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Scott E. Rhoades Art



Scott Rhoades was born in Houlton, Maine in 1951 and grew up in Coventry, Connecticut. When he was a junior in college he took his first art class and was hooked on artistic processes and made several paintings. After graduating from Eastern Connecticut State University in 1973 he earned his Master’s degree in Art Education from Central Connecticut State University. In 1975 he began a 35 year art education career in Coventry.

Scott embraced teaching and worked with over 6000 students in grades K-8. He coached girls sports, taught a class in Developmental Stages of Child Art at Eastern and was a high school baseball umpire. His work with children was published in several magazines and his school mural program was nationally recognized as over 200 students signed their names to painted works on school walls. Over four hundred students had drawings published in the *Willimantic Chronicle*.

Rhoades presented workshops on child art at



national, state and local venues. He was a grade level co-ordinator, related arts team leader, and mentor teacher team



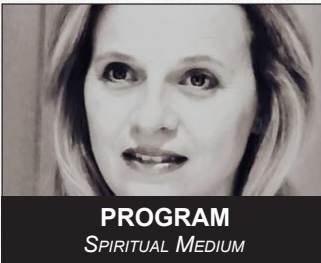
leader. He designed and produced 30 school yearbooks. As Scott approached retirement, he felt compelled to build an art studio in his back yard so that he could resume painting works of art. Rhoades, who is an avid runner, has two daughters, Andrea and Summer, and four grandchildren. He lives in Storrs, Connecticut with his wife Ellie. Visit Scott’s website at: ScottERhoadesArt.com

Ed. note: Text taken from Scott’s website.

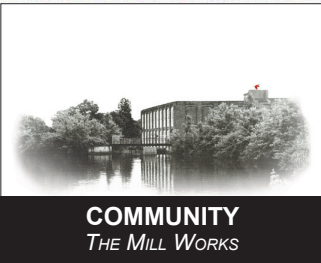
Cover art: *Birch* by Scott E. Rhoades

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Dec 10th | 3:00pm

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“TALENT SHOWCASE”
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Free and open to all ages
Call to register (recommended) or sign up at the door (time permitting)
Dec 13th | 7:00pm

“INFORMATION EXCHANGE MEETINGS”
Dec 12th | 7:00pm

“FRIDAY NIGHT FILM SERIES”
‘It’s A Wonderful Life’ (G)
Dec 15th | 7:30pm

All proceeds go to support the “Eastern Connecticut Center for History, Art, and Performance”
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COMING UP IN JANUARY 2018!

- 1/06: SEAT OF OUR PANTS (FOLK)
- 1/10: TALENT SHOWCASE (SHARE YOUR TALENT - CALL TO SIGN UP)
- 1/16: DRUM CIRCLE WITH BOB BLOOM (3RD TUESDAY OF THE MONTH)
- 1/17: EC-CHAP INFORMATION EXCHANGE MEETING
- 1/19: FILM SHOWING: “CALLE 54” (G)
- 1/20: CLAUDIA SCHMIDT & MIRO (JAZZ)

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

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The Purpose of Neighbors:
-To encourage reading
-To provide a place where ideas, writing, artwork and photographs of area residents can be shared
-To encourage people to get involved in their communities
-To begin to solve national and global problems on a local basis
-To provide useful information
-To serve the inhabitants and environment of our region

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Dream Fulfilled

By Loretta Wrobel

Lately, I find myself angry at the ever-mushrooming news of sexual abuse, angry at the stupid actions by men who should know better, angry at our President, who acts as if bullying is the best diplomacy, angry at the proliferation of violence in our Country, and angry at the depth of misogyny in our culture. As my blood boils and my teeth gnash, insight showers over me. I am adding more rage, violence, and hatred to a world already reeling with negativity, hostility and disrespect. What am I doing?

After much introspection, I decide to change course. I choose to shift the focus to something that brings hope and inspiration and not dwell on unsettling news that is unhealthy for my digestion and well-being. Why not focus on a positive and upbeat subject? What about giving attention to a woman who is actualizing her dreams and following her passion?

It was easy to find my subject. A neighbor who lives in Ashford has embarked on a thrilling new journey. She opened her own bakery/cafe in Old Saybrook. The shop is called Shayna B’s by the Sea. The owner is Christine Reed. Christine has always dreamed of owning her own restaurant by the sea.

Ms. Reed is the founder and owner of Shayna B’s and the Pickle, a business which has been in existence for ten years. Shayna B’s started out providing gluten-free and dairy-free baked goods for those who have allergies and insensitivities. She was inspired to begin her business because friends had gluten intolerances and allergies. In the beginning she joined the Ashford Farmers Market to determine if her products would sell. Her rich, moist, delicious desserts were well received and she was on her way!

After using several different locations for baking, she eventually built a commercially licensed kitchen at her residence. As her reputation grew, she added more mouth-watering baked goods to her selections. She moved on to larger markets, such as the Coventry Farmers Market and Fiddleheads in New London.

This woman walks her talk, as she is devoted to operating a socially conscious business using recyclable containers and locally grown and organic products. The goal is not to squeeze out as much profit as possible, but to treat everyone with respect and provide healthy safe food. Christine, from the beginning, was attentive, caring and displayed a sincere concern to provide alternative food choices for those left out of the mainstream American diet.

This energetic baker continually expanded her business and now is ready for a gluten-free and vegan storefront. She had a soft opening in October, and on November 18th celebrated the official grand opening. The café in Old Saybrook at 247 Main Street is warm and welcoming. The tantalizing aromas of baked bread, pizza, chocolate and ginger cookies fill the bakery. It is a completely gluten-free and vegan space so those with high sensitivities are assured that there is no contamination as is the case with many restaurants that promote gluten-free menus.

The store is open six days a week, closed on Monday. There is a wonderful selection of lunches and dinners, such as lentils and rice, eggplant parmesan, cashew calzones, pizza, different kinds of wraps and soups, plus salads. Even if you are not restricted in your diet, you will be pleasantly surprised by how tasty and satisfying the meals are. I have relished the humus wrap, butternut squash soup, Buddha bowl with peanut sauce, and lentils and rice.

Christine has done a comprehensive job of locating nearby farmers and merchants to supply her with



Christine Reed (left) and employee Cassidy Clark. Contributed photo.

excellent produce, coffee and teas. She is committed to supporting local businesses and artists. In the café, she has area artists displaying their pottery, paintings and jewelry. Walking into the shop, you want to sit, relax and linger to absorb the ambiance and lovely setting.

Of course, you can purchase “Grab and Go” lunches and dinners and/or all sorts of desserts-- cookies, Wendy bites, cinnamon rolls, muffins, etc. If you have a friend who is gluten-free, you can special-order a birthday cake without any worries.

I am so impressed by the fortitude and stamina of Christine that this sounds like a marketing pitch. Trust me, I am not exaggerating. In order to fulfill her long held dream, she had to accomplish numerous and tedious chores to meet strict requirements. I am awed by her stick-to-it-iveness and her follow-through, while baking up a storm!

It is not easy for one person to be an entrepreneur, especially a woman in today’s political climate. We, as women, need role models who are successful and willing to take risks. To see women being enterprising and assertive, and

striding towards what they are passionate about, is empowering for others. I visualize our culture one day adopting the word “businessfolk” (not “businessmen”), because CEO’s will be equally male or female.

Christine is doing her part to improve our world, change our culture, and demonstrate that women and men are equally capable, competent and visionary. Support the women you know. Treat yourself to a fine meal at Shayna B’s by the Sea, or purchase a gift certificate for someone you love. It all does matter and adds more harmony, equality, and sense to our mixed-up country. More entrepreneurial women and less violence, abuse, and harassment directed towards women is the correct recipe for today’s world.

Find Shayna B’s on Facebook Shayna B’s and the Pickle, LLC.

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Willimantic, Now and Then:

Understanding our history: A Backward Look To See the Future

By Mark Svetz

Hindsight is 20-20. I’ve heard that many times in my life, and often it seems to be true. Twenty-twenty or not, if we don’t understand what we’re looking at, it doesn’t really matter how clearly we can see.

These particular thoughts come to me right now following a conversation with Sarah. She described pulling out of a driveway, and after several backward glances, realized there were many blind spots and she wasn’t sure whether there was traffic coming. Hindsight, it seems, is not always 20-20!

At any rate Sarah pulled onto the highway, and everything was fine. A short distance down the road, another vehicle pulled out in front of her. The car was close, Sarah had to slow a bit, but what she told me was how easy it is when you look forward. To Sarah, this meant it was easy for her to adjust her speed and accommodate the entering vehicle.

This reminded me of just how much ‘accommodation’ is required of us in the daily give and take of life in community. A great teacher once told me, “Education is change and always remember that we make change from strength, not weakness.” As a teacher, I always took this to mean it was my job to help people strengthen and empower themselves to get ready to make the change that is learning.

In our parable of Sarah on the highway, she was telling me that her clear vantage gave her the strength to adjust her speed and let the new vehicle enter traffic easily. This brings me back to the whole idea of looking back. Knowledge and understanding are always empowering and, of course, one of the necessary elements for change. If there is one thing clear to me today, it is that we need change in how we view ourselves and our nation.

I am thinking now of the many tragic events that have occurred recently, this time of the violence that occurred in Charlottesville, VA, during a rally of white supremacists. One of the central themes of this conflict was about statues of Confederate soldiers and leaders in public places. Because the Confederacy is entangled in history with slavery and modern racism, these statues made many of us uncomfortable. Others seem to believe the removal of these reminders was some sort of purge, aimed at sanitizing our history.



The hindsight of some journalists helped crystalize this subject for me, when I learned that many of these statues were erected in the 1960s as a backlash against the Civil Rights Movement. So, it seems the historic record we are protecting here is that of selfish and violent resistance to human rights and the progress of human dignity. This makes the question a little easier for me.

Our past is not a static collection of images and facts to be recalled or forgotten. Rather, it is a progress of events, large and small, that must be perceived, understood and reconciled with the present circumstances. When Sarah saw the car approach the stop sign on the side street, she was able to take this information and use it to make the change she needed to make, and the result was the smooth flow of traffic.

The smooth flow of life in our communities also requires us to make constant adjustments and accommodations. I like Sarah’s example where she saw her better vantage as a responsibility to accommodate the other vehicle. I similarly believe those of us who feel the sting of the reminders of slavery, for example, could be more easily accommodated if we all searched for that better vantage of understanding.

As we sit in coffee shops and living rooms talking about these events, I hope we think about them and their historic context. In the case of Charlottesville, it was important to be clear about just what history we are preserving. Our perception of the past – whether the historic past, or behind us on the highway – should help us decide what we are going to do next. Whether it’s to slow down for the entering vehicle, listen to those who are offended by statues celebrating the Confederate States of America or cast a vote on a school bonding package. Knowledge is power and it gives us the strength to make the changes we need to make.

As this year winds down and I think about all that has happened, I believe I will look for clues about my next steps. Do I need to slow down for that car up ahead? Is that belief I have held for so long still valid in light of new information? Does my neighbor need help with the sidewalks this winter? Have a great New Year!

Mark Svetz, now (mostly) retired, has been a journalist, activist, teacher and self-appointed knight errant in Willimantic for the last 45 years. You can read more of Mark’s writing at www.sarahwinterclothworks.com

December at The Gardiner Hall Jr. Museum

By Pamm Summers

December brings some changes to The Gardiner Hall Jr. Museum! Our schedule is changing. Beginning December 5th we will be open on Tuesdays and closed on Wednesdays. Our hours will remain the same – from 9:30am until 11:00am. We’ve also had some interesting donations from Tyler Hall dating back to when Gardiner Hall Jr, himself, was the owner operator of the Thread mill. Come on over and take a look when you have time to spare.



Our Winter “First Sunday at The Mill Works” will take place on December 3rd from 12:00pm to 5:00pm. We will have a surprise display on loan from Alice Hall Cassells. Alice has provided tremendous historical insight at our First Sunday in October, and if you missed that you missed something very special. We look forward to having her spend time with us at the museum in December, and also hope Tyler will be available to stop by as well.

We are always looking for new artifacts either by donation or on loan to add to our collection. If you have any old family stories or photos from the Mill back when it was in operation and would like to come by and spend some time sharing them with me; I’d love to hear about your relatives time working at the Mill. The more I can learn from families who had a history here the more complete picture of working life in Willington can be shared with the public. That’s really why we are here, to pass along the Willington history from the mid 1800’s to the present.

Come on by, spend a little time and learn about the past on this beautiful street in Willington.

December Programs at the Connecticut Audubon Society in Pomfret

Grassland Bird Conservation Center
218 Day Road, Pomfret Center, CT 06259
(860)928-4948
www.ctaudubon.org/center-at-pomfret

Submitted by Pat Coleman

Annual Holiday Nature Store
Now until Friday, December 22
10 a.m. - 4 p.m. weekdays and Saturday;
Noon to 4 p.m. Sunday
The Center at Pomfret - 218 Day Rd, will be full of gifts for all ages with “Mother Nature” in mind.
We will have bird feeders and houses, suet, gardening gifts, nature books, children’s games, puzzles, field guides, freshly cut Christmas trees, holiday decorations, freshly made evergreen swags, works by local artists, nature jewelry and more. Stock changes daily.

Winter Art Show Featuring Local Artists
Now through mid-January at the Center at Pomfret, 218 Day Rd.
10 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays and Saturday;
Noon to 4 p.m. Sunday
Feast your eyes on the talents of three local artists. Watercolorist David Stumpo, wildlife photographer Nancy Barrett and a special exhibit by photographer Virge Lorents will be featured. There will be a wide variety of artwork on sale for purchase with holiday gift-giving in mind. Free admission.



Wednesday Noon Walks
December 6 thru 27
Join our volunteers for fresh air, exercise, good company and naturalist lessons along the way.
Seniors and parents with babes in backpacks welcome. Meet at the Center at Pomfret, 218 Day Rd.
Free to CAS members; \$3 non-members.

Thursday Morning Walks
December 7 thru 28
8:30 a.m.
Stretch your legs, breathe in that early morning air and look for signs of wildlife on the Bafflin Sanctuary with Fran Barnas-ki, longtime volunteer, tracker and nature

photographer. Bring your camera if you are so inclined. Meet at the Center at Pomfret, 218 Day Rd. Free to CAS members; \$5 non-members.

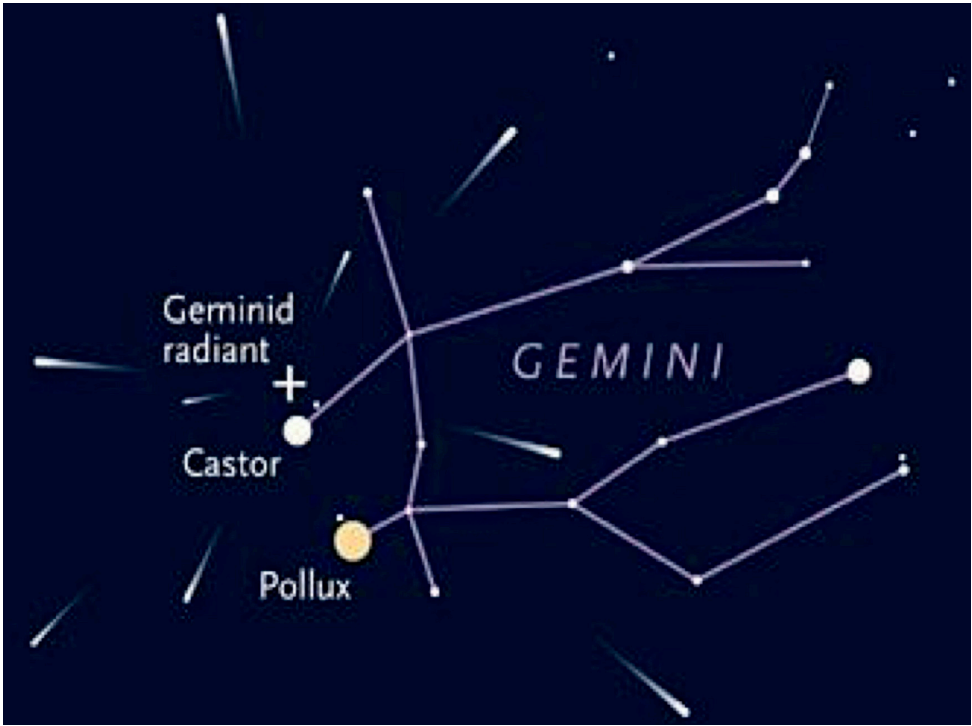
Monthly Bird Walk
Thursday, December 28
1 p.m.
Come out in search of wintering bird species. Andy will look for horned larks, ducks, hawks, sparrows, yellow-bellied sapsuckers and more. Meet at the Center at Pomfret, 218 Day Rd. Fee: \$5 CAS members; \$10 non-members.

Owl Walk
Saturday, December 30

7 p.m.
Join us in search of wintering owls; such as screech, barred, and great-horned owls. Most of the calling is done from the road. Meet at the Center at Pomfret, 218 Day Rd. Program contingent on the weather. Fee: \$5 CAS members; \$10 non-members.

Citizen Science Volunteer Appreciation Night
Wednesday, November 29
7 p.m.
This is our annual event at the Center at Pomfret to thank our Citizen Science volunteers! Enjoy a special presentation on Connecticut’s Eagles by Brian Hess from the Conn. DEEP Wildlife Division. RSVP Paula at 860-928-4948 or email paulacoughlin@charter.net

Introductory Winter Tracking Hike
Saturday, December 2
9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
We’re looking for adults who want to become trained wildlife trackers to monitor study sites in Willington, Canterbury, and Woodstock. Learn to find and recognize tracks and document sightings that support local conservation efforts. Winter is a great time to find track and sign of fisher, river otter, mink, fox, bobcat, coyote and more. For registration and info, contact Paula Coughlin, Coordinator at 860-928-4948 or email pcoughlin@charter.net Fee: \$25 CAS members/\$35 non-members.



The radiant of the Geminid shower is near Castor, the fainter of the Twin Stars in Gemini. S&T illustration.

