

Neighbors



No. 133

March–April 2015

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Neighbors

March-April 2015



Inside the new CLiCK kitchen building on Cemetary Road in Willimantic.

Photo by Maraiah Popeleski

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Cover photo: Spring Welsh lambs

Photo by © BCritchley | Dreamstime.com

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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

Neighbors is published bimonthly by
Neighborspaper LLC.
Thomas A. King, member

Neighborspaper LLC is a member of the
Ashford Business Association and the
Mansfield Downtown Partnership.

Is Civility Buried in the Snow?

By Loretta Wrobel

During this frequently snowy and frigid winter, I have spent inordinate amounts of time waiting for the snow to stop or recovering from shoveling. Since I was in stop or slow mode, I wondered about where the rest of the population was headed on their daily hectic pace. Exhibiting patience and tolerance are considered old fashioned and out of style. We must get it done instantaneously, often without regard for others, or some tragic event will descend upon us.



Stopped at a light, if I don't floor it when the light flashes green, I will be jolted by a blaring horn, or scarier, the car behind me, moving rapidly towards my bumper. If I am looking for change at the cashier's register, I feel the eyes of the person in line behind me drilling into my back, perceive deep sighing or nervous foot tapping. I admit these are small potatoes in the great scheme of the universe.

However, I commence listening and studying the style we employ as we talk to one another in our normal conversations. I hear people uttering sarcastic remarks about their jobs, their relationships and themselves. "How could I have been so stupid!" is a familiar remark I hear on a too recurrent basis. An exasperated friend demands, "What part of 'no' can't he hear?" The boss's favorite request is "I want it yesterday!" What kinds of human beings talk in this manner?

Looking to the larger national stage, I remember the lawmakers who boasted, "We'll shut it down!" (our US Government), when asked about how they will handle the budget crisis. I hear the aggression and hostility in many encounters and the lack of concern about how disrespectful we are to one another. How many times during a 24-hour period do you hear the ubiquitous "Whatever?!!" Count for yourself, if you doubt me.

It appears we are living in text format. We communicate in a terse and often strident manner without any wavering as to how we may impact the receiver of our message. I am appalled when couples calmly mention their text fights. How limited has our communication morphed into! How can anyone possibly decipher what a loved one is saying in limited abbreviated letters?

It puzzles me that we have substituted clear language for chopped up midget phrases and replies that leave the imagination free to roam anywhere. In a disagreement there is an ocean of miscommunication, which can only be increased

by the limited responses via the new security blanket—the cell! We don't even say cell phone because it is so much more than a phone and why use two words when one will do?

I envision a future where the entire English language will be reduced to a few syllables and a scattering of smiling or sad icons. Will our tongues get smaller and our thumbs overtake us? Will we become immobile, and only our cells and computers will be mobile?

Perhaps there is still time to stop this mad rush to compress and throttle our creativity. We could have contests on reality TV for lengthy compound sentences and multisyllable words. How about offering a reward for explaining how one feels in a paragraph or two? It opens up vast opportunities. It could become a new trend, lasting a few weeks or even several months. People might want to join groups to discuss the future and longevity of such a phenomenon. You could come up with other possibilities as you wait for the snow to melt and spring to arrive.

I am attempting to add some humor to a deadly serious cultural trend. As we become disrespectful of ourselves, our loved ones and our leaders, we also are oblivious to our environment and our health. We don't detect what is happening to our civilization. We have fashioned a world that impulsively responds to every crisis with violence, aggression and threats.

I then promised myself to alter my behavior and be conscious and appreciative of any kindness or gentleness I encountered, regardless of how minuscule. Initially, I hoped I would witness some compassionate acts. Surprisingly and uplifting to me, I did. I responded with pleasure and exhilaration as I focused on people being kind. I did not focus on the harsh and inconsiderate actions. It became a delicious time for me. I found myself being lighter and more content. I wasn't gnashing my teeth or pulling my hair or spouting out at the end of the day.

Was I attracting good stuff? I don't know. I know I was grateful to the jeep angel that helped plow my driveway after one of our big-time storms because he saw me struggling with the shovel. While attempting to open a particular stubborn jar, a sister shopper, after asking if I wanted help, deftly opened the jar. As she performed this task, she mentioned I had told her how to deal with the pesky cover. I started to feel glad, and stopped focusing on the cold and snow.

Could we all just try a little of this each day? Adding a bit of humanness and compassion to one or two interactions each day. Might it bring back a more civil society? Grassroots civility. Try it. You might like it, as might all your relations.

Food for Friends at Willow Valley Farm

Submitted by Julia Cartabiano

Willow Valley Farm is a third generation family farm located on 64 acres of fields and woodland along the Fenton River in Willington, CT. The Cartabiano family is beginning their second season of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) at the farm. CSA is a way for members and farmers to partner in the production and support of locally grown, sustainable, high quality produce. Members pay for a share of the farmers' crop at the beginning of the season and in return receive a weekly selection of their freshest produce.

Willow Valley Farm has taken "community" one step further by starting a new program to help all community members get access to fresh, local produce. The "Food for Friends" program offers the opportunity to donate to the fund and sponsor a family in need for the 2015 CSA season.

Families with limited income may apply for a sponsored share. The donations to Food for Friends will defray half the cost of a share. If you are a limited income family in the Willington area or know someone who could benefit from this program please contact Camber McCue at Willington Youth, Family and Social Services at (860) 487-3118 or email her at wvfss@willingtonct.org for application guidelines for receiving a Food for Friends CSA share.

Julia and Spencer Cartabiano (mother and son) began growing vegetables and blueberries because they want to contribute to a healthy, sustainable community. The Food for Friends program is a way to make their product more accessible to families that want to eat healthy, but can't afford to. Community members can donate what they think they can afford, which evens the playing field for access to some of the most essential human resources.

Our local food system is one of the keys to cutting fossil fuel use and enhancing the health of people and their environment. The farm's petrochemical-free, ecosystem enhancing and soil building farming methods combined with significantly fewer travel miles than your average grocery store produce makes for the freshest food around. Willow Valley Farm has also taken the CT NOFA (Northeast Organic Farming Association) Farmer's Pledge, a commitment to farming, marketing and farm management in accordance with sound ecological and economic principles.

To learn more about Willow Valley Farm, its "Food for Friends" program, and Community Supported Agriculture, visit their new website, wvfcsa.wordpress.com, or email wvfcsa@gmail.com. You can also like them on Facebook, www.facebook.com/wvfcsa, or call Julia at (860) 508-7706.



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Yearning for a Better Boy

By Dennis Pierce

The word, “terroir” is not one that I use daily. To pronounce it say, “tare-wahr”. Terroir is a French term, usually associated with wine. It means, “the taste of a place”. As the local food movement gains momentum the fundamental desire is the constant search for quality in flavors that are locally grown. No longer is it just about finding local produce at a farmer’s market. The grand prize, for those that seek out quality in our ingredients, is the pursuit for the best of the best. And what is the best? Those vegetables that have an amazing taste profile that make your eyes roll back in your head after the first bite. We have turned a page in our personal cookbooks and are seeking, like the author Euell Gibbons, “the pursuit of the wild asparagus”.

When I am in search of tomatoes at the markets in late summer I have noticed the difference in the taste of Better Boy tomatoes. The reality is that the farmer is using the same seed stock however the land where they were grown, the water and the microclimate created the environment that produced the characteristics of the tomato differ. In essence no two Better Boy tomatoes taste entirely identical. Same tomato seed, same year, two different farms, two different tomatoes. Terroir is a new concept among foodies like myself however it is not a new idea. So the journey continues, just when I thought getting local was enough.

Connecticut falls between USDA hardiness zones 5 and 6, Connecticut has rich, well-draining soil due to deposits of glacial till left in the state during the ice age. You see soil is not just dirt. It is a combination of tiny rock fragments; water, air, dead vegetable particles, tiny living plants and animals. There are four different kinds of soils found in the state. These soils differ because they have been produced on different kinds of glacial deposits.

According to the Department of Agriculture many soils are red and yellow in color. Their color is directly related to the presence of several iron and manganese compounds. For example, if a soil is derived from parent material rich in iron minerals, it is generally highly colored, with the exact color depending on the mineral form of the iron. The mineral form is dependent on oxygen supply. Red color in a soil usually



indicates good drainage and good aeration, especially in the lower horizons. Our red Connecticut Valley soils are derived from sandstone parent materials high in iron content. Which leads me to the question why is there now a local farmers market in almost each town in the Quiet Corner? It is because the locavore movement is incredible and we have realized that there is so much “taste” potential available. Those of us that cook regularly are not satisfied with the ingredients from supermarket chains who do not have the characteristics of a local grown product. Their “taste of place” has been disguised and over processed.

So as I am writing this article on a snowy Sunday I yearn for the best, Better Boy tomato. The sound of plows softly in a distance get louder as they approach my house. God that’s a thankless job. I like the snow because it prepares us for spring. Somehow this year I truly believe I am over prepared. Like a person lost at sea who has finely reached land they

approach the beach and fall down on their knees and kiss the land. I am looking forward to laying on my back in the middle of my garden appreciating the ground that brought me my first spring crop and the rough time it lay dormant through another tough winter. I will never complain about weeding again. Since winter has hit us with a cold vengeance there is a limited amount of local produce still in the market. However, you can still find local pumpkins and squashes at the Willimantic Co-op or any of the winter farmer’s markets. Here is a recipe that is a



Pumpkins at Buell’s Orchard, Eastford, Fall 2014

Photo by Dennis Pierce

little different from a traditional sweet pastry.

Savory Pumpkin Scone

Ingredients:

10 ½ oz. Pumpkin (or comparable squash like Butternut), peeled and seeded
 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons of all-purpose flour
 ½ teaspoon of baking soda
 ½ teaspoon of salt
 5 tablespoons of butter
 2 tablespoons of honey
 1 egg, beaten
 6 tablespoons of warm milk (not skin)
 2 teaspoons of thyme leaves chopped – fresh or dried
 1 pinch, pepper
 A little oil or butter

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees

Cut pumpkin into large pieces approximately 1 inch by 1 inch and boil in a little water until tender. When soft drain.

Mix flour, baking soda and salt in a large bowl.

Cut butter in small pieces and rub into dry mixture with your fingers or use an old fashion pastry cutter or a fork.

Take drained pumpkin and mash with a potato masher. Beat in egg, milk, honey, and then thyme leaves.

Add pumpkin mix into flour mixture. Season with pepper.

Add oil or butter to a non-stick large frying pan with a metal handle and warm. I have not tried this in a cast iron skillet but I bet it would work. Make sure to add enough oil / butter so the mixture releases.

Add mixture to pan and smooth it flat.

Cook over low heat until underside is beginning to crust and mixture starts to become firm.

Lightly oil a large plate that is the same size of the frying pan. When mixture is done loosen the underside of the mixture with a spatula. Place plate on top of pan and turn over so mixture falls on the plate

Put mixture back into the pan and heat until that side begins to crust, four or five minutes.

Take pan and place in oven for seven minutes or until mixture is lightly set in the middle.

When done place mixture on a plate and cut into thick scone like wedges. Serve with cheese or chutney.

Let's hope I right the next column sans snow. While I have always been told to look at the positive I leave you with this grin, "Snowmen fall from heaven... unassembled. ~Author unknown. If you have a suggestion or a farm or local grower you would like featured drop me a line at Codfish53@Yahoo.com. Peas be with you.



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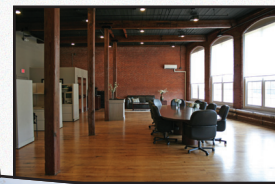
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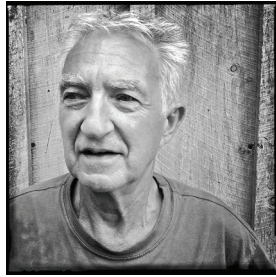
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Neighbors
A little paper, big on community

Thoughts in Recovery

By David Corsini

As I approached my 75th birthday, Dr Kilgannon said my heart murmur had turned into a rumble and it was time to check it out. Then, after a series of echo cardiograms and stress tests, Dr. Fisherkeller said the results indicated that it was time to have my aortic valve replaced.



After researching options, Delia and I went to talk with Dr. Gallagher at Hartford Hospital. He was very personable, clear in explaining what was involved, and reassuring. From listening to him, it seemed like aortic valve replacement was as routine as a valve job on a car. I became a bit frazzled only when he started going over all the possible valve options. In my particular case the one thing that was clear is that I should choose a valve made of cow or pig tissue rather than a mechanical valve. But after that decision, learning about the possible options became as confusing as choosing a toothpaste. I finally told him to stick with the “tried and true” model and use his judgment when he had me open.

The Event took place on Nov. 19. To replace my aortic valve, a medical team rendered me unconscious, sawed open my chest, hooked me up to a heart/lung machine, stopped my heart, cut out the defective valve, stitched in a new valve made from cow tissue, restarted my heart, put in place several drainage tubes and then wired and glued me back together. I woke up in intensive care with Delia telling me everything was ok. I was in the hospital for only four days and have been making steady progress since.

As I write this I am almost three months post surgery and have resumed swimming at a pace close to that before my surgery, walking the hill to and from the Mainstreet Café and Cafemantic with only occasional stops, and attending cardiac rehab three times a week. While my physical strength is returning fast, the creative aspects, writing and making assemblages, have been slower.

In my recovery I have been rereading some of my favorite books. Three of these are *The Sixth Extinction* by Elizabeth Kolbert, *The Diversity of Life* by Edward O. Wilson, and *War of the Whales* by Joshua Horwitz.

Kolbert describes, in 13 chapters, her experiences with a wide range of scientists who have explored the role of *Homo sapiens* in the disappearance of some species and the severe endangerment of others. Her message, the sixth extinction, is of course disturbing but her adventures with scientists studying these issues are inspiring. Her adventures with different scientists remind me of similar ones I have had on Earthwatch expeditions in Hong Kong, Costa Rica and Brazil. I hope to sign on to more expeditions in the near future.

One of her stories is about her visit to El Valle, Panama where scientists were working to save the golden frog.

Until 2002 the golden frog was common in this part of Panama. But since then most of these frogs have succumbed to the chytrid fungus that is decimating many species of amphibians. One strategy employed by herpetologists to save a particular species involves raising them in captivity until a cure is found for the illness that is killing them.

Several years ago on a birding trip with my brother-in-law in search of the resplendent quetzal, I was in El Valle and stumbled upon the facility where the golden frogs were being raised. I viewed several golden frogs through the laboratory window and in the town market bought a replica of the golden frog as a memento of the trip. We did find the resplendent quetzal, but not in El Valle.

Wilson’s book is a classic with explanations of how evolution works and biodiversity is created, maintained, and compromised. Every time I read this book I discover new insights into evolution and biodiversity.

One example is how a predator species can be important for maintaining or increasing species diversity. He reports one study of an ocean niche that contained 15 species of mollusks and one species of starfish that was a predator of mollusks. When the starfish was removed from that area by the scientist, the number of mollusk species soon was reduced to only eight. The reduction in species happened because, when the starfish predator was removed from the niche, two species of mollusks increased dramatically and crowded out several less hardy species. So a predator species, by controlling species that tend to overwhelm a niche, can maintain environmental conditions for more diversity.

War of the Whales is about how a marine biologist, who found dead and stranded beaked whales, and a lawyer for the Natural Resources Defense Council mounted a legal battle to expose the role of the Navy’s sonar testing in these deaths and strandings. The book is a moving story of how at great personal sacrifice the scientist and lawyer persisted in their legal fight to get the Navy to accept responsibility and change sonar testing practices.

One problem for me in reading these books is they can be quite depressing. Even when one is not recovering from a major medical procedure, the news about the threats to many life forms can, to say the least, take the edge off feelings of happiness.

While it is easy to get depressed when reading and thinking about the threats to the diversity of life forms, I believe it is important to recognize that there have been achievements and there is progress being made in some areas. In addition, I believe it is important to remain informed and to support in various ways individuals and organizations that are making a difference.

One organization that I think makes a difference is the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC). What I find important about this organization is that their work not only documents the extent of environmental problems in various

contexts, but also focuses attention on people and businesses that are making significant positive strides to improve things.

One article called "Made In Vietnam" that recently appeared in the NRCD online publication called ON EARTH, first gives an overview of the environmental impacts of the textile industry. The textile industry produces 10% of green house gas emissions, is responsible for 20% of the water pollution, and utilizes 20,000 chemicals- many of them carcinogenic. The article then focused attention on the efforts of an Indian- born entrepreneur to retrofit his blue jean factory in Vietnam.

Blue jeans are a big deal with an estimated 450 million pairs sold in the U.S. each year. The typical blue jean factory uses a great deal of water, energy, many chemicals, and produces much pollution. The article described how this new factory has been innovative in many ways. For example, the amount of water used to create a pair of jeans was reduced from 37 to 10 gallons. Energy, the number of chemicals, particularly toxic chemicals, used and waste also were significantly reduced. While what was described is encouraging, it must be noted that this factory produced high-end blue jeans and is only one of 6,000 clothing factories in Vietnam. Vietnam is now second to China in clothing production. However, what has been demonstrated in this factory can be important for positive changes in the overall textile industry.

