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No. 230

July - August 2024

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Looking Up

As Night Unwinds

By Bob Grindle

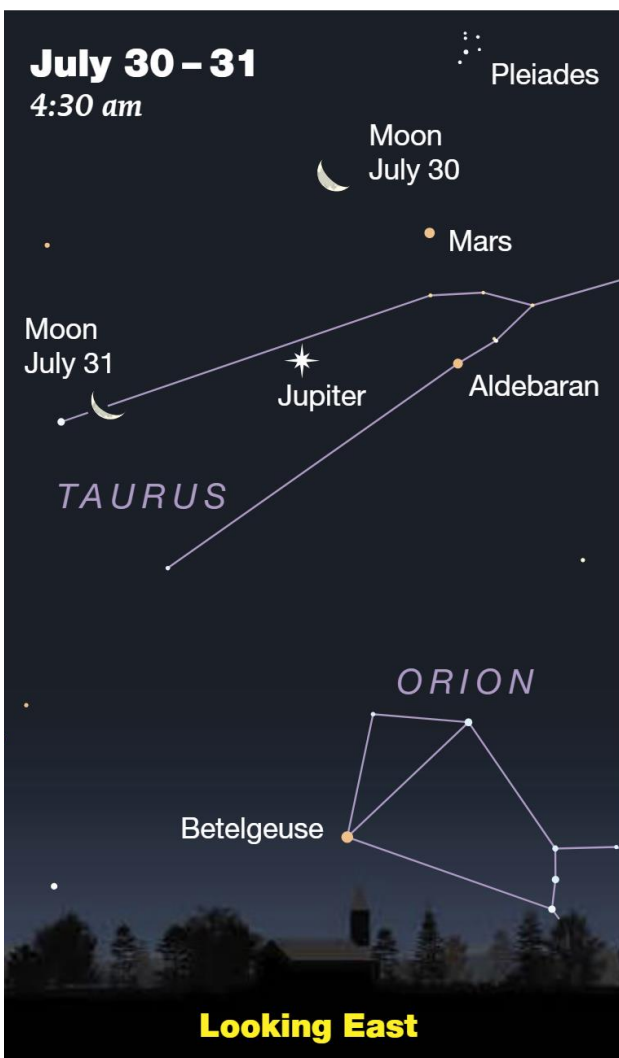
It is in those quiet and magically late hours before dawn has even entered the theater, that deepest trench of night...when sleepers sigh and soundlessly shift in their beds and are drawn deeper into their dreams, or, if awake, tiptoe to an open window and peer sleepily into a world lost in shadows. After the darkness of night has spread... quiet as a breath...steady as breathing, inhaling the last bits of the day's light and exhaling the sky in deepening hues of gray—to purple; then black—and finally, as our hemisphere revolves slowly away from the Sun and lays exposed beneath the pure, take-your-breath-away blackness of deep cosmic space... when the stars and planets begin to twinkle into view like fellow travelers signing on to help light our evening's journey across the sky—fireflies beyond the reach of any cage except the imagination—a kind of romantic uncoupling from optimism and idealized reality sometimes sets in...a dream-like state as the senses transition from the bright, hot, urgent clarity of day to the softer, less clawing and more introspective temper that night unveils...as if the very darkness becomes a chamber that softens and echoes even the sounds in our own head and the space around us fills with the timeless infinity of music...of Spanish guitar, soft piano, flute and drum brush strokes perhaps, courtesy of our brain's hallucinogenic alter-ego that takes over and exchanges the human-made hand tools that help us shape the topiary world we think we live in for the harder to master tools of imagination, insight and artistic vision that our cosmic origins let us tap into and allow us to navigate the sometimes frightening, but always exciting landscape of what we can imagine.

Not everyone is interested in entering into this shape-shifting night setting of shadows and round-the-bend alterations in what is comfortable. A simple dream will do, and frequently does. Some hearts and minds will do better, thank you very much, docked safely in a quiet port of call. But pausing under this canopy of distant suns I feel a connection to all the story tellers, dreamers, explorers and perhaps even to the many, many paths not taken... not just by myself, but by our species—a singular voyager on the fraught odyssey from life's lost origins on Earth until now. Whether modern poet searching for meaning, indigenous storyteller trying to explain patterns and events,

ancient mariner learning to navigate across the immensity of uncharted seas or early hunter-gatherer trying to survive in an unforgiving environment, we have a role in all of their stories and the common thread that connects us all is the very sky over our heads. Tonight is moonless, comfortably breezy and dry and is easy to imagine skywatchers of old spending the entire night till first dawn listening to the old storytellers relate their tales.

The evening, night and early morning skies of July and August are at hand though, and July's very early morning hours open in the eastern sky with a thin waning crescent Moon passing between Mars and brilliant Jupiter who has become the morning star since Venus' exit in April. Venus, however, will return as the evening star in early July—low in the western sky, and remaining as the evening star through the end of the year, slowly getting higher in the sky each night. By the end of July, the 30th and 31st, in the eastern pre-dawn sky (yes, that's about 4:30 a.m.) Jupiter, Mars, the waning crescent Moon and Aldebaran, a red giant star about 44 million miles across will form a delightful, compact and slightly off-square rectangle resting over the constellation Orion, forever chasing Taurus the bull. The night has grown a bit chilly...funny how that works, it must be down to almost 60°, and a couple of months ago 60° was a heat wave.

With August comes the promise of the Perseid meteor shower and this year should be one of the best, because the first quarter Moon sets before midnight on the 11th and 12th and the Perseids always peak after midnight. This shower is actually active from mid-July to late August as our planet crosses a wide field of debris left behind in the wake of the last passage of the Swift-Tuttle comet, but because there are several areas of comet debris and the Earth passes through those on the 11th and 12th of August the chance of seeing up to 100 meteors an hour is best after midnight on those nights. Grab a lawn chair, a wool blanket, any binoculars you might have and enjoy the show... sitting here under a mid-summer night's sky it is easy to believe that Eastern Connecticut is, on the whole, one of the very best places to enjoy the miraculous nature of our planet.



Looking East

Dear Readers, Writers and Advertisers-

Starting with this issue, *Neighbors* will be bi-monthly year 'round. It needs to happen for several reasons. I hope you remain involved with this little paper for as long as it is in print. I will never publish a 'digital only' version. We spend too much time looking at screens.

Tom King

Support our local farmers.

You and your family will eat better.

Our community will be healthier.

Look for locally sourced produce when you dine.

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

Frequent our farmers markets.

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

On our cover: Top photo - Students working the SNAP booth. Lower left - Anika being held by Grandma while Mom shops. Both photos taken by Dennis Pierce at the Ellington Farmers Market on June 29th. Lower right - Musicians perform at the Willimantic Third Thursday Streetfest on June 20th. Photo by Pete Polomski.

Correction: The cover photo for the June issue should be credited as courtesy of 'The Florence Griswold Museum', Old Lyme, Connecticut, and not Mark Mathew Braunstein.

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

Neighbors
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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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Eighty--a large number

By Loretta Wrobel



I can now claim I made it to eight decades! Now as I negotiate the trials and tribulations of being an old person, I run smack into ---AGEism! Prior to turning the page on this new experience, I felt I was doing quite fine with my own aging process. I accepted that a lot has changed and shifted during this long time of living on this sweet planet. Even though I don't spend a lot of time jumping, I can dance with those younger than I am. And I danced the night away at the last wedding I attended a few months ago. Yes I know I am a tad slower, but I get things done in a timely fashion. What I was totally unprepared for is my own feelings about being old.

I have ingested, totally unconsciously, all the negative prejudice and discrimination associated with age. Now that I am an 80-year-old woman, how do I accept that, without all the myths and stereotypes that come with the number? As I read a description of myself from a recent doctor's visit, the number jumps out at me and calls up a fragile image. I don't see myself as a ghost of my former robust being. Nevertheless, I can't ignore the image that comes to mind as I read those large numbers. That reaction surprised me.

As I increase my awareness of embracing my inner truth, I am floored that I am grappling with this issue. Before I reached this significant age, I would never have guessed I would be influenced by what I had heard, seen, and been exposed to all my life, regarding the misconceptions of "old." How could I not be susceptible to what our culture tells us and how it treats us old people, especially women! Men get a softer reaction to their own aging and are described in less demeaning words. Think for a moment of what comes into your brain cells when you hear the term "old woman."

So why am I so surprised when I am just reflecting the society that raised me? I arrogantly scream that I know better. That fact may be real; however, as a human being I have swallowed many myths and assumptions, during my decades of roaming this world with zest and exuberance. I bought the concept of forefathers doing all those amazing feats in creating our Country, and there was one woman, Betsy Ross, sewing the flag! As a child growing up, I accepted without question the patriarchal reality that all our Presidents were male because they were the best qualified to be leaders of our gigantic and powerful country.

My wisdom grew as I aged, and today, I laugh at my own brainwashing. Society can convince you to adopt some pretty strange, harmful and self-destructive thoughts and behaviors. After being persuaded, it is easy to passively swallow and accept the foolish techniques of the powers that be.

The journey to continue to explore and shift my erroneous concepts is an ongoing process. There is always something to alert me to my limited and prejudicial fixed notions. I never knew I carried the seed of agism within

me. Further, I was clueless about sexual orientations other than the party line heterosexuality. Ditto for being completely unaware of my own racism and white privilege.

One healthy aspect of being in this human body is we have the capacity to transform our closed beliefs, and work on learning better and more inclusive behaviors. First comes the awareness which can be painful and scary. As humans, we can fight and become defensive and not accept our limitations. In this way we can make our lives more difficult, in promoting the fable that says, "I am too old to change." Of course, as a devious human, I only want to employ that fable when I am unwilling to improve an attitude. When I see myself as functioning in a manner that works for me, I stubbornly want to stay there. In more sane moments I eventually accept that a slight shift can be best for all.

It can be frustrating to look at yourself in the mirror and realize that the person staring at you is indeed you; however, there exist several changes in your appearance. The wrinkles seem to multiple faster than you can count your blessings!

I pay attention to when I first react with a that-is-not-for-me posture. If it is truly my feeling, I can accept it. Is my response based on my perceived diminishing sense of importance or worthiness due to being on the other side of youthful? This question requires me to take a deep breath and be honest with myself. I choose to see myself as evolved and past all that ageist garbage because, of course, I know better. I do know the only way to move ahead is to accept the places where you are flawed and to focus on changing those destructive habits and patterns.

Here is what I have learned as I have survived several decades. The hardest part is looking inward and seeing that you are simply a human who is trying. You can continue to improve at eight or one hundred and eight and every year in between! For me the trick is to increase my flexibility as I age, and not revert to the false excuse that I have done it this way or thought this for my whole life and I am not shifting it now that I am a certain age. We sure can be clever and deceive ourselves, no matter how old we are!

I do consider reaching eighty a success. My life has been rich and full. Yes, I am grappling with my own ageist attitudes and prejudices, which I see as another adventure in self-discovery. I now know I will always be exploring and surprising myself. Life is interesting, never dull and stale.

I have a bumper sticker on my vehicle that reads:

Old age is not a disease
IT IS A TRIUMPH.

The entire quote by Maggie Kuhn, an activist who founded the Gray Panthers, reads: "Old age is not a disease - it is strength and survivorship, triumph over all kinds of vicissitudes and disappointments, trials and illnesses."

That says it all.

it's a great day for a subway!

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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.

Read the Neighbors paper on your desktop, laptop, tablet or smartphone.
Go to neighborspaper.com for link to current and past editions.
All in beautiful COLOR!

From the Ground Up - Buying Local in Connecticut

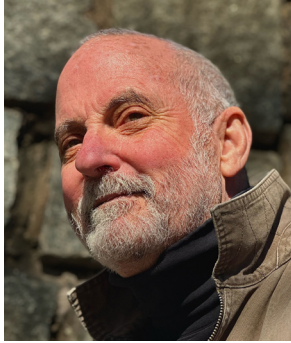
"Pulling my son out of the bath, I urged him, "Hurry, put on your pajamas. Come outside and watch the thunderstorm." And in the twenty minutes before a relentless downpour, he, his sister... and I pull out the folding chairs and watch the better-than-fireworks lightning storm. The sky splits open. Crack! The kids jump up from their seats, grab hands, and dance to bring the rain down. Nobody's dollars bought this moment. The sky's for free."

-Cherrie L. Moraga, From Inside the First World:
On 9/11 and Women-of-Color Feminism

By C. Dennis Pierce

This has been a month of violent thunderstorms. When my dog senses the upcoming weather she scurries around the house. At the first rumble of thunder, she panics and looks at me as if to say, "did you hear that?" I find that when the air gets heavy and threatening it is a prelude to a unique and powerful demonstration of nature at its best. When it approaches, I move to my porch to watch the fierce white lightning, jagged as it paints the sky and brings out the density of the foreboding clouds. As the sky empties itself on my back yard the torrential rain rolls off my porch roof, down the drainpipe and out to the street.

I would say these summer storms are full of splendor. They break the heat with their presence of cool air that is refreshing. Yes, these storms are great for entertaining, but the rain does not help the farmers who desperately need a steady rain that soaks into the ground and provides nourishment for their parched crops.



of vendors, mostly featuring local small farms, others have structured their venue with a mix of farmers, food producers and crafts. Dianne has established a nice balance at the Ellington Market. I believe, unique to this market, their mission lies in their mantra, "Local and Fresh...Our Community at Its Best!". This is evident in the wide variety of farm, and food products that they offer, a matching SNAP dollars program where the market matches SNAP dollars, a match for WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program vouchers, a unique Kids Power of Produce Club, where children are given a free coupon to spend at the market. Now you can see why Ellington Farmers was voted one of Best of Hartford Magazine top farmer's market in Connecticut. The market is held on Saturdays, 9:00am to 12:00pm from May to October. Information can be found at www.ellingtonfarmersmarket.com Saturdays 9-12, Arbor Park, Main street, Ellington – May to October. When checking out their web site a feature that is helpful is a section that provides a history of each farm / vendor that is at the market. This way the marketgoer can find out who is growing their produce and what they have to offer.

This past Saturday while shopping at the market I had the opportunity to speak to Dianne who was very proud of the three community supportive programs listed above. Her efforts and philosophy demonstrates that the market is all about the community and the services the market provides. While at the market I visited with many of the vendors, purchased a nice lavender plant from Colgan Farm from Lebanon, bought a loaf of enticing cinnamon bread from LuAnn's bakery, hot sauce from Dragons Breath for a present for an upcoming trip to New Hampshire and I also dined on a breakfast bowl from Taylor Spring Farm's food truck, while not the healthiest option, it was delicious – tater tots covered with country gravy a smattering of spicy cheese sauce, chopped bacon and a fried egg on top.

If you have guests visiting this summer and you would like to dazzle them with your culinary skills treat them to the following breakfast offering:

Beet & Root Hash with Poached Egg (roasted red & golden beets, potato medley, mushrooms, and caramelized onions)
Serves: 4

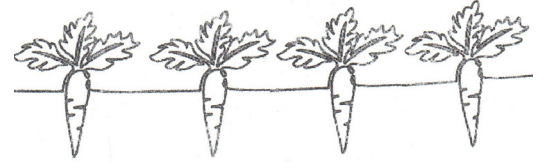
Ingredients:

-3 pounds of root vegetables – red beets, golden beets, a variety of mushrooms (if a variety is available otherwise anything but white mushrooms). Feel free to add / substitute other vegetables such as carrots, celery root, turnips etc.

-2 medium onions, caramelized (find instructions below)
-1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons of olive oil
-¾ teaspoon of kosher salt
-4 eggs, poached
Optional – chopped cooked bacon or sausage – add after vegetables are cooked

Instructions:

-Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
-In advance: Up to 4 hours ahead, prepare all the vegetables except the onions. Prepare onions separately. Brush vegetables with the oil on the baking sheet and cover tightly with plastic wrap. Set aside at room temperature.
-To peel the root vegetables. Cut them into a ¼ to ½ inch dice. If any of the vegetables are thicker than 1-1/2 inches in diameter, cut them lengthwise in half, then cut crosswise into 1/4- to 1/3-inch-thick slices.
Sprinkle all the vegetables with salt and pepper.



6.29.2024. At the Ellington Farmers Market.

Dennis Pierce photo.

-Roast in oven, turning the vegetables every 15 minutes or so with a spatula, until they are tender and golden, about 45 minutes. Turn oven to 250 degrees, add caramelized onions and optional bacon / sausage
-Place beet and root hash on each plate and top with poached egg

Caramelized onions -

Ingredients:

-Medium onions, yellow, white, or red
-Extra virgin olive oil
-Butter, optional
-Kosher salt
-Sugar, optional
-Balsamic vinegar, optional

Directions:

-Use a wide, thick-bottomed sauté pan for maximum pan contact with the onions. Coat the bottom of the pan with olive oil, or a mixture of olive oil and butter, if using (about 1 teaspoon per onion).
-Heat the pan on medium high heat until the oil is shimmering. Add the onion slices and stir to coat the onions with the oil. Spread the onions out evenly over the pan and let cook, stirring occasionally.
-Depending on how strong your stovetop burner is you may need to reduce the heat to medium or medium low to prevent the onions from burning or drying out.
-After 10 minutes, sprinkle some salt over the onions, and if you want, you can add some sugar to help with the caramelization process. Add sugar sparsely, you can add more later as needed.) One trick to keeping the onions from drying out as they cook is to add a little water to the pan.
-Let the onions cook for 30 minutes. As soon as the onions start sticking to the pan, let them stick a little and brown, but then stir them before they burn. Depending on the heat of your burner you might need to cook longer than 30 minutes.
-The trick is to leave them alone enough to brown (if you stir them too often, they won't brown), but not so long so that they burn. After the first 20 to 30 minutes, you may want to lower the stove temperature a little, and add a little more oil, if you find the onions are verging on burning.
-Continue to cook and scrape, cook and scrape, until the onions are a rich, browned color. At the end of the cooking process, you might want to add a little balsamic vinegar or wine to help deglaze the pan and bring some additional flavor to the onions.

Gardening suggestion of the month – looking to stake your tomatoes? Home Depot sells 2" x 2" x 8' firing strips for about \$1.59. These work great for those tomato plants that want to reach to the sky.

And some final thoughts – if you are visiting family this summer sit and talk to them. Talk about growing up together, stories that will come out will sometimes surprise you. This is the time where you can show up as you are. Time spent together can heal a weary mind and revitalize your heart.

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. Peas be with you. Come celebrate with me and remember, every day is a holiday, and every meal is a banquet. I'll save you a seat at the table!