When the Sun Sets Early and the Nights are Long

By Bob Grindle

Today has been a quintessential New England fall day. Perhaps I should be more specific and say November day. A chill, gray, blustery morning as daylight clawed its way onto the scene with increasing winds evoking anxious memories of recent power outages. But, true to the forecasts, clearing skies arrived and by early afternoon it was a rather nice day...less bluster, more blue sky and a bit warmer. Just in time for a seasonally early sunset — at 4:26p.m. But it was a beauty.

As I'm watching the gorgeous yellow-orange sunset, I recall a bit of common sense science I learned in secondary school: since both Mercury and Venus are closer to the Sun than the Earth, it is only by looking toward (NOT AT) the Sun that you are likely to see either of them. It is at or just before sunrise, and at or just after sunset that you are most likely to see these planets. Venus, the storied "morning star" and "evening star", despite being by far the brightest planet makes only the briefest of appearances this December, low in the pre-dawn sky about 45 minutes before sunrise, but only until the 12th of the month when it drops from view until nearly mid-January. Not to fret though, there is a lot going on in December's skies, early and late.

As the month opens, Jupiter and Mars are high in the morning sky; look to the Southeast just before sunrise. The full 'Cold' Moon will have just set at about 5:30a.m., so the sky may still be a bit bright. By 6 o'clock, though, Venus will be rising, Jupiter will be about mid-sky and Mars will be high in the southeastern sky in a straight line with its sibling planets. To the right of reddish Mars will be the bright white Spica, the only star visible in Virgo as the constellation of the growing season fades into the prewinter morning sky. Jupiter and Mars will remain visible in the predawn skies throughout the month of December, with Jupiter rising rapidly through the month to catch up to Mars. By mid-month the waning crescent Moon slides down the early morning sky, very close to Mars on the 13th and then Jupiter on the 14th and 15th. By the end of the month, about 6:30 am on the morning of December 31st, Jupiter and Mars are a mere finger's width apart high in the upper right quadrant of the southeastern sky. Let your gaze sweep to the lower left corner of the sky and with any luck you may see the faint light of Mercury. This will be one of the few times when naked eye viewing of the tiny planet is possible. Antares, a red giant star in the constellation Scorpius, is just to the right of Mercury and might help in locating the planet. If you have a pair of

binoculars, use them; it makes star gazing quite a bit easier.

The real show this December, though, is the Geminid meteor shower. Earlier meteor showers in 2017 have been something of a disappointment. Between too much moonlight and cloudy skies, there hasn't been much to look at. So, with just a bit of weather good luck on the evening of December 13th, and only a sliver of waning crescent Moon that doesn't rise until 3 in the morning on December 14th, the Geminids could prove to be something special. Part of the reason the Geminids can be so special is that, although 9:00p.m. until 2:00a.m. is the best time to observe them, they start as soon as it is dark. Their origin, as one might expect, is from the constellation Gemini, which rises in the East on early evenings in December. It is the low horizon meteors which tend to be brightest. Later in the night, there will probably be more meteors, and as the evening wears on, Gemini will move to the south. By 2 am, the Geminids could reach a hundred and twenty (120) an hour, high in the southern sky, and that should make for a worthwhile way to spend a few hours of a mid-December night. Still, it's a work night and it's easy to understand why most readers won't be spending the entire time staring at the cold December night sky. The Geminids, however, account for many of the very brightest of 'shooting stars' and most of us are willing to spend a few minutes to half an hour looking up for the chance to first-hand see a really spectacular streak across the sky.

Dean Regas, an astronomer at the Cincinnati Observatory in Ohio, never studied astronomy. He was a history teacher whose interest in nature got him involved with leading nature walks in area parks. Most of the questions on the night walks he led were about the night sky, so he pursued his growing interest through books and planetarium shows. He changed careers. A few years later, when he was asked how this change of careers changed his life, he responded that "I never really noticed much about the universe before. Now when I go outside, I look up and see what's going on. I feel like I'm in the stars."

Bob Grindle is a Windham Hospital Retiree who recently graduated from ECSU, concentrating in Astronomy.

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Being Warmed Twice

By C. Dennis Pierce

Wood. We take it for granted. Often, we do not think of it as a Connecticut agricultural product but yet many local farmers subsidize their crop sales by also offering seasoned, cut wood. Henry Ford, the founder of Ford Motor company, realized the benefit of burning wood. He stated, “Chop your own wood and it will warm you twice”. (I would suggest that stacking it after a delivery has the same effect.) As winter approaches I have seen many trucks struggling under the weight of cut wood that is out for delivery for that eager homeowner that either heats with wood, offsets their oil bill or just likes that occasional fire in their fireplace.

I having been burning wood for well over ten years. As most of my children have gotten older and have left the “coop” I no longer have the need to keep the whole house toasty warm. In the early days I would burn all day, stocking up the insert stove that I had installed when I purchased my house. Now it gets lit late afternoon and all day on the weekends. Several of my neighbors also have stoves so when the cool evenings arrived early this past fall the scent of wood smoke filled the neighborhood and created that ambiance that we come to expect in New England.

Many Connecticut residents use wood stoves to heat their homes. Wood is a locally-produced, renewable natural resource and using a wood stove reduces our dependence on foreign oil and other fossil fuels. Wood stoves (including fireplace inserts and pellet stoves) manufactured and sold after July 1, 1992 are required to be certified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

EPA certified wood stoves have been tested to meet more stringent emissions requirements. They have been designed to burn cleaner and more efficiently resulting in 50 to 60 percent less pollution. Because they are more efficient, they use two thirds less wood, saving you time and money

Here are some useful tips that I have learned. Burn denser wood. Trees have different densities and are generally divided into hardwoods and softwoods. A truckload of hardwood weighs roughly twice as much as an equal load of softwood. As compared to softwood, hardwood burns approximately twice as long, potentially gives off twice as much heat. One of the reasons hardwoods put off so much more heat than softwoods is because the dense logs produce long-burning coal, an excellent heat source. The best firewood comes from the logs of oak, maple, hickory, hackberry, birch, cherry, and ironwood trees, along with the other hardwoods. Avoid problems this winter and prepare for the burning season early with the correct type of firewood. It is best to purchase your firewood in the spring or summer to guarantee that it is properly dried out before use. Remember to store your firewood in a dry area and stick to hardwoods for a hotter, cleaner fire. Another great tip for starting your fire is begin saving the card board rolls from your paper towels and toilet paper. Put these near your clothes dryer. When cleaning out you dryer trap / filter stuff the rolls with the lint that has been accumulated. These burn quickly and hot enough to start that stubborn wood that does not want to be lit.

Buying local is always a wise practice. Whether it be purchasing wood or end of the season vegetables. You see sustainability is no longer a “buzzword”. Buying local, supports the community, cuts down on the use of long distance transportation of goods and the impact that it has on the environment. Yes, it is our responsibility to leave this planet in a better condition than when we found it. When it comes to food preparation in the restaurant industry we are witnessing chefs making many uses for non-traditional parts of the animal. This practice sometimes is referred to as “nose to tail”. While others, who are focusing on overall production, look closely to food waste in general and have been creative in the use of those items that might have been destined for the trash bin or those eco-friendly compost



piles. This movement is referred to as root to stalk. This month I thought it would be nice to provide you with an easy recipe that you might serve over the upcoming holidays. It is easy to make and you can still find an abundance of chard at your local farmer’s market.

Chard Stalk Hummus
Makes 1 cup (you might want to double this recipe)

- Ingredients:
- Chard stalks from 1-pound whole chard, trimmed and chopped
 - 1 whole garlic clove, peeled
 - ¼ cup tahini (can be purchased at most stores)
 - ¼ cup of olive oil, plus more for drizzling
 - 2 tablespoons of fresh lemon juice
 - ½ teaspoon of kosher salt



- Directions:
- Bring a large pot of water to boil and cook stalks until very tender, 18 to 20 minutes. Drain.
 - Place the garlic in a food processor and pulse until chopped. You can also use a blender instead.
 - Add chard and puree, then add the remaining ingredients and process until very smooth.
 - Transfer to a bowl, drizzle the remaining olive oil on top and serve at room temperature. The mixture can be stored in the refrigerator for up to three days. Always serve at room temperature.

Another year is coming to an end. I wish you a happy holiday, one that you will enjoy with friends and family. During this time when you find yourself rushing around, practice gratitude by stopping every day and taking inventory of what you are thankful for. Share this by appreciating what others do for you. Remember the secret to having it all is knowing you already do. If you have a suggestion or a farm or a local grower you would like featured in a future column drop me a line at Codfish53@Yahoo.com. Peas be with you.

NECCO Christmas Concert

Submitted by Jane Vercelli

The Northeast Connecticut Community Orchestra will present its Christmas concert on Friday, Dec. 8th, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. at Knowlton Memorial Hall next to the Ashford Town Hall, Rte. 44, Ashford, and again on Sunday, Dec. 17 at 2 p.m. at Pomfret School’s Clark Chapel, Rte. 44, Pomfret.

The concert will feature Dr. Emily Ferguson and her daughter, Margalit Kaufman, both of Woodstock, performing the Concerto for Oboe and Violin in C minor by J.S. Bach. Also featured in the Pomfret performance will be solo pianist Yulia Fedorov performing “December” from the “Seasons” by Tchaikovsky.

The program includes Suite of Carols and A Christmas Festival, both by Leroy Anderson, Nimrod by Edward Elgar (performed in memory of James Bump), Pavane by Gabriel Faure and Gabriel’s Oboe by Ennio Morricco.

Admission is free; donations are welcome.

Members of this regional string orchestra founded in 2012 include: Barbara Horn, Ashford; Eileen Geriak, Ashford; Saul Ahola, Woodstock; Margalit Kaufman, Woodstock; Melissa Joyal, Pomfret; Jan Zacharski, Brooklyn; Joan Sinder, Willimantic; Joan Taraskiewicz, Willington; Jane Vercelli, Thompson; Gale Eberly, Tolland; Kurt Kaufman, Woodstock; Linda Hilliard, Manchester; Sondra Boyer, Storrs; Maidie Cohen, Mansfield, and Charles Seivard, Woodstock.

Dylan Lomangino of Manchester is the conductor and music director.

The orchestra welcomes new members. Rehearsals are held on Fridays at 6:30 p.m. in the Ashford Town Office Building. For more information, call Jane Vercelli at 860 428-4633.

Dr. Emily Ferguson holds Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees from the Juilliard School. She has been a visiting professor in oboe instruction at the University of California, Davis where she was a member of the faculty woodwind quintet.

Margalit Kaufman, daughter of Dr. Ferguson and cellist Kurt Kaufman, has studied violin with Stan Renard, Yaroslav Tereschenko, and most recently with Barbara Vaughan. She has been a member of the Northeast Connecticut Community Orchestra for many years.

Yulia Fedorov, a native of Ukraine, earned a degree in piano performance and music theory at Dnipro Conservatory and then graduated from Lviv Conservatory with a degree in music education and in music history. In Connecticut, she earned her Masters in Music Education at Western Connecticut State University.

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My Facebook Experiment is Over

By Delia Berlin

I resisted having a Facebook presence for many years. One of the strongest reservations I had was that, being retired and a writer, I didn’t need more screen time in my life. Things that made me move, took me outdoors or brought me to interact with people face-to-face, were what my body and mind needed to stay healthy and engaged.

In addition, I had observed gradual negative changes in several people I knew that I attributed to their Facebook use. I had witnessed that annoying distraction and preoccupation, instantly caused by the chiming of an electronic device, that plagued many of my Facebook-using friends. I had also felt “forgotten” by many of these, who seemed to communicate solely via Facebook and wouldn’t bother emailing, texting or calling any non-Facebook-users. While these bad habits weren’t universally adopted by all Facebook users I knew, an erosion of social skills was palpable in many.

But periodically many friends and colleagues insisted that all writers needed a Facebook presence, and while my livelihood was not dependent on selling manuscripts, I didn’t want to be dismissed. I was assured by many that I could have an author’s page while remaining just minimally involved with my personal Facebook account. So, reluctantly, in early 2016, I established an account and started maintaining a Facebook writer’s page.

Initially things seemed simple. I didn’t have many “friends” and I limited my postings to subjects related to my writings. But as time went on, my Facebook circle grew. Soon, I had over 350 friends. My newsfeed was always full of new postings and my “notifications” kept increasing. As the presidential election neared, it became hard for everyone to stay out of posting politics. Apparently, we were not alone, as Russian bots targeted our networks with finely tailored fake political posts.

Although we didn’t know then what we know now about these fake posts, I remember feeling puzzled about the origin of the content of some of them. But at a time when reality was stranger than fiction, I was used to shrugging and shaking my head. Some of the posts were upsetting, but in spite of that I found it hard to look away.

My own political postings were mostly limited to sharing information that I considered interesting or important, sometimes with my own comments, sometimes not. But even if I never posted anything that I considered inflammatory or even controversial, tempers were frayed and it was easy to be misunderstood. Was “speaking out” really worth it?

Research appears to show that it’s rare to change anyone’s political position through Facebook. “Rare” means that the percentage of people one can flip is very small. But if one can target a large number of people in effective ways, this very small percentage can yield large numbers. This indicates to me that my time speaking out was probably not worth it, since my reach was limited to my network and not effectively targeted to susceptible individuals.

As for my writer’s page, I don’t know if it was worth it either. For example, I didn’t notice a big spike on book sales when I experimented with Facebook ads. These ads can be very cheap and reach many people. Facebook can boost effectiveness by flagging “highly performing” posts. However, I found that once Facebook has secured information about your form of payment, it doesn’t really like giving it back. Finding any type of customer service or help line at Facebook is nearly impossible (and the “nearly” is just to give them the benefit of the doubt). I didn’t like that aspect of Facebook. They make it very easy to start an ad campaign and not so easy to cancel it. So, once I finally succeeded in escaping their jaws, I vowed never to fall into them again.

But how about the benefits of reconnecting and keeping up with friends and family? It turns out that Facebook results along this topic are at best mixed. Research about Facebook, social wellbeing and mental health produced mostly negative results. A recent article by Dr. Douglas T. Kenrick in Psychology Today summarizes many problems common to Facebook users.

Among these problems, “chronic Facebook users tend to think that other people lead happier lives than their own, leading them to feel that life is less fair.” Also, since internet searches have grown personalized and sorting functions favor posts of like-minded friends, Facebook can lead to a feeling of false consensus, making us less open to



opposing views.

Facebook can also keep you connected to people you wouldn’t otherwise concern yourself with, and it can make you reveal information that may not favor your public image as your network evolves. Apparently 40% of Facebook users mention alcohol use and 20% make sexual references. Potential employers, as well as friends of different backgrounds, may not welcome these disclosures. Even seemingly innocent mentions about health or emotional status may work against someone’s interest in certain circumstances.

Perhaps worst of all, Facebook can become addictive. Even for those of us without addictive tendencies, it’s easy to spend more time than intended on Facebook. Once you open the Pandora’s box of posts, notifications, tags and comments, there is no telling how long it may take you to respond politely, even if minimally. And sadly, this may impact the quality of our lives, as our face-to-face relationships suffer when time spent online displaces them. The most important people in our here-and-now world, who may need us as much as we need them, may get pushed to the back burner by our Facebook friends.

In fact, countless studies have associated increased Facebook use with more envy, worsening depression and declines in subjective well-being. This is not surprising, as it takes me back full-circle to the beginning of this piece: things that make us move, take us outdoors or bring us to interact with people face-to-face, are usually what our bodies and minds need to stay healthy and engaged.

I had thoughts about leaving Facebook many times, almost from the moment I signed up for an account. Yet, I had more than a year of moderate use. Why am I leaving it now? Actually, I have the Department of Homeland Security to thank, since as of October 18, they started monitoring the social media activity of all immigrants, including naturalized US citizens like me.

Frankly, the timing is only symbolic, since DHS will not find anything dangerous, radical or incriminating by monitoring my activity. But being a US citizen by choice, after more than 41 legal years in the US, makes me feel more American than apple pie, and therefore I’m disgusted at being “monitored” on that account. So, whether you happen to be a former Facebook friend or the Department of Homeland Security, you will find a final post on my timeline, dated October 18, 2017. And I have no doubt that in either case, you will know where you can find me.

Pat Donahue at Top Shelf Gallery

Submitted by Janice Trecker

The December- January show, “Over the Years,” at the Top Shelf Gallery will feature works by local Hampton painter, Pat Donahue. The show opens Dec 1, with an artist’s reception Wed. Dec 6 from 4:30- 6 p.m. There will be an oil painting demonstration at 5 p.m., plus wine and refreshments.

Donahue has been painting since 1972. She trained originally with Foster Caddell at his Voluntown studio, before taking art courses at UConn. She paints landscapes and still lifes, and loves to paint plein air in her favorite medium, oils.

An award winning artist, she has participated in many juried shows and is a member of the Connecticut Women Artists. She has taught adult education painting classes at Windham High, E.O. Smith and at the Wrights Village Senior Center in Storrs.

Donahue says that painting is about seeing and about capturing the moment. She is fascinated by light and color. She adds that she loves all the impressionists, especially Degas, Monet and Van Gogh.

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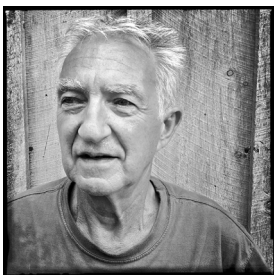
Arches National Park is southern Utah.

Contributed photo.

A Visit to Some National Parks

By David Corsini

Last September I made a 10-day trip to Utah and Colorado with my sister Donna and brother-in-law Bill. Bill had planned visits to four national parks with stops at museums and national monuments. A rental car, three guided tours in the parks and stays at six motels had been booked. In years past I traveled with Bill to Belize, Panama, and Joshua Tree in California. Those trips were great, but I was a bit concerned about how traveling with my sister added to the mix would work. My sister and I have a good relationship, but a different pace. Also of concern was the difficulty of travel and the fact that the three of us are above 75 years of age with various aging issues



We landed in Salt Lake City in mid-afternoon and had time to visit the Mormon complex. I don’t have a religious bone in my body and have only vague awareness of the Mormon story, but remember that California gulls were involved. Since I was in Salt Lake City, I wanted to see the tabernacle and some of the Mormon buildings, to at least say that I had seen them. There were many people from multiple ethnic backgrounds also visiting the complex in guided tours, given in several languages. I was impressed by the buildings as well as the gardens and fountains that graced the Mormon complex. We had an alcohol-free dinner in a restaurant associated with the Mormon complex. Although I had been concerned about the availability of liquor in Utah, this was the only restaurant we encountered that did not serve liquor.

