

Neighbors

No. 238

November-December 2025

FREE



10.11.25. At Horizon Wings 'Open House' in Ashford. Read article inside.

Photos by Ali Parkes.

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Pulling the Covers Up Over Our Heads

By Bob Grindle

The birds are quiet as I step out onto the porch and breathe deeply of the morning air...it's 6:50 a.m. on a darkish, chill and blustery Sunday morning in early October...the clouds scoot low... over, almost through, the trees and there is a soft, chilly mist that rinses away any hint of warmth from this quietest of corners...it feels almost as if Mother Earth has pulled the covers up over our heads to hide us from something, or something from us. I step inside to pour a cup of coffee and light the wood stove...our first wood fire of this heating season, though the early morning air has smelled of wood smoke from neighboring fires for a few days now. Yesterday morning, at about this same time it felt like a different world. It was a warm, bright and cheerful dawn...sounding of birdsong and gentle breezes, and feeling like spring...as colorful as an artist's palette but with an aroma of nature's take on autumn-spice with its leaves decaying and scent of the season's last roses mixed with dry pine needles, the metallic smell of earthworm castings and wild geranium and, ironically, the funky rot of a world composting itself toward hibernation.

As I look out over this morning's topsy-turvy landscape of fallen branches, layers of wet leaves, battered daisies and dahlias, an occasional broken shrub and the general disorder that accompanies these interludes of chill autumn bluster and blow, my eyes are drawn to the comfortable white oak that towers over our front lawn, neither

majestic or gnarled or exceptional in any way really, just a rather large Connecticut native tree, perhaps a hundred and fifty years old that stands like a totem: survivor of the blizzard of 1888, the hurricane of 1938, the ice storm of 1973 and the blizzard of 1978...umbilically rooted to the Earth that nourishes it, a mother tree to the hundreds of white oak seedlings that sprout nearby every year...to say nothing of its value to the birds who nest in its branches, the squirrels and turkeys who have thrived on its thousands of acorns each year, its cooling shade, carbon storage, oxygen production, recreational value—for decades we would swing on an old tire swing hung by a 30 foot rope—and, of course, its simple aesthetic charm.

Would that we could all be such good neighbors to one another as this old oak has been to its neighborhood, and I must admit there are times when I talk to this old tree...as if the many folds and endless tangled neurons of our brain are part of an umbilical connection to all of life on not only this Earth, but all of the Cosmos. Having read once that in order to adapt to change all living things require two conditions...time and being left alone...I suppose I feel this oak and I have something in common and, of course, we do...the need to adapt to change. We are two living things on planet Earth, sharing, for whatever time we have, this ride across the cosmic kaleidoscope and perhaps coming to an understanding that will unriddle the differences we seem to dwell upon, and allow us to turn over the stones on the distant shores of our most earnest dreams in this scavenger hunt for meaning and peace. And

on those stones discover the ritual tantric that brings mental calmness and insight into how we can all communicate with one another. William Shakespear may have offered, in his play Julius Caesar that "...the fault...is not in our stars, but in ourselves..." and perhaps the fix is to be found there as well.

There is an old French proverb that 'autumn is the hush before winter,' and true enough, there are times when the chill of the autumn air can sink into a person deeper than your bones, quieting your soul, as something primeval is touched by this never-ending connection to the very genesis of our planetary home. If you happen to be a lover of autumn, and I would guess most New Englanders are, that proverbial 'hush before winter' comes with a full woodshed's worth of images, memories and even hopes...so as November opens and the full Beaver Moon of November 5th rises over route 6 as the second of three consecutive supermoons—October, November and December—it is worth noting that this will be the next to last full moon before the winter solstice and in some traditions it is known as the "mourning moon;" representing a time to let go of past troubles, grief, and anything that no longer serves you to make way for a fresh start and, like beavers building their lodges and dams, this moon invites you to focus on taking care of your own physical and emotional well-being.

And that brings us to the final month of 2025 and the full Cold Moon of December 4th, also known as the Long Night Moon...the third consecutive and last supermoon of the year will appear higher in the night sky than any moon until 2042 so if you get the chance, give it a look. Nine nights later, what could be this year's most promising meteor shower, the Geminids on the night of December 13/14 should be only minimally impacted by the waning crescent Moon. The Geminids are the only meteor shower that can be viewed starting as early as 9 p.m. on the 13th, even though they peak around 3 a.m. on the 14th. Bundle up a bit depending on the weather and sit back to enjoy a display that frequently yields not only several fireball meteors, but also colorful greens, yellows and reds as magnesium, sodium, iron, nitrogen and oxygen particles and atoms are excited as the meteors plunge earthward.

You can't just walk out and look up at the night sky, or day sky, every so often for a few minutes and expect to feel the deep excitement of the mystery and majesty that comes from an understanding of the world around us. Like almost any other experience in life, it is repetition of the behavior that makes it special and gives it deeper meaning. To hear an especially beautiful piece of music or a deeply meaningful song once, and only once, creates an ache that's hard to express. Like walking along the beach, hiking up a mountain or hanging out with friends, spending time looking up at the sky is something best done as often as the weather and your time allow. It doesn't have to be for long periods of time, but if you do it often the rewards can last forever. Enjoy the coming season and be the good neighbor that we all enjoy having.

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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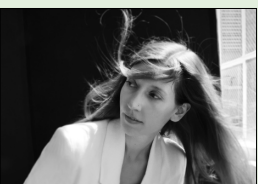
RAMBLIN' DAN STEVENS
BLUES

Friday November 14th



SIRSY
FOLK / INDIE

Saturday December 6th



KATE PRASCHER
FOLK / COUNTRY

Monthly Programs:
"Songwriter Showcase"
*2nd Wednesday

"Dye & Bleach House Poetry Series"
*3rd Thursday

"Friday FilmSeries"
*Check Website for Titles and Dates

2026

Saturday January 10th



MIGHTY SOUL DRIVERS
BLUES

Saturday January 24th



DANIELLE MIRAGLIA
BLUES

Saturday February 14th



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"As Real As It Gets"
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"Opening Reception" - September 20th - 6:00pm



DYE & BLEACH HOUSE
COMMUNITY GALLERY



"Threads in Time"
On Exhibit



Medical Systems Fury

By Loretta Wrobel

Yes, our medical system is broken. We all know that. However, how will it be fixed? Improved? Repaired? As I move deeply into my elderhood, there looms ahead the time both to treat myself to what matters to me, and welcome new doctors into my healthcare team. Both of these areas offer new unexplored adventures and anxieties. Plus, the added bonus is that some of my long-term medical partners are leaving their work life and moving into enjoying the freedom that comes with retirement, where you can determine what you will tackle each day to satisfy your curiosity!



Now as I set up encounters with our medical system for numerous specialists, tests that I never knew existed, and blood tests so often that my car knows the route to Quest Diagnostics, I wonder am I here to serve the medical establishment? I figure I am providing jobs for oh so many individuals, as I meander through the various specialists for the assorted systems within my aging body.

Yes, I am learning to manage all these new experiences, and I have the finances to pay for decent coverage from our friends in the medical insurance companies. It only takes *weeks* to compare the omnipresent healthcare programs for the upcoming year. You have plenty of time to compare the changes, additions, and shifts in each plan and make your informed choice. The companies generously allow from October 15 through December 7 to make a decision. For those elders who are signed up for some sort of Medicare program offered by our compassionate leaders, you have the time to leisurely scroll through the multitude of options spelled out on your computer and choose the best plan for you, based on your particular health needs and your financial situation. Problem is that it becomes a choice of the category that are you willing to pay the most of your dollars for--copays, prescriptions, specialists, dental, or co-insurances. Since you are gambling on where your healthcare needs will move into during the upcoming year, throw the dice!!!

As I mentioned above, I am blessed to have some savings; therefore, right now, the ability to make my choices with regard to adequate healthcare. There are many elders and families that do not have the funds to pay for an insurance plan, never mind funding the full cost of the ever-rising prices for health care. This is where my fury reaches an explosive level. As a Country, we are denying healthcare to millions of Americans who are having to choose among food, shelter, health care, prescriptions, or utilities.

As I was considering writing this article, I received a notification on My Chart that my present insurance company would not consider several of my doctors as “in network.” My present insurance was not negotiating with University of CT Health Center because they were not able to agree on how much profit each of these gluttonous giants wanted to reap from our sicknesses. More money for them and less for us. This is the world we exist in. It directly impacts folks who are struggling to cover all their expenses, including the vast majority of our old people, who tend to use the medical system more frequently as they age.

What has happened to our country that healthcare has become a privilege rather than a right? What must we do to reverse this trend? Are we rapidly spiraling down to only having the wealthy be able to afford healthcare? This is not the country I want to grow old in. I want to function in an environment that allows people to have basic rights so that they can live productive and satisfying lives. I do not want the big bullies to take everything from me, especially my right to have availability for the advanced healthcare that exists. Struggling to get an appointment, or to find a competent healthcare professional are not satisfying solutions to the avalanche of poor healthcare delivery. Or to switch healthcare providers because they are no longer covered by your particular insurance plan.

We can do much better as a nation when we provide sensible care for all of our citizens, not just a select few. The truth is that everyone gets sick, very well-off people and people on the lower end of financial security. We have the technology to provide healthcare for all of us. Healthcare should not be a profit-based system that reaps bigger and bigger profits every year. The system needs to get its priorities adjusted. The goal should be to provide an environment that offers the best essential treatment for everyone, at an affordable cost, and from skilled medical

staff. It is unhealthy medical care to have to switch providers due to a shift in the provision of services each new enrollment period brings. This faulty system is orchestrated by administrators employed by the heartless corporate insurance behemoths to allow companies to increase their yearly profit margins.

We must shift our profit-driven desires to compassionate and humane treatment, for all individuals are worthy and deserving. Having the goal of keeping our population healthy and contributing to the common good is an excellent place to start. To use our intellect and kindness to bring out the best in each of us, is a successful approach towards a better functioning world. In this environment all citizens, regardless of wealth and connections, are treated with dignity and respect. In this scenario we develop a community where people work together to make positive improvements for all of us and our environment, and develop strong connections in the process. It can actually be fun, since we are social creatures and have evolved from being members of several groups, families, nationalities, communities, and tribes.

A few people or a small group cannot achieve this, but a large outpouring can reverse the trend and stop the spiral into greed and self-indulgence. We must stand up for the right to expect reasonable, benevolent healthcare for all the people in our country. Healthcare that allows us to thrive must not be limited to a select few who have the financial security to not be concerned about the inflated costs. We need to make some noise, and to pressure our legislators for smart and creative solutions rather than building more separation between the average worker and the extremely wealthy elite. As humans we all deserve access to the best healthcare possibilities, regardless of the size of our net worth. Let’s dedicate our energy to working on that goal—Together!!!

Correction: In this space in the last Neighbors issue, it was stated that Lilly Ledbetter died in 2004. Lilly passed away in 2024. Ed.

Letters and Emails

To the Editor:

Like many others, I look forward to each new issue of *Neighbors* because of the interesting pieces by many of its frequent contributors. One of those contributors, Delia Berlin, surprised and disappointed me in “An Open Letter to Jeff Bezos” (p. 5, September-October, 2025). My surprise and disappointment came from the remark that, “Because of their unusual syntax and funny names, I assumed that Jibin and Chintalapudi were chatbots... Who would name a child “Chintalapudi”?” Such ethnocentrism! With respect to the “funny” names, a quick online query reveals that Jibin is a fairly common name in India, especially Kerala, that delightfully implies “full of life”. Chintalapudi is an Indian placename (there are several in Andhra Pradesh), and also is often used as a surname of resident families. The “unusual” syntax encountered by Berlin moreover could have many sources. One is that people who are multilingual may lean on the syntax of another language in some cases. Another is that South Asians often learn British English, which has some grammatical differences from American English. It’s easy to understand Berlin’s (also the name of a city) frustration with Amazon, but resorting to a type of othering microaggression in print isn’t going to help anything.

-Mary Hanink

Delia responds-

Hi Mary,

Tom forwarded me your letter to the editor in reference to my latest submission. I wrote that piece in humor but obviously misjudged the full range of reactions it would elicit. My apologies. I was careless. But “resorting to a type of othering microaggression in print” is an overly harsh take on my intent.

As a non-native English speaker who studied British English, I am familiar with the origins of “funny syntax” and still provide examples in my own writing. “We” (others) survive by learning a little more each day and being able to laugh at ourselves. It is not just the syntax, but the cultural subtleties that remain evasive, and may get us in trouble even after fifty years of immersion.

Thank you for your comments.

-Delia

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From the Ground Up - Buying Local in Connecticut

Eagle Heights Farm

By Rebecca Toms

When I first met Anna Terwilleger of Eagle Heights Farm, it was around this time last year, and I immediately knew she had chosen the right direction for her life—farming. There was something in the way she moved across the land, in the easy familiarity of her gestures, that spoke of a deep connection with the earth.



She was at home in her surroundings, not because she had curated them into a picture-perfect scene, but because she lived and worked with nature every day. She built a cedar structure and covered it in fruiting kiwi vines to create a whimsical hideaway, flowers she encouraged sprang from every nook they could find, life spilled out wherever it could, despite the crisp autumn chill in the air. It was as if her feet had rooted into the soil, and with every step she took, the tendrils of these roots were preparing to dive deep, ready to grow.

It made sense, really. This was land that had been in her family for years, and Anna had chosen to breathe new life into it. She cultivated flower patches wherever space allowed, built a high tunnel to start flower and vegetable seedlings for the community, and tended to the warmer-loving tomatoes and resilient winter greens with patient care. The land itself seemed to respond to have conversations with her—she would plant, it would grow.

As we walked through the property, Anna shared memories and pointed out markers of the past—old deer bones, fallen timber, and traces of previous generations. Each of these elements carried a story, a weight of experience she understood intimately, turning the wild edges of the farm into a living narrative that weaved into human timelines.

You might have glimpsed her farmstand along Route 169 in Canterbury: an old 1923 Model T pickup truck brimming with whatever was in season, the colors and textures of the farm’s bounty spilling over into a small shed, an old tractor, all displaying what felt both practical and charming. At this time of year, the stand shouts autumn in fiery reds, golds, and oranges—pumpkins, gourds, hay, and mums—but it also invites play as her Halloween decorations provide the backdrop to the farmstand display. It’s impossible not to feel the joy of the season there.

As we moved from the main growing areas through the woods and onto an open field, Anna shared her dreams for the future. This is where the next phase of the farm will take shape: more room for rooting daikon, pumpkin vines stretching and crawling, dahlias and sunflowers reaching for the sun. Hay had its place, but now the land was ready for something more, ready to respond to the care she could provide. Some trees had to be let go to the emerald ash borer, but she saw potential in the open spaces, imagining what she could grow for her neighbors, for the community that cherishes her work.

We took a soil test while I was there (because every farmer should!) and I could recognize the deep satisfaction she felt with the dark cool soil piled into her hands;

it often made me feel that way too. A plot of land, full of potential that was just waiting.

These are the types of people that you find at small farms in our community. People that have a reason to grow food beyond what they can get from the land. This is why our small farms are important. They are stewards of a rich history that has life and its own stories. You don’t get that with 6,000-acre farms. You don’t get that with fields turned to apartment complexes.



Anna Terwilleger.

Photos by the author.

So yes, even if she doesn’t realize it, the work that Anna is doing has deep significance, as deep as the roots that seem to spring from her feet. As she isn’t always at the stand, which operates on a self-serve model, if you ever have the chance to meet her, take it. The warmth, dedication, and quiet magic she brings to the land are infectious, leaving you with the sense that you’ve witnessed something rare: a life rooted so fully in the soil and in service to both land and people. And get to know your other farmers too. They too have more to them than a dozen eggs or fresh heirloom tomatoes.

Because Eagle Heights sells so many magnificent pumpkins, and because I personally love to eat pumpkins (*and* because so many of you are bound to have pumpkins for decoration that you could actually eat once you’re done with them), I’m sharing an adaptation of a Mollie Katzen recipe from her *Moosewood Cookbook*. Though she uses acorn or butternut squash, this recipe I think became even cozier when I subbed in the pumpkin instead. I made this one after my Halloween pumpkins were through last year, and on the chilly wet nights of late fall, it warmed me all the way to my toes. Lots of the ingredients can be sourced locally, but if you need help, check out the farms



in the Grown ConNECTed *Farm Fresh Food* guide (www.grownconNECTed.org/findfarms).

Curried Pumpkin Mushroom Soup

Adapted from Mollie Katzen’s *Moosewood Cookbook*

- Ingredients:
- 3 cups roasted pumpkin (no skins, please!)
 - 2½ cups vegetable or chicken stock
 - 1 cup orange juice
 - 1 tbsp. butter
 - 1 cup chopped onions
 - 2 medium garlic cloves, crushed
 - 1¼ tsp. salt
 - ½ tsp. ground cumin
 - ½ tsp. coriander
 - ½ tsp. cinnamon
 - 1 tsp. ginger (or 2 tsp. for fresh)
 - ¼ tsp. dry mustard
 - ½ lb. local mushrooms (I like maitake chopped up for this)
 - some cayenne (to taste)

Directions:

If you don’t know how to roast a pumpkin, it’s basically like any other squash. Split down the middle, scoop out the seeds, and place face down on an oiled tray. Bake at 375° F until soft.

For a creamier soup, puree the pumpkin with the stock in a blender. For a brothier soup, just break up the larger pieces and add when ready (my preference). Add the orange juice and set it aside.

Heat oil in a deep soup pot and add garlic, onion, salt and spices. Sauté over medium heat until translucent (add some of the broth if it starts to stick). Add mushrooms, cover, and cook about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Add the squash mixture to the sauté mixture, using the extra liquid to break loose any of the flavor sticking to the bottom of the pot. Add the cayenne to taste and then warm it together for 10 minutes.

(Optional) Top with lemon or lime juice and/or a dollop of plain yogurt.

Lovin’ In the Oven

By Carl Swartz

(Loud snoring from the back of the classroom. Oh, not again.)

The students in My Marketing Principles class were smirking and laughing. (Gino Martinelli was asleep again.)

“Gino, wake up.”

Gino was a good natured, heavy-set young man, scruffy beard, wavy- thick black hair and he was sleeping again.

“GINO, WAKE UP.”

(Geno finally, woke up.)

“Hey Professor, was I sleeping again?”

“Gino, Let’s step out in the hall for a minute. Hey, what’s going on? Do you find the class uninteresting?”

“No, Professor, the class is good. The problem is I work at my family’s bakery and I start baking my bread at 2:00 in the morning, but sometimes I can’t keep my eyes open. Your classes are good but, sometimes I’m just too tired. My Doc says I might have Narcolepsy because when I sit down, my fat presses up against my lungs and it’s hard for me to breathe and makes me sleep.”

I said, “Let’s try this, stand up against the back wall when you need to and maybe you won’t go to sleep.”

The class was given an assignment for the following week, to organize and present a marketing plan, by identifying its

“product mix” and /or “target market’. The next week, the plans came and went. Some were very good, some not.

When Gino’s turn to present came, he came to the front of the room carrying a medium-sized cardboard box labeled ‘Marinelli Bakery’. Gino opened the box and the room filled with the aroma of freshly baked breads.

“Hey, Professor told us to organize our business by customer and product, so I made different breads for my different kinds of customers. I baked a special bread for each day of the week.”

“On Monday, I baked 20 pans of Focaccia Bread as the special bread of the day.” He then removed a large piece of flat bread covered in veggies and cheese and rosemary and spices. “People from all over love this.” We all got a taste. On Tuesday, the bread of the day was Ciabatta. It’s a

bread with a soft inside and hard crust. Gino said his customers used it to make sandwiches. Again, everyone got a ‘taste’.

He went on to name five other breads noting their origins, ingredients and flavors. Everyone got a taste of Gino Martinelli’s “Family of Breads”. His motto can now be found in advertising all over the eastern part of the state: “We send you our lovin’ from baking bread in the oven.”

Post script:

Today there are six Martinelli Bakeries in the region and their biggest sellers are Italian breads. (by the way, Gino got an “A” in Marketing Principles).



Pomfret Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Submitted by Cris Cadiz

For the past 5 years, the Pomfret Proprietors Association has organized and promoted a food drive every First Saturday at the Pomfret Community Center. This food drive supports the Pomfret Community Market, a food pantry run by TEEG at our community center. TEEG feeds about 45 families each month from the Pomfret Market. The PPA wishes to recognize and thank the people who donated food and money and the volunteers who donated their time and thoughtfulness to staff this effort for 2025.

From January to October, over 2,500 pounds of food and almost \$800 was donated for the year so far. Your efforts do make a difference in the lives of your neighbors in need. If your business or organization would like to help with the monthly PPA Food Drive, please contact Louisa Jones at ljones@pomfret.org. If you'd like to donate food or money to this monthly effort, please stop by Pomfret Community Center (207 Mashamoquet Road) every first Saturday from 9am to 11am. Volunteers with greet you in the parking lot.

- ~ January- 441.5 lbs. and \$170 - Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices New England Properties
- ~ February- 292.9 lbs. - Pomfret School Girls JV Squash Team
- ~ March- 301.2 lbs. - Pomfret School Pomfret Happiness Project
- ~ April- 296.4 lbs. - Pomfret Recreation Department
- ~ May- 103 lbs. - Pomfret Lions Club
- ~ June- 401.6 lbs. and \$245- Pomfret Democratic Town Committee
- ~ July- 238.2 lbs. - Pomfret School, Patrick Woods Scholars
- ~ August - 226 lbs. - Weiss, Hale, and Zahansky Strategic Wealth Advisors

- ~ September – 247.7 lbs. and \$45 - The Abington Social Library Board
- ~ October – 187.50 lbs. and \$330 - Christ Church Outreach Committee
- ~ November - Rectory School Community Service Club (total not available yet)
- ~ December - Vanilla Bean & QC NEMBA (total not available yet)

With Thanksgiving approaching, specific needs include instant mashed potatoes, canned corn/peas/green beans, cranberry sauce, canned gravy, rolls, stuffing, pies, and large-sized beverages. They can always use Toiletries, paper products, and cleaning supplies. They DO NOT need clothing.

Another helpful neighbor is The Pomfret School. Their curriculum offers a course called The History of Food Insecurity. One of the outcomes for the course is the opportunity for students to plan for and pack bags of food that are delivered to 20 Pomfret Community School families each weekend. These “Pomfret Power Packs” have been supported financially by the Pomfret Proprietors over the years with donations from Town Wide Tag Sale profits.

If you are interested in providing non-perishables specifically for Pomfret Power Packs, please consider **donating 24 of the same item**. These include pasta, cereal, pasta sauce, fruit snacks, granola bars, pudding packs, oranges, carrots, peanut butter, jelly, or canned protein. Please reach out to Louisa Jones to coordinate drop-off of these food items at Pomfret School.

For more information about the Pomfret Proprietors Association, see to VisitPomfret.com. To learn about the Pomfret Community Market, visit <https://www.pomfretct.gov/home/pages/food-pantry>.

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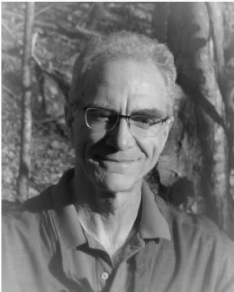
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Always a Time for Gratitude and Joy

“Piglet noticed that even though he had a Very small Heart, it could hold a rather large amount of Gratitude.”
A.A. Milne, *Winnie the Pooh*

By Bill Powers

The coming holidays will provide, in case we forget due to the distractions and the busyness of life, an opportunity to appreciate and recognize what is valuable and meaningful for us. Taking the goodness in life for granted is easy because it is often made up of the simple things in life. Winnie The Pooh and his buddies prompt us to value and to be grateful for things big and small. The holiday season beginning with Thanksgiving is a traditional time for us to express our gratitude and experience feelings of joy.

Historically, “In the Colony of Connecticut, the first proclamation for a time of Thanksgiving was called for September 18, 1639, and two others were on record in 1644 and 1649. These are significant because civil authorities proclaimed this day of thanksgiving and focused on general blessings and thanks for well-being which was a step toward the holiday we know today.” (Maryanne Daly Doran, Thomas J. Meskill Law Library, UConn School of Law, November 18, 2023) The New England Historical Society stresses: “New England’s theocratic governments called for public days of fasting or thanksgiving in response to political or natural events. They could happen several times a year.”

Recently, at church on a Sunday when there wasn’t a priest, and a prayer meeting was held instead, an interesting and well-prepared homily was given by a parishioner that involved gratitude and joy. This was based on the week’s reading from Luke 17: 11-19. It is the story of Jesus curing 10 lepers and only one returned to express his gratitude. The parishioner skillfully coupled the concepts of gratitude and joy. She introduced Beethoven’s 4th movement of his 9th Symphony and the familiar melody “Hymn of Joy” – “Joyful, Joyful, we adore thee...” (lyrics by Henry van Dyke). I know this hymn well and Beethoven’s movement, and hearing it always brings joy to my heart.

With this said, last year during the holiday season in Willimantic’s Jillson Square Park, a colorful welcoming display faced Main Street welcoming all to Windham. I was grateful to be able to view the display which provoked a joyous moment. *See the photo accompanying this story.* The special display emphasized the holiday season. Joy is an intense feeling of happiness or delight. It exceeds simple contentment. It can arise naturally from events we experience in life but can also be acquired through intentional practicing and the expressing of gratitude. Theologian David Steindl-Rast reminds us: “It is not joy that makes us grateful; it is gratitude that makes us joyful.”

Finally, there is a profound and multifaceted connection between gratitude and joy. Our psychological well-being is enhanced and there is a positive ripple effect to our relationships with others and the community where we live. Realize and express your Gratitude frequently thereby cultivating Joy in your life. Be sure to Appreciate Life! Always a time for Gratitude and Joy!

Bill Powers is a former teacher and Licensed Professional Counselor.

Thanking Our Veterans

By Carol Wheelock Hall

In autumn 2025 a ceremony, sponsored by our representatives, was held at Beckish Sr. Center to recognize, honor and award Columbia, Ct.’s veterans from the Korean and Vietnam War eras. Our senior center was the perfect hostess in this well attended, interactive, and enlightening program for our vets and their families. Thanks goes to all for the planning and putting on this event.

Some of us, including myself, have not been in the military, although many of our family members may have been, and some may be currently on active duty. We respect and honor all those who serve to protect our people and our freedoms. We have all heard the stories and know that the training is tough. Not all serve in combat, but they still serve in many other ways. Some serve by supporting the military by transporting goods and personnel, and by managing machinery or technology. Others prepare places of refuge, and some care for the injured, just to name a few placements for those who are called to serve our country. A variety of skills is needed and put to good use.

Those who served in war often endured terrible conditions. Besides being a target of the enemy, they may have had harsh weather conditions and difficult terrain, sometimes without adequate resources. Sadly, we know that not all service people return home in the same condition as in their departure. The time away and then adjusting to home after duty is often very difficult for the military person as well as for their family, as the mind and body may have altered with circumstances endured.

From movies, ceremonies, and conversations we know about the bond of servicemen, and how they looked out for one another to survive. Most veterans will tell you that although our country has problems, the USA is still the best place to be. We heard this repeated at the award ceremony. Thank you for helping to preserve that status for us. Thank you to all veterans for keeping our families safe.

Chosen Song

The quiet song starts out small
and builds into a roaring crescendo
of a battle cry aimed towards all.

The chosen song has a chorus of
division, fear, hate and pain.

One hint of a mind or a voice of
your own, is quickly met with
fiery disdain and fingers pointing to
be silent and to stay in your own lane.

Souls are indiscriminately bought and
sold for a price, as humanity is irreverently
stripped away without thinking twice.

One percent are perched high on
their mountain of greed.
Proudly waving a flag of superiority
in the face of the poor and those in need.

When it is all said and done,
it will be hope, grace, and faith that
will bridge the cavernous divide.
It will be love, respect and integrity,
that gives diplomacy a place to abide.

