

June 2018

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Neighbors

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Looking Up:

Embracing Our Limitations, Under the Night Sky

By Bob Grindle

Sometimes a tiny little patch of night sky can be very illuminating. Those breathtaking panoramas of the Arizona desert skies, Icelandic Aurora light shows, and show-stopping videos from stunning trips under southern hemisphere skies can make us all just a trifle jaded about our rushed efforts to snatch a cloud-threatened glimpse of a celestial event of note here in southern New England. But, like an old friend that you only see occasionally and are always happy to hear is still doing well, there is comfort in the familiarity of the ever changing dance of the planets and stars. Whether the skies are cloudy or clear; whether we look up or not, the dance goes on.

Does absence make the heart grow fonder, or is it simply hungrier, and thus more appreciative of small bites? It has been a tough season-and-a-half, and small visual bites are about all one could manage. I found myself wondering is that Arcturus or Mars, is that Vega or Altair? Fortunately the Moon acts as a dark sky docent, and as an ever-changing, ever-present St. Christopher for the up-watching travelers of the night sky, our Moon offers helpful pointers. In the pre-dawn mornings of early June--yikes, that is early!--if your bit of sky is to the South and Southwest, that is Saturn just below the waning Gibbous Moon on the 1st of June and that's Mars on the 3rd of June. If four in the morning is too early—duh—then maybe



9 o'clock at night is more manageable. On June 8th, an hour or so after sunset...how I do love late evenings and lightning bugs and Crecopia and Luna Moths...anyway, by 9:30 or so, that super-bright star in the West, maybe slightly to the Northwest, is Venus. Venus is an evening star all month, and as such becomes an effective tour guide. To the right of this legendary “star” of poetry and romance are the twin stars of Gemini, Castor and Pollux. The myth goes that these twin brothers were inseparable, and when Castor was mortally wounded in battle, Pollux pleaded with the gods on Mount Olympus to let him join his brother. Such loyalty and brotherly love was rewarded by Zeus placing the two brothers in the heavens as the constellation Gemini. Charming, to be sure, and the twin stars don't have any real

bright stars around them, so they are pretty easy to pick out. With Venus hanging nearby during much of June, they will be very easy to identify in the western sky, and by mid-month the waxing thin crescent Moon will help, as well. On the 15th of June, shortly after sunset, the crescent Moon below Venus and to the left of Pollux and Castor will be a striking image. A week later, and about 11 o'clock at night, the still waxing, now gibbous Moon, will rest just above Jupiter in the southern sky.

We started the month with Saturn in the pre-dawn sky next to a just beginning to wane Moon, and we will finish the month with Saturn in the night

sky nearly touching a full Moon on June 27th. If you get the chance to see a night sky in one of Earth's great Dark Sky regions, you will be overwhelmed and awed. It is truly breathtaking. However, it will be almost impossible to identify many—or most—of your familiar skypals that routinely populate the sky of your daily life. Hope you get the chance to look up during the next few weeks and enjoy the coming solstice. Have a great summer.

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

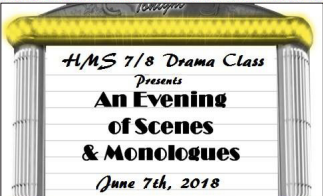
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EC-CHAP INFORMATION EXCHANGE MEETING
LEARN ABOUT EC-CHAP
Tuesday, June 12th | 7:00pm



TALENT SHOWCASE
2ND WEDNESDAY
TALENT SHARING TALENT
Wednesday, June 13th | 7:00pm



EC-CHAP - SOCIAL DANCE
2ND THURSDAY
OSWALDO TIRANO
Thursday, June 14th | 7:00pm



END-OF-SEASON EVENT!
"A CONCERT & A MOVIE"
BLUES ARTIST ERIC SOMMER & FILM: "FRED ROGERS: AMERICA'S FAVORITE NEIGHBOR" (NR)
Friday, June 15th | 7:00pm



EC-CHAP
Eastern Connecticut Center for History, Art, and Performance, Inc.

RECURRING MONTHLY EVENTS (final end-of season)

"EC-CHAP INFORMATION EXCHANGE MEETING"
Tuesday, June 12th | 7:00pm

"TALENT SHOWCASE"
2nd Wednesday!
June 13th | 7:00pm

"SOCIAL DANCE" w/OSWALDO TIRANO
2nd Thursday!
June 14th | 7:00pm

SPECIAL END-OF-SEASON EVENT!
"A CONCERT AND A MOVIE"
FRIDAY, JUNE 15TH, 7:00PM

As a final end-of season event, EC-CHAP presents Blues Artist **Eric Sommer** in concert-followed by a free film screening: **"Fred Rogers: America's Favorite Neighbor" (NR)!**

All proceeds to support "EC-CHAP", 501.c.3 nonprofit member-based cultural organization
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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

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

Neighborspaper LLC is a member of the Ashford Business Association.

Neighbors is printed by Rare Reminder in Rocky Hill, Connecticut.

Check our website frequently for updates!

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4.28.18 Some of the many volunteers who gathered at Ashford’s Knowlton Hall parking lot before dispersing to clean local roads of trash.
Photo by Pat Pheanious

Why I Love Ashford

By Loretta Wrobel

I am an Ashford-ite since 1987. Initially, I freaked out as I was used to living in a more populated environment and was not accustomed to being greeted every morning by trees, birds, deer, turkeys and a paucity of humans. I quickly learned that the Ashford way was everyone respects your right to peace and privacy. Therefore no one bothered me. However, I wanted to be bothered, as I had come from an urban environment where when you leave your home, you interact with people everywhere. I was not used to being alone in the beauty of the natural world where animals are more plentiful than two-legged creatures. I had some major adjusting ahead.



And adjust I did. I grew to enjoy the different pace and domination of nature, always present in each season. I welcomed the diversity of birds, the variety of wildlife such as deer, coyote, foxes and bobcats. It took longer to adapt to the variety of bugs and flying insects that bite and sting, and does one ever resolve living in close proximity to ticks and ubiquitous poison ivy?

As the years passed, I slowly established connections in this small rural community and started to identify as a rural gal. I had intended to stay for a short time and move on. I didn’t. I stayed and stayed. Still here after all these years. I never imagined this would be true. Ashford slowly embraced me and caught me in her web of small town community connections.

Now after more than thirty years of training, I know I love this community of special people who can appreciate the rugged outdoors and also love a big party. This spring solidified my love for my town. April was a feast of connection, community and collaboration. Starting with the trash day cleanup on the last Saturday in April in the morning, and finishing with the dinner dance that evening, I never felt prouder to be a member of this community.

The trash clean-up day was, dare I say, fun. “Are you crazy?” someone asked me with a look of incredulity on their face. First my heart soared when I arrived at Knowlton Hall and witnessed the array of people proceeding to the announced meet-up place. More than twenty people, encompassing all ages, gave up a beautiful Saturday morning to help clean up Ashford. The energy was infectious and everyone was smiling, eager to begin. One of our selectmen, Bill Falletti, was there with his wife Linda ready to help. Pat Pheanious, who is running for State representative, was chronicling the event by taking pictures, and we gleefully stood together with our vests, gloves and nail tool sticks to grin for the camera. We were all jolly and feeling connected as we left to tackle a roadside near our homes.

As I grabbed garbage with one of the carefully crafted sticks that Bruce DePercio had designed, I was especially appreciative of being a part of this cool town. We laughed and joked as we jumped into the gullies and searched for those little nip bottles and castaway cans and rubbish. It was a physical task made easier and tolerable because I was part of a group of neighbors who cared about their town.

On my way back home, I was singing and laugh-

ing. What I envisioned as a chore turned out to be a merry outing with neighbors. I later discovered others were cleaning their roads, so more people were trash picking than I initially tallied up. I deeply thank all those who were part of the crew that day, and especially Pamela Summers, who spearheaded this project.

Later that evening, I attended the dinner dance ball at Knowlton Hall. The volunteers who set up the space and served up a delicious meal worked tirelessly for the benefit of the Ashford Arts Council. Several local artists contributed to the silent auction that served as a fund raiser. The donated items were finely crafted and led to several back-and-forth bids. The band, Blu Ja’nk, provided excellent Bluesy Jazz and Funk tunes for dancing. I boogied and frolicked on the dance floor with old and new friends. Our community came out to support local artists and provide scholarships for young artists. I am so appreciative of all the time and effort that went into the organization and preparation of this gala event. Ashford did rock on Saturday night.

In addition to the above thrilling happenings, on May 13th Mother’s Day, the Ashford Farmers Market began its 12th year. Opening day, we shared the stage with Boy Scouts selling plants and Pfalzgraf Pfarm selling their vegetables, herbs and perennials. What a community event. People showed up and it was a grand success. The following Sunday, the market was a beehive of activity with folks buying plants, radishes, lettuce, microgreens, cheese, herbs and breads. It was a delightful coming together, as people stood around chatting and laughing, while supporting our local growers.

All of this activity, events and connection make me feel honored to be living in Ashford and helping create a community that values the land, each other and all living creatures. We are fun-loving residents, who are united in keeping Ashford rural and vibrant with healthy waterways, trees, and wildlife. There are so many people who freely volunteer to provide service to our town. By the way, have you seen the stunning gardens around our town hall? Thank the Garden Club for all that elegance and color.

And it continues, as June is chock-full of events. On June 3rd there is a hike at Langhammer Trail on Lustig Road (1-3 pm) to view spring growth and search for flowers. On Wednesday June 13th at 6 pm, the bee lady, Catherine Wolko of Humble Bee Honey Company will educate us about pollinators and how they affect their environment. A new statewide initiative, SustainableCt, will hold an informational meeting on June 25th at 7 pm at Knowlton Hall. Come on down to see how you can be a part of another new adventure to keep Ashford sustainable, support local economy, and build more cohesive community. Look for me there with a friendly smile and a radiant welcome.

The Neighbors paper
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Imagine

By Delia Berlin

Remember John Lennon’s song?

“Imagine there’s no countries
It isn’t hard to do
Nothing to kill or die for
And no religion too
Imagine all the people living life in peace
You may say I’m a dreamer
But I’m not the only one
I hope someday you’ll join us
And the world will be as one.”



Well, there are countries and the world is not as one. For most of us, these facts may be of little consequence in our daily lives, but for many others, they are momentous.

If you are reading this, chances are that you are a citizen of at least one country and that you have done little or nothing to earn that qualification. Most people automatically become citizens of the country where they are born. This is called “birthright citizenship” and it’s often taken for granted, but it defines a momentous and serendipitous event that affects each person’s fate and future to a great extent.

In addition to these “natural born” citizens, most countries also have “naturalized” citizens. Usually, they comprise a relatively small fraction of the population that acquired citizenship through a “naturalization” process. This process can be lengthy, expensive and involved. In most cases, people must pre-qualify to even start the process. It’s not an easy credential to obtain by any means, but once granted it confers virtually the same rights of natural born citizens.

Depending on international laws and reciprocity agreements, some naturalized citizens never lose their original citizenship, sporting what is known as “dual citizenship” or citizenship recognized by two countries at once. I am one of those fortunate individuals. Born abroad, but having spent practically all of my adult life in the US, I became a US citizen through naturalization many years ago, as soon as I could complete the process.

But my country of birth, Argentina, and the US, have a reciprocal dual-citizenship agreement, allowing those who naturalize in each country to retain their birth citizenship in the other. So, at my US citizenship ceremony, the Immigration and Naturalization Service gave me a certificate of naturalization, a US passport, and a lapel pin with the flags of the US and Argentina. I still have that pin and sometimes even wear it.



In spite of personal experience with immigration issues, only recently did I learn that not everyone is fortunate enough to have at least one citizenship. According to the United Nations Refugee Agency, UNHCR, today “at least 10 million people around the world are denied a nationality. As a result, they often aren’t allowed to go to school, see a doctor, get a job, open a bank account, buy a house or even get married.”

These “stateless people” lack most of the basic rights that we take for granted, including freedom of movement. Some of them may have been, at some point, citizens of a country that no longer exist; some may have been born in territories that are now disputed, and some belong to groups or tribes that were exiled from their native lands. In addition to these stateless people, there are many more who have been displaced by wars, persecution and natural disasters. While these people usually do have citizenship somewhere, they can’t stay or return there. A recent report from the UNHCR entitled Global Trends, noted that “on average 24 people were forced to flee each minute in 2015, four times more than a decade earlier.”

This report found that a total 65.3 million people were displaced by the end of 2015, compared to 59.5 million just 12 months earlier. This number represents approximately 1 in 113 of all people in the world, and more than half of them are children. The totals are growing every year and expected to increase. These displaced human beings, plus those who are born stateless, add up to more than 75 million people who live without the rights and benefits of citizenship. Think about that for a moment. Really try to put yourself in the shoes of one of these people, unpleasant as it may be. Try, for example, to imagine something like... Being a mother in Aleppo:

Rubble,
broken bodies, lives, dreams,
primal fear,
urge to flee,
to pick up my child and run, swim, fly,
whatever may take us
to a piece of quiet,
to see green again,
to grow a carrot,
to watch a chicken lay an egg.

Our imagination can help us understand the reasons and trials of displacement, even if our own lives are stable and safe. Imagination can make us particularly generous and nonjudgmental towards children because we perceive them as innocent victims of their circumstances. Children lack control over their destiny and if misfortune befalls on them, we naturally want to help them. But what about adults? At what age can we say that someone who lost everything due to war, famine, or a natural disaster becomes responsible for his own bad luck?

As children grow into adults, we seem more inclined to judge them and less willing to help them out. But are we ever in control of our misfortunes and less deserving of assistance? I don’t know about you, but I’m a grandmother and still feel that I’m growing up and “winging it” as I go. A rapidly changing world exacerbates the feeling of having to find my own way in uncharted waters. In the words of the Spanish poet Antonio Machado, “*Caminante, no hay camino, se hace camino al andar.*” (“Walker, there is no path, you make the path as you walk.”)

The UNHCR hopes to end the problem of statelessness by 2024. This is a lofty, and perhaps unrealistic goal, but even if accomplished, the end of statelessness would not address the end of human displacement. Within the US in 2017 alone, more than a million people were permanently displaced from their homes due to hurricanes and other natural disasters. Whether they are stateless, refugees, homeless US citizens or immigrants, the future will bring increasing numbers of humans for whom we’ll have to make room. And before closing that thought, it is important to accept that at some point, one of them could be you or me.

Needless to say, I don’t have a solution to the problem of growing numbers of displaced people. But I believe that knowing about it and considering that it is a huge problem, is a first step. Unfortunately, that knowledge is not mainstream. Instead of objective information about other people’s situations and needs, we are often presented with the risks that strangers may pose. Our fears are stoked and fanned, blunting our goodwill and generosity towards those in need.

This is unfortunate, because Americans are a most generous people who readily organize to help their neighbors. When faced with actual people, our empathy and generosity immediately kick in. But when presented with stereotypes of groups, such as potential refugees from an unfamiliar region, our fears may win.

In this era of uncertainty, rapid change and diminishing resources, protectionism and populism are thriving. We hear about closing the borders, building a wall, extreme vetting. In turn, this trend also alarms many in this country of immigrants. So, in response, countless groups and organizations are doing everything in their power to continue helping others, to welcome displaced people into their communities, to provide shelter and respite to the homeless and the needy.

Through these competing reactions and responses, we are becoming increasingly divided about how to best deal with these issues. We are finding it difficult, if not impossible, to strike balance and compromise. Apparently, this polarization is starting to affect our health and even our children’s.

A recent study by the Center for Law and Social Policy found that many US children as young as three now fear that their parents will be “taken away to Mexico” even in families of all US citizens. Parental deportation has become the new “Boogey man” of today for young US children, even if their own family situation does not place them at risk. Our children are already suffering the impact of human displacement in their own land. But ironically, their fears are not caused by “aliens” but by those supposedly “protecting” us from aliens. Isn’t that counterproductive?

There is no way to end this argument and perhaps there shouldn’t be. A changing world demands flexibility. Our positions will, by necessity, evolve. The topic of human suffering is difficult and we can only contemplate it for so long. Perhaps in some ways, protectionism and inclusion have always coexisted, and our focus needs to be on preserving civility and respect for each other. But imagining others’ lives can help us understand their problems and gain empathy. In turn, this understanding can guide us to potential solutions. Although complex problems rarely have unique solutions and each one of us may respond differently, I am hopeful that compassion will always factor in.

Out Front

It was a nothing front yard when we bought the house; mowing the lawn meant churning dust over the scarred, knuckled roots beneath two dying, centuries-old silver maples.

So I snapped twigs, raked away leaf debris, uncovered the sloping contours of soil, the dream of drought-hardy, deer-resistant joy unfolding in continuous bloom.

With shovel hoe crowbar, hands back thighs, I cut trenches for insistent cobalt blues, dug holes for flecked lavender, for orange striped with unruly reds. I wrestled rock

for searing yellows with black centers, hauled pine mulch, staked landscape cloth around square-stemmed mauves, neon-blaze magentas. I gouged clay and now pale blush pink fades to pure white froth.

What I didn’t plan was the savory polyglot of dappled scents, the soft shapes of their names in my mouth: Bearded Iris, *Buddleia*, salvia, Rose of Sharon, *Hesperis matronalis*, *Lamium*.

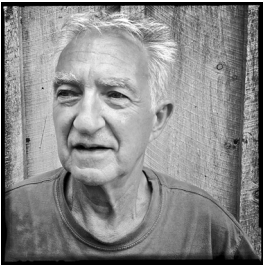
It doesn’t matter what the yard looks like from the road—it’s the summer air alive wild with honey bees, Siberian sage, *Callicarpa*, *Rudbeckia hirta*;

it’s bee balm’s delicate throat brimming sweet with nectar; it’s wet *Hibiscus*, yarrow, open *Eutrochium* and peonies overrun with hummingbirds, butterflies.

Claudia McGhee facilitates a weekly writing group for Coventry senior citizens at the Coventry Senior Center. Claudia’s poetry chapbook, Paperlight, was published by Finishing Line Press in August 2016

Report from the Jungle

By David Corsini



At publication time I’m in the rain forest of Costa Rica, with limited computer and wi-fi access. I promise a better report for the July issue, but here are a couple pictures and highlights from the field:

It’s hot and humid, but not enough to get in the way of enjoying rigorous hikes. The air is filled with the sound of howler monkeys, insect noises and bird calls. So far, I’ve had many good sightings, including trogons, a manakin, two species of toucans, a large great basilisk lizard, a hollow tree filled with bats, and a black squirrel eating a banana.

Did you know that black light makes scorpions glow in the dark? At night, I’ve been holding the black light source ahead of a group of scorpion hunters. The critters aren’t very abundant, as one night’s work produced only a very small specimen.



Lizard and heliconia
David Corsini photos.

I’m also starting to test local bird responses to recordings of chickadees or crows mobbing. On my first trial with chickadee calls, a Rufus-tailed hummingbird came and flew for several minutes around the speaker. When I played crow calls, a female tanager landed on top of the bush with my speaker, then three motmots landed in a tree high above.

On another trial in a nearby spot I had clear response of a flycatcher to the chickadee calls. But when I tried to play the crow recording my phone got too hot from the sun and stopped working correctly. I also got too hot and had to abort that trial, but not before noticing that some insects also started screaming to one of the recordings.

Soon we’ll break for lunch and then visit a pineapple farm. Maybe after that we’ll take another night walk. The adventure continues. Much more to come...



A Call to Share Your Music with the World

By William Rood Jr.

Last summer I lost a friend. He was a musician and singer who had a profound influence on my musicianship and my outlook on life. He possessed a genuine creative musical talent and when on stage, he was a true entertainer. Although I didn't see him often, the two of us shared a special connection as musicians from the Jazz and R&B scene. Every single time we got back together, it was as though we had never been apart.

My last visit with him was a few months before he passed away. He called me out of the blue and said, "Billy I need you to play sax on this track." I answered, "You know I kind of quit, right? I can't play like I used to." He said, "No. No. I need you to do it! You're the only one with that sound and this here's my wife's favorite song. I need to get it recorded." This was my good friend talking, so I went along with it and dusted off my saxophone. I practiced with the track a few times and then went over to his home studio to record.

I recorded the tracks for him the way he wanted. But, then... here's the real point of the story.... he started pulling up his other creations.

His health was failing badly, his medical conditions were compounding day by day, but when he sang, he was as alive as ever. Man, he was so alive! He loads up the song on his computer, pulls up the lyrics on his phone and sings right there to me. That song reminds him of another one he wrote so he pulls up the audio tracks, opens his lyrics and sings to me. His voice is like being up close to Luther Vandross or Ray Charles; I am at once overwhelmed and awestruck! This goes on for hours: one song after another, these marvelous creations and this unbelievably powerful voice delivering the message right to me in my own private concert!