The next morning we headed for southern Utah to a resort near the city of Moab and two National Parks- Arches and Canyonlands. Moab is a tourist oriented town with many shops and restaurants. Our resort, appropriately called Red Cliff Lodge, was nestled beneath huge red stone cliffs and 12 scenic, curvy miles from Moab. We rented a modern two-bedroom cabin with a deck, beside the Colorado River.

For Day 1 Bill had arranged a private tour through Arches National Park with a company called NAVTEC that runs both land and river excursions. As we were preparing to leave our resort, we had an incident which could have had dramatic consequences. Donna and Bill were in their room preparing things for the day. I had finished my readiness and closed the sliding door to the deck. Bill came out of his bedroom. Not realizing the sliding door was closed, he tried to go onto the deck to look at the river. He hit his nose on the glass and it started to bleed. Because Bill is taking a blood thinner, this was potentially serious. Luckily, the bleeding soon stopped and we were able to proceed. A potential disaster was avoided.

For land excursions NAVTEC has a stable of 1997 and 1998 Toyota Land Cruisers which they have found to be the most reliable vehicles. Johnnie, a 60-year-old “desert rat” was our guide. He first let us off at a spot called Park Avenue for an easy walk through towering blocks of stone reminiscent of huge buildings. I soon came to a step down of about eight inches. Instead of turning to step down, my 25-year-old brain said to jump. My 77-year-old legs failed to respond and I tumbled. Bill and Donna gasped. Quickly, a woman who was within earshot of their gasps, appeared with an antibiotic wipe. My fall resulted in only a small scrape to my knee and my embarrassment.

I continued along but was experiencing visual

difficulty processing changes in levels. I soon realized that my new bifocal glasses were a hindrance when hiking. Because I had not adapted well to progressive lenses, I had purchased bifocals. These glasses are good for distances and reading but, as I slowly came to realize, are not good for mid-distances. From then on I hiked without glasses and was fine, except for one pirouette. But I did not fall. After Park Avenue we were off to find more arches and trails. Johnnie set us loose on several trails that involved climbing over rocks with some ambiguity in the path to be followed. I was a bit challenged, but I am sure that if we had not returned soon our guide would have found us, or our remains.

We were in the desert, where water is at a premium. At our lunch spot, I visited a bush to “take a leak”. As soon as my urine hit the ground, a small lizard rushed out to take a drink. As it came back for seconds, I assumed it found the bouquet appealing.

Johnnie loved driving the Land Cruiser over the rock-strewn jeep trails and took particular pleasure in pulling off trail, so that down-driving vehicles could pass. For Donna and me in the back of the jeep, it was shake, rattle and roll and frequent gasps as the car leaned to the side. Johnnie described the difficulty of our trail as a four on a scale of 1-10. He mentioned that the trail we had scheduled for the next day was an eight. We were not happy to hear that.

Johnnie was a skilled driver who knew volumes about the park. However, he talked in a continuous stream about his experiences, both in the park and in his life. There were many interesting stories, but he talked nonstop and I felt sorry for Bill in the front seat, to whom most of the talk was directed.

One interesting story was about how he had been bitten by a very poisonous snake while camping out and asleep. Rattlesnakes hunt by olfactory and heat cues rather than visual cues. Luckily, Johnnie knew what had happened and had been able to contact first responders, who administered antihistamine and then transported him by helicopter to a hospital for the appropriate antiserum. It had been a close call.

Since the Day 2 tour we had arranged would involve a long initial drive, then lots of time on a category eight jeep trail, and possibly more stories from Johnnie, we decided to cancel it. The owner of NAVTEC was very accommodating, as we already had taken one tour and had another planned on Day 3. We spent our Day 2 exploring on our own in Arches and going to the visitors’ center in Canyonlands for an introduction to that park.

Since Red Cliff lodge is about 10 miles from Moab, on Day 1 we stayed in Moab to have dinner and then buy groceries for breakfasts at the lodge and lunch on the trails. Donna did an excellent job preparing our lunches of crackers, cheese, yogurts, trail mix and fruits. We even had enough to leave scraps for a raven that watched over us during one lunch and a ground squirrel that monitored another.

On Day 3 we took a daylong guided tour at Canyonlands. In the morning, our guide, a 30+ young man named Gunner, drove us on Shafer Trail, a narrow White Rim Sandstone road around Shafer Canyon. Gunner was very knowledgeable about the geology of the area and a good story teller. We were quite nervous about the narrowness of the road and the depth of the canyon. Gunner assured us he could drive it with his eyes closed. We urged him not to demonstrate.

Gunner told us how he had a difficult time as a

traditional student, but blossomed as a learner since becoming enchanted by the geology of the area. Among the things he showed us was the cliff where the final scene of the movie Thelma and Louise had taken place. In the movie, the dummies in the car when it went over the cliff, were wearing scarves and we were told why. The final scene had been filmed twice. Since the heads had fallen off during the first attempt, the scarves covered the duct tape that held the heads in place on the second attempt.

After lunch we boarded a raft for a spin on the Colorado River. We traveled on a very calm part of the river as the day was without wind or storms. We stopped several times to explore areas with some large pieces of petrified wood. It was nice to be on the river, but there were no rapids to add zest.

The primary reason to visit southern Utah is to admire the geological formations. The cliffs, canyons, rock walls, distinct layers, and isolated rock forms of many colors, textures and patterns are not just in the parks, but everywhere. There is abundant literature and discussion from guides that try to explain how and when these formations came to be. It is not easy to think in geologic time and to remember what geologists have learned about the different formations. We were told that some of the rocks we observed were formed 200 or 300 million years ago. That’s a lot of zeros.

It is impossible to gain a deep or even modest understanding of the geology in this area during a short visit. To stand in awe is possible. I could not even guess how many times we exclaimed to each other “Wow, look at that!” and “Can you believe that?”

We spent five nights at Red Cliff lodge, a resort with outdoor swimming pool that I managed to use only twice; horseback riding we did not try; trails we did not follow and fine dining we sampled only twice. It would have been nice to spend more time there, but it was time to move on to Mesa Verde.

Staying Healthy During Holiday Travel

(StatePoint) More than 100 million Americans will travel this holiday season, according to AAA estimates. Holiday travel can seem daunting, between flight delays and bumper-to-bumper traffic. What’s more, it has potential health impacts, including leg swelling and increased risk for cold and flu.

“Air travel, long drives, less sleep and added stress can weaken your immune system at a time when you’re around more people and susceptible to illness,” says nationally renowned natural health physician and best-selling author, Dr. Fred Pescatore.

Dr. Pescatore is sharing a few tips to help boost health for this season’s holiday travel.

Cold and flu season ramps up just in time for the holidays, which means you may be more at risk of catching a bug. “Take precautions before boarding your flight -- wash your hands frequently, bring hand sanitizer with you and snack on antioxidant-packed vegetables like broccoli, carrots and sweet potatoes to keep your immune system strong,” says Dr. Pescatore.

The American Sleep Association estimates that nearly 93 percent of travelers experience jet lag and it can be severe enough to interfere with holiday and vacation plans. “Sleep disturbances make you feel tired, nauseous and irritable -- not a good combination with holiday activities,” says Dr. Pescatore.

A peer-reviewed study shows that daily supplementation with the super-antioxidant, Pycnogenol (Piconoj-en-all), reduces jet lag symptoms by nearly 50 percent. “Pycnogenol, a natural botanical extract from the bark of the French maritime pine tree, is a traveler’s best friend. You can spend less time feeling fatigued and more quality time with your loved ones this holiday season,” says Dr. Pescatore.

Long periods of immobility in a cramped space like a car or plane contribute to swelling and fluid accumulation throughout the legs. Known as edema, it can be uncomfortable and may feel worse after travel.

Dr. Pescatore recommends taking shorts breaks to move around on road trips and to stand up and stretch during long flights to keep blood circulating and reduce swelling. “Pycnogenol is also shown to promote circulation, and studies show its benefits for reducing swelling and discomfort during long-distance travel. Again, it’s a good supplement for travel,” he says.

Pycnogenol is one of the most researched ingredients on the market with decades of studies showing its benefits for a variety of health applications. It’s available in more than 700 dietary supplements, multi-vitamins and health products worldwide. For more information, visit pycnogenol.com.

“Drink plenty of water, use a supplement for a beneficial boost and remember to enjoy the holidays. Yes, even the travel can be fun,” says Dr. Pescatore.

This holiday season, give yourself the gift of better health by taking simple steps.

In This Moment

By Grace Preli

Small moments are big moments and big moments are small moments too. So really, all moments are just this, moments. We can completely forget about whether they're big or small, or important, or boring, or whether they're anything at all. Throw out all the adjectives. They're moments. And whether we attach significance to them, or to some over others, it doesn't change what they are: moments. A single space in time, within which, all possibilities are available and all is open to change. You might not think you're suddenly different in this moment, in that blink of an eye, in the space of a breath, but oh you've changed. You've changed a million times over and everything has shifted. Inhale, it changes. Exhale, it shifts again.

We humans LOVE hierarchy. Oh yes. We love classifying anything and everything by importance. Better, worse, cooler, smarter, more important, less, compare, contrast. This is. That ISN'T. Moments, people, days, jobs, cars, ideas, foods, everything. Hide the wife, hide the kids, nothing is safe from our powers of assignation.

Okay, so, why? Why do we love attributing all these 'somethings' to something else? Why do we continue to play by the rules that something is always better, or worse? (Hint: we don't have to!) But let's look at this.

Assigning characteristics (commonly, adjectives) as a way of differentiating between things does help us when speaking about multiple things as it is often a way to easily describe a situation, person or scenario. Adjectives help us describe our world. What is this thing? I don't know, it just is what it is. Well it is what it is until someone comes along and says "no, what is it?" The old cat. The green sweater. Which chicken? The spicy chicken. Which boy? The cute one.

There are two tomatoes sitting on the counter. They are the same and they are different. They just are. Well what are they? Okay, okay, lets assign some adjectives, set the scene. They're red and big and warm from the sun. Look a human, walking by to make a sandwich! "Ew this one has a mark on it, this one is better" Blink. A hierarchy. Blink a judgement. Suddenly one tomato is better. One is now worse. The tomato thinks to itself what happened? I was just sitting here, now I'm worse?!

This judgement, this hierarchy doesn't honor what the tomatoes ARE. What they simply, ARE. Which is what? They're both tomatoes, both with the same capacity for tasty-ness and yummy-ness. Both picked from the same plant. Both ready to be put on the perfect sandwich. It also doesn't honor our choice. Our ability to say what we want without having to justify our want. We can honor our choice and in doing so, we honor what we didn't choose. We don't have to put down or judge what we don't want, we just have to say, "I don't want it."

Let's try this again. The red car is better than the blue car. Okay. But why is the red car BETTER than the blue car. Why does it have to be better? Maybe the blue car is an automatic and we prefer a standard. So because we want a standard, and perceive a standard car as being a better car for us, then that makes the red car better. But what if we looked at the two cars as being simply different? One is different from the other. What if we honored that one of the cars would serve us differently than the other. So, then we might say, the red car is different than the blue car. The red car is a standard. I would like the red car.



You might think I'm being pedantic... what are you on about Grace? But look what we just did. We honored both cars. Hi cars, thanks for being here today. Thanks for being you. Thanks for being the same (make, model etc.) Thanks for being different. We honor too our possibilities and our choice. We honor without putting one down. And we honor ourselves by picking the one we want, the one we really want, without making a fuss about the one we don't. The red car doesn't need to be cooler or better than the blue car. It just needs to be what it is. Different.

What happens when we start honoring everything for what it IS? We begin to see things as they ARE, not as we think they should be. Not as we judge them to be, or hierarchically want them to be, or wish them to be. When we see things for what they are, as they really are, our interaction with ourselves and our world becomes an opportunity to honor all that we are, and all that is. Instead of it being a red car, or a blue car, it is a car. A car we want? No? Okay. How about this car instead? We can apply this to anything, any one, any experience. A good book? No, a book. An angry cashier? No, just a cashier. Having a bad day? Just having a day.

When we approach objects, decisions, ideas, people, places, anything, in this way we give honor to EVERYTHING. Because we honor the something can be anything to anybody. This affects the decisions we make, suddenly, it's not a bad decision or a good decision, but a decision. It's not a big choice or a small choice it's a choice. We honor the infinite amount of possibility in our moments, in our things, in our changes. Breathe, change. Blink, change. Breathe again, change.

This is how we begin. With the big moment, which is really a small moment, which is really just this moment. So. Start 'small', which is to say, start NOW. In the moment, no, not that moment. This moment, THE moment. A single space in time, within which, all possibilities are available, all is open to change. When you pick out your shirt in the morning, pick it out, not because it is better, or prettier or red. Pick it out because it is perfectly perfect in that moment, as it is. Pick it out because it simply is. What is it? What you want of course! Honor your choice, honor all those other infinite choices that exist and are also perfectly perfect but fall away to reveal the perfectness of your choice, whatever it is, whatever it may be. Pick the sweater. Breathe. Pick the jeans.

Ed. note: Writer mini 'Autobio.': Grace Preli is a creative and spunky 22 year old. She is, among other things, a painter, a writer, a creator and a healer. She is inspired daily by people and their individual and collective journeys. For her, each day is a chance to grow, change, love, respect and create with herself and our world, a beautiful, kind and gentle place.

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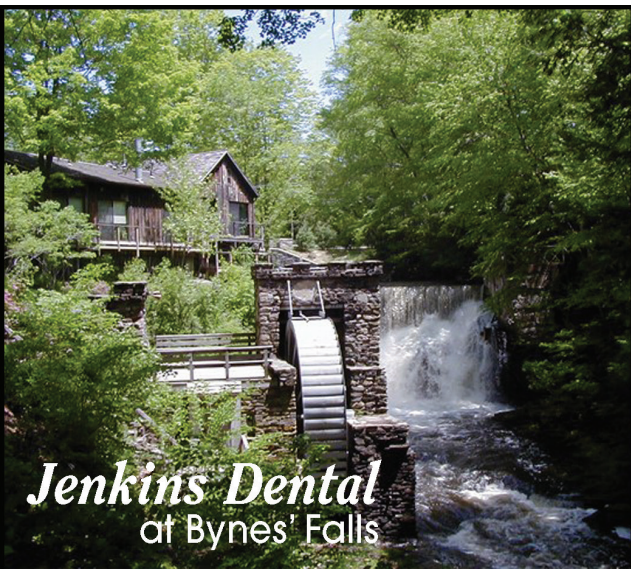
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Why We Are What We Eat

By Kelly Flanagan

How many of us think about what we eat? Why do we choose certain foods over others? Is there one “dietetic philosophy” – vegetarianism, veganism, eating locally/organically – that supersedes the rest in terms of mitigating environmental harm?

My name is Kelly Flanagan, and I am a junior Environmental Studies major at UConn. I am writing this article for my Society and Climate Change class, to try to answer the above questions for myself, and hopefully to help you answer them, too. Ed. note: The class is being taught by Phoebe C. Godfrey, whose articles have appeared on a regular basis in *Neighbors* for many years.

In the weeks before Thanksgiving, a holiday deeply imbedded in our agrarian culture, I met with fellow students and professors at UConn Storrs, and heard from many others through email, to try to further my understanding of how what we eat affects who we are in the world. I was already aware that the foods which one typically consumes is the result of many complicated factors, but because of the limited scope of this article, I was not able to discuss issues of inequality to food access, for example, as relevant as this and similar issues are to a conversation about food. As for myself: I currently follow a vegan diet and have done so for about a year and a half. My choice was the result of several different factors: I initially became vegetarian because I did not like to think that I sustained myself from animal suffering. However, veganism was also a constructive answer to my struggle with anorexia and binge-eating. Connecting myself to something larger than my own body – animal welfare and global health – helped me normalize my eating patterns and regain a healthier relationship with food. This, and my commitment to being environmentally friendly, are what motivate me to learn and share more about our global relationship with our diets.

My first meeting is with Cameron, a fellow student in Phoebe’s class, on a rainy Tuesday. He has an individualized major in Sustainable Soil Systems and Global Perspectives in Sustainable Agroecology, which is enough to assure me that he would provide expertise as well as a unique perspective. As we walked past the greenhouses in the floriculture building, I can hear rain falling over the leaves, and the long buildings give off a peaty, earthy smell.

Our interview is held in a room with a wooden workbench and shelves containing tools, cannisters of nails and paint, and, I notice with amusement, a jar of Jiffy peanut butter. Cam provides context for the issues discussed in films like *Cowspiracy* and *Food, Inc.*: firstly, the immense pollution and water usage from the beef industry, particularly the nitrous oxide that is produced from cattle feed-yards through the over-fertilization of the soil. Then there’s the fact that cows are fed corn, something that their digestive systems cannot process efficiently.

“Feeding corn to cows is messed up,” Cam says. In short, corn allows for the growth of *E.coli* in cow’s stomachs, which makes it more likely that the bacteria will make its way up the food chain to us. Scientists are currently addressing this problem by starving the cattle and then feeding them a grass-only diet in the week before they are set to be slaughtered, thereby reducing the counts of *E.coli*.

But why all this corn in the first place? The answer: “Monsanto runs the government.” This means that there are tons of corn subsidies—especially for corn ethanol—in farming states across the country, which began and are maintained by strong lobbying efforts.

Our conversation wanders to cover a variety of interesting topics: mycology and the important role that mushrooms play in soil systems, fermentation of food (Cam and a friend are starting up their own brewery and hope to sell to locals) as well as some of the misconceptions about eating vegan and local.

“Transportation costs are really misunderstood by consumers,” says Cam. The environmental cost of driving twenty minutes to a local farmer’s market every week to get tomatoes, for example, is about the same as that of the bulk transport to get those same tomatoes shipped from Mexico. However, there are some quick fixes—carpooling, for example, buying in bulk when possible to reduce the frequency of travel, as well as buying in season. And of course, all of these factors should be considered on a case-by-case basis, but what’s important is that consumers often attribute GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions to producer to store transport, when the reality is that there is more pollution on the consumer end.