At the root of most environmental issues is human population. Although even small numbers of Homo sapiens have been implicated in the extinction of some animals consumed for food, it is only with the large increase in human population that the negative impact of humans has become global. If there were only 1 billion humans, the global impact from what was consumed and emitted or where people lived would be limited. When I was born in 1940, there were only 2.3 billion humans. Now there are 7 billion and by 2050, when I am 110, the population estimates are for between 8 and 11 billion. It is not looking good.

What, if anything, can be done about human population is an important question. It is a very complicated issue that deserves serious discussion. I never in my wildest dreams thought I would stand in awe of a Pope. But I salute Pope Francis for his recent statement that there is no need to breed like rabbits. Hopefully His recent statement will open a discussion about population. Already I have read several editorials about population, family planning and birth control. Let us hope that the discussion continues. I just hope it doesn't go bad for the rabbits because, in my neck of the woods, I would like to have more rabbits.

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Collective Action: For What Cause?

Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success. —Henry Ford

By Phoebe C. Godfrey

I just read through a large selection of quotes on achievement and all of them were about the individual. So then I put in 'collective achievement' and found one more fitting to what has been the journey of CLiCK. As many of you may know I've been involved with the 'idea' of CLiCK (commercially licensed co-operative kitchen) for over six years and it is now finally a reality. In fact, it is so much a reality that we are now officially open and ready for the ovens to be fired up, for the mixers to turn, for the steam kettles to boil and for the sinks to flow! This has been quite the journey as I have shared and so the sentiment of this quote was perfect – a small group of us came together, stayed together and have been able to work together to create success. Yet ironically, now the work really begins. Now is the true test of our idea, as to whether or not we will be able to get enough people of good will to want to share our kitchen space to create their businesses and to build upon our vision as their own so that it will in turn benefit us all. And so as Mr. Ford said, our ability to work together will determine our success.



This recognition of collective effort is vital as it is one we continually forget in our constant assertion of the supremacy of the individual. For example, I was just at a Unitarian Church and was reading a hand-made poster about how to reduce CO2 in the atmosphere. It then invited people to fill out a sticky and to add it to the collective pledge that "I will...?", with such fill in the blank pledges as "turn off the lights", "not drive for fun", "turn the water off when I brush my teeth" ...etc. Now, these are all good practices even if all one wants to do is save some money, as well as reduce minute aspects of consumption. However, the most glaring issue is that the focus of the entire educational exercise was on individualized solutions. There wasn't one proposal on the sheet that said "We will..."! There wasn't one indication that collective action has been and remains the only way that societies achieve significant change, regardless of whether that change is towards more liberal or more conservative practices. Collective action means that yes, the role of the individual is important but it is when that individual joins other individuals to address common concerns that structural change – i.e institutional in terms of laws, policies and practices – occurs. The continued narrative that has us believe in the 'cult of the individual' as the one who achieves social change (again regardless of the philosophical motive) is an egregious falsehood. This is not to say that there isn't a vital role played by leaders but all leaders are embedded in a collective that enables them to lead not just because they have followers but because the followers are also their motivators. A perfect, yet painful to

watch, illustration of this was from the inspirational film Selma (2014) that I recently saw.

This is not the place to tell the story of the film, or of the actual history but rather I merely want to mention how the film portrayed the two attempted marches from Selma to Montgomery across the Edmund Pettis Bridge (the first one 'Bloody Sunday' without M.L. King, the second with him where he, and consequently everyone, else turned back) and the third and final march when the marchers were finally able to cross. What struck me most was the level of commitment and cohesion of both sides and the portrayed dance played between the individuals and their collective causes. Obviously, my emotional and ethical commitment was with the courage and non-violence of the marchers and their vision of equality and justice. However, equally committed to their distorted cause were the racist white police officers ignited by psychotic violence. These two forms of commitment, although radically distinct in their motives, nevertheless embodied what can be achieved when individuals are drawn together in collective action. We can achieve the worst of our potentials and we can also achieve the best. The question always comes down to the methods by which we practice and whether or not those methods increase the circle of rights, respect, equality and love for the collective or contrastingly whether they decrease the circle by limiting who and what is deemed worthy of its attributes. For I agree with M.L. King when he said that "...the arc of the universe is long, but it bends towards justice."

In returning to our own small attempt at adding to this 'arc of the universe' my personal hope for CLiCK, now that our door is finally open, is that this act of 'opening' remains a constant stance rather than a singular act. In other words, I hope that we can continually open to possibility and that although we will no doubt face many struggles that collectively we will work together for success. Likewise, if we still hope to achieve success in the on-going struggles both locally and nationally to address structural racism and inequality and additionally to also mitigate climate change by changing our economic system we must live 'I' as 'we'. And the 'we' we live must include and benefit all life on earth. There is no other way.

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Willington Dollars for Scholars

Submitted by Leslie Letendre

The Willington Scholarship Foundation Dollars For Scholars, inc. is gearing up for its 20th year of giving awards funded by the generous donations of the Willington Community. The 2015 Annual Appeal will officially begin on March 15 with the distribution of letters of appeal which will be sent to all Willington residents and businesses. For Information please visit <www.willington.dollarsforscholars.org>. Donations are welcome at any time and may be sent to WSFDFS, PO Box 194, Willington, CT 06279.

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T. King, Publisher

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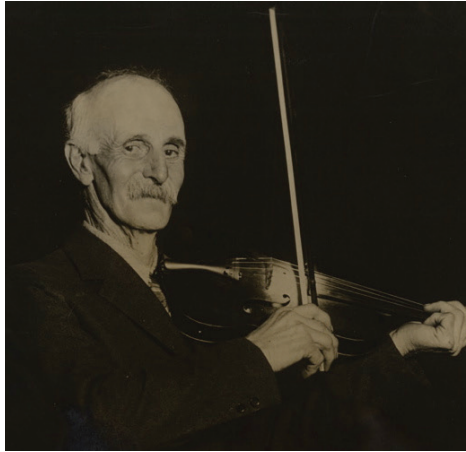
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Local Fiddlers I've Known...or Wish I'd Known

By Chuck Morgan

January, 1926. Providence's Keith-Albee Theater, seating 2000, was the scene of a major entertainment event when 19 New England fiddlers competed in a fiddle contest inspired by Henry Ford. The winner: Joseph "Uncle Joe" Shippee of Plainfield, Connecticut. This led Shippee, a teamster and livery stable owner, to a brief stint as a somewhat unwilling media star, with numerous stories in the Hartford Courant, Boston Globe, and other papers about his various appearances, for which he frequently received fees of about \$200. In 1926 he made commercial recordings for Pathe and Perfect labels. His discs are among few recordings of early northeast fiddlers. One of Shippee's records, "Irish Washerwoman", is on YouTube. Eugene Cote, a Willimantic barber, was another entrant in the contest. The complete story about Joe Shippee and the contest was researched and documented in a manuscript by Steve Green at the University of Maine.



Joe Shippee Photo courtesy of Steve Green, Pacific and Atlantic Photos, Inc.

Shippee was a member of the Old Fiddlers' Club of Rhode Island. By an interesting turn of affairs Shippee's great-granddaughter Sandra Ahola is the wife of retired Woodstock physician Saul Ahola, who is now president of that fiddle club. Saul is a fine fiddler in his own right, and as he plays "Stone's Rag", with his whole body keeping time, I can imagine him in the operating room, picking up various organs, throwing them aside, gleefully saying, "We don't need this...we don't need that...".

Over the years many fine fiddlers came from this area. I'd like to tell you about a few I knew. One of the very best was Bob Thurston, from Mansfield. Bob was originally from Michigan, where he passed away a few years ago. Around the 1970s, Bob, with the band "Pilgrim", was well known on the local music scene, even producing a fine 33 rpm record. Bob was a superb musician, classically trained as a violinist. While at UCONN he decided he would become a professional free-lance musician. He had an unerring ear for improvising melody and harmony. One had only to glance at him as a singer finished a verse, and he could take off on an improvised break, flawlessly leading the singer back to the next verse. Once, Bob told me that to be a real fiddler one had to become proficient at the "Orange Blossom Special". So, he worked on it all one summer. He surpassed proficient, to become an absolute master of the tune. He even composed a version, that he narrated, in which the "Special" left the shores of the USA, made a musical tour of Europe and Asia, returned across the Pacific and then raced back into the station at warp speed.

Unfortunately, as far as I know, this was never recorded.

Another of our great Willimantic fiddlers was Rosaire Lehoux, who died in 2013. Rosaire was a very humble and gentlemanly man. He taught himself to play. He had a way of holding the bow over his little finger and under the other three fingers that I've never seen elsewhere. I think that loose way of holding the bow gave amazing rhythm to his playing. At the peak of his powers, it was almost impossible to keep one's feet still as he played. In younger days in Quebec, he played dances at which he was the only musician. To make up for lack of accompaniment, he taught himself to "tape des pieds tout en jouant", tap the feet while playing. Rosaire often demonstrated this as he effortlessly sat on a chair, feet loudly dancing, while playing at the same time. Rosaire taught us many fine French-Canadian tunes in the years we knew him. When he was in his eighties, he received an arts heritage grant to teach his style of French Canadian fiddling to two young adult fiddlers who have since carried on his fiddling traditions.

Two other very talented local fiddlers were Claire Hanlon of Willimantic and Frank Moon of South Kingston, RI, both of whom passed away a few years ago. Claire came to Willimantic after he retired. He was a vibrant part of our local fiddling scene. Fiddlers everywhere were his friends, from the famous to his local buddies. When he was in his eighties I remember going to a fiddle camp with him, and chuckling that he was never lacking for female admirers bedeviled by his Irish charm. He had a light touch of the bow on his many Irish and Canadian tunes. In his younger years, he told us, he had been a winner in the prestigious Barre, Vermont fiddle contest. He loved to amaze us by playing in F and B flat, which are generally difficult for amateur fiddlers. Frank Moon, though practically unknown in Willimantic, was an inspiration to many eastern Connecticut amateur fiddlers active today. Frank joined Old Fiddlers' Club of Rhode Island in the 1930s and was a devoted member all his life, except army years during WWII. Even today he is referred to as "our beloved Frank Moon". I'm pretty sure Frank was classically trained. He loved to play the old strathspeys and such that are rarely heard locally today. His playing was impeccable. Watching his fingers dancing on the strings was like watching the valve stems of a finely tuned old car. I remember him frequently saying, as someone got up to play a solo with the club, "Play something you know." He was jesting, but there was a lot of wisdom there too. Another who has passed away is PV O'Donnell, a professional Irish fiddler from Manchester, who often played in Willimantic or nearby. I took lessons from him and remember his lilting Irish brogue, "No, no, Chuck....up bow there....up bow there". Kathy Lepak,

a Coventry fiddler, also took his lessons, and passed on to us his memorable critique, "You're bowing against yourself." Another I remember is Al Joly of Mansfield, who gave me my first fiddle lessons.

Lest one think that all the memorable amateur fiddlers are deceased, I have to mention that many local fiddlers are carrying on the traditions: about twenty five in Quiet Corner Fiddlers; about thirty in Old Fiddlers' Club of Rhode Island; and Gerry Legace with others in the Connecticut Bristol Old Tyme Fiddlers. Additionally there are very good

semi-professional fiddlers such as Louise Muller of Danielson, Nanette Adesso of Willimantic, Tim St. Jean and Cathy Day of Putnam; and Dan Boucher of the Bristol area, among others

Why do folks become amateur fiddlers? I think



Rosaire Lehoux at his surprise 90th birthday party. He is playing with his long time friend Michael Grenier.
Photo courtesy of Amanda Manso.

it's because of the joy of playing fiddle. Although there are basic versions to all the hundreds of traditional tunes, fiddlers play tunes as they feel them, not necessarily as written down. Using different bowing patterns and other techniques, two fiddlers will play the same tune differently, and don't always play it the same way. Local jazz singer and fiddler June Bizantz once asked me, "You mean all those notes Beethoven wrote are just suggestions?"

Almost all of these fiddlers belonged to one or more of the Old Fiddlers' Club of Rhode Island, Quiet

Corner Fiddlers, or Connecticut Bristol Old Tyme Fiddlers. Maybe we love fiddling so much that we just want to do it all we can.



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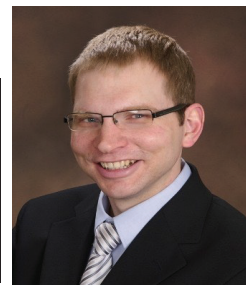


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Discover Your Premier Source for Holistic Health Options

By June Hyjek

The Greater Vernon Holistic Healthfest returns for the 7th time on March 28-29, as one of the state's largest educational fairs on natural and holistic medicine.



Many of us are interested in including complementary or holistic practices in our wellness plans, but the number of modalities, the wide array of possibilities, and the research involved to make informed decisions can be overwhelming and confusing. How do you find them? Which one do you choose?

Alan Slobodien was one of those people. Searching for the right complementary healing practices for a back problem required educating himself when limited resources existed to get that information. With some effort, he found the right healer for himself, but it left him with a desire to help others along the same path. Slobodien wanted to create some sort of resource that would bring the research to the public in a simpler way, making it easier for people to get the information they needed to discover alternatives to conventional medicine. He found Jon Roe, a well-renowned expert in Connecticut's holistic world who has worked tirelessly for decades to bring holistic medicine to the forefront.

The two created and launched the Greater Vernon Holistic Healthfest.

The fair began in 2004 at the Vernon Center Middle School and has since more than doubled in vendors and workshops, and tripled in attendees. Held every two years in partnership with the Town of Vernon, all proceeds from the Healthfest go to the Vernon Youth Services Bureau and is used to hire young people for summer jobs. This year's fair will feature more than 80 exhibitors and 40 workshops. As an attendee, you will have the opportunity to be exposed to a wide range of holistic modalities, as well as take the time to talk one-on-one to practitioners. In many cases, you can sample the treatments, products and services offered. You can even take a break for lunch at the Healthfest Café, featuring healthy foods from local restaurants.

Vendors and speakers come from all over the state and represent top practitioners with reputations for providing scientifically-documented holistic therapies and products. Unlike "New Age Fairs" you may have been to, you won't find psychics, tarot card readers or astrologers here. Although these may have some basis for personal understanding and have their place in alternative services, the Healthfest focuses on those holistic health and natural medicine practices proven to be effective in complementing conventional treatments.

At the Healthfest, you'll find integrative medicine practitioners, chiropractors, yoga studios, massage therapists, products and services for green living, naturopaths, nutritionists, acupuncturists, wellness coaches and medical intuitives, psychotherapists, hypnotherapists, vibrational healers, art therapists, and providers of herbs, supplements and natural foods. And because other objects to support our practices can be helpful, you'll also find a variety of crystals, jewelry, books, DVDs, candles and much more.

A special feature at this year's Healthfest is the Authors' Table, where you'll be able to talk to some of the state's best-known authors on holistic healing, wellness and personal growth. From children's books and teen leadership to inspirational and self-help, the authors will be available to sign books for purchase and talk to you about their particular perspective on holistic wellness. Besides me, you'll meet authors like Dr. Rob Langone, Susan Omilian, Nancy Butler, Dr. Gary Rhule, Norton Berkowitz, Dr. Bridget Cooper, Cindy Eastman, Barbara Hardie, Deborah Ravenwood and Fredericka Close.

And just for kids and teens. . .three interactive presentations each day! Jason Marchi brings Connecticut's Sleeping Giant to life with The Legend of Hobbomock. Dan Blanchard inspires teens to become better leaders, using lessons from Granddaddy's Secrets. Saturday will feature Jeanne Rogers with a presentation about endangered species from Australia, who are the characters in her fantasy, The Sword of Demelza. And on Sunday, Dr. Joe Breton brings kids together with an exciting empowerment program of drums, chant-dance and healing song.

Between practitioners, product vendors, workshops and authors, you'll come away with a much greater understanding of how to use holistic modalities to support and enhance your overall well-being. By complementing traditional medicine with these proven holistic practices, you can experience deeper healing in mind, body and spirit. The Healthfest represents the best opportunity around to learn about your natural health options and make informed decisions about what's right for you!

The 7th Greater Vernon Holistic Healthfest is located at the Vernon Center Middle School, 777 Hartford Turnpike (Route 30) in Vernon, and will be open from 10 am to 4 pm, Saturday/Sunday, March 28-29, 2015. Admission to the exhibits, authors and all workshops is \$5. For more information on the 2015 Healthfest line-up of exhibitors, vendors and speakers, visit <http://vernonhealthfest.com>.

As a MindBody Coach, Certified Hypnotherapist, Reiki Master and award-winning Author, June Hyjek offers extensive

experience in helping clients manage their pain and stress, working with them to move through life's transitions with grace and peace. She is the author of "Unexpected Grace: A Discovery of Healing through Surrender" and a meditation CD, "Moving into Grace." Her book and CD offer hope, comfort and insights to help us move through the difficult times we all face in life. (www.junehyjek.com) Look for her Holistic Health Column in each edition of "Neighbors." June welcomes comments and suggestions for topics and can be reached at jhyjek@earthlink.net.