Then it hits me. "Brother, you never recorded the lead vocals to any of your songs?" I ask as my heart sinks. No. He explains that he's waiting for the right time to do it, that's the last step that he hasn't gotten to, or he wants to sell the songs to someone else, or maybe he might find the next Justin Bieber who he can then help produce, manage and get his songs out to the world....

Share your music with the world.
As imperfect as it may be — share your music with the world.

By all means, go through the steps to copyright your music according to U.S. law, but do not let that hold you back. I meet so many people who are worried about their songs being stolen that they hide them away. I know elderly musicians and songwriters who say they have a fortune on the ADAT machines and someday when the right time comes, they'll make big money with the songs. I really want them to. I do. Truthfully, I believe that even with copyright protection the average person wouldn't stand a chance if a celebrity with unlimited financial means were to steal their song.

Even if you never sell a single download, put your music out there. Finish your songs, record them and share them. There is a new revolution happening in music today and we can all join in.

If only my friend had recorded his songs and put them out on iTunes, Spotify, YouTube, SoundCloud or anywhere else, then I could hear his voice once again. RIP JJ. I'll miss you.

William Rood Jr. is a graduate of the Hartt School of Music. He has had a successful career as a music teacher for 19 years and has been performing professionally since the age of 16.

Join us! If you are a creative artist looking for support send an email with links to your music to - ctoriginalmusic@gmail.com

Call for Artwork

Submitted by Janice Trecker

Interested in showing your paintings, prints, or photographs? Fletcher Memorial Library's Top Shelf Gallery is looking for artists willing to display their work for a month or two. This safe, well lighted venue is available during library hours. Contact Anne at annesgarden@aol.com or call the library at 860 455 - 1086. More information is also available on the library website, www.fletchermemoriallibrary.org.

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06.28	The Silks // Blues, Rock
07.05	Wise Old Moon // Folk Rock
07.12	The Wolff Sisters // Folk Rock
07.19	Mo Lowda & The Humble // Alt Rock <i>presented by UConn Summer/Winter Programs</i>
07.26	Funky Dawgz Brass Band // Funk, Soul

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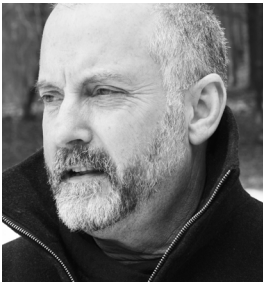
Caring Stewards of the Earth

By C. Dennis Pierce

There is something to be said about the natural habitat of a farm and the animals that inhabit the garden. On a recent visit to Willow Valley Farm, in Ashford Connecticut, I observed a Killdeer bird that was protecting its nest as we walked through the garden. The Killdeer is very common in the area as it calls its name as it flies over head. Like many members of the plover family this species is often found in pastures and fields. In this case, mom had decided to make her nest smack in the middle of the garden where there was an abundance of straw mulch that surrounded the fledgling tomato plants. As she danced around, trying to move us away from the nest she attempted to fool us by her “broken wing” act as she fluttered along the ground in a show of injury, luring us away from her nest. Little did this bird know she picked a perfect place to host her new family. You see, Willow Valley Farm, is probably the most caring farm I have come across since I have began writing this column, well over four years ago. How would I define caring? They have taken the NOFA pledge, the majority of their seed is organic, they draw water from two, farm irrigation ponds on the property and mulch with their own hay that they grow on land that they lease which consists of thirty acres in Ashford. Spencer Cartabiano, his mother, Julia and Jackie Kulig manage the farm using good agricultural practices.

A lot like the Killdeer, that has nested at the Willow Valley Farm, the farm owners are very conscientious. They aim to supply the local food system with fresh fruit and vegetables while enhancing the land and natural resources around us. By taking care of the soil, wildlife habitat, and water resources, they ensure the future of their farm and its ability to provide great offerings. Active soil life is an important aspect of sustainable farming. By creating the right balance of plants, nutrients, and microorganisms, they are able to avoid using synthetic fertilizers. This involves regular applications of compost and mulch. They grow their own rye straw for mulch and use other plant-based mulches, such as wood chips, paper, and living mulch (cover crops). These additions provide nutrients for their plants and large amounts of organic matter to feed the worms and microorganisms in the soil. They also use natural products such as garlic spray to protect their plants from pests and pathogens. They do not use GMOs, pesticides, or black plastic mulch.

Willow Valley farm plants approximately three acres of vegetables. There selections range from, cabbage, peas, broccoli, beets, carrots, many varieties of tomatoes, a field of garlic, onions and others too many to mention. They also lease sixty acres in Ashford where they grow hay and straw that has not been treated with fertilizer. As I was not aware most commercial straw and hay that is used for mulch is treated with fertilizer so that it stands straight up when it is harvested. The farm also offers a CSA membership, but sadly to say, they are full this year. But don’t fret their produce can be found at the following markets: Ashford Farmers’ Market: Sundays, 10AM – 1PM, Pompey Hollow Park, 25 Tremko Lane, Ashford, CT, Storrs Farmers’ Market: Saturdays, 3PM-6PM, Mansfield Town Hall, 4 S Eagleville Road, Storrs, CT. and the Stafford Market,



Saturday morning (opening day June 16, 2018). The market will be every Saturday from 9:00am to 1:00pm at 31 Main Street, Stafford. And if that is not enough, as summer warms up their stand is open mid-June On Saturday and Sunday from 9:00am to 6:00pm.

Willow Valley Farm’s contact information is: Email: wvfcsa@gmail.com, Mailing Address: 91 Jared Sparks Road, Willington, CT 06279, Farm Stand Address: 39 Moose Meadow Road, Willington, CT 06279, Home Phone: 860-508-7706, Cell Phone: 860-933-5842 Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/wvfcsa>

So, now that we have the spring crops coming to market, I thought I would offer a recipe with a differ twist. We often think of pancakes as a breakfast item but some cultures offer them as a side dish to a meal. For those that are looking for something different, easy to make, and a perfect host for new spring peas, try the following Pea Pancakes as an alternative to a potato or grain. They will go over well with your vegetarian friends too.



Julie Kulig and Spencer Cartabiano.

Dennis Pierce photo.

Pea Pancakes
Serves 4

Ingredients:
4 ounces of sugar snap peas, strings removed
½ cup shelled peas
2 tablespoons of milk
1 tablespoon of cream
1 egg
1/4 cup of flour
¼ teaspoon of sugar
¼ teaspoon kosher salt
½ teaspoon of baking powder
1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon of butter

Topping for Pancakes
1 ½ cups of shelled peas (about 1 pound)
1/2 pound of sugar snap peas, strings removed and cut into 3 pieces on the diagonal.
3 tablespoons of butter
½ cup of vegetable stock or water
Salt
2 teaspoons of finely sliced mint leaves.

Directions:

Preheat the oven top 450 degrees
Bring a pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Fill s large bowl, halfway with ice water. Add sugar snap peas to the boiling water and blanch for two minutes. Remove the peas with a slotted spoon and shock in the ice water for two minutes. Remove the peas with a slotted spoon and set aside.
Add the shelled peas to the same boiling water and blanch until just tender, four to six minutes. Transfer to ice water and shock for two minutes. Remove and set aside.
In a blender, puree the sugar snap peas with the milk and cream. Transfer the puree to a bowl, making sure to scrape down the sides, stir in the egg, then add the flour, sugar, salt and baking powder.
Coarsely puree the shelled peas in the blender, then mix them into the batter.
Melt ½ teaspoon of butter ion a medium, oven proof, nonstick, pan over high heat, swirling the butter around the pan.
Add batter and make two pancakes, 3 inches in diameter, using 2 tablespoons of batter for each.
When edges brown, transfer the pan to the oven and bake for two minutes. Flip pancakes and return to the oven for four minutes.
Transfer the pancakes to a plate and cover with aluminum foil to keep them warm.
Repeat with the remaining batter.

Directions for Topping:
Prepare shelled peas as you did previously with boiling water and shocking, with ice water, for the pancakes
Put the sugar snap peas, butter, stock and a pinch of salt in a pot and bring to a boil over high heat. Add shelled peas and cook until the peas are nicely glazed, 3 to 5 minutes. Season to taste with salt.
To serve, divide pancakes among four warmed plates. Top with pea mixture and sprinkle with mint.
Serve immediately.

As you are aware local food is better for you. The shorter the time between the farm and your table, the less likely it is that nutrients will be lost from fresh food. As I toured Willow Valley Farm I was given some peas and a carrot to taste. It is hard to explain the experience when eating a carrot that was in the ground just a few seconds before. It is important to remember that food imported from far away is older and has traveled distances before it gets to you.

Local food preserves genetic diversity.
In the modern agricultural system, plant varieties are chosen for their ability to ripen uniformly, withstand harvesting, survive packing and last a long time on the shelf, so there is limited genetic diversity in large-scale production. Smaller local farms, in contrast, often grow many different varieties of crops to provide a long harvest season, an array of colors, and the best flavors. Livestock diversity is also higher where there are many small farms rather than few large farms.

Lastly local Connecticut Grown food is safe. There’s a unique kind of assurance that comes from looking a farmer in the eye at farmers’ market or driving by the fields where your food comes from. Local farmers aren’t anonymous and they take their responsibility to the consumer seriously. Go see for yourself. You can find information about the farm during their open house on June 10th from 2:00pm to 6:00pm. Additional info can be found on their website <https://wvfcsa.wordpress.com>

As always, thanks for taking the time to write me, read this column, and buy local. As the old expression goes, “You are what you eat”. 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.

Our Community Calendar

Compiled By Dagmar Noll

Ed. note: Once again, this month’s calendar starts here and winds its way through the issue.

June 1, Friday
Live Music: Classic Brass Band Concert, 7:00p.m. Free. First Congregational Church, 199 Valley Street, Willimantic. Info: 860-456-1666 www.victorianwillimantic.org

June 2, Saturday
Hike: Birds of Black Spruce Pond/Natchaug Trail, 8:00a.m. - 10:30a.m. Goodwin Forest

Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 jasper.sha@ct.gov
Cycling: Annual New Engand Mountain Bike Association Annual Goodwin/Natchaug Epic Fun Ride, 9:00a.m. Off-road event with three terrain loops over marked routes. Pot luck cookout to follow at 12:30p.m.
Gardening: Garden Club of Windam Plant Sale, 9:00a.m. - 12:00p.m. 15 Washburn St, Willimantic. Info: rhoorocks@snet.net or 860-456-1666
Architecture: Architectural Slide Show, 10:00a.m. Free. Dugan Hall, 157 Union Street, Willimantic. Info: 860-456-2178

www.millmuseum.org
Hike: A Walk with James L. Goodwin, 3:00p.m. - 5:00p.m. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 jasper.sha@ct.gov
History: Candlelight Tour, 8:00p.m. \$7-\$10. Oil light and candlelight tour of Mill Museum. Windham Textile & History Museum, 411 Main St, Willimantic. Info: 860-456-2178 www.millmuseum.org
Hiking: Night Hike, bonfire, and S’mores, 8:00p.m. - 10:00p.m. Bring a flashlight or headlamp. Followed by a campfire and s’mores. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 jasper.sha@ct.gov

June 3, Sunday
Running: 2018 Friends of Goodwin Forest Trail Run, 9:00a.m. \$20-33. 30k and 10k courses through Goodwin and area forests. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Register: 860-455-9534 jasper.sha@ct.gov
Community Food: Ashford Farmers Market, 10:00a.m. - 1:00p.m. Ashford produce & more, Rt 44 Ashford.
History: Victorian Home Tours, 11:00a.m. - 4:00p.m. \$20. 9 houses open for guided tours, Willimantic. Info: 860-456-1666 www.victorianwillimantic.org
Arts: Summer 2018 “First Sunday at The Mill Works”, 12:00pm-5:00pm. Free and open to everyone! Open artist studios; Gardiner Hall Jr. Historical Museum;

What Are You Going to Do About It?

The Paradox of Knowing Too Much and Too Little

By Edmund J. Smith, LCSW

These days, the presence of the mass media is with us always. It is now a rare occurrence to find a restaurant, or any public place, where there is not a TV blaring the latest traumatizing reports to events that flow into our field of experience, as if issuing from one massive waste-drenched river. One would think that the effects of all this would be to create proportionate horror, outrage, and appropriate response. The problem is that it has produced quite the opposite. And still we wonder why the American public lags behind so many other populations in the degree of activism that it is willing to engage in, in the face of disastrous political tidings.

One of the salient features of psychological trauma is numbing, or desensitization. It is the opposite side of the coin of hyper-vigilance, impulsive reaction, and other more familiar signs of the condition known as PTSD. This numbing is accompanied by dysphoria, or ‘bad feelings’ and a sense of helplessness before the spectacle of the horror being portrayed. One of the functions of mass media, now comprising other outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, and the like, is to reinforce these feelings endlessly, supplying trauma details from every geographical point in a person’s daily functioning. It then becomes routine to witness police shootings, terrorist attacks (not to be confused with military missions!), stories of school shootings, domestic violence....and the list goes on. Information overload, sensory overload, leaving one helpless before the spectacle.

A key element that all of these stories have in common- besides their more often than not being reported through a filtered lens of corporate America, with its predilection for blaming human nature and for providing scant if any explanatory insight- is their leaving viewers with a sense of helplessness before the scenes that unfold before them, instilling resignation before the spectacle of it all. Resignation is vital to establishing obedience, and obedience is fear-driven compliance with the will of others. Fear and depression, as well as hate (often in the form of misdirected anger) are the mood colors that largely inform reactions to news reports as well as the many story-lines of Hollywood dramas, leaving audiences with feelings that push them further from themselves, from people around them (beware, the stranger!) and from meaning in daily activity.

Having outlined such a phenomenon, the question becomes, ‘what is to be done about all this, or is stating the above like the news stories themselves, a set of statements bankrupt of any motivating content? Perhaps the first step, and for some the hardest, is to turn away from the gruesome spectacle. The objection might be raised, ‘to turn away from the news and from disagreeable incidents in life generally, isn’t that a form of numbing, breeding indifference and leaving the playing field of life only to the bad guys? To turn away from horrific funhouse of demoralizing reports is not to turn away from responsibility or from the core values of a meaningful life. It is to provide a fresh field in which to think ‘outside of the idiot box’ in order to address what most concerns us.

If one were to say, ‘I am most concerned about the destruction of the environment’ or ‘ the threats of nuclear war are frightening me and life itself is at risk’, or any of a number of other statements reflecting an awareness of the perils that are in fact a part of our world, the next consideration following from that would be what you intended to do about it. If the answer that comes of this question is something on the order of , ‘nothing, I am helpless, the situation is too bad, there is no remedy’, than naturally no action will follow and all of the moods described above will infest within you as a consequence of your acquired passivity. If, on the other hand, you were to move in the direction of learning what others are doing- the great step in realizing that you are not alone in these concerns- a different experience entirely from one of isolation- you would find yourself immediately relieved of at least a good measure of your despair. To be freed from crippling emotional reactions is a precondition for letting meaning into one’s life, let alone the ‘bonus’ of joy. All of this is so much easier said than done. That is why it is best defined as a practice, the practice of engaging with wide-world problems mindfully.

A couple of years back, I attended a march to protest climate change in New York City. Clearly there were all sorts of answers being offered and different perspectives from many different groups. And clearly now, despite all that – a turn out of millions, which happened in



cities throughout the world at the same time- we are still stuck in the Earth-threatening morass of corporate greed and heedless destruction. But what comes clear on days like that is that through such actions, we can see who our friends are, the millions who, like ourselves, aspire to a world that is safe and whole. In such encounters, people learn, as if in a crash course, the other side of human nature. It stands forth as a living manifesto. It trains people to have the courage to act as citizens of the planet, even when we are being told to leave it in the hands of Wall Street and their political instruments. We can see that we are not alone, that we can collectively be a mighty force. In that realization, the force that is each one of us has weight; whereas the be ‘only one’ against the inimical forces of daily disaster is to be ‘weightless’, detached and adrift.

There are of course other dimensions to the construction of the moods that we associate with trauma. We often need look no further than our own life conditions, wrestling with problems of family, neighborhood, money, illness, employment, and more. Threading through all of these, however, is the imperative of acting as if everything counts, the way one confers meaning on one’s life. In doing so, the worlds we inhabit acquire a kind of iridescence that affirms that we are here and a difference has been made because of it. This is always possible.

Edmund Smith is a practicing psychotherapist, musician, and co-founder of the Think and Do Philosophy Club.

‘Spring Breeze Concert’

Submitted by Jane Vercelli

The Northeast Connecticut Community Orchestra, a regional string group with musicians from nine area towns, presents its 7th spring concert featuring soloist Jiayi He on harmonica and music by Holst, Puccini and Verdi. Conductor Dylan Lomangino will lead the 20-member orchestra in concerts on Sunday, June 10, at 2 p.m. at Clark Chapel, Pomfret School, and Friday, June 8, at 7:30 p.m. at Knowlton Hall, Ashford. The concert is free; donations are gratefully received.

A harmonica virtuoso, Jiayi He will perform playing a range of harmonicas, including chromatic, diatonic, tremolo and bass. He will join the orchestra on classical pieces by Strauss and Mozart as well as on a modern composition by Gordon Jacob, “Five Pieces for Harmonica and Strings.”

Jiayi He has been a soloist at Carnegie Hall, Shea Stadium and on NBC’s Season 5 of “America’s Got Talent.”

The orchestra was founded in 2012 by violinist Yaroslav Tereshchenko who invited Dylan Lomanginio to be assistant conductor in 2014. Since Tereshchenko’s move to Nebraska, Lomangino has been conductor and music director.

Lomangino earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Connecticut and his Bachelor of Science degree in Music Education from the University of Bridgeport. He is a violist in the Connecticut Valley Symphony Orchestra and the Beth-El Symphony.

The orchestra is a non audition - based group of musicians from throughout the Quiet Corner who rehearse weekly in Ashford. Anyone who plays violin, viola, cello or string bass is welcome to join. For more information, contact NCCO president Jane Vercelli at janevercelli@gmail.com or 860 428-4633.

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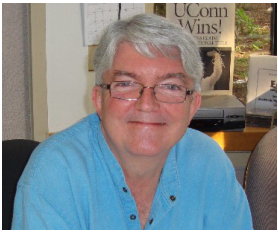
The Neighbors Paper

A little paper
Big on community

Your Local Community Media and the Arts: Connecting the Community

By John Murphy

This series will continue covering the locally-based electronic media channels and programs in our region — across all distribution platforms — radio, TV, cable, print and web-based. Valuable and relevant content is out there looking for audiences of common interest and value. The expression and energy of the arts in action can provide the message for the medium...and putting thought into action first is where change and unity begins. Sharing thoughtful change by creating unity in our daily lives is how we can build community.



This month’s highlights include:
-Make Music Day Connecticut 2018 on June 21
-New Grant Opportunities for Artists — Don’t Miss These Opportunities!

Make Music Day Connecticut 2018— A Statewide Solstice Music Festival on June 21!



The world’s largest annual music event makes its Connecticut debut on June 21. This event connects 71 cities across the USA and over 800 cities in 120 different countries across the planet!

Over 250 free outdoor music making events will be held across the Nutmeg State. Join Windham Arts in their music and community celebration, happening in Downtown Willimantic on the Solstice. The Third Thursday Street Fest will take part in CT Make Music Day!

Important news! The deadline to register and participate as an artist or venue has been extended to June 19 in the Windham Arts service region. Plenty of time for new performances to be included—go for it!

SIGN UP TO BE AN ARTIST OR VENUE AT MAKE MUSIC DAY

If you would like to participate as an artist or vendor in our Make Music event, please visit matchnect.makemusicday.org. (copy and paste: <https://matchnect.makemusicday.org/>)

Please note you MUST register first, then log in to select between either the artist or a venue option, both can be an option. If you have any questions, please contact John Murphy at 860.377.7166 or john@windhamarts.org.

History and Background of Make Music Day:

Each Make Music city is independently organized. As the designated Regional Service Organization, Windham Arts will coordinate local promotions and communicate with participants throughout its 36-town region. The website will always have the latest information available — at www.windhamarts.org.

What ties everything together is the nonprofit Make Music Alliance. When musicians and locations join Make Music, they go to their local city’s website and register using embedded matchmaking software, provided by the Alliance to each member city.

Using these tools, any musician can sign up, describe their music, and request performance space; stores, buildings, gardens, and other locations register to host these musicians, providing electricity, equipment, and promotion. Like an internet dating site, musicians and venues search through the listings to find each other and make arrangements for June 21st concerts. The software then creates an interactive map and searchable listings for each city, displayed on the local site, and on smartphone apps for iOS and Android.

Amateur musicians of all ages and genres can play for some of the biggest crowds of their lives. Everyone can experience the joy of performing, even those without the skills or connections to find gigs in regular venues. Professional artists and presenters showcase their music to a new audience, reaching people who would never normally hear their work. The best of both worlds in celebration of what brings them together — music!