There was also some bad news for my vegan diet: the water requirements of legumes, like lentils and dal, is very high, almost as high as for eggs. Of course, the cost in animal suffering and pollution of factory-farm raised chickens still means that I see veganism as a better option—yet,

it also meant I started thinking about the environmental costs of my lifestyle that I had been overlooking.

After my conversation with Cam, I am filled with the desire to learn more about different ways of living. (He recommended to me *The Omnivore’s Dilemma* by Michael Pollan, which I further recommend to you.) One of the most interesting parts of our conversation was our discussion of his visit to an all-vegan community in India, and how different, strenuous and yet fulfilling the life was there. However, I was also grimly set on this new truth—big agriculture was the enemy.

My conversation with Karl Guillard was largely focused on repealing some of these stereotypes. Guillard is a professor in the school of plant science/landscape architecture. We meet in his office; Horsebarn Hill, one of UConn’s trademark views, is visible through his window. We began the conversation by talking about how things got to be the way they are: in short, industrial agriculture.

“But I’m not using industrial agricultural in a pejorative sense,” says Professor Guillard. He explains that industrial agriculture is simply the best term to describe our-large scale automated farming operations. In fact, if we didn’t have this system of agriculture, then the percentage of people required for food production would be much higher than the current estimate of two percent—or two of every one hundred people.

“What I tell my students is, ‘in a class of forty, about ten or more of you wouldn’t be here. You would be out in the fields tilling the soil for weeds and rocks.’ Then I ask them to raise their hands if they would want to do manual labor, and I get one or two that do,” he says, shrugging.

I ask what an ideal system would look like for him. He responds by reaffirming a commitment to efficiency and hybridity, of applying the best solution to the problem of an eternally limited system – and this could mean big scale industrial agriculture, or highly refined indigenous systems of agroecology (incorporating agricultural systems in the natural formations of the environment), or both. The most important part is that the system can exist in perpetuity.

“[The problem is that] our current system is not sustainable,” Guillard says. “[If you look at] indigenous systems, rice paddies for example, they’re still around – we need to plan so that we can keep doing this 60 or 100 years in the future.”

Prof. Guillard even causes me to scale back some of my ire for Monsanto. “A lot of these companies are investing in looking at sustainable options,” he states. “Even if the solution doesn’t come from legislators, it will come from private industry.” I leave our talk still skeptical of Monsanto and other large-scale companies new-found commitment to the environment. A part of me believes it is too little and almost too late. However, it is clear to me that the problem is much more complicated than I could have originally imagined. For any UConn students that would be interested to learn more about these topics, Professor Guillard is teaching two courses on this subject in the spring semester: Environmental Sustainability of Food Production in Developed Countries, and Principles and Concepts of Agroecology.

But does all this really mean for us and for what we eat? On Thursday, I drove to Spring Valley Student Farm to share a meal with some of the students that lived and worked there. There were no street lights on the long, winding road down the hill, but that means I can see the stars as I make my way over puddles towards the yellow light of the farmhouse. I help the process by washing and slicing some purple kale that was grown on the farm. Ethan, a fellow student that lives on the farm, cooks it with some black beans, tempeh, crushed tomatoes and spices. As the dishes gently simmer on the stove, we discuss school and food, learning and farming. The meal I eat is vegan, and comes from a variety of different sources: local and hand-grown, as well as provided cheaply, canned or in bulk, thanks to a global market. What I find, most importantly, is that it gives me both bodily and spiritual fulfillment.

I hope that I can be excused for not incorporating all the enlightening conversations I have had into this article. Learning from fellow classmates, peers, classmates, dieticians and environmental law students has given me a wealth of different perspectives to incorporate into my own “philosophy of food.” However, the one constant of these exchanges was that what we eat is inexorably tied to our own relationship with ourselves, and with the Earth.

Of course, this does not mean that we need to make a religious doctrine of food. As Jess, another student at Spring Valley, wisely stated, “If you want to be environmentally conscious, read. Talk to people. Learn about whatever it is you care about, and keep thinking. It’s not useful to follow a regimented plan on how to live well if

that plan was made by someone else.”

The really rewarding part of any journey is taking it yourself. Wherever this journey leads you, whether it be to veganism, vegetarianism, or simply making time to eat locally with friends and family, I am sure that the world will be a better place because of it. This is what I have discovered in my journey in writing this article. Thank you for listening.

I would love to hear opinions on the information presented in this article, and to start a conversation about any of these topics.

I can be reached at kelly.flanagan@uconn.edu.

Tips to Reduce Holiday Spending, Without Cutting Back on Cheer

(StatePoint) Amid the merriment of the holiday season is a hard reality -- nearly six in 10 Americans don’t have enough savings to afford an unexpected expense like a \$500 car repair or \$1000 emergency room bill, according to a Bank survey conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associations International.

While 83 percent of U.S. consumers are expected to spend \$1,189 this holiday season, an amount equal to or more than they spent last year, there is no reason to enter the new year in bad financial standing if you do some smart planning and spend wisely. Here are some great ways to reduce your seasonal spending, without cutting back on the cheer.

Know your limit. Figure out how much you can spend on gifts, decorations, etc. Divide the total amount into a per-gift limit. If it doesn’t add up, cut back the gift list or consider making a baked item or other homemade gift, or giving a gift certificate for a service you might provide, such as babysitting, car washing or house cleaning.

Shop wisely. Watch for special sale days and coupons. Many online retail sites offer free shipping, discounts and other promotions during the holiday season. After the holidays, look for deep sales on wrapping paper and greeting cards to save for next year’s celebrations.

Spend differently. New ways to pay for items can make the task of budgeting organized and straightforward. Check out specialty e-retailers like Purchasing Power, which is offered by many employers as a voluntary benefit, and gives workers an opportunity to shop for thousands of brand name products they need now, for which they can make manageable payments over time through payroll deduction. With no credit checks, hidden fees or interest, it’s a service you may find gives you more flexibility over a traditionally expensive season.

“It’s not always possible to pay for big ticket items in-full when you need them, whether you’re buying a tablet for your teenager for the holidays or a family vacation package next summer,” says Elizabeth Halkos, Chief Operating Officer for Purchasing Power, LLC. “We created this solution to empower people to budget more wisely, and buy the things they need, while avoiding penalty fees and ballooning interest associated with other payment options.”

Ask your employer if an employee purchase program and financial wellness benefit like PurchasingPower.com is available to your workforce.

Some additional cost-friendly options for the holidays:

Suggest a family gift exchange. Spare the expense and frustration of trying to find gifts for each member of your extended family. Instead, pull names from a hat and find something special for just one person. For extra fun, play “Secret Santa,” keeping gift-giver identities concealed until the gift exchange.

Spend time together. In lieu of gifts, bring everyone together over the holidays. Have a board game night or a day of service, such as serving meals at a shelter.

Enjoy the season. There are many ways to celebrate spending little to no money. Curl up for a holiday movie marathon, bake cookies or look for free holiday concerts in your local area. Shopping malls and community centers typically offer a schedule of no-cost holiday entertainment.

For a better financial start in the new year, spend wisely this holiday season. Smart budgeting and new payment options can make it easy.

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Charitable Contributions from IRAs

By James Zahansky, AWMA

Maybe this holiday season is making you feel generous, what better way to fulfill that need than a charitable contribution from your IRA?

The Pension Protection Act of 2006 first allowed taxpayers age 70½ and older to make tax-free charitable donations directly from their IRAs. By making a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) from an IRA directly to a qualified charitable organization, older IRA owners were allowed to exclude up to \$100,000 annually from gross income. These gifts, also known as “charitable IRA rollovers,” would otherwise be taxable IRA distributions. The law was originally scheduled to expire in 2007, but was extended periodically through 2014 by subsequent legislation and finally made permanent by the Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes (PATH) Act of 2015.



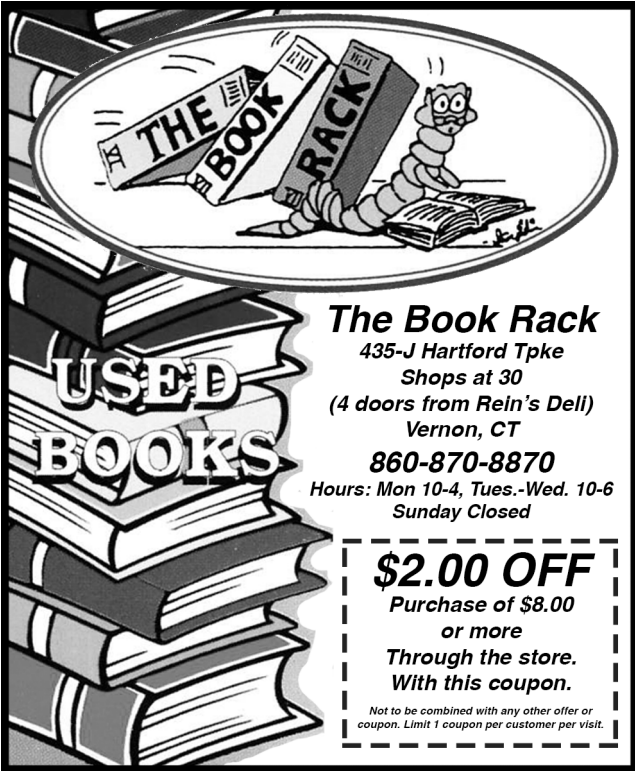
How QCDs work

You must be 70½ or older in order to be eligible to make QCDs. You simply instruct your IRA trustee to make a distribution directly from your IRA (other than SEP and SIMPLE IRAs) to a qualified charity. The distribution must be one that would otherwise be taxable to you. You can exclude up to \$100,000 of QCDs from your gross income each year. And if you file a joint return, your spouse (if 70½ or older) can exclude an additional \$100,000 of QCDs. Note: You don’t get to deduct QCDs as a charitable contribution on your federal income tax return—that would be double-dipping.

QCDs count toward satisfying any required minimum distributions (RMDs) that you would otherwise have to receive from your IRA, just as if you had received an actual distribution from the plan. However, distributions that you actually receive from your IRA (including RMDs) and subsequently transfer to a charity cannot qualify as QCDs.

Assume that your RMD for 2017, which you’re required to take no later than December 31, 2017, is \$25,000. You receive a \$5,000 cash distribution from your IRA in February 2017, which you then contribute to Charity A. In June 2017, you also make a \$15,000 QCD to Charity A. You must include the \$5,000 cash distribution in your 2017 gross income (but you may be entitled to a charitable deduction if you itemize your deductions). You exclude the \$15,000 of QCDs from your 2017 gross income. Your \$5,000 cash distribution plus your \$15,000 QCD satisfy \$20,000 of your \$25,000 RMD for 2017. You’ll need to withdraw another \$5,000 no later than December 31, 2017, to avoid a penalty.

Assume you turned 70½ in 2016. You must take your first RMD (for 2016) no later than April 1, 2017. You must take your second RMD (for 2017) no later than December 31, 2017. Assume each RMD is \$25,000. You don’t take any cash distributions from your IRA in 2016 or 2017. On March 31, 2017, you make a \$25,000 QCD to Charity B. Because the QCD is made prior to April 1, it satisfies your \$25,000 RMD for 2016. On December 31, 2017, you make a \$75,000 QCD to Charity C. Because the QCD is made by December 31, it satisfies your \$25,000 RMD for 2017. You can exclude the \$100,000 of QCDs from your



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As indicated earlier, a QCD must be an otherwise taxable distribution from your IRA. If you’ve made non-deductible contributions, then normally each distribution carries with it a pro-rata amount of taxable and nontaxable dollars. However, a special rule applies to QCDs--the pro-rata rule is ignored and your taxable dollars are treated as distributed first.

Assume you have a single traditional IRA with a current value of \$100,000, which includes \$10,000 of nondeductible contributions. Therefore, you have a taxable balance of \$90,000 and a nontaxable balance of \$10,000. If you were to make a \$5,000 withdrawal from your IRA, nine-tenths (\$10,000/100,000) of your distribution, or \$4,500, would be taxable and one-tenth (\$10,000/100,000), or \$500, would be nontaxable. However, if you make a \$5,000 QCD, the entire \$5,000 amount will be considered to come from your \$90,000 taxable balance.

Your QCD cannot be made to a private foundation, donor-advised fund, or supporting organization (as described in IRC Section 509(a)(3)). Further, the gift cannot be made in exchange for a charitable gift annuity or to a charitable remainder trust.

Why are QCDs important?

Without this special rule, taking a distribution from your IRA and donating the proceeds to a charity would be a bit more cumbersome and possibly more expensive. You would request a distribution from the IRA and then make the contribution to the charity yourself. You’d include the distribution in gross income and then take a corresponding income tax deduction for the charitable contribution. But due to IRS limits, the additional tax from the distribution may be more than the charitable deduction.

QCDs avoid all this by providing an exclusion from income for the amount paid directly from your IRA to the charity--you don’t report the IRA distribution in your gross income, and you don’t take a deduction for the QCD. The exclusion from gross income for QCDs also provides a tax-effective way for taxpayers who don’t itemize deductions to make charitable contributions.

The legal and tax issues discussed here can be complex. Be sure to consult an estate planning attorney for further guidance.

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The Neighbors Paper
A little paper big on community

Necessary Evil

By Tom Woron

I wish they were never invented. On second thought I'm glad they were because they make life much easier. You know exactly what I'm referring to. Cell phones.

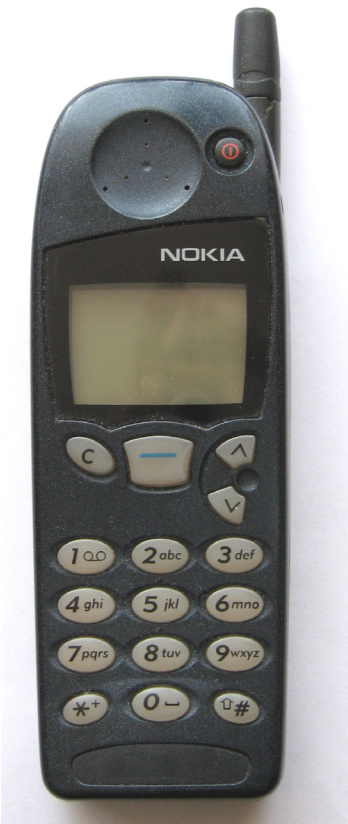
Look all around wherever you go today and what do you see? You see people everywhere holding and concentrating on a little device in their hands. Whether you're in a store, out at a bus stop, at work or walking in the local park or shopping mall, everyone everywhere is concentrating on a little device in their hands.

Try telling a person under 30 years of age that not too long ago (so it seems) if you were away from home and not able to access a regular, now we call them, land based telephone, you then had to find what was called a "pay phone" somewhere that was available for public use. Yes, you had to pay to use it by dropping coins into a slot. For many years a dime got you unlimited call time if the call was local.

Though invented much earlier, wireless portable phones, or cell phones, as we know them today, started to show up with the general public around the mid 1990s. However in the mid 1990s to have a cell phone was, for the most part, a status symbol, an item to get you attention and let everyone around you know that you had above average wealth. Once in a grocery store in 1996 I was near the refrigerators that stored the milk. A woman nearby reached into her purse and pulled out a wireless cell phone. She proceeded to call home and asked whoever answered to check if they needed milk. "Look what I got!" the woman seemed to be saying to everyone around. "Showoff!" I muttered under my breath. Just buy some milk and if it was needed then great, but if you end up with surplus milk then just consume it faster! Geezus! Those were my unspoken thoughts.

In 1998 my brother got his first cell phone and my own wife gave me a hard time about it questioning, or more accurately disputing, if he needed one. But then as we got into the 2000s cell phones were becoming more affordable and a common sight. Less and less people did not have one. It was soon obvious how much easier life could be if one could be in easy communication with family, friends, and other people who are important in their lives. By 2006 we had a daughter in school who was involved in extracurricular activities. Staying after school and evening sports practices were to be part of life. Being in easy touch with her, her coaches and the parents of other kids would make life a whole lot easier. Guess who then went out and bought a couple cell phones?!

Nonetheless as much as cell phones improve the quality of life, there is always another way to look at things. There was a time that you could actually have a conversation with someone and have that person's attention when speaking to him or her. In 2004 I was assigned to a different area at my place of work. I made friends with the gentleman that sat next to me. It seemed to never fail that whenever I engaged him in conversation, suddenly a



tune would start playing in his pocket. Out of his pocket came the cell phone, he would look at it and say, "Excuse me I have to take this." It would often be his wife calling about something that was neither urgent nor important. This same scenario began to play out frequently in different places with different people. I always found the interruption very irritating.

On the same note it seems today that you cannot engage in conversation with anyone without their cell phone chirping an annoying high pitched "beep beep" or make a distinct "da ding" signaling that a text message just showed up. Then the next thing you know the person you're talking with is concentrating on their cell phone. Recently I got in touch with a long lost friend and we meet periodically to talk over coffee. Guess what? Yes, his cell phone is constantly flashing or making noise and the next thing I know my friend is intensely concentrating on typing a text message on the touch keyboard of his cell phone. When that happens I stop talking. "I'm listening," my friend would say. Believe me he is not listening. When he's done concentrating on his texting someone else, I politely ask him (hint hint!) if he noticed that I keep my cell phone off and out of sight when we meet for socialization. I doubt the hint ever registered.

It's a whole different story if one has a family member that's ill at home or in the hospital. In such circumstances you should have your cell phone on and in reach at all times.

There is a law in Connecticut forbidding the use of hand held cell phones while driving. Yet I constantly see drivers with a hand held phone at their ear. By the grins and expressions on their faces I could tell that it's a gossip call and not one that's necessary while driving. Safety on the road while talking or texting on a cell phone is a whole different issue.

On the positive side, being able to reach family and friends instantaneously by cell phone undisputedly makes life a whole lot easier. Cell phones can be very convenient

when stuck in traffic and you need to reach your spouse, boss or co-workers. Cell phones can be a Godsend when in difficult situations. A woman at work described how her car got stuck in snow during the Great New England Blizzard of 1978. She was stranded away from home with her 3-year-old son. What she wouldn't have given to have a cell phone then. Cell phones can even save lives. A person with a life threatening injury or in a potentially life threatening situation can call or have someone else call for help faster due to the availability of cell phones.

Cell phones are here to stay like them or not. They can be considered a necessary evil.