Dianne Trueb, Market Master of the Ellington Farmers Market and a young volunteer.
Dennis Pierce photo.

Today, was one of those cloudy, slightly windy day as I headed over to Ellington's, Saturday morning, farmer's market. In route I hit waves of light rain droplets as I traveled down route 195. Fortunately for the market the sky cleared, and a light wind kept the shoppers cooled off. Ellington's market is a rare find. While it does not match in size to the Coventry farmer's market it boasts a more varied selection of offerings without the crowds. The summer market features over 40 full-time vendors, weekly themes, guest vendors and live music and plenty of parking.

Dianne Trueb, who is the current Market Master, posted her participation with the market in a WordPress article that she posted on the internet, "I became involved with the Ellington Farmers' Market in 2009 through my sister, owner of Toes to Nose Soaps, who was a vendor at the market. After visiting Haiti in 2009, I began selling handmade children's dresses and other sewn items to raise money for the Haitian Health Foundation at her booth. I found the vendors at the market were an incredible group of people, passionate about the products they grew and made, and genuinely interested in each other and their customers.... In 2012, I started a Market Partner program to provide funding for weekly themes, events and entertainment and was overwhelmed with the response of 30 local businesses willing to donate... We have also added a Kids Power of Produce Club to encourage children to eat healthy and connect them with food production."

In many of my columns I have shared information about local markets. Some markets have a limited number

Joy

By Bill Powers

Many years ago, at a workshop, psychologist Carl Rogers told me: "The terms happiness and joy are not interchangeable and not the same thing." From his perspective there were important differences. One is the source. Happiness is frequently tied to possessions, events and circumstances. Our source of joy is more internal and spiritual. It comes from an inner peace, our love, or service to others. Happiness comes and goes since situations change. Joy, stays with you longer since it is not tied to particular events or outcomes. Finally, during hard or difficult times happiness can quickly dissipate; whereas joy is more resilient and stands tall versus adversity. In Rogers' Person-Centered Therapy his theory is based on the postulate that clients possess within themselves the capacity to understand the factors in their life that are causing unhappiness and lack of joy.

Beyond the theory and practice of counseling and psychotherapy, let's wade into the waters of everyday life and cast our net to catch a sample of what our neighbors have to say about what gives them joy.

In my opinion, for the most part, the participants at the Windham Center Post Office and Windham Senior Center who were asked: their first name, age and "What gives you Joy?" support that joy as a concept readily engages the idea that it is more internal and spiritual.

- Luciano 28 "My family and dog"
- Karla 33 "My Children"
- Maria 50 "Helping People"
- Kate 56 "Seeing People happy and my dog"
- Illiana 58 "Being around people"
- Doreen 58 "NASCAR and Modifieds"
- Judy 58 "My Kids"
- Joe 64 "People"
- Linda 65 "My grandkids"
- Janet 65 "Free Farmers' Market cards"
- Judy 65 "My nieces and the change of the seasons"
- Gwen 66 "Family"
- June 69 "My daughter"
- Bryce 69 "My family"
- Linda 70 "Helping people"
- Melody 71 "Classical Music"
- Barbara 71 "Dogs"
- Denise 71 "Being with family"
- Paulette 73 "Making people laugh"
- Suzanne 74 "My boyfriend"
- Becky 76 "My Grandkids and fishing"
- Al 76 "Grandchildren and serving other seniors"
- Pat 76 "People"
- Elie 77 "Just living and woodworking"
- Elizabeth 77 "My husband"
- Joyce 80 "Love and joy of Jesus"
- Jevena 84 "Family"
- Dianna 87 "My Senior Center Family"

The Meaning of Love

The age old question. Love has never been more confusing as today. We seem to love everything and it is tossed around haphazardly. We love inanimate things, things that can't love back...but can they?

We all know the joy of having our loved ones near, the overpowering love we feel when meeting our babies for the first time...is there more?

Let's take a look.

Do we love the chair we had to have because we just loved it? The one that hugs us immediately and warms us, in comfort, on cold winter nights? Does it make us feel loved?

Is it our favorite color that reminds us of a loved one and suddenly we remember the love they gave us and we knew just how wonderful it felt to be with them?

Maybe it's the favorite tree of our childhood, the one that held our swing and listened to our hearts and bore the initials of our first loves, to endure forever. Is that love?

Of course, it could be the flowers that God so plentifully spread upon the meadows, all of different colors to show us how beautifully they complement each other and how bland they might be if only there was one kind. Is there a message behind His wisdom?

Is it sitting on the edge of a quiet pond, smelling the blend of rainfall as it dampens the earth, rotted leaves and tree bark joining together to create a perfume that cannot be created by man, while pond creatures raise their melodious voices to be carried across the night sky for the world to enjoy?

Of all the things I love best are the smiles we get from strangers we pass, the ones that make us feel connected to the amazing world God created for us.

Most of all the love I feel from God when I know He did this all for us.

We may throw the love randomly but what better word could we use? Love come easily to me and for that I am truly grateful.

PS: Last week upon finishing a conversation with a customer service representative my last words to him upon hanging up were 'Love you' immediately feeling embarrassed, his response was 'thank you love you too. Love is a good thing to overuse.

With love,

Ella Sharpe, 2024

Quiet Corner Garden Club Tour



Submitted by Caroline Delaney

Quiet Corner Gardens, a self-guided tour of eight gardens in Pomfret, Putnam and Woodstock on July 13, from 9am to 4pm, is the Quiet Corner Garden Club's latest offering to the community. Come, be inspired.

Start at the Woodstock Town Green (Route 169, across from Roseland Cottage) where you can purchase tickets or pick up prepaid tickets at the will-call table. You will then receive a map with garden descriptions and locations. Tickets are \$25 the day of the sale or \$20 when purchased in advance at the Quiet Corner Garden Club's website, quietcornergardenclub.com.

The tour includes homes where owners have created gardens reflecting their unique vision; a family's self-sustaining property with orchards, vegetables, flowers and more; an organic farm; a historic inn, where in addition to the gardens, a luncheon buffet is available from 12pm to 2pm (reservations required, \$35); and municipal gardens maintained by the Club.

A garden-inspired Arts & Crafts fair, located adjacent to the registration tables, will offer gift items for sale including baskets, ceramics for home and garden, hand made soaps and lotions, bird houses, jewelry and more.

Proceeds from the Garden Tour are used to fund scholarships for area students studying horticulture-related fields, for civic projects such as children's gardens in schools and libraries, plantings at senior housing facilities, and memorial sites throughout the region.

The Quiet Corner Garden Club is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization affiliated with The Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut and is a member of the National Garden Clubs.





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First Ride

By Delia Berlin

Although I have been retired for more than a decade, I still retain that “Friday feeling” of excitement as the weekend approaches. The anticipation has more to do with the different activities that weekends bring than with being bound to a weekly schedule.

In summer, for example, David and I always go to the Willimantic Farmers Market on Saturday mornings. There, at a minimum, we pick up our vegetable farm share from Russo’s Roots, homemade breads from the Bread Lady, and flowers from Foliota Farm. Curly, our rescue mini-poodle, often comes along. He seems to enjoy these outings and is learning to get more comfortable around strangers.

On a recent Friday, just after we had finished a nice supper, we were brainstorming about Curly’s sudden lack of appetite and low energy that evening. Curly has a sensitive stomach and is already on a diet formulated for such dogs. Normally, he is very energetic and eats well. But sporadically, he may vomit or briefly lose interest in food and play. Naturally, we worry when he does not act like himself. We were pondering what to do to help him feel better soon.

But having one crisis at a time can be a luxury one cannot count on. Suddenly, and out of the blue, my vision out of my left eye got very cloudy. Unable to clear it by blinking or cleaning my glasses, I tried lubricating eye drops, with no results. I immediately called my ophthalmologist. I have been his patient for decades and had never called him unexpectedly, much less outside of business hours. But the greeting message at his group office simply said that they were closed. In case of emergency, their only instruction was to call 911.

Fearing the possibility of an evolving stroke, I was about to take an aspirin but decided to check with my daughter first. She, a physician in New York City, thought that aspirin was a good idea. But, in addition, she strongly urged me to seek emergency care without delay. She hoped that it would be something benign, but insisted that the situation called for ruling out not only a stroke, but also a possible retinal detachment. Either one of those conditions would require urgent attention to prevent permanent damage.

My “Friday feeling” had completely evaporated. It had been replaced by anxiety and turmoil. I did not want to leave Curly, potentially sick, unattended. My sister, who is a neighbor and loves to watch Curly, was away. David would have to stay with him and, until a stroke was ruled out, it was not safe for me to drive or ride in a private car. Since paramedics are equipped to deal with potentially evolving strokes, I called 911.



This is how, at age 70, I took my first ambulance ride. Most likely, it will not be my last. In the ambulance, my blood pressure was so high that I knew I had done the right thing. The paramedics took the relevant history and communicated with the hospital to prepare for my arrival. By the time I got there, I was already a little calmer.

Once at the Windham Hospital Emergency Department, I was seen immediately and treated kindly by a professional team. Because my main symptoms involved an eye, I did not know how much they were going to be able to do on location. But to my surprise, after ruling out a stroke, they did a visual acuity test followed by an ultrasound of the affected eye. The ultrasound was inconclusive. It could not clearly differentiate between a vitreous problem and a retinal injury. A specialist consultation was needed.

Because a retinal detachment would require laser surgery as soon as possible, the emergency doctor arranged for a specialist to see me in West Hartford early the next morning. He instructed me to go home and have nothing by mouth after midnight, in case surgery was needed. Overwhelmed, I lamented about this big change in weekend plans. My disappointment was justified, but emergency doctors deal with such extreme hardship that my complaint must have sounded very petty in the light of more difficult situations. Yet, instead of judging, ignoring me or lecturing me, he took the time to listen, re-explained the options, and walked me through the steps that I had to accept were still ahead. This made a huge difference and I was able to reset from self-pity to problem-solving mode. I could not thank him enough for that kindness.

On Saturday, I woke up with clear vision. I was grateful for this welcome development, but I could not assume that it was the end of the problem. I took an Uber ride to the consultant’s office, so David could stay with Curly. After a thorough exam, the doctor ruled out retinal issues. Although a vitreous detachment could not be confirmed, it is the most likely diagnosis at this point. I will need to be re-checked by my own ophthalmologist soon and hopefully my vision will remain stable.

Meanwhile, Curly seems to have regained his energy and appetite. I am grateful for that, and for the good care I could still get locally. But gradually, the “excellent care closer to home” that was once a guiding concept for small hospitals is slipping away. The health care conglomerates that have absorbed them point to advanced technologies as a reason to migrate from smaller settings to larger, more distant centers. Technology makes a difference, but at the end of the day, nothing beats the comfort of community care.

Stop Making Sense (Aristotle, Einstein, and Me)

By Bob Lorentson

Sometimes you lie in bed at night and you don't have a single thing to worry about. That always worries me.

-Charlie Brown (Charles Schultz)

Every so often I get together with a few friends of mine and try to make some sense of the world over a couple of beers. So far, unsuccessfully. I can’t honestly even say that we’re making any progress. About the only thing I can conclude from this is that either the world doesn’t make any sense, or that we don’t. On the bright side, at least we’ve narrowed our focus. On the not-so-bright side, maybe we’re just not drinking enough beer.

Humans have been trying to make sense of the world ever since the world consisted of caves, clans, and creatures that were trying to eat them. Not everyone, of course. Some were incapable of making sense, and sitting around the cave calling attention to that fact did little to further our advancement. As a survival strategy this wouldn’t seem to make much sense, but every election season we are reminded of how well it works. In any case, most humans would have liked to have something to show for their efforts, like food, water, shelter, and mates, whether they made sense or not. Some things never change.

Like all animals, humans evolved with only these four basic needs. But their world was small then, and humans have never liked to be limited. If other animals could have four, there was no reason they couldn’t have five. While it is debatable whether this need for more constituted a fifth basic need, this was only the beginning.

Despite this inauspicious start, humans slowly began to grow their world by exploring, making discoveries, accumulating knowledge, and then trying to make sense of it. Science, religion, philosophy, and even essay writing were some of the tools that were used to do this. As was the reality hammer that sometimes hit them over the head, which is why I’m wearing a hard hat as I write this. Don’t worry though. As far as I know, no readers have been harmed by any of my essays. Some have said they don’t make enough sense to hurt a fly.

The thing is, while every species tries to make sense of the world in their own way, other species do so only in support of their basic needs, while we have now gone so far beyond them that we claim our basic needs include everything from desirable things like smartphones, tattoos, and melatonin gummies, to potentially world-ending things like fossil fuel burning, nuclear weapons proliferation, and artificial intelligence that is too smart for

our own good. To say nothing about the new country music. One way to look at this, I suppose, is that all our sense making has taken most of us from the Stone Age to the Space Age. We all know who the stragglers are.

Now, I’m not admitting to anything here, but I have a stone to throw. Perhaps it’s those stragglers who really make the most sense. Perhaps, with all that humans have accomplished, all we’ve really done is to make the world more complicated than it needs to be. And that with each giant step for mankind, we’re only making it harder to make sense of the world. Even Aristotle, one of the first scientists, came to realize this when he said, “The more you know, the more you realize you don’t know.” And 2,000 years later, Einstein said the same thing, suggesting to me that maybe we should replace The Land of Opportunity as America’s slogan with What’s the point?

This Paradox of Knowledge suggests that we don’t know the half of it. While the implication of this is plenty worrisome, it should be even more so knowing that between Aristotle, Einstein, and me, we’ve possibly influenced Western thought more than anyone. If Aristotle were here today, beyond looking silly in a toga, I believe he might say that what we don’t know about the world is now reaching a crisis. Einstein might say that each giant step forward is really taking us a giant step closer to the Stone Age. And as always, I will continue to say, Another beer, please, because that has become a basic need for me. You can’t make sense of what you don’t know, and after Aristotle and Einstein, I feel like I know next to nothing.

When I was a boy, the only thing that didn’t make sense was girls. Thinking back on it, that might have been the first demonstration I had of Aristotle’s and Einstein’s paradox. Also of just how wrong I can be in asking, What’s the point? Nevertheless, I suggest that we all stop trying so hard to make any more sense of the world. I think we’ve made enough sense for one species. Perhaps now is the time for a new basic need – a need to rest on our laurels instead of always needing more. Personally, I wouldn’t know a laurel if I sat on one, but since I’ve come this far with Aristotle and Einstein, I’ll rest on theirs.

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).

Mansfield Fall Book Sale

The Friends of the Mansfield Public Library are holding their Fall Book Sale on Saturday, September 7 and Sunday, September 8. The sale will run from 9-4 on Saturday and 9-3 on Sunday. Please join us for this important sale that benefits the Mansfield Public Library and various library programs for both adults and children.

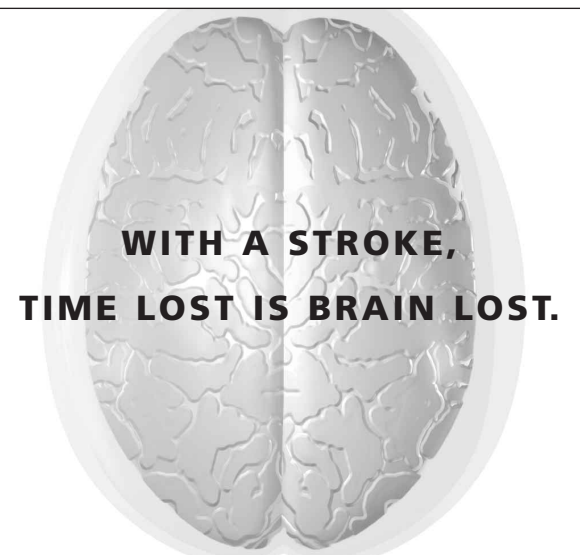
The Book Sale will be held in the Buchannan Library and will feature children’s books, adult fiction and non-fiction, puzzles/games and so much more. We hope to see you there.

Liber Tea at the America Museum

July 11: Outhouses and their Role in the American Revolution. Bev York will present an illustrated talk about outhouses, privies and “necessaries.”

The contents were collected and used in the production of black powder and used at the Elderkin and Wales Powder Mill at Willimantic Falls.

The program begins at 5:30 and light refreshments are served. Eastern CT Veteran Center 47 Crescent Street, Willimantic. Suggested donation \$10. America Museum.

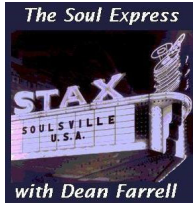


Unsung Heroes of Soul:

Freda Payne

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 Freda Payne, best known for 1970's "Band of Gold."



She was born in Detroit on September 9, 1942. Payne grew up hearing jazz singers like Ella Fitzgerald and Billie Holiday. In her teens, she went to the Detroit Institute of Musical Arts, found work singing radio ad jingles, and participated in local TV and radio talent shows. She won quite a few of them, too.

Payne relocated to New York City in 1963 and worked with performers such as Quincy Jones, Pearl Bailey, and Bill Cosby. The following year, she released a jazz LP, *After the Lights Go Down Low and Much More!!!*, on the Impulse label. She toured Europe in 1965, recording an album in Sweden with Don Gardner and Bengt-Arne Wallin. The year 1966 saw Payne's second American LP, *How Do You Say I Don't Love You Anymore*, on MGM. It, too, was a jazz release. She also made guest appearances on TV programs like *The Merv Griffin Show* and *The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson*. Beginning in 1967, Payne took to the theater. She was Leslie Uggams' understudy in *Hallelujah Baby*, and appeared at the Equity Theatre in *Lost in the Stars*.

In 1969, Payne heard from her old friends in Detroit, Lamont Dozier and brothers Eddie and Brian Holland. They had written and produced many hits for Motown, but left the company over royalty disputes. They had started their own label, Invictus, and offered Payne a recording contract. Her Invictus debut, "The Unhooked Generation," came out in late 1969 and made the lower rungs of *Billboard* magazine's Soul Singles chart.

In early 1970, Eddie Holland offered Payne a song he had co-written with Ronald Dunbar and Edythe Wayne. "Band of Gold" became a solid smash, reaching #3 in the pop market and #1 in England. In the Soul market, though, it topped out at a more modest #20. The song did, however, spend four months on that chart. It was also Payne's first gold record, with estimated global sales of two million. Invictus would subsequently release a *Band of Gold* album.

While Payne never duplicated the success of her signature hit, she remained on the Soul and pop charts well into 1971 with hits like "Deeper and Deeper," "Cherish What Is Dear to You," "Bring the Boys Home" (her second gold record), and "You Brought the Joy." Along with *Band of Gold*, Invictus released three more albums on Payne: *Contact* (1971), *The Best of Freda Payne* (1972, a compilation), and *Reaching Out* (1973).