Local business districts attract customers by hosting musicians in front of shops and restaurants. For neighbors, it’s a chance to turn ordinary sidewalks and streets into impromptu stages, dance floors, and social meeting points, and bring their community together. For the city, it’s a way to attract tourists from other parts of the region to come experience the city’s cultural richness. And through the Make Music Alliance, it’s a way to showcase the city’s local music scene through a nationwide PR campaign and listings platform on June 21.

This celebration will be covered widely in local community media and anyone interested in participating in any aspect of this great event should contact me via email at: john@windhamarts.org. More information is available at www.windhamarts.org.

New Grant Opportunities for Artists— Don’t Miss These Opportunities!



The Connecticut Office of the Arts (COA) animates a culture of creativity across Connecticut by supporting arts making and arts participation for all people.

For 2018-2019 there are several categories for funding. If you are reading this online the various weblinks will be active and you can just click and connect to the information. If you are reading a printed version the web addresses are listed—you can copy and paste them into your browser.

Artist Fellowship (for individual artists)

(copy and paste: <http://www.cultureandtourism.org/cct/cwp/view.asp?a=3933&q=293740>)

The Artist Fellowship program encourages the continuing development of Connecticut artists. The program provides competitive Artistic Excellence grants of \$5,000; Artist Fellowship grants of \$3,000; and Emerging Recognition grants of \$1,000. The funding provides an opportunity for artists to pursue new work and achieve specific creative and career goals.

For more information or questions, please contact Tamara Dimitri via email at tamara.dimitri@ct.gov.

Arts Learning Grants (for projects)

(copy and paste: <http://www.cultureandtourism.org/cct/cwp/view.asp?a=4346&q=589586>)

The Connecticut Office of the Arts (COA) promotes teaching and learning in, about, and through the arts, through high quality arts engagement, arts integration, arts exploration and discovery experiences.

Through its Arts Learning grant program, the COA seeks to connect PK-12 schools and citizens with arts experience(s) in Connecticut.

GRANT CATEGORIES

The Arts Learning grant program offers funding through three (3) distinct categories:

Arts Access (copy and paste: <http://www.ct.gov/cct/cwp/view.asp?a=4346&q=601702>)

Connections and Correlations (CC)
(copy and paste: <http://www.ct.gov/cct/cwp/view.asp?a=4346&q=601710>)

Integration (copy and paste: <http://www.ct.gov/cct/cwp/view.asp?a=4346&q=601716>)

Arts Project Grants (for projects)

(Copy and paste: <http://www.cultureandtourism.org/cct/cwp/view.asp?a=4346&q=589616>)

The Arts Project grant program encourages and supports arts-based projects of artistic excellence that are aligned with our READI (Relevance, Equity, Access, Diversity, Inclusion) framework. Grants requests range from \$5,000-\$15,000 for planning and implementation of arts-based projects for Connecticut audiences, communities and participants.

For more information or questions, please contact Tamara Dimitri at tamara.dimitri@ct.gov

Regional Initiative “REGI” Grants (for projects)
(Copy and paste: <http://www.cultureandtourism.org/cct/cwp/view.asp?a=4346&q=589588>)

The Regional Initiative (REGI) grant program encourages and supports small community arts projects that are aligned with COA’s READI (Relevance, Equity, Access, Diversity, and Inclusion) framework. REGI is a good fit for applicants that intend to use small arts-based projects to engage in a specific community matter, reflect on personal experience, and/or projects that bring neighborhoods together.

For more information or questions, please contact Adriane Jefferson via email at adriane.jefferson@ct.gov.

Supporting Arts Program (for operating support)
(Copy and paste: <http://www.cultureandtourism.org/cct/cwp/view.asp?a=4346&q=589618>)

The Supporting Arts grant program provides unrestricted funding to help support Connecticut’s arts organizations and municipal arts departments as they pursue their mission. This type of grant is flexible rather than for specific projects or programs and gives the grantee the ability to use the funds where they are most needed.

For more information or questions, please contact Rhonda F. Olisky via email at rhonda.olisky@ct.gov.

Connecticut Arts Endowment Fund
(Copy and paste: <http://www.cultureandtourism.org/cct/cwp/view.asp?a=3933&q=293766>)

The Connecticut Arts Endowment Fund (CAEF) was established by the State of Connecticut in 2003 with an initial investment of \$1 million. The Fund is managed by the Connecticut Office of the State Treasurer and the program is administered by the Connecticut Office of the Arts. The interest earned on the Fund’s principal is distributed annually to eligible Connecticut arts organizations.

CAEF grants are unrestricted. Grantees may apply the grant funds toward programming, administrative/operational costs, capital projects, equipment or to build their own endowments, etc.

For more information or questions, please contact Rhonda F. Olisky via email at rhonda.olisky@ct.gov.

One more special resource for anyone who is interested in a possible grant. A special webinar with an overview and introduction about the grant programs was recorded and is available at the links below. If you are interested in any program it would be very good to view this before you apply.

Grant Overview Webinar (recorded on May 8): View/Listen Here!

(Or copy and paste this link: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/1923721327723271425>)

PDF of PowerPoint presentation used during webinar. (Or copy and paste this link: http://www.cultureandtourism.org/cct/lib/cct/FINAL_PPT_FY19Grant_Programs.FINAL%285-8-18%29.pdf)

For more news and regular arts updates go the Windham Arts website and sign up for the weekly eNewsletter and special notices: www.windhamarts.org. Feel free to contact me with questions.

Other Community Media Resources for Our Region

A great deal of programming about the spectrum of local life in our region is available throughout the year. Watch, listen and read — and let us know you are out there. Connect for cooperative action!

Local Radio Programs
Windham Arts Radio Review, Wednesdays 5-6 pm on WILI AM 1400 and FM 95.3
The Pan American Express, Tuesdays 12—3 pm on WECS 90.1 FM and www.wecsfm.com
Guests invited! Email john@windhamarts.org

Charter Public Access TV Channel 192/NE Connecticut Area/North Windham Studio

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So that’s it for this issue. Thanks for reading and best wishes for a great summer!

John Murphy
john@humanartsmedia.com

Summer Is For Playing!

By Grace Preli

“This is it. There are no hidden meanings.”
— Werner Erhard, If God Had Meant Man to Fly, He Would Have Given Him Wings. Or: Up to Your Ass in Aphorisms



Summer is here! The days are gloriously long, the heat is a welcome relief and the trees are resplendent in their many shades of green. What a gift we have witnessed; in less than a month our little corner of the world has bloomed in beautiful ways.

With more light, more warmth and more movement we are being asked to attend to our projects, our passions and our creations. With energy and daylight to spare, what needs our attention? We are being called to move and stretch and grow, there is movement all around us. The birds and critters sing and dance and play along the river banks and among the hay fields, inviting us to join them. With lengthening days and the magic of summer upon us what are we feeling called to? What are we feeling inspired to do? Who and what do we want to play with?

For me, summers have always been freedom. Summers remind me, more so than other times of the year what an incredible gift life is. It's easy to feel held and supported by the universe when the sunlight shines and the birds sing. It's easy to feel the magic of life when the air smells so sweet and there's time in the day to lay still, spread out on the grass watching the clouds float lazily by.

It's a time of sweetness, a time to look around at your garden, real or metaphorical and say, Wow! Look at all I have planted, look at what is coming into bloom, look at what I have sown and what I shall soon reap. Summer is a time to sit back and take stock of all of the hard work, all of the growth, all of the efforts of planting and tilling. We still have to water and pull weeds and maintain the health of our flower beds but it's a time to rejoice in what we have created for ourselves and revel in the gardens of our creation. We work hard to create for ourselves, beautiful and safe spaces now it is time to enjoy them, to play within them and to see the beauty of all we have grown.

We all need time and space to play and I think that sometimes it is hard for us to enjoy ourselves because we don't make enjoyment or pleasure or play a priority. It's hard for us to give ourselves the time and space we need in order to be in love with our lives and our worlds. How do we continue to nurture ourselves? How do we maintain our crops so to speak? How do we continue to water and weed while still enjoying ourselves and the fruits of our labor?

I think that often, because of 'the way the world works', we pass up opportunities of pleasure and of fun, we pass on doing what we really want or say no to the thing we know we would really enjoy. So many of the things we do for fun aren't really that at all. So many of the things society says are enjoyable, really aren't, yet we feel pressure to participate nonetheless.

What is it that YOU want to do? How is it that you would like to play? The ways in which you choose to enjoy your life are different than the ways in which I might choose to enjoy my life. What I find pleasure and joy in is different than what my friends enjoy.

A lot of my peers are doing things that they don't really want to be doing, and they're searching for what brings them enjoyment and fulfillment in their lives. Maybe they're finishing college and feeling confused about getting out of the school system and into the job system. Or maybe they've started jobs that they're unhappy with but they stay because they're hooked on the money. They look at my life and ask me how I live the life I want to live, the life that brings me joy and peace and they say how do I live like that? And I say: stop doing what you do not want to be doing and start doing what you do want to be doing.

A lot of people don't actually want to admit they are unhappy because to do so would mean admitting that they are not doing what they want. They think that to do what they want would require a seemingly difficult life reboot and this scares them. It would mean allowing a lot of things to crumble and fall apart. It would require letting things go, it would mean re-defining what makes you, you and me, me. It would take pulling up those pesky weeds to make way for the plants to bear fruit, it means doing the work and tending the garden. It asks you to be new at something, be confused by something, be a beginner with something.

Our bodies and souls are incredibly smart and capable. They are super adept at telling us what we want and don't want, the thing is, we just have to listen. Rebooting doesn't have to be scary, it doesn't mean all the walls have to come crashing down, it just means things slowly need to change. So first thing, stop doing what you know you

need to stop doing. Pause. Take a minute, a day, a week to identify what is making you unhappy. Then begin to make the small changes.

Why would we deny ourselves the joy of a life lived from our heart? Why would we deny ourselves the pleasure of truly knowing who we are? For me, enjoying my life is non negotiable. It is my number one priority. I am here to 100% enjoy and experience my life the way I WANT to explore and experience it. If I wake up one day and the birds or the breeze are calling to me in a certain way, well, I'll put my grocery shopping off another day and finish my book outside in the shade instead. If I don't want to do something that 'everyone else' enjoys doing or wants to do, I won't do it. I decided many years ago to enjoy my life and since have done my best to support myself to this end.

YOU deserve to live the life you want to live, how you want to live it, with who and for what purpose. You deserve to find peace and joy and happiness within your life. You deserve to look around your metaphorical garden and say damn! Look at all I have grown, look at who I am, I am proud to be me, proud of what I have created. You deserve to have people in your life who want to play with you, who want to dance and walk and lay in the grass to watch the clouds. You deserve the pleasure of your own company as well as the company of people who care for you in unconditional ways.

Please give yourself the gift of yourself this summer. Give yourself the gift of long sunny days, doing what you wish. Give yourself the pleasure of knowing you are making the choices you WANT to make and are doing the things you WANT to do. Mama nature is providing long, sunny, tender days for us to explore ourselves and our lives. Summer is providing fresh air and a soft breeze for you to hear and feel and see what joy and love feels like. The lush hay fields and clear cool lakes provides the perfect mirror within which you can see your own incredible radiance. Look at what is around you and you will see what is also within you.

I wish for everyone a peaceful and beautiful summer. I wish for everyone exquisite moments of joy, of love, of reflection. I wish for everyone a beautiful summer solstice and a safe and healthy June. May we all play in our gardens, may we all dance under the sun, may we all enjoy what we have created for ourselves and what blooms in our lives.

“People are capable, at any time in their lives, of doing what they dream of.” — Paulo Coelho, The Alchemist

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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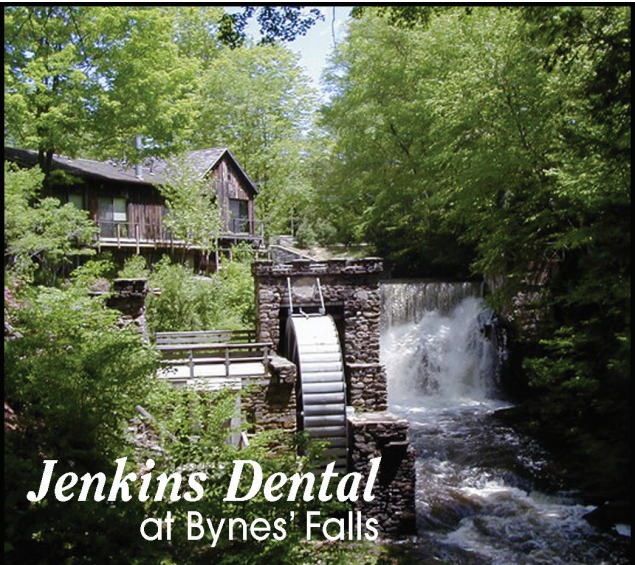
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Forget the Question- It’s Time to Focus on ‘the Answer’

“*To be or not to be?*” *That’s the answer.* john a. powell

By Phoebe C. Godfrey

My wife Tina and I have just come back from what was my second time (her first) in Israel to visit my half-brother and his family. I would have never gone to Israel had it not been for discovering my brother’s existence three years ago (all family’s have secretes – he was ours). The reason being is that I have strong political views in opposition to Israel’s ongoing occupation within Palestinian territories (I am taking Palestinian territories to be the West Bank and the Gaza strip) –the world’s longest military occupation in modern times—and supported, and still do, the BDS (boycott, divestment and sanctions movement). Adding to my on-going critique of Israel was the fact that the day we flew over was the day after the Israeli government killed 60+ Palestinians who were protesting President Trump’s moving of the US Embassy to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv where it had been since 1966. As such, I was not feeling very enthusiastic about our destination, although of course I was excited to again meet my extended family and to share them with Tina. However, something I spent time thinking about over my 12 day visit is that the purity of political positions, as in an attempt at living in a self-prescribed ethical way, must remain flexible in the face of life’s actual unexpected complications and challenges. In other words, as john a. powell, (he chooses lower case letters for his name) the director of the Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society and professor of Law, African American, and Ethnic Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, stated in his recent interview with Krista Tippett aired on NPR’s *On Being*, “‘To be or not to be?’ That’s the answer,” as opposed to being the question.

This insight of powell’s based on revising Hamlet’s famous adage has increasingly become one I am exploring as a result of my going to Israel and of my time spent there. Actually, in reflecting upon my choices and my analysis of those choices I am reminded of a Zen monk story that I once heard shared by Buddhist teacher Jack Kornfield—a story whose moral gains depth as we ourselves do. It was a story of an old woman who had been supporting a monk to meditate for many years. However, one day she decided to see if his meditating had been bearing any fruit. So she sent him a test. The test was she sent him a provocatively beautiful young woman who arrived at his door asking for help. The monk told her to go away as being a monk he was not allowed to be alone with a young woman and besides he was too busy meditating to help her. The young woman went back to the old woman to report that she had been sent way without having been helped. Enraged the old woman went with a broom to visit her monk and beat him yelling, “You have learned nothing, you have learned nothing...”. Obviously, from the monk’s perspective he didn’t understand how he had failed and why the old woman would now no longer support him in that he had kept to the rules of deportment for monks...but in doing so he had failed to respond creativity and compassionately to the spirit of the moment. Likewise, I could have been like the monk and kept to my political rules and not gone to Israel regardless of new found family but again like the monk I would’ve missed the challenge to find a new way to engage with my ethics and respond creatively and compassionately to the spirit of the moment. Of course many may say that I have ‘sold out’, ‘given in to personal convenience’ ...etc but if we



are honest with ourselves we know that an authentically ethical and compassionate life is never lived in or from the extremes but rather from the places were the opposites overlap and reveal their similarities.

Another story that I am reminded of was shared with me by my sister-in-law in Israel and features her son (my nephew) who was about 6 at the time of the story. He is a very preconscious child who goes to a Waldorf school where emphasis is placed on the role of imagination in learning and curriculum strives to integrate holistically the intellectual, practical, and artistic development of pupils. In fact my brother’s family live on a Kibbutz called Harduf that is based on the teachings / philosophy of Rudolf Steiner known as anthroposophy that postulates the existence of an objective, intellectually comprehensible spiritual world, accessible to human experience through inner development. Therefore, my nephew is immersed in an atmosphere where ethics in both theory and in practice are constantly being reflected upon by adults and children alike. As such, one day when on a class trip outside of Harduf the child witnessed a policewoman throw a plastic bottle into the road as opposed to putting it in the trash. As my sister-in-law reported, her son was devastated by this breach in his worldview that someone in authority, such as a policewoman, could’ve done something they knew to be wrong as in littering. So upset was the child that he ruminated for months on his inability to comprehend how ‘the good’ (the policewoman) could also be ‘the bad’ (littering).

What I like about this story is that my nephew at the age of 6 had such a strong sense of ethics as to be emotionally disturbed by what he witnessed. I also like how it reminds me that part of gaining ethical maturity is that not only should we be equally upset as this child but as mature adults we should also be able to stay in that difficult place where we can hold both states as true—that the good can also be the bad and the bad can also be good. This is our challenge not only as individuals in terms of working with our own ‘bad aspects’ hence shadow selves, but also as societies in working with our collective ‘bad aspects’ hence shadow societies. To stay as children who, if they are lucky, are able to begin by seeing the world in absolutes of good and bad is as problematic as becoming adults who no longer seek such an ideal world. Rather to reiterate, the true challenge is to nurture the child within who seeks a world where ‘good is good’ and ‘bad is bad’, while at the same time work to embody the wise adult who can mindfully and intelligently navigate the realities of everyday life for which the answer is always to be or not to be. For it is from that place of being and not being that we can seek not merely to reject what we perceive to be bad (as in not going to Israel or as in sending the young woman away) but rather to work with it and transform it into an even grater good (as in going to Israel and writing this piece or as in offering the young woman help while not falling pray to her provocative beauty).

Therefore, to conclude, yes, there is much that is problematic about Israel, just as there is about our own United States, but there is also much that is admirable, again just as there is about our own United States. And to nurture those aspects that are admirable, hence good in Israel, I plan to keep going back while further recognizing and exploring the bad. I also plan to continue picking up other people’s trash while I am there (there is trash all over the place) as I was doing on the beach days before I heard the story of my nephew, even if said trash was left by those who *should* know better.

“Availaflex” Exhibition Space; Performances in The Packing House; Artist talk; Interactive Pastel Painting Activity; Period Refreshments; and More! Info: The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington www.thepackinghouse.us/upcomming
Sports History: Victorian Era Baseball Played by 1861 Rules, 1:00p.m. Jillson Square, 627 Main Street, Willimantic. Info: 860-456-1666 www.victorianwillimantic.org
Hiking: Geocaching and iNaturalist App, 1:00p.m. - 3:00m. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Info: 860-455-9534 jasper.sha@ct.gov
Hiking: Hike at Langhammer Trail End, 1:00p.m. - 3:p.m. Led by Gwen Haaland (botanist) and Charlotte Pyle (ecologist). Rain date June 17. End of Lustig Road, Ashford.

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
June 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

June 8, Friday
Live Music: Spring Breeze Concert, 7:30p.m. Northeast Connecticut Community Orchestra plays at Knowlton Hall, 5 Town Hall Road, Ashford.

June 9, Saturday
Kids: Kids are Free Old Fashioned Games, 1:00p.m. - 4:00p.m. Includes an activity, craft, story and snack. Windham Textile & History Museum, 411 Main Street, Willimantic. Register: 860-456-2178 www.millmuseum.org
June 10, Sunday
Community Food: Ashford Farmers Market, 10:00a.m. - 1:00p.m. (See 6/3)
Live Music: Germ House, Zero Year, & Procedure Club, 2:00p.m. Willimantic Records, Bridge Street, Willimantic. Free. Info: www.willimanticrecords.com
Live Music: Spring Breeze Concert, 2:00p.m. Northeast Connecticut Community Orchestra plays at Clark Chapel, Pomfret School, 398 Pomfret Street, Pomfret
Meditation: Willimantic Mindfulness Sangha

Normal

By Kevin Pratt Jr.

Normal. What does it exactly mean? Well, in my case I’ve always wanted a normal existence meaning a wife, two kids and a dog and a beautiful house to watch my kids grow up in. All I’ve ever wanted are those things I just listed, but being almost 45 years old and a disabled individual I often wonder if those items will ever come to pass. Somehow I don’t think so. I live with the threat of losing homecare eventually dissolving my way of life. Everything I created or have gathered over the last 25 years will be no more. Am I at a disadvantage because I am disabled? Absolutely. A normal existence or a normal life has always been hard for me to achieve. Or should I say it’s been hard for me to maintain because people want to change the rules in the way things are done all the time.