A big question, however, is whether cell phones are totally safe to use. I know of two young women that had brain tumors before age 30 and another who had one while in her 40s. Another gentleman I know had some sort of cancer on the inside of one side of his face before he was 30. All four of these people are fine today but went through difficult ordeals. Were these cases caused by cell phone usage? Are cell phones totally safe? I do not have the answers to these questions.

State Cuts

By Kevin Pratt

Recent items have come to light in regards to people on state insurance a.k.a. husky/title 19. People receiving care from Hartford Healthcare may not be covered under state insurance by the first of the year. This means several hundred to several thousand people will be without coverage in the very near future.

If these cuts occur, people such as me will have no home care coverage whatsoever. So here's the question. Where are we supposed to go and what are we supposed to do if this happens? A lot of us cannot rely on family members or friends to take care of us on a regular basis. As I stated in my previous article I currently receive 14 hours a week of care, twice a day. This care is very much needed in order for me to survive on a daily basis. So what am I supposed to do if these cuts occur? Some of my options are moving into an assisted living facility further away from my current location, which I really don't want to do because it would require me to quit my job and take several steps backwards. My second option would be to move into a group home where I would be placed me if there was an open bedroom. I would then be farther away and probably still have to quit my job and then they would take my entire retirement and my Social Security. I would be treated like a child given an allowance once a month to buy toiletries and any necessary items. My final option would be Personal Care Assistants (PCA's). However, because of my age and the fact that I am still currently working, I would have to quit my job and be completely destitute in order to qualify for the PCA program. However, keep in mind my age still may be a factor.

With state cuts looming, there are a lot of people, including myself, who are very afraid of what's going to happen to them. I don't want to get rid of what I've accumulated over the last 24 years of working and living independently. Everything I mentioned above would be a regression that's not healthy for disabled individuals such as myself. What happened to the notion of wanting to help the individual? What happened to the notion of caring for the person that was less fortunate and needs help? I know it seems at times that homecare is a thankless job. From my perspective it is not. I appreciate everyone that comes in to help me every day. And I really do not want to see them go away because you will still have several generations needing help and services well after I'm gone. Who is going to speak up for those people that need help? Who is going to step up for those later generations that will need help and don't have family members to rely on? That's the question they should be asking before they make all these cuts and affect hundreds of thousands of people in Connecticut.

The next generation of younger people should take interest in wanting to help. Individual CNA work/home care is not a thankless job. There are people out there I appreciate more than people know. The next time you see a disabled individual, ask yourself how he or she got to work or got up that day. I guarantee a home health aide/CNA got them out of bed and got them ready.

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Kidde Recalls Fire Extinguishers

Thursday, November 2nd, 2017 –

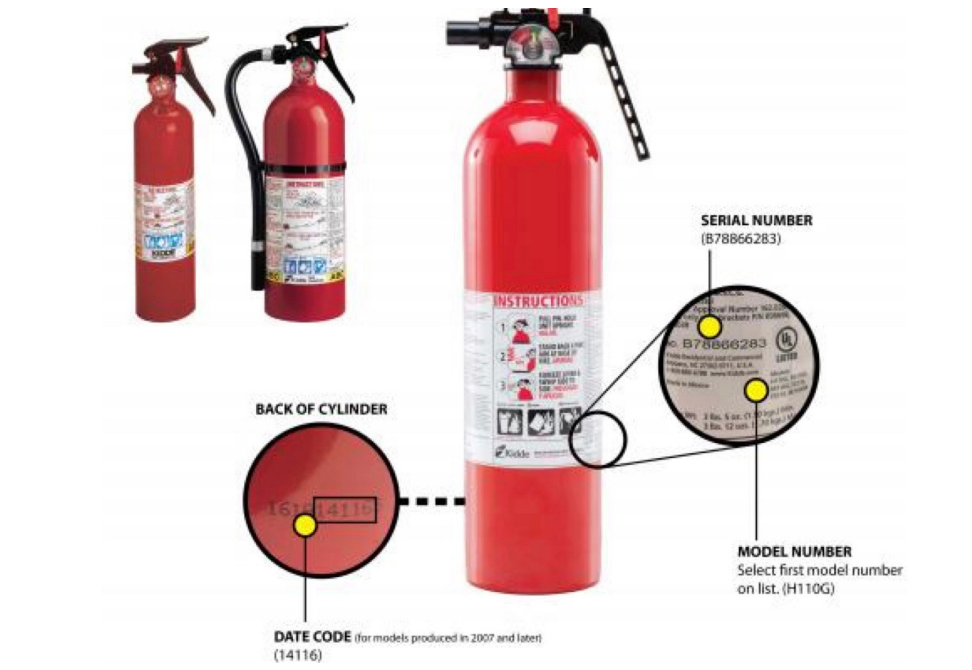
Today, Kidde announced a recall of fire extinguishers with plastic handles. The extinguishers can become clogged or require excessive force to discharge, and may fail in a fire emergency. In the case the nozzle is detached, it may detach with enough force to pose an impact hazard.

"It's important to us that families have the tools they need to prepare for emergencies, and to prevent them," said Consumer Protection Commissioner Michelle H. Seagull, "We encourage everyone who owns a fire extinguisher to take a moment, and double check if it's made by Kidde and has a plastic handle. If your fire extinguisher falls into that category, take the appropriate steps for replacement right away."

This recall includes 134 models of Kidde fire extinguishers manufactured

between 1973 and 2017. For units produced before 2007, a date code is not printed on the fire extinguisher. Previous recalls were issued in March of 2009 and February of 2015. The units were sold in red, white, and silver.

These units were sold at Menards, Montgomery Ward, Sears, Walmart, and other department stores, home and hardware stores nationwide, and at Amazon.com, ShopKidde.com. They have also been sold in conjunctions with commercial trucks, recreational vehicles, and some boats. About 37.8 million have been sold, and a complete model list can be found on the Consumer Product Safety Commission's website. Consumers who own, or suspect they own one of these models should contact Kidde immediately for a replacement by calling 855-271-0773 from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET



Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. ET Saturday and Sunday, or by visiting www.kidde.com and clicking on "Product Safety Recall" for more information.

Mental Health Therapy Within the Geography of the Healthcare Industry, Part 1

By Edmund J. Smith, LCSW

A Question

A question that arises for me again and again, as I look at the kind of work I have been involved in as an outpatient therapist is, ‘how much good is this work actually doing, and how would it be otherwise if the health care system itself was otherwise?’ Like Chinese boxes, I realize these are questions within questions, but sometimes that is where we find a bit of the truth.

Considering the ever-expanding set of treatment modalities that have been developed since the early days of psychotherapy, I wonder about what goes by the name of therapy, and what, after all, is clearly therapeutic. In terms of many of the new-age treatments, it is not so bad to say that it is often a matter of ‘old wine in new bottles’. But to some, all of it tastes sour, regardless of vintage. A friend once suggested- a not so friendly suggestion- that what I do is really redundant-or worse- to anything helpful. He, for example, had years of therapy to no avail, and was better served by a good group of friends along with one or another substance. This set me to thinking about his personal situation but more broadly about the idea of therapy- mental health therapy, that is.

Going for years of therapy with little or nothing to show raises of the question of what keeps such a person going. Surely if it is the illusion of being helped, that in itself is a very interesting thing. In medicine, the idea of the placebo is not one to be scorned so easily. The belief that one is being helped may be given the same weight as the opposite impression that one has been left to suffer by those who might otherwise support. So the belief that one is being helped, that there is a helper who has an interest, is in itself a motive force for a person taking steps of their own to resuscitate their life force, or whatever we wish to call the will to live.

Closely connected to motivation is the quality of relationship with one’s therapist. It is not a matter of being insufferably affable. It is a matter of becoming a witness to ‘who’ someone is, who they had been before what befell them, and what they still aspire for in their daily lives. To note these details and reflect in one’s awareness through the back and forth of dialogue and of being together: I believe this can be a gift, one that some friendships, but not so many, are able to achieve.

...Within a Question

I want to look at the question of the tasks of medicine in comparison to those of psychotherapy, and what is it that is in common to both that encumbers their progress. In medicine, one is treated and the rest of one’s time is spent ‘following doctor’s orders’, which may or may not call on the individual to enact changes in their daily lives that support and extend the benefits of the medical intervention. Preventive medicine would seem to be a first priority, but sadly, the financial structure of this system finds little to recommend it. A similar failing lies in the clueless approach to mental health that originates in a studied blindness to societal and familial stress and trauma. In addressing the patient once the damage has been done, there still can be remedial measures- preventive of worse insults to the individual’s well-being. In medical terms, this would include lifestyle changes (arguably an impractical luxury in many dire situations); in mental health, it may include a number a ways for the individual to challenge assumptions about the possibilities for change that exist, though superficially all doors appear to be closed at first glance. The surest way to find one’s path through a harsh landscape is to acknowledge the ‘lay of the land’. In the caring professions, economics stands as a painfully prominent feature.

Both the fields of modern medicine and of psychotherapy have been dealt body blows by the always advancing insinuation of profiteering interests, especially by drug and insurance companies. In this, because they exist on a continuum with other capitalist infrastructural elements, the professional organizations, due to their dependent status, have been complicit. When I was still in graduate school, the movement quaintly known as ‘managed care’ became part of the paradigm for our future work environments. It was presented at the time as a bitter pill, but it was a pill we were forced to swallow, nonetheless. The imposition of time-limited, billable sessions, as opposed to having care determined by the extent of need as it presents itself in the course of treatment, imposes an industrial model that is, in effect, a form of piece-work,



commodity-driven strategy predicated on squeezing more profit out of each working hour by speeding up the production process and making compensation contingent on productivity. Further, in regards to health care specifically, value is assigned to the treatment of each condition, and this value is correlated with the actuarial estimates of insurance companies, a reality that may make treatment just too expensive for a person with a given policy, and more direly, for people with no insurance at all. The constraints imposed by this business model of health care are manifest most noticeably in the ‘flash visits’ to doctor’s offices, often consisting of as little of 10 minutes with the clinician and more time occupied in paper work and in waiting. This form of care makes it virtually impossible to allow for there to be anything resembling a therapeutic bond, which would favor necessary communication and positive regard within the clinician-client relationship. The problems of care, which are somewhat attenuated in the PPO model, are even more pronounced in the case of the typical HMO.

And Yet...

Just as the patient is asked to assess what possibilities for positive change exist within the scope of otherwise limited vistas of the world one inhabits, the practitioner is likewise forced back upon resources that are far from ideally accessed, facing the same barriers of monetized, billable units of service. Yet two things remains a constant, through all the permutations of the healthcare industry, and indeed cross-culturally and even trans-historically : the motivation to get well and the dedication of the healer to never give up on the patient and, as goes the Hippocratic Oath, ‘to do no harm’. Through the mad jungle of industry and ideology, still stands the will and knowledge of the healer and the desire and ability of the patient to heal. Inevitably, we (healers and patients alike) will face greater hurdles in a world in which market forces grow less and less subtle in their insistence that we toe the bottom line. In spite of this, we insist that the ‘bottom line’, contrary to corporatist opinion, is us.



Drivers Watch for Deer and Moose

Connecticut’s Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) reminds motorists to be watchful of increased deer and moose activity along roadways, especially during early morning and evening hours. Fall is the peak of the breeding season for Connecticut’s small but expanding moose population in the northern part of the state. The breeding season (also known as “the rut”) for white-tailed deer closely follows the moose breeding season, running from late October through late December.

DEEP’s Wildlife Division says motorists should be aware and heed “Deer Crossing” signs along state highways. Motorists are advised to slow down and drive defensively should a deer or moose be spotted on or by the road. Because moose are darker in color and stand much higher than deer, observing reflective eye-shine from headlights is infrequent and, when struck, moose often end up impacting the windshield of vehicles. All moose and deer vehicle collisions should be reported to local, state, or DEEP Environmental Conservation Police Officers (860-424-3333).

“During 2016, approximately 3,700 deer were killed in the state due to collisions with vehicles,” said Rick Jacobson, Director of the DEEP Wildlife Division.

“Over 40 moose-vehicle accidents have been reported in Connecticut between 1995 and 2016, with an average of two per year since 2002,” continued Jacobson. “Two moose-vehicle accidents have already occurred this past September. It is believed that one of the moose traveled from Stafford to Essex over a five-day period before being struck by a motorist.”

Most of Connecticut is not considered ideal habitat for moose because the state’s landscape is fragmented, roadways have high traffic volume, and moose have large home ranges (approximately 10-15 square miles). Moose venturing into southern Connecticut, with high population density, road networks, and traffic volumes, pose an increased potential for human fatalities from accidents as compared to deer-vehicle accidents. Residents throughout the state are encouraged to report moose sightings on the DEEP website at www.ct.gov/deep/wildlife.

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The Tim Ray Trio (above) and Bruno Raberg Triloka (at right) perform at The Packing House in Willington. Contributed photos.



By EC-CHAP

Happy Holidays!

Please join us for our Winter “First Sunday at The Mill Works”, Sunday, December 3rd! EC-CHAP will provide an afternoon of History, Art, and Performance from noon to 5:00pm. What better way to begin the Holiday Season than with this community event? Admission is free and open to everyone.

Last month’s programming at The Packing House included a diverse genre mix of jazz, folk, classical and rock. From the Tim Ray Trio and unique sound of Bruno Raberg’s Triloka - to Belle of the Fall and the classic documentary of Woodstock. Thank you to all that joined us for these events. Your continued support is greatly appreciated!

Our schedule for December will take us through the middle of the month, followed by a break for the Holidays. In addition to a variety of music and our 3rd annual film showing of “It’s A Wonderful Life” (PG) on December 15th, join us for a special program with spiritual medium Maura Geist, Friday, December 1st at 7:30pm. This month we are also offering a Sunday afternoon performance with “Eclectica” on Sunday, December 10th at 3:00pm. This acoustic classical ensemble will deliver a timeless sound for the Season (details below).



Dean Bolt (above) and acoustic trio Seldom Heard (below) perform at The Packing House. Contributed photos.



Take advantage of an opportunity to share your creative talent with us at our “Talent Showcase” at 7:00pm, December 13th (and every 2nd Wednesday of the month) – It’s free and it’s fun! Last month brought two outstanding performers to The Packing House – West Hartford singer/songwriter Dean Bolt, and the local acoustic trio “Seldom Heard”. We recommend calling 518-791-9474 in advance to get on the schedule, although you can sign up at the door if you wish (time permitting). If you’re not performing, consider joining us to experience a variety of regional

artists.

This month, EC-CHAP will be holding our monthly “Information Exchange Meeting” on Tuesday, December 12th at 7:00pm in The Packing House. If you’re interested in learning more about EC-CHAP and how you can become involved, please join us. We would like to understand what expectations you hold for your regional cultural center. Refreshments provided.

We encourage you to visit our website at www.ec-chap.org or www.thepackinghouse.us for additional program details, ‘soundbites’, videos, and artist bios. EC-CHAP will be offering a new Drum Circle series led by master drummer Bob Bloom beginning in January. If you are a seasoned percussionist, or just someone who enjoys an interactive drumming experience, join us on the 3rd Tuesday of the month from January to May, 2018.

The Eastern Connecticut Center for History, Art, and Performance (EC-CHAP) is a 501.c.3 nonprofit volunteer member-based cultural organization. All proceeds from programs, donations, and partnerships go directly to EC-CHAP to support operations and program costs.

The members of the EC-CHAP Board wish you and yours a safe, happy, and restful Holiday Season!

December Performances and Film Showings

Our line-up for this month includes:

EC-CHAP – Special Program:

An Evening with Spiritual Medium Maura Geist. Friday, December 1st, 7:30pm.

By popular demand, Maura is returning for her third appearance at The Packing House. She will provide an overview of how a reading is done, methods used in the process and what she will need from the audience. Maura will then make connections for the audience members and bring loving and healing messages from loved ones that have crossed over.

Based on experience and general audience attendance, approximately ten readings are typically able to be completed during an evening session. There will be a brief intermission ending with a Q & A. Come be part of this inspirational, loving and healing evening in our intimate historic setting. Doors 7:00pm / Show 7:30pm. Tickets \$15.00 Advance (online) / \$20.00 Door.

Winter “First Sunday at The Mill Works” (Community Event). Sunday, December 3rd, Noon to 5:00pm.

Join us at The Mill Works this Holiday Season for an afternoon of activity, performances, fun and refreshments! During the day, visit the Gardiner Hall Jr. Historical Museum, and artist studios and work spaces of resident Community members. Meet Jack Broderick, local Plein-Air painter, who will offer a painting demonstration through the afternoon. Performances in The Packing House include the Hall Memorial School “Select Chorus” led by Jason Philips at 1:00pm; followed by singer/songwriter Dean Bolt at 2:00pm. Artists Chris Gunderson and Carol Maciewicz will offer an ornament decorating activity for all ages, and period refreshments typical of the 19th century will be available. Free admission - Open to everyone!

EC-CHAP’s Jazz Series:

Kevin Harris Project. Saturday, December 9th, 7:30pm

Join us for the Kevin Harris Project’s debut appearance at The Packing House! The nature of the Kevin Harris Project is a highly interactive compilation of repertoire that seeks to interpret a message of strength and curiosity through mostly original compositions and occasional



American standards. Harris believes the intersection of classically influenced music, American traditional jazz, and Afro-Latin rhythms is the perfect spring board for exciting conversations with the members of his group.

When the unmistakable musical influences of The Ionious Monk and Charlie Parker intersect with J.S. Bach, Scott Joplin, and the folkloric rhythms of Cuba, could one possibly conceptualize the celebration that occurs at that intersection? New York-based jazz pianist Kevin Harris plays a distinctive combination of traditional and contemporary music that seeks to explore such a crossroad. Doors 7:00pm / Show 7:30pm. Tickets \$15.00 Advance (online) / \$20.00 Door. Special student pricing \$10.00 at the door (with valid I.D.).

EC-CHAP Acoustic Artist Series:

Eclectica (Classical). Sunday afternoon, December 10th, 3:00pm

Eclectica is a Connecticut-based chamber trio that arranges and plays music spanning centuries, continents, musical styles, and cultures - using a unique combination of instruments including recorders, various sizes of viola da gamba, hammered dulcimer, and violin.