Lynda George Bowen

The Windham Theatre Guild
announces auditions
for their February production of
“The Importance of Being Earnest”
by Oscar Wilde.

Auditions will be on Sunday, December 7
and Monday, December 8.

More specific information
will be available on our website:
www.windhamtheatreguild.org



Savanna Rivera of Willimantic takes a turn painting on the recreation of “The Spirit of ‘76” masterpiece at the Willimantic 3rd Thursday Street Festival. Contributed photo.

Painting American Freedom

Submitted by Bev York

In Willimantic this past summer, the community had an opportunity to recreate famous paintings representing American Freedom. At the 3rd Thursday Street Festivals, there was an easel set up with a sketch of the painting. Festival goers would stop and many would yield a brush and paint a section. They received a mini lesson on the story of the painting and the artist.

According to Bev York, the project met its goal of engaging people of all ages, sharing some art images of freedom and celebrating the Americans who won and secured democracy. The comments ranged from “tell me about this work to I have seen this somewhere,” Many folks knew about the works of art.

The four paintings in the project were: *Freedom of Speech*, *Frederick Douglass*, *Pulling Down the Statue of King George III*, and *The Spirit of ‘76*.

Freedom of Speech is one of four freedom paintings by New England artist and illustrator Norman Rockwell. He painted the famous set in 1947 to illustrate the freedoms outlined by President Roosevelt during World War 2.

On Juneteenth, the painting was a Pop Art rendition of a photograph of Frederick Douglass, an American social reformer, abolitionist, orator, writer, and statesman. He was an important leader of the civil rights movement and the most photographed American in the 19th century. The photo was taken in c.1879 by George K. Warren. In 1876, Johannes Adam Simon Ortel, recorded a historic moment in *The Pulling Down of the Statue of King George at Bowling Green, N. Y.* On July 9, 1776, the newly approved Declaration was read in New York City. The crowd was excited about being independent from a tyrant king. They marched over to Bowling Green and proceeded to pull down the gold covered statue from its pedestal. The lead base of the statue was brought to Connecticut and melted into 42,000 bullets for the Continental army.

The Spirit of ‘76 was painted by Archibald Willard in 1875 for the American Centennial. The image of the confident and courageous soldiers: drummers, a fifer and a flag bearer rally the crowd celebrating victory for Independence. On another educational note drummers were usually teenage boys too young to bear arms and drumming served many purposes from marching, raising morale and sending messages to the soldiers during battle.

The Community Paints Freedom paintings are unframed on foam core and measure up to 3 feet by 4 feet. They make a colorful and meaningful display as we celebrate the semiquincentennial or 250th Birthday of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

York has been distributing free color copies of the Declaration of Independence document and painting by John Trumbull of Lebanon. (copies were funded by Liberty Bank) Trumbull is the “Painter of the American Revolution”. John is the son of Governor Jonathan Trumbull, who played a major role in provisioning the troops during the war.

Any schools, libraries or groups may inquire about a program of the Freedom Paintings, The Declaration of Independence by John Trumbull and other historic topics. bevishistory@yahoo.com

Doris Troy

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 Doris Troy, best known for 1963’s “Just One Look.”

She was born Doris Elaine Higgensen in the Bronx, NY, on January 6, 1937. She came up singing in her father’s choir as her parents denounced so-called “subversive” music like Rhythm & Blues. The girl would, however, sneak out to see shows at Harlem’s famed Apollo Theater, where she got a job as an usherette at age sixteen.

She spent her off-duty hours at a restaurant where unemployed artists and composers hung out. As Doris Payne (her grandmother’s surname), she began writing songs like “How About That,” a 1959 hit for Dee Clark. She made exactly \$100 off the song. During this time, she also formed a vocal group called the Halos, who never recorded.

Taking her stage name from Helen of Troy, she worked as a background singer for Atlantic Records along with sisters Dionne and Dee Dee Warwick. The three of them, joined by Cissy Houston (Whitney’s mother), formed a vocal group called the Sweet Inspirations. (They continued as a trio when Troy left to pursue her solo career.)

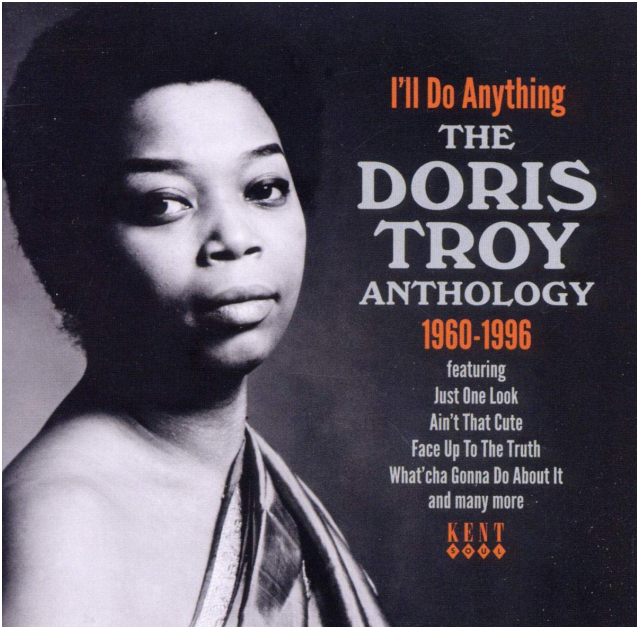
At Atlantic, Troy sang on recordings by Solomon Burke, the Drifters, Dionne Warwick, and Cissy Houston before she wrote “Just One Look” (as Doris Payne). She recorded the song in one take as a demo and brought it to Juggy Murray of Sue Records, who sat on it. But Atlantic’s Jerry Wexler loved the track and thought it was good enough to release without re-recording it. “Just One Look” hit #3 on the R&B chart and #10 pop in the summer of 1963. At the time, Troy was touring as a backup singer for Chuck Jackson. Next thing she knew, with a hit single, she was a featured act on the show!

The success of “Just One Look” prompted Atlantic to released an identically titled album on Troy, who either wrote or co-wrote eight of its twelve tracks. It yielded the single, “What’cha Gonna Do About It,” which made the R&B chart at #21 but missed the Hot 100 pop survey. While sales were disappointing, Atlantic did not give up on Troy, including her in the line-up of its 1964 live album, *Apollo Saturday Night*.

By the mid ‘60s, Troy had left Atlantic and turned up on Calla Records. Her 1965 release, “I’ll Do Anything (He Wants Me to Do),” became a huge favorite of England’s Northern Soul scene. Troy later made one single for Capitol, which did nothing.

In 1969, she relocated to London. There, Troy was signed to the Beatles’ Apple label, which released a self-titled album on her in 1970. She co-produced the LP with George Harrison. Troy worked in England throughout the early ‘70s, appearing at Ronnie Scott’s club. She released a live album, *The Rainbow Testament*, in 1972 and a studio LP, *Stretching Out*, in 1974.

Troy also got a lot of studio work. She sang on the Rolling Stones’ “You Can’t Always Get What You Want,” Pink Floyd’s *Dark Side of the Moon*, and Carly Simon’s “You’re



So Vain.” She also lent her voice to Kevin Ayers, Edgar Broughton, Junior Campbell, Nick Drake, Johnny Hallyday, George Harrison, Humble Pie, John Lennon & Yoko Ono, Led Zeppelin, Paul & Linda McCartney, the Moody Blues, Dusty Springfield, and Vivian Stanshall (among others). She returned to the U.S. in 1973, worked in Las Vegas with Lola Falana, and cut a single for Midland Records in 1977.

In 1983, *Mama, I Want to Sing*, a stage musical based on Troy’s life, opened at the Heckscher Theater in New York’s Spanish Harlem. She co-wrote the musical with her sister, Vy Higgensen, and played her own mother, Geraldine. It ran for 1,500 performances. In 2012, *Mama, I Want to Sing* was made into a straight-to-DVD movie.

Rock critic Dave Marsh included “Just One Look” in his 1989 book, *The Heart of Rock and Soul: The 1001 Greatest Singles Ever Made*. The song has been remade by acts like the Hollies, Faith Hope & Charity, Major Lance, Linda Ronstadt, Bryan Ferry, Anne Murray, Klaus Nomi, and Harry Nilsson (in a duet with Linda Ronstadt). It was also used in commercials for Pepsi, Hyundai, and Mazda, and appeared in the 1990 Cher movie, *Mermaids*.

Doris Troy, 67, died of emphysema at her home in Las Vegas on February 16, 2004.

Charted singles:

“Just One Look” (1963) R&B #3, Pop #10

“What’cha Gonna Do About It” (1963) R&B #21, Pop #102

“Tomorrow Is Another Day” (1963) Pop #118

“Please Little Angel” (1964) Pop #128

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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Tai Chi Home

We’re In For It Now

By Joe Pandolfo

All in the same moment, the sun is disappearing at the tree line and the moon’s lifting into the east sky. We’re in for it now. Here comes a wind of Yin season, sweeping overhead with the voices of the geese.



Time is getting tight to close things up and button things down for those long nights coming. Stowing away what we can of the last gold warmth from the garden, there’s that late-hour feeling in the air.

But keep heart. When the coldest night comes, you’ve got “heaven qi” deep down... treasure from the ancestors, there from the beginning, and forever ready to reach for.

Finding Appaquage: Windham’s Lost Boundary Keeps Its True-Edge Secret

By Martin Moebus

May 23, 2026, marks the 350th anniversary of the burial of Joshua Attawanhood Uncas, the Mohegan leader who granted the land that became Windham. One hopes the town will commemorate this significant milestone with the recognition it deserves. In preparation for this occasion, I’ll share with you some research on Windham’s earliest history as well as informed speculations rooted in the surviving historical evidence. I invite historians and scholars alike to join me in uncovering a clearer understanding of Windham’s origins as we celebrate this important milestone.

Joshua Attawanhood Uncas, son of Uncas, spent many days in his lands in Lyme, Connecticut. He long favored living there since obtaining the land through a marriage to one of his three wives, Sowgonosk, a daughter of the Podunk sachem Arramamet. A prominent rock along the Connecticut River is known as Joshua’s Rock, “from which, like the robber barons of the Rhine, he discharged arrows at persons passing up and down the river in boats or canoes and compelled them to land to pay him tribute,” according to apocryphal tales told by later settlers.¹ A more believable story is that Joshua would look down to watch fellow tribal members fishing in the river. Later, the area around Joshua’s Rock became a quarry for paving stones for New York City.

At age 46, Attawanhood Uncas lay dying—almost certainly of wounds sustained in fighting alongside the English in King Philip’s War. With death approaching, he composed his last will and testament. It begins: “I, Joshua Uncas, Sachem, son of Uncas, Sachem, living nigh eight mile Island on the river Connecticut and within the boundary of Lyme, being sick in body but of good and perfect memory and not knowing how soon I may depart this life, do make this my last will and testament.”

Out of the will’s 97 lines, nine are dedicated to granting the land that would become Windham to fourteen individuals: “I give and bequeath all that tracke of land lying to the westward of Appaquage,² and Eastward from Willimantucke River, South from Appaquague Pond, eight miles board and according to the Mappe—to be divided and distributed amongst them and every of them as my Father Uncas shall see meet and Convenient.”³ The will includes a final request: “I desire to be buried at Saybrook, in a Coffin after an English manner and that my Legatees at Say Brook would see this done.” Today, the location of Joshua’s grave, like that of the original will, remains a mystery.⁴ Notably, an earlier record from the Connecticut Court indicates that Joshua was granted permission to purchase a horse for his interpreter, whom he used when meeting with James Fitch of Norwich, one of the inheritors mentioned in the will. This suggests that he likely spoke little or no English. We don’t know if he truly grasped what he was signing, or if terms like “miles” held any meaning for him.

So where is this Appaquage? Where are the original boundaries, eight miles broad, bounded by the Willimantic River on one side, with Appaquage on the other? Historian Lincoln Allen, writing in 1920, believed it to be in the southeastern part of Eastford. Writer Susan Griggs of Hampton thought in 1950 it was at the Lewis farm on Route 97 in Hampton. In 1898, the town clerk, a Mr. Dimmick, concluded that the original location was at the northeast corner of Hampton on the Pomfret boundary. Hampton’s historian, Robert Burgoyne, through his study of original land grants, reached the same conclusion about the settlers’ belief. No doubt the founders of Hampton believed this was the place. But is it the original Appaquage? Drawing upon Joshua’s will and an account recorded by Ellen Larned, I arrive at a different conclusion.

When the English First Laid Eyes on Windham

Two years after Joshua’s death, “[i]n May, 1678, the General Court of Connecticut allowed and established Joshua’s Will and granted the legatees liberty to possess all Joshua’s rights in this land.”⁵ Uncas chose Robin Cassasinamon, a Pequot, to guide the English in identifying the boundaries.⁶

Robin, accompanied by Lt. Thomas Leffingwell, surveyor Nathaniel Bushnell, and several other beneficiaries in the will, departed Norwich. According to Larned: “Passing through Mamosqueage—a strip north of Norwich reserved for Joshua’s children—he led them eight miles northward along an Indian trail known as the Nipmuck Path to a wet flag-meadow just north of the trail, which he identified as Appaquage.” This marked the boundary of their new lands, becoming the northernmost part of Windham.

The next morning, they traveled ten miles west to the Willimantic River, where they stayed overnight, thus becoming the first English people to sleep in the Willimantic area. They returned to Norwich the next day. The boundaries were laid out and marked by a long-gone white oak, eight miles down from Appaquage.



Photo of new Appaquage.

Photo by author.

Reconstructing Appaquage

So, again, where is Appaquage? The Larned story recounts a journey of eight miles north from Mamosqueage to reach Appaquage. So, the key to finding Appaquage is to find Mamosqueage. If we can identify Mamosqueage, we can measure eight miles northward to the approximate site of Appaquage.

According to Larned’s map, the upper eastern boundary of Mamosqueage lies between the Frog Pond and the Shetucket River—probably near Indian Hollow Road today. Mamosqueage lands extended to the west bank of the Little River, which was where the Nipmuc Path lay. North along the path is Appaquage.

We also have the locations of the original lots of Windham, now in Windham Center, which were just outside of Mamosqueage boundaries. Mamosqueage lands were reserved for Joshua’s children. They were claimed by Owaneco, his brother, and the Mohegan sachem who succeeded Uncas. Mohegans lived and hunted there. Windham plots certainly lie within the boundaries defined in Joshua’s will. Local residents like the Mohegan Mooch family, living near the future Waldo House, would have noticed settlers building in the wrong location.

According to both the will and the journey, Appaquage lies west no more than eight miles north (and to the east) of these Windham lots. Unfortunately, the northeastern Hampton location lies *ten* miles north, not eight miles, from the Windham settlements. This is outside the lands granted in Joshua’s will by about two miles. Thus, the present-day Hampton Appaquage cannot be the location of Windham’s first northerly boundary.

Additional evidence comes from the journey the next day. The English travelers journeyed ten miles from Appaquage to the Willimantic River. The distance from the northeastern Hampton site to the mouth of the Willimantic River is at least twelve miles. Since the settlers then traveled down the Willimantic River to Mamosqueage, the actual location they camped at must have been even further upriver and farther away.

Finally, Hampton was settled in 1712, thirty-six years after Joshua’s death and the granting of Windham’s lands. At the time Joshua drafted his will in 1676, the territory in northern Hampton was under Nipmuc control, rather than Mohegan, and was not owned by Joshua. With King Philip’s War going on at the time of his death, it is unlikely the Nipmucs would be giving up their lands to Joshua!

My Thesis

After King Philip’s War, Nipmuc power in Connecticut was much reduced. Any Nipmucs in Windham County allied with Philip against the English would have forfeited their lands. As in the aftermath of the Pequot War, Uncas claimed ownership over conquered territories, including these former Nipmuc lands. The English had a vested interest in Uncas’s new claims and were not impartial observers. Previously, the Mohegans had conveyed large tracts of land to the settlers, and they expected additional grants in the future. For example, Wabaquasset County, which encompasses areas of present-day Tolland, was originally Nipmuc territory before becoming Mohe-

gan. James Fitch, who already had been granted land in Windham, received extensive Nipmuc and Wabaquasset lands from Owaneco, Uncas’s son.

Subsequent maps, such as John Chandler’s, were produced after the war when northern Hampton became part of the Mohegan lands granted to the English. My guess is that on these later maps, Appaquage was placed on Nipmuc lands to support English claims and to further land donations by the Mohegans.

For a native perspective, the website Native Land Digital (*native-land.ca*) shows approximate tribal boundaries. Native boundaries were not straight lines but somewhat fluid, with different tribes sharing boundary lands at various times. At the time, Willimantic and land to the south were under Mohegan domain. Above Mansfield Center to the north was mixed, more Nipmuc than Mohegan. South of Sherman Corner/Clark’s Corner, the mix was more Mohegan than Nipmuc. Above old Route 6 was solid Nipmuc territory.

So, given that the northeastern Hampton location is too far north and not Mohegan land, where was the original Appaquage? As the term “Appaquage” means “place where rushes or flags (cattails) grow,” it could refer to any number of locations in and around (most likely) Hampton. We can find one that best aligns with the travelers’ account and Joshua’s will.

My thoughts are that the original Appaquage is in the vicinity of Pine Acres Lake today, near the existing Nipmuc/Mohegan boundary. While the area has undergone drastic changes over time, it still retains many of the original swampy areas that can be described as a “wet flag meadow,” including Brown Hill Marsh. The Pine Acres Lake area is approximately ten miles from the Willimantic River and also about eight miles from where the original lots of Windham’s first settlements were laid out, fitting well both the story Larned tells in her history and the record from Joshua’s will.

Why did Joshua give the Windham lands away? I believe that, in Windham’s case, Joshua was strategically giving the English lands on the boundary between the Mohegan and the Nipmuc tribes. English settlement would provide a buffer between the tribes and create a powerful ally for the Mohegans after the war.

Finally, where was the first Windham encampment? Rather than leading the English back to Norwich along the shorter route from Appaquage, Robin guided them to the Willimantic River, tracing the boundaries of the land they had been granted. Following the Mohegan boundaries shown on the Native Land Digital site, a ten-mile route from the Pine Lake area leads us to the Willimantic River near the Mansfield Drive-in. Based on distance and direction, I would suggest—albeit speculatively—that this area may be the location of that first campsite!

1. Oscar Jewell Harvey, *The Harvey Book: Giving the Genealogies of Certain Branches of the American Families of Harvey, Nesbitt, Dixon and Jameson, and Notes on Many Other Families, Together with Numerous Biographical Sketches* (Wilkes-Barre, PA: 1899), page 77.
2. Appaquage is a Nipmuck word for “land of cattails,” which were traditionally used for making mats. Could the idea of the “Eight Mile bequest” have originated from living on Eight Mile Island?
3. Uncas lived until 1683, reaching 94 years. His great-great-grandson, Abimelech Uncas III, would fight in the Revolutionary War, as told in another tale.
4. Jonathan Clark of Hampton, Connecticut, discovered a copy of the will among old Windham records. That copy is now preserved at the Windham Town Hall. The “official” will was published in *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register* in 1859. The “Mappe” (map) is lost.
5. Ellen D. Larned, *History of Windham County, Connecticut* (Worcester, MA: 1874).
6. At this time, the Pequots were under Mohegan rule. Robin, a well-respected servant to Gov. John Winthrop in Boston, later worked for John Winthrop Jr. in New London. Previously, he arranged with Governor Winthrop for a Pequot maiden from his household to be given to Uncas as a bride. Perhaps Uncas chose him because of his English skills. Robin Cassasinamon became the governor of the Pequots and was instrumental in freeing his people from Mohegan control, obtaining approximately 2,500 acres of land that would one day become the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation’s land. There were deep connections between the tribes, as Robin, a Pequot, knew where the future Windham boundary lay.

8 Ways to Reduce Your 2025 Tax Bill Before Year’s End

By Holly C. Wanegar, CFP® , Vice President, Associate Financial Advisor

As we move into the last quarter of 2025, it’s important to think about strategies to reduce your tax burden before the year ends. With significant changes to tax law on the horizon and current opportunities available, proactive tax planning can help you keep more of your hard-earned money in your pocket. Don’t wait until December or worse yet, get caught frantically searching for deductions when you’re preparing your return in the new year. Here’s what to know and do right now instead...



1. Understand your 2025 tax landscape and where your liability currently stands.

The first step is, of course, to know where you stand. Understanding which tax bracket you’re in—and more importantly, how to potentially stay in a lower one—is crucial for effective tax planning. A key income threshold to watch for high-income filers is \$197,300 for single filers and \$394,600 for married couples filing jointly. These are the thresholds for moving from the 24% to the 32% tax bracket, making income timing strategies particularly valuable for those approaching these levels.

2. Maximize your retirement contributions.

One of the most effective ways to reduce your current tax bill is by maximizing contributions to tax-deferred retirement accounts. Every dollar you contribute to a traditional IRA or 401(k) reduces your taxable income dollar-for-dollar, providing immediate tax relief. So, review your current contribution levels and increase them if possible. If you’re over 50, don’t forget about catch-up contributions that allow you to save even more. If you have a 401(k), 403(b), or a governmental 457 plan or Thrift Savings Plan, your maximum contribution increases to \$23,500 for 2025. If you have an IRA, you can contribute up to \$7,000 for tax year 2025, the same as for tax year 2024. And if you’re over 50, you can contribute an additional \$1,000 per individual.

3. Leverage Health Savings Accounts (HSAs).

HSAs offer a rare triple tax advantage: contributions are tax-deductible, growth is tax-free, and withdrawals for qualified medical expenses are also tax-free. If you are eligible to contribute to an HSA, contribution limits are \$4,300 for self-only coverage and \$8,550 for family coverage for 2025. There are no carryover limits, so if you haven’t yet hit the maximum contribution for this year and you want to reduce your tax liability, making an additional contribution to your HSA is a great way to do so.

4. Take advantage of Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs).

If you have an FSA, be sure to use all the funds by year’s end, as funds cannot be carried over to next year. For 2026, the IRS increases the maximum you can contribute tax-free to a dependent care account to \$7,500 per household (or \$3,750 if married filing separately), potentially providing significant savings for families with childcare expenses. So plan accordingly by contributing more funds to this account next year.

5. Implement Tax-Loss Harvesting

If you have investment accounts outside of retirement plans, tax-loss harvesting can be a valuable strategy. If you sold other investments at a loss, you can use those losses to offset your gains. This tactic, called tax-loss harvesting, helps lower your overall tax bill. You can even deduct up to \$3,000 of net capital losses against your regular income each year if your losses exceed your gains. Review your investment portfolio with your financial advisor to identify opportunities for tax-loss harvesting before year-end.

6. Consider Charitable Giving Strategies

A donor-advised fund is a charitable fund you can set up that allows you to decide how and when to allocate funds to individual charities. You can make contributions this year and take the full tax deductions on your tax return, thus reducing your tax bill. This strategy is particularly effective if you expect to be in a higher tax bracket this year or if you’ve had an unusually high-income year due to bonuses, stock options, or other windfalls.

7. Plan for Education Expenses

If you have children, grandchildren, or are considering further education for yourself, consider contributing to a 529 college savings account, where earnings and withdrawals are federal income tax-free when used for qualified education expenses. While 529 contributions aren’t deductible on your federal return, many states offer tax deductions or credits for contributions to their state’s plan, providing immediate tax benefits while saving for education expenses.

8. Review Your Withholdings and Estimated Payments

As we progress through 2025, it’s important to review whether you’re having enough tax withheld from your paychecks or if you need to adjust your estimated quarterly payments. The goal is to avoid both overpaying (which gives the government an interest-free loan of your money) and underpaying (which can result in penalties).

Now and all year long, remember that timing is everything when it comes to taxes.

Many of these strategies require action well before December 31st. For instance, if you want to maximize your 401(k) contributions, you need to adjust your payroll deductions now to ensure you hit the annual limit. Similarly, tax-loss harvesting should be considered throughout the year, not just at year-end.

The expiration of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) at the end of 2025 may catch some high-income individuals off-guard. While recent legislation has extended many TCJA provisions, it’s still important to plan for potential changes and consider strategies that might be more valuable this year than next.

Effective tax planning isn’t about finding loopholes or taking excessive risks—it’s about using legitimate strategies to legally minimize your tax burden while supporting your long-term financial goals. The strategies outlined above work best when implemented as part of a comprehensive financial plan.

Remember, tax laws are complex and constantly changing. What works for one person may not be appropriate for another, depending on their income level, family situation, and financial goals.

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Dear Reader-
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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

Connecting with Nature: Peace, Love, and Transitioning in the Autumnal Season

By Jesse R. Clark

It’s interesting, writing an article in September for a November/December issue that will come out in October. Fortunately, these four months all have one thing in common: fall. I have always liked fall more than spring. I think this has to do with the fact that we tend to think of things in a contradictory way when it comes to the seasons. We like to think of spring as the start of a new cycle—the earth has come back to life—yet we start the school year in September. I don’t mind; this is part of my love for fall—the new year with the crisp air cooling us down from the heat of the summer. There is a real energy to the season. This led me to the realization that maybe I don’t like fall over spring as much as I like early fall over early spring, when it is still wintertime. This is why some people don’t like fall—they see it as a transition to winter, as they are holding on to summer. Transitions are difficult, but they can also be liberating. They cause us to face an unknown future, but hopefully a better one. Use these transitions to face the question we may fear: what comes next? Leaves naturally fall onto the ground; lakes, blown by the wind, are not worried about where their journey takes them. May we let go in kind.

September 21 was the International Day of Peace, also called World Peace Day. This is interesting because there is another World Peace Day on November 17 (right after World Kindness Day on November 13). This just goes to show you how much we are in need of it! For World Peace Day, September 21, I was able to spend the day working at the Connecticut Renaissance Faire. Between being out in nature and being around creative spirits, I felt spiritual joy. This day was perfect, for it was not only right before the autumnal equinox, but it was also a partial solar eclipse (what energy!) and a new moon, a time for manifesting. And boy, do we need to manifest some peace. Now, the idea of manifesting can be misunderstood; it’s not simply wishing, meditating, or wanting, it’s about internalizing an intention, a vision, a dream, and working to make it a reality. This time of year, especially experiencing the balance of the autumnal equinox, is a beautiful time for that. Global peace begins with inner peace. Here is a meditation I had about stillness and undoing the lessons that were taught to us as children by society:

I am not in competition. I don’t have to be the quickest, smartest, funniest, or have perfect attendance. Others are there to lift me up, help me improve. We all have a part to play. I don’t have to do everything, just what I can do.

I can go at my own pace, not be hurried by others. Peace is an active state. When life is chaotic, choosing peace is a form of resistance.

Stillness is a physically active choice. When I hear the voice telling me to move, getting upset that others are slow, I can choose to slow down and be still. Let others rush, move. I resist and observe.

My stillness sends a message to those around me—I shall not be moved.

Though instinctively my mind races to unwanted, unhelpful thoughts,

I can breathe and give them caring love as I calmly redirect my thoughts to that of The Divine.

Letting go of concern for the future by saying, “Where am I now?,”

I find divine peace.

I have faith and trust that things will happen when they are supposed to happen. It’s okay that I am not doing what I perceive I should be doing right now. It will happen when it’s supposed to. I don’t need to be in a hurry.

If I am running late, being stressed out isn’t going to make it any better.

Instinctively, I tense, absorbing the energy of those around me, frustrated,

hearing the voice drilled into me by society that I should be upset and move quickly.

Still, I wait. If I end up being late, it’s not the end of the world, and I might not even be late.

In stillness, I observe, I listen. I am aware of myself inside and out, physically, emotionally, spiritually.

I am calm like the water moving back and forth with my breath.

I glow in the truth that everything will work out. My faith, my trust, fill me with joy.

I can move forward by being still.

I don’t have to stress myself out, looking busy, on the move just to prove myself to others.