The year 1973 saw Freda Payne leave Invictus for ABC/Dunhill and later Capitol, but commercial success eluded her at those labels. While at Capitol, she recorded a duet with labelmates Tavares, "I Wanna See You Soon." The label further put out three disco albums on her.

In 1974, Payne appeared on the cover of *Jet* magazine after the Prince of Romania made her a Dame of Justice of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem.

In 1981, she briefly hosted a talk show, *Today's Black Woman*. Payne also acted in different movies, on Broadway, and in other theater productions throughout the '80s. In 1982, she recorded the single, "In Motion," for the New York-based Sutra label. Four years later, she and Belinda Carlisle (formerly of the Go-Go's) teamed up on a remake of "Band of Gold," which made #26 on the Dance chart.

In 1990, Payne recorded three songs for Ian Levine's UK-based Motorcity label. In the mid '90s, she released three albums for Dove Music. She also acted in the films *Private Obsession* (1995), *Ragdoll* (1999), *Nutty Professor II: The Klumps* (2000), and *Fire & Ice* (2001).

In 2001, Payne released the album *Come See About Me* on Volt Records. The title track was a remake of the Supremes' 1964 hit. Two years later, she and Darlene Love performed in the show *Love & Payne*. It played at both New York's Regency and the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel in Los Angeles, to rave reviews.

In 2002, Payne appeared with numerous additional R&B performers on the "Rhythm, Love and Soul" edition of the PBS series, *American Soundtrack*. She also sang "Band of Gold" on the April 22, 2009, episode of



American Idol. In early 2010, Payne took part in "We Are the World for Haiti Relief." In 2011, she and Cliff Richard teamed up for the duet, "Saving a Life," which turned up on Richard's *Soullicious* album. Payne also joined Richard on his *Soullicious* tour that fall. In 2017, Freda Payne was inducted into the Rhythm and Blues Music Hall of Fame. And in January 2018, she performed "A Tribute to Ella Fitzgerald" at the Lackland Performing Arts Center in New Jersey.

From 1976-79, Payne was married to singer Gregory Abbott, whose "Shake You Down" was a #1 hit in 1987. Their son, Gregory Abbott, Jr., was born on Payne's 35th birthday. She was later in a relationship with Edmund Sylvers, lead singer of the Sylvers ("Boogie Fever," 1976). He produced Payne's 1982 single, "In Motion."

Rock critic Dave Marsh included "Bring the Boys Home" in his 1989 book, *The Heart of Rock and Soul: The 1001 Greatest Singles Ever Made*.

Charted singles:

- "The Unhooked Generation" (1969) R&B #43
- "Band of Gold" (1970) R&B #20, Pop #3, UK #1
- "Deeper and Deeper" (1970) R&B #9, Pop #24, UK #33
- "Cherish What Is Dear to You" (1971) R&B #11, Pop #44, UK #46
- "Bring the Boys Home" (1971) R&B #3, Pop #12
- "You Brought the Joy" (1971) R&B #21, Pop #52
- "The Road We Didn't Take" (1972) Pop #100
- "Two Wrongs Don't Make a Right" (1973) R&B #75
- "It's Yours to Have" (1974) R&B #81
- "Love Magnet" (1977) R&B #85
- "In Motion" (1982) R&B #63

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

Summer Regional Herbs

By Ashley Bissonnette-Murphy

In summer, we warm our skin with the rays of the sun, finding a renewed strength and lightness as we shed long pants and sleeves, forgo heavy foods, and our schedules become more relaxed with longer days. We create a renewed connection to Nature, frequenting beaches, lakes, and forests, and tending our gardens. Pleasure blooms in a multitude of colors: the rich reds, purples, greens, and yellows of summer herbs, flowers, vegetables, and fruit.

Take a cue from Nature and rise earlier with the sun, greet the birds, and pick summer sprouts of green—responsibly (for a list of plant species at risk and that are best to conserve, visit <https://unitedplantsavers.org/species-at-risk-list/>). For we are revived yet again as the earth maximizes its healthy blooms.

In my clinical herbal practice, I urge clients to seek green space—in their yard (unsprayed), public trails, and parks—to de-stress and reduce cortisol, ground their anxiousness with bare feet, get active, and reap the benefit of soil-based probiotics—all of which are free of charge, with momentous benefits to be gained. (For a list of parks and trails in Connecticut, check out <https://ctparks.com/park-finder/>.)

Herbalism is all around us, as is evident with an immersion into Nature. Go ahead and make this interaction. Create games and discovery challenges with your children, friends, and family. You may be surprised to find field garlic, mullein, garlic mustard leaves, sassafras, violet leaf, chickweed, plantain, red clover, chicory, dandelion, and ground ivy covering the ground.

Nature provides health-giving plants and what we now need most. Connect with an herbalist who can direct you to the plant attributes best suited to your constitution and condition, and reach out to your local farmers offering seasonal varieties of vegetables brimming with nourishment and sustainably sourced animal products. (To find farms near you, check out CTgrown.org.)

Many of the bloomed plants of summer share commonalities. They are “moving” herbs, aiding our lymph to move toxins and stagnation from our systems, and opening our pores to release heat. These herbs are internally circulatory and moistening, offering reprieve from the hot summer weather—and supporting our detox pathways. Return to Nature and open your eyes to the plant world around you; these herbs are widely accessible, and often considered “weeds.”

Some select regional herbs

Below is a list of some of my favorite late spring-summer herbs—an herbal ode. These plants have been used by Indigenous peoples for thousands of years and, later, by New Englanders, to enliven the body, mind, and spirit in the warmer months. These are herbs I also call on in my practice, and integrate into formulae for clients.

Chickweed (*L. Stellaria media*) is a moistening nutritive herb, blooming early, and common. It is a powerful herb to stir the internal waters (a lymphatic aid) and dissipate stagnation. It can be added to salads or steeped in long infusions overnight to extract minerals to fortify the body; enjoy your infusion cold or rewarmed the following day.



Dandelions (*Taraxacum officinale*), common in summer soils (even through cement cracks) offer reviving strength and resilience. Bought fresh at most grocery stores, the nutritive bitter greens can be added to salads and enjoyed before meals to stimulate digestion. Decocted (sometimes roasted for more desirable taste) the roots aid sluggish digestion as well. The vibrant yellow flowers can be used to make flower essences or in sympathetic medicine to call in “sunny” aspirations.

Evening primrose leaves (*Oenothera biennis*) are another nourishing salad green

you can find in dry fields and open areas scattered throughout our woodlands. It is a tall and impressive herb standing up to five feet that in early summer supports four-petaled, delicate yellow flowers that bloom under the moon. The herb is moistening and cooling, and makes for refreshing summer tea infusions paired with mint and enjoyed on ice. It has long been used to sooth digestive complaints.

Garlic and garlic greens (*Allium vineale*) are for purification and blood strengthening. An herb of summer, it is stimulating to the body and prized for adding flavor and green flair to dishes. It is also called “field garlic” and often mistaken for a clump of grass, with little distinction other than the garlic aroma in spring.

Ground ivy (*L. Nepeta glechoma*) is the sweet herb that blesses common walkways, peeking up between paving stones. Low-growing, this is another lymphatic herb that has an affinity for the head and glymphatic waters. The aerial parts of ground ivy are a remedy for the sinuses, earaches, and headaches caused by congestion. The herb is most common in tinctures or enjoyed as tea (try it iced) and sweetened with honey.

Plantain (*Plantago major*) is a versatile herb that is as tonifying to tissues as it is moistening. Abundant in forest clearings, walkways, and parks, this is an easily accessible ally with wide, ovate leaves with visible ribs, and stalks packed with seeds. This is a go-to herb in most of my gut-healing formulations for its vulnerary action and ability to mend compromised digestive tracts.

Violets (*L. Viola odorata*), low-growing with heart-shaped leaves and flowers, are some of the first spring flowers, with native varieties of deep to light purple and white. The leaves (still prevalent through summer) and flowers are enjoyed in salads, applied as poultices to hot skin irritations, or long infused and sipped as tea. This is a beautiful plant for reviving and gently moving the body to release what it no longer needs. Syrups, elixirs, and even perfumes of violet are enjoyed for their sweet, delicate floral profile.

This article contains statements that have not been evaluated by the FDA. The information contained is not intended to diagnose, treat, or prevent any disease. Consult your doctor/herbalist before taking herbal preparations, especially if you are pregnant or have a preexisting health condition.

Ashley Bissonnette-Murphy, Ph.D., MPH, is the clinical herbalist of H.W. Apothicaire and its Holistic Herbal Clinic. For more information, holistic herbal consults, or questions regarding all things herbal, visit hwapothicaire.com. You can also connect with Ashley at ashley@hwapothicaire.com and Instagram/Facebook @hwapothicaire.

The Leak

By Anne Goodin

The dripping was getting worse. Every time Beth turned on the kitchen faucet, a steady stream of water ran out from the bottom of the fixture. Beth thought back to the days of two faucets in the kitchen sink, when even she could replace a washer. Not anymore. She stood at the sink, frowning. She hesitated to ask Ed to fix it.

Ed sat at the kitchen table with the *Herald*, finishing his second cup of coffee. Beth mused. It was Saturday. The first weekend in a long time that there wasn't anything planned, no crisis in process, none of the kids needing their help with anything. The time seemed right to bring up the leaking faucet, except she knew the chaos it would create.

First the complaints that it was always something, then sighing that he can never just enjoy his day off. He would recite a litany of all the problems he had had to deal with over the past umpteen weeks, months, years.

When he finally condescended to use his precious time off to repair the faucet, he would take hours to go to the hardware store to buy the parts. When he returned, he would be complaining of the highway-robbery prices they charged and the poor quality of the parts they made now. Then he would go into telling stories of all the old guys he ran into at the hardware store that he went to school with and what had happened in their lives recently, thereby explaining why a half-hour trip for anyone else would be two or more hours for Ed. By now he would be smiling broadly, having caught up with old friends.

He would then dramatically lug in his toolbox, which inevitably wouldn't have the correct tools. He would go on a search in the basement, the garage, the trunk of his car, bringing in more and more of the tools he found but didn't need, spreading them all over the kitchen. Complaining all the time that their son, or son-in-law, always borrowed his tools and didn't return them, eventually claiming that the youngest children took them and left them out in the yard to rust.

He would finally say, “Give me a check, Ma, I need to go buy a new tool.” After which he would go off to the hardware store once again, to find more old friends to talk to. After sharing their plumbing wisdom, he would return bearing several new tools that he just had to have in order to be up to date on all the changes in the plumbing field.

Now it will be time for lunch and more coffee, and someone, a son or daughter, brother or sister, will show up and visit for an hour.

When company finally leaves, it will be afternoon. Ed will open the packaging of the new part, and, putting on his glasses, will sit down with yet more coffee to read the instructions that come with it.

After educating himself on the ins and outs of the new part, he will confidently proceed to take apart the broken faucet. That will be when he realizes he has bought the wrong part, or model, or the new model doesn't match up with the old fixture, screaming expletives the whole time. By then it will be 5:15 and the hardware store will be closed.

Ed will frantically turn to Beth and ask, “Well, now what do I do?” expecting her to magically fix the problem. She will say, “Just put it back together and fix it next weekend.”

Ed will try to put it back together but end up realizing it won't go back together because it is too rusty, or he broke off a part when removing it, or some other reason.

Beth will sigh, and offer to call a plumber on Monday, and Ed will go into a

rant about how expensive plumbers are and how he won't pay those rip-off artists to do something he can do himself.

Then Beth will have to carry buckets of water all week from the bathroom to the kitchen to do the dishes, cleaning, and cooking. All the while aware of Ed staring daggers at her, daring her to say one word.

Next Saturday will finally come and Ed will act as if he is being martyred when he has to make a return trip to the hardware store to return the wrong part he bought.

When he returns he once again will be all smiles, having purchased an entire new faucet that cost another fortune, a much bigger fortune, because his friends who are much more experienced in the plumbing field will have told him which one was really good and how to install it. Then, with complete confidence and total efficiency, he will finish the job.

Ed will stand back and admire his work. He will invite the whole family to admire his work and the beautiful new faucet he so generously has provided his wife and family. He will be sure to let them all know how fortunate they are to have such a talented husband and father who can accomplish such amazing feats as replacing a leaky faucet with a modern and beautiful faucet. The family will oooh and aaah and really and truly be very grateful for this lovely new faucet and even more impressed that he knew how to install it. With his new confidence, Ed will share his wisdom and joy in repairing things with the children, and he will in fact inspire the younger children to one day try to fix things themselves. Every person who comes through the door in the next six months, including the gas delivery boy and the life insurance salesman, will hear of this great joy that he has discovered and is sharing with his kids.

At the end of the day, Beth will add up all of the expense of the tools and new shiny faucet and realize that a visit from the plumber to fix a faulty washer would have been a fraction of the cost, but she will not say a word. Some things are worth far more than money.

Looking again at the leak, Beth decides it's not that bad. She turns to Ed and says, “Why don't we take a ride out to Railroad Salvage today?” To which he smiles and says, “Hey, that's a great idea! Let's go see what new junk is on sale. I could use some new tools!” He makes a choo-choo sound, and they both laugh.

Beth smiles and goes to get her coat.

Author's note: Ed and Beth are fictional characters representing my mom and dad. Railroad Salvage was his favorite place to go and always made him smile, and making the “choo-choo” noise was something he did every time they went there or the TV commercial came on. I shared this story with one of our sons-in-law and a friend who do their own repairs. Both of them thought I was talking about them! So I guess it's a relatable story for a lot of D.I.Y. guys. Ha, ha.

To all our contributors-

Thank You!

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

Resistance

By Judy Davis

I have always loved the Irish Rebel Songs, such as, "The Rising Of The Moon", "The Foggy Dew", "Patriot Game", and "A Nation Once Again." Those men and women fought for Ireland's freedom, never backing down in the face of oppression. In the 1800's, the poet T.D. Sullivan wrote: "Never till the latest day shall the memory pass away of the gallant lives thus given for our land; but on the cause must go, amid joy, or weal or woe, till we make this isle a nation, free and grand!"

What is a Birthday?

By Jesse R. Clark

What is a birthday? It's a day of celebration of the day you came into being. Everything you are, down to your core. But you are not just you. You are your ancestors. Every person that came before to make up your DNA. Your soul. Your being. Every bit of fate, coincidence and moment in life that led up to your birth. This is one of three things that we honor on your birthday. The second is what we know about you. When people say what you mean to them, they talk about their experience with you-their relationship with you-at this point in your life. Why you are so special.

Finding Her Purpose

By Carol Wheelock Hall

Little girl, how could she know, Her purpose was to live, learn, grow. In teenage years began the plans And future thoughts of where she'd land.

She saw her purpose with dreams anew, With needed work to see it through. School, a job, a mate someday, Be good, do well. She'd find a way.

And life went on, she'd met some goals. Her purpose grew with kids to hold. She taught them as the best she knew Ever hopeful as they learned and grew.

Hardy and willing she did her works. Home and job satisfaction had some perks. But age progressed year after year And her purpose then became unclear.

Now old with time to think and plan... "Stay well, be kind, do what you can!" Purposes alter but were always around. Not so different, her purpose was found.

Finally, we celebrate your potential-your future. We don't know what your future holds, but we know you and we can envision all the joys, all the work, all the passion and creativity you will express in whatever form you choose. Of course, we see you from *our* perspective-*our* experience, *our* relationship with you. But we know you and love you and where you are at this point in your life is important, whether it's a high point, or low because we have a shared experience, even if our lives are vastly different than others, we all *should* be blessed with those who love us and have watched us grow. And on this day, this day when we celebrate a birth, a life that came into this world, filled with hope, potential and love, we thank the heavens for everything that came before and everything that will come after. For the past is embedded in us, the good and the bad, and we can use it to create our future. And that's a cause for celebration.

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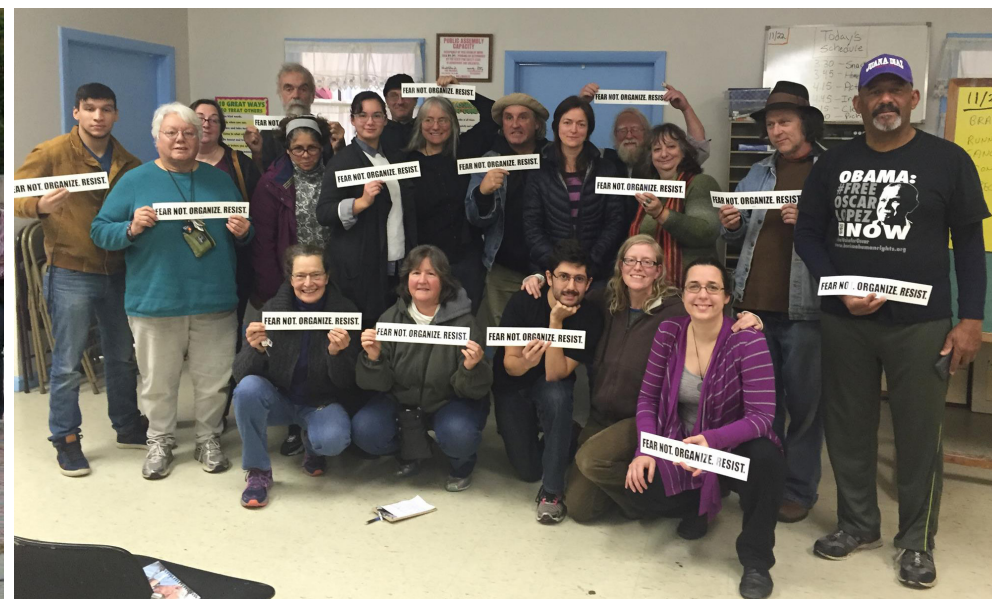
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Standing Up for Peace and Justice, Part 2 of 3 (or maybe more)



Left photo: 10.21.2011 Occupy Wall Street demonstration in downtown Willimantic. Right photo: 11.27.2016 Windham Area Progressive Action group is formed. Contributed photos.

By Michael Westerfield

Willimantic's famous Frog Bridge opened for traffic in the fall of 2001 and quickly became the busiest traffic spot in town. The Main Street corner across from the bridge has excellent visibility from all directions, and it proved to be a perfect spot for the Peace and Justice demonstrations that had been an ongoing local institution for years. In 2002, the first 3rd Thursday street festival was held in Willimantic, and shortly afterward the demonstrations were shifted from Thursday to Friday evenings to avoid contributing to the traffic chaos that went with setting up the festival.