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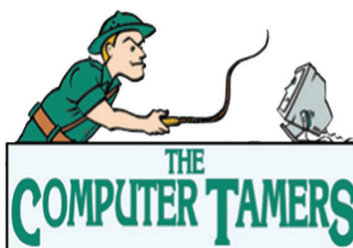
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The Packing House: Historic Venue for Performance & The Arts

Submitted by Thomas Buccino

Did you hear that? Listen very carefully... it's an early fall morning in 1870 and we are standing on the 3rd floor of the new Gardiner Hall Jr. Company's Packing and Shipping Building. Packers are pulling material from racks and methodically positioning spools of cotton thread in boxes to be shipped from the floor below. We can't help but notice the morning sun streaming through the line of windows on the east side of the room casting defined geometric shapes on the wooden floor. As workers pass by, the harsh shadows are interrupted in a sequence resembling the frames of a silent movie. There appears to be a rhythm to the echo permeating this space. The movement of the men chases dust particles from the floor and the crisp cool fall breeze carries them floating upward through the sunlight. It's like a choreographed symphony of syncopated light, sound, and movement.

What you are experiencing are the beginning sights and sounds of innovation: early creative outcomes driven by perseverance, non-traditional thought and action that will continue to evolve in this space, "The Packing House", for 145 years to the present day.

From an initial investment of \$430 and a workforce of six in 1860, Gardner Hall, Jr. built what was to be the first spooled thread production facility in the United States, valued at over \$2,225,000 at the time of his death in 1915. Despite hardship and loss from fire and natural disasters, Hall's perseverance, hard work, and entrepreneurial spirit drove the company's culture and success for nearly a century.

The Gardiner Hall Jr. Company produced fine cotton threads that grew to national and international acclaim. The Hall Company played a significant role in the industrialization and development of the region, and in 1919 the Town of Willington adopted the spool design as its corporate seal. The impact and benevolence of the Company and the Hall family is present to this day through the local school, churches, and grants offered by the Hall Foundation.

Photographic evidence suggests the Packing and Shipping Building, part of what is now The Mill Works and home of The Packing House, represents the oldest original standing production facility from the Hall Thread Company. Documentation confirms that in 1906 Hall began providing free movies to his employees as a form of entertainment. Though records are not definitive, we believe The Packing House served as a first theatre for these early films.

Whether by plan of the original founders or by chance, the Packing and Shipping Building evolved as a central structure within the South Willington manufacturing complex, situated adjacent to the Company General Store and between the Winding/Spooling Operation and Bleach and Dye House. Before his death, Gardiner Hall, Jr. would see over 3,000,000 finished spools of thread leaving the doors of the Packing and Shipping Building each month.



The Gardiner Hall Jr. Company operated for nearly a century, from 1860 to 1954. Much of the Hall property was then purchased by the New England Development Company in 1955, subdivided and sold over time as smaller parcels of land and buildings. The original Packing and Shipping Building, Dye and Bleach House, and six other structures and property that now comprise The Mill Works, were purchased in 1962 by Tom and Irma Buccino.

With less than a thousand dollars to their name and a small family loan, they took a chance to follow their American dream. The Buccinos relocated their small tool and die company from Andover, CT to Willington, and situated their entire operation into the 3rd floor of the Packing and Shipping Building, now The Packing House.

Unfortunately, the vacant years that bridged the end of the Hall thread era and the beginning of the machine tool presence by Buccino had taken a toll on the physical plant and infrastructure. A failed heating system, leaking roofs, degrading water and fire protection system, and insufficient electrical distribution represented only a few of the initial facility challenges that Buccino had to address while trying to establish his business. These combined with a personal injury from an industrial accident on site made the early sixties seem quite bleak.

Similar to Hall, Buccino demonstrated an uncanny resilience and perseverance to overcome the obstacles that came his way. It was through hard work, determination, and innovation that the Buccinos were able to expand their small tool and die operation in The Packing House to a variety of high production manufacturing operations throughout The Mill Works facility. Products produced included dies, stampings, nameplates, plastic bags, and most notably beater shafts for Iona hand mixers, blade shafts for Waring blenders, and axels for the popular "Digger the Dog" toy produced by Hasbro.

During the late 1970's the Buccinos sold their business, and the new owner relocated operations to Worcester, MA, leaving an empty facility behind. Through the 1980's, an assortment of advanced manufacturing concerns and small businesses established occupancy here. It was in 1988 that "The Mill Works" name was born.

It has been well over a half century since the last spools of thread left the Packing and Shipping Building, and the Buccino family's subsequent acquisition of this historic

facility. Today, the legacy of innovation continues at The Mill Works where it serves as home to a community of small businesses, artisans, and entrepreneurs engaged in design, collaboration, and the creative process. A place where ideas become reality.

The Packing House at The Mill Works is being reborn once again as an historic venue for performance and the arts. Managed and operated by the Friends of The Mill Works (a non-profit organization operating under fiscal agreement with Windham Arts) this 3,500sf open space will “unpack” an assortment of programming in music, dance, film, literature, and the visual arts. It will serve as a cultural stage and focal point where synergistic relationships may further evolve. Picture this: an intimate acoustic jazz series or a chamber concert; a show of modern dance or a place to dance; a classic film or a 3-D surround experience; a scholarly lecture or a poetry reading; a prominent gallery opening or a wine tasting and silent auction... Creative offerings limited only to imagination.

As a flexible space, The Packing House will also be available to rent for creative projects, events, meetings, receptions, workshops, recitals, and much more. We invite you to visit The Mill Works and learn how The Packing House may serve as a unique alternative space for your next project or event. We sincerely encourage your input and collaboration, and hope that you will consider becoming a Friend of the Mill Works, to support and be a part of exciting project.

It's now a winter afternoon in 2015. You enter the original Packing and Shipping Building and climb the stairs to The Packing House. Your eyes tend to widen and gravitate to the wood planked gable ceiling and robust hand-hewed chestnut beams overhead. As your focus drifts down to the hardwood floor, your senses seem to become more acute, and you notice sounds to be very much alive - the reverberation similar to the acoustics of a raw unaltered music hall from the 19th century. If you close your eyes, and remain very still, you can begin to feel the warmth of the setting sun touching your face and hear the intermittent knocking of steam rushing through the fin-tubes. As your heart slows and senses acclimate, your mind's eye can almost see the shadows of the packers moving past... and if you listen carefully... you may still hear the



rhythm of the workers as they prepare their next shipment. This is a special place.

For information or to schedule a visit, please email Chris at info@thefriendsofthemillworks.org, call Tom at 518-791-9474, or check our website at www.themillworks.us/thepackinghouse.html.



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Clarifying Gandhi # 4: Sex and the Saint Continued

By P.K. Willey

(This article is excerpted from “An Open Letter to Arundhati Roy by an American”.)

The roles of men and women are clearly defined in India. Gandhi was breaking molds in all kinds of ways. He wanted to see women strong and self-reliant. Historically, in numerous religious faiths, woman's ways of uniting to universal awareness have often, but not always, been through a path of love and intense yearning. The young girls around Gandhi in his ashram seem to have been in this bhava or mental attitude, and were very attached to physical proximity to Gandhi.

Ashrams are not sylvan peaceful abodes; they are battlefields with human nature inside and outside. The effect on the leader of having fawning followers seeking his/her guidance or attention in their lives, must also be considered. Certainly, elements of over-confident arrogance, a degree of narcissism, autocratic nature, favoritism, all kinds of things, can creep in. These in turn corrupt both the leader and community social relations.

Gandhi was self-admittedly and historically a difficult man to live with. He was harsh in his expectations and demands upon his wife and sons, and harsher upon himself. There is the story of a young mother who wanted her child to stop eating sweets, and went to Gandhi and asked him to tell him to stop having them, feeling that if the child heard it from Gandhiji, he would follow suit. Gandhi asked her to come back the next week and he would see if he could advise the boy then. The next week, she brought her son before him, and he told the child to stop eating sweets. The mother asked why he couldn't have said that the week before? Gandhi told her that he himself had not yet given up eating sugar, but now he had. Can you give up sugar? Would you even want to?

Control of the mind takes constant vigilance. Gandhi relied heavily on prayer, and mentally chanting a name that meant truth to him – his Ramanama – to help him. When he claimed that the experiments helped his brahmacharya, he didn't mean that they increased his libido – the conclusion of an ignoramus. He meant that they helped him increase his inner mental strength and control. Gandhi had incredible mastery over his mind. Look at the records in London in 1931 on how he spoke at the Round Table meetings.

There is the undeniable aspect, that love, pure love (as opposed to sexual love) is an energy. Gandhi loved Manubehn as a dear child, she was an intimate family member since age 14. He trusted her love. At times he embraced her. Now here, we have to understand what embrace meant in 1930 and

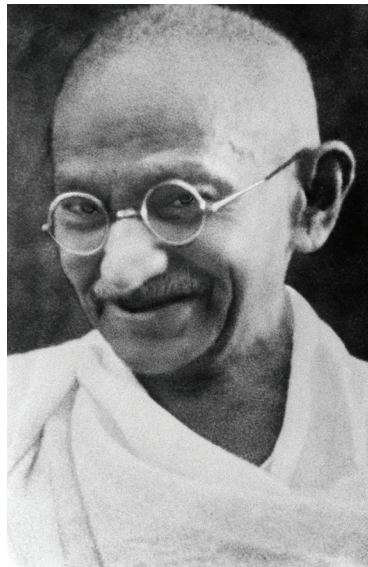
1940. We can't apply today's language to words from decades ago, as sick minds are doing now to Gandhi's use of the terms 'upper house' and 'lower house' to imply bi- or homosexuality. Manubehn's innocence, and Gandhi's determination to vigilantly direct his energy, to control and master his own thoughts for heightened awareness, kept sexual lust out of the relationship.

Manu's mother had died. Kasturba and Gandhi welcomed her into their lives as their own daughter. Her new mother figure, Kasturba died, and a few short years later, so did Gandhi, in her arms. She was alone in life, with mostly hostile and jealous former associates. Is the traumatic stress of this event and its affect on her life, being overlooked in the psychological discourse on her diaries?

Another aspect is Gandhi's methodology for action. He prepared himself and society for large actions, which you have termed 'brilliant political theatre' by building up to them through smaller steps. Control of response is incumbent upon a Satyagrahi, one who would fight with truth force. It begins within the individual with self control of inner responses in all respects. And that too, can only be achieved through small steps, one by one. Gandhi described how in seeking the ideal of 'aparigraha', non-possession, he struggled first to do without this or that, to give things away. At a certain point, everything just slipped away from him, to his joy and positive relief. Non-possession is a fruit of brahmacharya, not a deprivation. Can you understand that joy?

Another gift of Gandhi's life to the planet due to his experiments, was a revival in public discourse about the ideals behind brahmacharya for men and women, and a secular awakening to the metaphysical blueprint of India's ancient social architects. India's temperament is scientific in many aspects: psychology, medicine, innumerable cultural expressions. Gandhi was a product of that ethos. The overall goal of these sciences united, is harmony with Nature, leading to transcendental experience and knowledge of Her and therefore, oneself, as part and parcel.

There are universal laws which affect our lives; a truth seeker seeks to know and be obedient to them. These laws create ideals, the depth of which is expressed by the limits of capability by each practitioner. From the governing law of the equality of all life, we see the ideal of justice expressed in varying degrees throughout the earth. Ideals become tools to free a person's mind and sensibilities from what are false self-identifications, to truth – reality. These universal laws, arrived at similarly by all different religious and spiritual adepts, are not to cramp and hinder. I suggest you read Swami Shivananda of the Divine Life Society. He is held to be a genuine master, and wrote prolifically about the benefits of brahmacharya as well as lived the life.



In 1947, Gandhi began his experiment with Manu. Manu was the only one that he took with him to Noakhali, in what was a desperate and life threatening situation of vicious and senseless communal killing. Gandhi sensed his time left was short. He wanted intense alertness. Nonetheless, wherever Gandhi went, shades of the ashram soon followed. From those days:

Gandhi's Bengali secretary, Nirmal Bose, reported that he heard Gandhi "slap" himself, and later say, "I am not a Mahatma...I am an ordinary mortal like you all and I am strenuously trying to practise Ahimsa." Sushila Nayar [involved in experiments with Gandhi and Manu] also came to join him and Manu, but soon left. His typist and shorthand secretary also left him when he saw them sleeping naked, and Pyarelal reported he heard Gandhi mutter to himself: "There must be a serious flaw deep down in me which I am unable to discover...could I have missed my way?"

[To Miraben [Madeline Slade], Gandhi wrote then] "Do not ever worry how I am faring or what I am doing here,"... "If I succeed in emptying myself utterly, God will possess me. Then I know that everything will come true." Yet he continued to worry about a "deep flaw" within himself. "God's grace alone is sustaining me," he confided to his diary. "I can see there is some grave defect in me...All around me is utter darkness."¹

The three-month experiment with Manu ended when Gandhi showed her a letter an associate had secretly written to Gandhi. After reading it, Manu told Gandhi she wanted to sleep separately, to which Gandhi immediately acquiesced and wrote two associates who were very bothered about the experiments, that they were over.

The point is not that he was right: he was wrong. His experiments in this regard did not enable him to clear his inner path as he hoped. But, Gandhi could admit his mistakes, although he may not have seen solutions for them. He didn't consider himself a saint. What greater icon can there be for a nation, than a man who was truly honest, who strove with all his might to help others, to raise the down trodden, to help India become aware of her own gifts and potentials? To err is human, to forgive is divine; but to admit a mistake and change one's thinking is an act of bravery too rare on our planet.

P.K. Willey, Ph.D. (University of CT, USA), a scholar of Gandhi's ideals, is a parent of two, and a writer. Willey seeks to foster discussion on Gandhi's Earth Ethics, to contribute to raising awareness about what is most essential to us all. To join this discussion email: pkwilley@wiseearthpublishers.org. or browse to www.earthethics.org.in Wolpert, S. (2013) Master of His Own Mind. India Today. June 7. As seen on Dec. 1, 2014: <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/mahatma-gandhi-relationship-young-women-celibacy/1/278965.html>

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Spring Running

By Rachel Tambling

Spring is coming, or here, depending on when you read this article. I know it. As I look out at the piles of snow, and shiver in -10 degree temperatures, it doesn't seem like spring will ever come. I dutifully count down the days until the first day of spring (less than four weeks!). I plan my spring training and register for spring races. If I keep thinking about spring, maybe it will come. Spring is coming.

Spring is a great time for running - for renewing running patterns and starting new running habits. In this installment of Running with Dr. Rachel, I talk about hitting the refresh button on your spring training. This column also includes a link to a free Couch to 5k training plan for those of you who will use the start of spring to begin a new running habit.

Spring is a great time for new running gear! Start the spring season with new shoes. Over time, your feet will change, both from the stresses of running, and from normal aging processes. Feet can change when you gain or lose weight, too. Use the change of seasons as a reminder to change your shoes and assess your foot health. This is a time to visit your local specialty

running store to have your feet fitted in new shoes. Go through the whole fit process and try several different pairs of shoes to ensure that you have a great fit for your feet as they are today.

One of my favorite spring traditions is spring cleaning. I love clearing out old things, donating my unwanted items, and getting organized. My love of spring cleaning extends to my running gear as well. Each spring, I go through my running clothes, coats, shoes, and accessories to assess their usefulness and determine what needs to be retired or replaced. Use the spring to wash all running coats, jackets, outerwear, and accessories. Zip up zippers, place mittens and other small accessories in a garment bag, and wash everything on gentle with a sports-specific detergent. Hang coats, match mittens, and organize each item. Look carefully for signs of wear and take note of things that need to be retired or replaced. Spring is a great time for good deals on winter apparel and if you know what needs to be replaced, you can stock up at lower prices.



Carefully go through anything that has stretchy fabric and look for signs of wear – tights that don't quite hold their shape, or socks that slip. Retire those items that are showing signs of wear. Keep your new gear fresh by washing in cool water with a sports-specific detergent.

Ladies, spring is an excellent time to sort through sports bras. Each spring, I go through sports bras carefully and replace any that are more than one year old. The life expectancy of a sports bra depends on a number of factors, including intensity of exercise, how you wash it, and how often it's worn, but most sports bras last 75-100 wears, or about 6-12 months, depending on your usage. After that, the bra is likely not providing effective support, or could be providing uneven support. Replace older bras, and replace any that were purchased when you weighed more or less, or that were around before a change to your breast shape (like childbirth, nursing,

or treatment for breast cancer). Indulge in a new bra and feel supported during each run.

Finally, spring is an amazing time to start running! If you've never run before, or are returning to running after a long hiatus, consider registering for a spring race to get motivated to run. Enjoy the warmer weather and longer days by starting a new running program, or joining friends on a run. Ready to try your first 5k, or curious about what it

would take to run a 5k? Check out the free training plan on my website: <http://drachelruns.com/couch-to-5k/>. Looking for a great first 5k? Shop around on Active.com, RunningintheUSA.com, or visit the website of your local running club for great ideas. Happy running!

Each column will feature tips and training advice inspired by reader questions. Send your questions to Coach@DrRachelRuns.com – to see your questions answered in print.