By being still, I can do my job and focus before acting. I can allow things to come to me by being still rather than by running after them in a panic.

My heart, my mind, my body are open to receive peace that I can give to others.

Grace, love, care.

Self-care, for may we not only forgive others as God forgives us,

but may we also forgive ourselves.

When it comes to peace and changing the world, it can seem like a lot. I don’t have to tell you about the intense division and violence happening. You want less gun violence, political or otherwise? Pass gun control laws. Less school shootings, less political shootings. We are destroying each other and our home—this beautiful planet. Do we hold on to what we have been doing, or do we work together to find a new way of survival? Do we wear that springtime jacket when it’s still cold out of stubbornness, or will we dress in something warmer? Do we forgo the light jacket needed for the slight fall chill as we cling to the idea of the warmth of summer? With Election Day, we can use our voice instead of violence. There is hope, for in the mist of crumbling, the beauty of nature has a way of peeking through the cracks. Will we pave over the garden of roses blossoming, or will we give gratitude to nature and her beauty?

Through the energy of being outside during the early fall, I feel as if I can create magic. As I hear a drum beat or a flute playing, I am transported to another state of mind, realizing that many cultures use drums and flutes to play the sounds of the earth. It is a spiritual practice that stretches across the entire globe, communicating with the ancestors, trying to express ourselves in this story. I realize I am standing on the land that has been around long before our ancestors were here—the ancestors of place, those who have lived on the land that I am now on, regardless of blood relation. I cry as my spirit feels like it has returned home, grounded to the earth and soaring to the sky.

I see a candle. I look at the flame and see Day of the Dead celebrations with candles on gravestones. I see people holding a vigil on November 20th, the Transgender Day of Remembrance—a day to remember those who have been killed by hatred’s cold hand—and vigils on December 1st for World AIDS Day, thinking of those suffering from the physical disease made worse by ignorance and fear. I see candles on a dining room table on Veterans Day, honoring those living and dead. I think of Diwali, the Hindu celebration of light conquering darkness. I see the lights of Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and Christmas, offering hope and warmth on the cold winter nights. Do I fear those nights? No, for I shall rest, like nature, staying warm in the winter, enjoying the sun in the early fall. I am happy. I am at peace. In my stillness, I move forward. In my peace, I resist fear and anger.

We must acknowledge our darkness. In order to see the light, we need to see the darkness. In order to heal, we need to face our pain. The history of this country, as all countries, has darkness. We can’t let our own fears and judgments of others get the better of us. That’s what the Witch Trials were: people so scared of evil and monsters that they became the same monsters they were trying to get rid of. Let go of that fear. Let go of that hate, like a tree shedding its leaves. Unlearn those lessons. As the music of the land fills the air, we take a deep breath, letting go, embracing the transition, ready to bring light and warmth into a time of darkness and cold, celebrating and giving thanks to each new day. Blessed be.

COVENTRY CHILI FEST

The Coventry Chili Fest is back for another year. Sponsored by the Coventry Lions Club, the Chili Fest will take place on Saturday Nov.8 from 12-2pm at Coventry High School. Prizes will be awarded. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$7 for seniors and student ID, and free for age 6 and under. Information will be available on the Lions’ Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/CoventryLionsClub> or the Lions Club of Coventry website. New chili cooks are welcome to the competition.

Celebrating Community and Conservation: WLT’s 3rd Annual Ride for Open Space

Submitted by Amy Burroughs, Office Manager, Wyndham Land Trust

On October 5th, the Wyndham Land Trust held its 3rd Annual Ride for Open Space fundraiser at our Cabbage Hill Preserve in Woodstock. It was a beautiful day filled with sunshine and community spirit. Riders enjoyed more than nine miles of scenic trails winding through Nightingale Forest, a network that connects conserved lands and private properties.

We’re deeply grateful to the generous landowners who opened their fields and trails for this event, allowing us to showcase the beauty of our shared landscape. This year’s ride was our largest yet — and extra special as we celebrated WLT’s 50th anniversary!



Our dedicated committee — Sue Jackson (Co-Chair), Penny Foisey (Co-Chair), Penny Gladstone-Kaiser (Marketing), and Nina Kneeland (Fundraising) — worked tirelessly to make it a memorable day for all.

We extend heartfelt thanks to our community sponsors whose support makes these events possible: Presenting Sponsors: bankHometown, Bay State Trail Riders, New England Plasma, Pomfret Horse and Trail Association, The Inn at Woodstock Hill, and Weiss, Hale & Zahansky.

Trail Sponsors: Green Valley Hospitality, Line-master, Mackey’s, Triple Crown.

Preserve Sponsors: Advanced Back & Wellness, Jewett City Savings Bank, Rocco’s Lawn Care, Spirol, and Stargazer Farm.

Thanks to their generosity, every rider received a commemorative sweatshirt, and 100% of registration fees went directly to support WLT’s conservation mission. Lunch was provided by The Rolling Tomato, whose brick-oven pizza is always a hit, and We-Li-Kit Ice Cream generously donated a delicious dessert.

We-Li-Kit has long supported our fundraising efforts, including the popular Ice Cream Ride — now in its second year — which takes riders from Legendary Farm to the We-Li-Kit shop. It’s hard to beat a trail ride that ends with an ice cream cone!

Nightingale Forest spans over 1,300 acres and features a well-established multiuse trail network originally created by Harry Townshend for bird dog trials. His family’s enduring appreciation for land stewardship lives on through this forest, now a cornerstone of our conserved lands.

In preparation for this year’s ride, WLT volunteers came together to replace a failing bridge — a significant project completed in just two days. The new bridge is safer, sturdier, and a testament to what can be accomplished when our community joins hands for conservation. We invite everyone to visit Nightingale Forest and experience its tranquility, wildlife, and natural beauty.

Founded in 1975 by Virginia (Jimmie) Booth, Phil James, George Jackson, John Bigelow, Ben Williams III, Lois Orswell, and Dick Booth, the Wyndham Land Trust has spent five decades safeguarding the rural character and natural spaces of northeastern Connecticut.

As board member Jeff Stefanik wisely notes, “If WLT is successful, the road views and landscape do not change — so it’s easy not to notice how much has been accomplished.”

Our mission remains steadfast: to conserve land not only for wildlife and habitat, but for the enjoyment, health, and well-being of our community. Every acre protected and every trail maintained represents an investment in the shared future of our residents — where open space, clean air, and natural beauty remain part of everyday life.



Whitewashing America: The White Supremacist Drive to Cancel Black History

By Donna Dufresne

In January of 1781, Cato, an enslaved man who was owned by nine prominent men of Pomfret, was manumitted in exchange for enlisting and fighting in the 11th Regiment for the Continental Army. In the transcription of his manumission (Pomfret Land Records, vol. 8, pg. 154), it appears that Cato was still seeking liberty in 1794. But this was merely a legal formality, one of a flurry of manumissions recorded as the transfer of property in Pomfret between 1792 and 1795. Cato would have undergone an examination by a physician and interviews by town selectmen to determine that he was mentally and physically fit for freedom and could support himself. Samuel McClellan testified that Cato had indeed mustered and fought in the 11th Regiment in 1781 and thus earned his liberty.

Cato’s story is an American story, and American history at its best is grounded in primary source material, scholarship, and critical thinking. In this one document depicting an event in one small town in Connecticut during the Revolutionary War, we have the opportunity to study the intricate and complex relationships between the enslaved and how the laws were designed to both liberate and keep the liberated in their place. Cato was free, yet bound by the emergence of what we now call structural, or institutional, racism.

Previous manumission laws required “masters” to provide support for their freed slaves. Slavery laws in Connecticut made the enslavers liable for the lifelong care of former slaves. However, “the abolition law of 1784 allowed for an exception for masters who manumitted slaves. Under that law masters could get a certificate that freed them from this liability” (Witness to History: Slavery in Guilford, <https://slaveryinguilford.org/new-page>). In 1792 Connecticut passed a law to further protect former enslavers from liability, hence the numerous manumissions found in the land records at that time.

Cato’s freedom cost him dearly, robbing him of dignity in a lifelong steeples chase where the hurdles were constantly raised by laws responding to the Connecticut Gradual Abolition Act of 1784. Two steps forward. One step back. And yet he was not alone on the long road to freedom and equality. His story is an example of agency, resistance, and fortitude buried deep in the whitewashed and hallowed walls of American history, a story in the process of being redacted and replaced by a white supremacist narrative.

On July 4, 2025, we celebrated the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the document that inspired countless fledgling democracies across the globe to pen carbon-copy constitutions and build political systems that support justice and equality. It was supposed to be a moment of reckoning and hope that after 250 years of denial and exclusivity we could finally embrace the rich

understory of American history and celebrate the diversity of the American experience. Unfortunately, the scholarly goal of engaging Americans in conversations about the meaning of freedom in the context of a diverse and complex society were abruptly defunded and canceled during the Trump regime’s authoritarian dismantling of DEI initiatives and civil rights history in February of 2025. The continuing nationalistic purge has literally removed African American history from the Smithsonian Museums and archives in a revisionist whitewash and erasure of Black and brown people from American history.

To further rub salt in the wound, several Republican-led states have rewritten their American history curricula and implemented the systematic erasure of the contributions of Indigenous cultures, people of African descent, and immigrants in exchange for a whitewashed version of history that denies ordinary people a voice or a place in America’s past. Teachers now run the risk of being fired for mentioning slavery or the civil rights movement amid a *Brave New World* backlash and white supremacist power grab as promised and implemented by Donald J. Trump. This is *not* what democracy looks like. It is an exercise in white fragility, the tip of the iceberg driven by a white supremacist narrative that would be the envy of Nazi Germany.

Several years ago, I visited a cellar in an old colonial house which was used for a home industry in the eighteenth century. The stone walls had been meticulously whitewashed to reflect limited candlelight before electricity. But over the past 250 years, flaws were oozing to the surface. Water stains and the darker minerals in the local granitic gneiss were beginning to poke through and show their true colors. An earlier inhabitant tried to cover up the flaws, but truth has a way of bubbling to the surface.

Like that beautiful colonial foundation, our country has come to a place of reckoning with its past and the whitewashing of history. We can no longer hide the truth, because it has been steadily eating away at our flesh and bone. We have been exposed by the historic and present rhetoric of white supremacists and the pustule of uber-right extremism that oozed to the surface in 2016. White liberals like me were shocked by the blatant hate speech spewing from the cracks of social media onto the streets and, yes, from the White House when Trump emerged and reemerged.

“This is not America! This is not who we are!” we cried. But in fact it is exactly who we are and have been throughout history. Our Black, brown, and immigrant communities have known it all too well and continue to suffer the consequences. We have been told that by exposing the truth, *we* are dividing the country, as if throwing a coat of paint on or ignoring the facts will make them go away. Unfortunately, the cadence of our American dreams is still driven by the distant fumes of white supremacy.



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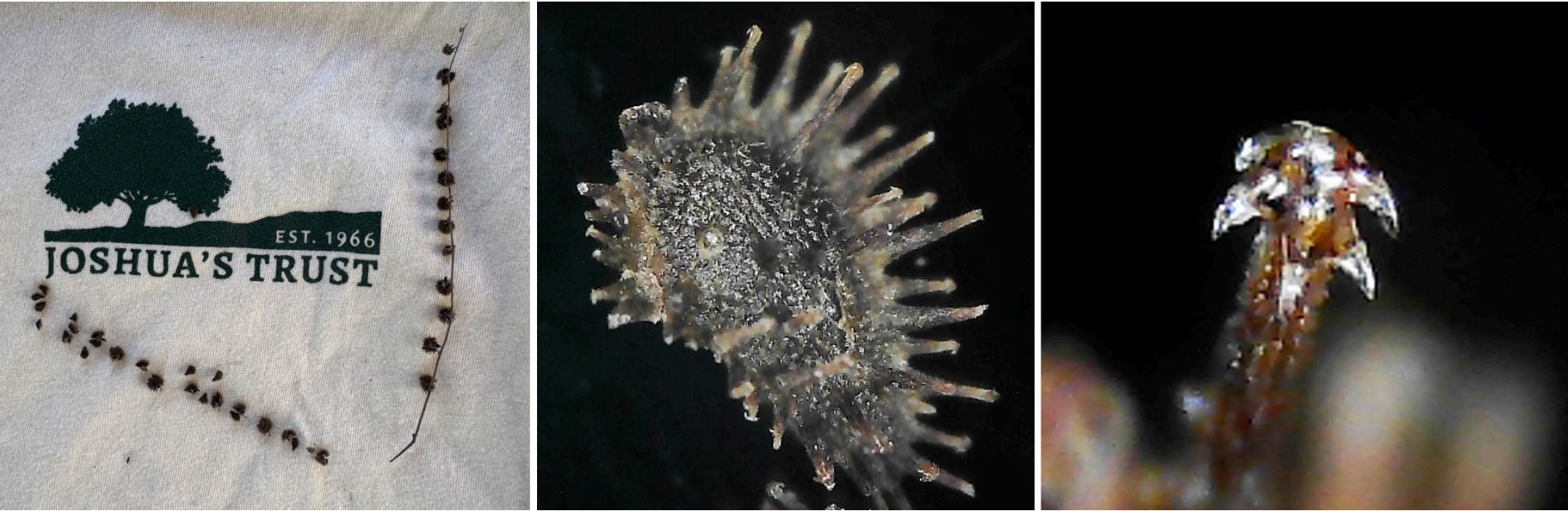
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Left: The seeded stem next to the logo is firmly attached by many prickly seeds; attempted removal by pulling the stem leaves behind the line of seeds (below the logo). Center: each seed has multiple spikes. Right: each spike sports a tiny barbed tip that defies extraction. Contributed photos.

Anatomy of a botanical hitchhiker

By Marie Cantino, Trustee, Joshua’s Trust

In recent years I have increasingly come to appreciate the beauty and benefits of botanical species that are indigenous to our region, so almost any plant native to New England is welcome in my garden. But there’s one plant towards which I bear uncharacteristic malice. Its scientific name is *Hackelia virginiana*, commonly known as Virginia Stickseed or Beggar’s Lice. It has attractive deep green foliage in the spring, is a food source for bees and songbirds and was important in Cherokee medicine, where it was used to treat skin and kidney issues and even as a love charm.

So why is it on my list of *planta non grata*? In late summer the flowers give way to long stems covered with small spiky seeds. While they presumably evolved to attach to the fur of passing animals, aiding in seed dispersal, they also happen to be perfectly designed to grab onto any piece of fabric that brushes by. The delicate stems then break off the plant and cling to their target via multiple seed anchors. It looks like an easy removal -- just grab the stem and pull it off. But this approach only leads to frustration when the stem immediately detaches, leaving 10-20 tiny seeds to remove. And each one sticks like Velcro on steroids.

The source of their tenacious grip becomes evident when the seeds are viewed at high power (I used a *Plugable* digital microscope, a little marvel of consumer technology.) Each seed is covered with a multitude of tiny spikes. When viewed at higher power, each spike can be seen to sport a tiny harpoon at its tip. These tips are diabolically designed to catch onto cloth fibers. The backward tilt of the barbs means they go in easily, but strongly resist extraction. And with multiple seeds, each with many spikes all at different angles, the chance of getting “hooked” is pretty much 100%.

Although I will continue to wage war on Virginia Stickseed in my garden, I do recognize that it plays an important role in the food chain. And I grudgingly admire the evolutionary process that has produced a seed so perfectly designed to hitch a ride and travel to parts unknown.

If you would like to support Joshua’s Trust and learn more about local wildlife, join Joshua’s Trust as an Annual Member and join us at one or more of our fall events, listed below.

Nature Walk at Joshua’s Trust Tinkerville Preserve

October 18, 2025, 9:00-11:00 am

Tinkerville Brook Preserve, 135 Armitage Road, Ashford, CT

Join Master Naturalist Deb Field for an exploration of Joshua’s Trust’s Tinkerville Preserve in Ashford. This 1.7 mile trail parallels Tinkerville Brook, ending at Bissonette Pond. There are several marsh and swamp views, some excellent ledges, and the remains of an old mill foundation. We’ll have the possibility to see migratory songbirds or waterfowl. The trail is easy to moderate. Bring sunscreen, insect repellent, and water. Sturdy shoes, hiking poles and binoculars are recommended. Rain will cancel. Pre-registration is required. For more information contact Deb Field: 860-208-5459 (leave a message) or dcfieldview@gmail.com. Be sure to visit joshuastrust.org/events/ details, updates and cancellations. Joshuastrust.

Guided Hike at Joshua’s Trust Tower Hill Preserve

October 25, 2025, 10:00 am-12:00 pm

Tower Hill Preserve Between 96 & 154 Tower Hill Road, Chaplin, CT

Join Master Naturalist Deb Field for an exploration of Joshua’s Trust’s Tower Hill Preserve. Enjoy historic rock walls and the beautiful fall foliage along this 1.3-mile trail

in Chaplin, CT. This will be a leisurely walk through the woods with some stops along the way to admire the scenery. The terrain is varied with some rocks and roots, and some minor hills along the way. Appropriate hiking gear and water is recommended. For more information contact Deb Field: 860-208-5459 (leave a message) or dcfieldview@gmail.com. Be sure to visit joshuastrust.org/events/ details, updates and cancellations.

A Joshua’s Trust Guided Hike at the Church Farm

November 9, 10:00 am-12:00 pm

Church Farm Preserve, 29 Varga Rd, Ashford, CT

We will be welcomed by a brief rocky scramble up the blue trail, followed by a woodsy hike along the ledges. This hike offers beautiful views of gorgeous hardwood and pine forest and historic sites, including a home that was built in the 1700s and a barn build in the late 1800s. The 3-4 mile route is moderate/hard due to steep rocky inclines, terrain, and muddy sections. Be sure to visit joshuastrust.org/events/ for details, updates and cancellations.

Post-Thanksgiving walk at Joshua’s Trust’s Utley Hill Preserve

November 28, 2025, 10:00 PM-noon

Utley Hill Preserve, 60 Hennequin Rd, Columbia, CT

Join Laurie Gypson, for a walk at Joshuas Trust’s Utley Hill Preserve for a Day After Thanksgiving Wilderness Walk. The loop in Utley Hill Preserve is approximately 2.50 miles long and will take us roughly 1 and 1/2 hours to complete. After you pull into the park, take the first right, just before the tennis courts, and follow the road until you see the kiosk, where we will meet. Be sure to visit joshuastrust.org/events/ for details, updates and cancellations.

Buy-A Brick-Campaign:

Willimantic Whitewater Partnership Embarks On Fundraising For Its Next Phase Of Construction

By Peter Leeds, President of WWP

Many changes are coming to Willimantic Whitewater Partnership’s park in the upcoming months of 2025 and into 2026. Fish restoration work is planned through a DEEP grant, and park construction is immediately planned.

Construction of the infrastructure of Willimantic Whitewater Partnership’s park will begin in October of 2025, at the close of the Farmers Market season. This phase of construction is made possible through a state grant awarded in 2022, thanks to the advocacy of State Representative Susan Johnson and State Senator Mae Flexer. Much public engagement has been done to get to this step, and the park is now poised to serve as a true urban center of serenity, overlooking the river rapids, linking three long-distance cycling and walking trails, and contributing to the prosperity and growth of downtown Willimantic.

However, many amenities are not

part of the initial building phase. Buy-A-Brick is a way that everyone can participate in the development of the park, while at the same time commemorating people, places, pets, and ideas important to the donor. This fundraising will finance improvements like benches, picnic tables, improved garden areas, a solar cell phone charging station, bicycle repair equipment, a small performance stage, a gazebo or pavilion, and public art. Some of these improvements will be financed through a grant from Pageau Trust, but your contributions will also be a huge help!

You can donate outright, join our organization, play in or sponsor our golf tournament, or purchase a commemorative brick.

To join us on this mission, visit WWP’s website at www.willimanticwhitewater.org. There you will find information about our park and a link to the Buy-A-Brick fundraiser.

NCCO Plays Concert of Baroque Music

By Jane Anderson Vercelli, NCCO President

The Northeast Connecticut Community Orchestra will play a concert of music by Bach and other Baroque composers on Friday, Nov. 21 at 7 pm and Sunday, Nov. 23 at 2 pm at Clark Chapel, Pomfret School, Rte. 44, Pomfret. Admission is free. Donations are welcome.

Jennifer Owen of Ashford, chair of our NCCO cello section, will begin the concert with a solo prelude, Bach’s beautiful “Cello Suite No. 1.” For this piece, Jen will be seated in front of the statue of St. George across from the entry to the chapel.

After the introduction of our conductor, Linda Rondo Tracy of Storrs, the full orchestra will play the opening piece, “Entrance of the Queen of Sheba” by George Fr Handel. This will be followed by Antonio Vivaldi’s “Concerto alla Rustica in G Major.”

Now in its 14th year, the orchestra predominantly features amateur musicians playing violins, violas, cellos and double

bass with occasional guest instruments like the bassoon played by Jesse Owen of Ashford and featured in Antonio Vivaldi’s “Concerto in E Minor for Bassoon.”

Another program highlight will be Tomaso Albinoni’s “Adagio in G Minor” with Tyler Ironside of Thompson playing the violin solo accompanied by Dennis Patton of Brooklyn on organ.

For the second half of the program, the entire orchestra will play J.S. Bach’s “Contrapunctus 1” from Art of Fugue; Torelli’s “Concerto in Pastorale in G minor,” Henry Purcell’s “Rondeau from Abdelazer,” followed by the Adagio and Presto from Georg Phillipp Telemann’s “Quartet in G.” The final piece will be J.S. Bach’s “Brandenburg Concerto No. 3.”

For questions about NCCO, call Jane Vercelli at 860 428-4633.

Veterans Day 2025

By Edward DAgata

On this Veterans Day we are here to honor the Veterans who served during that era. Many of these veterans are still fighting that war privately.

In many ways, the **Vietnam War** was a formative part of United States history. It was the first widely televised war, meaning that the American public had unprecedented access to the conflict. Further, despite the many years and lives lost to the war, its outcome remains hotly debated to this day

According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Vietnam Service Era, is defined as lasting from February of 1961 to May of 1975. Anyone who served in Vietnam during that time frame is considered a Vietnam veteran. Around 2.7 million Americans served in Vietnam; of those, over 58,000 died.

The Vietnam War was an extremely unpopular war. By May of 1971, polls revealed that over 70% of people thought that US involvement in the war was a mistake. Sadly, many veterans bore the brunt of this public frustration and outrage, and were treated with coldness or outright hostility on returning home. While walking through Seattle Tacoma Airport in Uniform upon returning from overseas a young boy came up to me and spit on me and was rewarded by his father with a pat on his head and positive acknowledgement. The veterans were treated as outcasts. They were drafted, called to duty, followed orders, took care of their brothers in arms, fought for democracy against communisms and then treated as outcasts. Veterans from this era also suffered from Agent Orange Fallout and Post-traumatic stress disorder(PTSD).

Agent Orange was a chemical herbicide that the US military used to defoliate forests in Vietnam in order to prevent enemy forces from hiding in them. Exposure to Agent Orange has since been found to cause a long list of diseases, including several types of cancer, Parkinson’s disease, heart disease, and diabetes. In addition to affecting Vietnam soldiers directly, Agent Orange can also cause birth defects in the children of exposed individuals.

It’s estimated that around 300,000 veterans have died from the effects of Agent Orange.

I am a survivor of Stage 4 Cancer that was diagnosed shortly after I was discharged from the service and told that I had six months to live. Many veterans of this era still live today with this legacy.

And then there was Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Of course, trauma and PTSD didn’t originate with the Vietnam War. However, the post-Vietnam era was unique in that it was the first time that PTSD was given a formal, clinical definition.

According to the VA, it’s believed that around 30% of Vietnam War Era Veterans have suffered from PTSD at some point in their lives. For many of those individuals, their struggle with PTSD has lasted decades. In addition to the trauma of combat, many believe that the isolation caused by the war, as well as the critical treatment soldiers received upon returning, may have contributed to PTSD among Vietnam veterans.

In 1971 when I was discharged there were no support programs for these problems that the veterans from this conflict faced. There was no diagnosis, no support groups, no medicines to combat the cancer and other medical problems. My family believes that it is a miracle that I am standing here telling you about this. And we wonder why there are so many Vietnam Vets that are homeless, lost, feel forgotten.

These men and women swore an oath to the constitution and served their country and we owe them so much more that they have ever received. I am proud that I served my country during that time as are all Vietnam Era Veterans, weather they served in Vietnam or in other duty stations around the world, they still experienced the public outrage and discord while wearing the uniforms of the United States Services.

To my brothers in arms, I say to you that you will never be forgotten and will always be honored for your service to our country.

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Thanking Our Veterans

By Carol Wheelock Hall

In autumn 2025 a ceremony, sponsored by our representatives, was held at Beckish Sr. Center to recognize, honor and award Columbia, Ct.’s veterans from the Korean and Vietnam War eras. Our senior center was the perfect hostess in this well attended, interactive, and enlightening program for our vets and their families. Thanks goes to all for the planning and putting on this event.

Some of us, including myself, have not been in the military, although many of our family members may have been, and some may be currently on active duty. We respect and honor all those who serve to protect our people and our freedoms. We have all heard the stories and know that the training is tough. Not all serve in combat, but they still serve in many other ways. Some serve by supporting the military by transporting goods and personnel, and by managing machinery or technology. Others prepare places of refuge, and some care for the injured, just to name a few placements for those who are called to serve our country. A variety of skills is needed and put to good use.

Those who served in war often endured terrible conditions. Besides being a target of the enemy, they may have had harsh weather conditions and difficult terrain, sometimes without adequate resources. Sadly, we know that not all service people return home in the same condition as in their departure. The time away and then adjusting to home after duty is often very difficult for the military person as well as for their family, as the mind and body may have altered with circumstances endured.

From movies, ceremonies, and conversations we know about the bond of servicemen, and how they looked out for one another to survive. Most veterans will tell you that although our country has problems, the USA is still the best place to be. We heard this repeated at the award ceremony. Thank you for helping to preserve that status for us. Thank you to all veterans for keeping our families safe.

Poets at Large at The Vanilla Bean

Submitted by Karen Warinsky

The Vanilla Bean Café, 450 Deerfield Road, Pomfret, CT. will host a spoken word event on November 22nd at 7 p.m. Featured that evening will be poets Gloria Monaghan and Heather Treseler. Admission is \$15.00 and includes a raffle and an open mic. Contact karen.warinsky@gmail.com to be on the open mic list. 5-min limit, recommended for ages 18 plus.

Gloria Monaghan is a Professor at Wentworth University with seven poetry collections to her credit. Her latest book, Diary of Saint Marion, (Lily Poetry Review, 2025) was featured this year at the Association of Writers and Writing Program, and her poems have appeared in Nixes Mate, NPR, Poem-a-Day, Lily Poetry Review, and Mom Egg Review, among others. She has been nominated twice for the Pushcart Prize, as well as the Massachusetts Book Award, and the Griffin Prize. She has also been nominated for the Sheila Margaret Motton Book Award from the New England Poetry Club. Thanks to a Bistline Grant from Wentworth Institute, she recently completed a film on the painter, Nancy Ellen Craig, Daughter of Rubens, which was accepted into the 2023 Provincetown Film Festival. Monaghan is currently working on another film about the Dominican painter, Jose Ricon Mora.

Heather Treseler is the author of the poetry collection Auguries & Divinations, which received the May Sarton New Hampshire Prize and the Sheila Margaret Motton Book Award, and she has authored two chapbooks, Parturition and Hard Bargain. Treseler has received a Pushcart Prize, the W.B.Yeats Prize, and the Editors’ Prize at Missouri Review, and her poems appear in The American Scholar, Harvard Review, The Iowa Review, The Irish Times, and Kenyon Review. Recipient of the George I. Alden Award for Excellence in Teaching, she is professor of English at Worcester State University and a scholar at the Brandeis Women’s Studies Research Center.