George Bush the Younger was president at the time, and the Global War on Terror was in full swing. On March 20, 2003, a coalition of nations led by the USA invaded Iraq, beginning a conflict that lasted for close to nine years. It was widely believed that the purpose of the war was to seize control of Iraq's valuable oil fields, which Saddam Hussein had nationalized, and one of the main slogans of protestors was "No Blood for Oil." During this time, demonstrations were very well attended, including several "speak-outs," where a microphone was provided on the Major Parcel (now Jillson Square) for any community member to express their opinion on the war.

March 20, 2004, was the first anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, and once again the Willimantic Peace and Justice folks boarded a bus to join a demonstration in New York City. On this occasion about 200,000 people showed up, completely filling 20 blocks of Madison Avenue. The city administration had recently changed and, rather than being overtly hostile as they had been on previous occasions, the city police were friendly and helpful and the event went very smoothly.

2004 was a presidential election year, and it happened that the Democrats were holding their convention at the FleetCenter in Boston in August and the Republicans were convening theirs in Madison Square Garden in New York City in September. The closeness of the events inspired a group of activists to organize a march between the two, with demonstrations at both ends, billing it as the DNC2RNC March. The route passed through Willimantic on August 8th, so of course it was obvious that we should schedule an event here on Jillson Square. The day before arriving in Willimantic, the group stopped in Hampton, where many local folks joined them for what turned into a mini-festival of food, conversation, stilt-walking lessons, and music. In the morning, they headed for the city, taking a break from the hazards of the road by walking down the rail trail.

At Jillson Square, the local group had set up for the gathering in the morning, but no one was sure at what time the March would arrive. It was about 11 miles by trail, which could theoretically be done in four hours of steady walking, but of course they took breaks for resting and eating, and for holding an anarchist foot race through the aisles of Walmart.

The first marchers arrived sometime in the afternoon. There was no Shaboo Stage in those days, but a borrowed stage and decent sound system had been set up. For the next several hours a continuous program of music, songs, poetry, and speeches entertained a sizeable

crowd. The sound system was taken down as darkness fell, but many of the performers remained afterward, playing on acoustic instruments and singing. The entire event was recorded on a series of five CDs. The marchers spent the night in various homes, continuing on their way to New York the following day.

Although the anti-war protests continued unabated, on occasion activists participated in other actions that mixed an element of fun with making a serious point. One continuing theme was the necessity to break our dependence on oil and particularly upon a transportation model based almost entirely on privately owned, gas-guzzling automobiles. A group called Critical Mass was formed in San Francisco in 1992 and began a series of monthly political-protest bike rides, where large numbers of folks would ride together to "reclaim the streets." Eventually critical-mass bike rides were being held in over 300 cities around the world.

In April 2005, Willimantic-area activist-cyclers joined the movement and held joyous mass bike rides through the streets of Willimantic on the last Friday of each month. Unfortunately, Northeast Connecticut does not have San Francisco's climate, and cold, sloppy winter weather put an end to that particular type of demonstration.

Meanwhile the Iraq War continued unabated under President Bush, and on April 29, 2006, Willimantic-area activists yet again took a bus to a protest in New York City. This time over 300,000 people marched down Broadway, demanding an end to the current war and opposing military action against Iran. The event was organized by the national group United for Peace and Justice and was entirely peaceful, with no arrests reported.

Peace demonstrations were held in numerous cities throughout this period, many attended by local activists, including major actions in Boston on October 27, 2007; March 19, 2008; and March 21, 2009, in Washington, D.C., and again in New York City on April 4, 2009.

In January 2009, Barak Obama became president, and initially a great spirit of hope pervaded the progressive community. Gradually, however, it became apparent that although there were a few positive developments, by and large it was business as usual in Washington.

Looking back, it is very clear that there was a continuous stream of interrelated protest movements popping into prominence in response to the major issues of the day. Even before the Iraq War ended officially on December 15, 2011, a new movement took the world by surprise. On September 17, 2011, the Occupy Wall Street action, with the slogan "We Are the 99%," formed an encampment at Zuccotti Park in the Financial District of New York City. This in turn spawned the Occupy movement, which rapidly spread throughout the country and the world. The basic point of the movement was that 1% of the people own the majority of the world's wealth and resources, while the remaining 99%—us—have to make do with what was left.

In Willimantic, a call went out for a march to occupy Jillson Square and to hold a "general assembly and discussion" on October 21st. Such local assemblies were the decision-making bodies of the Occupy movement. The process was designed to encourage all persons to fully participate in discussions and to arrive at decisions through the consensus of those present. A few general assemblies

were held in Willimantic, but the process quickly faltered over the inability to come up with a meaningful action that could be engaged in by a relatively small number of people. Eventually, the Occupy theme was incorporated into the regular Frog Bridge demonstrations.

On February 26, 2012, Trayvon Martin, a 17-year-old African American, was shot to death in Sanford, Florida, by George Zimmerman, a "community watch coordinator." Martin was visiting relatives in a gated community when Zimmerman attacked and shot him. Zimmerman was tried for second-degree murder but was acquitted on the grounds of self-defense, despite the fact that Martin was unarmed. The acquittal of Zimmerman gave birth to the Black Lives Matter movement, which sought to end police brutality and racially motivated violence against African Americans. The movement spread quickly following the police-related deaths of other African Americans in 2014. Black Lives Matter posters became prominent at the Friday evening demonstrations in Willimantic and throughout much of the country.

By the fall of 2014, climate change had become one of the leading issues of concern throughout the world, and in response a People's Climate March was scheduled for New York City on September 21st, just ahead of a United Nations Climate Summit on the 23rd. Folks from Willimantic rented a bus, filled it completely, and headed down to the march. Despite the massive number of people arriving by bus, train, and every other means of transportation, things were quite well organized. We were dropped off reasonably close to the assembly area and told where to find our bus after the march concluded. It turned out that this was the largest climate march in history, with as many as 400,000 participants.

Even marching a dozen abreast, it takes a long time for hundreds of thousands of people to arrive at their destination, so the march went on for hours. Being in a demonstration like that is a powerful experience; as the crowd shifts you continually meet a wide variety of people, all united for a single purpose. For that short time, comradeship dispels our chronic isolation, and hope overrides despair for our future. Then the march ends and the world reasserts itself.

After the march, we hurried to our appointed meeting place, where hundreds of buses were lined up near the old waterfront. As so many buses attempted to leave the city simultaneously, they tied up traffic for hours. The congestion and the radio traffic reports made far more New Yorkers aware of the magnitude of the protest than those who actually saw it in person.

Back in Willimantic, the Frog Bridge demonstrations focused not only on the climate emergency but also on police brutality, income inequality, immigrant rights, and, increasingly, upon the upcoming presidential election. No one could have foreseen the outcome of the contest between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, or the cascade of crises that would result from a Trump victory.

On November 8, 2016, Trump was elected president, and on November 27, a new organization, Windham Area Progressive Action, was formed to help coordinate the local response to the coming MAGA storm.

To be continued.

Are Your Investments Really Earning As Much As You Think They Are?

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



When it comes to making investment decisions, many individuals focus on nominal returns – the raw percentage increase or decrease in the value of an investment over time. However, to truly understand the growth potential of your investments, it's crucial to consider the concept of real return. Let's explore what real return is, how it differs from nominal return, and why it should be a key factor in deciding what types of investments are best for your unique financial situation.

Bonds, on the other hand, generally offer lower nominal returns but provide a steady stream of income and can help to stabilize your portfolio during market downturns. However, when inflation is high, the real return of bonds may be minimal or even negative.

Real estate investments, such as rental properties or REITs (Real Estate Investment Trusts), can offer a balance of income and growth potential. They also have the added benefit of potential appreciation in property values over time. However, like stocks, real estate investments come with their own set of risks and considerations.

Understanding Real Return

Real return is the actual rate of return on an investment after accounting for inflation. Inflation, which is the general increase in prices and the decrease in the purchasing power of money over time, can significantly impact the true growth of your investments. For example, if your portfolio earns a 6% nominal return, but the inflation rate is 2%, your real return would be approximately 4%. This means that while your investment grew in dollar terms, its purchasing power only increased by 4%.

Real Return vs. Nominal Return

Nominal return, on the other hand, is the rate of return on an investment before factoring in inflation. It's the figure most often quoted in financial news and investment performance reports. However, relying solely on nominal returns can give you a false sense of your investments' actual growth potential, especially when making long-term investment decisions.

Consider two investments: a corporate bond with a 4% yield and a dividend stock with a 2% yield and 3% expected annual growth. With 1.5% inflation, the bond's real return is 2.5% (4% yield - 1.5% inflation). The stock's real return is 3.5% (2% yield + 3% growth - 1.5% inflation). Despite the stock's lower initial yield, it's the better choice after considering inflation and growth, with a higher positive real return.

Applying Real Return to Investment Decisions

Understanding the concept of real return is essential when deciding what types of investments are best suited for your portfolio. Different asset classes – such as stocks, bonds, and real estate – have varying levels of risk and potential for growth. By considering the real return potential of each asset class, you can make more informed decisions about how to allocate your investments.

Historically, stocks have provided higher nominal returns compared to bonds and cash equivalents. However, they also come with greater short-term volatility and risk. When adjusting for inflation, the real return of stocks may be lower than their nominal return, but they still tend to outperform bonds and cash over the long term.

Tailoring Your Investment Strategy

When making investment decisions, it's essential to consider your personal financial goals, risk tolerance, and time horizon. A well-diversified portfolio that includes a mix of asset classes can help to balance risk and return potential while taking into account the impact of inflation on real returns.

For example, if you have a longer time horizon until retirement, you may be able to afford to take on more risk in your portfolio by allocating a larger portion to stocks. As you near retirement, you may want to gradually shift more of your assets into bonds and cash equivalents to prioritize stability and income.

Regularly reviewing your investment strategy and making adjustments based on changes in your personal circumstances, market conditions, and inflation rates can help ensure that your portfolio remains aligned with your goals and optimized for real return potential.

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Authored by Senior Vice President, Financial Advisor Leisl L. Langevin, CFP® CDFA®. 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.

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Tai Chi Home

There's Still Time

By Joe Pandolfo

The peak of summer's here now. Things are letting their energy go, letting more of their secrets show. Lightning and thunder come and break open a sky full of rain. In a calmer spell the broadleaf boughs hang like loose robes, brushed open by every breeze.

Now and then, some moment will hint that the turn toward Fall is begun. But let that worry go. There's still time in the long afternoon to breathe as deep as you like, sighing as slow as you like.

When the tide of night sky comes, we still have light warm and close by - the moon floating low over the tree-tops, fireflies touching at the tips of the leaves.

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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.

Traditional Music in Connecticut's Last Green Valley

Windham Center's Great Bank Robbery

By Martin Moebus

November 17, 1854, would be a bad day for Samuel Bingham. Sam was the cashier of the Windham Bank in Windham Center. He had an important position—what today would be called chief financial officer. His name even appeared next to the president's on the bank stationery. What he didn't know was that he was about to be robbed!



Hebard House today.

It started on November 1 when a so-called "large man" checked into the Hebard House, a hotel managed by a man with a luggage fetish, William Tingley. Why Mr. Tingley noticed the "large man" is not recorded. The Hebard House, which still exists as the Young's Tavern apartment house on Route 32 across the Frog Bridge, was built by Guy Hebard in 1825, replacing Young's Tavern, which had been on the site since the 1700s. Richard Bayles describes the Hebard House as the place for "all public gatherings, Fourth of July celebrations, trainings, dancing schools, balls and other carousals of festivity."

The creepy hotel manager

On November 2, three additional men checked into the hotel and joined the "large man." Mr. Tingley watched them go out and return about 10:00 p.m. that night. Tingley seemed very interested in them and their bags. The next morning as they went to breakfast, Tingley could not restrain himself. He had an insatiable urge to touch their carpetbag luggage, so he entered their room. Touching the luggage, he convinced himself there were burglar tools inside but didn't open the bags. He may have been right, but he did nothing with his discovery, probably thinking it would be difficult to explain why he was in some guests' room groping their luggage. In my opinion, any hotel where the proprietor thinks they should go in your room and feel your belongings is not one that I would want to stay in, robber or no. The four men left Willimantic on a train bound for New York via Hartford the next day.



The Windham Bank, now library - safe would be in left at rear of building.

The robbery

Approximately two weeks later, the four men returned to Willimantic, again staying with Mr. Tingley. The "observant" Mr. Tingley noticed nothing on this trip, as he was probably too busy inspecting other guests' luggage. On the dark and stormy night of Friday, November 17, the men proceeded to the Windham Bank on foot. The bank was located on the Windham Green and now houses the Windham Free Library. Following the usual banking procedures, Samuel Bingham, the cashier, locked up the bank at sunset, about 4:30 p.m. He also put his large watchdog inside. The dog would bark and alert him if someone entered the bank after hours. In addition, at about 9:00 p.m., James Parsons, a lad of eighteen years and the bank's clerk, entered the bank, relocking the doors and planning to stay inside all night with the dog as extra security. He had been doing this since he was about sixteen.

The bank then, as the library does now, had two doors. Parsons opened the outer door and quickly locked it behind him. As he opened the inner door, the light from a lantern showed four men, who quickly grabbed him by

the throat. He was gagged, bound, and told if he made any sound he would be shot. He was placed on his bed with the dog, which had been poisoned. One of the men guarded him with a pistol. Another remained outside, standing watch as the other two started to break into the vault. The dog revived slightly and crawled under the bed. The robbers, fearing the dog would make noise, dispatched it with a knife. It took about five hours to break through the two doors of the vault. Inside was \$7,000 in gold, a pile of Windham bank bills, and \$2,000 in other bank bills, for a total of \$23,784.40. The gold would have weighed about 25 pounds and would be valued at \$864,256.83 today.



A bank note from the times (From Windham Library display case).

The escape

Getting ready to make their escape, the robbers again cautioned James Parsons to keep quiet until banking hours the next morning, and to please inform Mr. Bingham, the cashier, that "they all wished to be remembered with affection." The very polite robbers then bid the young Parsons adieu.



South Windham train station operating.

Walking to South Windham, they ditched their tools under the bridge over the Shetucket River. Three men waited at the South Windham railroad station (behind South Windham Auto today), while the fourth man walked to Willimantic to steal a handcar, which they pumped to the Indian Leap waterfall in Norwich, about 15 miles south, intending to catch the morning train to Boston. Ditching the railcar to avoid suspicion, they walked nonchalantly the rest of the way to the Norwich station. They arrived five minutes too late for the train.

Meanwhile, James Parsons escaped his bindings and proceeded to wake the cashier, who lived nearby. Horses were sent in all directions, including Norwich, to watch the trains for the robbers. The news spread quickly. As the robbers dined in a hotel in Norwich that morning, planning their escape, some gentlemen came in talking about the robbery. Apparently the conversation did not please the robbers, as "they withdrew from the hotel, without a why or wherefore" (Bristol Eagle). Their abrupt departure was noticed, and they were now suspected.

Back then, steamboats were part of the transportation line that connected New York to Boston by train through Norwich, with boats arriving at Allyn's Point in Ledyard. The robbers decided to hide in the woods between Laurel Hill and Allyn's Point, intending to take a steamboat to New York. The steamboat Worcester was scheduled to take passengers to New York that evening. A Sheriff Bliss, along with his deputies, Payne and Chappel, and a Norwich police officer, Emerson, were now on the case. They suspected that the robbers would make for the ferry. Somehow, luggage-loving Mr. Tingley found out and came to Norwich, joining the sheriff and taking the train from Norwich to Allyn's Point to watch for the suspects. When passengers came on board the Worcester, Tingley recognized the robbers and

they were arrested. They had \$8,000 in bills and gold on them, along with revolvers and knives. Another \$13,000 was found hidden under an anchor of the Worcester in the carpetbag luggage. Over \$3,000 from the heist was never recovered. The robbers were described as "genteel and finished scoundrels" by the press.

The suspects, three from New York and one from Vermont, were charged with theft, robbery, and burglary. Three were found guilty, one not—probably the outside lookout. Back in Windham, they were sentenced on January 2, 1855. Two were sentenced to nine years and one to seven years in state prison. After the robbery, it was found out that the four men were indeed intent on robbing the bank on their first visit to Windham on November 1, but their illegal key had broken. They returned to New York and had a new key made and returned to Willimantic two weeks later. Mr. Tingley's hunch was right.

The bank had offered a \$3,000 reward. Sheriff Bliss received \$714. The creepy Tingley received the next largest amount, \$631. James Parsons, who endured the most hardship and alerted everyone, received \$300. The rest was doled out to the various law enforcement personnel who helped. The family of the poor dog got nothing.

Loose strings

There are some loose strings to tie up in this case. The first is that it seems the robbers knew a lot about the Windham Bank's security procedures, such as that there was a watchdog and what time James Parsons would arrive. They even knew how to obtain a key for the lock on the door. Who gave them this information?

The second revolves around the poisoning of the dog. Some reports say they poisoned the dog with meat tainted with chloroform, which is sweet-tasting in liquid form. Where did the robbers get the chloroform to poison the meat? And where did they get the meat, as it seems unlikely that they would bring raw meat from New York. Who is the butcher who sold them the meat in Willimantic?

The third mystery is what happened to the missing \$3,000. Nothing was heard about it again. Was there an informant in the Windham area? Was there a payoff for the information needed to rob the bank? Was one of our old neighbors in on the heist?

They might even have gotten away with it if they had planned better. Here is my timeline:

9:00 p.m. Walk from Hebard House to Bank, tie up clerk, and start breaking into vault

2:00 a.m. Break into vault (took about 5 hours, according to reports)

2:40 a.m. Walk to South Windham train station (1.7 miles), ditch tools

3:52 a.m. One robber walks to Willimantic train station (3.4 miles, or 1 hour, 12 minutes), steals handcar

5:52 a.m. Robbers ride handcar to Indian Leap (15.4 miles, at about 8 mph)

6:07 a.m. Walk to Norwich railroad station (1 mile)

If they had stolen the handcar ahead of time and hidden it at the South Windham train station, they would have saved over an hour and would have had plenty of time to catch the 6:00 a.m. train to Boston.

The bank moves due to the crime

According to Allen Lincoln in his Modern History of Windham County, Connecticut, the robbery made the bank feel unsafe. It "caused a feeling of insecurity, and the old institution was removed to Willimantic in 1879"—just 25 years later. Things sure move slow in Windham!

All photos contributed.

