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HIGH SCHOOL NOTEBOOK

Woodstock Academy, Killingly boys', girls' hoopsters continue to impress

BY KEN POWERS
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

WOODSTOCK — The Woodstock Academy boys' basketball team opened the 2021 season splendidly, winning three of the four games it played in a six-day span.

The Centaurs started the season with an 88-63 road win over Windham High on Saturday, Feb. 20. They followed that up with a 62-24 home win over Lyman. WA suffered its only loss of the young season, so far, on Wednesday, Feb. 24, a 67-58 defeat at the hands of host Plainfield High, before rebounding for a 67-36 road victory over Tourtellotte on Friday, Feb. 26.

In the win over the Tigers, seniors Logan Talbot and Dmitrii Zinchenko each scored 16 points, Zinchenko recording half of his total from the free throw line. Talbot scored 24 points and pulled down 13 rebounds in the Centaurs' loss to the Panthers. Zinchenko and junior Ethan Davis each scored 10 points against Plainfield.

Zinchenko led Woodstock Academy in its home win over Lyman, all of his team-high 12 points coming in the first half. Talbot was right behind Zinchenko in the scoring column, with 11 points. A big key to the victory was the fact the Centaurs held the

Bulldogs to a total of nine points in the first three quarters.

In the Centaurs' season-opening win over the host Whippets, Zinchenko scored 18 points, leading the way for the five WA players who scored in double figures. Junior Parker Anderson added 15 points while Davis, Talbot and senior Andrew Johnson all contributed to the win with 13 points each.

The Killingly High boys' basketball team remained undefeated in 2021 with a pair of wins, 63-54 over Plainfield High on Friday, Feb. 26, and 52-33 over Putnam High on Monday, Feb. 22.

In the road win over the Panthers, sophomore Yianni Baribeau led the way, with 22 points, 16 rebounds, and six blocks. Junior Jay Grzysiewicz added 23 points and six assists. Another junior, Jason Simoneau drained a pair of key second-half three pointers to help 4-0 Killingly take the lead for good.

Senior Cole Lavigne turned in a double-double, scoring 15 points and grabbing 10 rebounds in Killingly's home win over 1-2 Putnam. Baribeau chipped into the winning effort with 12 points, eight rebounds, and five blocks. Grzysiewicz added 13 points and nine assists.

Colby Livingston led the Clippers



Photo Courtesy

Woodstock Academy senior Guerin Favreau has scored three goals so far this season. For his efforts he was nominated last week for the Eastern Connecticut Conference (ECC) Athlete of the Week.

with 18 points.

GIRLS' BASKETBALL

Woodstock Academy won three games in a five-day span to improve to 3-1.

The Centaurs finished the week with a stirring 33-32 victory over visiting Tourtellotte High on Friday, Feb. 26, senior Alexa Pechie scoring the final two of her team-high

12 points on a layup with 35 seconds remaining. Junior Aurissa Boardman added eight points.

In WA's 41-26 home win over Plainfield High on Wednesday, Feb. 24, Boardman scored 13 of her game-high 15 points in the first quarter, helping the Centaurs build a 16-4 lead, a lead that would never be seri-

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NDDH coordinates COVID-19 vaccination for school and childcare personnel

BROOKLYN — The Northeast District Department of Health (NDDH), following a directive by the State of Connecticut, is coordinating COVID-19 vaccination for all newly eligible Pre-K through grade 12 school personnel who work onsite with students, as well as licensed childcare professionals in the district during the month of March.

NDDH will partner with Day Kimball Healthcare (DKH) to vaccinate certain schools and collaborate on larger schools if the need arises. The effort incorporates 12 school districts, 41 schools and includes approximately 3,400 eligible individuals. NDDH is also working with over 71 licensed daycare providers to ensure that they have access to vaccine in March. All this happens as a new eligibility phase opens in Connecticut on March 1st to residents and employees within the State of Connecticut who are age 55 and older. Previously eligible phases will also continue to be vaccinated.

Sixteen schools from eight districts, including a first round of EASTCONN personnel will be vaccinated in the first week beginning March 2. Remaining schools are planned for the weeks of March 7 and 14.

"This is an exciting time, and we are so pleased to be

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Paranormal experts explore "Strange New England" in new book

BY JASON BLEAU
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

PUTNAM — New England has a rich history that has made it a hot sport for paranormal activity in the United States. For nearly 40 years, Putnam resident Thomas D'Agostino has worked to uncover the paranormal secrets of the region, as well as other areas of the United States, and has turned his passion into a profession writing numerous books on the subject.