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10.11.25 Mary-Beth Kaeser holding an American kestrel during Horizon Wings Open House. Ali Parkes photo.

Twenty-five Years of Helping Birds

By Mary-Beth Kaeser

I formed Horizon Wings in 2001 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit wildlife rehabilitation center specializing in birds of prey. It is located in Ashford, Connecticut.

A federal permit is needed in order to rehabilitate any migratory bird. I have been a state-licensed rehabilitator for 40 years and have been federally licensed for 25 years. The idea to form a nonprofit and to offer educational programs came about as both a way to support rehabilitation efforts and to share my passion to educate people about these wonderful birds.

Our mission at Horizon Wings is to rehabilitate birds of prey for release into the wild in order to maintain their population, and to educate the community to enhance awareness of the environment. It is our hope that by doing this we will reach people of all ages and create the desire in them to help preserve our natural world.

Horizon Wings has several raptors that cannot be released back to the wild. These are birds that have sustained injuries and gone through rehabilitation, but, due to the nature of their injuries, cannot survive in the wild. Fortunately, with special permits from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Department of Agriculture, we are able to keep these birds at our center and use them for educational programs.

At this time, there are 22 birds residing as Educational Ambassadors at Horizon Wings. They range from a blue jay to ravens, hawks, owls, bald eagles, and a peregrine falcon.

Many of the birds travel with us, providing educational programs to schools, libraries, senior centers, assisted living facilities, and other groups. We also give tours, by appointment, of our facilities.

All of our funding is provided by educational programs, donations, and grants.

You can learn more at our website: <https://www.horizonwings.org/index.html>.

Dear Contributors- Thank you for your submissions. They are what makes this paper special. I received a larger than normal volume of submissions for the edition you are reading. At 32 pages, this is the largest *Neighbors* ever, yet not big enough to hold all the submissions. I don’t have the time, energy or resources to make it any larger. If your article, poem or photograph is not on these pages, I will make every effort to see that it is in our January-February 2026 edition. Thank you for your work. Tom King

Alarming and Laughable

By Phoebe C. Godfrey

It is hard to keep up with all the social, political, and economic chaos that President Trump creates, but one recent memorandum has caught my attention, in that it aims to use the label “domestic terrorism” to target any who critique government policies and values. Certainly, seeking to prevent killings of politicians or schoolchildren or anyone is a good thing and would no doubt be best achieved by limiting gun sales, in particular semi-automatic ones. Of course, this memorandum is not about such logic but rather is more a means of silencing critical ideas, which are of course the biggest threats to the administration’s idiocy.

The memorandum is the National Security Presidential Memorandum/NSPM-7, which quickly gets to the heart of the matter, declaring that those engaged in violent terrorism have a pattern of portraying “foundational American principles (e.g., support for law enforcement and border control) as ‘fascist’ to justify and encourage acts of violent revolution.” The memorandum goes on to say that these so-called “anti-fascist” movements are a “lie” used to justify violent actions “against democratic institutions, constitutional rights, and fundamental American liberties.” Included in this critique are charges that the protesters have adopted themes that are “anti-American, anti-capitalism, and anti-Christianity,” as well as “extremism on migration, race, and gender; and hostility towards those who hold traditional American views on family, religion, and morality.”

Before analyzing this memorandum, I will turn to an article by Hina Shamsi, director of the ACLU National Security Project, that clarifies a few key points. One thing that the memorandum does not do, according to Shamsi, is “create any new federal powers or crimes,” nor is there as of yet any “standalone crime of ‘domestic terrorism.’” What it does nevertheless do is that it “instructs Joint Terrorism Task Forces to conduct investigations” and to monitor for investigation such people as Black Lives Matter activists, Muslim journalists, and environmentalists, while working as part of the FBI. Again NSPM-7 does not “rewrite our constitutional rights,” but the goal is to nevertheless intimidate, disrupt, and weaken any opposition to federal powers, as has been done in the past. For example, during the civil rights era J. Edgar Hoover used the FBI to create the Counterintelligence Program to disrupt the activism of such groups as the Black Panthers, as well as that of Martin Luther King.

As for my analysis, identifying as a socialist environmental sociologist, all that I teach would be seen as suspect under NSPM-7, which is why I find it alarming, but also laughable. In fact, what makes it laughable is also what makes it alarming, in that it demonstrates a total denial of American history and a total reversal of the teachings of Jesus. Of course, the main issues being defended in the memo are *capitalism*, *white supremacy*, and *patriarchy*, with some Christianity sprinkled in to give an air of moral credibility, for nothing about any of this is supported by the teaching of Jesus. “Love your neighbor”? “Blessed are the poor”? “Turn the other cheek”? Like I said, it is laughable.

And there is nothing in American history that speaks to respect for law, liberty, or democracy—just ask Native Americans, descendants of African slaves, or women of any race. Oh, but factual American history is considered “extremism,” while colonialism, genocide, slavery, racism, sexism, hypocrisy, abuse of power, deception, war, and ultimately profiteering from the exploitation of people and the planet are seen as “moral.” In fact, even *Fortune* magazine is reporting that the UN sees the world entering an “extremely dangerous” climate era as CO2 spikes by the most in human history. This ongoing *actual* crisis is something worth worrying about, not the ideas that people like me are trying to teach our youth so they can learn how society really works. But of course, to address the climate crisis would require addressing capitalism, white supremacy, and patriarchy, and according to NSPM-7, we can’t have that, can we, Jesus? Oh, what did you say as a rebuttal? Oh, that “it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter into the kingdom of God.” I thought so; glad I could google and check. Laughable that so few who claim to be Christian do the same.

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A Kind of Spark TV Series Is Advocacy at Its Best

By Michelle M. Baughman

Elle McNicoll is a Scottish children’s literature author whose award-winning debut novel, *A Kind of Spark*, published in 2020, has been turned into a television series for CBBC (Children’s BBC) that is now streaming on BYUtv. I love this show because it is positive and autism affirming, while at the same time accurately portraying the types of prejudice, patronizing, infantilizing, and bullying that we neurodivergent people receive at the hands of neurotypicals. I particularly love the fact that it does not shy away from accurately portraying how authority figures, even teachers, are among those who bully us.

When her publishers first informed her that TV people wanted to turn her book into a TV show, McNicoll told them, “Only if they are going to cast neurodivergent actors.” The show hired McNicoll as co-head writer for the program, so she ended up having a lot of creative control.

In an interview about the show, McNicoll explains:

It was very important to me to have neurodivergent actors playing neurodivergent parts. That little bit of authentic experience just pushes a good performance into being a great performance, and I think that is what all of our neurodivergent actors have done.

But Elle McNicoll has always been an autism advocate, as she is autistic herself, and her dissertation for her master’s degree in publishing from University College London was on why children’s publishing needs more neurodiversity. McNicoll has also been an outspoken advocate for better representations of neurodiversity in publishing, saying:

It’s important for children to see themselves in literature because if we only have a single story being told then it tells the other people in the world that they don’t matter, or that they don’t even exist. When you don’t see yourself in a book you begin to think, “Well I don’t belong in that author’s world because they haven’t included anyone neurodivergent,” and it’s upsetting.

McNicoll says that she is inspired to write about neurodiversity because it is not often written about, and when it is, it is not written about very well, so she wanted to correct the record. “I didn’t want a story about a girl who was being pathologized, I didn’t want it to be a story about autism, I want it to be a story about *a girl who is autistic*.” McNicoll creates very engaging characters that readers can identify with. “I like to write books that make children (like I was) feel included and empowered and feel like they can be the main character in a fun and exciting way,” she says.

A Kind of Spark is listed as one of the 100 Greatest Children’s Books of All Time by the BBC and by Blackwell’s. It won the Waterstones Children’s Book Prize in both the Younger Fiction and Overall categories in 2021, and the Blue Peter Book Award for Best Story (which is voted on by children). It was also nominated for the Carnegie Medal for Writing and the Branford Boase Award.

McNicoll says that this is a show that talks about a point of view that has been suppressed for a very long time, and that it is the kind of show that she needed when she was a young teen girl. But it is also a show for everyone, and a show that the whole family can enjoy together.

Lola Blue plays Addie, the protagonist, a 14-year-old autistic Scottish girl who has twin older sisters, one who is also autistic and one who is neurotypical. Addie is on a mission to get her town to erect a memorial to the women who were wrongly executed there for being different during the historic witch trials.

Caitlin Hamilton plays Addie’s neurotypical older sister Nina, whose pursuit of popularity as a social media influencer ends up bullying her autistic twin sister. It is interesting to note that Hamilton is actually a neurodivergent actor. In real life, Hamilton has a neurotypical sister, so she has drawn on her relationship and experiences with her sister as inspiration for acting

in this role.

Georgia de Gidlow plays Keedie, Addie’s older autistic sister. Keedie has been bullied and then gaslighted by a teacher in the past, which caused her to go into a prolonged autistic shutdown, losing confidence in herself and carrying shame about it because others (including her parents) ended up defining her by her natural reactions to this insidious form of mental abuse that was perpetrated by her teacher. She ends up championing her little sister Addie when she sees that same teacher doing the same thing to Addie.

Hattie Gotobed plays Maggie Fraser, the author of a historic diary (and firsthand account of the witch trials) that Addie becomes enthralled with. Ella Maisy Purvis plays Elinor, Maggie’s sister. This



storyline concerning the sisters in the diary cleverly reminds viewers that neurodivergent people have always existed throughout history, although there was never a name for it (and how they have been persecuted for just being different).

A Kind of Spark allows neurotypical viewers a glimpse into what the world is like for autistic people. Viewers gain a greater understanding of the struggles autistic individuals contend with that neurotypicals are oblivious to. The show introduces viewers to concepts like masking, situational mutism, sensory overload, autistic burnout, autistic shutdown, and the reality that the medical and psychological professions, which operate from a deficit paradigm, cause more harm than remedy because they are so ill-informed about autism and because research (particularly in the U.S.) is so far behind. I believe that bringing these concepts into the mainstream via an engaging TV series is a very powerful form of advocacy because it demystifies, brings about better awareness, and provides a common language that allows for better support and connection.

To learn more about this groundbreaking TV series, which is now in its second season, go to <<https://youtu.be/WqFWEJ2ia24?si=EVHU8afBQX-w7SSjQ>>.

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.

Ashford AAC Holiday Artist Market

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This event is **free to attend**, and donations are welcomed to help fund **grants for local young artists**. Come celebrate the season, support local talent, and find truly unique gifts made right here in our community!

Rest, the New Productivity

By Angie Jacques

In a culture that celebrates hustle, speed, and multitasking, rest has often been misunderstood as laziness. But science—and life experience—are showing us something different: rest isn’t the opposite of productivity, it’s the foundation of it. When we rest deeply, our nervous system recalibrates, our creativity reawakens, and we begin to show up more fully for ourselves and for those around us.

Rest is not about doing nothing—it’s about allowing your body and mind to do what they are naturally designed to do: restore, repair, and rebalance.

When we slow down—whether through yoga, floating, sound healing, or simply stillness, we activate our body’s parasympathetic nervous system, often called the “rest and digest” state. This is where healing happens. A calm nervous system listens better, loves deeper, and responds with compassion instead of reactivity.

Our fascia, the connective tissue that wraps every muscle and organ, also begins to unwind. Under constant stress, fascia becomes tight and dehydrated, restricting movement and energy flow. But with intentional rest, gentle stretching, and breath work, fascia becomes pliable again like silk instead of rope allowing vitality and ease to return to the body.

Even our organs benefit from rest. Our liver and kidneys have space to detoxify efficiently. Rest gives your brain time to clear away built-up toxins and reset neural connections, helping you think more clearly and feel emotionally balanced. When you rest, your heart rate and blood pressure naturally slow, easing strain on your cardiovascular system and supporting long-term heart health. These are just glimpses of what rest does. The list of benefits goes on, touching nearly every cell, system, and function in the body.

In short, rest isn’t just “nice.” It’s biology. It’s the body’s most intelligent design for healing itself.

For too long, we’ve defined productivity by how much we do, the number of hours worked, tasks completed, boxes checked. But true productivity is not just output; it’s the quality of energy behind what we create.

When we start honoring rest as a form of nourishment rather than indulgence, we begin to see how it shapes everything we do. We parent differently. We create differently. We lead differently. We connect differently.

Rest is not a break from your life—it’s how you restore your life force.

When we first opened our doors, just a few people showed up seeking something more than a workout—they were seeking a way to feel at home in their bodies again. A place to breathe, release, and remember who they are beneath the noise.

Since then, our community has grown into something beautiful. People are recognizing that rest is not weakness—it’s wisdom. They’re learning that slowing down is not falling behind, but catching up to yourself.

Through movement, breath, stillness, and connection, we’ve watched people transform. We’ve seen stress melt away in the quiet of a float session. We’ve seen emotional release in a restorative yoga pose. We’ve seen faces soften after sound baths, where vibration and frequency bring the body back into harmony.

And perhaps most importantly, we’ve witnessed how this inner peace ripples outward—into families, workplaces, and the wider community. When one person rests, everyone they touch benefits. A calm nervous system is contagious.

What makes rest even more powerful is when we do it together. In community, rest becomes a shared act of resilience. It reminds us that we are all connected that your calm supports mine, and my stillness helps you breathe deeper too.

At YONO and Quiet Corner Float, we believe healing isn’t just an individual journey—it’s a collective awakening. Every class, every float, every shared breath contributes to a community that values presence over pressure, and wellbeing over busyness.

Here, we don’t strive for perfection we practice permission.

Permission to pause.

Permission to listen.

Permission to come back home to yourself.

If you’ve been feeling tired, overstimulated, or simply ready to reconnect, we invite you to experience the power of rest for yourself. Join us for our Open House on November 15, with free classes throughout the day starting at 7 AM.

Explore a variety of offerings—yoga, float therapy, sauna therapy, meditation, sound healing, and more. Meet our teachers, take guided tours, and enter our raffle for special prizes.

Whether you stay for a class, a conversation, or just a few quiet moments, you’ll

leave feeling lighter, clearer, and more grounded ready to return to your life with a little more ease and a lot more presence.

Because rest isn’t something you earn.

It’s something you remember.

And when we rest well, we live well.

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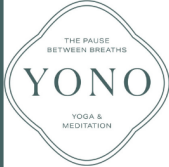
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Seeking Solitude in Slovenia

By D. R. Blanchette

If you have ever felt sorry for some the lesser used letters like J, Z, or V, then Slovenian is the language for you. They get used a lot. Sometimes multiple times in the same word, occasionally right next to each other. For purposes of this article, just know that J is pronounced as Y in “yacht.”

Having left the crowds, the narrow streets, and left-lane driving of Scotland (see “Reflections on Scotland” in the Sept.-Oct. *Neighbors*), Janet and I fetched Slovenia around dinnertime Friday and jumped into a taxi for the ride to the capital city, Ljubljana. Half an hour later, the driver suddenly stopped near a bus stop and put our suitcases on the ground. Pointing toward a narrow set of steps barely discernible in the twilight, he said, “Pedestrians only from here on. Walk down those steps, across the courtyard, cross the river, and your place will be there.”

Darkness descended as we went down the steps, wondering what was ahead. Few people were about until we crossed the bridge over the river, and then night exploded into day. There were hundreds of brightly lit bars, restaurants, and cafes with outdoor seating packed with people eating, drinking, and smoking, strolling from restaurant to bar conversing in German, Italian, and Slovenian. Feeling completely conspicuous, suitcases clacking across the cobblestones, we made our way through the throngs toward the address of the apartment.



Janet in Ljubljana.

Contributed photo.

On Saturday morning we woke up to the most beautiful city we had ever seen. A vast expanse of cobblestoned streets lined with tan, mauve, and powder-blue buildings in every imaginable architectural style was split in half by the graceful arc of the Ljubljanica River. After breakfast we retained the services of a guide from Ljubljana Free Tour, a misnomer, at least for honest tourists, because you are requested to tip €20–€30. The dishonest simply vanish into the crowd near the end of the tour. By

lunchtime the restaurants and cafes were full again in what seemed to be a vibrant perpetual street party. The streets and sidewalks were immaculate, making me wonder once again why Americans can’t seem to grasp the concept of “do not litter.”

The guide introduced us to the works of Jože Plečnik, the most famous architect you have probably never heard of. He designed many of the buildings in Ljubljana, the banks of the Ljubljanica River, parks, entire streets, monuments, stairways, and the famous (but least impressive) Triple Bridge. She took us to Locksmith Street to see “Faces,” an art exhibit that used to feature 900 bronze faces embedded in the pavement. Cast by sculptor Jakov Brdar in 2009, they were inspired by a passage from Rainer Maria Rilke’s novel *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*. There are no longer 900 faces, as many have been pried out of the pavement for souvenirs.

On Monday, knowing we had barely scratched the surface of Ljubljana, it was time to head for the Julian Alps, the name given to the section of the Alps in Slovenia. The Julian Alps are made of limestone which, due its porous nature, gives rise to jagged peaks and rugged, steep-sided gorges. They are not as tall as the Swiss Alps but many consider them the most spectacular. The cost of food, lodging, and travel is much lower in Slovenia than in Switzerland and the Julians are much less crowded, two of the reasons we chose them.

First stop, Bovec, gateway to Triglav National Park and home of Mt. Triglav, Slovenia’s highest mountain. It is such a part of their ethnic identity that all Slovenians are expected to climb it at least once in their lifetime. Mt. Svinjak’s pyramidal form springs up at the edge of town and dominates the Bovec skyline, appearing so close and accessible that we knew instantly it was a mark for us. According to the guidebook, it was a five-hour hike, and there was a wild goat that harassed hikers along the trail. The trail was so close to the edge at times that it felt as if one misstep and you would land on a table in one of the Bovec cafes. Nevertheless, it was supremely beautiful, with a panorama of the Bovec valley that seemed to stretch on forever. The hike took eight hours. The goat had a kid with her and was very friendly. Maybe motherhood had changed her attitude.

The Soča River is known for its luminous blue-green water, picturesque suspension bridges, marble trout, and white-throated dippers. And as the setting for the final battle scene in *The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian*. It was time for an easy day, and a three-hour stroll on a portion of the Soča River Trail seemed to fit the bill. The color of the water was astounding; the river disappeared into the porous rock at times, only to reappear hundreds of yards downstream. Kayakers were ubiquitous, although they spent as much time scouting the river as paddling. We saw many people fly fishing and many marble trout, but never in the same place.

Six hours later, we were back in Bovec, wondering about the accuracy of the guidebooks.

The picturesque village of Rateče, trailhead for Mt. Peč, was reminiscent of an Austrian village. Mt. Peč is known locally as Tromeja, literally “three-border point,” and it is where the borders of Slovenia, Austria, and Italy meet. It was here that the representatives of those three governments met to welcome Slovenia into the European Union in 2004.

The trail begins in pastureland where Haflinger horses grazed, their chestnut hair and flaxen manes glinting in the sun. As we approached a bend in the trail, an unearthly howl, sounding like a fisher cat being tortured, arose. As we rounded the bend, a jackal and its pup bounded off into the woods. The trail then entered a highland meadow of vivid green, overflowing with wildflowers of every imaginable color framed by the jagged peaks of the Julian Alps. Leaving the meadow, the



Town of Bovec with Mt. Svinjak in background. Contributed photo.

trail switch backed up through a pine forest to the top of Mt. Peč. The forest on the Slovenian side gave way to a ski resort on the Austrian side. The flagpoles for the flags of the three countries swayed in the breeze, but someone had forgotten to put up the flags.

We finished the hike early and decided to check out Slovenia’s most famous lake, Lake Bled. With its bluish-green water, red-roofed medieval castle on a rocky cliff, and postcard-worthy church on a tiny island, it was undeniably beautiful. It was also the most over-touristed and overbuilt destination we had been to in years. We stayed long enough to eat an ice cream and left with no desire to ever return. The next day we drove to Lake Bohinj, Slovenia’s second most famous lake. It has the same bluish-green water as Lake Bled but not the hotels, shops, and hordes of people. Hiking the trail around the lake was the epitome of solitude until we were surrounded by hundreds of people running the Four Brave Men trail race.



The author near top of Svinjak.

Contributed photo.

The view from the summit of Mt. Vogel is said to be spectacular. To get there, one takes a cable car from Lake Bohinj to the Vogel Ski Resort base lodge and then hikes 3,000 feet to the summit. When we approached the window to buy tickets, the woman in the booth shook her head no and pointed to the video feed from the top. It was raining, with zero visibility. We debated. It was our last day in Slovenia. There would be no other opportunities. But mountain weather changes quickly, so we gambled and bought tickets. At the summit station, the rain had abated, but the fog reduced visibility to only a few feet. For safety, we decided to stay on the ski resort roads until it cleared; as soon as it did, we took to the trail. The trail opened into a beautiful hidden valley showcasing a symphony of wildflowers in a rainbow of colors. As we approached the cutoff to the Mt. Vogel summit, the rain and fog returned with a vengeance. It was not worth the risk of falling over the edge or getting lost, so we headed back to the tram, having to take the guidebook’s word about the spectacular view.

We found the solitude we were seeking in the Julian Alps. We also found medieval cities dotted with cafes, and highland meadows full of wildflowers framed by snowcapped mountains. Along with its sun-swept beaches and hillsides covered in grape arbors, it seems Slovenia has it all, crammed into one tiny country the size of Massachusetts.

Dennis R. Blanchette is a semi-retired civil engineer and travel writer. Pictures of this trip can be found at www.dennisblanchette.com.

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Contradictions Of Freedom Part II

Major Exhibition at the Windham Textile and History Museum

By Irene Barnard

The Windham Textile and History (aka Mill) Museum just opened a major new exhibition, *Contradictions Of Freedom Part II*. Co-sponsored by the Windham NAACP, the show features over 20 quilts made by Sisters in Stitches Joined by the Cloth (www.sistersinstitches.org). Formally established in Massachusetts in 1997 (also with Connecticut ties), theirs is the only New England guild dedicated to preserving the centuries-old art, history, culture and traditions of African American quiltmaking for future generations. Their work celebrates and connects the artists to their personal stories and to each other, and they’ve exhibited at numerous art galleries, museums, local and state libraries, colleges, and universities.

The well-attended October 4 opening featured remarks by museum director Aaron Skarzenski. Guild members Susi Ryan and Christle Rawlins-Jackson (guild cofounders), and Sheila Lutz and Donna Clark then told an

Neighbors 17 enthusiastic audience about their creative process and some of the history depicted in these stunning, vibrantly-colored works of art. The exhibit addresses the complexities of freedom in Colonial America, and recognizes and honors the Ancestors of guild members and their collective histories in America. It coincides with the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution, and a few quilts depict African American involvement in the Revolution.

Quilters, fiber artists, crafters, and arts lovers are all welcome to experience these artists’ important work. The Sisters In Stitches show inaugurates the museum’s renovated and repainted exhibition hall, featuring new lighting for greater visibility, and new movable wall panels facilitating ease of access and movement throughout.

Through Saturday, December 6, 2025. Museum hours: Saturday-Sunday 10am-4pm.

Regular admission: \$10.00; Seniors (60+) / Kids (5-17) / Students: \$7.00; Members and Kids under 5: Free. Windham Textile and History Museum, 411 Main Street, Willimantic, CT, 06226. (860) 456-2178. For further information, check the museum’s Instagram and Facebook pages, or <https://millmuseum.org>



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No planted bridge is a bridge too far



Bridge of Flowers, Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts.

By Brian Karlsson-Barnes

An abandoned bridge in Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts, was planted with flowers in **1929**, six months before the Wall Street Crash, and the **Bridge of Flowers** is now a horticultural delight with a restaurant at one end. *Food and flower, great idea!*

The century-old bridge was inspiration for Willimantic’s **Garden on the Bridge** at the edge of the Quiet Corner -- now being renovated after twenty years. Public gardens need continuing care with funds, staff and volunteers. As Putnam’s Memorial Garden that I steward, and the other civic gardens maintained by the Quiet Corner Garden Club (QCGC). Some imagine a future garden bridge in Putnam’s River Mill district. No planted bridge is a bridge too far.

BRIDGE OF FLOWERS Drive a few hours from Connecticut’s Quiet Corner to a *One-of-a-Kind* horticultural wonder in Western Massachusetts, a traditional New England garden *in the middle of a river!* Densely planted on an abandoned railway bridge in Shelburne Falls near Route 2, the Mohawk Trail, it continues to offer guidance.

US Route 2 was an early “Shun Pike” avoiding turnpike tolls. Shunpiking now avoids major highways for scenic drives, as the Mohawk Trail used by Native Americans of the Five Nations to traverse the Connecticut and Hudson River valleys. Quiet Corner highways are mostly shunpikes.

Built in **1908** to carry freight over the Deerfield River, a bridge of rails 18-feet wide over five arching concrete spans, the Bridge is now a 400-foot long garden of annuals, herbaceous perennials, vines, shrubs -- even trees in the 9-feet deep arches. The railroad was bankrupted by **1927** with the advent of trucking. New technology a century ago. The abandoned bridge was unsightly until the Shelburne Falls Women’s Club took charge with Antoinette Burnham’s vision and 80 yards of loam in **April 1929**.

Memorial Day 2011, I first visited the Bridge of Flowers. A town parade marched near the bridge with Girl Scouts at the rear, unlike the gender’s leading role on the abandoned railway. Women gardeners of Shelburne Falls took advantage of soil depths from 2.5-feet at the top of the concrete arches, to 9-feet for deep-rooted woody plants where spans extend down to the water. Dense combinations of color and texture in flower and leaf were very showy in the spring-summer transition.

Over 500 types of perennial flowers and woody plants (and some colorful annuals in shady spaces) are plant-

ed for USDA Cold-hardiness Zone 5a, the cold side of Zone 5 with an *Average Low Temperature* of minus 15 to -20 degrees F. for winter. Perhaps a warmer Zone 5b in global warming? All can be planted in upland northeastern Connecticut landscapes (Zone 6b?), slightly colder in winter and hotter in summer than urban Boston. Many plants have labels and the website lists plants and bloom times:

Bridgeofflowersmass.org/on-the-bridge



Stargazer lilies on the bridge of flowers.

HERBACEOUS Perennial flowers offer more color than woody plants, well-or- chestrated on the Bridge when I last visited in **2020**. Most floriferous in summer are the herbaceous (nonwoody) perennials. Such as true **Lilies (*Lilium*)**, very colorful -- pink, red, purple, orange, yellow and white -- and some fragrant as the pictured ‘**Stargazer**’.

(I use airy plants like **Russian Sage** / **Perovskia** to hide lily stems and leaves that feed bulbs after bloom. The tiny blue flowers are neutral, as white, and play well with others. Blooming late summer into fall, the dry-tolerance tolerates root competition, a useful weaver around contrasting flowers.)

TREES Surprise! There were mature ornamental trees on the river in those 9-feet deep “containers”. A **Crabapple (*Malus*)** was at the middle of the bridge with a tree-like **Wisteria** vine twining like a snake on the railing. **Apple Serviceberry (*Amelanchier*)** was a multi-stem favorite with early spring flower and fall color. **Fringetree(*Chionanthus*)** and **Japanese Snowbell (*Styrax*)** were newly planted. No trees were blooming the end of May, but an autumn drive up the Berkshires is awesome *Leafpeeping*.

GEOWONDERS Fifty yards downriver from the Bridge of Flowers are ancient glacial potholes that were ground out of the granite river bed over centuries by circling stones in rushing meltwater. Over 50 potholes, 6-inches to 39-foot round, geologically wondrous and a world record! The concrete bridge is eroding faster than the granite riverbed... a glimmer in glacial time... so visit soon. Roadtrip in **2026**?



Toad lily like a tiny orchid.

GARDEN ON THE BRIDGE Willimantic’s two-arch granite bridge was built in **1857** but obsolete in **2001** with the new upriver Frog Bridge. Inspired by Shelburne Falls, the Town of Windham and its Garden Club, en-



Noreene in red, Nancy in blue in Flo Gris gardens.

joined the Windham Textile and History Museum, and the University of Connecticut/Storrs Master Gardener Program to transform the bridge in **2005**.