In Your Corner

By Pamela Skelly

The Dream Big Project provides role models for diversity in careers and professions. In our northeastern corner of Connecticut, students don't always see professionals of color, or men and women in nontraditional jobs. Honestly, in many of our Quiet Corner communities, students may rarely see students of color. The Windham/Willimantic branch of Dream Big believes educational outreach is important on a variety of issues, but we especially want to present our youth with opportunities that they are unaware of because they don't see "people like them" in those roles. Representation matters.

The Dream Big Project, a nationwide initiative, brings professional people of color and of nontraditional choices together with students to discuss their career paths. The speakers talk about the obstacles they faced and how they overcame discrimination and racism. One purpose is to motivate students to consider careers in medicine and science, technology, engineering, business, education, and other fields. A second is to illustrate recent examples of racism, which persists today. A final purpose is to host conversations about race in the context of personal accounts of career development. This program is targeted at classes and groups that have an interest in breaking barriers and challenging systemic racism.

Dream Big speakers present their professional journeys to classes or meetings of organizations such as a church or club. They share how they developed their knowledge and skills, how they overcame obstacles, and how their experiences can be an example for students. Guest speakers describe career paths, lead by example, expand possibilities, and illustrate perseverance. Following the presentation, they participate in a question-and-answer session.

Speakers are ready to publicly tell their stories. Who are they? Here are some of our speakers:

Rodney P. Alexander Jr. earned his associate degree in drug and alcohol recovery counseling from Manchester Community College, a bachelor of science in human services from Springfield College, and a master's degree of education in mental health counseling at Cambridge College. He has held positions at Perception Programs as an outreach case manager and at Lebanon Pines as a counselor, and currently works at the Root Center for Advanced Recovery as an Intensive Outpatient Program counselor in Norwich. Dedicated to service beyond his employment, he also volunteers on the Norwich Heroin Task Force. He is serving his second term as first vice president of the Windham/Willimantic branch of the NAACP. And, in November 2021, he was elected town councilman for Willimantic, where he aims to represent the interests of all residents.

Jean de Smet started an apprenticeship with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in 1980. She worked as an electrician on construction projects for casinos, office buildings, and schools and retired in 2016 after 36 years. She is well known for her work producing Willimantic's 3rd Thursday Street Festivals. She has also spent many years battling local environmental threats by preventing the burning of mercury-laden medical waste, stopping the construction of an ash landfill along the Shetucket River in Windham Center, and serving as chairwoman of the Windham Citizens Advisory Recycling Committee. Ms. de Smet served as Willimantic's first selectwoman from 2007 to 2009. She spends as much time as possible planting, weeding, and saving the earth, one bit at a time, and would like you to know that "you can do it too."

Sahra Deer became a mother at a young age. Determined to improve her life, by the age of 23 she had earned her GED, started college, got a job, moved out on her own, and had a second baby. Soon after, she was seeking a natural product for a skin condition but could not find any that worked for her ethnic or financial demographic. At that point she was in a biology class, and she started making products for her family. After years of trial and error, she began to make a name for herself, and her line of skin care products grew. Ms. Deer has experienced discrimination as a businesswoman and as a consumer. For years, Eurocentric ideals of beauty were predominant, and generations of women of color were taught that their natural hair and skin color isn't beautiful. This myth led women of color to fall victim to chemically laden products, foods, and clothing. Ms. Deer championed healthy change by creating a company that represents her culture and by

supporting businesses that promote a similar philosophy. She re-educated herself by living her vision and seeing those who look like her as beautiful.

Michael A. Jefferson is a graduate of Southern Connecticut State University. He received his master's degree in child welfare from Saint Joseph College and his juris doctor from the University of Connecticut School of Law. He is a member of the Connecticut and federal bars and has been a sole practitioner for nearly 25 years. Mr. Jefferson is a longtime community activist and established New Haven's first all-civilian review board as a means of combating police misconduct. He is the former chairperson of the state's African-American Affairs Commission and in 2021 was appointed by State Senator Martin Looney to the state's Social Equity Council. Mr. Jefferson is also in his second term as clerk of the Connecticut Senate. For his work in the community he has received numerous awards, including a five-time selection by the NAACP as one of the 100 most influential Blacks in the state.

Joelle Murchison has a rich and multifaceted background, with varied experience, expertise, and interests. She is a graduate of Brown University and holds two master's degrees, from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and Syracuse University's Newhouse School of Public Communications. She has been a leader in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion for the past two decades, serving as chief diversity officer in a major corporation as well as at a flagship state university here in Connecticut. Ms. Murchison is the founder of the ExecMommy Group, which she describes as "an inclusion, communication, leadership, and coaching practice." She incorporates her interests in education, inclusion, organizational development, policy, and communications into her work.

Mary Wishart graduated in 2019 with a bachelor's in computer science and mathematics from Eastern Connecticut State University. She then attended the University of Rhode Island's Master's in Computer Science program, where she spent time as a research assistant studying accessibility technology. After a year, she dropped out due to a multitude of factors including Covid-19. She got her first full-time job at Envision Pharma Group in Glastonbury as a configuration analyst and now works as a software engineer at TJX.

The Dream Big Project has received great reviews. Here are some testimonials from participating teachers:

"The Dream Big Project has been very beneficial to our students here at Coventry High School. The speakers have enriched the students with very valuable information directly related to our health classes. Having speakers from within the community with years of experience in health-related fields has given my students a clearer understanding of the importance of keeping our minds and bodies healthy."—Melissa Makara, health teacher

"Our students have had their eyes opened to the struggles and successes of a wide array of professionals from marginalized backgrounds. We look forward to the next presentation!"—Ryan Giberson, health teacher

"My seniors were impressed with the career path and opportunities that Ms. DeSmet demonstrated throughout her career and life by giving back to her community. Her experience showcased that she is much more than a woman forging a path in a male-dominated field as an electrician. She inspired the students by sharing her vision to let the future unfold and follow your own path to make your dreams become a reality. It is important to be happy in a career choice, build partnerships, and not let anyone limit you. Thank you for the opportunity to have Ms. DeSmet speak at our school to help our students recognize that their career options are open."—Kim Dias, special education teacher

Would you like to have a Dream Big speaker for your group? The Windham/Willimantic NAACP Speakers Bureau is comprised of volunteers with diverse backgrounds committed to serving our schools and communities throughout Windham County and parts of Tolland County. Contact us with the needs of your organization, school, or religious group at (860) 230-6911 or email us at info@windhamctnaacp.org.

Please visit the Windham/Willimantic NAACP website at <https://windhamctnaacp.org/> to learn more about our Dream Big Project (<https://windhamctnaacp.org/anti-racism-education/the-dream-big-project/>) as well as our other events and activities. We welcome new members to support our diverse community and we are happy to accept donations to support our work.



Clockwise from top left: Rodney P. Alexander Jr., Jean de Smet, Sahra Deer, Michael A. Jefferson, Joelle Murchison, Mary Wishart.

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Pirates and Privateers in Pomfret

By Donna Dufresne



One of the prevailing folktales in Pomfret's understory is the tale of Blackbeard's treasure. The story has intrigued the children of summer people and local farmers in the Mashamoquet Uplands, Pomfret's northwest corner, for generations, if not centuries. As with the ghost stories of "Lost Village," the genesis of the myth is buried deep in the past. Like many of the old tales told around the hearth in the dark of winter, the story of Blackbeard's treasure has dwindled down to the faint embers of living memory.

The story goes like this: It was a dark and stormy night... (just kidding). Blackbeard the pirate arrived at Caleb Grosvenor's Tavern (now Spring Farm) with a heavy wagonload of treasure. After a meal at the tavern, with "ho-ho-ho and a barrel of rum," he took his wagon in the dark of night down the hill toward Nightingale Pond. When he returned at dawn, the wagon was empty. Local folk concluded that he must have buried the treasure along Mashamoquet Brook in what would become known as Blackbeard's Swamp. Folks say he never returned for that treasure and it's still out there, waiting to be found.

Who wouldn't want to believe that story! I know that if I were a kid in the neighborhood, I would have been out in that swamp with my little tin beach pail and shovel from Flag Day to the dog days of summer. If not digging for treasure, I surely would have made my friends dress up as pirates and create elaborate treasure maps. But there's one fatal flaw to the story. Blackbeard, otherwise known as Edward Teach, retired on Ocracoke Island, where he was killed in a battle with a British naval ship in 1718.

In 1718, Pomfret was barely settled. The first proprietors hadn't mapped their large tracts of land until 1714. There were no roads except the improved footpaths once used by the Nipmuc. Caleb Grosvenor, the grandson of Esther Grosvenor, was hardly a twinkle in his father's eye. The story about Blackbeard doesn't match the timeline of Caleb Grosvenor's Tavern, which was in operation from 1765 to 1786.

However, there was a real-life pirate presiding over Pomfret during the Revolutionary War. Col. Joseph Nightingale, a Providence merchant and privateer, was born in Pomfret on Nightingale Farm in the neighborhood of Caleb Grosvenor's Tavern in 1747. His father, Samuel Nightingale, arrived in Pomfret in 1741 after inheriting the estate that his father, Joseph, bought in 1716. Like many farms in the area, its virgin soil and forests produced much-needed products for the West Indies sugar plantations. Although the practice of slavery was minuscule in New England compared to the sugar islands and Southern plantations, the structural economy was deeply entrenched and complicit with slavery. Farmers from Connecticut benefited from trade with the West Indies, fueled by the hunger for rum and sugar, the link in the chain of command between merchants, privateers, and pirates.

In 1750, Samuel moved the family to Providence, where he opened a rum distillery. Later, he invested in the West Indies trade and his son Joseph expanded the sugar trade to include other goods from the East Indies. Clark & Nightingale of Providence became one of the largest merchant houses in Rhode Island, rivaled only by that of John Brown. It owned a fleet of ships that sailed to the Caribbean several times a year, fueling the sugar plantations with New England products and returning with enslaved captives too young to be of use in the sugar fields. On the return trip, the ships made port in Georgia and South Carolina, where they unloaded indigo and possibly slaves. But most importantly, Clark & Nightingale brought sugar and molasses to the rum distilleries in Providence. After the 1764 British sugar tax, Clark & Nightingale began smuggling sugar from the Dutch and French West Indies. Even after the Revolution, the firm continued its long-established trade with the islands, as can be seen in the cargo list of its ship Providence in 1795.

In 1770, one of Clark & Nightingale's ships was confiscated by a British customs boat and impounded in Newport for smuggling sugar and molasses. By that time, the merchants of Rhode Island, including John Brown, had evolved from smuggling to the more brazen and dangerous territory of privateering. They outfitted their ships with cannons and intercepted British merchant ships, confiscating the cargo, including slaves. The Revolution was already taking place on the high seas long before the Boston Tea Party and Battle of Lexington. In 1772, John Brown's ship Hannah was confiscated by the British customs cutter Gaspee and coastal Rhode Island was fired up to rebel. Brown rallied a large group of men including, no doubt, the Nightingales, Greenes, Arnolds, and Bowens, who had

vested interests in privateering, sugar, rum, and the slave trade. They met at Sabin's Tavern in Providence and rowed across the bay to Pawtuxet, where the Gaspee had been chased and run aground. They attacked and overcame the crew, shot the despised Captain Dudingston, who pledged to stop illegal trade, and burned the Gaspee to the waterline.

Names familiar in Pomfret appeared in the ensuing trials, including Jonathan Randall and others mentioned above. But no one was prosecuted despite the outraged British Admiralty, which accused the Rhode Island colonists of being "piratical." Within a few years, privateers such as Joseph Nightingale became legitimized when they were commissioned by the Continental Army and sanctioned by George Washington himself. The heat was on while war brewed on the coast. With the commencement of the British blockade in Boston, the Rhode Island merchants became more brazen, even with the increased presence of the British Navy patrolling Narragansett Bay. No doubt, they sought safer ports to unload their loot.



There is evidence to suggest that "Colonel" Nightingale, privateer and merchant, was seeking alternative routes by which to continue trade between the inland farms of Connecticut and the West Indies. Overland routes were rough highways, barely passable for wagons filled with merchandise. Meanwhile, Narragansett Bay was teeming, with the British Admiralty still miffed over the Gaspee affair and seeking revenge. Clark & Nightingale needed to lay low, away from the watchful spyglass of the British Navy. Yet it continued its business, providing New Englanders with a commercial outlet for their farm products and the now boycotted and highly taxed items to which they were accustomed.

Hence, it's no surprise that Clark & Nightingale suddenly appears in Pomfret land records in 1776. It bought hundreds of acres in Pomfret Landing, including the Thomas Cotton Tavern at the fording place where Cotton Bridge now spans the Quinebaug River. Joseph Nightingale's father, Samuel, still owned the Nightingale Farm estate on Angell Road, which included Nightingale Pond, the site of an early sawmill and possible warehouse owned by Clark & Nightingale.

With the acquisition of the Thomas Cotton farm on the Quinebaug, Joseph would have gained a hideout from the British as well as a safe haven for his family. He also gained water access to New London. There had been talk in the 1760s of dredging the river for navigation from Norwich to Worcester. Although the falls in Danielson posed a difficult hurdle, much of the Quinebaug was navigable from Norwich. If the stakes were high enough, it would be worth the trouble to unload contraband, portage around the falls, and reload onto a flatboat that could be poled the few miles up to Pomfret Landing. I believe that Joseph Nightingale built a wharf at the crossing for unloading his loot, which was then distributed to inland merchants in Pomfret and Woodstock.

And here we return to the myth of Blackbeard's treasure. It is highly plausible that it is the time-worn distortion of a story told about Pomfret's infamous privateer, Joseph Nightingale. The contraband from his privateering may have been carted from Pomfret Landing up to Grosvenor's Tavern and then transported to the sawmill/warehouse on Nightingale Pond. By midnight, the teamster returned to the tavern with an empty wagon. Eyebrows were raised. Tongues began to wag. And before long, Nightingale's contraband became a pirate's treasure. Eavesdropping children heard the story from their lofts, where their imaginations, fired by the popular book *Treasure Island*, spawned dreams of pirates and buried treasure in Pomfret. But the real treasure remains to be dredged from the understory of local history found in the town vault.

The Day the Elephants Cried

as told by a child of seven

By Ella Sharpe

It was July and a very special day for many but especially her. It was an early birthday present and Daddy was taking her to the circus. In one month and twelve days she would be seven and more than half way to being a teen, just like Violet, her best friend's older sister. She loved Violet so much but now all these years later she can't remember why. I regress

At the last minute Daddy was called into work, Mommy couldn't take me so I was going with my babysitter, Ann. Nothing short of a miracle, Mommy said later. We had to take two buses to get all the way to the north end of Hartford from the south end of Hartford, two tokens each and Ann let me pay and get the transfers because, at almost seven, I was a big girl now and needed responsibility.

We got there early because Ann wanted to show me everything, get cotton candy, pet the animals, if allowed and talk to the clowns. I didn't like cotton candy so she bought me popcorn. Much better. I was anxious to see the animals up close so we walked around for awhile. I saw a black and white bear and was surprised that bears came in so many colors, I was disappointed because most of the animals were in cages and we couldn't see them very well but then one of the clowns took me to pet an elephant. The clown told me that elephants were gentle and loving animals and should always be respected. I really didn't know what respected meant but I loved the elephants and would until the day I die, I promised myself.

We went inside and Ann took us up high, better to see up here, my dear, she said like the wolf in Little Red Riding Hood. I giggled and climbed.

There was a lot to see at once, I loved the lion tricks and thought them one of the most beautiful animals in the world. The clowns did funny tricks and then a beautiful streak of light crawled across the top of the tent and I asked Ann how they did that and the next thing I knew I was falling, she had taken me by the arms and dropped me down, through the seats, to the ground. Then she jumped down and pushed me outside the tent, it collapsed shortly after. She grabbed me and started yelling something about being trampled. Somehow we were clear.

This is fun, I said to Ann but she isn't having fun. She's pulled me away and tried to cover my eyes. There were people running around and Ann kept pushing me away from the crowd. I heard people crying and screaming and climbing over others who were lying on the ground and then I saw the smoke and fire for the first time.

I saw people on fire and worst of all the cry of the elephants. It was so loud, I worried they were hurt and I started to cry while all the time Ann pulled and pushed till she finally got us to safety on the sidewalk toward home. We walked, no busses at all. Soon we spotted Daddy running toward us, Ann began to cry and then she fell, Daddy picked me up and put me on his shoulders and then picked Ann up and carried us both all the way home. My daddy was so strong.

Mommy was waiting when we got home, she hugged me till I couldn't breathe. My father had to take me from her, afraid she'd hurt me... then she noticed a burn on my hand, when Ann saw it she started crying, Mommy told her not to cry, told her she saved my life and said if she had taken me I probably would have died. Why did Mommy say that I wondered?

I did find the answer to that question many years later. There are a few misunderstandings in my young childhood. The reason for this one is simple. My mother would have panicked and believed we both would have perished in the circus fire. As for my babysitter, she was a seventeen year old girl who kept her cool and got us out of there with barely a scratch. Unfortunately, many years later I learned that Ann didn't fare so well. I now know she suffered from PTSD. My family lost contact with her a couple of years later.

The next two days were all about Ann and me and how brave we were...and what a good girl I was for minding what Ann told me.

The following two days were overcast in mourning for Little Miss 1565 and how awful it was to die all alone...anyway Mrs. Lonerger's baby started walking when she was only nine months old and was into everything, one day that little imp will lead this nation. At the moment that news was the best news in these dire times.

Soon after that all was forgotten and the conversation went back to war, ration stamps and the shortage of eggs. Life goes on my Daddy said.

What promised to be a day for fun and laughter turned to a horrific tragedy for more than a thousand victims including families who would never see their loved ones again.

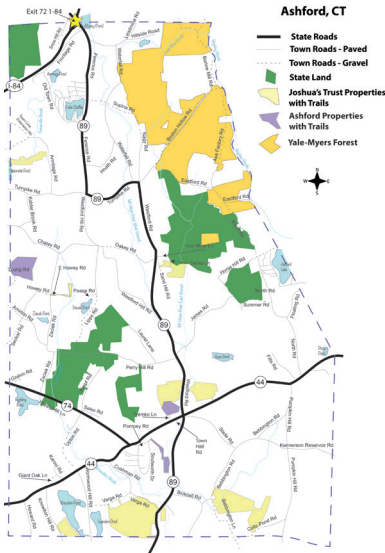
Those who died, those who cried and for Little Miss 1565, I still remember but in my memory it will always be, The Day The Elephants Cried...

Explore Ashford's Outdoors!

By Nora Galvin

Did you know that there are 40 miles of public hiking trails in Ashford? Are you looking for an interesting bike ride through scenic areas? How about locating a place in Ashford where you can dip your feet or a fishing rod into a cool stream?