Fact. When homecare agencies are just focusing on hospice and not the living, there is a major disconnect. I understand patients under hospice need to be seen and need to be cared for as well, but you forget the other people that need help on a daily basis. What are we supposed to do if the state of Connecticut changes the rules, especially if you are covered under state insurance? Are we supposed to rely on family? And if that is the case, what happens when families do not want to take on the responsibility? The only option at that point is to be institutionalized or placed in a group home. Would the regular taxpayer want to pay \$3000 per month or almost \$12,000 per month? A regular taxpayer would want to pay a lesser amount because it’s only logical. Homecare agencies and state programs should always encourage CNA’s because that’s what makes homecare possible for individuals like myself who can’t rely on family or friends all the time. I personally do not want to give up the lifestyle I worked for and established because homecare is dying. What happens to my generation, or the generation before me, that is going to need help and doesn’t want to be institutionalized or placed in a home?

Basically what I’m saying is I want to have as normal an existence as possible. I want to be able to control as much as I can. From my experience the only way that is going to happen is if a new generation of CNA’s becomes a reality. What that means is medical agencies need to start recruiting younger individuals who want to do CNA work. If they got a competitive wage and appreciation along the way there would be more people willing to do homecare. People like me would be able to have their normal existence and still be out in society. Institutionalizing people such as myself is not a good thing. It’s not a good quality of life. That’s why homecare can’t and must not die. There needs to be more people willing to stand up and fight for the little person that wants to live and be as normal as possible. Public and private agencies, non-profits and unions need to start promoting the CNA career. Current CNA’s are vitally important to my existence, every day of my life. Without them I would not be able to work or be out in the community or be able to live on my own. I sincerely don’t ever want to see that go away. People need to stand up and start respecting CNA’s and what they do on a daily basis.

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Meditation, 7:00p.m. - 8:30p.m. (See 6/3)

June 11, Monday
Film: “Faces of the Enemy”, 7:00p.m. Storrs UU Meetinghouse, 46 Spring Hill Road, Mansfield. Info: 860-428-4867

June 12, Tuesday
Live Music: Quiet Corner Fiddlers, 7:00p.m. Midway Restaurant, Route 44, Ashford. Info: qcf.webs.com
Arts: “EC-CHAP Information Exchange Meeting”. 7:00pm. Eastern CT Center for History, Art, and Performance (EC-CHAP). The Packing House at The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington Interactive exchange of ideas. Discuss EC-CHAP mission, membership, program and support opportunities; solicit feedback. Refreshments provided. Information: 518-791-9474. www.

The Importance of Health in any Financial Plan

By James Zahansky, AWMA

What is it that you have always imagined yourself doing? Are you headed in the direction of that dream? Is your dream big enough? We know that your money is more than just an asset – it is an important resource to living the life you want. At Weiss & Hale Financial, we call the fulfillment of these dreams Living Well, and we know that getting there is often not by mistake. Throughout this year, this column has focused on Planning and Investing Well topics so that you can ultimately Live Well. And with the summer months finally upon us, we thought there was no better time than now to focus on your dreams and aspirations. So, this June, we will be focusing on Living Well in the context of self-improvement. We will focus on topics such as healthcare, starting a new hobby, or beginning a new career in retirement. Knowing that without your health, Living Well is just an aspiration. So this week, let us look at one health planning tool that can help some towards the fulfillment of those goals, HSAs.

A Health Savings Account (HSA) may be one tool that could help you pay for medical related expenses. HSAs are a great way of paying for both long and short-term health care costs. They are flexible and offer tax advantage savings to fit your unique goals and needs. Three distinct features expand HSAs from accounts that fund short-term medical expenses into long-term investment vehicles. HSAs are just one option, Medicare is an alternative which you can read more information about in upcoming articles.

So how do you make the most of the HSA investment opportunity?

If you are an employee in an HSA-eligible/ high-deductible health insurance plan, you can save and invest your HSA assets — the employer and employee contributions — with any provider you choose, not just the one your employer offers. This may provide greater investment opportunity, especially if your employer only offers cash-based or low-return investments from their current HSA provider.

If you are an employer, you may not know that you can expand the range of available investments by de-coupling your HSA provider from your high-deductible health plan provider, who may be a health insurer that offers a less robust investment menu.

If you are an individual, in order to qualify for an HSA you must be covered under a high deductible health plan. You must also have no other health coverage. You cannot be enrolled in Medicare and cannot be claimed as a dependent on someone’s 2017 tax return. For more detailed information visit www.weissandhale.com/artcles to read publication 969 for HSA info in the “Related Links” sidebar.

10 Important things to consider

The first thing to look for in an HSA provider is the investment threshold. Many people don’t have the luxu-



ry of contributing in a given year beyond what is needed to pay for that year’s health care needs. The investment minimums can help you determine if you can feasibly utilize the HSA as an investment account.

Secondly, you will want to look at the investment menu. Are there long-term growth options in the mix, or only low-return “cash” options? If there are fixed, value and growth investments, what their historical results against their peers? When choosing an HSA provider, flexibility is one characteristic that sets it apart from other savings vehicles.

Third, self-directed brokerage is another flexible attribute you may consider. Does it allow you to invest in the stocks and bonds of your own choice or are you only limited to pooled investments?

Fourth, fees should be taken into consideration too. Be on the lookout for account opening, closing, check writing, monthly and annual fees. There may also be monthly account fee waivers at varying balances.

The fifth thing to look for is the financial strength of the provider. Some questions you may want to ask may be what are the total assets under management (AUM)? When was the program started? Will the provider be around long enough to manage your long-term investment?

Sixth, does the provider offer tiered interest rate? This feature will increase your interest rate as the balance in the account increases. This may be most appropriate for those who want to use an HSA primarily for short-term costs but preserve the right to capture long-term accumulations.

The seventh thing to consider is the investment sweep capability. This allows you to transfer funds between short- and long-term investment accounts on a prescheduled and automated basis.

HSA “on Demand” is the eighth consideration, this means you can use your entire year’s HSA to pay for a current expense. This also works if you have not accrued the cost yet.

Ninth of all, it is critical to know the convenience of the provider. Some providers offer single sign-on (SSO) to access both your HSA and healthcare accounts.

Lastly, what educational resources does your provider have? Think about what you would want from your provider, for example, being able to talk to someone on the phone may be a helpful benefit.

Presented by James Zahansky, AWMA, researched through Capital Ideas - Copyright 2018. Weiss & Hale financial Managing Partners Laurence Hale and Jim Zahansky offer securities and advisory services through Commonwealth Financial Network®, Member FINRA/SIPC, a Registered Investment Adviser. They practice at 697 Pomfret Street, Pomfret Center, CT 06259, 860.928.2341.

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Joshua’s Trust June Events

Submitted by Angelika Hansen

Saturday, June 2 8 – 10 am Joshua’s Trust Utley Preserve in Columbia.

Accompany birders Mike Curtis and Dave Parry looking for potential breeding and migrating species in this habitat. Walk is approx. 2.5 miles, moderate. Bring binoculars. Wear appropriate clothing for the weather and tick protection. Please, no children under age 8.

Meet at Recreation Park at 60 Hennequin Rd. Columbia. Drive to the parking lot at the rear and meet near kiosk at far right. Please, register at activities@joshuastrust.org Limit to 12 participants. Rain cancels.

Saturday, June 2 12:45 pm Down by the old mill stream...in Columbia.

Come visit Joshua’s Trust

Utley Hill Preserve in Columbia walking alongside Utley Brook past several old mill sites to a large former supply pond that is now an important wildlife habitat and key element in the protection of Columbia Lake’s waters. Stops will be made to appreciate both local history and the natural beauty of the area. Moderate 2 mile hike. No dogs, children welcome. Please, wear appropriate clothing for the weather and tick protection.

Meet at Recreation Park, 60 Hennequin Rd. Columbia. Drive to the parking lot at the rear, and meet near kiosk at far right. Rain date June 9, 12:45 pm. Contact the leaders: Ann Dunnack 860-228-3992 or Joan Hill, jhill003@charter.net, or 860-228-2849 for further information. This walk complements the Columbia Historical Society’s 2018 exhibit - “Columbia Lake-Through the Years”.

Saturday, June 9 12 – 4 pm The Atwood Farm will be open in conjunction with Connecticut Open House Day .

Come see the many outbuildings at the Farm. Visit the Weaver’s Cottage and see an expert weaver demonstrate her craft, peek into the hen house and pigsty. The carriage shed and 1883 barn will be open as well as the blacksmith’s shop. Explore the orchard and take a moment to study the labels identifying the many antique apple varieties. Members of Joshua’s Trust will be on hand to answer questions.

For more information go to activities@joshuastrust.org or call 860 429-9023. The Atwood Farm is located at 624 Wormwood Hill, Mansfield.

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Much to See for All Ages at Railroad Museum



William Voorvaart, of Coventry (left), Shirley Dempsey (center) and Andrew Robinson (right) stand outside the Chaplin Station. A GE 44-ton locomotive, built in December 1950, sits in front of the EMD SW-8, built in February 1953 on the track nearby. Corey Sipe photo.

By Corey Sipe

All aboard! After enjoying the Quiet Corner’s Rails-to-Trails, the multi-use recreational pathways that used to be home to the railroads, folks should see history come to life at the Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum in Willimantic. Improvements to the Willimantic Rails-to-Trails Network three years ago have led to more visitors for the museum, said docent Jean Lambert, of Chaplin. A key improvement was converting an old railroad bridge over the Willimantic River, near the Lebanon town line, into a decked trail bridge. Lambert is one of over 12 dedicated volunteers who share their love of trains with visitors. Lambert started as a volunteer in 2004. “It took me a while to learn the history and I started in the maintenance shop before becoming a docent as well as working in the ticket booth and gift shop,” she said. Today, the museum’s gift shop features railroad calendars, books, VHS tapes, and old model railroad controllers. When Lambert was asked why she decided to volunteer, she said “I’ve always been a people-oriented person. I also really enjoy restoration of history. To me, it’s been a rewarding experience. I enjoy watching children having fun,” she said, adding that kids love opportunities to ride the trains. They also like to see the model trains run during special off-site events that the museum participates in like the Willimantic Chocolate Festival in February and the Trains, Toys, and Trees Display in December and January. As for the museum grounds, Lambert said that each weekend, they have about 40 visitors.



Mark Granville points to a wooden train tender connected to the Mary Lou. The tender is the latest addition to the children’s play area. Corey Sipe photo.

Two major Eastern Connecticut Rails-to-Trails sections intersect near the museum, the 20.2-mile Hop River State Park Trail and the 49.6-mile Air Line State Park Trail. A sign tells trail users about the rich history of the railroads, including the museum and its Ghost Train Journal, the museum’s newsletter. The journal’s masthead pays homage to the nickname of the white Pullman railcars used by the New York and New England Railroad in the

late 1800’s on the Air Line. “One train left Boston and one left New York but they both met in Willimantic. In the early morning, on foggy mornings with all the cars being white, it looked like a ghost,” Hebron resident and museum volunteer Robert LaMay, said while giving a recent tour. The Ghost Train, which was officially known as the White Train, was the quickest way for trains to go between New York and Boston. He served as the Ghost Train Journal editor from 2003 to 2016. “What I enjoyed most was letting the membership know what was going on at the museum and also keeping them up-to-date on the latest projects,” LaMay said.

Folks today can travel on Eastern Connecticut’s Rails-to-Trails by walking, running, biking, horseback riding, or cross-country skiing during the winter months, but there will be soon more to explore. The Air Line Trail, which currently runs between East Hampton and Thompson, with a spur in Colchester, will go further west as the result of a five-mile extension. A ribbon cutting will take place on June 2 at 10:30 a.m. at the new Keegan Trail Head at 82 Middle Haddam Road in Portland. The smaller Hop River Trail primarily follows the path of the former Hartford, Providence and Fishkill Rail Line. The trail takes folks from Willimantic to Manchester with a spur that goes into Vernon. Impassable conditions of the aging Hop River Bridge, located in Columbia and Willimantic, forces those traveling east to detour in Columbia down a steep hill into a former roadside picnic area and onto the sidewalk of a Route 66 vehicular bridge to cross the Willimantic River. At that point, travelers must walk through a Rails-to-Trails parking area to access Willimantic’s section of the Hop River Trail. However, Windham Town Council member Dagmar Noll, who lives in Willimantic, said that voters unanimously passed a resolution at a May 15 town meeting to appropriate \$1.3 million to rehabilitate the bridge so it can safely be crossed by pedestrians. Funds are expected to be fully reimbursed by the Connecticut Department of Transportation. The project will go to bid in June and construction will begin this fall. “It would be done in one year, by September 2019,” she said. This will finally fully connect the Hop River Trail. Both projects are expected to increase recreational and tourism opportunities and result in more museum visitors.

The area of the Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum seeing the most growth since last year is the children’s play area. Mansfield resident and museum president Mark Granville said that a new wooden vehicle has been added. “It is a tender, which carries the coal and fuel for a steam locomotive,” he explained. It is physically connected with the museum’s “Mary Lou,” a wooden locomotive donated by Mary-Lou DeVivo. She served as a museum volunteer and purchased it during the going-out-of-business sale by G&L Country Barn & Christmas Shop in 2014. DeVivo passed away in 2015. The other addition to the children’s play area is a garden railroad, being setup as a 185-foot oval. It is expected to be operational later this summer. “The train is referred to as 7½ inch gauge. That is the distance between the inside of the rails that make up the track. It is a little less than 1/7th full scale,” Granville said. The garden railroad locomotive is electric and powered by batteries. A flatbed will be attached to the locomotive allowing visitors to ride. The garden train set was donated

by Stephen MacLean of Trumbull and delivered by the Railroad Museum of New England in Thomaston. “It is aimed at kids ages 5 through 12 but adults will also be able to ride it,” Granville said.

As for this year’s opening day at the museum, which took place May 5, folks young and old alike enjoyed themselves. Little Elizabeth McClellan was happily playing inside the new tender while her mother, Amanda Harlow, talked with her. Both are from Lebanon. “It is our first time here. A friend told us about the museum,” Harlow said, adding that they both rode on the museum’s train ride. “She liked the horn the most,” Harlow said. The 1½ mile train ride takes visitors from the museum’s Groton Freight House, built in the 1890’s, past the main entrance and almost to Bridge Street and back again. It is powered by an ex-Pfizer Corporation railcar mover which used to move railroad cars around Pfizer’s Groton plant. It was manufactured by the Trackmobile Corporation and brought to the museum in May 2002. The vehicle is attached to a restored 1914 40-foot flatcar which was purchased from the Central Vermont Railway in 1992. Benches were built onto the flatcar allowing folks to sit and enjoy the view.

After going on the train ride, Andrew Robinson and his girlfriend, Shirley Dempsey, both of Oakham, Mass., spoke with volunteer William Voorvaart, of Coventry. Voorvaart met Robinson at a construction job near Edaville Railroad in South Carver, Mass. and invited him and Dempsey to visit the museum. This was their first time there. “It was wonderful. It was nice to see the museum. We did the old pump car this



Andrew Robinson, William Voorvaart, and Shirley Dempsey (l-r) pump a hand car down the track on a replica of an 1800’s pump car. C. Sipe photo

morning and it was interesting, there was a little bit of work involved,” Robinson chuckled. The vehicle, also called a hand car, is a replica of an 1800’s pump car which visitors can pump down the track using their hands. It was built by museum members and completed in 1994. Dempsey called the train ride “very relaxing,” but added that she liked the pump car better. “It was different. Something you see in the movies and you picture how they used to do it in the old days,” Dempsey said. For Voorvaart, volunteering at the museum has been a rewarding experience. “I have been able to meet true rail fans who see our vision in preserving history. I’ve done a lot of work getting the Maine Central Railbus running, about six to seven years of work.” The railbus used to inspect rail lines in Maine in the late 1940’s. It is stored in the museum’s 1892 Columbia Junction Roundhouse, which is not far from the Columbia town line. It’s one of the key features of the museum whose restoration began in 1991 thanks to a \$500,000 grant from the State of Connecticut. Historical exhibits about the



Folks sit on benches on the 1914 Central Vermont flatbed pulled by an ex-Pfizer Corporation railcar mover during the museum's 1 ½ mile train ride. The Niantic River Bridge Operator's Cabin is expected to be restored. Corey Sipe photo.

roundhouse are located there and at the Groton Freight House.

Looking back at the Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum's history, Granville, who has served as the museum's president since 1998 but started volunteering back in 1996, said "Over the years, we always look around and see all the things we have to do and want to do and think how will we ever finish all this? Visitors will say 'look at all the stuff you have done since last year.' While



Robert LaMay demonstrates a telegraph, which sits next to a typewriter, inside the old Chaplin station as he gazes out onto the train tracks. Corey Sipe photo.

it's becoming harder for the museum to find volunteers, he explained that "several Eagle Scouts do projects at the museum," and that those projects can vary based on what students hope to accomplish and their time limitations.

As for museum volunteers, one of their last completed projects was installing a new roof on the museum's 1872 Chaplin Station, which used to sit near today's Route 6 on Clarks Corners in Hampton, just across from the Chaplin town line. The bench inside came from the old Willimantic station. "I met my grandmother there when she came from Boston on the train," LaMay said as he gave a tour. It's a lot of hard work these volunteers do considering how it all started. South Windham resident and museum volunteer Pieter Roos said that "Many railroad museums already have track, but this site was pretty much brush and the roundhouse had been knocked down. We got grants to rebuild the roundhouse and rebuilt the museum from scratch as opposed to Danbury (Railway Museum) which had most of their stuff in place."

While the original turntable at the site was stripped and sold during World War II, the museum purchased a 60-foot manually operated wrought iron turntable from Edaville Railroad in 1994 and had it restored. Granville remembers vividly when the roundhouse's turntable, the last part of the roundhouse, was completed in 2008. "We called it the 'Turn of the Century,'" he said with a chuckle, adding that "we had dignitaries and we had them turn the turntable."

When asked why he volunteers at the museum, Roos said "I enjoy telling people the history of the area and of railroading. I was a history major in college but didn't do anything professionally with it, but this is a way to share my love of history." Roos said that the Connecticut Eastern



The 60-foot manually operated wrought iron turntable from Edaville Railroad in 1994 has been restored and is part of the Columbia Roundhouse. Corey Sipe photo.

Railroad Museum is a non-profit organization dependent on government grants, donations, and volunteers. He also volunteers at the Windham Textile and History Museum in Willimantic and his wife, Luzella Roos, helps run the gift shop there. While Granville enjoys sharing his love of history too, he joked that he volunteers at the railroad museum because "it's a good alternative to vegetating."

Granville said that one of the projects the museum is working on is restoration of the 1907 Niantic River Bridge Operator's Cabin, formerly located on Route 156 near the East Lyme and Waterford town line. "We want to totally rebuild it using the same design and include plenty of photos," he said. The building once held bridge controls when the Niantic River Bridge opened for marine traffic and closed to allow trains to cross it. Amtrak donated the structure to the museum in 2012 after a newer, wider, and taller bridge was built allowing boats to pass through the Niantic River and a new rail system was built for high-speed trains. The cabin currently sits next to the museum's rebuilt windmill signal, often called the gallows, with horizontal and vertical arms, which used to control train traffic on Bridge Street in Willimantic. "The New England Central Railroad stops here from time to time and we heard them say on the radio 'we are at the gallows at Willimantic' and the name stuck," he said.

Hampton resident Calvin Saxton, a retired adjunct Eastern Connecticut State University professor, said that he started volunteering last year because of his "love of trains," adding "there is a lot of love people put into this museum." As for Ray Axelrod, a volunteer and member of



Ray Axelrod stands at a tag sale table, in front of the Connecticut Department of Transportation's MUT Training Module #7000, built by Morrison-Knudson, as a training module for M-6 cars. Corey Sipe photo.

the museum for the past 30 years, he said "I love trains and I'm a train nut, I feel right at home here." Axelrod said that those in northeastern Connecticut may recognize his voice. "I do the ad 'I'm Ray and I'm Loco' on WILI," referring to the museum's advertisement on Willimantic's radio station broadcast on 1400 AM and 98.3 FM.

The Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum is located at 55 Bridge Street, also known as Route 32, in Willimantic. It is open May through October; Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sundays 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, visit www.cteastrrmuseum.org or call 860-456-9999.

Enjoy the Rails to Trails On Connecticut Trails Day

By Corey Sipe

Connecticut Trails Day, the largest coordinated program of its kind in the country, will be taking place Saturday and Sunday, June 2 and 3. There will over 240 events encouraging folks to get out and enjoy the great outdoors. Several events will be held at Eastern Connecticut's rails-to-trails in Air Line State Park Trail and the Hop River State Park Trail. Before attending, visit www.ctwoodlands.org/ct-trails-weekend/ for more details. Except where indicated, event postponement or cancellation will be posted on the Connecticut Forest and Park Association Facebook page www.facebook.com/CTForestandParkAssociation/, the morning of the event. Visit www.depdata.ct.gov/maps/ctrailtrail for maps of Connecticut's rails-to-trails.