Eclectica’s 2017 Christmas program takes listeners on a seasonal musical journey featuring original arrangements of Pre-Renaissance Spanish “cantiguas”, selections from Handel’s Messiah, Vivaldi’s The Seasons, and Tchaikovsky’s The Nutcracker, favorite American 20th-century holiday songs, and many other seasonal delights. Doors 2:30pm / Show 3:00pm. Tickets \$10.00 Advance (online) / \$15.00 Door.

EC-CHAP Friday Night Film Series:

“It’s A Wonderful Life” (PG). Friday, December 15th, 7:30pm

Join us for the 3rd annual showing of this Holiday classic “It’s A Wonderful Life” (1946) at The Packing House. Starring James Stewart, Donna Reed, and Lionel Barrymore. “An angel helps a compassionate but despairingly frustrated businessman by showing what life would have been like if he never existed.” (IMDb). Rated-PG. Friday, December 15th. Doors open at 7:00pm / Showing at 7:30pm. Suggested donation \$5.00.

continued on next page

EC-CHAP Announces New ‘Artist In Residence’ Program

By EC-CHAP

The Board of the Eastern Connecticut Center for History, Art, and Performance (EC-CHAP) is proud to announce our inaugural “Artist In Residence” (AIR) Program! We believe the provision of collaborative experiences to serve and promote visual artists passionate in their craft represents an integral part our mission and growth as a regional cultural institution. As a result, after significant planning, meetings, and review, we have formally established our first artist residency with Rebecca Zablocki and Jesse Sullivan.

Rebecca and Jesse are an artist couple who recently relocated back to Connecticut. The two completed their Bachelor of Fine Arts degrees from the University of Hartford’s Hartford Art School. Rebecca, primarily a printmaker, is originally from Long Island, NY, and Jesse, a potter and writer, was born and raised in Vernon, CT.

Directly following graduation from the Hartford Art School, Jesse secured an Artist In Residence position at the Worcester Center for Crafts in Worcester, MA. During his two years there he was able to focus on his body

of work creating pottery, while also teaching and helping to maintain the community ceramics studio. Rebecca returned to NY for a year where she worked in a gallery and art studio, teaching and managing the space. She currently holds the position of Assistant Director of the Gallery and Gallery Store at the Worcester Center for Crafts.

Please join us in welcoming Rebecca and Jesse to the EC-CHAP Artist In Residence program where you will see and learn more about the work of these fine artists.



Tickets, Reservations, CANCELLATIONS, and Contact

Tickets for all shows and program registrations can be purchased online at www.thepackinghouse.us/upcoming or at the door. Check our website frequently for new additions.

Table reservations and cabaret seating available. Unless specified otherwise, all performances will feature Bring Your Own Beverage & Food “BYOB&F”™ - wine & beer ONLY (I.D.s Required). Snacks and soft drinks will also be available. Doors open 30-minutes prior to show time.

Program cancellations will be listed on The

Packing House website (www.thepackinghouse.us/upcoming). Cancellations due to weather will also be listed on the News 8 website at www.wtnh.com.

Did you know that The Packing House is available to rent for your event? Whether it’s a business meeting, a creative project, or a private function, we can support your needs in our historic setting. Call anytime for details.

The Packing House is located at The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington, CT 06279. Parking is located onsite and across the street. For questions, program or rental information and table reservations, please call 518-791-9474. Email The Packing House (info@thepackinghouse.us) or EC-CHAP (info@ec-chap.org).



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Join us for QCF playing out dates:

Tuesday, December 12th, 7-8:30pm
The Lakeview Restaurant, Coventry

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Info Bernie: b.schreiber@snet.net

Picking-up Ethical Tools in Jail

By P.K. Willey, Ph.D.

Throughout history, in complete contradiction to common sense, people of Conscience who have stood up for causes of justice selflessly, for what everyone can recognize as being for the greater good, have often had to spend time in jail. Imprisonment had a great influence on the evolution and expression of Gandhi’s ideals. In South Africa he was jailed for 249 days; in India 2089 days. Altogether, more than 6½ years of his life. To work with Conscience necessarily involve self-restraint. Aspects of restrictions in jail life became ethical tools Gandhi picked-up and adapted to his communities or Ashrams. Prison exposure altered the ways in which he viewed his body.

Gandhi’s first time in jail in South Africa started on January 10, 1908; sentenced to two months for resistance to the compulsory Registration Act, but released after twenty days. Initially, he plunged into self-doubt; wrested suddenly away from family and social activism. He recoiled from the atmosphere filled with criminal elements, moral ignorance, and violence. Yet, he was able to take control of his mind, finding tools for ethical growth. From his first jail experience in South Africa, he picked up two restraints that he maintained throughout his life: he learned to do without tea or coffee, and to finish his last meal of the day before sundown.

He later called his ashram community members ‘inmates’ stressing equality and the degree of self-regulation required for ashram life. In jail, he learned the necessary value of stark simplicity. The bedding was naught but planks. Vigorous physical labor was the order of the day. No privacy was permitted, contact with the outside world was forbidden, except through specific channels. In jail, there was one uniform, one bowl, and one spoon, for food. Eating, if done, was to keep the body going to labor more. One had perforce to control one’s palate, there were no other choices. Gandhi steadied his mind, looking for moral benefit:

“I saw that some of the regulations that the prisoners had to observe were such as should be voluntarily observed by a brahmachari, that is, one desiring to practice self-restraint.”

In South African jails, the prisoners often had to stand long hours, completely naked, awaiting roll call. Gandhi learned to become completely indifferent to his body. Later in India, his lack of concern about his nudity disconcerted many, who had not had their own conditioning in this regard shaken off as had Gandhi.

As the nature of all Gandhi’s efforts were to increase his harmony with Reality, the people who joined his campaigns of civil disobedience were happy to find themselves imprisoned together. Being jailed together meant they could maintain a supportive ethical environment for one another through their group presence, mutual service, and love of their ideals.

In one jail going experience in South Africa, Gandhi’s Indian companions petitioned the Jail Authorities for curry powder and salt cooked into their food. Gandhi did not join them. The petition was categorically denied as being unnecessary from the standpoint of maintaining health. Only salt was allowed, after the food was cooked.

We all appreciate the food we are accustomed to, and granted, the unique combinations of ‘curry’ have medicinally positive health benefits. Traditionally however, those who follow the path of renunciation, as Gandhi sought to do, eschew spicy and savoury foods, due to their stimulating effects upon the body system. This demand on the part of Indian prisoners may have further reflected the divisive effects of colonialism and growing apartheid in South Africa upon their minds; a subsequent desire for European whites to see them as being distinct from Africans, and as being British Indians. Gandhi picked up this ethical tool, and applied the restriction of salt-less, spice-less food to himself when outside of prison as well.

In his second community, Tolstoy Farm in South Africa, the influence of jail going was clearly seen in many aspects of community life. About life in that community

he later said:

“As for food, we generally had rice, dal [a pea or lentil soup], vegetable and rotis [unleavened bread] with porridge occasionally added. All this was served in a single dish which was not really a dish, but a kind of bowl such as is supplied to prisoners in Jail. We had made wooden spoons on the Farm ourselves. There were three meals in the day...After the evening meal we had prayers at seven or half past seven.”

The caps that African prisoners were forced to wear inspired Gandhi as another archetypal symbol of the downtrodden masses, and the famous ‘Gandhi topee’ a small white cap, popular among men in north India, is a copy of it. Clothing at Tolstoy Farm came to be fashioned on the jail uniforms.

“...to cut down expenses to the barest minimum, we changed our dress also. We had all become labourers and

therefore put on laborer’s dress but in the European style, viz., working men’s trousers and shirts, which were imitated from prisoner’s uniform. We all used cheap trousers and shirts which could be had ready-made out of coarse blue cloth. Most of the ladies were good hands at sewing and took charge of the tailoring department.”

The effects of imprisonment on Gandhi were profound. At times he wrote voluminous amounts of letters to co-workers, books for children’s education,

personal letters of encouragement, articles – the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, compiled after his death, span 99 original volumes of Gandhi’s letters, speeches, articles; without responses, just Gandhi. Three supplemental books of more letters were found later. Each volume has about 550 pages.

When put into solitary confinement, there was time for reading, silence, and internal communion. Gandhi devised a schedule of study and viewed the seclusion time as a gift, for him to spend in silence with his Maker. In 1943, Gandhi was asked if he was lonely or depressed when he was in jail. He gave this reply which may be of service to those who are incarcerated for reasons of conscience:

“I have never felt lonely. In South Africa, I was put in solitary confinement but it did not trouble me. On the contrary, I was a little resentful of the visits of the Superintendent as they wasted my time. I had chalked out a time-table for myself. It included study of Sanskrit



Gandhi spent several years at The Yervada Jail Gandhi in India. Contributed photo.

and Tamil. I read many English books. I had also started making shoes in jail. The necessary material was supplied to me in my cell. I enjoyed working by myself. Just when my programme had been well set, I got the release orders. Every time I have felt unhappy at the time of my release. I have never experienced a feeling of despair and depression while in detention. In South Africa I was sometimes worried about the happenings outside. I have not had that feeling here [in India] for the simple reason that I have evolved a philosophy as to what attitude one should adopt while in prison. I have written a good deal about it. I used to write about these things in South Africa also, but there, I was rather new to these ideas. Moreover there were not very many educated people and intellectuals there with whom I could discuss my ideas. I have had to discuss these matters with so many people in India that my mind is full of them. In South Africa I had started the study of algebra also, because mathematics helps in developing concentration.”

As his fame and social work progressed, he looked forward to his time in jail as a reprieve and ‘period of grace’. “If I am imprisoned, it will be all peace and nothing but peace for me.” In India, he began to call the jail cell in which he was incarcerated a mandir, or temple. Gandhi had found jail life to be the preparatory pathway for inner self-consecration:

“...belief in man’s freedom is wholly unnecessary for conducting the highest type of activity...I have always reconciled comparative freedom of the individual with the all-powerfulness of the Supreme Will...A prisoner, even in a solitary cell, has freedom of movement, however little it may be, and he has complete freedom of the mind...the acid test of complete obedience to the Universal Will would be full surrender even of that tiny freedom.”

Can we understand his determined willingness to become one with what he saw as Purest Truth and Unconditional Love?

PK Willey welcomes your questions and comments on Gandhi, send to pkwilley@wiseearthpublishers.com Subject line: Clarifying Gandhi.

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December Events at Hampton’s Fletcher Memorial Library

Submitted by Janice Trecker

When writing out your Christmas list this year, will you please consider a donation to Fletcher Memorial Library as a tax deductible gift? Thank you for your support!

Pat Donahue Art Opening & Reception
Wednesday, December 6th, 4:30 – 6:00 p.m.

Donahue will discuss her life and passion as a painter and will do an oil painting demonstration at 5 pm. Refreshments will be served.

FML Book Discussion Group
Wednesday, December 6th @ 6:30 p.m.

Come with your ideas for book selections for 2018. Bring your favorite appetizer to share. New members are always welcome!

Hampton Heritage Quilt Silent Auction
Ongoing – December 9th

The Hampton Heritage Quilt will be on display at the library. Ongoing silent auction for town inspired quilt ends December 9th with an open house at the library. All proceeds to benefit the library. Stop by or contact the library for more information – 860-455-1086 or fletcher-memoriamlibrary@gmail.com

Holiday Open House
Saturday, December 9th, 10:00 a.m. – Noon

Please join us for refreshments and merry-making. High bidder for Hampton Heritage Quilt will be awarded at 11:45 am.

The Hampton Hoot
Wednesday, December 13th @ 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Join us on December 13th at 6:30 p.m. for the next Hoot. For those who love folk singing and/or playing traditional instruments. Strictly low-key, all about having fun, no talent required! Every second Wednesday! RSVP requested, but not required. Contact: Jaime@hotstringsguitar.com or 203 218-6199 or call the Library: 860 455-108.

Story Time, Song & Play
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Story Time, Song & Play for children (ages 0-5) and their caregivers. This is an interactive program using a variety of musical instruments, rhymes, songs, finger plays, puppets, as well as a story or two. Our goal is to encourage a lifelong love of reading and learning.

Knitting Group
Every Wednesday 12– 3 p.m.

The Knitting Group meets every Wednesday from 12-3. Drop in and have a cup of tea/coffee and work on a needlework project, or just come in to socialize. All are welcome!

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Library Hours: Wednesday 12-8, Thursday & Friday 9-12, & Saturday 9-3
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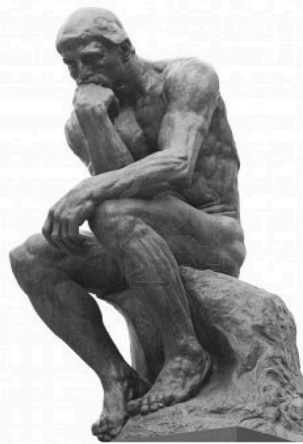
The Think and Do Club Wants You!

Submitted by Edmund Smith

What is the Think and Do Club? We are a group of folks who get together every week to talk philosophy. From these talks, some pretty cool thoughts happen. These, as thoughts often do, may turn into some pretty interesting, different behavior, from person life style choices to decisions to go forth and change the world.

What kind of things do we talk about?

To date, we have discussed such wide-ranging topics as global warming, evolution, the nature of consciousness, the political economy of banking, the origins of the universe, and racism. We have also begun to explore the formal branches of philosophy, such as metaphysics and epistemology. But we are not limited to any one discipline



or topic, because life itself.. philosophical! So join us!

We meet monthly. Please contact us for next date and site. Thank you.

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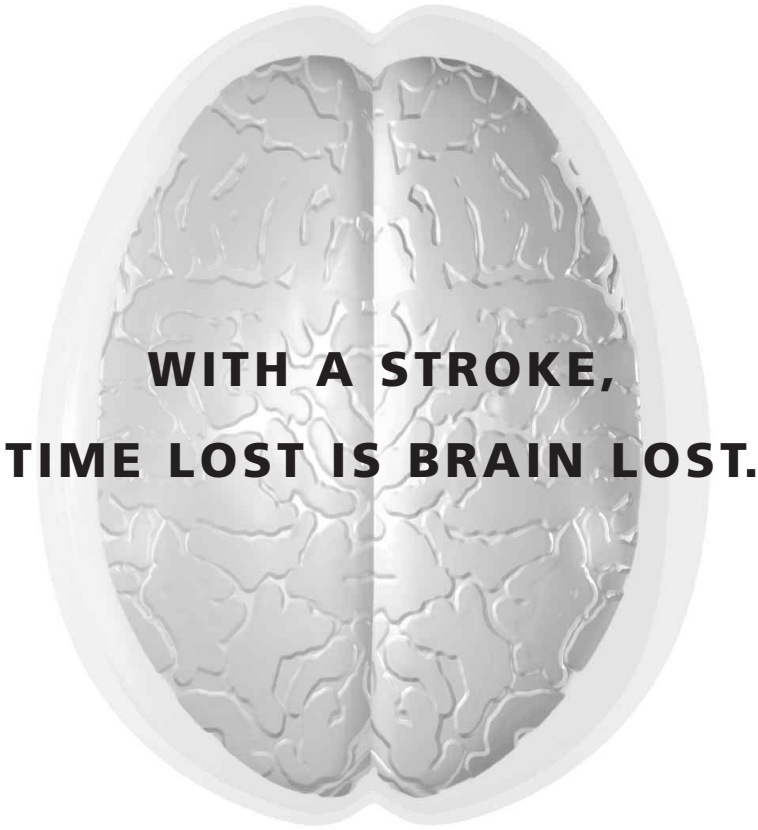
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21st Century Democracy Requires Thinking – and Acting – Outside the Box of Politicians and Political Parties

By Len Krimerman

Separation From Undemocratic Political Institutions

Last month, I suggested that to curtail “capitalism”, we needed more than a new and more just economy. To be specific, diminishing the dark power of capitalism, as I see it, also requires separation “from what passes as “democracy” in our largely lame and corrupt political institutions”.



Back in August, I touched on this issue, writing that:

“In [our current] politics, representatives elected solely from political parties constitute a...disempowering form of uniformity. That is, professional politicians, regardless of party affiliations, uniformly weigh their own party’s interests above any choices, concerns, dreams, or conscientious objections of ordinary citizens. Republican Mitch McConnell is a classic example: he happily brags about never making any political decisions except those favoring his own party’s staying in or gaining power. Politicians in the Democratic party are hardly different, though they may brag less about it.

What’s needed, and what the seeds of separation might bring about, is a shift in governance analogous to the separation happening in education (on this, see what I wrote in the June, 2017 Neighbors). Professional politicians should be treated as we have begun to treat educational administrators: neither should have ultimate or final authority. Instead, they must each see themselves as just one among many elements of a just and genuinely democratic society, helping empower both young or adult citizens; or at the least, getting out of their way.

One Way Out: the Participatory Budget

To make this point more concrete, I appealed to a new and very different form of political democracy, the Participatory Budget(PB) process, which first emerged in Brazil three decades ago, and can now be found in several thousand cities and communities, on at least four continents:

In all of these [PB initiatives], ordinary citizens along with civic or non-profit organizations have a definite role in both shaping and utilizing portions of their town, city, or larger region budgets. Typically, community groups put together a budget for a neighborhood project they need, e.g., renovation of a school, development of a Youth Center, etc.; funds for these projects are then allocated not by formal governments, but by all of the community groups deliberating together. As a result, the role of party-based officials, whether elected or appointed, is not to accept or reject citizen-generated budgets, but to offer assistance to citizens in preparing their own budgets and making sound budgetary decisions.

Last month, I received this email message from Josh Lerner, of the North American PB Project, to which I’ve added a few comments:

What is your vision of democracy?(Great Question!) Your answer is probably far removed from what we’ve experienced in 2017, which feels like democracy turned upside-down.

Most of us are infuriated with our political process, and angry that our voices aren’t being heard.(Yes, yes, yes!) And yet, we only look for solutions through the electoral process, thinking that if we elect someone new, everything will change, or “become great again”.

Organizing to elect and influence officials is essential, but it is not enough to fix our broken democracy.(This is the key point!) What happens when we instead seek solutions in we the people? When we invite people to actually govern, to help make the decisions that affect their lives? This is democracy made by YOU.