A new website lists and reviews every public outdoor opportunity in the amazing rural town of Ashford. AshfordCTOutdoors.org, sponsored by the Our Town Our Future committee, lists activities and sites for folks who are physically active as well as those who prefer to drive to see the sights. Each activity has a map showing exactly where you will be going, and provides some details of the terrain.



Two of Connecticut's Blue Trails passes through town. The Natchaug Trail enters northern Ashford from Eastford, just west of Ashford Road. It terminates at the Nipmuck Trail in the middle of the woods. The Nipmuck Trail cuts across the town from the southwest corner to the northeast corner. Together these two trails provide nearly 19 miles of hiking through beautiful forests and over some rocky slopes. Maps and details can be found on the website.

The Town of Ashford owns four trails. The shortest is handicapped accessible. It leads to an overlook of the Mount Hope River from Pompey Hollow Park at the senior housing complex. It's very peaceful. Go just a few yards along the trail and you feel you are in the middle of the woods. Tremko Trail leads from the senior center on the other side of the parking lot. Langhammer Trail is a fairly level walk in the woods on the west side of town, and the trail at Ashford Memorial Park goes along the Mount Hope River for an opportunity to cool off on a hot day.

Joshua's Trust conservation organization owns hundreds of acres in Ashford and maintains eight trails here. Some involve hills; others pass by or across streams. All are beautiful and worth a visit.

We have created three biking routes in town. One is an 8.8 mile beginner route on gravel (dirt) roads in the northeast part of town. It can be divided into a 3.4 mile and a 5.4 mile ride. A second route passes over all the designated Scenic Roads in town. On the third and longest, you will pass the Westford Hill Distillery where you can enjoy a rest and a beverage. There are maps and details for all of them on the website.

If you are car-bound, be sure to drive along the six beautiful Connecticut Designated Scenic Roads in town. They are marked on a map in this section and provide restful views in all seasons of the year. These roads can also be walked or biked.

Young children love playgrounds, and we have three in Ashford: Ashford School, Pompey Hollow Park, and Ashford Memorial Park. Find your favorite.

Ashford has history. Part of the Old Connecticut Path, the route Thomas Hooker and his group walked from Cambridge, Massachusetts Bay Colony, to Hartford in 1636, passes through Ashford, and you can walk on it today in two places: the Fliegel Farm Woods Trail, part of Joshua's Trust, and a section of the Nipmuck Trail starting on Iron Mine Lane.

The website has several other categories: Birding, Water Access, Distant Views, Connecticut State Forests, Winter Outdoors in Ashford, and Amazing Trees in Ashford. In addition, we will link to any public outdoor activity that a group may want to advertise. Right now we have linked to the outdoor concerts sponsored by the Ashford Parks and Recreation Committee. We welcome suggestions for other events, as well as favorite views and amazing trees.

Take a look at the website, choose an activity, and EXPLORE ASHFORD'S OUTDOORS. We are the Gateway to the Last Green Valley. Contact us at AshfordCTOutdoors@gmail.com. ASHFORDCTOUTDOORS.ORG

Map adapted by Marji Roy.

Common Sense Car Care

By Rick Ostien

Franc Motors, Inc began in 1949 and was started by my grandfather Joseph Franc. This year marks our 75th year of serving the motoring public. We want to take this time to thank our old and new customers. If it was not for your loyal support, I would not be writing this today. Who would have thought that 4 generations would carry on what my grandfather started in 1949 through the ups and downs of the small business world. We hope to carry on the tradition of providing dependable quality service during these trying times. Matt and I along with our dedicated staff want to say thank you for relying on us for your automotive needs.

We hope everyone has a safe summer driving season and look forward to seeing many of you in the future for your automotive repairs.

Windham-Tolland 4-H Camp Secures Funding for Dam Repair

Submitted by Elaine Nelson

Rep. Pat Boyd (D-Pomfret) is proud to announce that the Windham-Tolland 4H Camp in Pomfret will be receiving a grant for \$1,000,000 for emergency dam repairs. The funding was approved by the State Bonding Commission on June 7, 2024 with the support of State Sen. Mae Flexer (D-Windham).

"The camp has always been a vibrant spot in our community, and this funding will go a long way to help with the repairs needed for the camp to continue to serve youth in the Quiet Corner," Rep. Boyd said. "Funding this project is essential to keeping the camp open not just for the foreseeable future but for a very long time after. Thank you to Governor Ned Lamont for adding this item to the Bond Commission agenda."

"The Windham County 4-H Foundation Inc. is celebrating 70 years of service to Connecticut youth in 2024. Our large pond is the centerpiece of our property and programs," said Jane Rider, president of the Windham County 4H Foundation. "The reconstruction of the dam is vital to our Windham-Tolland 4-H Camp and Ragged Hill Woods Environmental Education programs' survival and to the lives of the thousands of children who come through our gates every year. They experience life and learning experiences "unplugged" and engaged with the great outdoors and make life-long friends. We are tremendously grateful to the Bonding Commission for their support which will save our pond and enable us to keep our camp affordable to Connecticut families."

This saga goes back to 2018 when while weed whacking, seepage on the downstream face of the dam embankment near the low-level drain and several sink holes were discovered on the dam. The Foundation has been working with DEEP and civil engineering firms since then. Foundation Treasurer Sandra Ahola said "We have been working to raise funds for the dam since this discovery. We have already expended \$250,000 for engineering and design costs, surveys and inspections and an emergency bank stabilization repair, recently completed by Steve Donahue Construction. These expenses were covered by generous donors including The Gates Group, Buck's Soft Serve, a grant from the Last Green Valley, ARPA grant awards from the towns of Brooklyn, Killingly, Pomfret and the Borough of Danielson, Foundation reserves, a number of fundraisers and several generous individual donors.

The thought of trying to raise an additional one million dollars to fix the dam seemed so overwhelming. This state grant ensures that the dam will be able to be reconstructed in a timely fashion, saving our pond. We have campers from across the state of Connecticut every summer. We work hard to keep fees as low as possible and provide campership support to as many as we can, so feel that this state support is reasonable and so much appreciated. What a wonderful 70th birthday present this is!"

"All you need is love."
-John Lennon

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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

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.

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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).

Offshore Wind Could Save New England Families \$630M on Electricity Annually

Renewable Energy Magazine. "Offshore wind is critical to achieving New England's climate goals, reducing local energy costs, and protecting New Englanders from volatile gas prices, according to a new report authored by Synapse Energy Economics, Inc. for the Sierra Club. If Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island achieve their shared goal of developing 9 GWs of offshore wind by 2030, residents will reap significant energy bill savings and life-saving emissions reductions."

War of Words Heats Up Over Once-in-a-Century Energy Regulations

CT Examiner. "Utilities and regulators in Connecticut are wrestling over perhaps the biggest change in how electric rates are set in more than a century. The debate pits United Illuminating and Eversource, the state's largest utilities, against the state's Public Utilities Regulatory Authority, or PURA, which is overseeing the changeover from a traditional cost of service model to performance-based regulation, or PBR...The change, which was overwhelmingly approved by the state legislature in 2020, takes a profit model allowing the state's utilities a simple return on investment, to a more complicated framework of penalties – and possibly rewards – for meeting the state's goals for service, reliability, environmental impact, equity and affordability. In March, UI called on PURA for consensus among stakeholders and to delay a decision for at least a year before approving a performance-based framework... "My sense is that the utilities want to write the rules on what good or great performance is, and therefore they are fighting PURA every step of the way," wrote [State Senator Norman] Needleman."

CTDOT developing bus infrastructure plans for Windham regional transit district

Mass Transit. "The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) is developing plans for the Windham regional transit district to receive, store and charge electric buses as part of phase 1 of a three-phase build out. The project involves bringing in new electrical and water services, charging equipment, fire suppression and necessary HVAC upgrades, as well as expanding the existing maintenance building to have two additional maintenance bays...design for the project will be completed in December 2024, with construction anticipated to start in summer 2025, assuming acceptance of the project...The project will be undertaken with 100 percent state funds."

Solar to save Groton Public Schools in Connecticut \$40,000 in energy costs

Solar Builder. "The Groton Board of Education in Connecticut expects to save \$40,000 per year on energy costs after installing solar photovoltaic (PV) systems on two schools in the town. The system at Groton Middle School has 560 panels with a 230 kW capacity, and the Mystic River Magnet School has 256 panels with 100 kW capacity. The Connecticut Green Bank provided Groton Public Schools with guidance through its Solar Municipal Assistance Program (MAP), which simplified the process of going solar to allow the district access to the savings benefits with fewer challenges...These arrays not only reflect Groton's commitment to sustainability, but also offer a real-world example of environmental stewardship for Groton students."

CT takes step towards network of EV chargers on key highways

CT Mirror. "Connecticut has selected applicants to install chargers for electric vehicles at nine locations just off interstate highways, part of what has been a painfully slow rollout of President Biden's plan to build out a network of 500,000 chargers by 2030...Connecticut now has about 500 direct current fast charging ports, with nearly 44,000 electric vehicles registered. The federal program is geared to ensuring that EV drivers far from home will have the ability to charge their vehicles."

Tesla sales and delivery center opens at Mohegan Sun News 8 WTNH. Mehrdad Faezi of Glastonbury is one of the first people to pick up their new Tesla within Connecticut. "It's wonderful. It's fantastic," Faezi said. "I was ready to go to New York." But, instead, he just had to come to Mohegan Sun, where Tesla has rolled out its new electric vehicle showroom...The Tesla facility at Mohegan Sun is exempt from that [auto franchise] law because it's on sovereign tribal land. "I hope this new development will lead our state to modernize its franchise laws to allow more electric vehicles to be sold throughout Connecticut,"...The tribe hopes the Tesla brand will drive more visitors to the casino. It's also in line with the tribe's values...Governor Ned Lamont called the showroom "good news for consumers in Connecticut who are looking to buy an electric vehicle."

Electric lawn care spreads across CT landscape. Quieter, less polluting, making 'people more happy.'

Hartford Courant. "Connecticut towns are pushing lawn-care companies and individuals to switch from gasoline-powered equipment to electric...Electric-run lawn care is a growing trend, as concern for carbon emissions increases and towns, including Westport and Greenwich, pass bans on gas-powered leaf blowers. Westport's ban took effect May 15. Greenwich added gas-powered leaf blowers to its noise ordinance, which goes into effect during certain times of the year... "So the smart money is on the electric," he said. "The return on investment is 25% for a commercial operator who invests in an electric lawn mower... if he's got decent utilization for 500 hours. Blowers, similar numbers: It's 25 cents an hour to run an electric blower, \$1 an hour to run a gas blower."

Massachusetts kicks off first pilot to shift gas utilities to clean heat

Canary Media. "Gas utilities could be key to the effort to get fossil fuels out of buildings — but only if they stop investing in pipes that deliver fossil gas and instead start building pipes for clean energy. This week, a groundbreaking project meant to test that proposition is going live in Framingham, Massachusetts — and utilities and regulators across the country will be watching closely to see how it works out. On Tuesday, utility Eversource will flip the switch on the country's first utility-operated underground thermal energy network. The \$14 million project includes a one-mile loop of pipes that will connect to houses, apartments, commercial buildings, a community college campus, and a fire station. Those pipes will circulate a water-and-glycol solution through 88boreholes that extend hundreds of feet into the earth, fetching the ambient temperature buried beneath the surface and shuttling it up into buildings.'The pipe is in the ground, the boreholes have been drilled. We're ready to turn the pumps on and get going.'"

New England States Should Go Big in Developing Offshore Wind

Union of Concerned Scientists. "If the Vineyard Wind and Revolution Wind projects had been up and running over the past two decades, the power produced would have cut the number of days with elevated blackout risk by 42%...The analysis found that the risk of electricity blackouts over the winter—when energy demand is high during periods of extreme cold from December through February—decreases with the amount of offshore wind power deployed. 'It turns out that during the coldest winter months when we are burning the most fuel to keep our homes warm, offshore wind is at its peak...Additional offshore wind also would eliminate the need to subsidize oil and gas generators for stockpiling the backup fuels that have been used as a band aid to get through the winter.'"

One if by Land, Two if by Tree: How Eradicating Tree of Heaven Can Help Fight an Insect Invasion

By Marie Cantino

-reprinted from the Joshua's Trust Fall 2023 Newsletter

You probably don't need a guy in a three-cornered hat galloping down your street to know that the **spotted lanternfly** (*Lycorma delicatula*) is coming to our corner of Connecticut. This native of China was first identified in Pennsylvania in 2014, and has been eating its way through the country ever since. Established populations have been found in Fairfield, Litchfield, Hartford, New London, and New Haven Counties. While its preferred host is **tree of heaven** (*Ailanthus altissima*), this insect will snack on a wide variety of plants when its favorite meal isn't available, making it a source of concern for naturalists, gardeners and farmers.



Tree of heaven leaves have a notch at the base and an unpleasant odor.

Tree of heaven is an invasive species native to China that was intentionally introduced in the US in the late eighteenth century and quickly became popular in the nursery trade for its rapid growth habit. Unfortunately, over the years it has escaped from gardens, creating headaches for homeowners and municipalities (it can damage sewer lines and building foundations), and reducing habitat for native species by competing for resources and producing compounds that prevent establishment of other plants nearby.

Although removal of tree of heaven has been suggested as a way to control spotted lanternflies, the insects can live off other hosts, so it has been unclear how this effort can have much impact. But a 2018 study (<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-018-34946-y.pdf>) suggests an explanation. Immature lanternflies are mostly black during their early nymphal stages (instars), but in their last instar they develop red patches, making them more conspicuous to birds. Around this time in their development, they also increase their dietary preference for tree of heaven. The study showed that feeding on tree of heaven makes late instars and adults less appealing to birds and that this change is likely the result of accumulation of unpalatable compounds derived from the tree of heaven.

It is unlikely that we will ever completely eradicate spotted lanternflies, but by reducing populations of tree of heaven we can help create tastier insects and thereby recruit an army of hungry birds to help keep the spotted lanternfly population in check.

Cutting an established tree of heaven can result in sprouting of multiple suckers as far as 50 feet from the stump. Before attempting removal, seek expert advice (e.g., <https://extension.psu.edu/tree-of-heaven>). Learn more about spotted lanternflies at <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Forestry/Forest-Protection/Spotted-Lanternfly>

Joshua's Trust events in July and August:

Gurleyville Gristmill Tours

Every Sunday in July from 1:00-5:00
Stone Mill Road, Mansfield, CT
The Gurleyville Gristmill offers a unique opportunity to observe rural 19th century technology. Visitors can see the equipment as it was operated for over 100 years, until the middle of the 20th century. Be sure to visit <https://joshuustrust.org/events/> for details, updates and cancellations.

Gentle Yoga on the Lawn with Carole Tyler, yoga instructor 07/20/2024, 9:00-10:00 AM

Atwood Farm, 624 Wormwood Hill Road, Mansfield Ctr.
Join us for a morning yoga session at Atwood Farm. Bring

continued on page 21

To all our contributors-
Thank You!

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

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Solar Today - Honoring Earth Day Every Day

Greetings all,

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



As mentioned at the end of last month's article; This month I will focus on new technology that uses a Hydro Powered Water Wheel to create electricity for your home or business. This is some exciting stuff!

A little history: With a quick Google search, I found that the earliest known version of the water wheel comes from mid-4th century BC Mesopotamia, a horizontal, propeller-like contraption that was used to turn millstones for grinding flour. I also see that Vitruvius, an engineer who died in 14 CE, has been credited with creating and using a vertical water wheel during Roman times. The wheels were used for crop irrigation and grinding grains, as well as to supply drinking water to villages. Locally here in the NE Corner you can find a lot of old foundations for water wheels that were used for Grist Mills, irrigation and a bunch of other uses. So needless to say, using water wheels has been a staple in our evolution for thousands of years.

Jump to current day: Imagine creating electricity that you can use to power your home or business by simply turning a small turbine, every time you use water.

Meet the "NEW" energy alternative Kid on the Block >> Coevo Energy's - **Noria Hydro Power** units are Hyper-efficient for Home and Commercial applications.

This new technology is very exciting to me in a few ways. I've been in the CT Solar Industry for 13 years and as you know from some of my monthly articles, the industry has seen it's challenges. A few challenges that I don't often write about is **the amount of people that cannot go solar** because of small roofs, shaded roof space, they may need a main panel upgrade and do not want to take on the expense, etc. Sometimes folks do not like the esthetics of solar panels or are worried about more roof penetrations that the already thousands of holes from shingles being installed, concerns of selling the home with solar on it, etc. This new Hydro unit solves a lot of those concerns.

The concept is pretty simple – Harness electricity every time you use water!

The unit connects to your inbound water supply, it turns a turbine that continues to spin even after the water is shut off. It produces electricity that is used by your home. When you produce more energy than what the home is using, the unit sends electricity back to the grid which is credited to your account. You get those credits back at no charge when you need them at night.

The Early Adopter Stage: Hydro now, as with Solar back 14 years ago when we had solar put on our home, we were early adopters. Not 1970 early adopters but this was at the stage where solar was starting to become mainstream for residential solar installations.

I would also be an early adopter for the Hydro Unit except that it is **currently only available to those hooked up with City Water!** Well water folks, like me, will have to wait about a year or so for integration into well water systems. My solar system is 14 yrs. old and covers about 60% of my home energy use due to older smaller wattage panels, my roof size and the Geo-thermal heating and cooling system that I have. I would LOVE to cover 100% of my electric usage with Solar and Hydro.... *And yes, the two systems are easily integrated with one another.*

Benefits of Hydro Electric Power Generator:

- Less expensive than solar
- Net metered, just like solar
- Rapid Return on Investment
- Eligible for 40% federal ITC (*All USA made components*)
- Clean exterior esthetics - Nothing goes on the roof.
- No need to cut shade trees
- Modern Day "grid-tied" water wheel - *that converts water usage into electricity*
- Easily connects to inbound waterline
- Wall mounted unit in basement - 21"x15"x24"
- Produces between 7K and 20,000kwh per year depending on what unit and water usage.

The Noria Hydro Power Generator easily integrates with solar, batteries, EV chargers and generators!

This VERY exciting technology will 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.

If you, or anyone you know, would like to learn more about capturing the suns energy or discovering the incredible potential of a Hydro Powered Water Wheel, 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

The Windham Concert Band – Summer Concerts in the Park

Submitted by Terry Cote, Windham Concert Band, Board Vice President

For 165 years the letters "WCB" have stood for the names of wind bands in the Windham and Willimantic region. From the first Willimantic Cornet Band through Wheeler's Cadet Band, to the Willimantic City Band after World War II, to the present Windham Concert Band, this combination of letters has stood for quality band music across the generations. The musicians of the Windham Concert Band come from all walks of life and span an age range from teenager to octogenarian. We delight in the fact that WCB cultivates a sense of community within the musical and the social context.