Air Line Trail (west to east)
Education Walk (5 miles – moderate terrain)
Portland; Keegan Trail Head, 82 Middle Haddam Rd.
June 2, 10 a.m.; rain date: June 3, 11:30 a.m.
Event begins with a ribbon cutting at 10 a.m. followed by a first hike, 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m., on the newly completed phase 1 of the Portland Air Line Trail
Leader: Rosario A. Rizzo Jr, 860-342-2780, theriz4@sbcglobal.net

Bike Ride (4 miles – easy terrain)
East Hampton; park at Town Hall Rd. lot; meet at Airline Cycles lot at 66 Main St.
June 3, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.; rain cancels
Leisure ride for families, bring your own or rent from Airline Cycles, 860-365-5496
Leader: State Rep. Melissa Ziobron, 860-842-1423, Melissa.Ziobron@housegop.ct.gov

Hike (6 miles – moderate terrain)
Colchester; parking area off Bull Hill Rd.
June 2, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.; rain cancels
Round trip to Cranberry Bog in East Hampton; bring your picnic lunch
Leader: State Rep. Melissa Ziobron, 860-842-1423, Melissa.Ziobron@housegop.ct.gov

Various Activities (10 miles – easy terrain)
Hebron; parking lot off Route 85, ½ mile south of intersection with Route 207
June 2, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.; rain or shine
Walk, jog, bike, or ride your horse in Colchester, Hebron, and East Hampton. Parks and recreation departments from those towns will have activity stations throughout the trail including bike maintenance, trail history, nature interpretation, land conservation, arts and crafts, viaduct history, trail safety and more.
Leader: Steven Bakowicz, 860-918-1127, sbakowicz@hebronct.com

Bird Walk (2 miles – easy terrain)
Lebanon; Cook Hill Rd. Air Line Trail Head
June 2, 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.; rain cancels
Bring binoculars if you have them
Leader: Nusie Halpine, 860-428-6911, nusieandjeff@sbcglobal.net

Educational Walk (1 mile – easy terrain)
Pomfret; 13 Railroad Ave.
June 2, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.; rain cancels
Wheelchair accessible
Learn about the new trail assessment program designed for the mobility impaired. Information on trail segments already assessed will be provided.
Leader: LyAnn Graff, 860-383-6244, lyann@tlgv.org

Hop River Trail (west to east)
Hike (1.5 miles – easy terrain)
Manchester; 178 Colonial Rd.
June 3, 9 a.m. to 10 a.m.; contact leader for rain plan
Leader: Steve Gates, 860-306-2104, gates0198@gmail.com

Rolling Museum Part 1 (6 miles – moderate terrain)
Vernon; Pedal Power, 520 Hartford Tpke.
June 2, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.; rain date: June 3, 11 a.m.
Bike ride from Vernon to Bolton
Experts will share special features of the trail, hybrid bikes recommended, helmets mandatory
Leader: Don Bellingham, 860-872-6061, vernongreenways@att.net

Rolling Museum Part 2 (12 miles – moderate terrain)
Bolton; Directions: At jct. of Rtes 6/44 in Bolton, head west on I-384 from Bolton Notch. Turn right at the end of the guardrail and go down to the parking lot
June 2, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., rain date: June 3, 1 p.m.
Bike ride from Bolton to Andover
Experts will share special features of the trail, hybrid bikes recommended, helmets mandatory
Leader: Barbara Amodio, 860-836-3982, barbaraamodio@comcast.net

Questioning Education Through Economy

By P.K. Willey, Ph.D.

To understand Gandhi’s thought on any topic, it’s root, the anchor of his life, must be continually borne in mind. Current hearsay, gossip, outright fake-news, disgusting deliberate distortion of Gandhi, cannot change the fact that he was a conscious, well-wishing, loving Friend and Brother to the entire human race. He strove to walk a righteous path in obedience to ‘the still small voice within’; showed the world its inexorable universal power, something the majority of us have lost sight of as a goal in life, something we fear to do, to be true to ourselves, under the glaring lights of political correctness. For Gandhi, God, Love, Truth, were all convertible terms. He said,

“My life is an indivisible whole and all my activities run into one another and they all have their rise in my insatiable love of mankind.”

There was a singular yearning desire that informed Gandhi’s evolving educational thought – *social equality*. Social equality is part of natural law, Earth ethics. With methods uniquely suited to India’s needs, Gandhi’s educational ideas and goals still are one of his greatest gifts to human progress today; the entire earth increasingly suffers under what are actually graduated forms of economic and social colonialism. Gandhi’s premises have world-wide applicability. As our universities look to industry to guide course offerings, hand in glove with economic power, his questions bear re-consideration.

From the plethora of innumerable causes, this article briefly illumines one stressor upon the Indian population as a whole: unjust economics that could only be truly reformed through a drastically new educational system.

Stonewalling Gandhi’s reformation efforts in India were 300+ years under British dominance, prior centuries under petty kings and tyrants, interspersed with Asiatic empire builders. The purposes of education, as ever, were to benefit the ruling powers. Gandhi himself was a product of a schooling/conditioning system that had been imposed by the British, to best serve their economic interests. Further, language and cultural barriers prohibited unity or nationhood amongst the people of south Asia. Additionally, the enormous stress of the social status system created deep apathy as well as a type of moral corruption that, for example, could never feel the equal value of the life, time, and labor of persons held as ‘inferior’.

Historically heralded as one of the great empires of India, although actually of foreign origin (of Turkik, Mongol, Persian peoples), the Moghuls (1550 – 1857), subdued numerous kings and tyrants on the subcontinent, built connecting roads, extracting taxes, beginning a process that was to politically create an Indian economic super-power. They were less concerned with the social and cultural life of the people. Education continued as it always had, in favor of the status quo.

In its hey-day Moghul rule kept artisan handicraft manufacturing apace with a global international market; urban areas thrived. India’s GDP was nearly 25% of all goods produced in the world. Life wasn’t fair, it could never be under a system of feudal caste thinking, yet under Moghul rule, unlike under the British and present day, historical records by travelers in the countryside indicate a general level of good health, absence of disease, longevity, good nutrition (agriculture).

By the 18th century numerous small manufacturing plants and towns with growing middle/merchant classes were in evidence. A 1757 account of Murshidabad, Bengal, by Officer/Privateer Robert Clive, described that city just weeks before the British grabbed control of it that same year:

“...as extensive, populous, and rich as the city of London, with the difference that there are individuals in [Murshidabad] possessing infinitely greater property than in London.”

India carried historical memories of self-sufficiency, of better days for everyone before the British take-over, and Gandhi was to use those buried memories to help a people, down-trodden for centuries, recognize that change was possible, that things could be better. At the same time, he ridiculed clinging onto an ancestral identity, filled with caste superstition, challenging young India to deal with the here and now.

The British East India Company expanded with the assistance of the declining Moghuls, from a trading

company (1602), to eventually gain considerable political clout. Battles with the French East India Company in the 1750’s, left the British ascendant. With private armies numbering over 250,000, by hook and crook, they soon cornered the markets of artisan manufacture produced in vast territories. Soon, productivity of Indian artisans threatened the handcraft trades of English and European artisans.

The Industrial Revolution began for the relatively small British island in 1830-40’s. By 1837, the Governor-General for the East India Co. reported its effects upon Indians:

“...the misery hardly finds a parallel in the history of commerce. The bones of the cotton-weavers are bleaching the plains of India.”

In 1853, the railroad came to India, enabling extraction and land stripping of all that was above and below the earth’s surface with increasing deadly efficiency. Life in Europe saw a rising middle-class, a flowering of the arts, the results of intelligent uses of leisure and a globally exploitative economic system.

With transportation came communication, the small farmer in India was now forced to sell his bag of wheat or cotton at world market prices. It was the first World Trade Organization. All this crushed and impoverished the Indian peasant terribly, continuing today. Within a span of 40 years (1880-1920) over 4 economically induced massive famines hit the people, not due to lack of food but means to buy it.



Gandhi and his first Community settlers, Phoenix, South Africa. Gandhi is in the second row, next to a lady with a white dog. Community life was real education. Contributed photos.

Protective tariffs were soon levied on goods coming into Britain from India. India changed rapidly too, but in a different sense. India’s manufactures and textiles were no longer wanted; all her natural resources went to British factories. Florence Nightingale, the English nurse famed for her kindness, a beacon in the early women’s movement in Victorian England, was to state:

“The saddest sight to be seen in the East—nay, probably in the world—is the peasant of our Eastern Empire.” She referred to the “...consequences of our laws,” producing in, “...the most fertile country in the world, a grinding, chronic semi-starvation in many places where what is called famine does not exist.”

The Indian ‘mutiny’ really the ‘first war of Independence’ was defeated in 1857, cinching British dominance. In 1858 the British Crown stepped in to claim India’s land, resources, and productivity, as its own. It was only possible because Indians themselves lacked the vision of social equality of one another, educating for a status-quo that kept the majority of people down.

Within the span of only a few years local prosperity evaporated. Skills, handed down generation to generation, were effectively silenced by dis-use. Anything that competed with profits and the machines of England was destroyed. Thus, an exquisitely fine hand woven cloth, known as ‘shubnum’, six meters of which could pass through a lady’s little finger ring with ease, disappeared. The thumbs of the weavers were cut off by the Brits. India manufactured nothing, not pin, pen, ink, nor cloth. Everything went out of India: ores, metals, fibers, woods, stones, leaves, sugar, coffee, cocoa seeds, you name it, and came back post-processing, for purchase.

This loss of the artisan life forced an ‘urban to rural’ migration. The artisan classes went desperately back-to-the-land for means to eat, their skills left fallow. This demographic trend continued until Indian capitalists gained the ‘big machine’ themselves in the 1930’s and began their



Education needs to face the reality of the community and nation. Here Gandhi instructs a group of volunteers practically committed to increasing social sanitation.

own exploitation of their brother’s labor, which continues to this day. Population demographics have now shifted again from rural to urban.

At its core, Gandhi saw that without a vision of social equality, without creating humane feelings for one another, a living strong concern that others too, had the basics to simply live, India could never truly rise. He sought to foster an economic system that was based upon a sympathetic and reciprocal understanding of relationships and needs between cities and villages. He struggled to re-establish the social primacy of artisan skills, to ensure self-motivated, creative entrepreneurial efforts; for modest capitalism that could keep body and soul together and ensure intellectual vibrancy in life. These goals became part of the philosophy that Gandhi was to incorporate in his educational theory and practice.

As the British controls grew, they found themselves in need of people to fill administrative posts: clerks and office peons. To this end, a different system of education was devised, the brain child of a Brit named Macaulay, who worked to see:

“...a class of Indians who may be interpreters between us and the millions we rule over—Indians in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect.”

A few generations of life under such a system caused an ‘intellectual fancy’ to grip the imaginations of what lie was for and how it should be lived. Indian youth admired, and wanted to be British Indians. English schooling was now sought after en masse, and expanded accordingly. Indian students mostly boys, wore British clothes, hard shiny shoes, to school, studied English language, literatures, history, sought English entertainments and past-times, as cricket and high-tea. Their families, and future wives, lived in a different

world in their minds, spoke a different language. ‘Education’ was personally advantageous if one cooperated with colonial robbery of the land and people. It was the successful annihilation of an entire culture; convincing the people that what was desirable, authentic, was British. Instilling intellectual fascination, distorted the impulses in the heart. Gandhi noted:

“The greatest drawback of the present system of education is that it does not bear the stamp of reality, that the children do not react to the varying wants of the country. True education must correspond to the surrounding circumstances or it is not a healthy growth. The necessity of this response was the object of non-co-operation in education. True, we have not acted up to the idea. That is because of our limitations, because we are unable to shake off the hypnotic effect of our surroundings.”

Gandhi began his educational work by asking Indians to recognize the reality they were in:

“National education to be truly national must reflect the national condition for the time being. [...] How do children fare in a besieged place? Do they not according to their capacity take part in repelling the attack of the besiegers and suit themselves to the changing circumstances? Is that not their true education? Is not education the art of drawing out full manhood of the children under training?”

Thus his questions to the people of India began. Questions that came out of a line of reasoned thought that bared the necessity of human dignity, born of social equality. Based in natural law, in the truth known in the human heart, he touched the cords of conscience: the response began a new system of education, impacting every aspect of temporal and spiritual life. Where is our education taking us?

Sears Roebucks Catalogs

By P.K. Willey

If we were archeologists, the remnants of bygone ways of living let us conjecture about what life was like. The Sears Roebuck Catalog, endemic to the life and outhouses of almost every American in the youth and early adult life of Charles and Virginia Prewitt, affords a peak into the personal lives of Americans through their possessions.

In 1940, a Professor, David Cohn, reviewed the Sears Catalogs from 1905 – 1940, finding in them, the artifacts and materials of his own life history. He leaves his understanding of the relevance of the study of consumer habits, as see through the Catalog:

“As my now-fascinated eyes stared longer and longer at the catalog pages, and as I delved deeper and deeper into them, it seemed to me that they constituted an invaluable record of American life; that they were a diary of the times created by the people; a measure of the desires and ambitions of millions. I thought, moreover, that if all the records of the catalog’s years should be lost, and only the catalog preserved, a scholar stumbling upon it in the remote future could re-create from its pages the way in which men had lived in American for fifty years [1890-1940]...”

Among the 1905 Catalog’s reliable best sellers, was the stock of massive sturdy Family Bibles, tomes that included maps of Biblical interest, space for recording births, marriages, deaths, as well places for signed vows of temperance – swearing upon the Bible, upon all the sacred ideals of Christendom, not to touch alcohol for life. Some had the illustrations of Gustave Dore.

The Catalog reflected also a national love of music, with numerous instruments, pianos, violins, guitars, zithers, for sale. Along with the internal mass production and manufacture, was an overseas economic boom, as manufacturers in other nations sought to supply items to the American markets. Mass production of musical instruments went from quality to a plentiful mediocre.

As different immigrant groups came to the nation, bringing their songs, initially it was through the Catalog that a sharing of music promoting brotherhood was felt:

“Millions of immigrants poured into the United States during the period 1870-1914, and the catalog of 1905, issued when the flood was at its tide, tell us us

Willington Farm Tour

By Jackie Kulig

Ever wonder what that strange piece of farm machinery is on the side of the road? Most people would assume it’s a relic of past generations, which is probably true, but agriculture is also alive and well in Willington! On June 10, from 2-6PM you can go out and visit five working farms and get answers to all those questions you’ve come up with. Why are you always switching which crop goes where? What do you feed your chickens? Are those cows wild? (yes, we got that one)

Your first stop could be Cowlick Farms, located at the junction of Seckar Road and Rt. 74. They must raise cows, right? Wrong! Ray and Victoria Lee of Cowlick Farms raise chickens on pasture for both meat and egg production. Their self-serve farm stand contains the freshest meat in town, and the most convenient! In addition to their wide selection of chicken, Cowlick Farms’ freezers contain:

Fenton River Farm beef! Scott and Heidi Morey run Fenton River Farm with help from several community members and 4-H Willing Workers. Their cows come back with ribbons from many local fairs each year. Scott and Heidi also run Fenton River Veterinary Hospital in Tolland. Their farm is located on Moose Meadow Road, about a ¼ mile from Rt. 74. You’ll see their iconic pastures just past their neighbor’s farm stand...

Their neighbors being Willow Valley Farm. Willow Valley Farm is a third-generation family farm, growing a variety of vegetables for farmers markets, their farm stand, and their Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. Spencer Cartabiano, his mother Julia Cartabiano, and his partner Jackie Kulig practice sustain-

able growing methods, which include NO GMOs, Pesticides, or Synthetic Fertilizers. Their ½ acre blueberry patch and much of their farm machinery dates back to the 1950s when Julia’s parents purchased the farm.

Ghost Fawn Homestead, run by Ken and Cari Donaldson, is located at 142 Tolland Turnpike (Rt. 74). The farm was established in 2015 and provides a variety of vegetables for their CSA program using “beyond organic” growing methods. The farmers and their children also raise a variety of livestock.

Last, but not least, is Bluebird Farm. In fact, I think they may have the most variety of farm products available! Carmen and Joe Hall’s farm is located at 211 Jared Sparks Road, on 40 acres of field and forest land. They make a diverse selection of jams, preserves, syrups, mustards, marmalades, etc. under their name “New England Spreads”. They also raise cows, sheep, turkeys, geese, rabbits, and chickens/ducks for eggs. You may also see some pigs, goats, alpacas... maybe more!

If you’re looking for a family-friendly, truly local outing for a Sunday afternoon, look no further. You’ll feel good getting some fresh air, enjoying the scenery, and learning about all the hard work your farmers are putting in nearby. You may also find a better place to do your grocery shopping! Stop by some, or all, of the farms, in whatever order you’d like. We encourage you to take pictures of you and your family at each farm and to share them on the Willington Farm Tour Facebook page. You can also check the Facebook page for updates and for information about our raffle. Happy Touring!
https://www.facebook.com/willington-farmtour/



that among its “Foreign selections are some splendid old German songs, weirdly sweet Hungarian music, Swedish and Norwegian airs that remind one of the far away North land, vivacious French selections, comical Hebrew songs that make you laugh, patriotic Polish airs, harmonious Russian selections, beautiful Italian songs that carry one’s thoughts to the sunny Mediterranean, and Spanish love songs.”

Wherever US based business went abroad, music and merchandise from those far off lands soon came to roost in the country: Polynesia, Latin America, China, Hawaii.

What other peoples on Earth had such a welcoming interest, acceptance, and enjoyment of music from all other lands, cultures and people?

Ashford Arts Council Presents ‘A Writing Stroll’

Submitted by Deb Gag

June 9, 10 am to 2 pm
Rain date: June 10, 10 am to 2 pm

Explore your inner creativity by participating in this low-stress but invigorating writing activity. We will meet at Storrs Center to start. Then with a small group, we will move around to various places in the area, Storrs and/or the University, taking the opportunity to write in each place. The area provides inspiration in a variety of ways--through its rich history and architecture, its museums, activities in the various retail establishments, its beautiful natural setting and more. Your writing also will be inspired by the mutual sharing of the work of your colleagues.

This method of encouraging creativity through writing draws on the work of Natalie Goldberg and was refined and developed by Richard Louth, Director of the Southeastern Louisiana Writing Project. No previous writing experience or drafts required--just bring something to write with and something to write on.

This fun activity will be led by Marian Matthews, Ashford resident, previous professor of education and Director of the High Plains Writing Project in New Mexico and the Central Connecticut Writing Project, now retired. She has over 20 years of experience in helping novice and experienced writers find their voices. Come find yours.

Free!
To enroll contact Debra Gag/
AAC Chair 860-933-2987

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a little paper big on community

By EC-CHAP

As we conclude our 2017-2018 performance season, we would like to thank all those who have supported EC-CHAP through membership, attendance at events, volunteering, donations, and sponsorships. Your generosity and sincere interest in sustaining our presence as your regional Cultural Center is making a critical difference. Without your support, we would not be able to continue to offer high quality performance and programming.

We will be using the summer months to evaluate your feedback and plan for our next season. In an effort to obtain your input, we will be sending out a survey to those on our mailing list (you can subscribe from The Packing House homepage at www.thepackinghouse.us). You will also be able to take a brief survey on our website (www.ec-chap.org).

This month, the EC-CHAP “Information Exchange Meeting” is scheduled on Tuesday, June 12th at 7:00pm in The Packing House. These monthly meetings serve as a great opportunity to learn more about EC-CHAP and a time to share your thoughts and feedback. Refreshments provided.

We would like to remind folks of the upcoming Summer 2018 “First Sunday at The Mill Works” scheduled for Sunday, June 3rd, 12:00pm to 5:00pm. Open artist studios, live music performances, Gardiner Hall Jr. Museum, art activities, period refreshments, and more!

We will conclude the 2017-2018 Season with a Special End-Of Season Event – “A Concert and a Movie”! Join us on Friday, June 15th at 7:00pm for Boston based Blues artist Eric Sommer in concert followed by a free screening of the documentary film, “Fred Rogers: America’s Favorite Neighbor” (NR). Visit our website for complete details.

We encourage you to visit our website at www.ec-chap.org or www.thepackinghouse.us for additional information and updates.

Wishing you a safe and enjoyable summer!
Engage the Senses,
EC-CHAP Board

JUNE EVENTS

SUMMER 2018 “FIRST SUNDAY AT THE MILL WORKS” – Community Event. Sunday, June 3rd, Noon – 5:00pm.

Celebrate the beginning of summer at The Mill Works! Meet members of The Mill Works Creative Community; visit with EC-CHAP Resident Artist, Rebecca Zablocki; and enjoy live musical performances by: Hall Memorial School Select Chorus and Falcon Treble Chorus, Jarmony, Rich deBrito; and a performance in dance by students of the Complex Performing Arts Center. Explore the Gardiner Hall Jr. History Museum, participate in an interactive pastel painting activity with Carol Mackiewicz, listen to an artist talk by travel photographer Paul Johnson, and sample refreshments typical of the mid 19th century! Visit www.thepackinghouse.us/upcoming for more information, detailed schedule, and free tickets. Open to the general public. Free to everyone.