Tom and his wife Arlene, who has assisted him on investigations for around 20 years, have resided in Putnam for 14 years while also taking the time to experience the paranormal offerings of the oldest permanently settled region of the country. In college, Tom D'Agostino's interest in the paranormal evolved from curiosity to genuine intrigue after he stayed in a

hotel for nearly a week experiencing events he could not explain. Since then, he has explored paranormal occurrences in numerous states in the northeast which he says is a fitting hotspot for the paranormal thanks to its connection to countless events in America's history.

"New England is the oldest permanently settled region in the country and there's an awful lot that took place here," D'Agostino said. "It has a very turbulent history and is also part of the glacial system that left behind a lot of underground streams and quartz which act as a natural battery for this kind of paranormal activity."

D'Agostino's latest book, the 16th in a series of books written with his wife, will be called "Strange New England," and

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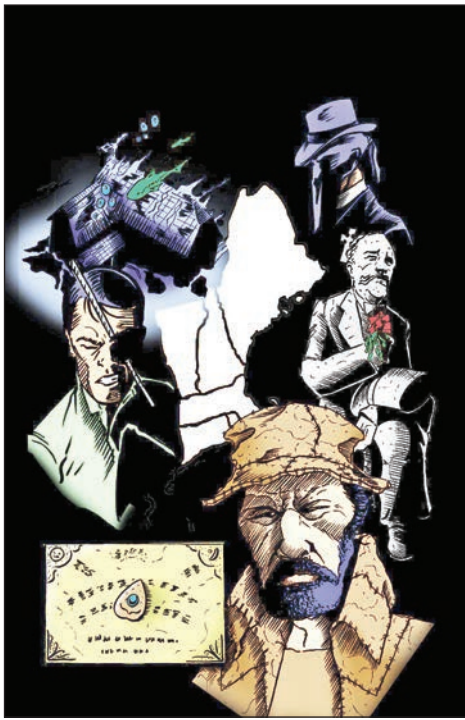


Photo Jason Bleau

The tentative cover art for the upcoming book "Strange New England"

Woodstock Farm sees community connection through CSA program

BY JASON BLEAU
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

WOODSTOCK — The final week of February 2021 was national CSA week, celebrating the countless farms that have embraced the Community Supported Agriculture program, a national initiative geared towards connecting members of communities with their local farms by offering them "shares" in the farm giving them weekly or monthly access to a portion of the farm's product.

Through the month of March, Stonebridge Press will be highlighting several business and farms that offer CSA programs in the region, starting with Woodstock Farms. Located at the corner of Senexet Road and Roseland Park Road, Woodstock Farms is owned by Amy and Rick Vinal and has been a part of Amy's family for most of her life. Amy grew up on a dairy farm in Woodstock on what is now Echo Farm.

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Courtesy Photo

An overhead shot of Woodstock Farm on Senexet Road in Woodstock.

Memories of Felicia Terry



KILLINGLY
AT 300

.....
MARGARET
WEAVER

I'm always happy to hear from readers who say that a column evokes memories from their earlier lives. Donna Coderre of Putnam sent an email that she had thoughts to share about Felicia Terry, and we then had a nice follow-up phone conversation. Donna reminisced that when she was little, about five and a half or six years old, her family lived in Brooklyn not far from where Felicia lived. She recalled Felicia, wearing her long skirts and carrying bags, always would come around the house near lunch or supper time, and in warmer weather they would see her through the screen door. Donna's mother, Madeline Giambattista, always cooked extra food and would often take some out of the refrigerator to send with Felicia. Once Madeline went to pour sour milk down the sink, but Felicia stopped her and said that she would take it home to the cats. As for the cats--Donna said that Felicia would leave windows in her house open so that the cats and chickens could go in and out of the house. Apparently, Felicia believed that a dead person's spirit could be transferred to an animal. One day Donna's mother, by now a widow, was trying to shoo away a black cat while Felicia was there. Felicia said that she shouldn't do that because the cat might have the spirit of her late husband Tony. Apparently, Madeline became quite indignant and said that if he came back, it would never be as a cat; it would be as a horse because he was always down at the Brooklyn Fair Grounds.

Donna noted that Felicia had beautiful handwriting. She also wondered how Felicia would have been able to afford a higher education. (Any suggestions?) Donna thought that it was a "travesty" that a woman with such an education basically ended up getting by through the kindness and generosity of her neighbors. May Felicia's story be a reminder to us to look around and see

who might need our help. There are many who do! Donate to a food pantry or ministry for the homeless. Even if you are not celebrating Lent, let this be a season of trying to make a difference. (Conversation, Feb. 28).