Unlike the Bridge of Flowers planted at “ground-level”, Willimantic’s garden suffered in containers above grade and the Windham Garden Club is now finishing a 5-year plan for restoration, maybe in time for **America’s 250th Semiquincentennial Celebration** NEXT year. Food stands at the entry? Pizza from Trigo or Tony’s, Pad Thai from Pho Delight? If the entrance off Main Street is unfinished during **2026 Summer Garden Tours**, persist... walk in for horticultural respite in the Garden on the Bridge.

WESTIES are QCGC members west of the Quinebaug Valley. On **September 4th**, three of us -- **Nancy Ethier of Eastford**, **Noreene Stehlik of Woodstock Valley** and I -- met in Old Lyme at the Florence Griswold campus on the bucolic Lieutenant River. The house, gardens, museum and café reflect her former art colony. We met on the Flo Gris Café veranda for lunch and walked lovely gardens.

QCGC MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

Noreene Stehlik of Woodstock Valley

Built in **1738**, Noreene’s house -- a quintessential white colonial farmhouse with a red door -- was the Woodstock Valley Schoolhouse, surrounded by strawberry fields when mother Beverly Noren attended, and last used in **1949**. Marrying William Stehlik, the newlyweds bought the house from the town in **June 1950**. Surrounded by 25 acres of woods, the expanded house now sits on two acres of ornamental and harvest gardens with an orchard, an ambitious work-in-progress.



FREE TREE Noreene is point-person for a QCGC Civic Program offering a **White Oak (*Quercus*)** tree to Quiet Corner towns in **2026**. Does your town want a free Connecticut State Tree? Oaks support more species of life than any other tree. Co-plant with **Oakleaf Hydrangea** shrubs for flower and fall color.

CONTACT Noreene at Nstehlik@verizon.net or text 301.908.9488

FIRST SUNDAYS during the next growing season, Noreene or I will host bonfire potlucks. Stay tuned.

Brian Karlsson-Barnes, Master gardener / designer, Chaplin CT (Text cell 617.957.6611)

The Penguins

By Bob Lorentson

They don’t make penguins like they used to. Sixty million years ago, after the asteroid crash wiped out the dinosaurs, some penguins saw their opening and evolved into 340-pound behemoths and six- to seven-foot giants. Life was good—dinosaur-free and teeming with fish. Today they have evolved back into more modest sizes, and their populations are crashing. Today life is not so good, still dinosaur-free, but now teeming with humans instead of fish. Penguins should be excused if they were to wish for another asteroid.

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

Penguins don’t tweet or quack like normal birds. Instead they squawk, honk, bray, growl, chirp, laugh, coo, and gecker, which could mean anything from “Hello, bring me a fish,” to “Help! The ice is melting!” Jackass penguins, so named for their resemblance to people we all know, are especially vocal during breeding season, the

only time we can really understand them. Imagine a Friday night bar scene full of thousands of people braying, “Hey baby, come here often?” and you’ll get a sense of how annoying a Jackass rookery can be.

A penguin’s physique is called fusiform, which means that it’s thick in the middle and tapered at both ends. As many humans can attest, it is a physique more suited to a life on a couch than to a life on one’s feet. As a penguin’s environment is totally devoid of couches, it tends to spend about 75 percent of its time in the water. A penguin’s exercise regimen therefore consists entirely of swimming vigorously away from leopard seals and orcas.

Leopard seals can swim at speeds of 25 miles per hour, and orcas 35. Gentoo penguins are considered the fastest penguins, and can reach speeds of 20 miles per hour. Penguins may not be the fastest learners, but most of them can understand basic math. One consolation is that penguins can swim faster than any other bird, which, while a triumph of evolutionary development, still likely leaves them wishing that they could at least fly faster than any other fish.

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

lenses in their eyes to adjust their vision to the low light. At the very least, it makes the plastic look more palatable.

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

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

Macaroni penguins live up to 20 years, weigh up to 15 pounds, and dream of flying. They hop instead of waddle. It’s not flying, but it gives them hope. With their red eyes and disheveled jumble of yellow/orange feathers on their heads, Macaroni penguins don’t look like they get much sleep. As the climate continues to warm, we may all look like Macaroni penguins before long.

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

Yellow-eyed penguins live up to 23 years, and weigh up to 20 pounds. When they molt, they lose up to eight pounds and whatever dignity they have left. Their diet consists of fish, squid, and sprat, which is either a sardine or a New Zealand word for plastic. The Maori call yellow-eyed penguins *Hoiho*, which means “noise shouter.” And this was before they became the world’s rarest penguin and really had something to shout about.

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

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

Bob Lorentson is a local writer and retired environmental scientist. His new book is a satirical novel, The Carousel of Beliefs.

The Wisdom of Winter: Slowing Down at the Solstice

By Haley Proto

As the days shorten and the air grows still, nature invites us to turn inward. The Winter Solstice — the longest night of the year — arrives not as an ending, but as a gentle pause. It’s the earth’s deep breath in, the soft hush before renewal.

We live in a culture that rarely slows down. Even in December, when darkness falls early and animals retreat to conserve their energy, we often rush — through shopping lists, to-do lists, and social obligations. Yet the Solstice reminds us that slowing down is not laziness; it’s wisdom. In winter, nature teaches us that rest is part of growth.

To “winter” is to embrace this rhythm — to soften, to listen, to stop pushing. It’s a season for tending the inner hearth: nourishing what’s been neglected, reflecting on what needs releasing, and honoring what’s been gained. Just as seeds rest unseen beneath the soil, much of our transformation happens in quiet spaces.

For many, this slowing feels uncomfortable at first. Stillness can surface emotions we’ve tucked away — grief, fatigue, longing. But winter asks us to trust the process of dormancy. To sit by the metaphorical fire and befriend the dark. In the stillness, we hear the noise of what summer drowned out.

Wintering might look like:

Long walks without earbuds, just breathing the cold air. Lighting a candle at dusk and letting yourself sit in silence. Drinking tea slowly, without multitasking. Journaling about what you’re ready to release before the new year. Saying no — kindly, but firmly — when your body asks for rest.

Yoga and mindfulness can support this inward journey. Gentle, restorative practices mirror the body’s natural instinct to conserve energy. Yin poses, Yoga Nidra, or

meditation can be ways to honor stillness without stagnation — ways to be present within the pause.

There’s also wisdom in planning our lives by the rhythm of the seasons. Modern culture often pushes us to launch new projects and resolutions on January 1st — right in the heart of winter. Yet if we look to nature as our guide, this is not the time for new beginnings. Nothing new is growing outside; everything is conserving, repairing, and gathering energy beneath the surface.

What if we did the same? What if winter was a season not for starting, but for *listening*? For letting ideas rest in the soil of imagination until the light returns? In our work and our lives, this could mean resisting the urge to take on new commitments, big plans, or major decisions. Instead, we might focus on reflection and refinement — evaluating what’s already in motion, allowing space for clarity to form before we plant anything new.

Spring, then, becomes the time for action — for planting those well-considered seeds. Summer is the season of full expression and energy, autumn for harvest and gratitude, and winter for rest and integration. This cycle honors the truth that growth and renewal require balance — a rhythm of expansion *and* retreat.

In the heart of darkness, light begins its return. From this turning point, the days will slowly lengthen again — but there’s no rush. The Solstice reminds us that light grows gradually, tenderly. We, too, can allow ourselves to emerge slowly, without forcing our way into the next season.

So as winter settles around us, may we honor it not as something to endure, but something to receive. May we learn from the trees, who shed what no longer serves them, and trust in the promise of spring. Let this Solstice be a sacred invitation: to rest deeply, to listen inwardly, and to remember that even in the darkest moments, the light is already returning.



WINTER SOLSTICE

Rest. Reflect. Reawaken.

This season reminds us that slowing down is not stopping, it’s restoring. Take time to breathe deeply, move gently, and let your spirit find its rhythm again.

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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).

The Constitution gas pipeline won’t solve New England’s energy problems

Canary Media. “...the narrative that natural gas is going to somehow create a big downward pressure on electricity and energy bills is just not proven out in the data...The major problem is that the pipeline wouldn’t actually bring much, if any, new gas into New England, Dolan said. The Constitution pipeline would terminate in Schoharie County, New York, where it would connect to pipes that already carry gas into New England. That existing infrastructure is the true bottleneck, he said...The pipes into and around New England are “narrow and limited,” so bringing a higher volume of gas into New York doesn’t mean more can flow throughout the neighboring region. There are no plans in the works to alleviate those constraints, and the models for funding such projects make it highly unlikely there will be any proposals for pipelines into or within New England in the near future...”

As work resumes on Revolution Wind, Lamont open to working with Trump

CT Mirror. “Gov. Ned Lamont took a victory lap in New London on Tuesday after a federal judge ordered work to resume on the Revolution Wind project, and he hinted that ongoing talks with the Trump administration could ease the path forward for both wind and fossil fuel projects in the region...“When these wind turbines are spinning in less than a year, it’s going to bring down the price of electricity, because it brings down peak pricing during the winter months, which is the most expensive time,” Lamont said. ‘This is a big deal for business, so it’s good.’ ”

CT moving ahead with \$52.5M expansion of EV charging network after Trump initially blocked funds

CT Insider. “Federal highway officials have given the go-ahead to Connecticut’s updated plan to use \$52.5 million in federal funding to expand the high-speed charging network for electric vehicles in the state. State transportation officials are continuing to move forward on financing the design and construction of the first phase, focusing on five major highway corridors...The Trump administration in February paused the distribution of funds to states through the \$5 billion National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Program, but reopened the funding program in August in the face of legal challenges and political pressure.”

CT starts AI-driven ‘virtual power plant’ energy storage program

CT Mirror. “Connecticut officials are hoping to boost participation in the state’s nascent energy storage program through the use of a new artificial intelligence platform designed to create networks of home batteries known as “virtual power plants.”...GoodLeap would not be the first company to operate such a system in Connecticut, but it has set an ambitious goal to sign up more than 3,000 subscribers in its first year of operation, with a total capacity of about 25 megawatts of electricity...“Solar today is being deployed at record numbers in Connecticut,” said Bryan Garcia, the president of the Green Bank. ‘It’s just they’re not being deployed including batteries. So we are working hard to showcase a sign: Connecticut, we are open for business for storage too.’ ”

Electric buses begin routes in Storrs, hybrids expected soon

The Daily Campus. “Two electric buses began their routes on the University of Connecticut’s Storrs campus this semester, marking an achievement in the university’s sustainability action plan. The associate director of facilities operations, Andy Kelly, said that students might also see the new hybrid buses on routes this academic year, but remained uncertain of when they’d be running...they’re very backed up and so the order [for the hybrids] went in over a year ago,”

Verogy building 6th community solar project for Connecticut state program

Solar Power World. “Verogy, a solar developer based in Connecticut, has started construction on its sixth solar project under the state’s Shared Clean Energy Facility (SCEF) program in 2025. These projects total more than 30 MW of solar power...Upon completion of these six SCEF projects, Verogy anticipates delivering enough clean energy to power more than 3,600 average homes every year. In addition, these projects will generate an estimated \$975,000 in annual savings for LMI households and other utility customers for the next 20 years.”

Connecticut officials approve the state’s 3-year energy savings plan

FOX61. “”The [2025-2027 Conservation and Load Management Plan (C&LM)] guides the priorities, design and incentives for Connecticut’s energy efficiency and demand management programs...They are meant to drive down energy costs by facilitating efficient building upgrades, including insulation, air sealing, heating and cooling system improvements and building controls and industrial process improvements for businesses...energy efficiency is cheaper than the price of supply and reduces the need for infrastructure upgrades, so it lowers costs for all utility ratepayers. The 2025-2027 C&LM Plan will deliver \$2.35 billion in lifetime benefits to residents of Connecticut...This will be accomplished through a \$705 million investment. DEEP officials point out that it’s a return of \$3.30 for every dollar invested...energy efficiency is cheaper than the price of supply and reduces the need for infrastructure upgrades, so it lowers costs for all utility ratepayers.”

Energy efficiency is reducing Northeast peak demand, electricity bills: Acadia

Utility Dive. “ ‘It is more important than ever for policymakers, advocates, program administrators, and consumers to understand the value and evolving role of energy efficiency resource acquisition and shape the future trajectories of the programs to meet the emerging needs of the region...Electric savings will help the region continue meeting a substantial portion of annual electric load via energy efficiency.’ ...Despite the savings, Acadia warned efficiency investment is under pressure.”

Millstone Nuclear plant will seek to expand license to operate in CT beyond 2029

CT Insider. “Connecticut officials and representatives of Dominion Energy on Monday pledged to continue a decades-long relationship between the state and the owners of the Millstone Nuclear power plant in Waterford...‘I just think it’s going to be a big piece of our future for the next 50 years,” Lamont said of nuclear power...We need you more than ever before and I think expansion and extension of nuclear power, right here, starting with with Millstone, is an enormous piece of our process.”...[Dominion Energy] would like to be able extend the units that are operating today for another 20 years. We have to seek approval with the nuclear regulatory commission and there will be investments associated with that.’ ...the company has no plans to develop smaller nuclear reactors at the site for at least 10 years, He said Dominion is considering developing the smaller reactors elsewhere in the company’s footprint.”

For this 200-year-old Connecticut church, ‘going green’ is a matter of faith

CT Insider. “The newly completed energy efficient project at the Salisbury Congregational Church has much higher aspirations than just saving money. “We are trying to protect God’s creation — the environment,” said Kerry Noble, who serves as the head of the church’s Green Team. “We did this as a Christian action.”...Eversource provided a \$75,000 grant, which allowed for the retrofiting of the LED lighting, replacing two boilers with air source heat pumps and installing a heat pump water heater. The church also put in 34 kW of removable solar panels and a publicly available EV charging station.”

Multiple people have turned down open PURA seats, Lamont says

CT Mirror. “Gov. Ned Lamont said Tuesday that he has been rejected by potential nominees for vacancies on the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority, whose chair is resigning after months of conflict and a threatened impeachment effort...There are currently two open seats at PURA, with a third soon to be created by the departure of the authority’s chair, Marissa Gillett, on Oct. 10...“I can get five generalists on there pretty quickly, if that’s good enough for you,” Lamont said Tuesday. ‘I’d also like a couple of people who really can match wits with Ever-

source and [United Illuminating], who will hit the ground running, because we have some big dockets in front of us.’ ”

Waterbury’s \$3.6M solar plan for five schools heads to Board of Education: ‘Complicated process’

Newstimes. “A \$3.6 million proposal to install solar panels on the rooftops of five city schools heads to the Board of Education...If the solar project is completed, the panels are expected to generate 1.2 million kilowatts of energy each year across the five rooftops, LeBlanc said. Officials expect that over a 20-year period, the panels would generate a total of \$4.6 million in energy revenue, with \$231,000 generated each year...‘I don’t know if it’s the complexity of it, the different agencies included. It’s not like just getting an RFP for a roof. This involves state and federal engineers. It is a complicated process...’ “ Plus: Cheshire schools to invest \$23M in solar project, aiming for long-term savings in utility costs

Port Authority mulls State Pier’s future after wind farm stoppage

Hartford Business. “The Connecticut Port Authority is considering what the future of the State Pier may be if the Revolution Wind energy project is permanently shut down...“We’ve already been approached, earlier this year, by transport companies from as far away as Miami,” he said. “We do have an initiative to do short sea shipping in Connecticut to relieve freight on the highway.” He said in the future after Ørsted’s lease on the pier ends, the aim would be to have multiple functions at the facility to mitigate the risk posed by a single use.”

In some CT towns, clouds form over new solar developments

CT Mirror. “After initially welcoming the Gravel Pit [solar] project, however, many residents and local officials now say they’ve soured on the town’s status as a hotbed for the solar industry. Critics have accused developers of snatching up farmland, altering the rural character of the town and ignoring local concerns about noise and safety. And East Windsor isn’t the only Connecticut community where solar opposition is on the rise...Mike Trahan, the executive director of the Connecticut Solar and Energy Storage Association, said solar development is concentrated in places where substations connecting to the regional electric grid have the capacity to handle the power produced by larger arrays. In more densely populated parts of the state like Fairfield County, Trahan said, higher land values and a backlog of available interconnections serve as an impediment to solar development.”

#15 Solar energy company lays off almost all CT workers as Trump administration cancels tax credits

Connecticut Public. “Dozens of Connecticut workers were recently laid off by PosiGen, a solar energy company known for leasing solar panels to low and moderate-income residents. PosiGen laid off 78 people from its offices in Shelton, Danbury and Wethersfield on Sunday, Aug. 24. In a letter notifying the cities of the layoffs, the company’s chief administrative officer wrote that the company was ceasing “most of its operations throughout the United States, effective immediately.” The company said it was experiencing “significant financial difficulties” made worse by the Trump administration’s spending and tax package, which will end solar tax credits by the end of 2025.”

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 Knowlton Hall Tue, Fri 9:30-10:30a
Coventry Senior Center: Wed 9:30-10:30a
Lebanon Senior Center: Tue 4-5p, Thu 6:30-7:30p
Lebanon Library: Thu 5-6p
Storrs Friends Meetinghouse: Sat 8:30-9:30a

Call or text Joe Pandolfo: 959-444-3979

Song-a-Day Music Center

Coventry, Connecticut
860-742-6878 or songadaymusic.com
Lessons in: Guitar, Piano, Bass Guitar, Banjo, Mandolin, Ukulele, Dulcimer, Violin, Woodwinds, Brass & Drums
Instruments New & Used - Books, Gifts, Accessories, Instrument Repair
Buying used instruments! We pay cash!
Band Instrument Rentals & Supplies



Solar Today - Honoring Earth Day, every day

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

A few brief sustainability topics before I dig into solar related topics:

Fall is here, please Leave the Leaves - Continually removing them does damage to the eco-system, air, noise, land and critters. If you’re curious, please do a google search to be educated on the topic. It’s more broad than you may think.

Help save the Deer - November 3rd: Daylight Saving Time ends. When clocks “fall back,” your evening commute happens at dusk—exactly when deer are most active between 5-7pm. This is deer mating season. Deer move at dawn and dusk (crepuscular), your commute suddenly overlaps with their active hours and deer hits go way up. If you see one deer, expect 5 more! What can you do? Slow down and watch out for them.

Let’s talk solar and the new current way forward!

TPO: The Smart, Secure Way to Go Solar

Despite the challenges and uncertainty facing the solar industry, there’s one clear, reliable way for homeowners to move forward with confidence — **TPO**, or **Third-Party Ownership**.

Under a TPO agreement, the solar system is owned and financed by a third-party company, not the homeowner. This means the finance company handles installation, compliance, maintenance, and, importantly, assumes all liabilities. Homeowners simply enjoy the clean energy and monthly savings with lower payments than what they are paying the utility company.

One of the biggest advantages of TPO is that it remains the **only way to capture the full value of the Federal Investment Tax Credit (ITC)** and the **Domestic Content bonuses**, both of which can substantially lower costs. These incentives have become increasingly complex to access under traditional loan or cash-purchase models due to federal “Foreign Entities of Concern” (FEOC) restrictions.

TPO also makes solar more accessible for many families. The approval process includes a **soft credit check** (which doesn’t affect your score), uses a **single score review**, allows a **seven-year lookback on bankruptcies**, and does **not require a debt-to-income ratio**.

In today’s changing landscape, TPO offers a practical, low-risk path for homeowners who want to benefit from solar without the financial or regulatory headaches. It’s a model that combines simplicity, savings, and sustainability — and continues to be the strongest option for capturing the full value of federal solar incentives.

Some of the new TPO options I am personally offering include the new and highly improved 15K Franklin battery with controllable breakers. The control is via software where you can direct the battery to supply certain breakers. The settings can be changed on the fly during an outage. The new battery also integrates a seamless transition for future upgrades.

Understanding Solar Lease and PPA Buyouts: A Word of Caution

Solar leases and PPA (Power Purchase Agreements) include an option to **purchase the system** after five years, or annually thereafter. If you sell your home before that, the new homeowner can either **take over the lease/PPA** under the original terms or **buy the system outright**.

However, homeowners should be aware that **current lease/PPA structures can make buyouts very expensive**. Most existing leases are not true “lease-to-own” programs — a buyout often requires paying the **remaining balance of the full 25-year contract**, which can be much higher than expected.

Finance companies are now developing **true lease-to-own programs**, where the system starts as an ownership program but functions as a lease for the first five years, allowing federal tax credits to be recaptured while keeping eventual ownership affordable.

Homeowners should also exercise caution with some sales practices in the industry. **A few salespeople have used misleading or improper language** to market current lease/PPA programs, overstating the benefits or downplaying the



buyout costs. Always **read contracts carefully** and confirm terms with a trusted advisor before signing.

By understanding the details, homeowners can make **informed decisions** and avoid surprises, ensuring that going solar is both **smart and fair**.

As stated, the Industry is currently working on a true Lease to own option but right now, if a sales person is using that as a lead in without disclosing the actual buyout costs, then they are twisting contractual language to make a quick sale!

Ownership Options After the Tax Credit Expires

Is solar ownership still worth it after the tax credit ends? For many, the answer will still be yes—but with a little longer return on investment. Today, a good solar site with a cash or loan purchase typically pays itself back in 6.5 to 7 years. After the credit expires, that ROI (return on investment) stretches to 9 or 11 years.

Whether that makes sense depends on your motivation and your solar exposure. Some things to consider: Are you planning to stay in your home long-term? Do you want the value of a solar system factored into your home’s resale price? Either way, if you have a good solar site, it will still pencil better than paying for utility energy pricing that continually increases each year.

A Personal Promise — and a New Service

*I’ve dedicated myself to helping homeowners switch to solar while **protecting their best interests**. I’ve seen too many people misled by half-truths, hidden fees, or rushed decisions.*

That’s why I’m now offering a consulting service: **For a small fee, I will review any quote you’ve received and break down the fine print for you. I’ll verify what’s true, what’s misleading, and whether it’s a deal worth committing to.**

Together, we can make sure your solar investment is not only smart, but financially strategic for you!

If you or someone you know wants to explore solar or just wants a no-pressure consultation, I’d love to help. Let’s bring clarity (and honesty) to this industry.

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

Dream

Ravens gather where you are.
Knowing your lupin nature
They bring you stories
With cackles and clicks
And the numerology of the flock.

They tell of danger, food, heat,
And where to find the weak.
You pad silently away
Senses tuned toward whatever serves you
In the moment.

Slipping silently by as I lay curled in a nest
Made from the detritus of the forest floor.

Smelling wet fur, I awake from a dream,
Surrounded by iridescent treasure-
A broken chain, a golden band, a dragon’s scale,
A jewel from the hilt of an ancient blade,
And a single, black, shimmering feather

Eva Lister

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Thank you. T. King, Publisher

Neighbors 21

At the Burton Leavitt Theatre

Submitted by Robin Rice

Mean Girls JR

November 7, 8, 14 & 15, 2025 at 7 pm

November 9 & 16, 2025 at 2 pm

All tickets \$15

This “fetch” musical from book writer Tina Fey (30 Rock), lyricist Nell Benjamin (Legally Blonde) and composer Jeff Richmond (Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt) is packed with keen wit, an undeniably catchy score, and a sincere message for everyone.

Cady Heron may have grown up on an African savanna, but nothing prepared her for the wild and vicious ways of her strange new home: suburban Illinois. How will this naïve newbie rise to the top of the popularity pecking order? By taking on The Plastics, a trio of lionized frenemies led by the charming but ruthless Regina George. Cady and her friends devise a “Revenge Party” to end Regina’s reign with Cady going undercover as an aspiring Plastic. When the lines between the real Cady and her Plastic self-get blurred, she must find her way back to herself and her true friends.

Adapted from Fey’s 2004 blockbuster film and the Broadway smash hit.

Yes, Virgina, There is a Santa Claus

December 5, 6, 11, 12 & 13, 2025 at 7:30 pm

December 7 & 14, at 2 pm 2025

Adults \$22 Students/Seniors \$17

UCONN/QVCC/ECSU Students \$15

By Bob Cooner

Children under 12 \$13

New York City, 1897. Christmas is almost here, and eight-year-old Virginia O’Hanlon is beside herself with excitement. Suddenly, though, she finds herself facing a crisis of belief when her friends tell her Santa Claus is a myth. Filled with doubt, Virginia asks everyone she knows to tell her the truth: Is Santa Claus real or not? Still unsure and dissatisfied, she finally takes her father’s advice and famously writes a letter to the New York Sun newspaper for a definitive answer to that most crucial of questions. Funny and heartwarming, this holiday play will delight audiences of all ages.

All shows are at the Burton Leavitt Theatre, 779 Main Street, Willimantic. Tickets are available by calling 860-423-2245, online at windhamtheatreguild.org or at the door.

Join us for Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving Day Service

10 am - 11 am

Christian Science Church
870 Main Street
Willimantic

All are welcome!

Service includes:

Hymns • Prayer • Lesson-Sermon
Expressions of Gratitude
No Collection Taken

Audi’s E-Tron Rejects Gasoline



By Bill Heald

There’s a new question that vexes those seeking a new car: should I stick with internal combustion, split the difference with a Hybrid, or go full electric? It’s a tough choice for most of us in the Northeast, because if you want to go all-out with a battery-powered auto or SUV (or even pickup) you really need to have a certain lifestyle that allows time for regular charging. But the cool thing about being in the market is so many manufacturers are offering models that fall into all three categories. Audi’s Hybrid line will be here any time now, but at present they offer both gas and all-electric units and today we look at the stunning Audi A6 Sportback e-tron Quattro. Powered by two electric motors that delivers 422 Horsepower during regular driving, this is sort of a blend between a sedan and a wagon making for excellent versatility.



The battery is a Lithium-Ion unit rated at 100 kW and 800 volts. Range provided by Audi is around 350 miles in our test unit. Recharge time depends on which charging port you use for the A6 e-tron has two: one is AC only and the other has a DC port that can take up a 270kW fast charger. Charging using this port at maximum speed can take the battery pack from 10%-80% in 21 minutes. Conventional household 120V charging takes forever, and a 240V home charger takes about 12 hours.



So enough about the electrics, how about the car itself? The Sportback design is sleek and beautiful, yet is still looks bulky when compared to a sedan. The wheelbase is a lengthy 116.1 inches, and this machine weighs about 5,200 lbs., which is not uncommon for a fully electric vehicle. Acceleration is smooth and powerful, and as there’s no real transmission thrust is a very pure experience. As part of the optional Prestige package, the Sportback has an air suspension that delivers a firm ride and can raise ride height at low speeds about an inch, to help navigate unimproved roads. The interior is very well designed (although the touch screen interface can take a while to master) and room for driver and co-pilot as well as rear-seat passengers is good with very supportive seating. The “wagon” part of the Sportback has about 30 cubic feet of cargo space with the rear seats up, and nearly forty when folded down. There’s also a small “frunk” under the hood for smaller items. Nice to have some utility in such a luxurious package.

When it comes to electronics, the A6 e-tron is both impressive and vexing (vexpressive?). There are a number of sub-menus to navigate through for a lot of functions, but state-of-the-art safety features include forward collision warning and automatic emergency braking. The panoramic roof doesn’t have a shade; it “frosts over” at the push of a button to limit sunlight. Amazing, really. With options, our 2025 Audi A6 Sportback e-tron Quattro was priced at \$77,240. www.audiusa.com

Common Sense Car Care

By Rick Ostien

I started writing a car care article back in the 1980’s. That was about the time full-service gas stations began changing from service stations to convenience stores. The service station was just that. The person at the gas pumps could check your tire pressure, check your oil, wash your windshield, and even replace your wiper blades if needed. The convenience store provides pump your own gas, check your own oil, check your own tire pressure if they provide an air tower, and wiper blades, well only if it’s raining and they cause a problem. I always thought that people took better care of their vehicle, but it was the person at the gas pump that made sure your common things were checked.