EC-CHAP HOSTS: “AN EVENING OF SCENES AND MONOLOGUES”, Presented by the Hall Memorial School 7/8 Drama Class. Thursday, June 7th.

Doors 5:30pm / Show 6:00pm. Join the HMS 7th and 8th grade Drama Class, under direction of Mr. Jason Philips, as they present a night of scenes and monologues at The Packing House. This event will showcase the multitude of skills students have been working on throughout the year. Free.

“TALENT SHOWCASE”. Wednesday, June 13th. (2nd Wednesday – Last session of the season).

Doors 6:30pm / Show 7:00pm. Our Talent Showcase is designed as a platform for local and regional performers to share their talent. Acoustic musicians, film makers, poets, comedians, jugglers, puppeteers, and creative artists of all ages are invited to perform. Showcase your work, test ideas and concepts, and solicit feedback. If

you’re interested in performing, please call 518-791-9474 in advance to sign-up (recommended), or sign-in at the door (time available). Not performing? No problem! Come join us for an evening of great talent. Invite everybody you know! Free.

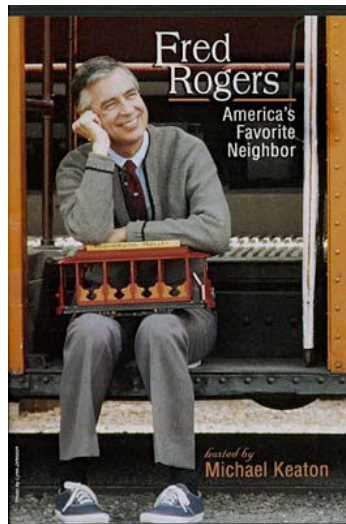
“EC-CHAP Social Dance Series with OSWALDO TIRANO. Thursday, June 14th (2nd Thursday – Last session of the season).

Doors 6:30pm / Dance 7:00pm. Oswaldo Tirano will be leading this evening’s social dance with a Latin focus. Each month will feature a beginner dance lesson. After the lesson stay or join us for a fun social dance to all your favorite ballroom hits. Viennese Waltz to West Coast Swing and everything in between. All levels welcome. Partner not required. \$10.00 at the door.



Special End-Of-Season Event: “A Concert and a Movie”. Friday, June 15th.

Doors 6:30pm / Show 7:00pm. EC-CHAP’s “Acoustic Artist Series” meets the “Friday Night Film Series” for an awesome evening out! Join us for Boston-based Blues artist Eric Sommer in concert - followed by a FREE film screening of the documentary film, “Fred Rogers: America’s Favorite Neighbor” (NR) narrated by Michael Keaton. Tickets \$12.00 Advance Online / \$15.00 at the Door. Be sure to bring your beverage (beer or wine only) and snack of choice - and arrive early, doors close for this event at 8:00pm.



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. Unless otherwise specified, doors open 30-minutes prior to show time.

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. You can also bring your paid ticket to Willington Pizza House (or WP Too) for eat-in or take-out the night of the show and receive 15% off your meal purchase. If you’re feeling adventurous, SPECIFICALLY ask for “The Packing House” pizza! You won’t go wrong. Visit www.thepackinghouse.us for the secret recipe.

Program cancellations will be listed on the EC-CHAP website (www.ec-chap.org), and The Packing House website (www.thepackinghouse.us). If you’re unsure, just call (518-791-9474).

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 EC-CHAP (info@ec-chap.org) or The Packing House (info@thepackinghouse.us).



Windham students rehearse for their production, *In Celebration of Puerto Rico: A Conversation Between Children*. Contributed photo.

In Celebration of Puerto Rico: A Conversation Between Children

Submitted by Carol Macy

On Saturday, June 9th, at 1pm at the ACT School, 896 Main Street, Willimantic CT, students from the Before and After-School Program in the five Windham Elementary Schools will dramatize folktales from Puerto Rico and also poetry written by students in Puerto Rico who lived through Hurricane Maria.

In February 2018, teaching artist Carol Macy received a grant she applied for entitled In Celebration: Dramatizing Stories and Poetry from Mexico and Puerto Rico. The grant was made possible with support from the Dept. of Economic and Caommunity Development, CT Office of the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts. With selected music, folktales and poetry, Carol set off into the schools looking for enthusiastic actors who would join her. In the midst of this work, Carol wrote to schools in Puerto Rico, hoping to involve students there in writing about their experiences during and after Hurricane Maria. Her intention was to give voice to the children of Puerto Rico and to share their words with the Willimantic community through the dramatization of these words. On May 9th, poetry poured into Carol’s inbox, along with photographs of the 34 poets from Masis Griffin School in Puerto Rico. Students grades 4th – 9th shared their wisdom, their courage, and the determination to rise again. Alejandra Caro Ruiz wrote: “María, Convertiste a la isla del encanto, a la isla en cantos.” “You have gone from the isle of enchantment into the island of pieces.”

These young poets have something important to teach us regarding how to respond to hard times. One 9th grader named Diego Acevedo shared insights about having lost power for so long. “I realized that the moon exists, and that the stars are lamps in the sky illuminating our every step.” Natasha L. Ramos wrote, “Beneath the rain, we bathed ourselves. We played. A lot of patience and a lot of hope.” Throughout the 34 poems is the message that these young individuals faced fear and destruction and grew stronger inside. They learned about giving, about their families and the power of the neighborhood, and about what is important in life. Diego Acevedo writes, “It was a day when we worked for a simple ‘thank you.’ A day when one neighbor cooked for the whole street. Where a gallon of water was like a gold ingot.”

Over 100 students displaced by Hurricane Maria have found a home in the Windham Public Schools, and on June 9th young actors in Windham’s elementary schools will present *In Celebration of Puerto Rico: A Conversation Between Children*. Admission is free. Seating is limited. Refreshments graciously provided by community merchants. Presentation will be in Spanish and English. For more information, please email Carol. macycje@gmail.com. Roger C. Ingraham’s photographic exhibit of the folktales and poetry being dramatized will be at The Willimantic Library from June 1st- June 15th.

To all our contributors-
Thank You!

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



Raising Cattle in Vermont’s Northeast Kingdom

By Harvey Dunbar

Black Hills Angus is a small family farm located in the heart of the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont and the local food movement. Here buying locally, knowing where your food comes from, and “you are what you eat” is a part of every day life.

For over 15 years, we have been raising our herd. We started with two Angus cows, then bought four more, and gradually have built a herd of over 60 cattle. We breed our cows with Registered Angus bulls either leased or purchased from foundation herds. We continue to improve the herd through genetics, concentrating on product traits and docility. We look for big rib eyes and marbling along with good growth.

We are very proud of our animals. Our purebred Angus cattle are born on our farm, raised their whole lives here, then processed and packaged to be shipped to our customers. All our cattle are pasture raised, grass fed, and never given growth hormones. They rotate through lush green pastures that are herbicide and pesticide free all summer. Then they are fed the best hay we can find during the winter, and have year round access to free choice minerals and fresh clean water. The steers’ grass diet is supplemented with a little grain which is what creates the marbling of fat. The marbling is what makes steaks more tender and burger more flavorful. The grain is also what helps us convince them to come back into the pasture when they get out!

Every year we sell sides of beef - you can order a half or a whole and are charged only \$4.50/lb hanging

weight. Halves average 300-350lbs, and we cut it to your specifications. Most people order about half as burger and the other half as steaks and roasts. Our beef is cut, vacuum packaged, and flash frozen at a USDA facility and we deliver our final product each November across New England. Flash freezing and vacuum sealing allows the beef to stay fresh for at least 18 months. Some of our customers order a whole animal every year, others order a half every two years. On our farm we also have a small retail space where we sell individual cuts so you can try some beef before committing to a whole side.

Raising cattle is work of passion- I bought my first cow when I was 14 and have worked on dairy farms most of my life before finally settling on Angus. I work as the Road Foreman for the Town of Glover, and my wife Deb is the business manager for the Lamoille North Supervisory Union District. The two of us manage Black Hills Angus in our spare time as we work our way toward retirement.

Give us a call if you would like to get to know us, learn more about our process, or visit us to see for yourself what buying locally really means! We are now taking orders for November delivery.

To all our contributors- Thank You!

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



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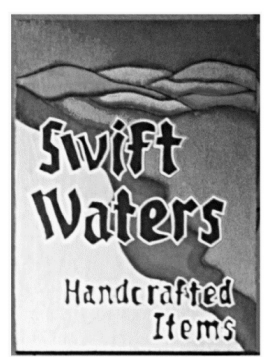
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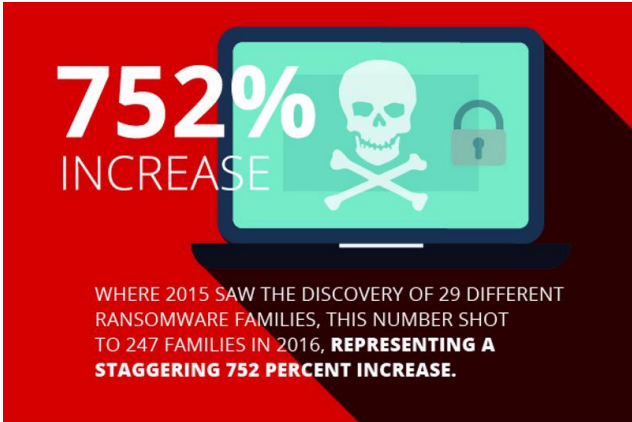
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RANSOM-WARE BEWARE!



Do Not Pay The Ransom!

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.

QUESTION:

I accidentally deleted the "All My Files" folder under
Finder/Favorites. Now I can't find it! Any way I can get
that back?

You can re-enable special items that appear in the Sidebar via Finder Preferences.

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.

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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June 13, Wednesday
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
Nature: Pollinators and Their Effects on Eco-Systems, 6:00p.m. Talk by Catharine Wolka, Humble Bee Honey Company, Knowlton Hall, Ashford. Info: lorettaw886@gmail.com
Arts: "Talent Showcase" – Come share your talents! 7:00pm. 2nd Wednesday of the month - Last session of the season – Back in September. Free and open to all ages. The Packing House at The Mill Works, 156 River Road. 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). 518-791-9474. www.thepackinghouse.us
Skill Share: Djembe Drumming Lessons,

7:00p.m. - 9:00p.m. (See 6/6)

June 14, Thursday
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
Dance: EC-CHAP Social Dance Series with Oswaldo Tirano (Latin). 7:00pm. 2nd Thursday of the month – Last session of the season – Back in September. \$10.00 at the door. Oswaldo leads Kelly Madenjian's class with focus on Latin Dance. Each month will feature a beginner ballroom dance lesson followed by a fun social dance to all your favorite ballroom hits. Viennese Waltz to West Coast Swing and everything in between. All levels welcome. Partner not required. The Packing House at The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington. www.thepackinghouse.us

June 15, Friday
Film: End-Of-Season Event! "A Concert

and A Movie". Boston based Blues Artist, Eric Sommer in concert followed by a Free Screening of "Fred Rogers: America's Favorite Neighbor" (NR). Doors 6:30pm / Show 7:00pm. An intersection of EC-CHAP's "Acoustic Artist Series" and "Friday Night Film Series". The Packing House at The Mill Works, 156 River Road, Willington, CT 06279. Tickets \$12.00 online / \$15.00 door. Snacks and soft drinks available. "BYOB&F"™ (Wine & Beer Only - I.D. Required). Info and table reservations call: 518-791-9474. See website for details. www.thepackinghouse.us/upcoming

June 16, Saturday
History: Eastern CT Railroad Museum Father's Day Special. Free admission for fathers! 55 Bridge Street, Willimantic. Info: www.cteastrrmuseum.org
History: Mill of the Month goes to the Coventry Glass Museum. Carpool from Windham Textile & History Museum, 411 Main Street, Willimantic. Register: 860-456-2178 www.millmuseum.org

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
Nature: Living in Harmony with Mother Earth: North Direction, 2:30p.m. - 4:00p.m. Mohegan tribal member Chris Harris "Turtle" returns for a in-depth look at living in harmony with Mother Earth. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Register: 860-455-9534 jasper.sha@ct.gov

June 17, Sunday
Community Food: Ashford Farmers Market, 10:00a.m. - 1:00p.m. (See 6/3)
Meditation: Willimantic Mindfulness Sangha Meditation, 7:00p.m. - 8:30p.m. (See 6/3)

June 20, Wednesday
Park: Willimantic Whitewater Partnership Annual Meeting & BBQ, 6:00p.m. 28 Bridge

Origins? Has Science Really Buried God?

By Conrad McIntire Jr.

I read with a great deal of interest Cathy Cementina’s article “Origins” in the March issue of *Neighbors*. What I found interesting was that there was a lot we could agree on. At times I wondered if she had read my book “Let Us Reason Together” as I wrote also about Edwin Hubble’s discovery of the expanding universe, the discovery of cosmic background radiation (CBR) at Bell Laboratories, red shifts, etc., showing the universe had a beginning. So we have agreement on the beginning of the universe, it is not eternal. I think we would also agree that a correct view of our origins is immensely important. Ms Cementina however, after 6 paragraphs of what we can agree on, takes a huge leap of faith in her last paragraph, that I am unwilling to logically take when she attempts to dismiss God.

She stated the stars “exploded in a way that disbursed the heavier elements through space...” that allowed for life on earth and “we all came from stardust’. So she agrees with the Bible, that we are made from dust (Genesis 2:7) But most important of all, how could ‘stardust’ become a thinking rational creature with a mind? How is it she even writes an article?

What I am really interested in is the science and logic in her last paragraph, that she attempts to use, in saying the answer to the universe “isn’t God”. Now how do you know that? Well she attempts to play a quick card game by saying “Stephen Hawking and Victor Stenger have proposed a plausible explanation for what proceeded the Big Bang. And it isn’t God.” She bluffs with another card with the statement that their explanation “can in time be supported with new data.” Another words it can’t be supported right now! .She concludes with “As long as there is a plausible empirical explanation for what proceeded the Big bang there is no need to invoke a supernatural one.” Game over? Not so fast Cathy. Let’s look at the cards your really holding.

First, neither Stephen Hawking or Victor Stenger have provided any empirical evidence for what proceeded the Big Bang. Nor can they provide us any scientific evidence against God. Cementina’s claims are without merit based on wishful reasoning and a questionable interpretation of science. What she doesn’t tell you is that Hawking’s and Stenger’s hypotheses have brought them into conflict with friend and foe alike. The US National Academy of Sciences has gone on record with the following statement.

“Science is a way of knowing about the natural world. It is limited to explaining the natural world through natural causes. Science can say nothing about the supernatural. Whether God exists or not is a question which science is neutral.”

Reading Stenger and Hawking’s attempts to explain away God reminds me of a quote from Albert Einstein “Logic can get you from A to B. Imagination will take you anywhere!”

Both Stenger and Hawking have trouble with logical thinking. In his book Stenger states “Where did the laws of nature come from? They came from nothing!” Try that on for size with anything else and see how it works. Stenger seems confused about just what this “nothing” is (which is a bit fascinating in itself). Remember the Big Bang contained space and time within itself. So the laws of nature, contrary to what Stenger tries to say, could not have come out from the “void out of which the universe arose” but only from the existing universe. This “void zero” by definition lies beyond the reach of science and is what the Bible calls “eternity”. In reality Stenger unwittingly corners himself into the logical conclusion that the laws of science had a non-physical, and therefore a theological origin!

Stenger is also guilty of the most illogical statement I have ever read by an atheist (and I have read almost all of them). He states “In short , the natural state of affairs is something (by which he means the universe) rather than nothing. An empty universe requires supernatural intervention-not a full one. Only by the constant action of an agent outside the universe, such as God, could a state of nothingness be maintained. The fact that we have something is just what we would expect if there is no God.” I realize that atheists have grown desperate with the growing evidence for design in the universe and in life, and the logical conclusions that it points to an intelligence, but this is like a plumber being shown Niagara Falls and after studying it a few minutes claims he can fix it!

With Stenger’s kind of logic we can maintain that Mt. Rushmore proves that there is no intelligence behind it, since the mountain should have just stayed a mountain with no apparent shape otherwise.

In reviewing Stenger’s book “God-the Failed Hy-

pothesis” Dr. Edgar Andrews at the University of London noted several glaring logical fallacies and concluded “But if your looking for a failed hypothesis his explanation of the origin of natural law can hardly be bettered!”

As for Hawking he drifted back and forth on his position regarding God during his lifetime. In his first major book “A Brief History of Time” in the final chapter he uses the word “God” eight times in four pages. Although he does not declare himself on the question of God’s existence he clearly implies the possibility. Where Ms Cementina apparently decides to rest her faith is in Hawking’s last book “The Grand Design”, where he invents a multi-universe theory and later states “Because there is a law like gravity the universe can and will create itself out of nothing.” Like Stenger he pretends the laws are there already, before the material universe begins. Now where did he get that from? How does he know? Can the laws of gravity exist in the absence of matter? Physical laws don’t initiate actions and events, they merely describe the physical universe! Is there any evidence at all for what Hawking’s theory?

Listen to what Roger Penrose, the leading British mathematician, a friend of Hawking’s who worked with him on black holes says regarding Hawking’s theory “It enjoys no observational support whatsoever. What is referred to as M-theory isn’t even a theory, indeed its hardly science. It’s a collection of ideas, hopes, aspirations...I think the book is misleading. It gives the impression that there is this new theory that is going to explain everything. It’s NOTHING OF THE SORT.”

Another friend of Hawking, Astronomer Martin Rees says “I know Stephen Hawking well enough to know that he has read very little philosophy and even less theology, so I don’t think we should attach any weight to his views on God.”

Physicist Paul Davies states of the ideas of the likes of Stenger and Hawking that the universe could be entirely the consequence of logical and mathematical necessity “I think this is demonstrably wrong. There’s not a shred of evidence that the universe is logically necessary.” As Professor John Lennox of Oxford stated in his book “God and Stephen Hawking -Whose Design is it Anyway?” “Nonsense is nonsense even when it is spoken by world famous scientists...immense prestige and authority do not compensate for faulty logic.”

Even the prestigious journal “Scientific American” headed their review of Hawking’s book “Cosmic Clowning: Hawking’s ‘new’ theory is the same old CRAP.” It went on to state that “M-theory stems not from the theory merits, but from lack of alternatives, an the stubborn refusal of enthusiasts to abandon their FAITH....if we believe him the joke’s on us.”

I could go on with this but space is limited, any interested reader can get my book “Let Us Reason Together – Christianity vs Atheism: Which Has the Evidence of Science, Logic and History?” for a deeper study.

The above shows that Ms Cementina statements that Stenger and Hawking have plausible explanations for what proceeded the Big Bang is false. The bigger question may be why do atheists desperately cling on to any wild unsupported theory as long as its not God?

Has science buried God? Why not admit as British astrophysicist Fred Hoyle reluctantly did “A common sense interpretation of the facts suggests that a superintellect has monkeyed with physics. As well as with chemistry and biology, and there are no blind forces worth speaking about in nature. The numbers one calculates from the facts seem so overwhelming as to put this conclusion almost beyond question.”

Or as agnostic, Dr. David Berlinski concludes “Has anyone provided proof of God’s inexistence? Not even close. Has quantum cosmology explained the emergence of the universe or why its here? Not even close? Have our sciences explained why the universe seems to be fine tuned for the existence of life? Not even close. Are physicists and biologists willing top believe in anything so long as its not a religious thought? Close enough. Has rationalism and moral thought provided us with an understanding of what is good, and what is right and what is moral? Not close enough. Has secularism in the terrible 20th century been a force for good? Not even close to being close! Is there a narrow and oppressive orthodoxy in the sciences? Close enough. Is anything in the sciences or their philosophy justify the claim that religious belief is irrational? Not even the ball park! Is scientific atheism a frivolous exercise in intellectual contempt? Dead on.”

Does science seem to point to God? Well since Mr. Cementina used the discovery of cosmic background radiation at Bell Labs in her article let’s ask the scientist there, Dr. Arno Penzias, who won the Noble prize

in Physics for this discovery: “Astronomy leads us to a unique event, a universe which was created out of nothing, and delicately balanced to provide exactly the conditions required to support life. In the absence of an absurdly improbable accident, the observations of modern science seem to suggest an underlying, one might say, supernatural plan.” He further concludes “The best data we have are exactly what I would have predicted had I had nothing to go on but the five books of Moses, the Psalms, the Bible as a whole.”

God is still the best answer with the most explanatory power for the reality we see all around us, from Big Bang, to the human mind, to the smallest cell. I’ll take that over everything coming from “nothing”.