Did you ever play Monopoly when you were growing up? I know I did. Recently Killingly Historical Center archivist Lynn LaBerge showed me a copy of the special edition "custom board game" Brooklynopoly, which had been donated to the Center. Printed in 1989 by Pride Distributors for the East Brooklyn Fire Departments, it shows the names of many businesses in both Brooklyn and Killingly. Remarkably a few are still in existence. How many of these do you recall?

"START-Diversified Real Estate, Inc.--collect \$300; Brooklyn Fire District, Robert Dragon, chairman, Maurice Mailloux, Douglas Gagnon, Paul Boire, tax collector, Ray Wishart, clerk & treasurer; BROOKLYN'S BRAVEST, EAST BROOKLYN FIRE DEPARTMENT, Draw a Card; Johnny's Pizza, 14 Day Street, (Price \$100); ReMax, Robert J. Taney, Wauregan Road (Price \$200); Connecticut Income Tax space-pay \$10% or \$200; Brooklyn Country Club, South Street (Price \$60); Langevin Electric Supply-Plumbing, Electric, Hardware, Route 6 Brooklyn (Price \$150); Jewett City Savings Bank, Brooklyn Branch (Price,\$140); Field Service (Price \$140); at a corner-Quinebaug Valley Emergency Communications, Inc. (no price); Wayne's Barber Shop, South Main Street (Price \$120); Saveway Petroleum (Price \$100); FATE Square; Hank's-Alice's Kitchen (Price \$180); Mortlake Fire Department-Draw a Card; Sigfridson Wood Products (Price \$180); Dziki & Associates Architects (Price \$200); corner-Loading Zone-Danielson Oil (No price); Windham County Agricultural Society-The "Oldest Agricultural Fair in the USA"-Brooklyn Fair (Price \$220); ReMax, Joyce Pomposelli Realtor (Price \$200); Deary's Gymnastic Training Center (Price \$160); E. Osterman Propane-Plainfield (Price \$220); The Racine Company, South Main Street (Price \$240); ReMax, Phyllis A. Charbonneau, Wauregan Road, Danielson (Price \$200); Sorel's Garage Inc., Route 6 (Price \$260); Westside Package Store, 164 South Main Street; Sorel's Auto Body (Price \$280); Crystal Water Co. (Price \$150); Sorel's

Citgo (Price \$260); corner- SPEEDING-GO TO COURT; Anderson, Brennan & Reeves Agency, Inc.-Insurance (Price \$300); The Baker's Dozen, Route 6 (Price \$300); West Wauregan Fire Department; Normandin & Associates, South Main Street, (Price \$320); ReMax, Theresa Skelley, realtor, Wauregan Road (Price \$200); Fleet Bank, Providence Road, Brooklyn (Price \$350); Brooklyn Town Library Association-Donate \$75; Westside Package Store, South Main Street, (Price \$400).

Others business sponsors listed on the game board, who did not have game spaces, included the following: The Ice Box & Ice Box Plus, The Savings Institute, Nieman Farm Gravel, Perform Data, Brooklyn Veterinary Hospital, The Place Restaurant, The Camel's Hump, Danielson Ford, Day Drug, The Head Shop-Family Hairstylist, Constantine's Restaurant, Ed's Service Center, (BGR?) Radiator Shop & Brooklyn General Repair, Inc. What was The Camel's Hump?

Since the Killingly Business Encyclopedia by Natalie L. Coolidge was started for that town's Tercentennial in 2008, it does not contain many of the above mentioned businesses which are located in Brooklyn. It does have numerous listings under Danielson Oil, which was on the Loading Zone Space. Richard D. Banigan filed a certificate of Registration with the Killingly Town Clerk Doing Business As (DBA) on August 9, 1927 and the company was incorporated two years later. The business was located on what was then called Railroad Street (now Commerce Avenue). The 1931 Telephone Book listed a service station, which was "Sinclair Oil for Heat" by the 1937/8Directory. In 1939 it advertised "Auto Body Department, Electric & Acetylene Welding, Complete Stock of Glass", James Hewitt. An extract solicited in November 1953 for the Danielson Centennial stated, "In 1945 Mr. Edward Cunneen, Mr. Norman A. Davignon, and Mr. Deforest Wells, Jr. became officers and stockholders of the Corporation. The company became the distributor of Shell Petroleum products. A modern gravity bulk depot was constructed on Shepard Hill in 1948 and in 1950 a new office was erected on the site of the old Hard Pan Shoe Store. In the fall of 1953 Danielson Oil employed twenty-five persons and had a fleet of

fifteen trucks, The last entries for the business in the Business Encyclopedia were from the 1997-98 SNET Telephone Directory. For a photo of Danielson Oil see "Images of America Killingly Revisited" by Natalie Coolidge, p. 62. For a picture of the Hard Pan Shoe Store see "Images of America Killingly" by Natalie L. Coolidge and Robert A. Spencer, p. 32.