The Windham Concert Band performs summer concerts in the parks and on the greens of Eastern Connecticut. These concerts are scheduled between the last week of June and the first week of August. Programs are designed to interest the whole family and include a wide variety of traditional band music such as patriotic music, overtures, musical

theater selections and light concert classics. Audiences are invited to bring lawn chairs and picnic baskets to enjoy summer outdoor band music at its best.

Following are the upcoming 2024 concerts:

Blish Park, Marlborough
Tuesday, July 2nd at 6:00pm
32 Park Road, Marlborough, CT
Rain date: Wednesday, July 3rd
Sponsored by: Marlborough Recreation Dept.

Somers High School, Somers
Thursday, July 4th at 6:00pm
5 Vision Blvd., Somers, CT
Sponsored by: Town of Somers, Somers Cultural Commission

Hyde Park, Stafford
Saturday, July 6th at 6:00pm
21 Hyde Park Road, Stafford Springs, CT
Rain date: Sunday, July 7th
Sponsored by: Town of Stafford

Windham Center Green
Friday, July 12th at 6:00pm
7 Windham Green Rd., Windham, CT
Rain date: Sunday, July 14th
Sponsored by: Windham Free Library.

Town Hall, Canterbury
Friday, July 19th at 7:00pm
1 Municipal Drive, Canterbury, CT
Rain date: Saturday, July 20th
Sponsored by: Town of Canterbury

Garrison Park, Chaplin
Saturday, July 27th at 6:00pm
495 Phoenixville Rd, Chaplin, CT
Rain date: Sunday, July 28th
Sponsored by: Chaplin Recreation Dept

Tai Chi Classes for Health and Balance

Windham Senior Center:
Mon, Wed 10-11a; & Wed, Fri 9-10a
Call or text Sarah Winter: 860-931-8636

Ashford Senior Center: Tue, Fri 9:30-10:30a
Chaplin Senior Center: Wed 12:30-1:30
Coventry Senior Center: Wed 9:30-10:30a
Lebanon Senior Center: Tue 4-5p, Thu 6:30-7:30p
Call or text Joe Pandolfo: 959-444-3979

At the Ashford Senior Center

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

Programs not limited to Ashford residents.
Contact the Center at 860-487-5122
25 Tremko Lane, Ashford

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Tremko Lane,
Ashford, CT

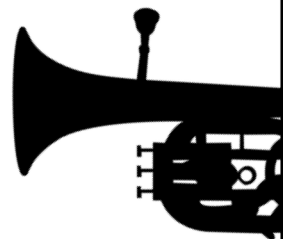
July 26
Rehearsal and
Concert with the
Babcock Summer
Youth Band,
Ashford, CT

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

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

The Babcock Cornet Band was founded in Ashford, CT in 1862 and is the oldest continuously-running independent community band in the United States, with roots dating back to April of 1775.

** For more information, find us on Facebook!*



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Historic Textile Production Demonstrations & Exhibits at Willimantic's Mill Museum

Submitted by Ed Silverstein

Kicking off on Saturday June 29, Willimantic's Mill Museum will present a 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 live demonstrations of preindustrial textile technology and other women's homekeeping skills, as well as sponsor related programs and exhibits in the museum's main exhibition room.

The presentations 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.

The exhibit, funded in part by Connecticut Humanities, is co-curated by museum Interim Executive Director Jamie Eves, who's also Windham Town Historian, and experienced weaver Peggy Church, who teaches at the museum.

The first live presentation will feature Peggy Church. She will lead a Saturday July 6 program on flax, between 1 and 3 p.m.

She will explain how flax is spun and its historic role dating back to colonial times. Processing flax is an arduous endeavor, according to Peggy Church.

"Once the fibers are spun into yarn, we call it linen. The spun linen thread is reeled off of the spinning wheel bobbin into 'knots' of 80 yards which are further combined into skeins of 20 knots. After bleaching, the yarn was woven into cloth for clothing and household textiles."

Mansfield Historical Society Director Ann Galonska will lead a program on silk worms on Saturday July 13 between 1 and 2 p.m.

Ann Galonska will discuss the early home silk industry, focusing mostly on Mansfield, CT. She plans to bring live silkworms to the presentation.

"Raising silkworms and then reeling and spinning the silk fiber from their cocoons was a profitable cottage industry from the Revolutionary period until the mid-1840s," Ann Galonska recalled.

"Most of the silk produced was made into thread that was marketed or bartered. Some, of course, was used domestically for home sewing or for weaving into cloth. The daughters of William Hanks of Mansfield reportedly produced enough silk to make five gowns," she said.

But things began to change. In 1844, there was a blight on mulberry trees used to feed the silkworms.

"The water-powered silk mills, already established by this time, continued to operate by using imported cocoons," she said.

Gale Olsen will demonstrate the spinning of cotton on a great wheel on Saturday July 20 between 1 and 2 p.m.

She will discuss the use of great wheels. "A great wheel is a spindle that is powered by a manually turned wheel about three to four feet in diameter for the purpose of spinning fibers for use in creating textiles," Gale Olsen explained.

In colonial times, the use of cotton was important for clothing and for piece work jobs for women working at home.

Susan Bruno and others from the Association of Traditional Hooking Artists (ATHA), Nutmeg Chapter, will demonstrate traditional rug hooking on Saturday July 27 between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Their exhibit will include a hooking frame fitted with foundation cloth, wool strips, and a hook for people to try. On display will be several rugs.

"Traditional rug hooking is the simple process of pulling loops of wool strips through woven fabric with a hook," Susan Bruno said.

"In pre-Revolutionary times, women would have hooked rugs using clothing and textiles that could no longer be salvaged for their intended use, burlap feed sacks as a foundation, and hooks forged by their menfolk by bending nails. The end product is a fairly thick mat that was used as a rug to warm cold floors or a bed cover to warm feet."

Terri Guerette will discuss and demonstrate handspinning of wool on Saturday August 3 between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Handspinning describes the spinning of fiber to create yarn, according to Terri Guerette. In her demonstration, she expects to use a treadle wheel. It's a wheel that has a treadle that's used to spin the drive wheel.

"On treadle wheels, the spinner manipulates the treadle by foot. The treadle is attached to a footman, a bar that attached the treadle to the drive wheel," Terri Guerette said.

Handspinning during colonial times was multi-faceted. "Not only was it a way to create yarn that could be woven into fabric for clothing and household textiles, but it was also considered to be a very patriotic act," she added. "Patriotic because England wanted its colonies to be a source of raw materials that would be sent to England, manufactured, and sold back to the colonies at higher and taxed rates."

Windham Center Green Spinning Bee to be held on Saturday August 17 between 10 a.m. and 12 p.m.

The Windham Center Green Spinning Bee will recreate spinning bees of old. August's spinning bee will feature some spinners dressed in colonial costumes and modern spinners, too. All spinners are welcome to attend.

In the years before the American Revolution, women came together for spinning bees to make a public statement supporting nonimportation of textiles from Britain, according to Peggy Church.

There were contests to see who could spin the longest thread.

In three sessions, August 10, September 14, and October 19, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., bobbin lacemaking will be explained by Jill Hawkins and others from the New England Lace Group.

Jill Hawkins learned to make bobbin lace in Glastonbury, England in 1985. She's twice been President of the New England Lace Group.

"Bobbin lace is a lace textile made by weaving lengths of thread, which are wound on bobbins to manage them," Jill Hawkins said.

"In Europe as well as colonial America, lace had important economic implications for the wearers," she said. "It was a signifier of wealth and fashion as we can often see from period portraits; owning and using lace represented status -- for both women and men."

Over weeks during the exhibit, an ancient barn frame loom will be set up; heddles knitted, pulleys hung, shafts threaded, reed sleyed and warp wound on, and finally linen cloth woven.

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.

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, and collections, the museum preserves and interprets the history of textiles, the textile industry, and textile communities in Connecticut.

Bone-Crushing or Back-Thumping Hugs Do Not Convey Warmth or Connection

By Michelle Baughman

The men in my dad's family always gave back thumping hugs or bone crushing hugs, sometimes lifting me off the floor and bending me forwards.

This always felt overwhelmingly intrusive to me, and it was very physically painful to endure. The resulting pain often lasting for several days or weeks afterwards, and interfering with my normal daily function.

Usually, the pain would not subside unless I got a chiropractic adjustment. This, of course, is expensive as it is not covered by medical insurance, and so it put a strain on our limited family finances. So, my husband adopted the habit of body-guarding me at extended family functions: He would stand close by my side, and when people leaned in to hug me, my husband would block their embrace with his arm while making a move that would appear that he was putting his arm around my back to place his hand on my shoulder. (He was not always successful in preventing a thumping blow to my back, and so sometimes I would still get hurt).

As I had a very large extended family (eight uncles), there were enough thwarted hug attempts that my hubby's protective hovering behavior did get noticed by the men in my dad's family, and they started to make joking comments about it. When we responded by telling them that their hugs actually cause me physical injury, they did not believe us. After all, they hug everyone else in the family the same way, and never caused any injury to anyone else, so how can it cause injury to me? At the time, I did not have an answer for them. So, they did not change their over exuberant hugging behavior, and so we eventually decided to stop attending family functions.

I now understand that the reason why I was injured by the hugs from the men in my dad's family when no one else in the family was injured by them, is because I am hypermobile. (Many neurodivergent folks are hypermobile and experience such severe pain from it that it interferes with their normal daily functioning). Being hypermobile means that our joints are unusually pliable, so things can get "dislocated" or moved from their original, normal location. (More specifically, the medical term is called a 'subluxation' which is a partial dislocation of a joint. And joints of the spine and shoulder just happen to be some of the most likely joints in the body to experience subluxations!) Pain is induced both by the trauma of the joint getting moved (which stretches and puts strain on tendons or ligaments) and by the body's natural healing response, which is the surrounding muscles trying to compensate by tightening up around the joint in order to keep it from moving any further. To learn more, turn to page 19 at: <https://neighbors.pageflip.site/editions/NP5352>.

Of course, avoiding family functions is not a foolproof way to ensure that I won't get injured anymore. Just last week, I was running errands and ran into a friend. We were both obvious-



ly glad to see each other, so we both leaned in for a hug. I didn't know she was a back thumper, and she ended up hurting me. I reflexively pulled her hand away saying, "Don't hurt me." The look of confusion and hurt on her face was disheartening. I tried to explain to her that my back is very fragile and back thumping hugs are painful. I am worried that the social awkwardness of the situation might have damaged our connection. And I have spent this past week isolating myself because I am in too much pain to do anything.



As people on the autism spectrum are already socially disadvantaged, avoiding social functions or interactions in order to avoid getting physically injured from someone's hugs is not a viable alternative because it would only lead us to becoming more isolated and less socially adept. So, it seems to me, the solution is to make other people more aware of this phenomenon so that no one is inadvertently inflicting physical injuries upon their autistic friends or loved ones. QR codes are becoming increasingly popular these days, as a means of conveying more information (if it is desired), so I would like to create a Public Service Announcement (PSA) campaign to bring awareness to this (and other issues) by using illustrations by autistic or neurodivergent artists and QR Codes giving more information about the issue.

It isn't just autistic/neurodivergent people who can be injured by back thumping hugs. Folks with osteoporosis, back injuries, muscular dystrophy or muscular atrophy, and even just the aging population can all be seriously injured by an over enthusiastic back thumping hug. If you have a place of business and are willing to post these PSA illustrations, you can download them via this link: <https://ko-fi.com/akirasorara>.

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.

World

By Jolene Munch Cardoza

I could travel across the world with you,
watch the whirling dervish in Turkey
and be bitten by a Tasmanian devil.
Sail across polar icecaps in the Arctic,
burn in the sun of old San Juan.

But nothing could make you feel closer
than the sound of your heartbeat
underneath my ear.

You remind me of the fields of tulips
I have never seen,
rows of color near Dutch windmills.

But I've never worn wooden shoes
or heard the call to prayer in the souk.
We haven't walked the beach in Normandy,
chartered a yacht in Monaco.

Yet I love you more than the sun setting over Ireland,
turning the green clover golden
in a sheet of late afternoon light,
more than the African desert
and the horn of the wild rhinoceros.

You are all the adventure I need,
no use for a backyard camp.
Here, we set up tent in the bedroom
and explore other kinds of mythical lands.

There's the vast landscape of your eyes, hidden behind screens for protection,
the safe net of your arms, holding me
close to your heart.
And two tree trunks for thighs, an entire forest of magic spun between your hips and ankle
length.

Were it hyperbole to call your face a treasure chest,
I would never dare swim to the bottom of the ocean looking for it.
Instead, we are content to light a candle,
no bonfire on the beach,
no skydiving come early morning,
no trolley ride through Central Park.

It's a far cry from the cathedrals of Rome,
this quiet and warm space,
but no less holy.
It is no less holy.

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MUSEUM & VISITORS CENTER
Located on the Lebanon Green

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860-642-6579 www.historyoflebanon.org





Students from North Windham School made sheep for Museum exhibit. Bev York photo.

Windham to the Rescue – 1774 - Mutton Stew for Boston

Submitted by Bev York

An exhibit “Mutton Stew for Boston” will open at the Eastern Connecticut Veteran Community Center on July 16. The exhibit explains Windham’s contribution to help feed the starving residents in Boston two hundred and fifty years ago this month. The King of England had decreed the Boston Port Act in retaliation for the destruction of valuable tea in the Boston Tea Party. Britain blockaded Boston Harbor and ruined colonist’s trading and cut off their food supplies. The local Windham colonists rounded up 258 sheep and left on June 28, 1774, to shepherd the animals to Massachusetts to help feed their neighbors.

Bev York of the America Museum said this will be a great opportunity to educate what people in town were doing exactly 250 years ago. Windhamites were donating an animal or two from their flock for the war effort. In 1774, the town of Windham was larger because it included Mansfield, Chaplin, Hampton and Scotland. The exhibit is hoping to have a lot of sheep made by members of the community. Visitors will learn the story of an event that led up to the American Revolution.

The community including children of all ages are invited to make a 2 dimensional or 3-D sheep in any size out of any materials and deliver it or mail to the Veteran Center at 47 Crescent Street, Willimantic, CT. Materials to make a sheep will also be provided at the exhibit. York explained that the exhibit aims to have 258 sheep and currently has about 100. The exhibit opens July 16, in the Coffee Break Gallery and is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 9 to 5. The exhibit runs until August 29.

As the story goes, Colonists were unhappy over the British control and the excessive taxes. So, in December, 1773, the Sons of Liberty in Boston destroyed cases of tea, an event known today as the Boston Tea Party. The King and Parliament were outraged and retaliated by adding more restrictions known as the four Coercive Acts. One of these “intolerable” acts was the Boston Port Act that blockaded the port to damage the trading industries of the Boston colonists. One of the dire effects was the lack of food for the city that usually came by boat. To help feed the residents of Boston, people of New England delivered food by foot and hoof. Windham was one of the first!

The America Museum presents programs and exhibits that educate about people and events that have secured our liberty. The Museum held a reenactment of the Boston Tea Party at the Willimantic River last December 16, 2023. The Museum is located in the Eastern CT Veteran Community Center, 47 Crescent Street in Willimantic. In preparation of the Semiquincentennial (the 250th) anniversary of the Signing of the Declaration of Independence, the Museum aims to share important events and people who contributed to the War for Independence. For more information contact bevishistory@yahoo.com or americamuseum.org

Just the Opinion of a Wondering Mind

Inspired by articles in recent editions of *Neighbors*.

By Ella Sharpe

Have you ever had something you really wanted to say, something so important but the words just won’t transfer to paper? *By important I mean important to you.*

I have a question rolling around in my mind and can’t seem to find peace until I put it out there wherever *there* is.

Why do people continue to stick their noses into other people’s business, debating, arguing and fighting just for the sake of being able to say, *I’m right and you’re wrong.*

I am a woman who has many more years behind her than ahead, I’ve seen many changes, some good and some not so. The one thing that hasn’t changed is the need to be right...no matter the cause and I ask, *would you rather be right or be happy.*

I could turn this into a novella with the questions I have but I will focus on this one for now...

This issue is on the news, in the papers on prime time medical shows almost everywhere you look and instead of focusing on the solution most are becoming part of the problem.

The issue is Abortion...to do or not to do, that is the question.

My wondering mind asks why the focus is on after instead of before. My logical mind tells me that, that would be too simple.

As a woman far beyond the age to carry a child I don’t feel qualified to decide on an issue of such magnitude as abortion. I, as a human, have no right to decide who lives or who dies but that doesn’t mean I have no opinion. I feel it’s deadlocked. Valid arguments on both sides. So put your brilliant minds and the money wasted on arguments, together and figure out a way of solving the problem instead of being part of it. Aside from rape or incest there is no reason why any woman should get pregnant unless she wants to. A faulty condom would be known right away, solution? Morning after pill. She has a choice and that is when it should be exercised not after the fact.

The simple solution to the Roe vs Wade would be for all the *brilliant* minds to figure out a way to transplant a fetus from an unwelcome womb into a loving womb that will nurture it. Heart transplant, lung transplant, liver...well I’m sure you can see where this goes.

I believe that our main purpose here is is the continuance of life. The child is given to us to nurture, love and mentor and hopefully to guide them into responsible adulthood. I believe that could be better served if we put focus on the children who are already here. Better schools, better principles in adult society. The children are our future so we should provide the best possible guidance available. There is nothing on this earth more important than having and raising children. I hear people ask all the time...*why are we here?* Well guess what? It’s to continue our species.

Cloning, robotics, man walking on the moon and no one has come up with the logical solution to Life or Choice? My wondering mind wonders if I had studied more in school would I then know what makes all of these so called problem solvers click, cause my wondering mind, common sense and logic can’t make sense of any of it.

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At Hampton’s Fletcher Library

Top Shelf Gallery- May & July
Natural Beauty by Stacey Gendreau

Stacey is extending her show at the Top Shelf Gallery until July 30th. “Natural Beauty” features landscapes, florals and figurative pieces by Hampton resident Stacey Gendreau. Stop by the library during open hours to check out Stacey’s beautiful work. Wed. 12-7, Thurs. & Fri. 9-12, and Sat. 9-3.