Conrad McIntire Jr. is the co-director of the Christian Apologetics Research and Education Service and the author of “Let Us Reason Together – Christianity vs Atheism: Which Has the Evidence of Science, Logic and History”, available on Amazon and at the Morning Star bookstore in Manchester, Ct. He welcomes your comments and questions at: caresipeter315@aol.com

Street, Willimantic. Info: www.willimanticwhitewater.org
Skill Share: Djembe Drumming Lessons, 7:00p.m. - 9:00p.m. (See 6/6)

June 21, Thursday
Festival: 3rd Thursday Street Festival, 6:00p.m. - 9:00p.m. Main Street, Willimantic closes for food, music and fun! Info: www.willimanticstreetfest.com

June 22, Friday
Nature & Art: Scientific Illustration Workshops: Summer Flowers and Pollinators, 1:00p.m. - 4:00p.m. Paper and pencils provided. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Register: 860-455-9534 jasper.sha@ct.gov

June 23, Saturday
Textiles: Quilt Appraisal Day, \$50. Fee certified appraiser Lois Palmer will be on hand. Windham Textile & History Museum, 411 Main Street, Willimantic. Register: 860-456-2178 www.millmuseum.org
Kids: Forest Youth Series: Turtles, 1:00p.m. - 3:00p.m. Explore the world of painted turtles. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Register: 860-455-9534 jasper.sha@ct.gov

June 24, Sunday
Community Food: Ashford Farmers Market, 10:00a.m. - 1:00p.m. (See 6/3)
Nature: Soils: The World beneath Our Feet, 2:00p.m. - 4:00p.m. Join conservation scientist Kip Kolesinskas for a presentation and short walk. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Register: 860-455-9534 jasper.sha@ct.gov
Meditation: Willimantic Mindfulness Sangha Meditation, 7:00p.m. - 8:30p.m. (See 6/3)

June 25, Monday
Sustainability: SustainableCT, 7:00p.m. Jessica LeClair will speak in Ashford on SustainableCT, a statewide program.

June 27, Wednesday
Skill Share: Djembe Drumming Lessons, 7:00p.m. - 9:00p.m. (See 6/6)

June 30, Saturday
Nature: Dragons & Damsels, 12:00p.m. - 2:00p.m. Explore the world of dragonflies. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, 23 Potter Road, Hampton. Register: 860-455-9534 jasper.sha@ct.gov

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

Please thank and patronize
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Thank you. T. King, Publisher

Beauty and the Beasts

By Mark Mathew Braunstein
www.MarkBraunstein.Org

Good Girls on Bad Drugs: Addiction Nonfiction of the Unhappy Hookers portrays the shattered lives of drug addicts who, in their hustle for drugs, became streetwalkers and internet escorts. The book chronicles the sex workers of Willimantic, New London, Norwich, and Connecticut’s two casinos. This is the sixth excerpt from the book in *Neighbors*. Part One of this chapter appeared last month. www.GoodGirlsOnBadDrugs.com

PART TWO

JENNIFER speaks:
When I was little, I had this weird backwards concept that bad was good. I remember teasing my sister, calling her a good girl. Like a good girl’s a bad thing. I remember telling myself, when I grow up, I’m going to be a bad girl. Because a bad girl’s a good thing. Only recently, I found out where I got that from. My father and my son were watching Star Wars. My father told my son that Darth Vader is the good guy.

My son is six. He’s just like me. He’s masochistic, hurts himself to hurt me. My father’s a correctional officer. He’s worked at all the jails, but he started at Niantic. I’ve been in Niantic. My father’s an addict, a lot of coke. And he’s a pot smoker. He checked me into rehab when I was 16 for drinking and doing coke and smoking pot. And yet he picked me up from rehab with roaches in his ashtray and as high as can be. He’s egotistical and really hypocritical. He’s 50 going on 21.

When he abandoned our entire family, at first it was scary, but after that it was better without him. He paid child support for only two years. Even that, my mother had to scare him to get it. She hates men now because of the way he mistreated her. There’s my two other sisters, but I was the one he hit and punched. He’d call me an idiot, stupid, all the time. Now he comes to Willimantic to try to drag me home. He cries, “Do I deserve this?”

I was 11 when I first got drunk. Then pot. At 15, I started doing coke. Then I went into rehab, came out, and started tripping. I was 16 when I first went to jail, not even juvenile reform school, for possession of acid on school grounds. My parents could have kept me out, but they thought it was a good lesson for me. It was. I didn’t go back to jail until almost ten years later. I’ve been back eight times, mostly drug charges. I’ve been busted for street-walking three times in stings, cops posing as johns.

The most recent, a motorcycle pulls over. I get on behind him, my arms around his waist. The guy is bitching, telling me he’s tired of his wife. He says, “I only got twenty-five dollars. Do you think I could get some sex?” I didn’t say yes or no. I just sighed. He pulls behind KFC. And boom! The cop car pulls up behind us, and I’m under arrest. I’m in jail overnight, very dopesick.

For the past seven years, I’ve been a heroin addict on and off. But mostly on. I’m now 30. I didn’t try heroin until I was 22. At first, heroin seems like it makes everything better. You think like you’re not going to end up where everyone else does, but you do. I’ve been in rehab almost 20 times. Some of them court-ordered, some of them parents, some of them me trying. When it was just me trying, usually it was short, just detox.

To pay for drugs, I started shoplifting. It’s stealing from a store. I would never steal from a person. I was doing it everywhere. Except I was getting caught all the time. They sent me from jail to a drug program where I met this girl from the streets of Willimantic. I was in rehab for just a day when we decided to leave, a violation of probation, so I hid out in Willimantic. Willimantic was where I had come to cop dope all the time.

We got here, she made a lot of money really fast from the street. We got dope and coke. Having been clean

for so long, I ended up getting really high. A young kid who was dealing us drugs asked me, “Do I want to do a date?” I said, “What the hell’s a date?” He said, “These Mexicans want to pay to have sex with you.” I didn’t have any money. I wanted more coke, so I did it. I have no feelings about that first time streetwalking. It’s almost like I can’t remember. I was drinking that day. I was drinking that night. As far as I remember, the kid took the money. I thought that johns would be older men, but now I see that the majority are younger men that have girlfriends and wives. Most johns don’t have much respect for women, and I don’t have much respect for most johns. A lot of bad things have happened to me at the hands of johns. People think that happens because I’m too trusting. Five or six

the weapon. Another cop gets there. They pulled Mike off me and pulled the weapon out of his hand. Then the medics get there. I could tell by their panic that something was really bad. As soon as I heard “Life Star” [helicopter], I’m thinking, Oh my God! Am I going to die?

I was in surgery for ten hours. Then I was comatose for two days. There were tubes everywhere. He punctured my lung. He broke a rib. He slit open my stomach, stabbed my back, my hand, my cheek, my ear, and an artery on my neck. Eight stab wounds. When I got out of the hospital, they had me on OxyContin. It’s a real bitch to get prescriptions filled. The pharmacy wouldn’t do it. So a week after getting out of the hospital, I was back on heroin and back on the streets.

Two months after that, I’m with two guys. They’re drinking, driving really crazy. The car spun out and crashed. I felt like my back was broke. The ambulance came. I got to the hospital. It was the same people there. They weren’t happy to see me. They gave me no painkillers because they wanted me to suffer.

The streets have left their marks on me. I have awful scars. I wonder all the time why I’m out here. It becomes a habit, not just the getting high but the whole thing that comes with it. And things I can’t deal with. Like the fact that I walked away from my son. It’s depressing because at home and off drugs I think about things that I don’t want to. Like my being pregnant right now. I’m past trimester. Now it’s a baby. [choking back tears] I don’t know what to do, what the heck is honorable. [sobbing] I can’t really talk about it. I can’t. [crying]

Girls on the streets are individuals, not just prostitutes, not just drug addicts. They have personalities, feelings. I’m a person too, just like anybody else is.

Being on the streets, almost everybody is lying and cheating. If you stay on drugs, everyone says you change. I’m seeing now it’s true, after five years on the streets, that you’ve got to be the bitch or people take advantage of you. My change started right after I got stabbed in the back.

Being kind in the real world is a strength. Being trustworthy is a good thing, but on the streets it makes matters worse. On the streets, it’s seen as naïve, as total weakness. On the streets, it’s backwards. [Jennifer’s speaking ends]

Posthumous Postscript

Looking backward, Jennifer marched forward. She escaped the streets, but not the drugs. She swapped her addiction to heroin for addiction to methadone. Unlike methadone, heroin is infused with a secret sauce called Death Wish. Each track mark memorializes a botched stab at suicide. After their many futile attempts of reaching for the heavens, many junkies fatally OD.

Just as a mother’s love is boundless, so can her sorrow be endless. If there exists a wailing louder than her mourning over her child’s death, it is her grieving its suicide. Her child’s willful renunciation of her gift of life is a wound from which no mother can heal.

Jennifer’s son, who at age six had been misled “that Darth Vader is the good guy,” followed her own descent into drugs. At age 22, on a hot summer night in 2017, he added his corpse to the body count of the opioid dead. Of Connecticut’s 1,040 overdose deaths that year, 675 were fueled by heroin laced with fentanyl. His death certificate documented that fatal brew as “Acute intoxication from the combined effects of Fentanyl, Heroin & Alcohol.”

In the natural order of birth and life and death, the mother dies and then, years later, her son dies. But on the streets, the son often dies first. “On the streets, it’s backwards.” Heroin had long cast a bleak shadow upon Jennifer’s ill-fated life. Heroin was never her friend but, in striking dead her firstborn, it had become her mortal enemy. More resolute than ever, Jennifer vowed to fight the curse of heroin for the rest of her life.



Chronicle, Willimantic, Conn. Wednesday, February 20, 2002

Woman critical after stabbing

By ROGER B. SNOW
Chronicle Staff Writer

WILLIMANTIC — A Willimantic police officer Tuesday night interrupted a brutal stabbing that left a woman in critical condition. A local man has been charged with attempted murder and police are hoping witnesses will come forward to aid their investigation.

Police said that at 10:17 p.m., Officer Stan Parizo was on patrol in his cruiser on Main Street between Windham and Tingley streets, when he saw a young woman being stabbed by an assailant.

Parizo pulled over his cruiser and was able to stop the attack, police said. They said that after he handcuffed Michael Lee, 21, of no certain address, he administered first aid to the victim.

Parizo called dispatchers and requested an ambulance, which arrived in minutes. The woman was taken to Danaher Hospital, where she underwent surgery for multiple knife wounds to her head, neck, and torso. She is listed in critical condition this morning, police said.

They have not released her identity pending the notification of family members.

Lee was charged with criminal attempt to commit murder and first-degree assault. He was held on \$1 million cash bond and was scheduled to be arraigned today in Danaher Superior Court after being treated at Windham Hospital. Police said he was brought to the hospital for a psychiatric evaluation because of a wrist injury. Police said the woman was injured but had no other injuries.

Parizo called dispatchers and requested an ambulance, which arrived in minutes. The woman was taken to Danaher Hospital, where she underwent surgery for multiple knife wounds to her head, neck, and torso. She is listed in critical condition this morning, police said.

Jennifer at age 35. Photographed by author.

times, I’ve been raped. The first ones, I fight back. After a while, I learn not to fight back. Each one gets more brutal. The worst, he looked scary, an albino look. He used a stun gun. He zapped me about 30 times. Then he raped me and told me to straighten myself up.

I’ve been assaulted many times by johns. Recently, I took care of him, then he smashed a bottle of beer on my head and took the money back. The most recent, this guy couldn’t finish because he had been drinking. He threw the forty dollars at me, and he lectured me, saying, “You are so stupid. What the fuck are you doing out here? Look at you, you’re beautiful. You’re slowly killing yourself. Next time I come by, I don’t want to see you out here, or else.” Lecture, lecture, lecture.

The next time he picks me up, like normal I get in the car. Then he’s running through all the red lights, heading towards the woods. He said, “You owe me. You’re going to fucking pay me, bitch!” I said to myself, here we go again. I didn’t even fight back. First times that bad things happened, I cried. Now I don’t cry anymore. I honestly don’t feel anything anymore. I don’t know if there’s something wrong with me or what.

The worst thing that happened was this kid, Mike [Michael Lee, Connecticut Inmate Number 263301], he’s a bit crazy. So here Mike is at night by this [Xtra] gas station [next to Dairy Queen]. He stretches out his hand as if he were going to give me a hug. Then I felt this unbelievably sharp pain in my neck. It just stunned me. A small knife. And he’s pulling it out, and stabbing me in other places. This whole time, people are watching. It’s Main Street, a busy place at night. From the sidewalk, we ended up in the middle of the road. Cars are stopped with their headlights on. I remember wondering, What the fuck is wrong with you people? Why aren’t you helping?

There was blood everywhere. I’m fighting with him. At this point, I was too tired, losing too much blood. I lay on the ground. He was kicking me, and stabbing me in the back. The policeman happened to be going by. Mike stabs me again. And I’m trying to tell the cop [voice faltering, muttering], “He’s stabbing me. He’s stabbing me.” The cop’s screaming, “Drop the weapon!” Mike still didn’t drop

Bakerwoods in Ashford: A Place in the Heart

By Nancy Discepolo

Let me tell you a little story about Bakerwoods. My Dad, Grant Baker, was a lumberman and trapper and was born and raised in Ashford. My Mom, Frances, was from New York City and had a few surprises when she married my Dad. She came from the city to set up housekeeping in a woodchoppers shack with a picnic table, a hand pump, no electricity and no telephone. Mom was learning about housekeeping in the country while listening to an old Buick engine that ran the small sawmill Dad operated.

When the war broke out, Dad was called to duty and off he went leaving Mom in the woods with two babies, no car and no contacts. But Dad was a wonderful inventor, so before he left he climbed to the top of a large oak tree and there he placed a pulley with a rope to which he attached a white grain bag. Now if Mom needed help while he was gone, all she had to do was to hoist the “flag” and someone in the neighborhood would see it and send help.

While she was working to establish their home, Mom’s New York City entrepreneurial spirit took over and gave her many wonderful ideas of what she could develop “way down in the woods”. Her first endeavor was raising Silver Fox for pelts since, after all, they had received a pair as a wedding gift.

In the 1950’s Mom and Dad began raising rabbits, chickens and goats. Mom renovated one of the old chicken shelters into dog kennels so she could add dogs and cats to their ever-growing animal farm. She ran Baker Kennel for many, many years.

A small table on the lawn held a few dog collars and knick-nacks, just some odds and ends, and Mom decided to hold her first “tag sale”. She soon saw the future in selling what-nots, so in 1960 she rented an apple stand and called it the “What-not Shop.”

What fun it was to be her child...feeding the animals, packing a lunch, and going to the shop or an auction! Soon Mom decided to concentrate on buying and selling antiques and junk. She was so good at it everyone knew that if they needed something, she had it! In the 1990’s she was still at it, selling at tag sales and flea markets as well as at home. Her dream was to have a huge barn as her store. She passed away in 1997 while her dream barn was still under construction, but she left her dreams and legacy to me and I continue the journey and invite all to share in the fun.

A portion of the 150 acres of land has been entered into the Federal Legacy Program, hopefully the future of Bakerwoods will fulfill the dreams of my ancestors.

There is no admission fee but we appreciate donations.

Fishing All Summer Long. We allow fishing when we are open! Remember to bring your poles when you come to visit. Catch & release, no license required. There are bass, bullhead, pickerel, blue gills and maybe even a trout! Open to children 16 and under. Bring your own gear, poles and bait! The contest will be from 10am to 1pm then we will give out the prizes. While we are open you can fish all you want! The trails should be ready and the Food wagon will be open. Restrooms available. Sorry. No Dogs.

God’s Special Children: As many of you know that visit Bakerwoods, we have a lot of special needs children who come. It has been on my heart to just to let you know how special they are to us here at Bakerwoods. It took me several months to figure out what I was going to tell you. I need or just wanted to find in the Bible God’s outlook on the special children and adults in this world. I asked a friend to help me, she not only came up with the verse, but her church is considering having a service for the special children.

This crazy idea came to me many times, like every time we have an animal that has a problem, when we first opened we had a one legged pheasant, then there was Peggy, the goose with the broken leg. And a few more, well some folks would ask why I had them here? I told them to teach us how lucky we are and blessed if we have both legs and arms. What would you be teaching the children if every animal was perfect? We recently had a duck break her leg. I would say at least 50% of the visitors,



ask me “Do you know you have an injured duck?” Yeah. It’s either butchering her, or just killing her or letting God have his way. It is healing. What does this have to do with special needs? Well hold on...all of these animals become a blessing because I can use them to teach about accepting these problems.

Well then, is that why I want the special children to come? NO!! because “On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable,” 1Corinthians (CR) 12:23 and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, 1Cr 12:24 while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, 1Cr 12:25 so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. 1Cr 12:26 If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. They are a blessing to all of us and that is why God chooses them to be special. There is no “special” deal...no, we are all alike in God’s eyes and equally loved by Him. I hope I have explained this right, you are invited and most of all, you are a blessing to us, I believe what God has told us and you are all “indispensable” You are a Blessing!

Party Facilities: A Great new idea for this year, so many folks have needs for parties and I have such little time. We will be putting up a 10X20 foot tent, with picnic tables you can decorate. Bring your friends have your party, all for one flat rate of \$100. Reservations only. Certain limitations include parking extra cars in field, no signs or balloons at entrance. A limited number of children and adults will be determined at time of reservation. A non-refundable deposit will be required. Call 860-336-9542 for early reservations.

Tea Room: There will be a great addition to the farm, a tea room, well it’s more like a gazebo overlooking the pond. We will have traditional scones and clotted cream! Flowering

teas too! We are going to do planned tea parties, groups or even individuals. Call ahead so I can be ready!

A Tree Treasure: While driving down route 89 almost to the center of Ashford, I noticed a large tree that had been cut down. Thinking I have lived in town all my life and never noticed that big tree. On my way home I stopped and checked it out. The circumference at five feet was about 18 feet. The second piece was not only a great specimen of the largest Ash tree I had ever seen, somehow I knew the Creator must have had a plan for this old tree.

Ash trees have been harvested for firewood, and a great wood when running low on wood in the winter, as it can be burned green. So how could this tree have been spared for so many years? Not being noticed by too many people, just planted by the river in the center of a town that derived its name from the tree. Ashford named for its large growth of ash trees. There it stood, grew and watched over the town as it was settled. Standing through the many storms of all those years gone by. It stood there and watched the little town grow. Not thinking of the growth rings that were building inside the trunk. According to the tell tale rings it must have been here for more than 300 years. It was still surviving but suffering from the ash boar inside the trunk.

A decision was made to cut it down. As I looked at the trunk and the perfect windows and door I knew the Creator had formed it perfectly. I stopped in and asked the McDonough family for the stump. I wanted it for the children to see and play in at Bakerwoods. Instantly it was mine. Casey McCue was the one that I had to ask to move it. I knew God had a plan for the tree. If only others would see and appreciate it. I knew it was a blessing from God when Casey had to ask his brother for help! He is Pastor of Living Proof Church (formerly Warrenville Baptist), the old church that the tree watched being built. From deep inside I knew it had to be preserved and honored. A true treasure of Gods creation to hold the air that our ancestors breathed, the tears, joy and sorrows that passed beneath its branches, all the days that passed to form our town from beginning to today. What a great piece of history! Now I invite all of its children from years gone by, like great, great- grandchildren of those that may have sat under the tree to come and visit and let your imagination run free! Being preserved here at Bakerwoods to honor the creator of a true treasure that only God could have made such a great plan!

Bakerwoods hours: Wednesday thru Saturday 10-6 & Sunday 12-5. 513 Bebbington Road, Ashford. 860-336-9542. E-Mail: nbakerwoods@sbcglobal.net

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The Easter Story: Fact or Friction - Part 3

The Day Death Died

By Conrad McIntire Jr.

The truth will be superior (The explanation achieves explanatory superiority). Finally I recognize that one of my suspects is unique in a superior way that he or she accounts for the evidence. In essence, this particular suspect is a far better choice when compared to other candidates that are offered. The quality of his or her connection to the evidence is better. When I see this characteristic of explanatory superiority, I know I have my killer.”

Former homicide detective, J. Warner Wallace

In this final installment , having researched all of the alternative theories that some have used to explain what happened that first Easter, and finding them highly improbable based on the evidence, we come now to only two possibilities. Either the disciples stole the body and invented the story or Jesus did miraculously rise from the dead. Let’s examine this choice.

It is a core historical fact that shortly after Jesus was crucified and buried, the same disciples that had fled for their lives when he was arrested, suddenly showed up in Jerusalem shortly afterwards boldly declaring that he had risen from the dead and had appeared to them. They did this within a short distance from where the tomb of Jesus lay. This substantiates the fact that the tomb of Jesus had to be empty. There is absolutely no way that Christianity could have made any converts at all if the tomb was not empty. As I said earlier, the enemies of Jesus would have been more than willing to cart the body up and down the streets of Jerusalem, which would have destroyed the disciples’ witness once and for all if there was any body in the tomb.