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There Is A Point At Which

By Georganne Sohmer

There is a point at which the sprawling wide Connecticut
 Surging heedless on its sure run down to reach the Sound
 Does assent to wind what looks to be a passage more restrained
 And flows a little easier south of Hartford's low-slung bridges,
 Churning currents less contentious where Glastonbury juts out rocky
 And Rocky Hill appears to slip a beachy toe into the swell
 Just to test the waters. The two stand opposite to one another here
 (And opposite in ways of looking at the world, the locals tell),
 But did consent long years ago to cast a sort of bridge between them
 And did connect their comings and their goings at this place,
 Trusting to the river's glistening rough mercurial grace,
 With a ferry for the portage and for meetings face to face
 (The oldest one continuously run in all states, though
 Nowadays a daylight-only, tug pulled ride in only May to just October,
 Outside the summery hours of which time travelers in hopes of crossing over
 Must make their transit to the other side by other means).

This ferry has a ferryman, or captain, if you will,
 And he still leans, as all his kind were wont to do
 These couple hundred years, to check those currents as he steers,
 But bends no pole, where now a steady engine takes its cue
 From his right modern tuned but still mysterious soundings,
 Dieseling the barge against a drift that tugs at sand and wave alike.
 He keeps no pet for company, this ferryman, that I can see,
 No room for one, with car space maybe two or three and at a premium,
 And biking riders braced against the rails to catch a breeze.
 But he's not much like testy Charon after all,
 Who kept his ferry going full year round and day and night,
 Expected to be paid in currency that had a bite,
 And rarely made a sound except to call that fearsome dog of his,
 Pacing for a fright upon the farther shore.
 Old Charon never had to play the fellow hail-well-met, never fraternized
 To charm a fare or guarantee his rides, never had to advertise;
 Of passengers to board his shallow bark there never was a lack,
 And never did he give a thought to bringing anybody back.

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CLiCK is Open!

By Maraiah Popeleski, RDN
General Manager, CLiCK Inc.

The past few months have been quite busy at CLiCK. CLiCK moved into its home located at 41 Club Road in Windham last February and a year later we are settled in and ready for members to join. Our kitchen renovations are complete and we now have three separate, beautiful, brand new food preparation areas. We have completed the application process and received our commercial kitchen license and are officially open to members. Hundreds of volunteer hours have gone into this project, and finally the kitchen of our dreams is available to local producers!

Each commercial kitchen space is set up to accommodate a small start-up food business. One room is a complete bakery with a 20 quart mixer, two convection ovens, prep tables, refrigerator and sinks. Another commercial kitchen is designed for processing ingredients into value added products such as packaged foods, sauce, soup or jam. This space has a ten burner gas stove, 40 quart steam jacketed kettle, refrigerator, prep tables, sinks, a blender, stock pots, roasting pans and small utensils. A 40 gallon steam jacketed kettle is on order and will arrive soon. The processing kitchen is also available to caterers, food truck owners and personal chefs. The final space is our little finishing room which is designated for packing prepared foods, labeling jars or containers and putting any finishing touches on products. The commercial kitchen space includes a large storage area complete with shelves, and an eight foot by ten foot walk in cooler and a double door reach in freezer. The storage space is available for members to utilize as needed.

The former bar area of the building is being renovated into a teaching kitchen. This project was funded by a generous grant from the Jeffery P. Ossen Family Foundation. The teaching kitchen will be used for teaching basic cooking skills to children and adults as well as for exploring food and culture. CLiCK plans to offer technique classes such as canning, butchery and specialty and ethnic cuisine classes in the new teaching kitchen. The teaching kitchen is housed in a large space that members can rent to use to hold yoga or dance classes, art lessons, or host lectures and workshops on topics such as wellness, food justice or sustainability. In addition, there is another smaller "classroom" which can accommodate groups for classes or events. Each space is available to members to use for an hourly fee. Small businesses will advertise independently for the events they organize at CLiCK and patrons will have the opportunity to attend events at

CLiCK throughout the year. CLiCK seeks to accommodate many various small businesses in our 2,000 sq ft building; CLiCK is the small business incubator and local food hub for Eastern Connecticut!

CLiCK is run on cooperative values to support the growth and development of small business owners in the Willimantic region and beyond. CLiCK has a growing network of small business resources to help individuals turn just about any dream into reality through business planning services, funding opportunities and networking. As CLiCK grows in members, plans are underway to start groups to support small business growth through professional seminars, peer

support and business services. Members will be a part of a large network of like-minded business owners who will all be working to build a more sustainable, local food system in Connecticut.

CLiCK's labyrinth and orchard may be covered in snow and the bee hives quiet, however plans are already being drawn up to build a community garden on the grounds. CLiCK will continue to work on the property this spring for members to enjoy. Community

events and fundraisers will be part of the summer landscape of CLiCK.

Membership is open to everyone! Yearly membership is available for supporters, individuals, groups and institutions. CLiCK is seeking members from all parts of the local community to help promote its mission and to help build a more sustainable local food system. Individuals, local businesses, farms, schools and institutions can join CLiCK as a supporter or utilize CLiCK's commercial kitchens, classroom or teaching kitchen for programing and production. CLiCK also welcomes monetary donations and volunteer time as support.

Programs are already planned for the early spring including: a series of art classes led by some wonderful local artists. March 1, 2015 kicks off the series with Beginning Acrylic Painting taught by Shauna Shane. April 12, 2015 class is Hand Building in Clay with Emine Cichowski and May 3, 2015 features Painting with Acrylics hosted by Blanche Serban. And a day long ServSafe class and test session is scheduled for March 30, 2015. To register call or email CLiCK: clickwillimantic@gmail.com or 860-455-8395.

For more information, to join, volunteer opportunities or to schedule a tour please email us at clickwillimantic@gmail.com or call 860-455-8395.

Photo by Olivia Aubin-Brouillard



Henrietta House Bed and Breakfast Opens in Ashford

Historic Henrietta House Bed and Breakfast and Red House Farm has opened in Ashford, CT. It provides a wonderful place to stay in this beautiful neighborhood, our "Quiet Corner." The


house was built in the early 1700's on land purchased by Josiah Byles in 1718. It consists of traditional cape and colonial center chimney post and beam construction. Though the house has been tastefully renovated over the centuries, many of the historical aspects of the house have been retained, such as the 5 fireplaces, 9 over 6 windows, bee-hive oven, and wide-board pine and chestnut floors.



Three bedrooms are available for a delightful stay, including one suite with its own entry, balcony, and bathroom. The light-filled rooms with their queen sized beds, down comforters, and hand-picked artifacts from around the world welcome everyone with all the modern comforts guests expect. The bathrooms are especially nice with deep soaking tubs, heated floor tiles, and skylights. Included with no extra cost a delicious gourmet breakfast, engaging stories about the house (mysterious Henrietta, Underground Railway, ghosts), and a lovely hike on the adjacent Byles Sanctuary Trail.

Originally the Byles land comprised around 400 acres. Now Red House Farm, on which Henrietta House sits, has approximately 3 acres. Owner Marian's holistic goal for her farm is "to live an ecologically sound, self-sufficient and sustainable (mentally, physically, aesthetically, spiritually, creatively) life that contributes to the well-being of the larger community, local and global." Marian and her assistant Jasmine are gradually adding productivity to these acres, surrounding the house with gardens that focus on native plants and additionally planting 125 blueberry bushes, 50 strawberry plants, 4 fruit trees, as well as mostly heirloom vegetables and herbs last year. We are planning additional plantings and a variety of animals in the coming years so that our gardens and farm can sustain our B & B. We will be providing places for contemplation and serenity where you can appreciate the bio-diverse and vital life throughout the gardens.

See pictures of and make reservations for Henrietta House at historichenriettahousebnbct.weebly.com or contact us at henriettahousebnb@gmail.com or 860-477-0318.




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Natchaug: Land Between Rivers

By Jace Paul

There may be a prodigious amount of snow on the ground, but spring is just a few weeks away. With a little luck, the trails will be clear soon. Spring is a great season for hiking, but melting ice and snow can lead to flooded lowlands and muddy ground. Good hikes in the spring can be found on higher (and drier) ground. Natchaug State Forest offers some great hikes that one can enjoy in late March and early April.

The confluence of the Bigelow and Still rivers create the Natchaug River. These are the two rivers to which the Nipmuc Indian word *natchaug* - “the land between rivers” - refers. The land there was once the hunting ground of the now-extinct Wabbaquassett Indians. The park began as Eastford Forest in 1917, and in the ensuing years has grown from 586 acres to its present size of 12,500 acres.

I’ve always been astonished by Natchaug’s unearthly silence and emptiness. Massive trees create a very high canopy that stretches over miles of colonial ruins, and few if any sounds of civilization can be heard. There are also several modern roads in the park that have been abandoned that add to the feeling of desolation and loneliness. One rarely encounters others when hiking, but in Natchuag I have only run into another human being once. I’d taken a detour down an unmarked trail that led me to a hunter’s perch. He was decked in day-glo orange from head to toe and chastised me for wearing only red to ward off his mark. We chatted for a few minutes about the void around us. He’d been there since dawn and seen no one until I arrived, had sighted no deer or game, and had heard only a late going flock of geese above. Remembering the first rule of trail etiquette, I offered him some walnuts and dried cranberries. He declined, and I went on my way. A few minutes down the trail, I realized that I didn’t get his name and hadn’t seen his face. He’d never taken his mask off.

Its peculiar loneliness aside, Natchaug is a textbook example of a northeastern coastal forest, a mix of broad-leafed oaks, red and sugar maples, ash and birch trees, and hilltop stands of white, pitch, and Virginia pines. Some of the largest and oldest specimens of pine I have encountered in Eastern Connecticut are to be found here. Marshes, another characteristic of northeastern coastal forests, are also abundant in Natchaug. Particularly noteworthy is the very large and impressive Beaver Dam Wildlife Marsh, which is accessible from the unpaved forest road system. This area is sure to be harder to traverse during the spring thaw, but worth the trouble to see returning birds repopulate the wetlands.

The longest trail in the park is the Natchaug trail itself, which enters the park via the Goodwin State Forest in the south and exits around Route 44 in the north, ultimately ending in Eastford when it joins with the Nipmuck trail. The Natchaug is maintained by the Connecticut Forest and Park Association,

who do splendid work keeping it and other blue-blazed trails in the state maintained. It’s a meandering trail with very few steep inclines, an easy hike suitable for people of all experience levels. The hike can be done in one day, but many hikers choose to camp along the way. Contact the CT DEEP for a permit if you’d like to camp along this trail.

Natchaug features about 5.5 miles of orange blazed “non-motorized multi-use trails.” The largest single stretch of these nearly bisects the park and runs northeast to Fayette Wright Road, a service road. This “trail” is in fact the maintenance zone for a gas main, about 30-40 meters across of clear-cut forest. There’s not much to commend this trail unless you fancy successional plant communities – another feature of northeastern coastal forests – which can include pioneer species like low-growing herbaceous goldenrod, grey-stemmed dogwood, juniper, blueberry woody shrubs, and poplar and gray birch.

Another multi-use trail has been purposed for horseback riding, and begins appropriately at the Silvermine Horse camp. The camp is readily accessible by car via Kingsbury Road, another unpaved service road in the park. The campground is intended only for equestrians and so the sites are sparsely appointed with just a tie up, fire ring, and picnic table each.

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) trail is the most interesting trail in the park. Around 3 miles long if done as a loop, this trail snakes its way through a variety of forest ecosystems and offers a peaceful, isolated hiking experience. It’s on high ground (with a few forays into wet and low-land areas) so you can expect it to be mostly dry even in the rainy days of spring.

To access the CCC trail, you’ll want to park at the entrance off Route 198 in the swimming and picnicking area. To reach the trail head, you’ll need to cross on foot a concrete bridge that once allowed vehicle access to the heart of the park. On the other side of the bridge, head up the crumbling asphalt road a little ways and look for the trail entrance on your right. The first mile of the trail will take you along the Natchaug river and offers



The Natchaug River looking east.

Photo by Jace Paul

beautiful views along its banks. A sharp bend in the trail takes you north/northeast toward what was farmland in colonial times, evidenced by rock walls, cisterns, and stone house foundations. The CCC trail joins up with the Natchaug trail in a clearing and heads north. The intersection was not well marked at the time of my last visit, so be careful not to miss it—if you reach Kingsbury Road, you have.

After going north about three quarters of a mile, the trail will turn east to avoid a dell and shortly reach Kingsbury Road. The Natchaug trail continues east from here, but to stay on the CCC trail you can head north until your reach an intersection. The westbound road on your left (blocked by heavy concrete barriers to thwart cars) returns to the abandoned bridge and parking area, completing the loop.

Alternatively, you can continue north up Kingsbury Road, where the Ranger Headquarters are to be found. I’ve never, ever seen anyone at all here, let alone a ranger, and there

seems to be no regular hours for the headquarter’s office. It’s a lonely place with a sense of abandonment fitting the silent, eerie forest around it.

In addition to the trails, the picnic and swimming area are highly recommended. Natchaug has a deserved reputation for pure, refreshing waters and I’ve spent many summer afternoons lolling in its gently flowing current. The beach at the picnic and swimming area is rocky, but the bottom of the river is sandy and soft. Pit toilets, picnic tables, and standing BBQ firepits are available here. After so brutal a winter as we’ve had this year, these appointments are sure to be welcome come summer.

See you on the trails.

Jace Paul is a writer and photographer who lives in Willimantic. He is the author of two books of verse: Eggshells & Entropy, and King’s Road to Pleasant Street (and Other Poems to Nowhere,) and a number of screen projects including the series “AP Life.”

Looking Up:

“The Moon on the Breast of the New-Fallen Snow...”

By Bob Grindle

March has never been one of my favorite months--blustery and muddy, cold one moment and warm the next, and, as a rule, very little sunshine--BUT, it is the month of Spring's arrival and in New England that often feels like breaking a winters-long fast of sensory deprivation. This year has been especially grueling; between the length of winter, the depth of the snow, the persistence of the bitter cold and the near total lack of clear skies day or night, March looms like some mythic promise of rescue from epic punishment. Last night, as my wife and I were leaving Margarita's in Storrs, it was 15°F, rather mild by this year's measure. The sky was beautifully clear and we were treated to a clean, crisp, dagger-sharp sliver of a waxing crescent Moon, hanging only a ring finger's distance away from Venus and Mars in the western sky. If only they could have been shifted a bit to the west, they would have looked like two gems in a dish.

It struck me that this was something of a “Wow!” moment. Venus is more than 25 million miles closer to the Sun than Earth, and Mars is nearly 50 million miles farther away from the Sun than we are. Here, though, right in front of us, they could have been celestial charms on some heavenly bracelet. Two planets separated by at least 75 million miles, clustered right next to a Moon that is really just next door, yet for this moment the laws of physics that define Gravity, elliptical motion, reflected light and atmospheric optics were putting on a very impressive show. Others who were just arriving to the restaurant noticed, perhaps in part because I was gawking.

There will be other events worth watching as March and April finally arrive. It is hard to know just what moment of looking up into the night sky will queue up memories of past loves, losses, passionate hopes or clashes with reality, or even a simple quickening of the pulse—there is, after all, no age limit, high or low, on feeling the thrill of being alive. The full worm Moon (a bit disturbing, that image) rising—or birthing, as it sometimes seems—over Route 6 in early March comes a few days before a dazzling Jupiter appears to hang over the now waning Moon on March 9th. As a kid, I had a hard time understanding that the planets looked just like stars but, today, understanding reflected sunlight, the mind-warping distances involved, and poetic license, it is rather comforting to think

of the planets and stars as other bodies bound by the same physical laws as Earth. As an adult, it is rather gripping to know that our home, Earth, looks very much like a blue star when seen from Saturn or Uranus or Neptune.

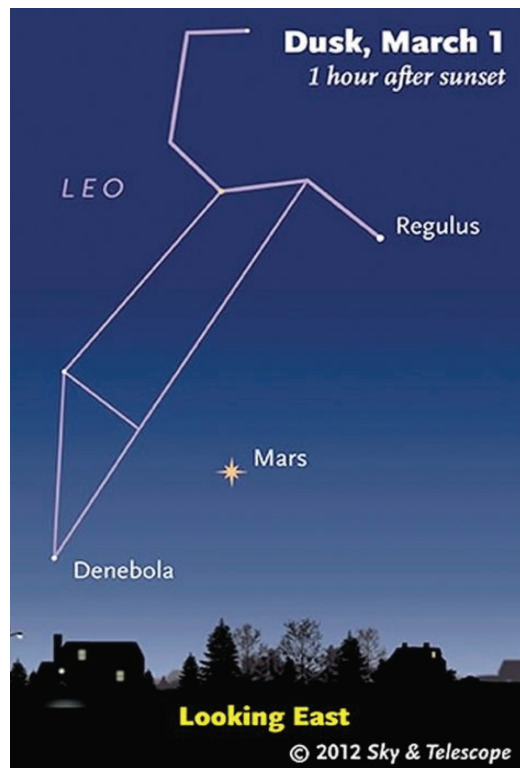
Spring officially arrives March 20th, and it should be a great night for moon or star gazing; there will be only the barest sliver of a Moon. On the 20th, it is quite near Saturn—looking very much like a bright star; on the 21st, it is close to the always faintly red-orange Mars; and on the 22nd, it is near every poet's favorite planet, Venus. Three planets in three nights sounds like a cosmic tour. Now, if we can get a few clear

nights with temperatures in the 50's—oh, heart be still—the 9:00pm sky will also be filled with bears, lynx, hunting dogs, rabbits, crows, serpents, hunters, and lions and twins and many, many more ancient, imaginative and often very useful characters in the human story of the heavens.