I would be interested in having your memories of any/all of the above businesses to add to the Center's files even if they are in Brooklyn. The Killingly Historical Center has many regional materials. Please email me with your memories. Thank you.

Yeah! It's March, and I'm seeing signs of spring--patches of grass as the snow melts, longer days, even crocus and daffodils poking their beautiful green tips through the ground, and spring training baseball. March is also Women's History Month so next week I thought I'd write a little about a noted female from Northeastern Connecticut. Do you recall what these women did? Mary Dixon Kies, Emeline Jones, Ida Bailey Allen, Hannah Fairman, Anne Hall, Ellen D. Larned, and Gertrude Chandler Warner? Read next week's column for the answers.

The mail and answering machine are being checked on a regular basis although the Killingly Historical and Genealogical Center is closed to the public. Please send an email to the director or leave a message on the answering machine if you would like to donate items or have research questions.

Margaret M. Weaver Killingly Municipal Historian, March, 2021. Special thanks to Lynn LaBerge for showing me Brooklynopoly and to Donna Coderre for sharing her memories. For additional information email me at margaretmweaver@gmail.com or visit the Killingly Historical & Genealogical Center Wed. or Sat. 10-4 (when it reopens) or www.killinglyhistorical.org. or call 860-779-7250 (when the Historical Center reopens). Like us at Facebook at www.facebook.com/killinglyhistoricalsociety. Mail for the Killingly Historical & Genealogical Society, Inc. or the Killingly Historical and Genealogical Center should be sent to PO Box 265, Danielson, Connecticut 06329

Putnam Lions Club accepting scholarship applications

PUTNAM — The Putnam Lions Club is accepting applications for \$1,000 non-renewable scholarships for any graduating high school senior or homeschooled student who is a Putnam

Resident. Deadline for applications is April 1. If you are interested in applying please email deb@chasegraphics.net for the application and instructions.

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VILLAGER ALMANAC

At CT AUDUBON

Bird sightings at the Connecticut Audubon Society Center at Pomfret and Wyndham Land Trust properties for the week of Feb. 22: Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, Raven, Song Sparrow, Bluebird, Flicker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Brown Creeper, Goldfinch, House Finch, Mockingbird, Chickadee, Junco, American Tree Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow. Visit ctaudubon.org/pomfret-home.

READING NEWSPAPERS IS A QUEST LIKE NO OTHER

Eastern reaffirms commitment to climate

WILLIMANTIC — Eastern Connecticut State University has reaffirmed its commitment to meeting the challenges of climate change, reflecting recent moves by the federal government and thousands of environmental leaders nationwide. After the Biden Administration formally rejoined the Paris Climate Agreement on Feb. 19, Eastern has united with thousands of communities and organizations to sign the America Is All In promise, a national effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50 percent by 2030 and reach net zero emissions by 2050.

As a host institution of the 2021 Climate Action Pursuit, kicking off this week from Feb. 24-26, Eastern is a leader among hundreds of colleges and universities that will participate in a series of sessions meant to advance their institutions' climate goals. Led by Second Nature and the Intentional Endowments Network (IEN), three Climate Action Pursuit sessions will follow the February kick off in June, October and December. As a host institution, Eastern has made a formal commitment to participate in the Climate Action Pursuit as a campus cohort with 10 administrative representatives.

"Eastern has been involved with the environmental movement since the first Earth Day in 1970," said Eastern President Elsa Núñez, "and I am proud that our participation continues to this day. Whether focused on campus recycling programs, preparing students for green careers, or providing Connecticut municipalities with sustainability assistance, we are deeply committed to energy conservation, a sustainable environment and a safer, greener world for future generations."

Núñez is the chair of Second Nature's Climate Action Steering Committee, which leads more than 600 member institutions in the Climate Leadership Network (CLN). Led by presidents and chancellors from higher education institutions across the country, the CLN is committed to mobilizing the sector's knowledge and expertise to accelerate global climate action and rapidly reduce carbon pollution and increase resilience to climate hazards.