There are several things to note. First, the earliest Jewish propaganda against the Christian preaching concerning the resurrection was that the disciples stole the body. That this was the argument used by the Jews against the Christians is even recorded in Matthew 28:11-15. Think about it. The Jews did not dispute whether the body was still in the tomb or that it was elsewhere in some other grave. Since they conceded that it was empty, the dispute between them and the early Christian preaching was how it became empty! The reaction of the Jewish leaders in using this story provides very solid evidence that the tomb had to be unoccupied. Another interesting fact is that Peter’s preaching about the resurrection in that first address in Jerusalem boldly proclaims that the tomb of King David is here to this day, and contrasts this to the fact that Jesus’ body was not abandoned to the grave. (Acts 2:29-32) Again, the tomb of Jesus is presupposed to be empty in the contrast between Jesus and David. Such a challenge could easily be verified. It would seem to me, reading Acts 2, that it already was common knowledge among the crowds that the body of Jesus was not in the tomb; the question being asked was why?

This brings us to the heart of the matter. Considering the fact that early Christianity was born in Jerusalem and the center of all Christian preaching was the declaration that Jesus rose from the dead and that he was the Jewish Messiah, then there are only two real choices. The disciples lied or Jesus really miraculously did conquer death. The issue needs to be examined with the case based upon the evidence. I submit the following reasons why Jesus had to have risen and the disciples could not be liars.

1. It is a fact that people can manufacture a lie; it has happened numerous times down through history and it will happen again into the future. But it is an equally established fact that no one will die for what they know to be a lie. There is an ultimate test for sincerity which forever separates willful liars and those who are claiming to tell the truth. It is “Are you willing to die for it?” What the disciples got for telling their story was a life of constant persecution and eventually martyrdom. They could have spent the rest of their days in peace as simple fisherman – instead, they left it all to march to what they must have know was persecution and death. The roll-call for the apostles reads as follows.

1. Peter – crucified upside down.
2. Matthew – put to death by the sword.
3. Philip – crucified.
4. Andrew – crucified.
5. Thaddaeus – killed by arrows.
6. Thomas – killed by the spear.
7. Bartholemew – crucified.
8. James, the brother of Jesus – stoned to death.
9. James, brother of John – death by the sword.
10. Simon – crucified.
11. James, son of Alphaeus – crucified.
12. Paul – Beheaded.

Only the Apostle John apparently died a natural death, but he endured prison and exile for his belief in the resurrection. And anyone who believed there message risked and often got similar treatment since they would not worship the emperor as God. Many were used for sport in the Roman coliseum. Nero crucified and had others tarred and use others as human torches to light up the night! There was nothing worldly to gain by becoming a Christian.

In light of the above, how could the disciples have been perpetuating a lie? Is there any case in history where any one person has died for what they know to be a lie, let alone an entire band? As J. Warner Wallace, a former atheist homicide detective, pointed out in his book “Cold Case Christianity”, there are to many people involved, with to much pressure and as the disciples were scattered, to little communication, for a successful conspiracy to work.

Former Watergate conspirator, Chuck Colson, stated one of the reasons for his conversion to Christianity was there was no way he felt the early disciples could have pulled off such a conspiracy. He stated:

“Think about it: the most powerful men around the president of the United States could not keep a lie for three weeks. And you would have me believe the 12 apostles -powerless, persecuted, exiled, many martyred, their leader Peter crucified upside down-these common men, gave there lives for a lie, without breathing a word to the contrary? Impossible!.....men will never die for something they know to be false.”

Isn’t it clear that the disciples of Jesus and many other early Christians gave the ultimate witness to what they were proclaiming? In his book, A Lawyer Examines the Bible, Irwin Linton, a Washington, D.C. Lawyer, who even appeared before the Supreme Court of the United States, made the following statements:

“True, we cannot now cross-examine the eye and ear witnesses to the words and events narrated in the gospels, but they were cross-examined at the time as no other witnesses have ever been examined since the world began, by interrogation and cross-interrogation, by fire, sword, cross and scourge. This was their heroic part in the ‘Holy War’, and doubtless it was to afford us of later generations the costly assurance of their truth and sincerity that the early Christians were all Christian martyrs.”

The New Testament documents carry the unique weight of being a series of historical records which were tested by the torture and death of their historians. If there is any record in history quite like this, I am not aware of it. It just wouldn’t add up, that people would make a claim that they knew was a lie when all they would gain for it was a life of hardship, persecution and finally, death.

2. The first Christians were all Jews. Judaism is a religion that stresses the importance of truth and a truthful testimony. Numerous Old Testament scriptures warned that a false witness was to be considered evil and worthy of punishment. If these early Christians were lying, when they were going against their ingrained Jewish belief to tell the truth. They would not only be giving false witness to their fellow man, but they were giving false witness against God. This is something they would know they must give account for in the next life. Paul himself emphasized the realization of this point when he wrote, “If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain, your faith is also in vain. Moreover, we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we witnessed against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead do not rise.” (1 Corinthians 15:14-15)

The lives of the apostles and early Christians were of the highest moral standards. It is incomparable with everything we know about their nature, that they could have deliberately lied about seeing the resurrected Christ.

3. The conspiracy theory that somehow the first Christians stole the body of Jesus and then lied about his resurrection cannot explain the conversion of Saul of Tarsus into the Apostle Paul. Saul was a Pharisee who had been eliminating Christians as one of his main goals. Saul had been directly involved in the death of Stephen, and he had been going house to house dragging off Christians to prison. He even set off for Damascus with the goal of bringing more Christians to Jerusalem as prisoners when an amazing thing happened. Jesus appeared to Saul (Acts 9). From this encounter, the man who had sworn to persecute the followers of Jesus was transformed into perhaps Christianity’s greatest defender. Saul of Tarsus became the Apostle Paul. Paul left behind a bright future (by worldly standards), the respect of the high priests and Sanhedrin, wealth, and all the comforts of a fast rising Pharisee, to suffer poverty, shipwreck, beatings, starvation, stoning,

imprisonment, and finally being beheaded in Rome. Paul could not have been part of some organized conspiracy by the earliest followers of Jesus. The appearance of Jesus to Paul took place years after the first Easter appearances. What could have motivated the drastic change that took place in Paul? Nothing can fit the facts better than Paul’s own explanation that, “last of all, he (Jesus) appeared to me also...” (1 Corinthians 15)

4. What could explain the Jewish converts changing their sacred day of worship from Saturday to Sunday? Imagine what it would take to change July 4th, Independence Day, to some other date. Whatever it would take, it would take even more for a first century Jew to change a day instituted by God (Genesis 2:1-3, Exodus 20:8-11) in honor of his creation of the universe? But this change did take place, and it took place because the early Christians felt that this was even more significant, and therefore, they worshiped on Sunday. As Michael Green has pointed out, “It is not very easy to change the day of rest, especially among Jews! Something very significant must have happened. The earliest church was sure that something very significant had happened; something unprecedented.”

5. How can someone explain the Christian sacraments without the resurrection? Both the Lord’s Supper and baptism are based squarely on it. Communion, also referred to as the Lord’s Supper, commemorates the death of Christ and yet it is also a celebration based on the fact that Jesus conquered death and is coming back again. (1 Corinthians 11:2)

Christian baptism is an illustration of the convert’s identification with Christ’s death and resurrection. The believer’s immersion into the water and back out again is a personal re-creation of Jesus’ dying and rising. Baptism, therefore, is directly tied into the belief in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. Historically, these two sacraments have been in existence from the birth of Christianity. You cannot account for the existence of either without having the resurrection actually having occurred.

6. The belief in the divinity of Jesus is not a gradual development. It is present in the earliest documents, as I have already shown. The amazing thing about this is that the first disciples who where presenting this picture of Jesus were steeped in the Jewish belief that it was blasphemous to call a man God. What is it that could have caused them to go against the central tenet of the Jewish fact about the unity of God? What else, but that Jesus had conquered death, which verified what he had said about who he was! As Paul himself declared concerning Jesus, “... as to his human nature, he was a descendant of David, and through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ, our Lord.” (Romans 1:3-4) Let me ask you what it would take to get you to believe someone who makes claims indicating he was God? Can there be any greater proof than power over death?

7) If Jesus had not risen from the dead, the very early disciples would have done what most religious groups have done to the tomb of their teacher. They would have made the tomb a site of worship and veneration. As J. P. Moreland stated,” In Palestine during the days of Jesus, at least fifty tombs of prophets or other holy persons served as sites of religious worship and veneration. However, there is no good evidence that such a practice was ever associated with Jesus’ tomb. Since this was customary, and since Jesus was a fitting object of veneration, why were such religious activities not conducted at his tomb? The most reasonable answer must be that Jesus’ body was not in his tomb, and thus the tomb was not regarded as an appropriate site for such veneration.”

What was it that caused the disciples not to observe the tomb of their teacher as a place for veneration, as was common in their culture? The resurrection? All through history followers of an executed leader either find another leader or another cause. The followers of Jesus did neither, they instead proclaimed he was Israel’s Messiah and that they saw him again after his crucifixion. They were willing to pay for this story with their lives.

When one examines all of the facts surrounding the life of Jesus, that first Easter morning, the reaction of the disciples and their unwavering conviction as they marched to their deaths, their ingrained culture, and early historical data, the evidence can only point strongly in one direction. The resurrection of Jesus did occur. It was the central foundation of all that followed. It turned previous cowards into men who subjected themselves to endure torture rather than to deny the resurrection. Something happened that cause these people not to be afraid to die anymore. The arguments for any one of several alternative theories, as I have shown, pale in the light of the evidence to explain the transformation of the disciples . The problem, is that in examining every one of these theories, we have not found one, but several flaws in each. When one inserts each of them as the “mysterious X factor” that got the Christian movement started, it becomes increasingly clear that they are insufficient. When one weighs actual evidence, there

is a world of difference something being a possibility and something being a probability. Looking at all of the evidence surrounding the development of Christianity, only the actual resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead can explain what took place. All that Christian thinkers ask of people is to use the same kind of reasoning that they use in every other area of their life to determine the reliability of the documents and the reliability of the evidence concerning the resurrection. If they did this, they would have no trouble becoming accepting the resur-

rection as a historical event. There is simply no way to dismiss the Christian evidences without throwing out all of the history with it. Verification of these historical events presents proof that these early Christian claims are true. The problem isn't the evidence. The problem is that people are either ignorant of the evidence, or their presuppositions make them biased against it. We have examined every theory proposed in place of the resurrection. Quite simply, none are as strong as the case for the resurrection. Other things cannot even come close if one

goes by the historical evidence using the rules and methods established by historians.

Conrad McIntire Jr is the co-director of the Christian Apologetics Research and Education Service (C.A.R.E.S) and the author of "Let Us Reason Together- Christianity vs Atheism: Which Has The Evidence of Science, Logic and History." Which is available on Amazon and at Morning Star bookstore in Manchester. He welcomes questions and comments at: caresipeter315@aol.com

Common Sense Car Care

By: Rick Ostien

I always worry about not having a topic to write about for the following month but, by the end of the four weeks I usually have more than one to pick from. This month the topic I'd like to discuss is estimates for repairs on your vehicle.

The first thing that the customer needs to understand is the repair itself or what is involved in the repair. The second thing to understand is the estimate. Is it based on one thing or are there other related problems figured into the repair estimate? I'll give some examples to illustrate what I mean. In example one the customer has asked for an estimate on a timing belt. The labor and timing belt are given as the estimate. This estimate is only covering labor and the timing belt. The same repair should also be estimated with replacement of the timing belt, water pump, gaskets, seals, accessory belt, fluids, shop material, EPA disposal, timing belt pulleys, and tensioner. The second estimate includes all the potential problem parts that could be found when the technician does the repair. The first estimate will be substantially lower than the second. Will you need everything in the second estimate? Probably not but, I would rather know the worst case scenario that receive a phone call saying that other parts are found to be defective and need to be replaced. This, as we all know, will make the repair much higher than the first estimate was quoted for. The sad thing is that many repair facilities operate exactly that way. The low estimate is given; the vehicle repair is started, and then comes the phone call informing the customer that there will be an increase in the cost of the repair.

The next example is a customer who asks for an estimate on struts or shocks. The shock price is a safe estimate as you are quoted the labor and the shock prices. The strut estimate is different. The struts on most vehicles have other related parts that could have failed and labor as well. This should be included in a strut estimate or you could be the recipient of the dreaded this is going to cost more phone calls.

I have to admit that phone calls for an estimate can be very frustrating. The person calling is usually looking for the lowest price. We, as a repair facility, want to do the repair but, we need to be realistic and upfront. There are other parts that could be related to the repair they are asking for and need to be replaced and they really should be included in the estimate so that the customer is aware of all of it. It eliminates the need for the it is going to cost more phone calls. Most of my regular customers who call for an estimate are trying to plan their monthly finances so I try to make sure I figure for everything so there are no surprises. Even then some unforeseen problem could occur.

The motor vehicle repair cost for the consumer and the cost of doing business for the repair facility is a balancing act for both sides. The repair facility needs the repair job to stay in business. The vehicle owner needs the repair job done right and for the best price possible. The outcome should be that the repair facility does the repairs and makes a profit with the customer paying a fair price for that repair. Until next month.....Happy Motoring!!

Willimantic Farmers Market

By Kate Callahan

The Willimantic Farmers Market is open every Saturday from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm on Jillson Square. There will be a wide variety of locally grown fruits and vegetables, honey, pork, baked goods, jams, dumplings, breakfast tacos, seedlings and much more.

This year, the market is fortunate to offer Double Dollars to our SNAP recipients, thanks to community donations and the support of the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) grant program. When a customer spends \$10 from their EBT Connect Card they will receive 10 additional dollars to spend on fresh, local fruits and vegetables. This is an incredibly important program that supports both the health of low-income community members and the economy of local farmers.

We're looking forward to a busy market season of connecting with our community and of course, eating the best of what Northeastern Connecticut has to offer.

The Willimantic Farmers' Market was founded in 1976 and is the longest continuously running farmers' market in Connecticut. It will be open through the last Saturday of October. Visit our Facebook page.

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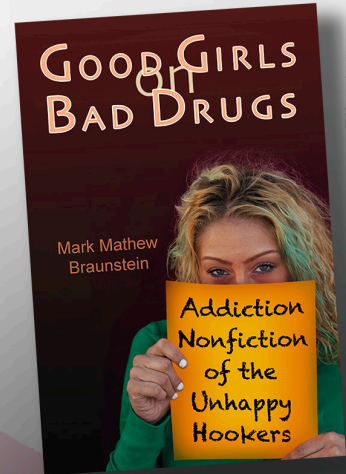


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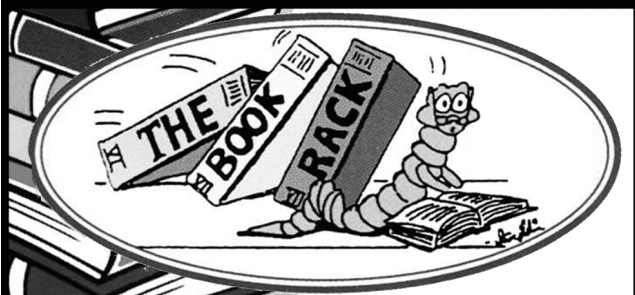
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Vanilla Bean Restaurant
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Scotland Library
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Bob's Windham IGA
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Windham Center
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Song-a-Day Music Celebrates Make Music Day

Submitted by Ruth O'Neil

Song-a-Day Music joins the Make Music Day in the Windham, CT celebration with an "On the Spot Pop-Up Music Festival" on Thursday, June 21, 2018. Make Music Day is a one-day event where free, live musical performances, opportunities to make music and other musical events take place around the world on the longest day of the year. Musical festivities in the greater Windham area are part of a global celebration of music making in over 750 cities inspired by France's Fête de la Musique.

The Song-a-Day Music Center invites everyone from professional musicians to people who have never picked up an instrument to join in the global music celebration by attending the Pop-Up Music Festival. The event will take place on the premises of the Song-a-Day Music Center located at 2809 Boston Turnpike (Route 44) in Coventry and will run from 4 P.M. to 9 P.M., rain or shine. All types of music are welcome. A full sound system as well as a keyboard will be available. Interested performers may contact the Song-a-Day Music Center at 860-742-6878 in advance to secure a performance slot. Slots are limited to 10 minutes to allow for numerous individuals to participate. The festival is free and open to the public, although donations are welcome to offset expenses; and any proceeds of which will benefit the Song-a-Day Music Fund. Guests are encouraged to bring lawn chairs or blankets. Beverages will be available; guests may bring a snack for the community food sharing table.

"Being part of a global music celebration such as Make Music is what Song-a-Day Music is about... since it first opened its doors over 15 years ago", says Ruth O'Neil, director. "Song-a-Day Music is and has always been committed to giving musicians of all levels and ages a chance to share their talents with one another in a fun, supportive atmosphere."

Music has been shown to strengthen social connectivity, reduce stress, lower blood pressure, stimulate memory, and is integral to a well-rounded, enjoyable life. By participating in Make Music Day, Song-a-Day Music and the greater Coventry and eastern Connecticut area encourage every form of music making.

National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) members and partners from coast to coast, including the Song-a-Day Music Center, will open their doors, joining in their communities' celebrations of Make Music Day.

For more information on the Pop-Up Music Festival, contact the Song-a-Day Music Center at 860-742-6878, www.songadaymusic.com, or its Facebook page.

Held annually on June 21, Make Music Day is part of the international Fête de la Musique, taking place in 800 cities across 120 countries. The daylong, musical free-for-all celebrates music in all its forms, encouraging people to band together and play in free public concerts. This year, more than 65 U.S. cities are organizing Make Music Day celebrations, encompassing thousands of concerts nationwide. Make Music Day is presented by the NAMM Foundation, and coordinated by the Make Music Alliance. For more information, please visit www.makemusicday.org.

June Greetings from the Gardiner Hall Jr. Museum

By Pamm Summers

Was it just the beginning of May when we were wondering if spring would ever come to Connecticut? Well, I think we skipped spring and from winter dove straight into summer... is it ever hot and humid! But it's actually cool and comfortable here in the GHJ Museum!

We are hard at work getting ready for our Summer 2018 "First Sunday at The Mill Works". In the museum you can see a few of the displays that Joan and I have updated. We've gotten our desk top computer, donated by Bernie Dubb for research at the museum and a period typewriter has been offered by Scott Mathis! We've been contacted by a few people who actually worked at the Gardiner Hall Jr. Company and who would like to be interviewed! This is a very valuable way to gather information about the daily operation of the Mill when it was in full swing!

But back to First Sunday at The Mill Works - this event is open to the public on June 3rd, and admission is free. Doors will open at 12:00pm and close at 5:00pm. There will be snacks, presentations, musical performances, open artist studios, and trivia games in the Museum for those who wish to play. Come in and find out how you can be part of this vibrant community by becoming a member of EC-CHAP. Volunteers will be on hand to converse with and help you navigate this historic site!

Here in the Museum we are still looking for donations of historic photographs of Willington and the Mill; and any artifacts pertaining to the Gardiner Hall Jr. Company - letters, ledgers, thread spools, postcards, and the like. Please feel free to email me if you have any items you'd like to either donate or put on loan (80barnowl@gmail.com). We are an all volunteer 501.c.3 nonprofit cultural organization, and run on a very limited budget, so every item gifted is greatly appreciated.

I hope to see you on Sunday, June 3rd, at our First Sunday at The Mill Works!



Hope and Wellness Center and Salon

Hope and Wellness is a complete wellness and salon facility specializing in a variety of services. We are here for your mind, body and spirit to help aid in a healthier and more peaceful way of life. Please come try our gentle care in a warm inviting environment.

Full Service Salon • Reflexology • Massage • Reiki
Make-up • Body Waxing • LCN Gel Enhancements
Aromatherapy • Ion Cleansing • Natural Health Education and Products • Custom Spa Facials • Spa Pedicures and Manicures
Wedding, Prom and Princess Services/Parties - WE WILL TRAVEL

39 Nott Highway (Route 74), Suite 2, Ashford, CT 06278
www.HopeandWellnessOnline.com • 860-477-0994

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HopeAndWellnessCT



Invites You To The 1st Annual



NEIGHBORHOOD FOOD & GARDEN FESTIVAL

Learn how to grow your own salsa garden at the *Thread City Family Garden*, swap seedlings with your local *Garden Club*, discover ways to manage food waste with the *Sustainable Windham Initiative*, and explore your local food resources. Expect to see your favorite local youth, food justice advocates, food vendors, entrepreneurs, and many other valuable community partners!

Bring your mat and enjoy a free outdoor yoga session at noon.





June 9th, 2018
10:00 am – 1:00 pm
@ Philip Lauter Park