The vehicles of today have message centers and warning lights to alert the driver of a problem. These systems only work if the driver heeds the warning or message. We have found more vehicles with messages and warning lights on that ever before. I must share a story of the tire monitor light. We had a vehicle come in for regular service. We informed the customer of the tire monitor light being on. The customer’s answer was “I had new tires put on and when I left the facility the tire light was on, but not before the new tires. The facility told me that the light would eventually go out.” This vehicle should have 4 tire monitor sensors. This vehicle had 2 sensors and 2 regular valve stems meaning that 2 of the sensors had been removed for an unknown reason. The vehicle left with the tire monitor light still on.

The manufacturer installed these systems in your vehicle to keep you and your passengers safe and not have a major repair happen. I have seen many changes in the last 50+ years of being in the family business. The cost of doing business, equipment, and the most important thing having qualified personnel to do vehicle repairs. The work force in our trade is dwindling partly because of the investment in equipment and knowledge you need to have to repair today’s vehicle. This is definitely not your grand-dad’s Model T anymore!

****Special Note below

The weather is getting colder and soon winter will arrive. Please be sure to have your tires checked for tread wear, check those wiper blades, and be sure all fluids are up to proper levels. It is also a good idea to put together and emergency kit for bad weather. Flashlights, a small tool kit, a blanket or 2, extra gloves, extra socks, and some non-perishable snacks are a must in case you are stuck in traffic or stranded for an extended period. It is important to be proactive during bad weather. Above all, stay safe and stay off the roads if you can when the weather warrants it. Wishing everyone a Happy Holiday season. Drive safely!!!!

Rick Ostien is the owner of Franc Motors in Willington.

Irish Pride

By Judy Davis

In Irish history, past and present, the struggles for freedom from British rule is ongoing. From the rebels such as Charles Stewart Parnell, Maude Gonne, Con Booth, Padraic Pearse, James Connolly, to Gerry Conlon, Bobby Sands, and Bernadette Devlin, Irish Pride was alive then, now, and will be always.

These heroes live in my heart, and in my soul. The words from the Irish National Anthem, “A Soldiers Song” says it best: “We’ll sing a song, a soldier’s song, with cheering, rousing chorus, as ‘round our blazing fires we throng, the stary heavens o’er us; impatient for the coming fight, and we wait for the morning’s light, here in the silence of the night, we’ll chant a soldier’s song.” I am proud, also, to be an Irish rebel. I learned from the best!



Wolf Rock Preserve, Mansfield. Contributed photo.

Join Joshua’s Trust’s Annual Membership Drive-Become a Member Today!

Submitted by David McCarthy, Executive Director

Have you ever toured the Gurleyville Grist Mill or hiked the Wolf Rock Preserve in Mansfield? Wandered through Utley Hill or Potters Meadow in Columbia? Maybe you’ve explored the Friedman Memorial Forest in Ashford or the Elizabeth Couch Preserve in Coventry. These are just a few of the special places that Joshua’s Trust preserves and protects across northeastern Connecticut.

Joshua’s Trust is one of the largest nonprofit land trusts in the state, caring for more than 5,000 acres of forests, meadows, wetlands, and 40 miles of trails across 14 towns. We also safeguard historic treasures like the Gurleyville Grist Mill and Atwood Farm, our Mansfield headquarters. Together with our members, volunteers, and partners, we’ve been protecting the natural and historic heritage of our region for nearly 60 years.

But our work is far from done. Forests and native habitats face increasing threats, pollinators are in decline, and wildlife is under stress. Each year, more land is lost to development, and opportunities to connect with nature become harder to find. That’s why Joshua’s Trust is taking action — preserving more open space, restoring habitats, and creating opportunities for people to learn about and experience the land and heritage that makes our communities so special.

With your membership support, we protect land, heritage, wildlife, and biodiversity across our region.

When you become a Joshua’s Trust member, you join a growing network of people who care deeply about protecting the Quiet Corner’s beauty, biodiversity, and history. Membership directly supports land acquisition, stewardship, trail maintenance, and community education programs that inspire a new generation of conservationists. Members also receive voting privileges at our Annual Meeting, invitations to special events, and regular updates through email and our printed quarterly newsletter. Most importantly, you’ll know that your support is making a lasting difference in the place you call home.

We can’t do this work without you. Please consider supporting Joshua’s Trust 2025–26 Annual Membership Drive — today. Your gift has an immediate impact—every contribution helps preserve the land and legacy of northeastern Connecticut for generations to come.

Join us today at <https://joshuastrusttest.org/donate-2/>

Phone: 860-429-9023 Email: administration@joshuastrust.org

Joshua’s Trust — Preserving Land and Heritage Across Northeastern Connecticut.

To all our contributors-Thank You!

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



This photo is courtesy of Fort Hill Farms and shows four generations of the family: front row: Norma O'Leary, Kristin Orr, and Adelaide (child). Back row: Kies and Jared LaVack.

Fort Hill Farms: 2025 CT Winner of New England Green Pastures Award

Submitted by Stacey Stearns

Fort Hill Farms in Thompson, Connecticut is the 2025 New England Green Pastures award winner for Connecticut. Led by Kies (Orr) and Jared LaVack, Fort Hill Farms exemplifies innovation, sustainability, and dedication to dairy excellence. As fourth-generation farmers, Kies and Jared have continued the Orr family legacy with a forward-thinking approach that blends tradition with technology.

The farm has grown from 200 to 230 milking cows, primarily Holsteins with a few Jerseys—Jared’s personal touch. Their herd produces high-quality milk with impressive components: 4.2% butterfat and 3.25% protein, averaging 90 pounds of milk per cow daily. Cows are housed in two groups and milked using robotic milking systems, with each cow being milked three times daily. These robot boxes are equipped with heating systems to ensure cow comfort year-round.

Kies and Jared work closely with a nutritionist to optimize herd health and productivity. First calving occurs at 24 months, and breeding strategies include sexed semen for first service and beef breeding at the fourth service. Their commitment to animal care and efficiency is evident in every aspect of their operation.

The farm spans 600 acres—350 dedicated to corn and 250 to grass—all managed in-house. Corn is typically planted by mid-June, with high-moisture corn stored in bags. While exact yields vary, the farm’s nutrient management is precise, with recommendations based on measured values. Manure is separated into solids and liquids, with solids pulled and liquids stored in a 5.5-million-gallon pit. Fort Hill Farms is also embracing sustainability through an anaerobic digester that processes food waste, primarily grease, into renewable energy. This initiative reflects their commitment to environmental stewardship and long-term viability.

Beyond dairy, Fort Hill Farms is a vibrant community hub. Kies, Jared, and Kies’ mother Kristin Orr operate a seasonal farm store, lavender business, and a popular corn maze with educational themes. Their farm stand, The Farmer’s Porch, offers products from The Farmer’s Cow and Cabot Creamery Cooperative, the farm’s two cooperatives, showcasing their role in local agriculture and direct-to-consumer marketing.

The barn, built in just three months, maintains a comfortable temperature range of 40–80°F and will soon be expanded with support from NRCS to include a dedicated heifer barn.

Kies and Jared’s passion for farming, innovation, and community engagement make Fort Hill Farms a stand-out in Connecticut agriculture. Their motto, “Farm On,” is more than a slogan—it’s a way of life that honors the past while building a sustainable future.

Congratulations to Kies and Jared LaVack of Fort Hill Farms on being named the 2025 New England Green Pastures Award Winner for Connecticut.

Visit <https://forthillfarms.com/> for more information.

News from The Willington Public Library

Submitted by Debbie Linares, Assistant Director/Programmer

We still have a great number of FREE Children, Young Adult, and Adult books that were left over from our Friend’s Book Sale for the taking. We really don’t want to see them get thrown away or destroyed.

Now and until November 20th, we are offering free “Conversational Spanish” classes every Thursday from 6:30 to 7:30pm. We ask that you register by calling or stopping in. This is a fun, seven week program, which began on October 9th, but you may join in at any time. If there is enough interest, we will continue to offer it.

Tuneful Tots is back! This is a music and movement class for birth to 5 year olds. This program is being sponsored by Consonare Choral Community. Join Ms. Catherine, an elementary music educator, for an engaging music class where your little one will explore with their voice, sing all kinds of fun and silly songs, get their bodies moving and try out a variety of instruments. You can join in on Wednesdays 10:30-11:15am, now and until November 19. There is a suggested \$5.00 donation per family (no one is turned away!)

We have a great Adult Book Club on the first Thursday of every month at 3:30pm in our Reading Room. November’s read will be “Queens of Crime” by Marie Benedict and December’s read will be “The Bookbinder” by Pip Williams. The library has books that you may borrow to read, if you don’t have one of your own. A number of books are supplied one month in advance so everyone has a chance to read before meeting to discuss. You can pick and choose which book to read and come to only those you would enjoy discussing as a group.

Another enjoyable evening at the library is our Poet-Tea, which is on the first Thursday of the month at 6:30pm. Bring your favorite poem, a poem you’ve written, or just bring yourself to listen! We will meet again on November 6th and December 4th.

Once a month, we offer a Family Movie Time at 12:30pm, on our BIG screen! On Saturday, November 22, we will be watching “Lilo & Stitch” (live) - rated PG and on December 20, “The Muppet Christmas Carol” - rated G. Ongoing are “Sound Healing Meditations” with Sound Healer, Edie Jemiola. Edie uses crystal alchemy bowls and voice to bring patrons on an stress-reducing and rejuvenating guided meditation journey. These classes are for adults. There is ample space for patrons to lie down. Bring a yoga mat, pillows, blanket or lounging chair. We do have chairs available for those who prefer. You may use whatever makes you feel most comfortable. Call the library to register for the dates you would like to attend. Walk-ins are also welcome. There is a \$10.00 suggested donation but all are welcome and encouraged to attend! Upcoming classes are Tuesday, November 4, Thursday, November 20, Tuesday, December 2, and Thursday, December 18. All classes begin at 6:30 and go until 7:30pm.

Mark your calendar for “Partoons”: Caricatures by Don Landgren, on Saturday, November 8th, at 12:30 - 2:30pm. For two hours, Don will draw a caricature of yourself and for a fee of only \$5.00.

What a great gift this would make to give someone. Registration is required for this event. First come, first to be “drawn”. Yes, walk-ins are welcome as time permits. Caricatures will be completed on 11” x14” or 8 1/2” x 11” card-stock and in black & white. Each drawing will be provided with a protective sleeve.

Santa is coming to the library! We are holding a pictures with Santa fundraiser!

On Thursday, November 13th from 6 - 8pm, in our beautifully decorated Reading Room. Get an early start on holiday shopping with a GREAT photo gift, or for sending out your holiday cards. Patrons and their families can call or visit to sign-up for a photo session and take pictures with ol’ Kris Kringle himself. Mrs. Claus will be accompanying him as well this evening. There is a \$5.00 per portrait fee. Bring your camera/cell phone to capture this special moment. All proceeds will help support the library.

We will be celebrating a “Holiday Paint Night & Pajama Party”! Join us Thursday, December 4th from 6 - 7:30pm! Come decked out in your favorite festive PJ’s or sweater, for an all ages craft, as we paint various wood holiday decorations for the home (or as a gift!). Sip on cider and hot cocoa, munch on cookies and popcorn, and listen to seasonal music to get yourself into the holiday spirit. Santa & Mrs. Claus will be visiting too and they will share a Christmas story with us. There is a fee of \$1.00 per decoration for this program. There are a limited number of

decorations, so, only one per person, while supplies last.

Join us this holiday season for another special program presented by actor Ken Noll, as he portrays author and storyteller, Charles Dickens, with a performance of, “A Christmas Carol”, Tuesday, December 16th at 6:00pm. This special performance will run approximately 70 minutes with an intermission. Mr. Noll will recreate that same experience for us, just as Dickens did, using different voices, adding emotions, and incorporating facial expressions and gestures - all while being dressed in full garb. So, get into the holiday spirit with this FREE performance, graciously sponsored by Connecticut Humanities.

The Willington Public Library is excited to announce a new fundraising initiative to bring 3D printing technology to the community. The project, led by E.O. Smith High School senior who aims to raise \$455–\$678 to purchase and install a high-quality 3D printer at the library. This addition will give Willington residents—children, teens, and adults alike—access to cutting-edge tools for creativity, innovation, and hands-on learning. Once funded, this student will offer introductory workshops on 3D printing, helping patrons explore design, engineering, and problem-solving in an accessible and engaging way. He will also develop a training guideline for staff to assist patrons and a reference handout. Community members are encouraged to support the fundraiser and help make 3D printing accessible to everyone in Willington by visiting the library, where a donation box will be located, or by going to www.gofundme.com/3dwillington

We are once again hosting the Caterpillar Club sponsored by the Town of Willington and the Department of Human Services. This is a free program that allows children ages 12 months to 4 years of age and their caregivers the opportunity for a safe place and time to play and socialize. You can join in on the class at any time! Gatherings are on Tuesdays from 9:30-11:00am, in our Community Room. If Willington schools are delayed or canceled, the Caterpillar Club is cancelled. To register, call or email Colleen Peck at 860-487-3119 or cpeck@willingtonct.gov for more information.

The Friend’s of Willington Public Library have received applications for their upcoming Holiday Craft Fair, Raffle Baskets, & Bake Sale, to be held on Saturday, December 6th from 9am-4pm. We now have a full house of 25 plus vendors! There will be plenty of fun-filled activities going on throughout the library! There will be children crafts throughout the day, a visit from Santa where you are welcome to take pictures with him, a room full of raffle baskets, a room full of baked goods, and shopping everywhere, upstairs and down!

Thank you to all who will be participating this year. We do have a wait list incase anyone is unable to show last minute. If you would like to still be a part of this event, you can still sign up by contacting the Friends at... willingtonfriendsofthelibrary@gmail.com

If anyone or any business would like to donate a gift certificate or basket to help us with this fundraising event, it would be greatly appreciated. Donations will be taken now and up to the day before the actual event which would be Friday, December 5th by 3:00pm. These can be dropped off at the library any time we are open.

During the winter months, notice of delays and closings, as well as program cancelations can be found on our website: www.willingtonpubliclibrary.org or WFSB-TV Channel 3 (or WFSB.com) and NBC 30 WVIT (or NBC30.com) Updates can also be found on Facebook - like us at www.Facebook.com/willingtonpubliclibrary

For more ongoing programs, go to our website at www.willingtonpubliclibrary.com. Happy Holidays!

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Regional Community Media & Arts News

By John Murphy

Greetings everyone, three highlights for this month:

- 1. A reflection on *No Kings Day* in Willimantic
- 2. Arts resource: Creative Ground
- 3. Update from public access Spectrum TV/CTV192



I am writing this column on “*No Kings Day*” in Willimantic, where an estimated 4000 people showed up in a peaceful (and humorous) expression of growing citizen concern about the quality and functioning of our democracy in 2025.

Whether you were on the street with a sign or driving by the crowds on Jackson and Main, whether you agreed with the crowd or not, everyone knows our political system is broken and running out of faith. We are still too polarized with media-induced confusion and fear to find the common ground for the solutions we must find to secure our future. Our Congress is derelict, MIA, out to lunch, whacked, while the rest of the world wonders what will bring our nation out of its self-imposed maelstrom and when will calm and compassion return?

Below is a highlight from my first column in *Neighbors* in 2014. It shines a very bright light on the spirit, purpose, and intention for all of my community media work. I share it with you now because it speaks to us directly and clearly today. It is about becoming a *community creature* and then living that way:

The Virtual Community

We know the rules of community; we know the healing effect of community in terms of individual lives. If we could somehow find a way across the bridge of our knowledge, would not these same rules have a healing effect upon our world? We human beings have often been referred to as social animals. But we are not yet community creatures. We are impelled to relate with each other for our survival. But we do not yet relate with the inclusivity, realism, self-awareness, vulnerability, commitment, openness, freedom, equality, and love of genuine community. It is clearly no longer enough to be simply social animals, babbling together at cocktail parties and brawling with each other in business and over boundaries. It is our task—our essential, central, crucial task—to transform ourselves from mere social creatures into community creatures. It is the only way that human evolution will be able to proceed.

—M. Scott Peck, from *The Different Drum: Community-Making and Peace* [From the Introduction to “The Virtual Community: Homesteading on the Electronic Frontier,” by Howard Rheingold, Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1993.]

A VALUABLE RESOURCE FOR THE ARTS

For this issue I am sharing information about an excellent resource for anyone involved in the arts community. Whatever your focus, level of experience, or location, you should connect to this organization and sign up for their newsletter to learn more about how their good work can serve your growth. Add your artist information and activity to their regional database! Some basic information below from the website will get you started:

CreativeGround is a project of the New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA/www.nefa.org). It is the dynamic regional directory that celebrates the vital work of New England’s creative people and places. CreativeGround is a community-generated and free tool that supports a region-wide creative network.

CreativeGround supports the creative core to:

- connect with each other
- share expertise
- collaborate on a project
- exchange resources
- map local cultural assets
- discover new neighbors

New England Creative Economy Network (the Network): Creative Core

- Creative entities that produce creative work (especially Artists/Creatives)
- Creative entities that distribute creative work
- Creative entities that support creative work
- Creative entities that train in creative work
- Creative-Related entities that are not creative in business mission but also distribute or otherwise support creative work (like Senior Centers, School Committees, and Foundations)
- Community Leaders who connect creatives and share resources
- Data Partners who license CreativeGround data to use as their own local directory or for research projects

Announcing Monthly Virtual Sessions for Profile & Search Support

CreativeGround equips New England’s creative communities with the tools for visibility, connection, and knowledge building. To support your effort to make the most of these opportunities, we will be offering scheduled, live virtual support sessions. As part of the support offered to site users, these live, virtual sessions will alternate focus between:

- Profile Support: Get tips and ask questions about creating or bolstering your own CreativeGround profile for maximum visibility
- Search Sessions: Guided, hands-on live sessions where we will explore search together and answer questions about connecting with your creative community

These live sessions will be responsive to participants’ specific needs and questions; come ready to participate and be sure to bring your questions!
November 13th 2025 1:00-1:30 pm - Profile Support Session
December 4th , 2025 1:00-1:30 pm - Search Session

Please register for any support sessions using the links below:
<https://www.creativeground.org/blog/join-us-announcing-monthly-virtual-sessions-profile-search-support>

CTV 192/PUBLIC ACCESS TV NEWS WATCH LOCAL WILI RADIO PROGRAMS ON PUBLIC ACCESS

In case you miss them live, several WILI Radio local information programs are available on CTV192 to provide additional exposure for guests and their good work in our community. These programs share information and ideas not available in other local media, so please check them out, live on the radio or on CTV192!
Contact the hosts if you would like to join them and share your stories, the studio doors are always open!

On the Homefront on CTV192

Tuesday 5:30-6:30 pm
Friday 8:00-9:00 pm

Ravings and Cravings on CTV192

Thursday and Friday 4-4:30 pm

Hometown Threads on CTV192

Thursday and Friday 5:00-5:30 pm

Let’s Talk About It on CTV192

Friday 9:00-10:00 pm
Sunday 12:00-1:00 pm

The full schedule for all programs is available online at www.ctv192.org. You can also learn about media training opportunities to build skills for personal or professional work.

Flagship originating broadcasts will continue in Willimantic at WILI AM 1400 and 95.3 FM on Wednesdays from 5:05-6:00 pm.
WILI YouTube Channel for all Monday-Friday local talk shows—available at:
<https://www.youtube.com/@wiliradio7000>. Each program has its own playlist with all the shows. Search on “WILI Radio” and subscribe!
The On the Homefront audio podcast archive is available

24/7. Subscribe to get every new program!
<https://www.wili.com/on-the-homefront-podcast/>
Archive of my media/arts columns in Neighbors at: www.neighborspaper.com and the January-February 2025 column at: <https://neighbors.pageflip.site/publications/NeighborsPaper#page/17>
The *On the Homefront* radio series is an integrated media hub for community service on all local platforms on a 24/7 basis, YouTube, podcasts, public access TV, Neighbors (print), streaming and mobile.

ON THE HOMEFRONT RECENT GUESTS



Connecticut Student Journalism Collaborative (CTSJC) Statewide faculty partnership to get journalism students published in professional media in Connecticut
(l-r) Kate Farrish/UConn Journalism Faculty and students Avery Martin & Brandon Cortes
CTSJC Website with student stories at <https://ctcommunitynews.org/>



Vulturetown Arts
Music/film/visual/performing arts in Willimantic
(l-r) Chad Duran and Laura Kessler
More info: <https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=vulturetown%20arts>

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

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

Windham-Tolland 4-H Camp News

Submitted by Elaine Nelson
Ragged Hill Woods Environmental Science Programs at Windham Tolland 4-H Camp 326 Taft Pond Rd, Pomfret, CT. For Pre-K to Grade 8 students. Oct 28 & 29 Fall Photosynthesis, Nov 4 & 5 Where Do Bugs Go?, Nov 11 & 12 Hibernation, Nov 18 & 19 Supercooling, Dec 9 & 10 Climate Science, Dec 16 & 17 Winter Solstice. Either Tuesday or Wednesday, all at 4:30 PM. \$20 per child per session or sign up for all for \$110 per child. To register, e-mail raggedhillwoods@gmail.com or call 860-974-1122.
December 7, 2025 - Lunch with Santa from 11 – 1 . Have lunch upstairs in the lodge or just come for a photo with Santa and avoid the lines at the mall. Made to order Pasta Bar, salad, drinks and desserts (gluten free pasta available). Join us in making holiday crafts, cookies, s’mores and more and shop our selection of silent auction and raffle items. Tickets available ahead of time by calling 974-3379, email registrar@4hcampct.org or at the door. No reservations necessary. \$10.00 for children up to age 8, \$14.00 for those 9 and older for lunch, 5 x 7 Photo with Santa \$8.00.
Looking for an awesome Christmas gift for a youngster in your life? Gift certificates are available for a week of camp or in any denomination you wish to give. Contact our Registrar, Jane Smith at 860-974-3379 to purchase.
December 30, 2025 - Camper Game Day from 9:00 am – 3:00 pm for children ages 6-12. Games, food and fun for the kids during the holiday vacation week from school. Lunch and snacks included and outdoor gear required as some time will be spent outside. Admission is \$30/child, everyone welcome. Pre-registration requested by 12/22. Call 860-974-1122 to register or email: campdirector@4hcampct.org

The Wild Turkey

By Carol Wheelock Hall

The wild turkey is a large game bird. On Thanksgiving, a turkey is our meal preferred, Although other main courses can be served. Most diners will feel like a nap afterwards.

Native to North America in a great many regions, Turkeys forage on the ground and this is the reason: To find seeds, nuts, reptiles, mammals, amphibians, Anything fitting their mouth and available that season.

Wild ones have dark feathers, a multi-colored head and neck nude. Ben Franklin once proposed to boost their fame and their latitude. Instead bald eagles came to signify our nation’s soaring attitude, While the wild turkeys remained as a very good source of food.

With a wattle, a snood, and a beard on his chest, The tom, or “gobbler”,struts and calls, doing his best. He attracts the hens who put eggs in their grassy nest. If poults survive to jakes and jennies, that’s part of the test.

Hungry predators raid eggs in nests, and the very young. Adults can run quite quickly to escape a hungry tongue. They can also fly to sleep in trees when the day is done. Wild turkeys can live 3 to 5 years before their life is done.

Some domesticated turkeys can get lucky and outlast With a presidential pardon, but for most the die is cast. Meanwhile turkeys came back from an over-hunted past, So in woodlands of America wild turkeys have amassed.

Happy Thanksgiving to All

Back from Suicide Book Signing and Talk on Suicide

Putnam Library, 200 School Street, Putnam, CT
Wednesday, November 5, 2025, 6:00 pm

When Pomfret School valedictorian Patrick Wood killed himself in 2006, his mother, Lisette Rimer, faced the hardest question of her life. “I had to learn why outwardly successful people kill themselves,” Rimer said. “I had to learn how the disease of depression led to Patrick’s death. A big part of that was the vulnerability of young gay people. They’re twice as likely to attempt suicide than the general youth population.”

Rimer’s search for answers led to her memoir, *Back from Suicide: Before and After the Essential Patrick*, which will be available at the Putnam Library, Wednesday, November 5, 2025, 6:00 pm. The book talk and signing will include a presentation on suicide risks and prevention. Rimer said, “Ninety percent of suicide is connected to mental illness, which can descend into unbearable pain, hopelessness, and the lure of permanent relief. I want others to benefit from my journey to understand that decline.

They may not perceive chronic sadness as a medical issue. Neither did I, and that meant I had to learn after it was too late.”

Patrick attended Pomfret School on a full scholarship and graduated as valedictorian with perfect SAT scores in 2001. Less than a year after he graduated from Stanford with honors, Rimer struggled to understand his death. “He had everything to live for, especially his twin sister Libby, who will never recover from his loss. She became a psychotherapist to help people in crisis like Patrick.”

Back from Suicide was a BookLife quarter-finalist with a perfect score of ten and won the Storytrade Prodigy Award and the Bookshelf honorable mention writing award.

Rimer said the presentation will show how the disease of depression can turn deadly. “We need to think of suicide as the mental health crisis that it is. We need to normalize talking about it. I hope that those who have been affected will bring their questions and their stories so that all of us can benefit.”

Marie Lisette Rimer grew up in

Popular Regionwide Artists’ Open Studios

November 28, 29, 30, December 1 & December 6, 7
10 am to 5 pm

Submitted by Suzy Staubach

Every year artists throughout northeastern Connecticut join together as Artists’ Open Studios to share their art with the community during Thanksgiving weekend and the first weekend of December. The public is invited to visit the many individual studios and group shows on this self-guided tour through the beautiful Quiet Corner of Connecticut. Talent ed professional painters, woodworkers, metal workers, printmakers, weavers, potters, jewelers, photographers, sculptors, calligraphers, digital artists, collagists, mixed media artists and more, are eager to welcome you.

Artists’ Open Studios Tour is your opportunity to see what local artists are creating. You can learn how they make their work, what inspires them, and in many cases, watch demonstrations.

The tour is free and family friendly. If you like, you can shop for gifts. All of the artists will offer work for purchase. Wrap up a shawl, earrings, a cutting board

or serving bowl for your holiday giving. Treat yourself and bring home a painting or a sculpture to enliven your house. Or just enjoy your visit.

Brochures with artist descriptions are available at area restaurants, post offices, and shops. They are also online at aosct.org. Online, you can read bios and artist’s statements for each participant. Specific dates for each location are listed in the brochure and online. Be sure to check these when planning your tour, as not all artists are open both weekends. There is also a map online to aid in your planning.

Artists’ Open Studios of Northeastern Connecticut has been celebrating the arts and connecting artists with the public for nearly four decades. Take the tour with friends or family or by yourself. It is a fun and relaxing way to enjoy the artistic and scenic richness of the farming towns and rejuvenated mill towns that make up this part of the state.

For more information: aosct.org.

Fort Lauderdale, Florida and earned a BA and MA in Secondary Education at the University of Connecticut. She was a publicist in the Connecticut legislature and an award-winning English teacher at Rectory School in Pomfret, Connecticut. The joy of three children and country living with her

husband Robert Wood was shattered by the suicide death of her youngest son, Patrick Wood.

More information is available at: www.backfromsuicide.com/events.

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Super Series

By Tom Woron

Every year sports fans are treated to the Fall Classic, the World Series. That is when the champions of Major League Baseball’s American League and National League meet to play a best four out of seven game series to determine the best team in all of baseball. Every now and then a World Series is played that’s super exciting leaving a lasting impression for years afterward.

Fifty years ago, in 1975, just such an electrifying World Series was to take place as a powerful and well balanced National League champion Cincinnati Reds team was to face off against the scrappy and determined American League champions, the Boston Red Sox.