Following its own example as well as the guidance laid out in the University's Climate Action Plan-which was revised in late 2020-Eastern is well positioned to meet the current and oncoming challenges of climate change. The University has set for itself a more ambitious goal than the one established by America Is All In, pledging to achieve carbon neutrality on campus by 2030, rather than 2050.

"Eastern lies within the Eastern seaboard corridor that runs from Boston to Washington, D.C. - one of the most

densely populated regions in our nation," said Núñez. "By accelerating our carbon neutrality goals, we can support the country's environmental objectives while demonstrating leadership by example."

As outlined in the Climate Action Plan, Eastern's three-pronged approach aims to increase efficiency and lower the carbon footprint of campus operations, nurture a sustainability-minded campus culture for students, faculty and staff, and support sustainability beyond Eastern's borders in communities throughout Connecticut.

As a result of Eastern's enduring commitment to sustainability, the University has reduced greenhouse gas emissions over time and been recognized with a STARS (Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System) silver rating in 2012, 2016, 2019 and 2020; Sierra Club Cool Schools ranking in 2018; and Princeton Review Green College recognition 11 years in a row. Beyond campus, Eastern's Institute for Sustainable Energy (ISE) continues to lead a statewide certification program called Sustainable CT, which supports more than 100 communities in becoming more sustainable, equitable and resilient.

Many strategies have been implemented since the University's first Climate Action Plan in 2009. Among its accomplishments, the University has cut paper consumption by 50 percent; five buildings are certified to LEED Silver Standards; a fuel cell installed in 2012 provides heat and electricity to the Science Building; all residence halls are retrofitted with low-flow shower heads; solar lighting illuminates campus walkways and parking lots; the dining hall reduces food waste with tray-less dining; commuters can charge up at electric vehicle charging stations; a Green Theme housing option allows likeminded students to live and plan events together; and more.

Building on the progress of the past decade, the 2020 revised Climate Action Plan focuses on short-term, intermediate and long-term strategies to be implemented within the current decade to achieve the institutional goal of carbon neutrality by 2030. The strategies fall within the impact categories of operations, campus life, and planning and administration.

Goals in the area of operations include working with vendors to reduce the sale of plastic bottles; further reducing use of paper by setting printers to double-sided printing; reviewing building temperature settings to better reflect occupied/non-occupied hours as well summer/winter outdoor conditions; growing food in the University's greenhouse; implementing composting across campus dining facilities and residence

halls; investing in electric vehicles for campus shuttles; developing a carpooling program for faculty and staff; and utilizing 100 percent renewable energy for all campus needs.

"A sustainable campus encompasses more than reducing greenhouse gas emissions," said Núñez. "It means giving sustainability-minded students the tools they need to enact change on campus and in their lives after they graduate."

Goals in the area of campus life include increasing sustainability literacy by adding requirements to Eastern's Liberal Arts Core (LAC) for all students; adding a session on sustainability to the first-year orientation program; increasing signage across campus about sustainability practices; adding a sustainability committee to the Student Government Association with representation on Eastern's Green Campus Committee; and more.

In the area of planning and management, the University aspires to improve data collection and develop and enforce new sustainability policies. Goals in this area include closely monitoring greenhouse gas emissions data and reporting in collaboration with administrative offices including the Office of Institutional Research, Institute for Sustainable Energy, Center for Sustainability Studies and the Eastern Institute for Data Analytics. Another goal includes developing incentive programs to help departments become greener.

For more on the 2020 Climate Action Plan, visit https://www.easternct.edu/sustainability/easternct_2020_climate_action_plan.pdf. For more on sustainability at Eastern, visit <https://www.easternct.edu/sustainability/index.html>.



ACCURACY WATCH

The *Villager Newspapers* is committed to accuracy in all its news reports. Although numerous safeguards are in place to ensure accurate reporting, mistakes can occur. Confirmed fact errors will be corrected at the top right hand corner of page A3 in a timely manner.

If you find a mistake call (860) 928-1818 or e-mail charlie@villager-newspapers.com.

STRANGE

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chronicles stories the two have heard and collected over the years that explore lesser known or overlooked mysteries and paranormal tales throughout the region.

"This new book contains over 60 stories about different people and events that were part of New England that most people probably wouldn't know about ranging from the very first ghost ever recorded in America which was in Maine to the disappearance of The White Bird in the 1920s," D'Agostino said. "These are stories that we researched, and that people told us over the years. It's been several years in the making."