April brings more comforting reasons to look up into the celestial panorama. Surely by the time of the full “Pink” Moon on April 4th, the Saturday before Easter, the snows of the winter of 2015 will be gone and the cherry and/or apple blossoms really will be in the pink. A week later, on the 11th, Venus will be right smack in the middle of the constellation Taurus, between the extraordinary Red Giant Star Aldebaran and the beautiful and mysterious star birthing cluster known as the Pleiades. Aldebaran is one of the brightest stars in the night sky, slightly reddish and a star that long ago burned up its Hydrogen fuel and is living out its days

now burning Helium and converting it into Carbon. This is the swan song of most stars and Aldebaran has swollen to nearly 50 times the size of our Sun and burns more than 400 times as brightly. In a million or so years this red giant that forms the left shoulder of Orion will explode in a cataclysmic super-nova, and I can't help but wonder if there will be Earth-dwelling storytellers around to update our star charts.

During much of the spring, due south and high, almost overhead, is the distinctive constellation Leo. Its linked stars really do resemble a crouching lion. The curve of his head—looking very much like the storied sickle of Leo—and the shape of his body are easy to pick out in the sky, resting directly below the Big Dipper. Leo looks to the west, past the bright stars Castor and Pollux in the constellation Gemini, toward the winter constellation Orion, now beginning to disappear from view. Following Leo's rise into the spring sky



Riverboat Ramblers to Perform at Music on the Green in Tolland

Submitted by Cheryl Randino

Leave those wintertime blues at home and join us for the next performance sponsored by the Music on the Green featuring The Riverboat Ramblers on Sunday, March 8, 2015, 3:00 PM at the United Congregational Church of Tolland (UCCT) located at 45 Tolland Green.

The Riverboat Ramblers have performed New Orleans Jazz, Bluegrass, Cajun, Calypso, Zydeco, Swing, and Mardi Gras party music throughout the United States since 1980. Their aggressive rhythmic style and outrageous humor attract a wide range of audiences wherever they perform. Well known in this part of Connecticut, Music on the Green is pleased to bring The Riverboat Ramblers back to UCCT as part of our 2014-2015 concert series.

Music on the Green is currently in its third successful season. Four concerts are presented yearly in a variety of musical media. All have drawn impressive audiences from the Quiet Corner of Connecticut and beyond.

The church is handicap accessible for your convenience. Admission to this concert is \$10 at the door with children under 12 years of age free of charge. Please join us



and the performers at a reception immediately following this concert. For more information, visit www.ucctolland.org/musiconthegreen.html

Come prepared for a lively afternoon of foot stamping, hand clapping music!

is Virgo, whose very appearance heralds the Earth's springing back to life. This constellation is easily spotted by the bright star Spica--Latin for 'ear of grain'--and in true ironic fashion, the constellation directly next to Virgo is Corvus, the crow. It is easy to imagine storytellers sitting under the dark night skies untold centuries ago making up tales and adding detail after detail so it would be easy to find the same collection of stars night after night. The longer they sat there, or strolled about the fire pit or mountaintop, the more their eyes adjusted to the night and the more stars appeared...and the richer and more populated with characters the stories became. Not so very much different from today, really. I know it's hard to believe that there will be warm nights that invite us to spend time outside. But as February fades away—in a snowstorm right at the moment—we are truly reminded that hope really does spring eternal. It always has.

Bob Grindle is a Windham Hospital retiree and a student in the Astronomy minor at Eastern Connecticut State University.



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The Dawkins Delusion - Part One

A Reply to Radical Atheism and the Denial of God

By Conrad McIntire Jr.

I read with interest Cathy Cementina's article in the January/February issue of *Neighbors*, *Defending Richard Dawkins*. Her belief in Dawkins and atheism are evident throughout her article which ends by telling us "traditional religious myths" are being blown away by the open window of science. In light of the fact that all polls show that the majority of Americans believe in God, and I am sure that would reflect on those who read *Neighbors* I think a reply, in line with one of the purposes of *Neighbors* - "to provide useful information", is necessary. Despite the obvious limitations of article space, I like to critique, parts of her article but more importantly I think its necessary to deal with her source, Richard Dawkins and in particular his book "The God Delusion".

To use her own reasoning, I would ask Cathy to put aside her prejudice toward spiritual people, to suspend her atheist beliefs and see if she can understand why the majority of people may be right. It is clear that Cementina is a disciple of the new "pope" of atheist, Richard Dawkins. Dawkins is a well known evolutionary biologist who seems to have made it his mission to move on from science and take on God. Cementina herself, writes that some people find Dawkins "mean and arrogant in his dismissal of religion and all things spiritual." That's a bit of an understatement! Unlike the main voice of atheism of the last half century, Anthony Flew, Dawkins displays absolute hostility and contempt in his writings and talks toward those who believe in God. His militant approach is evident in such statements, that teaching children to believe in God is a form of child abuse, and his call for fellow atheists to deal with some Christians "mock them, ridicule them in public and....with contempt", at a Reason Rally in Washington in 2012. Dawkins is the master of setting up a straw man and then dismantling it with great relish. As Dr. Francis Collins, one of the worlds leading scientists and head of the Genome Project has stated "Its hard to escape the conclusion, that such repeated mischaracterizations of faith betray a vitriolic personal agenda, rather than a reliance on the rational arguments that Dawkins so cherishes in the scientific realm.". Dawkins brand of radical atheism has turned off many members of his own atheist "family", who have problems not only with his attitude but his arguments as well. Well known atheist philosopher, Michael Ruse has stated that "the God Delusion" "makes me embarrassed to be an atheist", and atheist Paul Kurtz, the founder of the Center for Inquiry, says of Dawkins and his like "I consider them atheist fundamentalists. They are anti-religious and they are mean-spirited, unfortunately."

In reviewing Dawkins and his writings I openly admit I am a Christian theist and approach the subject from that

perspective. I like to think I have an open mind and willing to listen to other worldviews. Toward that end over the last 25 years I collected debate transcripts between theists and atheists and have read books by both atheists and theists and have been particularly interested in what modern science has to show about this question. When I bought "The God Delusion" I expected to see perhaps some new arguments. However as I went though the book I found it basically a rehash of many arguments from the past. It is also clear that Dawkins is not very well read in other fields such as philosophy. Compared to reading other atheists from the 20th century, Russell, Flew, Gould to name a few, Dawkins book simply offers the atheist equivalent of slick hellfire preaching, substituting turbocharged rhetoric and highly selective manipulations of facts for careful evidence based thinking. In a nutshell there is surprisingly little scientific analysis in "The God Delusion" but there is a lot of pseudoscientific speculation and a criticism of religion mostly borrowed from other atheist writings. What makes Dawkins book stand out in comparison to some other atheists I read is his anti-religious propaganda and apparent disregard for evidence not favorable to his case. Dawkins insults my intelligence by lumping belief in God as the same as orbiting teapots around the sun, Santa Claus and Spaghetti Monsters. Obviously to any thinking person this is a flawed analogy. No one I know believes such nonsense! The substance of the answer in "The God Delusion" for the reason why I and others like me believe in God, is that our intellectual capacity has been warped having been hijacked by some infectious, malignant God virus. Such a speculative answer may satisfy some atheists for why all civilizations have believed in God but its not much of an answer.

Religion is constantly displayed in the worse possible light throughout the book. It tells you a lot about Dawkins prejudice when he can call religion one of society's great evils, "comparable to the smallpox virus but harder to eradicate," in the light of numerous Christian organizations founded upon the teachings of Jesus to help the poor and less fortunate. With one statement Dawkins sweeps away, Mother Teresa, Habitat for Humanity, World Vision, the Red Cross, Salvation Army and numerous Christian groups both local and worldwide. Yes there have been hypocrites in every religion and that just speaks to the corruption of some people but to write a book over 400 pages and have nothing good to say about Christianity and other religions in the light of numerous organizations out there helping people is plainly dishonest. Its equally dishonest to try to blow past the monstrosities of the 20th century at the hands of atheist centered regimes, following the core of Darwinist philosophy, and try to say their atheism had nothing to do with what they did. Over one hundred and fifty million people were murdered by, Mao, Stalin, Hitler, etc., who believed

like Dawkins “there is at bottom no design, no purpose, no good, nothing but pointless indifference...we are machines for propagating DNA...It is every living object’s sole reason for being.” With this distorted view of humans, whom the Bible says are made in the image of God, in that kind of a world, might makes right, its survival of the fittest, elimination of the inferior. The stench of Hitler’s ovens is the perfume that adorns Darwinism.

I’d like to address the key part of his book and then review evidences that point to the existence of an intelligent Creator. On pages 157-158 Dawkins summarizes what he calls the ‘central argument of my book’. Here it is:

1. One of the greatest challenges to the human intellect has been to explain how the complex, improbable appearance of design in the universe arises.
 2. The natural temptation is to attribute the appearance of design to actual design itself.
 3. The temptation is a false one because the designer hypothesis immediately raises the larger problem of who designed the designer.
 4. The most ingenious and powerful explanation is Darwinism evolution by natural selection
 - 5 We don’t have an equivalent explanation for physics. 6. We should not give up the hope of a better explanation arising in physics, something as powerful as Darwinism is for biology.
- Therefore God almost certainly does not exist.

Before I go into Dawkins’ main points, I would like to address his conclusion “God almost certainly does not exist.” My main issue is – how does he conclude that God doesn’t exist from the above statements? It seems to me that his conclusion just jumps out of thin air, to infer that God does not exist just shows how invalid his argument is. The only delusion is Dawkins’ conviction that his arguments undermine the existence of God. No logical rules of inference would bring you to draw Dawkins conclusions from the 6 premises. At best this is an attempt to not infer God’s existence on the basis of design in the universe. But one can equally argue that design points to a designer. Lets take a closer look at Dawkins logic and see how sound it is.

Statement one says its a great challenge to explain the complex, improbable appearance of design in the universe. Well yes he is right but only for those who take God out of the picture! The first statement could simply be answered that the best explanation, with the greatest explanatory power, based on our own daily observations of designed things, is that there must be a supernatural designer. Its a bit comical that statement two draws the obvious from statement one, design requires a designer, that’s not only the natural temptation but the rational conclusion! But no says Dawkins because he says

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Soil Stewardship

By William Hooper

*"By the sweat of your face
you shall eat bread,
till you return to the ground,
for out of it you were taken;
for you are dust,
and to dust you shall return."*

- The book of Genesis, circa 600 BC (English Standard Version)

Of all the radical changes in the last two centuries in the industrialized world, the most profound shift may be that less than 5% of our population now provide all the needed food. In the 18th century, and earlier, 90% or more of all people above toddlerhood were directly involved in the production of food. Given our radically novel existence, in which most us are not tilling soil, herding animals, or harvesting fruit every day, it is understandable why these millennia-old words from Genesis may strike us merely as evocative poetry for funerals, rather than as a straightforward statement of fact. We would do well to reflect, however, on their implication: our origin from, sustenance by, and eventual return to, the earth itself.

The dust from which we all spring, and to which we all return, is the soil. While a fundamental aspect of sustainable living, soil is poorly understood, usually overlooked, and too often treated "like dirt", a simile whose existence tells you much about our cultural values.

Healthy soil isn't dirt. Dirt is an inorganic mishmash of mineral particles. Soil is dirt suffused with organic detritus, living things, water, and nutrients. If soil is a lake in the woods, fish leaping from the water and cranes tip-toeing through the lily pads, then dirt is a swimming pool filled with sterile tapwater. The last century of agricultural research has barely scratched the surface of the ecosystems present in healthy soil, but we've determined a few key points:

(1) Dirt by itself provides nothing more than anchoring for plants. It has to be fed and fertilized constantly for plant growth to occur, as it has negligible "nutritional value". The difference between soil and dirt is the difference between eating vitamin-fortified oatmeal, and eating boiled cardboard.

(2) Dirt is, in effect, immuno-suppressed. Lacking normal soil life, dirt presents no resistance or competition to colonizing pathogens. Therefore, growing in dirt requires constant use of pesticides, fungicides, and insecticides.

(3) Dirt cannot hold water or dissolved nutrients well. Dirt generally holds either no water at all (sandier soils) or forms a near-impermeable barrier (clays with no organic matter), neither of which help. Soil holds water and dissolved material (potassium, nitrates, calcium, etc) exceedingly well, both in



the living organisms themselves, and in chemical "traps" like humic acids.

So clearly, we all know to cultivate soil, not dirt? Except that often isn't what we do. Our current food system frequently depends on synthetically-fertilized and propped-up dirt. We actually degrade the soil year after year by planting the same few high-value crops, pillaging the complex nutrient web then trying to "replace" it with massive doses of simple, single-chemical fertilizers. Again, from a human perspective, it's like eating all of the fresh, just-picked apples and pears out of your bowl, then "replacing" them for the next meal with a bowl full of powdered sugar and tap water (since, hey, they are roughly similar chemically speaking, right?) We compound this issue by expending vast resources maintaining large lawns, which in their usual form are heavily fertilized and herbicided swathes of low-diversity (and low utility) grasses atop hard-pack dirt.

Historical perspective on soil destruction comes chillingly. Remember the dust bowl of the 30s, with parts of the great plains turning to dead, dusty, crop-killing emptiness? Less than a century previous, the first farmers in the great plains planted in top soil that was six feet deep. Millennia of migrating bison, pooping and grazing and stomping up the soil, then migrating away for years before returning, had build an unfathomable store of soil wealth, which we tore through and washed out to sea in three generations. The magnificent cedar forests of Lebanon are mentioned in the Hebrew bible, in the Epic of Gilgamesh, and in ancient accounts of Lebanon as a country of deep green forests, verdant pastures, and rich life. Currently, much of Lebanon is dry scrubland, because humans cut down all the famous cedars and left nothing in their place. The loss of trees means little holds the soil together. The loss of soil means little can grow back to replenish the soil. And so forth.

What can we do? Lots, actually, remembering that there are regions on Earth where humans have farmed for four thousand years by maintaining soil health. This is a hugely complex subject, but some key points stand out:

(1) Buy sustainably grown food. Get to know your food producers, and don't be afraid to ask questions about how they do what they do. Be an educated consumer; it's your planet, too, and this is stuff you are putting in your body. Remember that organic isn't the same as sustainable, necessarily.

Remember that lowest-intervention isn't always the same as most sustainable, either.

(2) **COMPOST.** Start a pile, or contribute to a friend's pile. Every time you remove matter from an area -- you harvest fruit, haul away grass clippings, etc -- all the stored energy and nutrients in that material leaves the local system. Either the local system just gets weaker and weaker (the dust bowl) or you have to replenish that lost material (compost being the good, soil-building way; massive fertilizer use being the highly effective in the short term but bad in the long term way.) Once you start composting, you'll also be amazed at how much less total trash your household produces. The compost can be mixed in, or better yet laid on top of, lower-quality soil to foster growth of healthy, robust soil.

(3) Make choices that build the soil, rather than mining it. Perennial (growing year after year, as opposed to annuals, which grow for one year and die) crops, trees, berry brambles -- these send deep, soil-cultivating roots, and sequester more carbon every passing year, and help solidify and strengthen the local microclimate. Look into perennial vegetables like asparagus, Good King Henry, sorrel, artichoke, Jerusalem artichoke (be careful as this one can overtake large areas), and perennial varieties of kale. If some of these are unfamiliar, don't feel bad - our food system shifted to almost exclusively annual crops in the last century, due in part to the mechanization of farming. Raspberry canes, blueberry bushes, and many kinds of fruit trees will thrive in our climate, and will produce year after year, and all have cultivars which can grow even in relatively constrained spaces: dwarf fruit trees, lowbush blueberries, and so forth.

4) Bare soil is dirt in the making. Plant cover crops to hold and build the soil, such as winter rye, alfalfa, and buckwheat. Make your lawn much lower maintenance by switching to a mix of grasses and clovers. This also contributes to replenishing needed soil chemicals, as clover is a nitrogen-fixing plant.

5) Hugelkultur. I discussed this at length in a previous issue of *Neighbors*.

6) Biochar. I will discuss this in a future issue of *Neighbors*.

By itself, the study of soil and soil-building is a lifetime of learning. But I hope I've given you a place to start learning more, and encouraged you to think about soil health in your gardening and eating habits. Remember that in permaculture, all we're actually growing is soil -- everything else is a byproduct of our success, or failure, in that most fundamental of tasks. While we huddle in the cold, waiting for the snow to melt, is when we have time to thoughtfully consider and plan our springtime gardens; keep the soil central in this process, and the soil will reward you abundantly. We come from soil, and to soil we shall return; in the middle period, let us respect and maintain and develop that soil with the diligence and intelligence of which we are so capable, if we merely make the effort.