The Boston Red Sox franchise had not won a World Series championship since 1918 but they now had very talented team that could possibly win it. On the other side the Cincinnati Reds had a championship caliber team, often referred to as the Big Red Machine, in the first half of the 1970s but had so far failed to win a world championship. The Reds franchise had not won the World Series since 1940. To put it bluntly, both teams were hungry for a championship. That was the key ingredient for an incredibly thrilling major sports showdown!

The first two games of the 1975 World Series were to be played in Boston’s Fenway Park. On October 11th Game 1 was an “El Tiente” show as the Red Sox star Cuban pitcher Luis Tiant faced the Big Red Machine. The Machine was unable to get started as the Red’s batters seemed to be confused by Tiant’s high, slow curveball pitches. The Red Sox prevailed 6-0 scoring all six runs in the seventh inning. Tiant himself began the inning with a hit and scored a run. In an entertaining moment he missed home plate and had to go back to touch it so the run would count.

Game 2 played on October 12th had the Red Sox on the verge of taking a two games to none lead in the series. In 17 innings from the first game up until the end of the eighth inning of the second game the Reds had scored only one run. Going into the top of the ninth inning the Red Sox led 2-1. The Reds started to show some life in the top of the ninth by getting two men on base. The Red Sox got two outs but they were unable to get the third out before the Reds scored two runs to take a 3-2 lead. That’s how it would end as Boston was retired in their half of the ninth by Red reliever Rawly Eastwick. The series headed to Cincinnati tied one game apiece.

The third game of the 1975 World Series, played in Cincinnati’s Riverfront Stadium on October 14th, is one of the more memorable games in World Series history. In the first two games in Boston’s smaller Fenway Park neither team hit a home run even though both had several powerful hitters. In the top of the second inning Red Sox catcher Carlton Fisk put Boston up 1-0 with a solo home run. The game became a slugfest. Reds catcher Johnny Bench countered with a two run home run in the Reds half of the fourth. The next inning Reds hitters Dave Concepcion and Cesar Geronimo hit consecutive home runs. That was followed with a triple by Reds star Pete Rose who then scored on a fly ball by Joe Morgan, later voted the National League’s Most Valuable Player. The Reds then had a 5-1 lead. The Red Sox fought back. With Boston trailing 5-2 in the seventh inning, Red Sox pinch hitter Bernie Carbo hit a home run to make the



score 5-3. The top of the ninth inning then saw Red Sox outfielder Dwight Evans hit a two run home run to tie the score at 5-5 and send the game into extra innings. In the bottom of the tenth the Reds Cesar Geronimo led off with a single. What followed was one of the greatest sports controversies of all time. Reds manager Sparky Anderson sent pinch hitter Ed Armbrister up to sacrifice bunt to move Geronimo to scoring position. Armbrister’s bunt bounced high in front of home plate. Boston catcher Fisk moved to field what appeared to be an easy double play ball. Armbrister hesitated in getting out of the batters box to move toward first base. When he did he collided with Fisk who was moving to field the ball. Trying to hurry a play at second base, Fisk then threw a wild throw over Red Sox shortstop Rick Burleson. The throwing error allowed Geronimo to reach third base with no outs. Fisk and Red Sox manager Darrell Johnson argued vehemently that Armbrister impeded Fisk from fielding the ball and should be called out for interference. Umpire Larry Barnett disagreed taking the position that Armbrister had a right to move toward first base at the same time Fisk had the right to field the ball. Their collision was incidental and there was no interference. After the Sox got one out, Joe Morgan got a hit to drive Geronimo home with the winning run.

Bahamian Ed Armbrister was a utility player for the Reds who only played a few years in the major leagues. His major league career was not very impressive, however he will always be famous for his involvement in a major controversial play that led to the Reds winning a key World Series game. Even he wasn’t sure why he hesitated in moving toward first base after bunting the ball. Was his collision with Fisk impediment and therefore interference? The play has been reviewed a million times over the years and the debate continues to this day. Regardless of anyone’s opinion it was umpire Barnett’s decision that counted.

Down two games to one, Boston sent their ace pitcher Luis Tiant back to the mound to start Game 4. He threw 163 pitches, something that would be unheard of today, and survived a major threat by the Reds in the bottom of the ninth. In securing a 5-4 complete game win it was assured that the series would return to Boston for a sixth game.

The 5th Series game, played at Riverfront Stadium on October 16th, saw the Red Sox take an early 1-0 lead. But it was all Reds after that as they got to Red Sox starting pitcher Reggie Cleveland. Cincinnati’s Tony Perez had not had a hit in fifteen at bats in the series. He ended his series slump by hitting two home runs as the Reds cruised to a 6-2 win. It was back to Fenway for the sixth game scheduled for October 18th.

Three days of rain postponed Game 6 until October 21st. Game 6 of the 1975 World Series! The very words are legendary to sports fans who know! The game was to be unbelievably exciting and nerve wracking for fans of both teams.

With both teams well rested from the extra days off, the Red Sox started Luis Tiant in Game 6. He got some support right away in the first inning when Red Sox center fielder Fred Lynn hit a three run homer to put Boston up 3-0. Lynn was American League Rookie of the Year as well as Most Valuable Player in 1975. Tiant held Cincinnati scoreless through the first four innings but the Red scored three in the top of the fifth to tie the game. By

the seventh inning the Reds had Tiant figured out. With two outs George Foster hit a two run double and the Reds led 5-3. Cesar Geronimo put the Reds ahead 6-3 in the top of the eighth with a solo home run that led to Tiant being relieved.

Going into the bottom of the eighth inning down 6-3, things looked pretty bleak for Boston. Unbeknownst to Red Sox fans however, the best was still to come. In their half of the eighth the Sox got two men on base. Bernie Carbo was sent in to pinch hit for relief pitcher Rogelio Moret. Facing Rawly Eastwick, Carbo struggled having two strikes against him and fouling off two more pitches to “stay alive.” On the next pitch Carbo smashed a home run to tie the



Game 3, Fisk and Armbrister collide. Interference or not?

game 6-6. Boston had come back to life and could still win the series! It looked as though the Sox might win the game in the ninth when they loaded the bases with none out. Fred Lynn hit a fly ball to Foster in left field foul territory. Denny Doyle then tagged at third and was thrown out trying to score. In the top of the eleventh, Cincinnati’s Joe Morgan hit a long drive with a man on base. It looked like it would be an extra base hit. However, Boston right fielder Dwight Evans made a leaping catch to prevent the Reds from scoring. In the top of the twelfth inning Sox pitcher Rick Wise pitched out of a jam. In the bottom of the twelfth, around 12:30 a.m. Red Sox catcher Carlton Fisk stepped up to the plate to face Pat Darcy, the eighth Reds pitcher of the game. Fisk hit a long drive

down the left field line. If it stayed fair the Sox win the game on a home run and force a seventh Series game. NBC had a TV camera inside the left field scoreboard that was focused on Fisk at the plate. The cameraman was supposed to follow the flight of the ball when Fisk hit it. However a big rat showed up near him so he froze and left the camera focused on Fisk. What was captured was classic film footage of Fisk wildly waving his arms to the right, pleading for the ball to stay fair. It hit the foul pole. Fair ball, home run! Boston wins 7-6 in most dramatic fashion forcing a seventh game.

Game 7 of the 1975 World Series at Fenway Park was somewhat of an anti-climax after the drama of the night before. The Boston Red Sox appeared to be in reach of a World Series Championship after scoring three runs in the third inning, two of them forced in by walks issued by Reds pitcher Don Gullet. Red Sox starting pitcher Bill Lee held the Reds scoreless until the sixth inning. It was then that he threw a slow curve pitch to Cincinnati’s Tony Perez who then drove the ball out of the park with a man on base cutting the Red Sox lead to 3-2. The Reds tied the game 3-3 in the seventh. The long seven game battle that was the 1975 World Series was to be decided by one run. In the top of the ninth Cincinnati’s Joe Morgan got a bloop hit off of Sox reliever Jim Burton to drive in Ken Griffey to give the Reds a 4-3 lead. Red Sox relief pitcher Will McEnany got the Sox out in order in the bottom of the ninth securing the World Championship for the Cincinnati Reds

Some sports writers and analysts rank the 1975 World Series as the greatest ever played. It had everything; Dramatic home runs, pinch hits, speedy base running, great catches, errors, many lead changes and one big controversy. For Red Sox fans it was so close yet so far. They had to wonder how it might have gone if Sox rookie slugger Jim Rice had not missed the series due to injury. Who knows?

It’s 2025 and I’m still reviewing the Armbrister-Fisk collision.

Join Us in Our Mission

Remember ★ Honor ★ Teach



★ December 13, 2025 ★

National Wreaths Across America Day



Help Corporal Henry Toberman Post # 938 VFW honor local heroes!

Sponsor a wreath today to be placed on a veteran's grave this December at Connecticut

Scan the QR code to make a donation online or visit www.wreathsasscrossamerica.org/CT0174P





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Ashford Candidates Speak Vote November 4th

Submitted by Christine Acebo, Ashford resident

Question 1: Why do you want to hold this town office?

Question 2: What do you hope to accomplish?

Question 3: How do you think the town of Ashford can find a balance between conservation and economic development?

Question 4: What do you think are the most important challenges the town has to face?

First Selectman

Cathryn Silver-Smith, Democratic Candidate, First Selectman (incumbent)

1. Ashford needs to be able to meet the economic, environmental and social challenges that our town faces now and be prepared for the future. My role as First Select is not only management of the Town’s day-to-day operations, it is to solicit input from informed sources and provide that information to my fellow selectman for use in our decision-making.

2. If re-elected as First Selectman, I hope to:

-Continue improving communications that keep the public informed about local issues, plans and activities that can affect them, and encourage their feedback and involvement. Improvements made include a new town website, monthly First Selectwoman Updates in our local Ashford Citizen, and weekly in-person “Chat with 1st Select” sessions with the public.

-Continue identifying opportunities and resolving inefficiencies in management of town resources. This term we identified and were able to reduce staff and costs without adversely impacting critical service levels and public safety.

-Continue addressing our aging town infrastructure. This term we replaced Ashford School and Fire Department roofs, made long-overdue improvements in our Senior Center facility, implemented safety upgrades in Pompey Hollow and Ashford Memorial parks and repaved our Public Works Facility, including the Transfer Station. We are currently working on safety upgrades to parking lot lighting at Ashford Town Offices.

-Continue to work with the public, town boards, commissions and committees, and with state officials to identify and encourage economic development that will benefit the community without adversely impacting our rural culture and resources.

3. Finding a balance between conservation and development is a difficult and polarizing issue in Ashford just as it is in many other small, rural towns. In general, property taxes are too high for many and town resources are spread very thin. We need the revenue, services and local jobs that good development can bring in order to thrive. We also want to preserve the town’s rural nature and protect its resources now and for future generations.

We need to clearly articulate what Ashford wants to be in 10, or even 20 years. We need a strategic, measurable plan that incorporates our Plan of Conservation and Development and includes the support of our state representatives and mechanisms for bringing in development that can offset some of our local tax burden without jeopardizing our precious natural resources.

4. I think that the most important challenges Ashford faces are limits on resources available to address our economic, social and environmental needs. We need to manage the funding we are entrusted with prudently and find other sources of revenue to reduce the burden on taxpayers. We need to maintain and improve the town’s infrastructure and vital services to the community. We also need people committed to our town and its future to fill the open positions on a number of town boards, commissions and committees.

William A. Falletti, Republican Candidate, First Selectman

1. It’s been my honor to serve on the Board of Selectmen since 1991. First Selectman from

1991 to 1995. Selectman from 1995 to 2021 and First Selectman from 2021 to 2023. I believe the continuity of those years of service to the Town has been helpful to our community and rewarding in many ways. My desire to stay on as First Selectman is to continue to address the many challenges that face Ashford in the near and distant future and to further bring us together as a community. This can be achieved by putting politics aside after election day and treating everyone civilly.

2. My goals include:

-Continue the positive working relationship with the Ashford School Administration and Board of Education to facilitate and complete the numerous projects that are on-going at the school. i.e. new and upgraded generator project, new roof, proposed new window and ADA upgrades/compliance project, etc. That positive working relationship resulted in the Town saving nearly \$100K in our recently completed 20,000 gallon mandated oil tank replacement project.

-Complete the many on-going ARPA funded projects at Town facilities, including Knowlton Hall, Senior Center and Fire House(s), etc.

-Complete reorganization of our Finance Office.

-Enhance our outreach for much needed volunteers on many of our boards, commissions, and Fire Department.

-Promoting transparency in government by continuing weekly Board of Selectmen’s meetings and encouraging public participation.

-Pursuing tax relief for our overburdened property tax payers in Town.

-Pursuing considerations for tax relief for our Veterans and Senior populations.

-Working closely with our Economic Development Commission (EDC), Planning and Zoning Commission, Inland Wetland Commission, Conservation Commission and other groups to address changing the tax formula(s) in Town to attract compatible commercial businesses and more jobs to Town. Presently, 93% of our tax burden falls directly on our real estate/property taxpayers.

-Continue restructuring of our Transfer Station facilities and policies while maintaining its free use to our residents.

-Continued support to our new After School Program to families in need of this vital service in Town and our new Local Business Assistance Program

3. I believe a balance between conservation and economic development can be achieved by continued cooperation between the Planning and Zoning Commission and Conservation Commission striving to work together with the Public, Town Boards and Commissions to update the Town’s Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). Everyone agrees that maintaining the Town’s rural/agricultural nature is critical to our community. That being said, we must also pursue commercial businesses that are compatible environmentally with the sensitivities of our community and will benefit changing our tax formula and include bringing new jobs to Town.

4. The most important challenges facing our community include:

-Public Safety

-Striving to maintain and improve excellence in the education of our children.

-Properly maintain and improve our Town facilities.

-Maintaining our roads and DPW equipment.

-Maintaining and enhancing our townwide recreational facilities.

-Striving to change our local tax formula to relieve our overburdened property taxpayers while maintaining the rural integrity of our community.

Selectman

Tess Grous, Republican Candidate, Selectman

1. If you want to see change, you need to be willing to step up and be part of the process. Having worked in several town departments under two different First Selectmen, I’ve seen firsthand how leadership styles impact both operations and morale. That experience gives me unique insight into what works and what doesn’t. I care deeply about Ashford’s future. It’s a good town, and I believe—with collaboration and commitment—we can make it even better. I want to represent the voices in our community who often feel unheard.

2. Strong relationships are the foundation for strong communities. I want to help lay the foundation for a stronger, more united Ashford. That starts with rebuilding mutual respect among employees and leadership, fostering a positive environment that reduces staff turnover and promotes stability. Public safety is a key concern—particularly around the elementary school, where speeding remains an issue. I’d also like to increase community engagement by creating more opportunities for residents to come together and volunteer. When we take pride in our town, we build something lasting for future generations.

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3. I firmly believe we can achieve both. The key lies in open, respectful communication. When we come together to share ideas—without personal agendas—we create space that fosters solutions. Leadership that sets this example can achieve that balance, maintaining rural charm while building a sustainable economic future.

Question 4:

-Budget management amid rising living costs—finding ways to be fiscally responsible without sacrificing essential services. (Volunteer Fire Department, the School, and Public Works.)

-Protecting the quality of education while staying within budget—ensuring we retain qualified teachers and offer competitive wages for all town employees.

-Addressing the crumbling foundation issue—many homes built between 1983 and 2015 still need repairs, and we must continue supporting affected residents.

-Supporting our aging population—ensuring those on fixed income to have the resources and services they need to live with dignity and security.

Alfred W. Maccarone Jr., Democratic Candidate, Selectman

I can offer assistance in governing the town by the learnings I have gained by the experience I have gained on the Board of Education during the past six years. BOE members become familiar with the town’s finances and concerns of the citizens. I can bring these understandings to the larger arena of the Board of Selectmen. I hope to bring a balance to the needs of the community and the capacity of the town’s ability to pay. The community has been frugal but has been able to maintain necessary services such as quality education, fire and recreation. I would work to maintain these programs.

Ashford is a rural community. Its culture is attractive to potential home owners. Its low tax rates and location makes it desirable. While development would expand our tax base, it needs to be “smart” to promote our nature as a rural outpost. Ashford is challenged to maintain financial frugality yet maintain quality services. I hope I can be part of the discussion as a Selectman.

Planning and Zoning Commission

Michael Peppin, Republican Candidate, Planning and Zoning Commission
Unable to contact.

Steven Petsch, Democratic Candidate, Planning and Zoning Commission

1. I like living in Ashford. I like the town’s rural character with farms, forests and open space. Serving on PZC allows me to engage with other Ashford residents around development and conservation issues, to learn about their ideas and perspectives, and then to be a small part of shaping Ashford’s future.

2. I hope to listen, to ask a few good questions, to offer some insights based on my knowledge and past experiences, and then to contribute to the Commission’s decision-making as aligns with regulations and Ashford’s priorities to the best of my understanding.

3. This is challenging. Conservation is centered around conserving resources so that they can be used – now and for future generations. There is no single balance; stakeholders in our town hold different views where that balance sits. Most critically, ensuring that lots of people can feel heard during the process is a good approach.

4. Sustainability is meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. We have economic needs, social needs and environmental needs. Ashford is challenged in agreeing on what it is that we want to sustain.

Nord Yakovleff, Democratic Candidate, Planning and Zoning Commission

1. I am running for re-election to the Planning and Zoning Commission because I like living in this small town New England village with old time Yankee values and friendly people. I’d like to keep it that way

2. I hope to direct growth in a direction that doesn’t change the ambiance of Ashford as it is.

3. The town’s conservation policies and regulations are very strict as they are. Ashford is a watershed to the Wil-

The Neighbors Local and Live Calendar

Compiled by Jesse R. Clark

Saturday, October 25th

Hiking: Guiding Hike at Tower Hill Preserve. Enjoy this 1.3 mile trail at 140 Tower Hill in Chaplin from 10:00-Noon. Appropriate hiking gear and water is recommended. Free. Email administration@joshuastrust.org with any questions.

Halloween Festival: Storrs will host their Downtown Boo Bash at 2 Dog Lane from 3:00-5:00. Families can come in costume and go trick-or-treating. **Parking at the Downtown Storrs Parking Garage is free for the first two hours and \$1.00 for all additional hours.** Check out <https://www.downtownstorrs.org/halloween> .

Live Music: The Leala Cyr Quintet- Jazz – will be performing at The River Room, 50 Riverside Drive, Willimantic from 8:00-10:00 pm. Doors open at 7:00 pm.

Hike: Fall at Bicentennial Pond. Enjoy a nice fall hike at Bicentennial Pond at 230 Clover Mill Road, Mansfield from 1:00-2:00. Free.

Historical Program: *Stories in Stone.* Cemetery Walk of Windham Center Cemetery, 219 Windham Center Rd, Windham Center. 1:00 pm-2:30. Free. Raindate Sunday, November 2nd. Sponsored by the America Museum in Willimantic.

Museum Tour: *A Walk-Through Encounters with the Collection: Exploring America* at 250 will happen at The William Benton Museum of Art, 245 Glenbrook Rd, Storrs from 2:00-3:00. A tour of an exhibit that looks at the meaning of “America” featuring artists such as Ansel Adams, Martin Johnson Heade and Richard Misrach.

Wednesday, October 29th

Historical Program: “Prison Ships in the American Revolution” at Plainfield Senior Center, 482 Norwich Rd, Plainfield. 6:30 pm. Free.

Friday, October 31st

Trick or Treat: *Trick or Treat on Main Street* will occur in Willimantic from 5:00-7:00. The event is free. Families can go Trick-or-Treating to local businesses up and down Main Street.

Saturday, November 1st

Hike: The Frogs of Windham Hike will feature a talk about the story of The Frogs of Windham while on a hike at the Allanch-Wolf Woodlands, 171 Back Rd, Windham from 1:00-3:00 pm.

Live Music: Ramblin’ Dan Stevens will be playing at The Packing House, 156 River Road, Willington from 7:30-10:30pm. Doors open at 7. Tickets are \$20.00 in advance (ONLINE) / \$25.00 at the door. For more info, check out thepackinghouse.us/upcoming/2025/11/01-acoustic-artist-series-ramblin-dan-stevens-blues-tlk65Tr

Live Music: The Pomfret Folk Brigade – Sally Rogers, Howie Bursen, Kala Farnham & Seamus McMullan – will be performing music and telling stories at The River Room, 50 Riverside Drive, Willimantic from 7:30-9:30 pm. Doors open at 6:30.

Sunday, November 2nd

Yoga/Meditation: *Bodhicitta – Developing the Mind of Total Altruism:* Join Geshema Tenzin Lhadron, resident teacher at the Forest of Wisdom in Scotland, CT, for a public talk on the foundational practice of *Bodhicitta*, the awakening mind, at YONO Yoga Studio on Church Street, Willimantic from 11:00 am - 12:00 pm for \$20.

Live Music: Aztec Two-Step will be performing at The Bread Box, 220 Valley St, Willimantic at 4:00 pm. Ticket information available at events.humanitix.com/fall-2025-music-series/tickets.

Wednesday, November 5th

Blood Drive: The Lebanon Lions Club will host a blood drive at the Lebanon Senior Center from 1PM-6PM. For the latest info, go to lebanonlions.org/events/

Friday, November 7th

Theater: The Windham Theater Guild on Main Street, Willimantic, will perform *Mean Girls, Jr.* at 7:00 pm(-Doors open at 6:30). \$15 for everyone. For more info or to purchase tickets, go to windhamtheatreguild.org/tickets/ or call 860-423-2245

Live Music: Bruce John’s Genre Jam will be performing at The River Room, 50 Riverside Drive, Willimantic at 7:30. Go to riverroomwilli.com for tickets.

Saturday, November 8th

Family Activity: People are invited to learn how to make maple syrup at The Jillson House Museum in Willimantic from 10:00 am- 12:00pm. \$35.00 for the general public, \$30.00 for members.

Food Festival: The Coventry Chili Fest will be at Coventry High School at 78 Ripley Hill Rd, Coventry from 12:00pm-2pm. Prizes will be awarded. \$10 for adults, \$7 for seniors and students with ID, and free for ages 6 and under. Go to <https://www.facebook.com/CoventryLions-Club> for more info.

Tour: Walking Through Deep Time at UCONN- take a tour through time walking through the UCONN campus with Professor Robert Thorson from 2:00-3:30. Register in advance.

Theater: *Mean Girls, Jr.* at the Windham Theater Guild 7:00 pm(Doors open at 6:30).(See 11/7)

Sunday, November 9th

Paranormal/Fundraiser: Gary McKinstry: Psychic Medium will be at the Plainfield VFW, 7 Windsor Ave, Plainfield from 1:00-3:00 contacting loved ones who have passed on to raise money for the DAR to help fund their America 250 programming. Tickets are \$20.00.

Theater: *Mean Girls, Jr.* at the Windham Theater Guild 2:00 pm(Doors open at 1:30).(See 11/7)

Monday, November 10th

Film: Second Monday Film Series. “*The American Question*” will be shown at Unitarian Universalist Meetinghouse 46 Spring Road, Storrs at 7:00 pm. Donations accepted. Check out Second Monday Film Series on Facebook for more info.

Wednesday, November 12th

Live Music: Songwriter Showcase will be at the Packing House, 156 River Road, Willington, featuring five regional songwriters. Doors open at 6:00 pm. No tickets, donations appreciated.

Thursday, November 13th

Film: Second Thursday Film Series. “*The Four Souls of Coyote*” will be shown at 6:30 pm at 31 Moulton Court, Willimantic. Popcorn provided. BYOB and a blanket. \$10 suggested donation.

Friday, November 14th

Poetry: Poet’s Corner Poetry Open Mic. Free. Booth & Dimock Library, 1134 Main St., Coventry 7:00 pm.

Live Music: SIRS Y, an Indy/Pop-Rock group, will be playing at The Packing House, 156 River Road, Willington from 7:30-10:30pm. Doors open at 7:00 pm. Tickets are \$20.00 in advance (ONLINE) / \$25.00 at the door. For more info, check out thepackinghouse.us/upcoming/2025/11/14-acoustic-artist-series-sirsy

Theater: *Mean Girls, Jr.* at the Windham Theater Guild 7:00 pm(Doors open at 6:30).(See 11/7)

Live Music: Earl MacDonald’s Black Square Ensemble will be performing at The River Room, 50 Riverside Drive, Willimantic at 7:30. Go to riverroomwilli.com for tickets.

Saturday, November 15th

Yoga/Open House: YONO Yoga Studio on Church Street in Willimantic will have an open house. Sign up for free classes that will be offered throughout the day. Featuring Discounts, Vendors, Raffles and Cake! Check out yonowillimantic.com/event/save-the-date-yono-open-house/ for more info.

Theater: *Mean Girls, Jr.* at the Windham Theater Guild 7:00 pm(Doors open at 6:30).(See 11/7)

Sunday, November 16th

Live Music: The Kennedys & The Nields will be performing at The Bread Box, 220 Valley St, Willimantic at 4:00 pm. Ticket information available at events.humanitix.com/fall-2025-music-series/tickets.

Theater: *Mean Girls, Jr.* at the Windham Theater Guild 2:00 pm(Doors open at 1:30).(See 11/7)

Activism/Art: Art in Action: A Community Art Building Collaborative will have their monthly meeting. Contact artinactionwillimantic@gmail.com to learn more.

Wednesday, November 19th

Historical Program: Tavern Night: Walt Disney. ‘Meet’ Walt Disney. You’ll learn about him and enjoy his favorite food and beverage. At the Jillson House Museum. 5:00 pm-6:30 pm. \$10. Go to jillsonhousemuseum.com/event-details-registration/tavern-night-with-walt-disney

Friday, November 21st

Vigil/Rally: A Transgender Day of Remembrance Vigil/Rally will be held at 5:00 in Willimantic by the Frog Bridge. A speech will be made listing those who lost their lives this past year.

Film: Friday Film Night: Bonnie Raitt will be the featured artist of the screening. This is a non-ticketed series at The

Packing House, 156 River Road, Willington. 7:00-9:00 pm. Suggested Donation of \$15.00.

Saturday, November 22nd

Yoga Workshop: *Yoga Foundations- From Principles to Poses with Angie & Anna:* Join YONO’s Angie and Anna at YONO Yoga Studio, Church Street Willimantic, from 10:30 am -12:00 pm for a workshop exploring the eight limbs of yoga and how it’s more than just a physical practice. \$35. Check out yonowillimantic.com/event/yoga-foundations-from-poses-to-principle-with-angie-anna/ for more info.

Family Activity: People are invited to learn how to make holiday gifts using herbs at The Jillson House Museum in Willimantic from 10:00 am- 12:00pm. \$35.00 for the general public, \$30.00 for members.

Live Music: Eastern Concert Band’s “Sounds of the Seasons” Concert will start at 7:30 at the FAIC Concert Hall at ESCU, 306 High Street, Willimantic. Free.

Live Music: The Kingpins Blues Band Dance Social will be performing at The River Room, 50 Riverside Drive, Willimantic at 7:30. Go to riverroomwilli.com for tickets.

Sunday, November 23rd

Live Music: Sarah McQuaid will be performing at The Bread Box, 220 Valley St, Willimantic at 4:00 pm. Ticket information available at events.humanitix.com/fall-2025-music-series/tickets.

Friday, November 28th

Art: Artists Open Studios. Stop by a local studio and see the art that artists around the area have created. They are open 10:00 am – 5:00 pm. To see a map of the local studios and artists, go to: aoset.org/aos-map/

Parade: Willimantic’s annual Christmas Tree Lighting & Holiday Light/Santa Parade will start at Memorial Park and go down to Jillson Square at 6pm.