"Strange New England" will be released on May 31, and will be available through Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and other outlets throughout New England. A complete collection of the D'Agostinos' books can be found by visiting www.tomdagostino.com.

Killingly resident named to Endicott Dean's List

BEVERLY, Mass. — Jared Gosper of Killingly has been named to the Dean's List for the fall semester of 2020 at Endicott College.

Gosper, a senior majoring in Nursing, graduated from Killingly High School in 2017.

POLICE LOGS

Putnam police log

PUTNAM — The Putnam Police Department reports the following arrests.

Elizabeth Foss, age 20, of Putnam was arrested on Feb. 21 for Creating a Public Disturbance and Breach of Peace.

Koil Holder, age 55, of New London was arrested on Feb. 22 for Violation of a Protective Order and Criminal Trespassing.

Shane Beaudreau, age 28, of Rogers was arrested on Feb. 22 for Assault and Disorderly Conduct.

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In the Studio

CYNTHIA SAARI

“In the Studio” is a newer feature for the Villager Newspapers. The Quiet Corner is home to many artists and makers, some of whom have national or international recognition for their work in fine art, handcraft, performing art, art education, and graphic art. In this semi-weekly series, we’ll talk with our artist neighbors and learn about their careers, current projects, and connections to our towns. We’ll also learn some “artspeak” terms in our conversations, demystifying some of those “artist words”.

This week we’re talking with artist and illustrator, Jane Larson.

Thanks for meeting with me for this week’s interview, Jane. Please tell us a bit about your work.

I’m primarily an illustrator, although I have shown some of my oil paintings in galleries. Most of my work has been for advertising, but I also have done editorial and children’s illustration. I’ve done magazine covers and article illustrations working primarily in pen and ink, sometimes colored with gouache and/or watercolor and/or Photoshop. Style-wise, I do both high-level realism and cartoons. When I work in oils, I usually make portraits—these I show in galleries. And at Fort Hill Farms [in Thompson, CT] I did a series of paintings of land-

scapes and flowers. I think my work is still on display there. I always draw by hand rather than on the computer because I prefer that look. Because I use the computer so little, my work tends to have a vintage appearance. I happen to love vintage illustration (pre-1950’s), so I think that this suits me well.

Do you have a few favorite projects you’d like to describe for us?

My favorite projects always feature animals wearing clothes, such as the winning 2009 Woodstock Fair poster. I was a Beatrix Potter fan as a child and hers were the first illustrations I ever copied. I study vintage illustration extensively for ideas, but I also use my background as an Illinois farm girl to invent my own, unique characters. I grew up raising cattle and hogs and showing them at country fairs; to me the animals always had so much personality, no two alike. I try to convey this in my drawings. I also taught myself to draw farm animals from observation, so I’m very familiar with their conformation. (This knowledge snagged me first place in the 4-H county-wide judging contest when I was only 13!) I am currently creating my own little world of animals wearing clothes, centering around a pig named Betty. She always wears overalls.

Do you work directly with authors or publishers as an illustrator?

I’m glad you asked this question. Most aspiring children’s

book writers assume they have to find their own illustrators, but there’s no need unless you intend to self-publish. Publishing companies don’t allow authors to choose their own illustrators. They typically use book designers to create the book’s appearance and to hire the illustrator. Aspiring illustrators can submit portfolios to publishers but must check with the company for submission guidelines. Aspiring illustrators also need to know that they would be wise to have an agent or lawyer look over any illustration contract they’re offered—sometimes contracts are very poor, putting the artist at a disadvantage. This advice also applies to authors.

What would you consider to be one of your most important professional experiences?

A bad contract!

Do you have a general philosophy about making art?

The very first artists were shamans. This is one of the reasons I think art directly connects to human spirituality. As with music, it allows us to express what cannot be expressed with words. It helps us process the great mystery of being and interconnectedness. Visual symbols emerge from the collective unconscious and from our own souls, which is why art therapy can be so effective and healing. In my own case, however, I don’t consider my commercial work to be a product of my soul. I just happen to have the skills for conveying an idea visually. My soul-related artwork includes three decades of automatic drawing, work I rarely show or sell. I do it simply to process feelings. But there is also the work that comes from my heart—this would be my “animals in clothes” series. This work is simply about fun, joy, and the miracle of being alive. This is the work I am most drawn to do now, and I find it the most fulfilling of the three types of artwork I do.

What do you think of the idea of artists as storytellers?