A Further Step Away from Political Parties and Representation

Thus far, however, PB initiatives have not figured out how they might shape or influence decisions made at the federal or even state level. In part, this may be because they still appear to accept the now-dominant notion of

“representation”, and with it, the domination of elections by political parties. To have a much wider impact, so it seems to me, we need to detach or separate from both of these notions, and seek deeper and more inclusive ways to democratize democracy. What might that look like??

It would, and should, take a variety of forms. One of these would supplement party-based “representatives” with “delegates”, the latter being drawn not from any political party, but from groups or organizations of citizens with social or public interest purposes, e.g., teachers, healthcare workers, cooperatives, social enterprises, cultural groups, veterans, artists, unemployed folks, etc. In addition, in contrast to today’s representatives, “delegates” could be directly recalled and unseated by their constituencies – rather than remaining in power despite dishonoring constituent priorities.

Thus, for example, ballots for town or city council members could include seats for social council members, e.g., one or more artist-councilors, farmer-councilors, youth councilors, tradespersons and small business councilors, Puerto Rican councilors, women councilors, elderly councilors, etc. Candidates for those seats could be elected by all voting members of a town or city, in which case, voters could be allowed to choose between, say, a maximum of three or four types of social council members; in addition, if desired, they could also choose between conventional candidates from political parties. Or, on the other hand, the social council seats could be open only to voters who were themselves members of the same social group(s) they want to cast their ballots for. E.g., only artists could vote to elect artist councilors; the same for farmers, youth, tradespersons, etc.

The aim of such a new system, in either form, would be to enable a much wider spectrum of voices to be heard and initiatives to be considered than what is now allowed by our current representative system. The transition would not involve “seceding” from or seeking to extinguish party-controlled elections; rather, it would add to and collaborate with them. E.g., a Town Council with nine conventional reps might become a Council with six social delegates and six party-based reps.

As opposed to the PB, this social delegate system would not just consider items in the town budget, but would have authority to address and help initiate any and all decisions that could come before a Town Council. As a result, it would probably fit much more easily than budget-driven PB projects into scaled up non-local elections, e.g., Congressional and Senate elections on the state and federal levels. For example, local artists would be elected as social council members of town councils, and those so elected would in turn elect statewide artists for congressional and/or senate positions; and this process could be repeated from the state artist delegates to the election of federal artists as social delegates to the nation’s House and Senate.

The motto of what I’d call this “social rainbow delegate system” might be: “No taxation or legislation without collaboration with citizen-elected delegates.”

Can this Collaboration Happen Here?

Of course, right now, this new system is pretty much an invention of my own separatist desire to get beyond the myth of “representation”, which claims to be a force for democracy, but which in general stifles and disempowers citizen initiative. From 1950 till 1990, the former Yugoslavia attempted to build a self-managed economy and support democratic governance – all enterprises were controlled by their workers, and local “communes” towns and cities – were largely self-governing. For the most part, a unique system of delegates, with minimal amounts of “representation”, was at the center of this effort. Could anything like it find a place here in the USA? I think so, but it won’t be an easy or short journey.

Still, I draw hope from all of the seeds of separation we have been discussing since last June; they provide us with “working models” that can assist us become far more than demoralized spectators of our current unimaginative and unjust institutions. And consider also philosopher John Dewey’s cogent insight: “Democracy has to be born anew every generation, and education is its midwife.” The time has never been riper for rethinking and rebirthing what others have passed onto us and called “democracy”, and these seeds of separation have begun that process. How far they can go depends, really, on lots more of us getting beyond our anger or despair at being so long unheeded by those we have elected, and becoming co-creators of our very own 21st Century democracy.

What, then, is Your Vision of Democracy? I’d really like to know...email me at lenisageo@gmail.com.

P.S. The Participatory Budgeting Project creates and supports participatory budgeting processes that deepen democracy, build stronger and more inclusive communities, and make public budgets more equitable and effective....[it has] helped to support PB processes in more than 20 cities distribute over \$240 million to much needed community projects, and engage more than 300,000 people. Might this initiative be worth considering for your town? Check them out at: www.participatorybudgeting.org/

How Digital Technology is Helping Patients Manage Chronic Pain

(StatePoint) Digital apps have long existed to help people lose weight or track exercise, and now, developers are providing new high-tech ways for those living with chronic pain to track key measures of their conditions -- providing a solution to one of the biggest challenges patients face.

For Elizabeth Newman, a 57-year old Chicago native, chronic pain is a way of life and a challenge she shares with more than 100 million Americans. Newman’s chronic pain started after an accident that resulted in a herniated disk and nerve damage that affects her legs and arm. She also has seven fused vertebrae, a spinal surgery that more than 400,000 Americans have every year. While millions of Americans rely on medications such as opioids to treat their chronic pain, Newman has started using a new mobile app to help tackle some of the complexities of living with chronic pain.

The app and website Newman recently discovered is called PainScale, which offers digital tools that modernize how we understand and communicate about pain. The app gives users an opportunity to track key measures such as pain levels, medication use, treatments and activity levels. It also provides general information about treatment options and how to connect with a pain specialist in the area. Patients can share information from the app with their physicians who may decide to use the information to tailor a treatment plan and assess what may not be working with their current approach.

“Using PainScale has motivated me to track my pain more consistently, which gives my doctor a better understanding of what I am experiencing, rather than relying strictly on memory. That helps us connect in how we manage it,” says Newman. “Every day I read articles on the app and bookmark those that I find helpful so that I can stay up-to-date on information about my condition and learn about new approaches.”

The free app, which was developed with support from Boston Scientific, provides a range of tools, including a customized daily newsfeed that is personalized to each user based on his or her pain diagnosis, as well as the opportunity to learn about treatment options, exercises, medications and nutritional tips that may help improve quality of life. It also allows users to connect and share their treatment experiences and gain insights on how others have managed their pain. For more information and to download the app, visit PainScale.com.

Digitizing the traditional one to 10 pain scale that physicians have relied on for decades to characterize patients’ pain is simplifying the way pain is tracked to keep up with the 21st century. If you are suffering from chronic pain, talk to your doctor about new resources and treatment options that may be available.

Dear Reader-

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

T. King, Publisher

Inside Santa’s Workshop*

By Roger Burten

During our first year of being together, my wife discovered that I’m a playful, fun-loving guy. So, she bought me a large glass-framed poster, which, 30 years later, still hangs on my workshop wall. It reads in multicolored letters *“I don’t want to grow up”*. The poster hangs above a near and dear stack of old games and a few toys, like Scrabble, Othello, Boggle, Rubik’s Cube, an old chess set and a big box of Legos. In a majority of people’s houses or apartments I’ve visited there’s been a similar big or small collection of games, puzzles and toys, whether children are scampering about or not. People love to occasionally be in playful and competitive situations, where the roll of the dice, spin of a spinner or turn of a card can dictate the survival or demise of “the whole Universe” for that moment. It’s quite a scene sitting around a table with others, whose unwavering focus is riveted on the breath-holding, pulse-quickening last millisecond before a random number is revealed? *“Please be a seven or a three! Not a four!”* *“OH, YES!!”* *“OH, NO!”* are common shouts heard by everyone in that particular room, upstairs rooms and, maybe, at the neighbors’ house.

The usual process of acquiring games and toys for people around the world is to go to a local toy shop, amble down the toy aisles of a large department or toy store, scan the items at a yard or garage sale, or peruse a toy and game-filled tarp-covered table at a local open-air marketplace in a remote mountain or desert village, somewhere way off any paved highway. And, relatively recently and increasingly utilized, a toy, game or puzzle, along with anything else you need or desire, can be delivered to your front door with the click of a keyboard key.

Therefore, the questions I know you’re asking are “Where the heck do all these playthings come from?” “Who thinks them up?” “How did they get here?” “Is there a big game and toy inventing machine at the North Pole and at all these companies that has round pink and blue buttons labeled “Boy” and “Girl”, an “Age range” dial, and a digital keypad labeled “Quantity” that only needs to be pushed and, Voila!, out pops never-been-seen-before items to be immediately shipped and sold at Walmart?” (Wow! That’s a cool idea which, in a miniaturized version, would be a big hit in most kid-filled homes.)

Realistically, the way the whole system works is a little more complicated than a room-sized machine, though, on the idea creation side there are only a few options: large companies pay large bucks to in-house designers, who go to work at the corporate building everyday tasked with coming up with unique and marketable items; secondly, independent, outside inventors will show their unique products to companies for possible acceptance and purchase; lastly, an outside inventor may manufacture their proprietary idea themselves and directly pitch the item to retailers and the public. A surprising fact is that around 60% of all the games and toys you see at your local Toys ‘R’ Us and Target originally were created by outside inventors: in-house designers, though they have a salary, space, materials and technology to work with, aren’t any more innovative and fail just as often as independent inventors.

If you’ve ever had a new game or toy idea, here’s what the journey for a new product submission to a large company might look like. An appointment is made and a product is shown to an “inventor relations” executive and an assistant (most large companies will only look at outside concepts by “recognized, professional” inventors), who will reject your idea outright or hold it for further review, usually 30-45 days. Then, a internal group meeting is held in the development department, where all the held over items are presented and further rejected or held for another review by the marketing and “bean counter” departments. If a product passes onward, and its prototype is sufficiently finished and playable, it could go directly to both internal and public “testing”. If it is not, the company might make its own prototype model to test. Finally, all the items that tested well and passed cost analysis are presented to the chief executives of many departments, where the final selection will be made for the Christmas season a year or two in the future. Along the way, especially if the evaluation process is going to take an extra long time, the company may enter into an “option agreement”, offering the inventor a small amount of non-refundable money, paid against possible future royalties, to hold the idea for a certain period of time. After your concept has been contracted, the odds at creating a “hit” or even a moderately successful product are about the same as winning the state lottery. For example, the very large game companies will average about 2,500-3,000 new game submissions every year. Maybe, 2,000 are rejected

outright. Then, possibly, 100 are selected for testing. A final list might have 10-15 new items. Lastly, maybe 1 or 2 of the surviving products, out of the original 2,500, will still be available in the stores for a second year. It’s brutal out there.

The last piece of the puzzle, no pun intended, is the retail buyer. Every retail outlet, both large and small has someone or many whose job it is to decide what will sell in their respective locations.

Where do these buyers efficiently see the tens of thousands of new products? At large, for-the-trade-only shows. The granddaddy of the toy industry shows is The North American International Toy Fair in New York City, which is held every year in the middle of February at the Javits Convention Center. It is run and managed by The Toy Association, which has 950 domestic and international members and was established in 1916. Each year 25,000 to 35,000 retail buyers converge on the site for four days (more accurately spelled “daze”) of viewing thousands of products, talking to thousands of sellers, and walking what seems like thousands of miles up and down and in and out the maze of aisles and rooms. At the end of this Toy Fair and at other Fairs in Dallas, Las Vegas and Chicago, depending on the amount of orders, a company will



New York City Toy Fair photo courtesy of The Toy Industry Associaton.

probably know if it has a possible “hit” or not. Again, it’s brutal out there.

Being one of those kids that secretly snuck down the stairs in the middle of the night to see what Santa had brought me for Christmas morning, I sort of wish that the fantasy had continued to be the reality. I’d love to look up in the starry night sky on December 24th and see a jolly, white-bearded, roly polly, red-suited guy flying around in a decorated and toy-laden sleigh shouting “HO HO HO, On Donner, On Blitzen”, while at the front was a red-nosed reindeer named Rudolph.

*Article title used with permission by Richard C. Levy and Ron Weingartner, authors of the delightful and insightful book, *“Inside Santa’s Workshop”*.



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How to Tame the Winter Blues

By Dr. Craig T. Fasullo

The Winter Blues

Many people are familiar with the heavy sensations that come along with colder temperatures and darker days – the same kind of sensations that make many crave an extra cup of coffee or the unthinkable jelly donut for the hopeful - yet short-lived - jolt of energy to follow. These sensations are sometimes subtle, sometimes severe; they can be feelings of moodiness and fatigue, with both mental and physical manifestations. The most severe version of the winter blues is known as seasonal affective disorder, which comes with the apropos acronym, SAD. SAD is a subtype of depression that occurs at the same time each year, usually starting in fall, worsening in winter, and ending in spring. It can, at times, feel a bit heavier than “winter blues” - although there is variance in severity of symptoms. With nearly 50% of people in the northeast feeling their worst in winter, symptoms can cause a significant disruption in life. Learning more may help you identify symptoms and treatment options.

What are the SAD Symptoms?

The most commonly reported symptoms of seasonal affective disorder are varying degrees of sadness, anxiety, or irritability, along with increased fatigue. Individuals often report a loss of interest in usually enjoyable activities or a withdrawal from social events. There can be an increased need for sleep, though more often people note more sleep difficulties. In addition to these feelings, many report cravings for starches and carbohydrates, and the accompanying weight gain that may come with that. Inversely, few people experience a reduced appetite with associated weight loss. Additionally, there may be an overall worsening of concentration or cognition. This may present as a mild brain fog or be more debilitating. A recent study showed that nearly 60% of a university hospital medication errors occurred during the first three months of the year, suggesting a pervasive seasonal component. It is important to remember that milder versions of any combination of these symptoms are also possible, and likely even more common.

A Biological Context

While many of us are familiar with some or many of these feelings, it is important to put them all into context. It’s easy to forget that despite our hectic work schedules, savvy smart phones, fascinating social media networks, and the availability of nearly anything anytime at the click of a button, we are still mammals on the planet earth. And most all mammals in regions with variable seasons have some practice of modifying their life practices in the winter months. Hibernation is the obvious and most extreme example, but in most cases there is a natural tendency to slow down, sleep a little more, eat a little more, and add a bit of extra winter weight. This is a normal and reasonable response to the change of seasons. We’ve secured ourselves in temperature-controlled environments and made all foods available year-round, but there is an inherent biological element written into our cellular structure that will always exist.

So What is Actually Happening?

At higher latitudes of the northern hemisphere during the winter months the sun is up for less of the day and does not get as high in the sky. This leads to a significant total decreased exposure to sunlight. As an extreme example, the folks in Anchorage, Alaska get only 5 1/2 hours of total daylight on the winter solstice, the shortest day of the year. As a result of this reduced light exposure, our internal biological clock that regulates mood, sleep hormones and neurotransmitters is shifted. This is called circadian phase shifting, and includes alterations in the normal fluctuations of thyroid and adrenal hormones, as well as body temperature. The pineal gland within the brain also varies production of melatonin, the hormone that causes drowsiness. Longer periods of dark mean increased melatonin synthesis during winter months, leading to higher levels of daytime melatonin. Lower levels of serotonin (the happy neurotransmitter) are also measured, which may be related to melatonin changes as well. Low levels of Vitamin D, which we absorb from sunlight, has shown to not be causative but likely an aggravating factor. Interestingly, there seems to be a genetic component - SAD tends to run in families. And the fact that 75% of sufferers are women suggests a hormonal component. While there is still a lot we do not understand about this condition, we

know enough to be able to make helpful recommendations to improve symptoms throughout the winter season.

It’s All About the Light

Fortunately, there are steps you can take beyond a trip to a tropical beach, though if given the option, that’s a great therapeutic intervention. Given that the major cause of these seasonal disturbances is the lack of daylight, it perhaps will come as no surprise that one of the best evidence-based treatments is adding more light. Indeed, some studies show up to 80% improvement with regular phototherapy. The theory behind its effectiveness is that full spectrum light helps to normalize the phase shift delay in melatonin production and suppresses melatonin during the day when you don’t need it. There are many “lightboxes” on the market, but make sure to find one with a power of 10,000 lux (by way of comparison, the light on a sunny summer day measures at 50,000 lux). It’s best to start treatment in the fall, before symptoms begin. And, of course, duration is everything. Use your light box for 20-30 minutes in the morning, as treatment too late in the day may produce insomnia. Individuals often report improvement in just a few days, although full benefit is usually felt in approximately two weeks. The symptoms of SAD return quickly when light therapy is stopped, so light treatment should be continued throughout the season of low sunlight.

Preventative Measures & Other Natural Therapies

When it comes to prevention, it’s always back to the basics. The pillars of wellness - diet, sleep, activity, and stress management – can have a huge impact, especially during the winter months. Eat a well-balanced whole food diet with adequate protein and quality fats at each meal. Avoid overdoing the sugars and simple carbs even if you crave them the most! It’s also vitally important to stay active. Sitting is the new smoking. We are physical creatures who have developed a nonsensical way of living sedentary lives, and it affects many aspects of our health. Aim for at least 30 minutes a day, at least three times a week, though that is only a bare minimum recommendation. Even small steps matter – take the stairs at work, or consider a “walking” meeting. Spending time outdoors every day exposed to natural sunlight is very therapeutic, so any kind of walk outside will do – just layer up!

To ensure quality sleep, create a quiet dark environment in the bedroom. Avoid bright lights at night that suppress melatonin production. The most common culprits are our many screens - turn them off at least 30 minutes before bedtime. If that is unlikely, there are programs available for all devices that dim the screen during night time hours and eliminate the stimulating blue light. Regularize your sleep/ wake cycle by going to bed and getting up at the same time each day; circadian rhythms, like our prehistoric ancestors, never heard of a “weekend.” And, of the utmost importance, be sure to manage stress during the winter months. Stay connected to your social circle and engage in regular activities that make you feel good. Or, take time to reflect and write in a journal if introspection is needed. Choose an approach that is suitable to your needs and personality during winter months. If you are overworked or exhausted, those feelings can get especially magnified during this time – all the more reason to take extra good care of yourself.

There are additional therapies that can be employed to fight off the winter doldrums. Specific amino acids, herbs, and

vitamins can be incredibly effective. It’s vital to optimize vitamin D levels based on testing. Individualized care is always preferred, and it is important to discuss your symptoms with your physician before initiating any treatment.