Saturday, November 29th

Art: Artists Open Studios. (See 11/28)

Sunday, November 30th

Art: Artists Open Studios. (See 11/28)

Friday, December 5th

Theater: The Windham Theater Guild on Main Street, Willimantic, will perform *Yes Virginia, There is a Santa Claus* at 7:30 pm(Doors open at 7:00). Adults \$22, Students/Seniors, \$17 UCONN/ECSU/QVCC Students \$15, Children under 12 \$13. For more info or to purchase tickets, go to windhamtheatreguild.org/tickets/ or call 860-423-2245

Saturday, December 6th

Holiday Fair: The Frist Baptist Church of Lebanon at 694 Trumbull Hwy, will have their Holiday Fair from 9:00 am – 2:00 pm. Baked Goods(lots of pies), Jams, Tables Runners, Poinsettias, Handcrafted items, a White Elephant Table a luncheon and other various gift items will be available for purchase.

Art: Artists Open Studios. (See 11/28)

Live Music: Folk/Country musician Kate Prascher will be playing at The Packing House, 156 River Road, Willington from 7:30-10:30pm. Doors open at 7. Tickets are \$20.00 in advance (ONLINE) / \$25.00 at the door. For more info, check out thepackinghouse.us/upcoming/2025/12/06-acoustic-artist-series-kate-prascher

Theater: *Yes Virginia, There is a Santa Claus* at the Windham Theater Guild 7:30 pm(Doors open at 7:00).(See 12/5)

Live Music: Dan Moretti & Brazilia will be performing at The River Room, 50 Riverside Drive, Willimantic at 7:30. Go to riverroomwilli.com for tickets.

Sunday, December 7th

Book Club: YONO Yoga Studio on Church Street in Willimantic will be discussing “*Becoming Supernatural*” at 11:00. The event is free.

Art: Artists Open Studios. (See 11/28)

Theater: *Yes Virginia, There is a Santa Claus* at the Windham Theater Guild 2:00 pm(Doors open at 1:30).(See 12/5)

Monday, December 8th

Film: Second Monday Film Series. “*Who We Are: A Chronicle of Racism in America*” will be shown at the Unitarian Universalist Meetinghouse 46 Spring Road, Storrs 7:00 pm. Donations accepted. Check out Second Monday Film Series on Facebook for more info.

Wednesday, December 10th

Live Music: Songwriter Showcase will be at the Packing

continued on next page

In Your Corner

Your Vote, Your Voice

By Pamela Skelly

This issue will be reaching you just in time for the 2025 local elections. Even though it’s not an election for federal or state offices, the off-year elections are important. Your local government makes many decisions that impact you directly, so you should vote for your local elected officials and vote on referendums, if any. Connecticut now has early voting, starting on October 20, making it easier for voters to find a convenient time to go to the polls. As a result of our last election, Connecticut residents can request absentee ballots without needing to provide a reason. Now is the time to make your voting plan.

In Connecticut, local municipal elections are scheduled for November 2025. The specific offices on the ballot will vary by town but can include positions like mayor, town council, and school board, as well as referendums. For example, in Windham, a referendum will ask residents to appropriate 20% of the cost for the elementary school consolidation project (since the state covers 80% of the cost).

Make a Plan to Vote!

The first step is being prepared. Check your voter registration, know your polling location, and mark your calendar. Checking your voter registration is easy if you have access to a computer by using the Voter Registration Lookup at <https://portaldir.ct.gov/sots/lookup.aspx> or you can make a call to your local office of the registrar of voters. You can find this information easily online at your town website or you can call your town hall and ask for your registrar of voters. Key dates and information for the 2025 municipal elections are:

-General Election Day: Tuesday, November 4, 2025.

-Early Voting: A period for early, in-person voting will be held from October 20 to November 2, 2025. You will need to check your local town for specific information on the times and places for early voting.

-Same-Day Registration: This is available on Election Day, November 4, 2025, at designated locations in each town.

Anytime you vote or whenever votes are counted, representatives from the two major political parties are present to ensure fairness. When I have been an election poll worker, I have always been impressed with the dedica-

tion of the election staff. If you have any questions or problems, the staff will explain things and guide you, but they will avert their eyes if you try to show them your selections on your ballot. Your privacy is taken very seriously.

Local Elections Matter!

During a federal or state election year, we are bombarded with political advertisements. That’s when I feel lucky that I don’t live in a swing state, where radio, television, and social media play the candidates’ spin throughout the day. In a state like ours, community members display yard signs and go door to door in support of their choices. You know who is running, where and when to vote, and the issues that matter to you.

The truth is that local elected government leaders make decisions that impact our lives directly. Local governments control the services and programs we depend on every day such as schools, public safety, parks, roads, and how new businesses are developed. Town and city councils, school boards, and county officials make decisions that touch everything from classroom sizes to road repairs. One of the most powerful ways to make a difference in your community is to vote in the place you call home.

-*Decide how your tax dollars are spent:* Local elected officials develop budgets to decide how much to fund schools, emergency services, and community projects. When you vote, you help decide funding priorities for services such as public safety, libraries, or road improvements. Make sure your tax dollars work for you by voting.

-*Think globally, act locally:* National movements usually start at the local level. These can be issues of education reform, public health policies, or environmental initiatives. Pilot projects often start in cities or states before they are adapted more broadly. Your vote can create the environment for the changes you want to see.

-*Your vote has more power:* Unfortunately, local elections have low voter turnout. But since fewer residents are voting, those who do vote have more voting power. In a local election, a single vote might actually determine the outcome. Your vote really does matter.

-*Your elected leaders live locally:* Unlike federal officials, most of our municipal leaders are easy to contact. You see them at local events and businesses providing opportunities for friendly connections and informal

(PZC) full time member and Alternate Member. As an owner/operator of a farming business in town I have also supported and recently volunteered my time on the Town of Ashford Agriculture Commission. My interest in PZC revolves around participating in laying out and supporting the look, feel, culture of our town. In addition to the farm business I share with my wife I am also a practicing aerospace structural engineer and come from a family of civil engineers bringing with me a background in regulation writing, planning and sustainment.

2. My goal is to continue providing my services to the town as I feel I bring to the table a background that provides diversity to the Planning and Zoning Commission. The environment and culture surrounding the Town of Ashford attracted my wife and I to establish ourselves here

at 4:00 pm. Ticket information available at events.humanitix.com/fall-2025-music-series/tickets.

Wednesday, December 17th
Historical Program: Tavern Night: Charles Dickens. ‘Meet’ Charles Dickens. You’ll learn about him and enjoy his favorite food and beverage. At the Jillson House Museum. 5:00 pm-6:30 pm. \$10. Go to jillsonhousemuseum.com/event-details-registration/tavern-night-with-charles-dickens to purchase tickets. *Note: It may say Herbie and Rudolph, but it will be Charles Dickens*.

Friday, December 19th
Film: Friday Film Night: Creedance Clearwater Revival will be the featured artist of the screening. This is a non-ticketed series at The Packing House, 156 River Road, Willington. 7:00-9:00 pm. Suggested Donation of \$15.00.

Saturday, December 20th
Yoga/Meditation: *Inner Seeing with Larson Di Fiori, PhD:* Larson Di Fiori, PhD will be at YONO Yoga Studio

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discussions. This connection means they’re more likely to listen to you, the voter. If they want to be re-elected, local officials need to listen to their constituents and hear their needs. Vote for the people you want to design your community.

Who you vote for and how you vote in a referendum are private. What is a matter of public record is whether or not you voted in a particular election, your address, as well as your political party affiliation, if you declared one. No one knows *how* you voted—that information is private. Candidates and elected officials can look at this data to help inform them about how their constituents feel on particular issues.

Where can you explore election data? The Office of the Connecticut Secretary of State provides this data on its Election Results Archive, <https://electionhistory.ct.gov/eng/>. You can view data on the contests in Connecticut starting in 1787 and find voter information starting in 1886.

Your municipal government has many meetings such as town council, zoning board, human rights commission, and others that you can attend. Local government websites have this information posted. You can share your opinions with local officials and you may even end up participating on a committee. You can get involved locally and bring fresh ideas to your community.

Voting and civic engagement are good habits. Last November, I had a discussion with one of my son’s friends who refused to vote in the presidential election because he didn’t like the choices. I kept trying to get him to vote, explaining that the popular vote is important too, even though we are not a swing state. I believe that many in swing states shared his opinion and now are regretting that they did not vote. Encouraging everyone to vote is our civic duty, and supporting access to the election polls is essential. When you create your voting plan, share your enthusiasm and ideas with your friends, relatives, and co-workers.

The NAACP is active in registering voters and encouraging involvement in local government because that is how real change is made. Community members can share ideas and vote to elect leaders who will enact policies and practices to improve their daily lives. Your vote, your voice—make it heard in this year’s election.

If you also feel strongly about civil rights and justice in our country, please consider joining our Windham/Willimantic NAACP branch. Members receive emails for events and meetings, but we keep membership information private. The annual membership is \$30, a reasonable price to support a worthy organization. Please visit our website at <https://windhamctnaacp.org/> to learn more. You can contact us at (860) 230-6911 or email us at info@windhamctnaacp.org. You can also check out our Facebook page, Windham Willimantic CT NAACP.

a decade ago and I would like to continue fostering said environment and culture as this is our permanent home we are able to sustain ourselves and fellow townspeople with.

3. Compared to other towns in the state of Connecticut there is limited commercially zoned real-estate in the Town of Ashford however there are existing sound regulations allowing businesses in town. As a result, there are means of balancing conservation and economic development within the Town of Ashford.

4. The Town of Ashford will continue to face striking a balance on maintaining a rural, agricultural atmosphere alongside sustained growth rates in population and an aging population. This is a delicate balance that can be achieved.

on Church Street in Willimantic from 10:30 am-12:00 pm to present a set of seated (or reclining) meditation techniques based on Daoist practices to turn the senses, particularly vision, back inward to observe the interior of the body. Guided meditations included. \$25. Check out yonowillimantic.com/event/inner-seeing-with-larson-di-fiori-phd/ for more info.
Live Music: A Charlie Brown Jazz Trio Christmas will be performing at The River Room, 50 Riverside Drive, Willimantic at 7:30. Go to riverroomwilli.com for tickets.

Sunday, December 21st
Activism/Art: “Art in Action: A Community Art Building Collaborative” will have their monthly meeting. Contact artinactionwillimantic@gmail.com to learn more.
Yoga/Meditation: The Mantra Room at Brooks Bend Plaza, 661 Windham Road, South Windham will have a special Winter Solstice Yoga Practice from 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm. \$35. Go to www.mantraroomct.com/events/winter for more info and to register.

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limantic reservoir. The people in Willimantic drink our runoff!

4. We have to be careful about growth, both commercial and residential. Growth and change are inevitable, but we want it to go in a favorable direction for us.

Alternate, Planning and Zoning Commission

Douglas C. Jenne, Democratic Candidate, Planning and Zoning Commission

1. I have been interested in supporting our town since initially moving to town ten years ago. In this time I have held elected roles of Planning and Zoning Commission

House, 156 River Road, Willington, featuring five regional songwriters.
Doors open at 6:00 pm. No tickets, donations appreciated.

Thursday, December 11th
Theater: *Yes Virginia, There is a Santa Claus* at the Windham Theater Guild 7:30 pm(Doors open at 7:00).(See 12/5)

Friday, December 12th
Poetry: Poet’s Corner Poetry Open Mic. Free. Booth & Dimock Library, 1134 Main St., Coventry 7:00 pm.
Theater: *Yes Virginia, There is a Santa Claus* at the Windham Theater Guild 7:30 pm(Doors open at 7:00).(See 12/5)

Saturday, December 13th
Theater: *Yes Virginia, There is a Santa Claus* at the Windham Theater Guild 7:30 pm(Doors open at 7:00).(See 12/5)
Sunday, December 14th
Theater: *Yes Virginia, There is a Santa Claus* at the Windham Theater Guild 2:00 pm(Doors open at 1:30).(See 12/5)
Live Music: Amy Gallatin & The Hot Flashes Christmas Show will be at The Bread Box, 220 Valley St, Willimantic

The Planet Press

No13

November and December — 2025

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The Planet Press Mission

The goal is to build a resilient community through accurate and engaging environmental news. We aim to foster positive change through informed dialogue by illuminating research, seasonal news, and issues affecting Connecticut. May Connecticut's natural beauty bless many future generations to come.

News, Articles, and Opinions Impacting Connecticut and Our Planet

Happy Winter!

Printed on October 21st 2025



We're Looking For Stories!

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

Your Winter Forecast

The *Old Farmer's Almanac* predicts a milder, drier winter for Connecticut, with a few cold spells in mid-December, January, and late February. Forecasters point to a weak La Niña pattern, meaning no major extremes are expected. Overall, the Northeast should see warmer-than-normal temperatures, with only short bursts of winter chill.

Acorn About

Peak acorn drop season, often called the "acorn fall", runs from late September through early November in Connecticut and across much of the Northeast. Acorns start to fall in late September, reach their peak in October, and taper off by early November. The timing can shift a bit each year; warm, dry summers tend to bring an earlier, lighter fall, while cool, wet seasons can lead to a heavier, later drop.

UConn Geo Tour

Join geologist Robert Thorson for a "walk through deep time" on Saturday, November 8, 2025, 2 – 3:30 p.m. at UConn Storrs. Explore the campus's geology, architecture, Swan Lake, and Stone Pavilion. Free and open to all; registration required. Learn more at csmnh.uconn.edu/programs.

Deer About

Deer are out and about. Deer are especially active in Connecticut from late October through December because it's their breeding season, known as the rut. During this time, bucks travel more widely in search of mates, often crossing roads and venturing into open areas at all hours, especially around dawn and dusk. Cooler weather and shorter days also encourage deer to move more as they feed heavily before winter. Drivers should stay alert through early winter, as deer movement typically slows down once the mating season ends and colder weather sets in.

The Leaves

Late October into early November, the shoreline and lower-lying areas may still show strong color as the season winds down. The recent weather has been unpredictable. Warm, dry stretches have stressed some trees and caused early leaf drop, but cooler nights are helping the reds and golds really pop. Add a nor'easter with rain and wind, and some leaves could come down sooner than expected. If you want the best views, now's the time to hit the roads and enjoy the season.

CT Parks, Still

No matter the season or the weather, there's always a reason to get outside. CTParks.com, the official site for Connecticut's 142 state parks and forests, makes it easy to explore more than 255,000 acres of trails, beaches, and natural beauty statewide. Check the site for upcoming events through November and December.

UConn Power Plant

UConn's campus power plant is hydrogen-capable and more efficient than ever. The University of Connecticut Central Utility Plant, which provides most of the energy used by UConn Storrs, is installing new turbines that can burn hydrogen as well as natural gas.

The new turbines could reduce the facility's carbon emissions by 30%, a key part of the University's plan to be carbon neutral by 2030. Hydrogen is a clean, high-efficiency fuel. Burning it produces mostly steam. Steam can be used to run a secondary turbine to generate more electricity, a compressor for air cooling, or used directly to provide heat.

Since commercial hydrogen pipelines don't yet exist, UConn would need to either buy hydrogen or produce it onsite to mix with the natural gas it currently uses, and it's exploring both options.

Source:
UConn Today (2025, October). *Campus Power Plant Hydrogen-Capable and More Efficient Than Ever*

The Endangerment Finding

As of late 2025, Connecticut officials are pushing back against the EPA's plan to repeal its 2009 "endangerment finding," which declared greenhouse gases a threat to public health and gave the agency authority to regulate them under the Clean Air Act.

The "endangerment finding" may sound technical, but it's one of the most essential tools the U.S. has to fight climate change.

Now, President Trump wants to repeal it, sparking widespread backlash from scientists, legal experts, and environmental groups. Connecticut is deeply affected, with its emissions and air quality on the line.

Connecticut already ranks low among the New England states when it comes to air quality. Connecticut residents, on average, are consistently more exposed to worse air quality than other states in a given year, according to a new report from the Commonwealth Fund, a non-profit health care think tank. While Connecticut's everyday air-quality levels for particles are relatively safe, its ozone problem and overall ranking reflect significant room for improvement compared with neighboring states.

Sources:
CT Mirror (2025, September). *CT battling Trump EPA proposal to end greenhouse gas regulation*

Stanford University (2025, September). *EPA 'endangerment finding' explained: 5 facts about the science and health risks*

Built in 1960 and closed after Hurricane Sandy in 2013, the former Connecticut Light & Power plant in Norwalk is being reborn as Manresa Wilds, a public park, nature retreat, and community hub.

Philanthropists Austin and Allison McChord bought the 125-acre site, formed a nonprofit, and partnered with landscape firm SCAPE to redesign it with beaches, habitats, a thermal pool, and a boat launch overlooking

Wind Work Resumes

The Revolution Wind project, halted for nearly a month by the U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, is expected to restart on September 25, Governor Ned Lamont said. He added that talks with the Trump administration could help smooth the way for both wind and fossil fuel projects in the region. Once the turbines are running year-round, Lamont said, they'll help lower electricity costs by eas-

Our Dirty River

Sewage plants have been discharging wastewater into the Connecticut River for over a century. Connecticut is tackling sewer overflows with a new tunnel project in Hartford's South Meadows. The four-mile tunnel, set to be finished next year, will hold sewage and stormwater during heavy rain to keep it out of the Connecticut River. The issue has fueled political blame in recent months, especially after viral videos showed toilet paper and raw sewage drifting through the river near Suffield and Enfield. Lawmakers have blamed Massachusetts cities like Holyoke, Springfield, and Chicopee for the pollution, frustrated by complaints from residents, state Reps. Tami Zawistowski and Devin Carney asked the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to step in to improve water monitoring, public alerts, and outdated infrastructure that continues to send millions of gallons of contaminated water downstream.

Source:
CT Insider (2025, August). *Why millions of gallons of untreated sewage finds its way into the Connecticut River*

A New Kind of Park

Long Island Sound. Supported by state and local leaders but funded entirely by the McChords, the project has drawn input from over 3,000 residents, turning a relic of industry into a model for renewal.

In other nuclear news, Millstone Nuclear Power Plant celebrates 50 years of powering Connecticut this September. The plant has supplied nearly half the state with carbon-free electricity for decades, and talks are underway to extend its license for

ing high winter prices, a "big deal for business."

Revolution Wind is an offshore wind farm project located off the coasts of Rhode Island and Connecticut. It's designed to produce about 700 megawatts of carbon-free power, enough to supply roughly 350,000 homes. By mid-2025, the project was about 80% complete, with foundations in place and many turbines already installed. In August 2025, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management ordered construction to stop, citing national security concerns.

The project's developers, Ørsted and Skyborn Renewables, along with the states of Connecticut and Rhode Island, challenged the order in court. A federal judge later ruled in their favor, saying the stop-work order wasn't justified and could cause serious harm if construction remained paused. Work has since resumed, and Ørsted now expects the project to be finished and generating power in 2026.

U.S. District Court Judge Royce Lamberth noted that national security concerns had already been reviewed during the project's lengthy permitting process.



Sources:
news12 (2025, September). *Work resumes on Revolution Wind project one day after judge lifts Trump pause*

Ørsted (2025, August). *Revolution Wind receives offshore stop-work order from US Department of the Interior's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management*

another 20 years. Connecticut's nuclear energy revolves around the Millstone Power Station in Waterford, a major source of carbon-free power with strong bipartisan support. Despite concerns over waste and aging infrastructure, the state backs Millstone through contracts and incentives to keep it viable alongside expanding renewables.

Source:
The New York Times (2025, October). *A Haunted Power Plant Becomes a Park. Is This the Future?*

Birds of the Winter Woods

As fall turns to winter, wild-life shifts into its seasonal rhythm. By mid-November, shagbark hickory nuts drop from their thick husks, feeding wood ducks, wild turkeys, and mammals from mice to bears. White ash and boxelder trees still cling to their winged seeds, an important winter food for birds.

Late November brings the last wave of migrants: snow geese, red-throated loons, ring-billed gulls, pine siskins, evening grosbeaks, and common redpolls. Warblers become rare sightings, though sparrows remain common. Mourning doves start forming winter flocks, organized in their typical pecking order.

With the trees bare, late November and early December are great times to spot bird nests. Some species linger longer than others; buffleheads, goldeneyes, mergansers, mallards, black ducks, and great blue herons can still be seen on open water.

Early December brings an acorn feast. Most birds shell the nuts before eating, but wild turkeys swallow them whole. By mid to late December, listen for the cheerful chee-chip calls of pine grosbeaks, friendly birds often found picking salt from roads. A few late migrants may even stick around for the Christmas Bird Count.

Hemlock seeds attract chickadees, siskins, and crossbills, while grouse gather into coveys and roost low in conifers to shelter from the cold.



RED-THROATED LOON
(*Gavia stellata*)



BUFFLEHEAD
(*Bucephala albeola*)



GREAT BLUE HERON
(*Ardea herodias*)



HICKORY NUTS
(*Carya ovata*)

SHAGBARK HICKORY
(*Carya ovata*)

Source: Northern Woodlands Magazine (2015, January). *The Place You Call Home A Guide to Caring for Your Land in Connecticut*

Into The Winter Night...

Night Hikes / Luminary Walks

Keep an eye out for Night hikes & luminary walks around Connecticut. Night hikes typically take place under the moon and stars, guided by naturalists or educators who help participants experience the forest in a new way. Many nature centers host themed night hikes tied to full moons (like the Cold Moon), solstices, or seasonal wildlife activity. They're often slower-paced, focusing on observation and mindfulness rather than distance.

Luminary walks are more festive and family-friendly, usually held around the holidays or the solstice. Some include warm drinks, storytelling, live music, or fire pits for gathering afterward. Check out events such as Winter Wonder Walks in Stamford.

What Sleeps

On a winter night in Connecticut, the forest is far from lifeless. Owls begin their nesting season, while red foxes roam in search of mates. Beneath the snow, mice and voles stay active in the insulated subnivean zone, tunneling for food and warmth. Deer move carefully through the darkness, conserving energy as they browse on twigs and evergreen shoots.

Bumblebee queens are one of the few bees that hibernate. After the first hard frost in late fall, the new queens dig small burrows in soil or leaf litter and settle in for winter. They enter a dormant state called diapause, slowing their metabolism and producing natural "antifreeze" compounds (like glycerol) to survive.

Full "Cold" Super Moon Night Hike

The Full Cold Moon usually occurs in early or mid-December and symbolizes the deepening of winter. The "supermoon" designation means the moon will be at perigee, its closest point to Earth, making it appear up to 14% larger and 30% brighter than a typical full moon.

Many cultures associate the Cold Moon with introspection, rest, and preparing for the coming year, as it coincides with the darkest stretch before the winter solstice. The Full "Cold" Supermoon Night Hike will be held on Thursday, December 4, from 7:00 to 8:15 p.m. at Roaring Brook Nature Center as part of the Winter Solstice Celebration & Hike, offering participants a guided walk through the moonlit woods to welcome the season's chill and longest nights.

Beaver Moon

The Beaver Moon will be visible in Connecticut on the evening of Wednesday, November 5, 2025. This full moon is also a supermoon, meaning it will appear particularly large and bright, and it is the closest supermoon of the year. The peak illumination occurs during the day at 8:19 A.M. EST, so the best viewing times will be on the evenings of November 4 and 5.

The name comes from Native American and Colonial traditions, when people set beaver traps before the swamps froze. Beavers were busy preparing for winter, and their thick pelts were prized for trade. Mentioned in *The Old Farmer's Almanac* and Algonquin calendars, the Beaver Moon marked a seasonal rhythm tied to nature's cycles and human activity.



Mine to Carry

By Shomriel Sherman

I can't carry it all.

* * *

I am nearing the mouth of the temple of the woods. These are not deep woods; the entire time I was in them I could hear the rush of the cars passing by, even if I couldn't see them. Nevertheless, they held me for six hours while I soothed my raw and weary soul - sitting against the trees, lying on the riverbank, moving oh so slowly, barefoot along the trail. Here I am unrushed, and the constant tick-tick-tick of anxiety slows, quiets, then disappears. For a blessed stretch of time and space, I simply breathe, and notice.

* * *

At the trail's exit, I'm immediately faced with trash. Fireball nips; fraying Big Gulps; red, white, and blue straws; shattered glass of every shade; single-use gloves; on and on it goes. It's a disorienting contrast to the quiet green and brown from which I've just emerged, and it doesn't belong here.

I pick up a handful but soon realize the impossibility of the task. For what I'm seeing on the side of the road in front of me, I would need multiple heavy-duty garbage bags. And a car to transport them. And assistance from others. It's so far beyond my capacity.

I keep walking, turn onto my street. I'm walking for a while before I see a plastic bottle. This I can carry. I pick it up, grateful to be able to participate, in this tiny way, in balancing the ecosystem of the street I live on, even as my rational mind knows that all I'm doing is moving trash from one place to another.

At first glance the street appears clean enough. But, eyes trained from my season with DEEP, the trash begins revealing itself to me. It's everywhere, and it too will soon be more than I can carry.

Partway up the hill I find a

rubber floor mat, discarded from someone's Jetta. It helps hold the array of detritus, my neighbors' rejects and leavings. I am forced to continue slowly, though now it is not so that I can observe every single variety of flora, fauna, and funga, but so as not to dislodge the absurdly precarious tower of trash I am carrying between my two hands. At this pace, I notice a small gray bird dead on the side of the road. A torrent of ants are feasting on its brain, and iridescent green flies buzz around its body. I carefully place the mat with its load off to the side and kneel at the body, sending prayer that wherever it is now will be peaceful, free of cars rushing to their destinations too fast to notice these small lives around them. A small red fox darts across the street in front of me, quick and fluid like water.

* * *

You see what you're looking for. So many different realities to choose from, so many different noticings! Is this very *here* a sacred place in its own right or merely a spot along the way to *there*? How deep the contrast between a barefoot, walking life ("Take off your shoes; the ground on which you stand is holy ground") and a four-lane highway life!

Anyone who knows me knows that I grapple constantly with the question of "What is my pace and my place? What is mine to carry?" Moment to moment I am feeling this out, learning what it means to do my part amongst the range of others, all traveling where we're traveling, noticing what we're noticing, holding what we're holding. When I get overwhelmed, as I do, I remind myself that there is always more happening beyond my field of vision, that there are so many of us out here, out there: cooking, cleaning, carrying, tarrying, tending, mending.

I breathe deep, pick up the mat once more, and continue the last leg of this particular journey, one small, careful step at a time.

Flower of the Month November



Witch Hazel

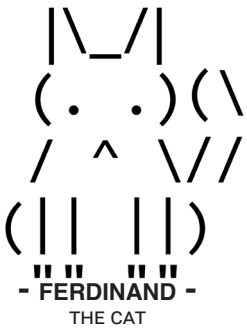
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Flower of the Month December



American Bittersweet

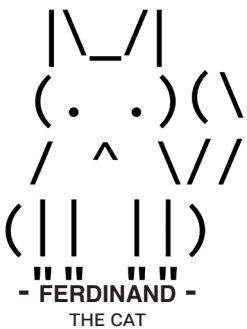
In Connecticut, witch hazel is one of the last native shrubs to bloom each year. By November, its spidery yellow flowers appear on bare branches, often after the leaves have dropped. The blooms can last into early winter, releasing a light, spicy fragrance on mild days, a bright surprise in the late fall woods.



Ferdinand's Flower Patch



The first berry to be featured by Ferdinand, American bittersweet adds a splash of color to December with its bright orange berries that split to reveal red seeds. This native vine twines through trees and stone walls, and its fruit provides winter food for birds like robins and cedar waxwings. Often mistaken for the invasive Oriental bittersweet, the native kind bears berries only at the tips of its vines.



Ferdinand's Flower Patch





FALL/WINTER 2025

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(Photo: The Duke Robillard Quartet, Live at The River Room, June 2025)



SAT, NOV 1 - POMFRET FOLK BRIGADE



FRI, NOV 7 - BRUCE JOHN'S GENRE JAM



FRI, NOV 14 - EARL MACDONALD'S BLACK SQUARE ENSEMBLE



SAT, NOV 22 - THE KINGPINS BLUES BAND DANCE SOCIAL!

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