There is always a narrative in visual art, even with the most abstract, minimalist pieces. Although an artist may think his or her work is narrative-free, viewers are usually going to make a narrative about a piece so they can understand its meaning and context. I think this is because of the way the human mind operates. We automatically look for stories, however simple or obscure. For my own work, I think, why not capitalize on that? Why not create work that suggests a narrative the viewer can use as a springboard for their own imagination? This is why I’m so drawn to imaginative illustration, cartooning, and surrealist fine art. I want to inspire viewers to invent their own stories, or at least enjoy mine.



It’s really been fun learning about your work! And I love Betty. Thanks so much. See more of Jane’s art at larson.studio.art

Word of the day: Gouache
A method of painting using opaque pigments ground in water and thickened with a glue-like substance. (Oxford Dictionary)

About the writer: Cynthia Saari (Woodstock, CT) is a nationally recognized flame-work glass artist. She has exhibited her work & taught for over 20 years; her glass beads have been included in numerous publications & invitations. Cynthia offers talks & workshops in the Quiet Corner; she is an adjunct professor of art at a local college.

Creation Church launching new men’s study

CLUES ACROSS

1. One of Noah’s sons

5. Openings

11. Rising from the dead

14. Expressions for humorous effect

15. North American country

18. Flowed over

19. Tags

21. Long-lasting light bulb

23. Off-Broadway theater award

24. Khoikhoi peoples

28. Beloved movie pig

29. South Dakota

30. Tai language

32. Get free of

33. Afflict
35. Transmits genetic information from DNA

36. Commercials

39. Digits

41. Expression of sympathy

42. Bleats

44. Swiss Nobel Peace Prize winner

46. Vegetable

47. Turf

49. Disorganized in character

52. Takes

56. Rules over

58. More fervid

60. Sweet drink

62. Cry loudly

63. A friendly nation

CLUES DOWN

1. A title of respect in India

2. His and __

3. Employee stock ownership plan

4. A type of bond (abbr.)

5. Acting as if you are

6. Affirmative

7. Not caps

8. Type of medication

9. Monetary unit

10. Private school in New York

12. Small stream

13. A person of wealth

16. Exclude

17. Someone who vouches for you

20. Vegetable part

22. Gov’t lawyer

25. Term to address a woman

26. Swiss river

27. About senate

29. __ Paulo, cityr
31. Native American tribe

34. “Titanic” actor

36. Campaign for students’ rights (abbr.)

37. Capital of Senegal

38. Slang for military leader

40. Football’s big game

43. Women who threw themselves on funeral pyres

45. Equally

48. Forest animal

50. Heavy stoves

51. Releasing hormone (abbr.)

53. Song

54. Type of pickle

55. Offer in return for money

57. Soviet Socialist Republic

58. Burns wood (abbr.)

59. Beloved singer Charles

61. Three-toed sloth

PUZZLE SOLUTION

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week, and is open to all men ages 16 and up. Every man will receive a free workbook for the study and admission is free. The study takes place in the newly constructed fellowship hall of Creation Church. All Covid-19 protocols will be in place, such as wearing masks, social distancing and taking temperatures upon entrance. “A Place of New Beginnings,” Creation Church seeks to make a difference in people’s lives by taking the reality of life and the reality of God’s Word and blending the two together. It will begin offering two worship services this coming Sunday at 9 and 10:30 a.m. with their Creation Kids program starting up again at their second service. The church is a non-denominational, Christian church located at 47 W. Thompson Rd. in Thompson. For more information about the men’s study or the church, please call (860) 923-9979 or go online at www.creationchurch.org.

The American Legion — helping veterans for 102 years



Photo Courtesy
Honoring and celebrating those veterans who served their country. The American Legion cares.

DANIELSON — The American Legion was founded in 1919 shortly following World War I as an organiza-

tion committed to supporting veterans and their families. On March 15, the organization will celebrate 102 years of continuous service to those who have served our country during wartime. The original founders based The American Legion on Four Pillars, which still stand today as the foundation of the organization. The Four Pillars are, Care and Rehabilitation of veterans and their families; support of our country's National Defense; Americanism; and Children & Youth. During its 102 years the organization of approximately two-million veterans has never wavered when it comes to the Four Pillars. Today, The American Legion proudly boasts that it processes more than 600 disability claims appeals per month for VA medical benefits for veterans on the local and Department level to its National organization. It is also ready to provide emergency assistance to Legion families when natural disasters such as hurricanes, floods, tornadoes and other disasters strike. Many local Posts are currently involved in "food share" programs for families in need due to the extenuating circumstances from the effects of the novel COVID-19 coronavirus. Some Posts in outlying areas are working closely with local