Dr. Fasullo has a family practice in Manchester, CT at Collaborative Natural Health Specialists. All of the physicians at the clinic are in network providers for most insurance companies and are accepting new patients. For more information or questions, please call (860) 533-0179 or visit ctnaturalhealth.com

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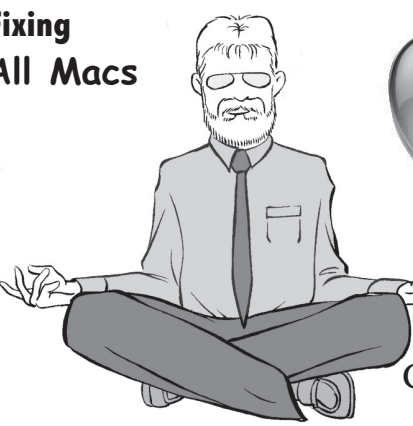

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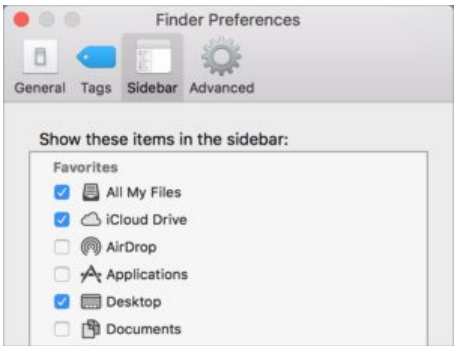
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All My Files is one of the most useful features in the Finder for my virtual dollar. It shows all files on your Mac, defaulting from newest to oldest. The setting for it is slightly hidden. In the Finder, choose Finder > Preferences, and then click Sidebar. That's where you'll find checkboxes for all the things you can have icons for in your Sidebar.

If you delete one of these special item from the Sidebar — hold down Option and drag it out—you should be able to restore it just by visiting this preference pane and checking its box.

However, I've seen on some machines that once the item is missing it's persistently gone. That might mean preferences corruption, and that can sometimes be cleared by restarting. If not, you might need to reinstall the system, not from scratch, but the "install in place" option that puts all the right files back in the right place.

Do Not Pay The Ransom!

By Emily Dolloff

I was scrolling through my Facebook feed a few months ago and saw a post from a friend. Her iPhone appeared to be frozen, she was locked out of it and there was a message that she needed to pay a \$50 fee in order to regain access to her iPhone. Over the years I have seen several similar instances. I remember seeing once on my own iOS device a message in Safari that took over my screen and told me to contact Apple because I had a virus on my iPad. Knowing that Apple would never send me an alert about needing to call them I simply ignored it. I tried to close out of Safari by hitting the home button, that worked, but when I opened Safari again the message was still there. Ultimately I had to power down my iPad and upon restart, it was gone, I never saw the message again. I had a few friends send me some panicked messages with screenshots of this same message on their device, I let them know to just turn off the iPad or iPhone. Historically, that is all you needed to do to avoid a scam about a virus or hack. This particular message was not isolated to an iOS device, it could happen on a desktop

as well. However, all this was, was a scam to get some money out of a concerned user and nothing more.

Fast forward a few years and now we are seeing reports of Mac computers or iOS devices locked and messages demanding a ransom be paid to regain access to your device. Unlike the Safari messages from a few years ago, just powering down your device or clearing your browsing history is not going to fix this problem. These new Bitcoin or PayPal ransomware are locking users out of their devices. Victims can not use them and are stuck with often one question running through their minds, do I really have to pay a ransom?

Do not pay the ransom! But how do you regain access, and, more importantly, how did you get locked out in the first place. As hackers have gotten more sophisticated, so has their ability to scam you. In almost all of the reported cases we have seen or heard about, users have been locked out via Find My iPhone/iPad or Find My Mac. Unfortunately, their iCloud account was accessed by the scammers who have locked users out of their devices by initiating the lost mode feature. Sometimes you might simply be locked out with a message that says the device is in lost mode and requires a code (a code you don't have access to) or it's asking for the ransom.

Thankfully all is not lost, but it does require a bit of work. Regaining access to your device will mean a trip to your local Apple Authorized Repair location or calling and talking to Apple directly. You will need to provide the service location or Apple a proof of purchase to prove you are the owner of the device and you will be able to regain access and most likely without losing your information. You can also follow some troubleshooting tips online from Apple, potentially if you are not being asked for a ransom these steps might help.

But how did this happen? As I mentioned earlier, this is through your iCloud account, which was compromised. You will want to take immediate action and change your iCloud password as soon as you regain access. If you do not have two-factor authentication enabled on your device you will want to do so. Setting up two-factor authentication and ideally setting a stronger password for your account will prevent these kinds of breaches. I always recommend passwords with a combination of letters, numbers and even special characters, and your password selection should be somewhat random. Hopefully, with these tips you can avoid being locked out of your device!

NOTE:

Find My Mac is one of the more useful features of iCloud, and while I hope your Mac is never lost or stolen, it's a good idea to set up Find My Mac in your System Preferences and know how to make use of all of the functions, in case the worst ever happens.

Steve Woron is an artist and Mac technician and lives in Vernon CT. Contact him at (860) 871-9933 leave a message, or illstudio@snet.net. He also has been doing desktop publishing for 21 years. He also scans slides and negatives professionally. See his ads to the left. See DrMacCT.blogspot.com



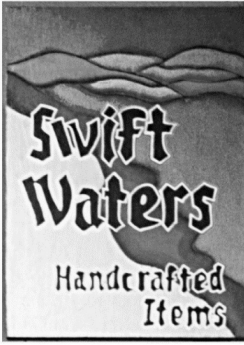
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KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL

Our Community Calendar

Compiled By Dagmar Noll

December 1, Friday

Holiday Shop: Local craft artisans on display, 1:00p.m. - 6:00p.m. Windham Textile & History Museum, 411 Main Street, Willimantic. Info: 860-456-2178 www.millmuseum.org
Occult: An Evening with Spiritual Medium Maura Geist. Doors 7:00pm / Show 7:30pm. The Packing House at The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington, CT 06279. Tickets \$15.00 online / \$20.00. Snacks and soft drinks available. "BYOB&F"™ (Wine & Beer Only - I.D. Required). Info and table reservations call: 518-791-9474. www.thepackinghouse.us

December 2, Saturday

Fair: Holiday Bazaar, 9:00a.m. - 2:00p.m. Hampton Congregational Church, 263 Main St, Hampton.
Running: Santa Fun Run 5K, 9:00a.m. - 12:00p.m. Hosted by the Women's Center of Eastern CT to support the Salvation Army's Angel Tree program. Bring toys! 1 Jillson Square, corner of Main & Jackson, Willimantic.
Animals: Black Bears in CT: When, Where, And How Many?, 1:00p.m. Free. Biology/Physics Bldg., Rm 130, UCONN, Storrs. Adults & children 8+. Info: 860-486-4460
Holiday Shop: Local craft artisans on display, 1:00p.m. - 6:00p.m. (See 12/1)
Painting: Paint Night, 6:30p.m. - 8:30p.m. Ages 21+ welcome to this guided painting experience. Quester's Way, 95 Storrs Rd, Eastbrook Mall, Mansfield Ctr.
Hiking: Cold Moon Night Hike followed by a campfire and s'mores, 7:30p.m. - 8:30p.m. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 jasper.sha@ct.gov

December 3, Sunday

Festival: Christmas in the Village, 12:00p.m. - 4:00p.m. Seasonal community and business activities, music, pony and wagon rides, Christmas tree auction, Santa visit, and more. Sponsored by the Lion's Club. Info: 860-918-5957 or 860-617-3588
Arts: Winter "First Sunday at The Mill Works" Open Artist Studios; Performances by HMS 'Select Chorus', Singer/songwriter Dean Bolt; Painting demonstration with Jack Broderick; Gardiner Hall Jr. Museum, Period Refreshments, Holiday Activities, and More. 12:00p.m.-5:00p.m. The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington, CT 06279. Everyone Welcome - Free Admission. Information 518-791-9474. Visit www.thepackinghouse.us for schedule.
Holiday Shop: Local craft artisans on display, 1:00p.m. - 6:00p.m. (See 12/1)
Live Music: Plywood Cowboy & Seat of Our Pants, 4:00p.m. \$15. Bread Box Theater, 220 Valley St, Willimantic. Tickets: Willi Food Co-op 91 Valley St. Info: 860-429-4220 or www.breadboxfolk.org
Meditation: Willimantic Mindfulness Sangha Meditation, 7:00p.m. - 8:30p.m. Non-sectarian, Buddhist-style sitting and walking meditations, teaching and sharing. Knight House, ECSU. Info: 860-450-1464 dmangum617@gmail.com

December 4, Monday

Kids: Mother Goose Storytime, 10:30a.m. Ages birth-3. Willimantic Public Library, 905 Main St, Willimantic. Info: 860-465-3082 www.willimanticlibrary.com
Live Music: The Osiris String Quartet. 11:30a.m. social and 12:00p.m. pot luck luncheon and meeting of the Women's Club of Storrs, followed by live music. Mansfield Library, Buchanan Auditorium, 54 Warrenville Rd, Mansfield, Ctr. Info: 860-429-5167.

December 6, Wednesday

Skill Share: Djembe Drumming Lessons, 7:00p.m. - 9:00p.m. Authentic West African Rhythms, all ages, all levels. Drum provided if needed. BENCH SHOP, 786 Main St, Willimantic. Info: 860-423-8331

December 7, Thursday

Kids: Mr. & Mrs. Santa Claus, 6:00p.m. Mrs. Claus will autograph a free book for each child. Includes story time, cookies, and hot chocolate. Willimantic Public Library, 905 Main St, Willimantic. Register: 860-465-3082 Info: www.willimanticlibrary.com
Kids: Evening Stories, 6:30p.m. Willimantic Public Library, 905 Main St, Willimantic. Register: 860-465-3082 Info: www.willimanticlibrary.com

December 8, Friday

Kids: Trains, Trees & Toys, 10:00a.m. - 4:00p.m. Show runs through January 7. Windham Textile & History Museum, 411 Main Street, Willimantic. Info: 860-456-2178 www.millmuseum.org

December 9, Saturday

Toy Drive: Stuff a Firetruck, 9:00a.m. - 3:00p.m. Hosted by Windham/Willimantic CARES. BJ's Wholesale Club, 1589 Main St, Willimantic.
Fair: Craft & Vendor Fair, 9:00a.m. - 3:00p.m. St. Mary St. Joseph School, 35 Valley St, Willimantic.
Lecture: Essays & stories from "Inspiration Point", by George Jacobi, 1:00p.m. - 2:00p.m. Focus on the Grand Canyon. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center,

23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 jasper.sha@ct.gov
Kids: Gingerbread Holiday, 2:00p.m. - 4:00p.m. \$5. Windham Textile & History Museum, 411 Main Street, Willimantic. Info: 860-456-2178 www.millmuseum.org
Archeology: Uncovering CT's Past: Recent Discoveries from the Office of State Archeology, 3:00p.m. State Archeologist Brian Jones presents on ongoing digs in Windsor, Glastonbury and Columbia. Biology/Physics Bldg., Rm 130, UCONN, Storrs. Adults & children 8+. Info: 860-486-4460
Live Music: Kevin Harris Project (Jazz), 7:00p.m. Tickets \$15.00 online / \$20.00 door. Part of the EC-CHAP Jazz Series. The Packing House at The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington, CT 06279. Snacks and soft drinks available. "BYOB&F"™ (Wine & Beer Only - I.D. Required). Info and table reservations call: 518-791-9474. www.thepackinghouse.us

December 10, Sunday

Hiking: Long Distance Guided Hike, 12:00p.m. - 3:00p.m. Free. 5-7 mile hike. Friendly dogs welcome. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 jasper.sha@ct.gov
Live Music: Eclectica (Classical), 2:30p.m. Part of the EC-CHAP Acoustic Artist Series. Tickets \$10.00 online / \$15.00 door. Snacks and soft drinks. The Packing House at The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington, CT 06279.
Live Music: Courters, The Dazies, Dr. Martino, So Sorry, 3:00p.m. - 6:00p.m. Willimantic Records, 744 Main Street (entrance and parking at rear of building). Info: www.willimanticrecords.com
Live Music: Kim Hill Christmas Concert, 6:00p.m. - 8:00p.m. Free. First Congregational Church of Willimantic, 199 Valley St, Willimantic. Register: 860-423-6827 or fccsecretary@snet.net
Meditation: Willimantic Mindfulness Sangha Meditation, 7:00p.m. - 8:30p.m. (See 12/3)

December 11, Monday

Kids: Mother Goose Storytime, 10:30a.m. (See 12/4)
Film: Pete Seeger Tribute: two interviews, from 2004 & 2013, 7:00p.m. Free. 46 Spring Hill Road, Storrs. Info: "Second Monday Film Series" on Facebook 860-428-4846

December 12, Tuesday

Hiking: Senior Walk, 10:00a.m. - 12:30p.m. Free. Easy walk not just for seniors. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 jasper.sha@ct.gov
Kids: Gingerbread Ornaments, 6:00p.m. All ages welcome. Willimantic Public Library, 905 Main St, Willimantic. Register: 860-465-3082 Info: www.willimanticlibrary.com

December 13, Wednesday

Hiking: Senior Walk, 12:00p.m. - 2:30p.m. Free. Easy walk not just for seniors. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 jasper.sha@ct.gov
The Arts: "Talent Showcase" – Come share your talents! 7:00pm. 2nd Wednesday of the month. Free and open to all ages. Snacks and soft drinks available. "BYOB&F"™ (Wine & Beer Only - I.D. Required). Call in advance to sign-up (recommended) or sign-in at the door (time permitting). The Packing House at The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington, CT 06279. 518-791-9474. www.thepackinghouse.us
Skill Share: Djembe Drumming Lessons, 7:00p.m. - 9:00p.m. (See 12/6)

December 14, Thursday

Kids: Evening Stories, 6:30p.m. (See 12/7)

December 15, Friday

Film: "It's A Wonderful Life" (G). Doors 7:00pm / Show 7:30pm. Part of the EC-CHAP Friday Night Film Series. Join us for this annual Holiday Tradition! Snacks and soft drinks available. "BYOB&F"™ (Wine & Beer Only - I.D. Required). The Packing House at The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington, CT 06279. Suggested donation \$5.00. Info and table reservations call: 518-791-9474. www.thepackinghouse.us.

December 16, Saturday

Activism: NAACP Windham/Willimantic Branch Meeting. Monthly meeting every 3rd Saturday. Look for us on Facebook. Info: naacp2016b@gmail.com
Skill Share: Building a Survival Camp, 10:00a.m. - 12:00p.m. Learn from survivalist brothers Ed and Fran Baranski. Info: 860-455-9534 jasper.sha@ct.gov

December 17, Sunday

Nature: The Reindeer Are Hungry: An Explanatory Walk & Talk on Reindeer Moss, 1:00p.m. - 2:30p.m. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 jasper.sha@ct.gov
Meditation: Willimantic Mindfulness Sangha Meditation, 7:00p.m. - 8:30p.m. (See 12/3)



Donna Reed and James Stewart in 'It's A Wonderful Life'. See it December 15th at The Packing House in Willington. More info below.

December 18, Monday

Kids: Mother Goose Storytime, 10:30a.m. (See 12/4)

December 19, Tuesday

Kids: Glass Bead Luminary-making, 6:00p.m. - 7:00p.m. Ages 12+ Willimantic Public Library, 905 Main St, Willimantic. Register: 860-465-3082 Info: www.willimanticlibrary.com
Meditation: Sound Healing Meditation, 7:00p.m. – 8:00p.m. \$10 suggested donation. BYO yoga mat, blanket or lounge chair. Willington Public Library, 7 Ruby Rd, Willington.

December 20, Wednesday

Skill Share: Animal Tracking with Mike Grady, 12:00p.m. - 2:00p.m. All ages welcome. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Register: 860-455-9534 jasper.sha@ct.gov
Skill Share: Djembe Drumming Lessons, 7:00p.m. - 9:00p.m. (See 12/6)

December 21, Thursday

Kids: Evening Stories, 6:30p.m. (See 12/7)

December 23, Saturday

Skill Share: Gardeners Roundtable, 10:00a.m. - 11:30a.m. Workshop for experienced gardeners to share best practices and pitfalls. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Register: 860-455-9534 jasper.sha@ct.gov
Holiday Party: Costume Party, 8:00p.m. Corleon's, 103 Union Street, Willimantic.

December 26, Tuesday

Kids: Birdseed Ornaments, 1:00p.m. - 2:00p.m. Ages 4+. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Register: 860-455-9534 jasper.sha@ct.gov

December 27, Wednesday

Skill Share: Djembe Drumming Lessons, 7:00p.m. - 9:00p.m. (See 12/6)

December 28, Thursday

Nature: Nature Immersion: The Art of the Sit Spot, 4:00p.m. - 5:30p.m. Discover the lost art of the Sit Spot. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 jasper.sha@ct.gov

December 31, Sunday

Hiking: Long Distance Guided Hike, 12:00p.m. - 3:00p.m. Free. 5-7 mile hike. Friendly dogs welcome. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 jasper.sha@ct.gov



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Ashford Spirit Shoppe
Wooden Spoon Rest.
Terry's Transmissions
Ashford Post Office
Babcock Library
KSK Market
Hope & Wellness

Bolton
Bolton Post Office
Subway-Bolton Notch

Chaplin
Chaplin Post Office
Zlotnick's Conv. Store
Pine Acres Restaurant

Columbia
Saxon Library
Columbia Post Office

Coventry
Highland Park Market
Meadowbrook Spirits
Coventry Laundromat
Subway
Booth and Dimock Library
Song-A-Day Music

Eastford
Eastford Post Office
Coriander
Basto Flooring

Hampton
Hampton Post Office
Hampton Library

Lebanon
Green Store

Mansfield/Storrs
Holiday Spirits
Bagel Zone
D & D Auto Repair
Storrs Post Office
Mansfield Senior Center

All Subway shops
Starbucks
People's Bank
Storrs Comm. Laundry
UConn Bookstore (2)
UConn Student Union
Tony's Garage

Mansfield Center
Mansfield Library
East Brook Mall
HST Realty
Lawrence Real Estate
Mansfield OB/GYN

Mansfield Depot
Thompson's Store

North Windham
Bagel One
Subway
No. Windham P.O

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Vanilla Bean Restaurant
Pomfret Post Office
Baker's Dozen
Weiss & Hale

Putnam
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Putnam Library
Subway
Putnam Post Office
Ben's Beans

Scotland
Scotland Library
Scotland Post Office
Scotland General Store

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

Stafford
Middle Ground Cafe
Subway

Tolland
Birch Mountain Pottery
Subway
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Tolland Post Office

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Willington Post Office
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