FML Book Discussion Group, Wednesday, July 10th @ 6:00 pm

We will be discussing *The Glass Universe: How the Ladies of the Harvard Observatory Took the Measure of the Stars* by Dava Sobel. Stop by the library to pick up a copy of the book. New members are always welcome.

Summer Concert at The Fletch featuring Handler & Levesque

Wednesday, July 17th, 6-7 p.m.
(Rain/heat date: July 24)

Music at the Fletch opens the 2024 summer season with a free concert on guitars and mandolin by Judy Handler and Mark Levesque, July 17th at 6 p.m. Their repertoire ranges from swing and folk to classical and jazz. Bring lawn chairs or blankets for seating. Rain date is Wednesday, July 24, 6-7 p.m.

Baby Story Time Song & Play (Birth - 3)

Friday Mornings, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

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

Mah Jongg 101 – Thursday Mornings, 10-12 am

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

Mexican Train - Friday Mornings, 9-12 am

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

Tai Chi at the Hampton Town Hall

Friday Mornings @ 8:30 a.m.

Tai Chi takes place each Friday morning in back of the Community Center or in the Pavilion at the Town Hall at 8:30 a.m. depending on the weather. Call the library for updated information 860-455-1086.

Senior Delivery Service

The library is happy to provide a delivery service for library items (books, audio CDs, and DVDs). Please call or email the library with your requests and/or questions. 860-455-1086 or fletchermemoriallibrary@gmail.com

Save the Bees



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On the Columbia Town Green

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For more info, to volunteer, or if you’d like to have a booth, please call Carol Coley at carol.coley61@gmail.com or 860-208-8309



Sheba



Sheba and Ben.

Yes, we had a dog! Sheba was headed to the pound at six months old. My husband called me and asked if I wanted a dog - I said "No!" I then went to the dog store and got all she needed. She was a dear and lovely dog who loved everyone - and cats.

Words and photo by Diane Rutherford.

Anthony Paticchio will serve a second 3-year term as Ashford's Poet Laureate!

Submitted by Christine Acebo
Poet Laureate Committee
Ashford Area Arts Council
Partnered with Windham Arts Org/CT Office of the Arts

Ashford is one of only 45 Connecticut towns to have a Poet Laureate, and Tony Paticchio has done a wonderful job these last 3 years. He has run a Poetry Workshop nearly continuously, first in person, then on Zoom. At this time there are 8 people in the workshop (3 from the West Coast) and the group has become very cohesive and supportive. Some group members have now begun to read their poetry at local open mic poetry sessions (Packing House, HOPS 44).

Other accomplishments by Tony have included: maintaining an active email list of community members interested in reading poetry and hearing about poetry readings and events; readings of his own poetry at a number of events hosted by Connecticut Town Poets Laureate, as well as at several Ashford Area Arts Council meetings and events; reading at the February 14, 2024 Riverwood Poetry Event at Real Art Ways in Hartford, along with Poets Laureate from five other Connecticut Towns; and publication of numerous poems in poetry journals and anthologies.

Tony has taught and participated in poetry workshops for 5th, 7th, and 8th grade students at Ashford School. His work with students at Ashford Schools' Fifth Grade Poetry Workshop in May, 2023 involved Tony reading a few of his poems as an "artful opener" for a visiting teaching artist's work with students to pair their own words to their artworks. The students' work is presented on the AAAC website: <https://ashfordarts.org/poet-laureate/ashford-schools-poetry-workshop/>

In January, 2024, the Ashford Area Arts Council put out a call for applications for the 2024-2027 term of our Poet Laureate. The search committee received applications from Tony and 1 other Ashford resident. The committee was in unanimous agreement that Tony not only met expectations for the role, but far exceeded them. The AAAC supported the appointment of Tony Paticchio as Ashford's Poet Laureate for a second 3-year term, from July, 2024 through June, 2027, with a yearly honorarium of \$200 from the AAAC.

We believe Tony will continue to bring additional excitement and opportunity to what we believe is already a vibrant arts community in Ashford.

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a mat or blanket. All ages are welcome to this free event. Following the class, light refreshments will be served. REGISTRATION REQUIRED at <https://joshuustrust.org/events/>. Check there for updates and cancellations.

Mansfield Library Story Time and Walk

07/27/24, 10:30 to noon. Mansfield Library and Joshua's Trust Bradley Buchanan Woods
54 Warrenville Rd, Mansfield Center, CT 06250. Bring your young naturalist to the Mansfield Library for a 30-minute nature themed story time, followed by a walk in the woods at the adjacent Bradley Buchanan Preserve. Be sure to visit <https://joshuustrust.org/events/> for details, updates and cancellations.

Willington Public Library Story Time and Hike

08/03/24 10:00-12:00 (Rain date, 08/10/24)
Chenes Roches Preserve, 71 Blair Rd, Willington, CT- Join the Willington Public Library and Joshua's Trust at Chenes Roches Preserve for a walk and reading of Yuval Zommer's children's book "The Wild," showcasing the importance of protecting our wild spaces and our connection to nature. Be sure to visit <https://joshuustrust.org/events/> or <https://www.willingtonpubliclibrary.org/> for details, updates and cancellations.

Bat Acoustic Walk

08/30/24, 7:30-9:00 PM (rain date: 08/31/24, 7:30-9:00 PM)
Allanach-Wolf Woodlands, 164 Back Road, Windham, CT
Join UConn Ecologist Laura Cisneros on a night adventure to observe and survey bats along the trails and pond at Allanach Wolf Woodlands. Participants will learn to use acoustic monitoring devices to learn about bat echolocation calls. We will discover which bat species are present and learn about their activity patterns within this habitat. Please bring a headlamp or flashlight and dress appropriately to be outdoors at night. REGISTRATION REQUIRED. Visit <https://joshuustrust.org/events/> for registration, details, and updates.



Seeking Museum Curator

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

EC-CHAP is seeking a Curator / Director to oversee the **Gardiner Hall Jr History Museum**. This volunteer leadership position will work with a small team of volunteers, to assist in expanding the collection of artifacts; develop meaningful and relevant historical programming; and support EC-CHAP's *Framework for Raising Historical Awareness*.

To learn more please email: info@ec-chap.org or call: 518.791.9474.

WWW.EC-CHAP.ORG

156 River Road, Suite 2106A, Willington, CT 06279 | 518.791.9474 | info@ec-chap.org

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T. King, Publisher

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The Planet Press

Happy Summer!

No 6

July & August — 2024

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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.

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Adding Green to The Food Supply Chain

A team of interdisciplinary researchers from UConn's College of Agriculture, Health, and Natural Resources has published a paper in the Journal of Agriculture and Food Research detailing the current state of sustainable food production research.

Sustainable food production aims to develop food systems that are environmentally sustainable, economically viable, and socially equitable. The paper highlights the critical aspects of sustainable food production, including environmental stewardship, economic vitality, innovation and adaptation, and social responsibility.

Luo, co-chair of CAHNR's committee for sustainable agriculture and food production, is currently collaborating with a group of students to develop an organic poultry feed additive made from microalgae.

Forest Management is Changing

Approximately 40% of forested land in the United States is privately owned. Collaborating with private landowners is a significant opportunity and necessity for agencies responsible for preserving the nation's natural resources.

Agencies such as state environmental departments collaborate with private landowners to create plans that promote sustainable forest management, wildlife conservation, and other land protection measures to ensure continuity in regional land management practices. However, landowners rarely participate in these initiatives. According to Smith, the latest U.S. Forest Ser-

vice National Woodland Owner Survey estimated that only about 11% of private landowners had a management plan.

Probiotic Spray for Chicks

A patented technique for spraying eggs with probiotics has been shown to enhance embryonic development and post-hatch growth in chicks raised for broiler production. This method improves chick health without relying on antibiotics, which are increasingly banned due to the rise of antibiotic-resistant bacteria, which threatens human and animal health.

Mary Anne Amalaradjou, an associate professor of animal science in the College of Agriculture, Health, and Natural Resources, has discovered that applying a probiotic spray to eggs enhances both the number and quality of successfully hatched chicks.

AI Already Uses as Much Energy as small Nation

The IEA estimates that collectively, this consumption accounted for nearly 2 percent of global energy demand in 2022 — a figure projected to potentially double by 2026, equivalent to Japan's electricity consumption. One of the fastest-growing energy demands is generative AI, particularly in machine learning, which necessitates significant energy for training and responding to queries and training extensive language models such as OpenAI's GPT-3.



No Relief for Connecticut's Smog Problem From The Supreme Court

On Thursday, the U.S. Supreme Court temporarily blocked a Biden administration rule to address Connecticut's persistent summertime smog and other air quality issues.

The rule aimed to significantly reduce emissions from power plants and industrial sources in the Midwest and West. These emissions travel eastward to Connecticut, exacerbating the state's high asthma rates and perpetual non-compliance with federal air quality standards.

The rule in question, named the Good Neighbor Plan, was formally adopted by the Biden administration in March 2023.

It mandated that 23 states in the Midwest and West cut emissions from their power plants and industrial facilities, strengthening standards established during the Obama administration.

The decision joins a series of recent setbacks to Biden administration environmental policies by the current conservative majority of the Roberts court. Previously, it blocked the administration from regulating greenhouse gas emissions from existing power plants and restricted the scope of water bodies protected under the Clean Water Act.

Before the current term concludes, a significant decision is

anticipated that could notably diminish the authority of administrative agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency to base their actions on scientific findings.

While the rule took effect in certain states, many others opposed it, leading to a patchwork of court decisions that either implemented or halted its enforcement. Some states denied stays and appealed to the Supreme Court on an emergency basis. The court agreed to hear the appeal to determine whether to grant a stay while the cases proceed through the legal system.

Lamont Signs PFAS Ban With Proposed Enhancements

In April, the Environmental Protection Agency introduced the country's initial drinking water regulations for six types of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, commonly referred to as PFAS.

These persistent synthetic chemicals do not degrade naturally and have been associated with various health concerns, such as cancer, liver issues, and developmental harm. The EPA standards cover only a tiny fraction of this chemical's over 15,000 variants.

Governor Ned Lamont signed a bill unanimously passed by lawmakers that will essentially phase out the use of PFAS, a family of persistent chemicals while cautioning that adjustments to the law are necessary.

In his signing letter, Lamont pointed out that, unlike laws in other states, the new Connecticut legislation only allows waivers

to keep a product on the market when no reasonable alternative exists. Lamont suggested this could lead to Teflon non-stick pans becoming unavailable in Connecticut after January 1, 2028.

Lamont also recommended that the legislature continue examining the issue, considering whether specific PFAS chemicals should be exempted or a waiver or exemption process should be incorporated into the law.

Representative Joe Gresko, D-Stratford, co-chair of the Environment Committee, indicated that the decision to omit a waiver process was a deliberate response to the administration's fiscal concerns.

The two lawsuits were initiated by the two major markets for products containing PFAS chemicals: aqueous film-forming foam (AFFF) used in firefighting and a wide array of consumer prod-

ucts, including food packaging, cookware, carpeting, upholstery, clothing, and cosmetics.

In January, Connecticut filed two lawsuits alleging that chemical manufacturers concealed the dangers of PFAS for decades.

"If you want me to come back next session and tweak it, I'd be more than happy to. I was working with the hand I was dealt"

- Rep. Joe Gresko
D-Stratford, co-chair of the Environment Committee

Minimizing the Environmental Footprint of Water Heating

When considering essential home appliances, thoughts often turn to the kitchen or laundry room. Yet, the most crucial, albeit less conspicuous, are your home heating appliances and water heater. While not as glamorous as a new refrigerator, the humble water heater consumes more energy than any other appliance in the home except the furnace. Making informed choices about your

hot water usage can significantly reduce your household's carbon footprint.

Gas boilers, which provide hot water and home heating through radiators, consume more energy and generate higher greenhouse gas emissions than any other household appliance, amounting to approximately 2,200 kg of CO₂ annually. While home heating generally consumes more energy than water heating

alone, even if your water heater operates independently from the heating system, water heating still constitutes about 17% of an average family's total energy consumption. This equates to around 4,000 kilowatt-hours per year. American households spend between \$400 and \$600 annually on energy for water heating.

There are two types of water heaters: tank and tankless. While tankless water heaters are prev-

alent in Europe and Asia, most American households use water heaters with large storage tanks. However, similar to clothes dryers, the American standard tends to be less efficient than global norms. Tankless water heaters are more compact, have a longer lifespan, and typically cost around \$100 less per year than standard storage tank heaters. Energy Star-certified tankless water heaters provide an additional

10% energy savings compared to non-certified models. Transitioning to tankless water heaters can be challenging, especially in older homes, as it may involve obtaining permits, installing a gas line, or significantly upgrading the home's electrical system.

Heat Waves Explained

While extreme heat may not appear as dramatic as hurricanes or floods, the National Weather Service has identified it as the most lethal weather event in the US on average over the last 30 years.

In the summer of the Northern Hemisphere, the northern half of the Earth tilts towards the sun, resulting in longer daylight hours and warming the hemisphere. The effect of increased solar radiation accumulates, explaining why temperatures typically reach their highest point weeks after the year's longest day.

The definition of a heat wave generally depends on local weather conditions, characterized by sustained temperatures in the 90th to 95th percentile range of the area's average temperatures.

Heat waves usually commence with the arrival of a high-pressure system, also known as an anticyclone, which causes atmospheric pressure to build over an area.

This creates a descending column of air that compresses, warms, and often dries out. The sinking air can form a cap or heat dome, trapping the accumulated heat the landscape absorbs.

Additionally, the high-pressure system displaces cooler, fast-moving air currents and disperses clouds, allowing the sun an uninterrupted path to the ground.

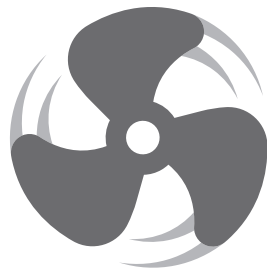
Heat waves are especially common in naturally dry regions like the desert Southwest and at higher altitudes where high-pressure systems often form. Soil moisture plays a crucial role in moderating heat, akin to how sweat cools the body by evaporating.

Yet, in areas lacking substantial groundwater, water bodies, and vegetation, there's limited capacity to absorb heat, leaving the air to absorb much of the accumulated heat.

Under the intense summer sun, the ground—composed of soil, sand, concrete, and asphalt—ab-

sorbs heat, accumulating thermal energy swiftly due to long days and short nights, raising temperatures.

However, extreme heat can also accumulate in areas with high moisture levels. In fact, for every degree Celsius (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit) that the air warms, it can hold approximately 7 percent more water, potentially leading to a hazardous blend of heat and humidity (further details below).



The Chevron Doctrine

On Friday, the United States Supreme Court overturned a longstanding decision, a ruling that Connecticut lawyers and officials believe could introduce significant uncertainty across various domains, including environmental regulation, workplace safety, food and drug oversight, financial markets, new technology, transportation, and beyond.

In a 6-3 decision in *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo* and its companion case *Relentless v. Dept. of Commerce*, the Supreme Court overturned the "Chevron doctrine," a four-decade-old ruling that guides courts on when to defer to an executive branch agency's interpretation of unclear statutes. Deference was traditionally granted when the court deemed the agency's inter-

pretation to be "rational."

That has significant implications for "all aspects of life ... everything that we touch and use in our lives that needs to be safe," said Connecticut Attorney General William Tong. Tong cited examples such as the Food and Drug Administration's rules around the ingredients in baby food, the Federal Aviation Administration's regulation of personal safety on airplanes, and the Environmental Protection Agency's limitations on toxic chemicals known as PFAS.

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

What is The Wet Bulb Temperature?

Cities and states are preparing for the health impacts of the blistering heat by establishing cooling centers and issuing emergency declarations. These risks are expected to endure beyond sunset. The National Weather Service highlighted in its bulletin that "Record warm overnight temperatures will prevent natural cooling and allow the heat danger to build over time indoors without air conditioning".

The severity of extreme heat became tragically apparent last year. According to the Associated Press, data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention revealed that approximately 2,300 deaths in 2023 were partially attributed to excessive heat, marking it the hottest year.

Particularly in the Southwestern US, some of the deadliest heat incidents underscored that even regions accustomed to and prepared for hot weather have their heat tolerance limits.

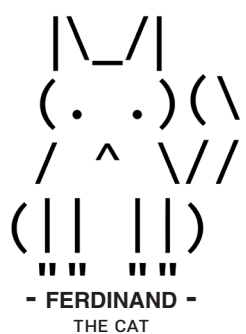
Health officials at both state and federal levels are urgently developing strategies to prevent loss of life as temperatures soar to new highs in 2024. Recently, the US Department of Health and Human Services introduced its Health and Heat Index to assist communities in preparing for heat-related risks. This tool analyzes temperature data and past emergency room admissions to assess potential heat hazards in each ZIP code, aiming to enhance community readiness for extreme heat conditions.

Flower of the Month August

Gladiolus



In general, gladioli symbolize strength of character, faithfulness, moral integrity, and remembrance. They are traditionally associated with the 40th wedding anniversary and serve as the birth flower for August.

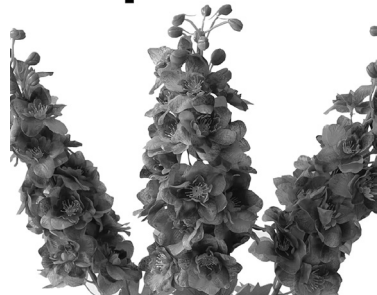


Ferdinand's Flower Patch

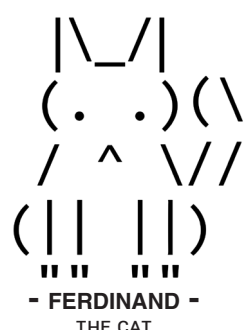


Flower of the Month July

Delphinium



The delphinium, commonly known as larkspur, is a tall and attractive flowering plant containing toxic levels of diterpene alkaloids. These compounds can cause severe neuromuscular effects in dogs, other animals, and humans alike. Remarkably, as little as two milligrams of the plant can be fatal to an adult human.



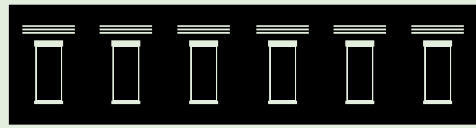
Ferdinand's Flower Patch





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November 2nd



KALA FARNHAM
CT STATE TROUBADOUR
FOLK / INDIE

Friday
December 6th



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AN EVENING WITH
GRAMMY WINNER
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“Look To Nature”
by Kathleen Zimmerman
July 20 - September 14, 2024
Opening Reception
Friday, July 19, 2024
6:30 - 8:00pm



“Threads in Time”
On Exhibit