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Access Agency Community Action News

Spring 2015

Submitted by John Murphy

The Windham Area Hour Exchange—Connecticut's only functioning time bank program.

There is more to your life than the market value of your labor. There is another dimension and reality to everyday life beyond the exchange of money and time and labor. One expression of this reality is the concept of time banking.

Time dollars are a community currency that members earn by using their time, energy, skills, and talents to help others. For every hour of service you provide to another member of the Windham Area Hour Exchange you earn one time dollar. You can then spend your time dollar on services provided by other Exchange members. The variety of services available is only limited by the number, diversity, and service offerings of individuals, organizations, and businesses that join the Exchange.

When you remove money from the equation of money—time—labor, you are left with the two bedrock principles and practices of time banking. One is that the value of time can be equal for all of us, regardless of the market value of labor in the world of money. The other is that everyone *takes for granted* their own knowledge base, skills and abilities. Everyone can do something well and we all have needs. This realization creates the foundation for each individual member's relationship with a time bank network.

Every human being has something of value to contribute. We celebrate the diversity of our local communities, our region, our state, our nation, and our world. Through exchange, we strive to empower people to grow their abilities and learn new skills, to stop limiting themselves by shifting away from focus on what they cannot do and imagining the possibilities of what we can all accomplish together.

Time Banking is an Engine for Generating and Managing Volunteer Energy in Our Region

The Windham Hour Exchange offers our community another path and a powerful tool to move forward with consciousness and unity of purpose and intent. The Exchange can help us realize many dreams in our area that have been in the birthing process for years. There are too many to list in this space but the range and scale of programs, festivals and special events in our town and region is an amazing demonstration of the quality of life we *already* have. Let's honor these efforts by raising and organizing our collective energies and use the time banking toolbox to make things happen for everyone.

I have lived here for over 30 years and seen many wonderful organizations and projects come into being and create unique contributions that made our shared life better. Over time each effort has grown into an ongoing tradition that must be supported and preserved for the future. Taking our own

history of local culture and its diversity of manifestation for granted is a social and economic error that Time Banking can help us avoid.

After many years of working individually and with good intentions but still in their own silos these organizations are talking with each other more often and more openly. Information is being shared, plans are being coordinated more effectively, and groups are combining or leveraging resources on special projects. This is all excellent work and it is very encouraging—and just imagine if this collective effort could have all the volunteer support it needs for everyone to succeed! The Windham Area Hour Exchange can serve as the heart and time bank for this volunteer network—to recruit and connect people with higher efficiency and effectiveness. It is still early in 2015 and with this unique support system we can share many successes.

The Windham Area Hour Exchange is a community service exchange of neighbors helping neighbors. The Exchange is made up of a network of individuals, businesses, and organizations that exchange services on a time-based currency where one hour of service equals one time dollar; these time dollars can be used to purchase services from another member in the Exchange.

In the Exchange, everyone's time is equal — no matter the service being provided. Windham Area Hour Exchange membership is open to all individuals, businesses, and organizations regardless of residency or location. Members do not need to live or work in Windham or its surrounding towns to be join; members need only to be comfortable with the commute they will need to make — however long — to provide or receive services to their fellow Exchange members.

The Exchange offices are located at the *Access* Community Action Agency, 1315 Main Street, Suite 2, Willimantic, CT 06226, (860) 450-7400. Contact John Murphy, Director of Volunteer Engagement at ext. 7458.

The 50th Anniversary of Access—community forum at UConn/Dodd Center April 17/1-4 pm.

In April 2015, *Access* Community Action Agency will celebrate 50 years of committed, passionate work in the war on poverty. We would like you to be part of the celebration that we are hosting in the form of an educational forum that will examine the impact of Community Action in North Eastern Connecticut.

Access serves Windham and Tolland counties with the mission to create opportunities that allow families and individuals to not only meet basic needs, but to be able to realize income accumulation, as well as foster a positive environment for at risk youth.

Our educational forum will be held on April 17th,

2015 from 1:00 to 4:00pm at the Konover Auditorium of the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center at the University of Connecticut in partnership with UConn Community Outreach and the Human Rights Institute.

The event will include a conversation with Sasha Abramsky, author of *The American Way of Poverty: How the Other Half Still Lives*. There will also be a screening of a brief documentary by Brad Clift which will reflect our work at Access. Lastly, there will be a panel with U.S. Congressmen Joe Courtney, local leaders and policy makers to discuss the themes and issues affecting anti-poverty work in this region. Our work would not be possible without the engaging, charitable spirit of this community. Visit www.accessagency.org

Homebuyer education workshops—especially for low income and first-time buyers.

Make Your Dream A Reality

Safe and affordable housing is a major challenge and unrealized dream for many of our region's working families. The Homebuyer Education Workshop Series is designed to prepare you to become homeowners or landlords, and there is a special focus on the needs of potential first time homebuyers from the low income community.

The workshop series will provide three comprehensive workshops, including an eight-hour HUD-approved homebuyer training, a three-hour financial fitness training, and a three-hour CHFA-approved landlord training.

A critical aim of these workshops will be to educate and empower individuals and families, particularly among the low-income community Access serves, to build strong strategies into their financial decision-making processes. The goal is to pursue homeownership armed with a sound understanding of how poor financial decisions made today can affect their ability to achieve a loan tomorrow, how the mortgage process works, how to work with a real estate agent, and how to navigate purchase and post-purchase activities.

Access will present three sessions in 2015—in spring, summer and fall. The dates and locations are still being confirmed but this article is advance notice for anyone who might be interested. The Liberty Bank Foundation made this program possible and we deeply appreciate their support and shared concern for people and families in our region.

To register or for more information please contact John Murphy, Director of Volunteer Engagement at Access at 860-450-7400, ext.7458 or john.murphy@accessagency.org.

Women: Inspired! Next Steps—local women helping local women start small businesses.

Women: Inspired! Next Steps is a program designed to provide support of low-income women who would like to start or grow small businesses. You are invited to participate as "Entrepreneurs," and established local business women will participate as "Mentors". The next program will be offered this

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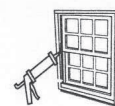
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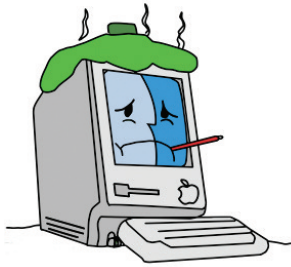
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Yosemite (Conclusion)



OS X Yosemite (continued)

Several people asked me about the latest upgrade; OS X Yosemite. I haven’t been brave enough to download it so I found this article to share with you by Jason Snell:

In Contacts, meanwhile, the entire top window bar is gone. The stoplight buttons still remain at the top-left corner of the window, but that’s now at the top of the leftmost visible pane of the application. They hover over the translucent Groups column until you choose View > Hide Groups, at which point they hop over to the top of the Contacts column (which turns from white to translucent in the process). A thin band across the top of the Contacts window is still draggable, but it’s not what you’d call a traditional Mac title bar.

In many OS X Yosemite windows, the menu bar has vanished, and the stoplight buttons move around.

This design isn’t consistent across all of Apple’s apps, either. The stoplight buttons share space with the toolbar in the Calendar, Maps, Messages, and Reminders apps. (Philosophical question: If a bar contains no title, can it still be called a title bar?) Yet Mail, TextEdit, Preview, and iWork all look the same as they ever did.

I don’t really mind the trend—I use an 11-inch MacBook Air every day, so I know about cramped working environments. By merging the toolbar and title bar, this approach saves some precious vertical space. Unfortunately, an overly cluttered title bar might be hard to reposition on screen if you can’t find anywhere to click that isn’t covered by a button. And while those old title bars featured an awful lot of empty space, sometimes such space can be good. Yosemite’s new look can lead to situations where windows feel more cluttered.

I have to admit I’m also a little nonplussed about the disappearance of titles from the top of many windows. In apps that never really have more than one important window (Calendar and Maps come to mind), the title is unnecessary; labeling my Calendar window with the word Calendar seems pointless. But in many other contexts, the title of the window imparts important information, and there’s a danger that some of that information could be lost if Apple takes this approach too far. It’s something worth keeping an eye on, especially given the radical changes Yosemite has in store for Safari.

More subtle changes

The sidebar in Messages is translucent, showing the items behind it. As with most OS X releases, Yosemite has its share of subtle design changes. The most notable is probably the system’s increased use of translucency, in which some interface elements are semi-opaque, allowing a blurred-out version of whatever is behind the window to show through. It’s a style iOS uses in abundance, and it’s now sprinkled here and there in Yosemite. The Messages sidebar, for instance, is translucent. It’s subtle, so it doesn’t harm readability, but it doesn’t really seem to serve any useful purpose. It’s a light design flourish that isn’t offensive, but it’s not particularly bold either.

Up in the (still translucent) menu bar, the bars on the Wi-Fi icon are thinner, and a simplified battery icon on laptops feels more like the one from iOS. The Spotlight menu bar item remains anchored

next to the similarly immovable Notification Center icon, despite the fact that the Spotlight window itself now floats in the center of the screen. I sense a disconnect here.

The Spotlight feature is now disconnected from its place in the menu bar. Beyond the occasional window pane,

translucency effects pop up in a few other places in the system. When Exposé is triggered, the background now fuzzes out, and there’s a similar effect on the login screen, which shows a fuzzed-out picture of Half Dome.



Default buttons now lack a texture and don’t pulsate.

Several other interface elements have been flattened in the same style as the stoplight buttons, as well. Most notably, the pulsating blue glass-textured button in dialog boxes has lost its texture (the glass texture that still remained from OS X’s “aqua” interface is gone), it’s darker (with the text in white), and it doesn’t pulsate anymore.

More plastic, less metal.

Apple’s engineers have taken a trip to The Container Store, and the result is that the system’s trash can is now a white translucent plastic job rather than the metallic wire basket previously favored. (Oscar the Grouch demands a return of the big metal trash can from the classic Mac OS, but nobody listens to smelly muppets.)

And the Dock, which in recent versions of the OS had become a 3-D shelf at the bottom of your screen upon which your icons sat, has reverted to something simpler. Like the Dock that you can still find

in Mavericks if you set it to display on the left or right side of your screen, Yosemite's dock is merely a 2-D background with a hint of translucency. It's a great improvement, but seriously folks, consider pinning your Dock to the left or the right side. (Try it, you'll like it!) The subtle glow beneath running applications in the Dock is now a more noticeable black dot.

Face the end, Mac OS 8. There's also a fresh new face in OS X Yosemite—literally. The “Mac face” logo that has represented various portions of the Mac (originally the classic Mac OS, most recently the Finder) for the last sixteen years, has been updated. The image (actually two faces, one with two eyes viewed face-on half comprised of the profile of a different face) still represents the Finder, but it's been tweaked. Farewell, old face, you served us well.

Skin deep

The design changes in Yosemite are noticeable, but the system is still very recognizably OS X. Longtime Mac users' fears that the Mac was about to collide with iOS in some kind of crazy peanut

butter-chocolate disaster have not been borne out. It's a forward-thinking design that looks better on Retina displays, pointing the way toward a high-resolution future for Mac users.

Unfortunately, in some areas Apple's left hand doesn't seem to know what the right is doing. I'd like to see more consistency when it comes to the way stoplight buttons and title bars are displayed, and I worry about the increased clutter and decrease in clickable areas for dragging windows. I'm also a bit concerned about the loss of window titles in apps where they impart real information. The new dark-Dock-and-menu-bar option seems like an afterthought. It'll be interesting to see how Apple designs its individual built-in apps, and what decisions third-party Mac developers make on this front. But otherwise, there's a lot to like in Yosemite's design. Unless, perhaps, you're Oscar the Grouch.

Jason is the former editorial director of Macworld, *Steve Woron is an artist and Mac technician and lives in Vernon CT. Leave a message at (860) 871-9933 or illstudio@yahoo.com*

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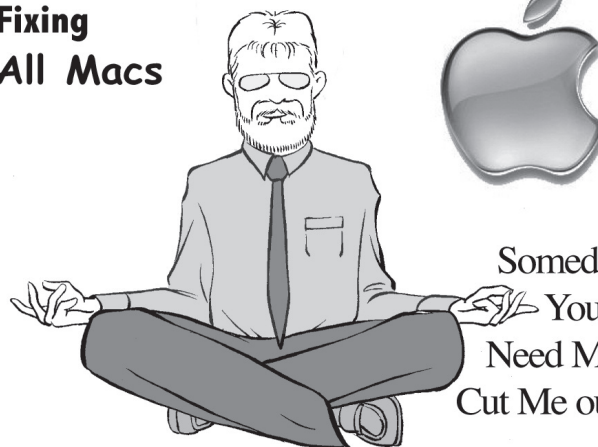
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The Principle of Favorability

By Dan McGinley

"Because we have to respond to omens . . . It's called the principle of favorability . . ."
From The Alchemist, by Paulo Coelho. HarperSanFrancisco, 1993.

It often seems like the principle of favorability has been in play since before this film's origin.

While in ninth grade (1972), I faked a sick note and walked out of school with a Cree Indian friend named Bill Whitley. We hitched a ride across town, snuck through the back doors of a movie theater in Edina, Minnesota, and watched an "R" rated film called *The Valachi Papers*, with Charles Bronson and Jill Ireland.

It's a film about Joseph Valachi, who worked for the Genovese crime family and became a devastating mob informant. It has rough language, partial nudity, and Charles Bronson. I was hooked. I had already been to see *Harold and Maude* with its killer Cat Stevens soundtrack, and had grown beyond those fantastic family nights parked at the drive-in to see such fare as *The Blue Max* and *Mary Poppins*.

I was a very shy kid, always trying to hide in the back of a classroom with my eyes on the world outside. My imagination flew far and wide while reality slipped by. My brain was full of non sequitur jumps from the present moment to some vast dream world that would constantly hijack every rational thought process. Over time, the practice of seeking and imagining omens in movies and books became the very omens I sought; a person can do well within a dream world; they just have to sell it to the real one. I was studying the moves of other dreamers without even realizing it.

After beating my hands raw for three years, the nuns of Annunciation Catholic School convinced my parents that public schooling was better suited for my lax attention span and a penchant for running away during recess. They would be correct.

I would flourish in writing classes and as Merlin in a school production of *Camelot*. I would crack fellow hockey players up with voice impersonations during a week-long training camp in Bemidji. I could do a killer Nixon, Pat Paulson, or Sammy Davis Junior. The dream world was crossing over in a good way, and I was slowly emerging from a very thick shell.

I still have to be careful. I volunteered for the service

a few years after foot surgery, and although the doctors signed me off as physically fit but a potential risk, I had no thoughts of riding a desk. I wanted to come flying out of the night sky with the Airborne's 505th Panthers and do some serious damage, but that is not a rational track to take when your left foot is already questionable. That is a dreamer's track, and I paid big-time. I still wince when the weather changes to rain; wires and screws remind me of overstepping bounds, but I learned . . . somewhat. Now the real world intercedes every day to slow this film down, and sometimes I question this path I've chosen, wondering if dreams have taken me too far again, but time and time again, the omens keep coming.

We filmed a very important opening scene in a Danielson, Connecticut bar formerly called *The Time Square Café*. Now we needed another bar to film at, and so a new search would begin. Keep in mind that the price of renting a full bar for the afternoon is in the thousands, and unless you have a very generous budget, very hard to come by. This is a film about the blues, which begs for dark and smoky barroom scenes. And then a fresh omen . . .

A friend I haven't seen in over twenty-five years called me out of the blue one night; one of those people who used to be like a brother, and the passing years don't matter. I spent more time doing road trips with Jimmy Stearns then

I can remember, and he reminded me of a night in Montreal that should've resulted in a regenerating rock pile and the ability to speak fluent French by the time we saw freedom again. Ahem.

After several minutes of laughter and reminiscing, he said, "I've got five bars on my property. 'You can film here any time.'"

Whoa.

Enter the next omen, which at first didn't seem like an omen at all but rather a massive hurdle up ahead. Our beautiful and talented leading lady had been deployed to Kosovo, and was leaving sometime in April. We had to film all of her parts by then, because her tour could last a year. So I pulled my little brain out of "winter editing" mode and into full "writing killer scenes quickly and planning to shoot ASAP" mode, which is a mode used strictly by little indy people who have to work around life and all of its pleasant surprises.

This week I got the word that her deployment was cancelled, but the omen was quite clear to me, and this killer bar scene will be shot by the time you read this:

Film very quickly and don't mess around. Pick-up the



pace. I've just been warned hard by that fickle finger of fate. And on that note, one final omen:

My dad did a lot of writing in his younger days, and once tried his hand at a tune entitled "The Hurting Days are Over". It is a song done in the style of classic American ballads performed by Hank Williams or Woody Guthrie, about a broken heart and moving on. It accompanies the opening scenes of our film, which depict a Mississippi police station circa 1931, and it's perfect for a sleepy little southern town.

My father had no idea why the song came to him, or why he had it recorded by a professional singer / songwriter named Bill Gaither, but it's a pretty good tune.

My loving father passed away during the early morning hours of February 9th 2015. He died knowing that his song was in the film and for that I am grateful, for his "mysterious impulse" to write a song was a kind of omen, along with his passing.

I miss calling him weekly with updates about family and friends, great books to read or movies to watch, miss his support and enthusiasm for this film that we are trying to wrap, and man oh man, do I get that life message most of all: This life can change or even end without warning. Make every day count when pursuing a dream, because you may never get another shot. You don't want to be that kid beaten for imagining other worlds; you want to be that kid delivering them to others. You want to see their pleasure at experiencing your creation and you don't want a ruler across the hand, you want a pat on the back.

I miss you dad, and still hear your voice loud and clear. You raised us on another principle of favorability: As our father . . . you favored us all.

John Murphy continued from page 33

spring with final plans and dates being confirmed at this time. This is an early announcement.

Entrepreneurs participating in the *Women: Inspired! Next Steps* program have access to a series of supports that will help them along in the "next steps" of their business development journeys, with mentors playing a key role in guiding them along the way. Supports include action planning to set manageable goals with guidance from an experienced employment support specialist, the ability to access and share local and online business development resource connections, and enrollment in the *Women: Inspired! Networking Group (WING)*, a mentoring and skills-sharing program that will help Entrepreneurs gain experience, earn professional references, and begin to build a consumer base for their products and services. For example:

A major component of the program is the *Women: Inspired! Networking Group (WING)* which provides participants with mentoring, networking, counseling, and job shadowing opportunities with established community women. *WING* activities are facilitated through *Access's* Windham Area Hour Exchange, a network of individuals, businesses, and organizations that exchange services using a time-based currency, where one hour of service equals one "time dollar". During the program participants will learn about the operation

Neighbors 37

and benefits of the Windham Area Hour Exchange and how to use it to maximize mentoring opportunities.

Finally, Entrepreneurs will be invited to apply to the *Women: Inspired! Next Steps Fund* for a limited number of small grants to pay for eligible expenses toward pursuing their business goals, including costs associated with education, licensing, business support services, equipment, etc.

This unique program is coordinated by the Windham Area Hour Exchange, a community engagement initiative of the *Access Community Action Agency*. Funding for this program is provided by both the Windham Area and Northeast Region Women & Girls Funds via the Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut. We are grateful for their continuing support for this effort.

To register or for more information please contact John Murphy, Director of Volunteer Engagement at *Access* at 860-450-7400, ext.7458 or john.murphy@accessagency.org.

Thanks for taking the time to read *Neighbors*, please share the good news and check out the website: www.neighborspaper.com. Take care everyone and Happy Spring! John Murphy

3rd ANNUAL DANCE PARTY

Sat. March 28th Doors open at 6PM, dancing starts at 7PM
Willimantic Elk's Club
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Willimantic, Ct.

ROOTS OF DEVELOPMENT

for Roots of Development

Sat March 28 Doors Open at 6:00PM - 11:00PM | LIVE MUSIC with STEPPIN' OUT

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Our Community Calendar

Compiled by Dagmar Noll

March 4, Wednesday

Theatre: Lysistrata, 7:30p.m. \$30. Naffe Katter Theatre, UCONN, Storrs. Tickets: 860-486-2113. crt.uconn.edu

March 5, Thursday

Community Food: Foodshare, 11:30a.m. - 12:15p.m. Bring your own shopping bag. Wrights Way back parking lot, Mansfield Senior Center, 303 Maple Road, Mansfield. Info: 860-429-0262

Theatre: Lysistrata, 7:30p.m. (See 3/4)

March 6, Friday

Talk: Israel/Palestine Talk, 7:00p.m. Free. By Dr. Lawrence Davidson, history professor and author of *A Concise History of the Middle East*. Storrs Friends Meeting, 57 Hunting Lodge Road, Storrs.

Theatre: Lysistrata, 8:00p.m. (See 3/4)

Reading: Friday Book Club "One Summer: America, 1927", by Bill Bryson, 2:00p.m. Babcock Library, 25 Pompey Hollow Road, Ashford. Info: 860-487-4420 www.babcocklibrary.org

March 7, Saturday

Kids: Breakfast & Books, 10:30a.m. Children ages 8-12. Babcock Library, 25 Pompey Hollow Road, Ashford. Info: 860-487-4420 www.babcocklibrary.org

History: Willimantic History Enthusiasts, 1:00p.m. Informal gathering of those who enjoy and/or collect Willimantic History. Windham Textile & History Museum, 411 Main Street, Willimantic. 860-456-2178 www.millmuseum.org

Theatre: Lysistrata, 2:00p.m. & 8:00p.m. (See 3/4)

Puppetry: Opening of "Reed & Light" & "Masters of the Marionette", 2:00p.m. - 4:00p.m. Ballard Institute and Museum of Puppetry, 1 Royce Circle, Storrs. 860-486-8580 bimp.uconn.edu

Live Music: Bruce John, 6:30p.m.-9:30p.m. Hilltop Restaurant, 39 Adamec Road, Willington.

Live Music: Seat of Our Pants, 7:00p.m. Acoustic, contemporary folk band. \$15. Hampton Community Center, Main Street, Hampton.

Live Music: Prayer in Opera, 7:00p.m. Soprano Jurate Svedaite presents sacred selections from well-known operas. Donations accepted. Emanuel Lutheran Church, 60 Church Street, Manchester. www.friendsofmusicatemanuel.org

Dancing: University Contra Dance, 7:30p.m. Called dancing by Rich Sbardella with music by The Rainwaters, featuring Max Rainwater. Wear soft-soled shoes and a snack to share. Instructions at 7:30 for beginners; dance begins at 8:00p.m. \$5-10. Info: 484-844-5203 or dcannell@freeshell.org quietcornercontradance.tripod.com

March 8, Sunday

Workshop: My Roots Are Showing: Collecting and Telling Family Stories, 1:00p.m. \$50.00. Performance follows at 3:30-4:30 (\$10). Mountain House, 40 Stearns Road, Storrs.

Skill Share: Identifying Bark, 1:00p.m. - 3:00p.m. Free. Learn to identify trees in winter by looking at their bark. Goodwin Forest Conservation Information Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Register: 850-455-9534 emma.lorusso@ct.gov

Live Music: Amy Gallatin & the Stillwaters with Kristen Graves opening, 4:00p.m. \$12. Covenant Soup Kitchen and Emergency Food Pantry fundraiser. St. Paul's Church, 220 Valley Street, Willimantic. Tickets: 850-429-4220 www.breadboxfolk.org

Theatre: Lysistrata, 2:00p.m. (See 3/4)

March 10, Tuesday

Skill Share: Overdrive eBook & Audiobook Training, 10:00a.m. Learn how to download eBooks on your personal device. Mansfield Senior Center, 303 Maple Road, Mansfield. Info: 860-429-0262

Kids: Tot Time for Ages 3 & Under, 10:30a.m.-11:15a.m. Babcock Library, 25 Pompey Hollow Road, Ashford. Info: 860-487-4420 www.babcocklibrary.org

Skill Share: Tracking, 12:00p.m. - 2:30p.m. Free. Learn the basics of animal tracking. Goodwin Forest Conservation Information Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Register: 850-455-9534 emma.lorusso@ct.gov

Live Music: Quiet Corner Fiddlers, 7:00p.m. - 8:30p.m. Midway Restaurant, 174 Ashford Center Road, Ashford.

March 11, Wednesday

Live Music: Bruce John, 1:15p.m. - 2:15. Irish music at Ashford Senior Center, 25 Tremko Lane, Ashford.

Environment: In Our Backyard: Expansion of Gas Pipelines in Connecticut, 7:00p.m. - 8:30p.m. Learn about plans for the expansion of three pipelines carrying fracked gas across Connecticut and the impact of these pipelines on people and the environment. Mansfield Public Library, Buchanan Auditorium, 54 Warrenville Road, Mansfield Center, CT.

Live Music: My Gay Banjo, 7:00p.m. \$15. Benefit for CliCK & Vulturetown Arts. Annex, 866 Main Street, Willimantic.

Puppetry: Spring Puppet Forum with Anne Cubberly, 7:00p.m. - 8:30p.m. Free. Ballard Institute and Museum of Puppetry, 1 Royce Circle, Storrs. 860-486-8580 bimp.uconn.edu

March 12, Thursday

Live Music: Bruce John, 6:30p.m.-9:30p.m. (See 3/7)

March 13, Friday

Singing: American Songs with Rick Spencer, 7:00p.m. Babcock Library, 25 Pompey Hollow Road, Ashford. Info: 860-487-4420 www.babcocklibrary.org

March 14, Saturday

Nature: Everything Evergreen, 10:00a.m. - 12:00p.m. Free. Learn all about evergreens. Goodwin Forest Conservation Information Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Register: 850-455-9534 emma.lorusso@ct.gov

Puppetry: "Squirrel Stole My Underpants", They Gotta Be Secret Agents, 1:00p.m. - 2:00p.m. & 3:00p.m. - 4:00p.m.. \$5-10. Ballard Institute and Museum of Puppetry, 1 Royce Circle, Storrs. Tickets: 860-486-8580 bimp.uconn.edu

Hike: Long Distance Guided Hike, 11:00a.m. - 2:00p.m. Free. Elaine Koza's leads a 5-7 mile hike through the Goodwin State Forest. Goodwin Forest Conservation Information Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Register: 850-455-9534 emma.lorusso@ct.gov

Kids: French Canadian and Polish People Came to Willimantic, 2:00p.m. - 3:30p.m. Learn about Immigration to a factory town through story, craft and snack. Windham Textile & History Museum, 411 Main Street, Willimantic. 860-456-2178 www.millmuseum.org

March 15, Sunday

Kids: Nature Crafts: Birdseed Ornaments, 1:00p.m. - 3:00p.m. Free. Create birdseed ornaments to hang for the birds in your yard. Goodwin Forest Conservation Information Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Register: 850-455-9534 emma.lorusso@ct.gov

Live Music: Take Note!, 3:00PM. Women's Club of Storrs fundraiser. A cappella concert at Storrs Congregational Church, 2 North Eagleville Road, Storrs.

March 17, Tuesday

Kids: Tot Time for Ages 3 & Under, 10:30a.m.-11:15a.m. Babcock Library, 25 Pompey Hollow Road, Ashford. Info: 860-487-4420 www.babcocklibrary.org

Reading: Mystery Book Club "The Keeper of Lost Causes", by Jussi Adler-Olsen, 2:00p.m. Babcock Library, 25 Pompey Hollow Road, Ashford. Info: 860-487-4420 www.babcocklibrary.org

March 18, Wednesday

Snow Sports: Snowshoeing, 12:00p.m. - 2:00p.m. Free. BYO snow shoes. Beginners welcome! Free. Goodwin Forest Conservation Information Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Register: 850-455-9534 emma.lorusso@ct.gov

Live Music: Artist's Showcase, 7:00p.m. - 9:00p.m. Covenant Soup Kitchen and Emergency Food Pantry fundraiser. St. Paul's Church, 220 Valley Street, Willimantic. Tickets: 850-429-4220

March 19, Thursday

Community Food: Foodshare, 11:30a.m. - 12:15p.m. (See 3/5)

March 20, Friday

Live Music: David Bromberg Quintet, 7:00PM. \$25. Windham High School, High Street, Willimantic. Tickets: 860-429-4220 www.breadboxfolk.org

Nature Talk: Woodland Wonders from the Wild, 7:00p.m. - 9:00p.m. \$20. A talk with native plant expert Barry Glick. Goodwin Forest Conservation Information Center, 23 Potter

Road, Hampton. Register: 850-455-9534 emma.lorusso@ct.gov

March 21, Saturday

Fundraiser: Tag Sale, 9:00a.m. - 2:00p.m. Fundraiser for the Willington Public Library. 7 Ruby Road, Willington.

Crafts: Psyanky Egg Decorating with Sharon Leonard, 1:30p.m. - 3:30p.m. Babcock Library, 25 Pompey Hollow Road, Ashford. Info: 860-487-4420 www.babcocklibrary.org

Live Music: SepiaTone & Tuesday Saints, 2:00p.m. Free. Willimantic Records, 744 Main Street. www.willimanticrecords.com

Community Food: Progressive Dinner, 5:30p.m. - 10:00p.m. \$45. Willimantic. Reservations: 860-617-6226.

Live Music: Bruce John, 6:30p.m.-9:30p.m. (See 3/7)

March 22, Sunday

Community Food: Annual Freedom Day Dinner, 12:00p.m. - 3:00p.m. \$20. Celebrate the Anniversary of the 1848 Revolution for Freedom with a dinner and commemorative program. Hungarian Social Club of Ashford, Route 44, Ashford. Info: 860-375-3390.

March 24, Tuesday

Kids: Tot Time for Ages 3 & Under, 10:30a.m.-11:15a.m. Babcock Library, 25 Pompey Hollow Road, Ashford. Info: 860-487-4420 www.babcocklibrary.org

Skill Share: AARP Homefit Program, 1:00p.m. AARP is providing families with resources and tools to create a comfortable and safe home. Mansfield Senior Center, 303 Maple Road, Mansfield. Info: 860-429-0262

March 25, Wednesday

Hike: Senior Walk, 12:00p.m. - 2:00p.m. Free. Moderate, casual walk on forest trails is open to all. Goodwin Forest Conservation Information Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Register: 850-455-9534 emma.lorusso@ct.gov

March 28, Saturday

Kids: Snow Buddies, 10:00a.m. - 12:00p.m. Free. Learn about snow and ice, go sledding, and have a snowball fight. Goodwin Forest Conservation Information Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Register: 850-455-9534 emma.lorusso@ct.gov

History: Mill of the Month visit to Collinsville Edged Tools Factory, 2:00p.m. Meet at the Canton Historical Society. \$10. Register: 860-456-2178 www.millmuseum.org

March 29, Sunday

History: Museum Lyceum: Explore Danish History, 1:00p.m. \$10. Presentation by Dagmar S. Noll. Windham Textile & History Museum, 411 Main Street, Willimantic. 860-456-2178 www.millmuseum.org

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40 Neighbors

Calendar continued from page 39

March 30, Monday

Skill Share: ServSafe Class, 8:30a.m. - 5:30p.m. \$130. Food service job certification. CliCK Inc., 41 Club Road, Windham.

March 31, Tuesday

Kids: Tot Time for Ages 3 & Under, 10:30a.m.-11:15a.m. Babcock Library, 25 Pompey Hollow Road, Ashford. Info: 860-487-4420 www.babcocklibrary.org

April 3, Friday

Reading: Friday Book Club "The Storied Life of A. J. Fikry", by Gabriella Zevin, 2:00p.m. Babcock Library, 25 Pompey Hollow Road, Ashford. Info: 860-487-4420 www.babcocklibrary.org

April 4, Saturday

History: Willimantic History Enthusiasts, 1:00p.m. Informal gathering of those who enjoy and/or collect Willimantic History. Windham Textile & History Museum, 411 Main Street, Willimantic. 860-456-2178 www.millmuseum.org

Dancing: University Contra Dance, 7:30p.m. Called dancing by Steve Holland with music by Chicks 'n Sticks. Wear soft-soled shoes and a snack to share. Instructions at 7:30 for beginners; dance begins at 8:00p.m. \$5-10. Info: 484-844-5203 or dcannell@freeshell.org quietcornercontradance.tripod.com

April 7, Tuesday

Kids: Tot Time for Ages 3 & Under, 10:30a.m.-11:15a.m. Babcock Library, 25 Pompey Hollow Road, Ashford. Info: 860-487-4420 www.babcocklibrary.org

April 10, Friday

Wildlife: Riverside Reptiles, Living Dragons, 7:00p.m. Babcock Library, 25 Pompey Hollow Road, Ashford. Info: 860-487-4420 www.babcocklibrary.org

April 11, Saturday

Kids: What Did Our Great-great Grandparents Wear?, 2:00p.m. - 3:30p.m. Fashion show, story, craft and snack. Windham Textile & History Museum, 411 Main Street, Willimantic. Register: 860-456-2178 www.millmuseum.org

April 12, Sunday

Skill Share: Hand building in Clay with Emine Cichowski, 2:00p.m. - 4:30p.m. \$37. CliCK Inc., 41 Club Road, Windham.
Live Music: John Ford Coley, 4:00p.m. Covenant Soup Kitchen and Emergency Food Pantry fundraiser. St. Paul's Church, 220 Valley Street, Willimantic. Tickets: 850-429-4220

April 13, Monday

Film: The Shock Doctrine, 7:00p.m. Free. Storrs Unitarian Universalist Church, 46 Spring Hill Road, Storrs. Info: 860-428-4867.

April 14, Tuesday

Kids: Tot Time for Ages 3 & Under, 10:30a.m.-11:15a.m. Babcock Library, 25 Pompey Hollow Road, Ashford. Info: 860-487-4420 www.babcocklibrary.org

April 17, Friday

Educational Forum: Facing Poverty in Our Midst: Past, Present Future, 1:00p.m. - 4:00p.m. Keynote speaker Sasha Abramsky, documentay short "Even Here" by Bradley Clift, and panel discussion with U.S. Congressman Joe Courtney and other local leaders. Konover Auditorium, Dodd Research Center, UCONN, Storrs. Register: elisha.sherman@accessagency.org or 860-450-7400.

April 18, Saturday

History: Lincoln's Gettysburg Address Challenge Performance, 4:00p.m. Children, youth, adults and families encouraged to memorize and recite the Gettysburg Address through song, props, costumes and creative ideas. Prizes to be awarded. \$3. Windham Textile & History Museum, 411 Main Street, Willimantic. 860-456-2178 www.millmuseum.org

April 21, Tuesday

Kids: Tot Time for Ages 3 & Under, 10:30a.m.-11:15a.m. Babcock Library, 25 Pompey Hollow Road, Ashford. Info: 860-487-4420 www.babcocklibrary.org

Reading: Mystery Book Club "The Broken Shore", by Peter Temple, 2:00p.m. Babcock Library, 25 Pompey Hollow Road, Ashford. Info: 860-487-4420 www.babcocklibrary.org

April 22, Wednesday

Festival: Earth Day Fair at the Willimantic Food Co-op. Info: 860-423-1878

Skill Share: AARP Safe Driving Course, 9:00a.m. - 1:00p.m. AARP is providing families with resources and tools to create a comfortable and safe home. Mansfield Senior Center, 303 Maple Road, Mansfield. Info: 860-429-0262

April 25, Saturday

Skill Share: AARP CARFIT program, 9:30a.m. - 1:30p.m. A 12-point checklist with your vehicle. Mansfield Senior Center, 303 Maple Road, Mansfield. Info: 860-429-0262

Live Music: Jim Mercik with Mark & Bevely Davis, 4:00p.m. Covenant Soup Kitchen and Emergency Food Pantry fundraiser. St. Paul's Church, 220 Valley Street, Willimantic. Tickets: 850-429-4220

History: Mill of the Month Trip to Talcottville in Vernon, 4:00p.m. Meet at Talcottville Village. \$10. Windham Textile & History Museum, 411 Main Street, Willimantic. 860-456-2178 www.millmuseum.org

April 28, Tuesday

Kids: Tot Time for Ages 3 & Under, 10:30a.m.-11:15a.m. Babcock Library, 25 Pompey Hollow Road, Ashford. Info: 860-487-4420 www.babcocklibrary.org

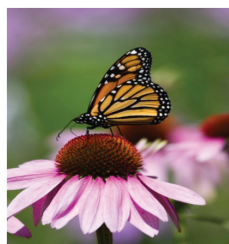
Farm, Forest and Natural Resources Expo

SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 10 AM - 2 PM.

WILLINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY, 7 RUBY ROAD (ROUTE 320)



Join us to explore the benefits of local farms, sustainable forests and open space protection with short talks, displays and handouts for adults and *music, crafts and stories for kids.*



FOR ADULTS

10-2 Dozens of experts with displays and handouts

10:15 “Growing Local Agriculture” by Joan Nichols, CT Farm Bureau

11:30 “Benefits of Managing your Forest” by Dan Evans, Forester

12:30 “Reasons and Ways to Use Native Plants” by Charlotte Pyle, USDA

FOR KIDS

10:00 Story time and seed planting by Willington Public Library

11:30 Folk Singer Maria Sangiolo, two-time Parents’ Choice award-winning artist

1:00 Make a mini-terrarium to take home by Willington Public Library

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CONTACT: JULIA CARTABIANO: WYFCSA@GMAIL.COM 860.487.9954

3rd Annual Dance Party for Roots of Development

Submitted by Marian Bissonnette

We, at Roots of Development, have the audacity to believe that impoverished communities can manage their own development.
~Chad Bissonnette

Amongst many things, poverty means a lack of resources, opportunities, and choices. These aspects of poverty affect the manner in which societies understand their own development. Poor societies are focused on minimizing risk, whereas wealthy societies have the luxury of focusing on maximizing profit. These are fundamentally two very different ways of approaching life. They are direct consequence of each society's circumstances, and it is critical for anyone or any group coming from one of these societies and working in the other to understand. Communities survive by creating a delicate balance that is often seriously disrupted when big-hearted people go into impoverished communities unaware of its subtle culture.

Roots of Development is a non-profit organization started nine years ago by a local Tolland man, Chad Bissonnette. Having traveled to many impoverished communities, Chad observed thousands of dollars being poured into these communities with little long-term result. Within a five-year span, a project completion it is often left barren due to the lack of necessary upkeep and financial commitment. So what is the answer? We believe community-driven development is an essential approach to improving the situation in any community. It is about empowerment and genuine ownership over one's own development. In an effort to make the work we support more sustainable, we make sure that every project is selected and prioritized by the community, staffed by locals who are provided education and training, with a development plan to insure project success.

NGOs increasingly mistake construction for development. Development must not only focus on the completion of community goals, but also emphasize the empowerment of community members. This approach to development should happen in two ways:

I. It must be Community-Driven (bottom-up vs. top-down). Decision-making: Roots of Development encourages the community itself to identify its greatest need rather than imposing that choice on them. Through a collective decision-making model involving diverse representatives of the community (men, women, old, young, religious and secular), the community identifies and prioritizes their most basic needs. Once a single initiative is decided upon, they collectively move forward to tackle all of the project's objectives. In this way, the people most affected by the decisions being made are the ones making them, thus embedding true ownership as the project evolves.

Funding

The level of priority a project is given, or the way a project is carried out should not depend on the amount of money the supporting organization or institution is willing to allocate to it. Instead, the amount of money allocated to the project should depend on the amount necessary to complete the desired project, in its entirety and in a way that it is most effective.

II. Emphasize the Process in which a project is carried out. We treat development as a process rather than a series of completed projects. Working closely with community organizations fosters ownership, a key component of a successful development project. Achieving a successful outcome, or final product, in a community-driven development project can improve the standard of living for many, but it does not necessarily make it sustainable.

We work with communities through the entirety of the project as they learn what it takes to walk through the development process. Once the steps become familiar to a community, it is then able to repeat the process and tackle other important initiatives without our assistance. Not only do these communities get the opportunity to come together and manage their own development, but they are then able to use their knowledge and experience to help neighboring communities as well.

The process is crucial to successful development, in that it:

- Increases the level of sustainability,
- 2. Decreases the potential degree of dependency,
- 3. Increases the chances of replicating or furthering of the process,
- 4. Reduces corruption by increasing transparency and accountability,
- 5. Leads to an efficient allocation of resources

If you like what we offer and want to become involved, visit us at www.rootsofdevelopment.org.

Come join Chad at the 3rd Annual Dance Party for Roots of Development on March 28th at the Willimantic Elks Club. Doors open at 6, live band Steppin Out will play at 7:00pm. All proceeds will go to Roots. For more information email Linda at bewell444@gmail.com
Follow Chad W. Bissonnette on Twitter: [www.twitter.com/RootsofDevlpmnt](https://twitter.com/RootsofDevlpmnt)



Farm, Forest and Natural Resources Expo

Saturday, March 14th, 10 am to 2 pm.

Willington Public Library, 7 Ruby Road (RT 320).
Explore the benefits of local farms, forests and natural
resources protection.

Dozens of organizations and educational displays for
adults and children, including UConn Extension, CT
Farm Bureau, Storrs Regional Future Farmers of Amer-
ica, Natural Resources Conservation Service, CT Forest
and Park Association, Joshua' Trust, and Willington and
Ashford Conservation Commissions.

Opportunity to meet local farmers who provide commu-
nity sponsored agriculture (CSA). Learn about gardening,
raising livestock and making maple syrup. Enjoy the
monarch butterfly display and talk with local foresters.

Attend short lectures:

10:15 "Growing Local Agriculture"

11:30 "Benefits of Managing Your Forest"

12:30 "Reasons and Ways to Use Native Plants"

For kids:

10 am "Story Time and Seed Planting"

11:30 Sing-along with award-winning folk musician
Maria Sangiolo

1 pm "Make Mini-terrariums to Take Home".

All Free! Sponsored by Willington Conservation Com-
mission. For more info: Kathy Demers at [cdemers@](mailto:cdemers@mindspring.com)
mindspring.com or 860-429-8384.

WANTED

The Gardiner Hall Jr. Company:
Original Photographs, Artifacts, & Oral Histories

The Friends of The Mill Works, a nonprofit group
organized under Windham Arts, has established a local
museum focused on the development and operation of
the Gardiner Hall Jr. Company. The objective of this
permanent installation is to examine the historical impact
and contributions this company has had on the Town of
Willington and its residents over a period of more than one
hundred years. The museum will be located at The Mill
Works, formally the home of the Gardiner Hall Jr. Company.

The Friends group is seeking original photographs,
equipment, artifacts, and any physical items associated with
the Gardiner Hall Jr. Company, its founders, employees,
and customers. Items that are donated or loaned to the
museum will be identified by the donor's name, and
included on display and in any print materials created for
the museum. In addition, the Friends are also interested
in conducting interviews with folks that may have worked
for or had a relationship with the Hall Company. The
intent of this collection is to create an opportunity for the
residents of Willington and surrounding towns to learn about
the technical innovations, production methods, and the
application of unique management practices that shaped the
local area.

If you possess any related items, have knowledge of any,
or are interested in sharing thoughts or reflections about
the Hall Company, please contact The Friends of The Mill
Works:

Email: info@friendsofthemillworks.org
Phone: (860) 836-7516 or (860) 487-3827

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Board of The Friends of The Mill Works



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Conrad McIntire Jr. continued from page 29

in statement three that if we accept the designer hypothesis we need to explain who designed the designer. Really? This is where Dawkins pyramid crumbles. This is an illogical straw man argument with several problems that is nothing new and has been answered many times. First, in order to recognize an explanation as the best one, one does not need an explanation for the explanation. That would lead to an infinite regress of explanations so that nothing could ever be explained. If you saw the words "John loves Jane" in a heart drawn on the beach you would logically draw the conclusion the waves didn't create it but intelligence did. You don't need to explain the drawer to know your correct. Second, both Dawkins and Cementina (who parrots it in her article) seem to think that the rules of the natural world apply to God. Cathy (using Dawkins line of thought) tells us that "complexity on the level of a divine being who manages such a feat (creation) is something that comes only after a long incremental process of evolution.....so how can there be a God of such magnificent complexity at the beginning?" In Dawkins words "Creative intelligences, being evolved, necessarily arrive late in the universe and therefore cannot be responsible for designing it.". Dawkins (and Cementina) are fatally flawed in their logic. They might as well say there are such things as square circles, married bachelors, and round triangles! God by definition as creator is not subject to its laws but is the creator of these laws. God, is a being, a mind that by definition exists apart from the universe. Dawkins & Cementina don't have to like what theists for centuries have defined God as but they don't have the right to change Webster's dictionary to support a straw man argument either. Even atheist philosopher Michael Ruse in the same article where he says Dawkins is an embarrassment says "I take scholarship seriously... Trying to understand how God could need no cause, Christians claim God exists necessarily. I have taken the effort to try to understand what that means. Dawkins and company are ignorant of such claims and positively contemptuous of those who even try to understand what that means. Thus, like a first year undergraduate, he can happily go around asking loudly "What caused God" as though he made some momentous philosophical discovery." Its pretty telling when other professed atheists see the fatal lack of logic displayed by Dawkins central argument!

Statement four gets pulled out of left field telling us that Darwinism is an explanation. Of what? Darwinism can't explain the universe and design! It has enough trouble explaining life. I don't want to get to sidetracked here but a quick couple of points should be made. First no knowledgeable person denies that micro-evolution takes place. In Cementina's article she brings up the changes within Iguanas over time as they adapted to new environments. Okay we observe something like this in the many breeds of dogs as well. We see it in breeding horses, growing roses, etc.. Its an example of how micro-evolution (changes within the species works). But what Cementina and Darwinists do next is take a leap of faith, long on speculation and short on evidence that micro-evolution is proof that everything evolved from a common ancestor over

millions of years. I don't care how much time you have because observed micro-evolution has shown just the opposite, that changes within the species have limitations that you cannot go beyond. We can breed animals to a certain point in size for example, and then we reach a point where the genetic makeup cannot be crossed. Limitations are reached. Yes the Iguanas adapt but in the end they are still Iguanas! The fatal flaw in Darwinism is that it uses micro-evolution(observed) to try to prove macro-evolution. That's like saying if you shoot an arrow at 150mph and at that speed it will take it a half hour to hit a target 75 miles away. The reason it won't is that there are limiting forces such as gravity that will slow then stop the arrow. All observed micro-evolution has shown that there are natural limits to the amount of variation. The gene pool only contains so much capacity for variation. You cannot use an observation that shows that variation is limited as evidence to try to prove the existence of a process that requires unlimited variations to achieve major new innovations! That not science that's faith!

Now back to the conclusion of Dawkin's central argument that is supposed to disprove God. Before I do let me give you one of Dawkins famous quotes he uses on religious people. "Faith is the great cop-out, the great excuse to evade the need to think and evaluate evidence." Statements 5 & 6 lead us to the grand finale "We don't have the equivalent explanation for physics. We should not give up the hope of a better explanation arising from physics, something as powerful as Darwinism is for biology." "Therefore God almost certainly does not exist."

This is it??? He hangs himself on his own words. Let me borrow a teaching of Jesus here for a second. "The way you judge others is the way you will be judged". We are told to have FAITH and not give up hope that somewhere in the future physics is going to explain what so far it hasn't been able to explain, and bingo that's going to explain how the universe looks so much like it was designed by a Designer! Is it any wonder even atheists have winced reading Dawkins book. In the end he cops out. Despite what he says is the natural and normal conclusion, (#2 coming from #1) that the universe is designed (which common sense points to a designer), we are to disregard that (from the straw man argument #3) and simply 'evade the need to think and evaluate evidence' and conclude by faith and not give up hope that someday a better explanation will arise from physics! Sorry Richard and Cathy. I don't have enough faith to be an atheist.

(end of part one -see part two in the next issue of *Neighbors*)

Email Conrad at: CARESIPeter315@aol.com

Storrs FFA Pancake Breakfast



The Storrs Regional FFA Alumni and Parent Support Group is holding a "Pancake Breakfast" on Saturday April 4th, 2015 at the Eagleville Fire Department Co. # 1, 897 Stafford Road (Route 32) in Eagleville, CT.

The breakfast will be held from 8:00a.m. to 10:00a.m.

Tickets are: \$5.00

Tickets will be available at the door.

Breakfast includes Pancakes and Sausage and Beverages

Activities for Children.

Tickets will available through the AG Ed Center at E.O. Smith High School @ 487-0528 or by contacting, Ellen @ (860) 456-9185 / Christine @ (860) 429-2769,

The Storrs Regional FFA Alumni and Parent Support Group raises money to solely provide individual Scholarships to graduating seniors and funding for Mini-Grants and Project SAE's in the Agricultural Education Program at E.O. Smith High School.

Students participating in the program are from the towns of Ashford, Willington, Mansfield, Coventry, Columbia and Windham.

If you cannot attend the fundraising dinner, but would still like to donate to the Scholarship fund, you may call one of the above numbers to donate.

A black and white illustration of a man and a young child sitting together in a large, comfortable armchair. The man is holding an open book titled "DINOSAURS" and they are both looking at it. The child is also holding a book titled "ELEPHANT". On the floor next to the chair are two more books, one titled "TIGER" and another titled "ELEPHANT".

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A black and white photograph of a tabby cat lying on its side on a wooden surface, looking towards the camera.
A black and white photograph of a black and white dog, possibly a pit bull mix, lying down and looking towards the camera.

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Geisslers Market

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Hampton Post Office
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Chaplin

Zlotnick's Gas/Conv.
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Villa Spirit Shoppe
Storrs Post Office
Mansfield Senior Ctr.
Mansfield Town Hall
All Subway shops
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Starbucks

Coventry

Highland Park Market
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Coventry Laundromat
Meet Me on Main
Café
Subway
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People's Bank
Storrs Comm. Laund.
UConn Bookstore
UConn Co-op
UConn Student Union
Willard's
Tony's Garage

Mansfield Center

Mansfield Library
Angellino's Restaurant
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HST Realty
Lawrence Real Estate

Mansfield Depot

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North Windham

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Subway
No. Windham P.O.

Pomfret

Vanilla Bean Rest.
Pomfret Post Office
Baker's Dozen

Putnam

Antiques Marketplace
Putnam Library

Subway

Scotland

Scotland Library
Scotland Post Office

South Windham

Bob's Windham IGA
Landon Tire
So. Windham P.O.

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Birch Mountain Pottery
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Tolland Library
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Vernon

Subway shops
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Willington

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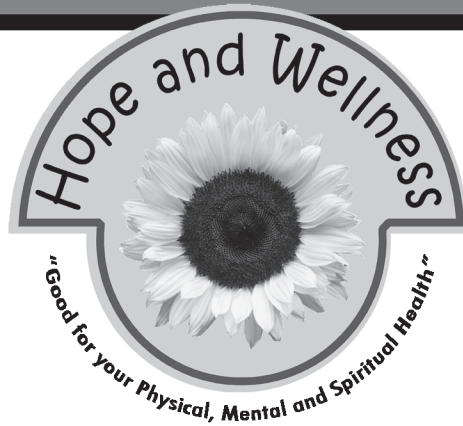


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