health groups in sponsoring Covid-19 vaccine clinics. It was The American Legion, following World War II, that lobbied Congress to institute educational benefits for veterans, better known as the GI Bill. The Legion continues lobbying Congress to upgrade and improve the Post-9/11 GI Bill. They also sponsor more than 5,000 American Legion Baseball teams around the country. Northeastern Connecticut is a hotbed of American Legion Baseball. In addition, they encourage intellectual and social growth through such programs as Boys State, Constitutional Oratorical Competition and sponsorship of Scout troops. The American Legion National organization, located in Indianapolis, Indiana, awards college scholarships to children whose mothers and fathers have sacrificed their lives in the global war on terrorism. Almost every local Post and District also provide scholarships to high school seniors and veterans attending college or schools of trade. "As veterans, we're very proud of our long and glorious history. Over the years it's become second nature for veterans to give back to their communities in the form of volunteerism

or sponsorships. Our men and women can be found any place in the community where there's a job or a project to be done," said Ronald P. Coderre, Commander of District #4. According to Coderre, District #4 encompasses all of Windham and Tolland counties. There are 13 Posts strategically located in the District. Posts are located in Putnam, Rockville, Willimantic, Danielson, Stafford Springs, Coventry/Mansfield, Ellington, North Grosvenordale, Moosup, Hebron, Somers, Woodstock and Eastford. Any veteran who has served a minimum of one day of active duty since Dec. 7, 1941 to the current time and was honorably discharged is eligible to join The American Legion. Anyone interested in learning more about The American Legion and local Posts can visit www.ctlegion.org or www.mylegion.org. They can also contact members of local Posts or call Coderre directly at 860-942-7243 or e-mail rpcassociates@snet.net. "Anyone becoming a member of The American Legion will be part of a vibrant organization, an army of volunteers, each one a veteran who served during wartime. These members of The American Legion do it all for free," concluded Coderre.

Kylie Kusnarowis graduates from CCU

CONWAY, S.C. — Coastal Carolina University recognized nearly 700 students during its in-person Fall 2020 commencement ceremony held Friday, Dec. 11, in Brooks Stadium. Among the graduates was Kylie Kusnarowis, a Biology major from Woodstock. Coastal Carolina University is a dynamic, public comprehensive liberal arts institution located in Conway, just minutes from the resort area of Myrtle Beach, S.C. The University offers baccalaureate degrees in 95 major fields of study. Among CCU's graduate-level programs are 27 master's degrees, two educational specialist degrees, and the doctorates in education and in marine science: coastal and marine systems science. The most popular undergraduate


majors are marine science, management, exercise and sport science, communication and psychology. CCU boasts a growing array of internship, research and international opportunities for students, as well as numerous online programs through Coastal Online. More than 10,000 students from across the country and around the world interact with a world-class faculty, and enjoy a nationally competitive NCAA I athletic program, an inspiring cultural calendar, and a tradition of community interaction that is fueled by more than 120 student clubs and organizations. Visit coastal.edu for more information.


FARM

continued from page A1

Her family eventually decided to take a different approach to agriculture and left the dairy business behind for more produce-oriented farming on the farm she now owns today. "This farm has been part of my family's heritage and has been a big part of my life," Amy said. "In the early spring, we have greenhouses where we sell bedding plants, we grow hanging baskets, we grow a lot of vegetables and in mid-June our stand opens with lettuce, strawberries, tomatoes, whatever we have coming in and we're open through October. We don't have really any animals for sale although we do have a few pigs that we raise for our own meat." The farm has participated in the CSA program for around four years with around 70 patrons purchasing CSA shares in 2020 alone. Every farm approached the CSA program differently with some trading product for volunteered hours while others, like Woodstock Farm, take a more traditional approach to shareholding setting prices for different levels that guarantee patrons a fair portion of the produce from the farm. "You can buy a half a share or a full share of the farm. A half share is \$300, and a full share is \$500. What that means is, you pay up front for your share and as the season goes on every week you get a share of what we're picking at the farm," Vinal said. "A half share provides for probably two or three people while a full share is good

for a family. We have a price point that we try to reach every week for the two, but the reality of it is when we have a lot, you're going to get a lot because you're sharing in what we've been able to grow and produce. I'm a proponent of making these shares something that I would like to get so there's a lot of variety to it." Community Supported Agriculture was established more than 25 years ago as a way for farmers to better connect and form a lasting relationship with their consumers. It not only guarantees a solid customer base for the farm, but also provides a dependable source of locally grown food for the customer that they can depend on every week for a single price paid up front. Amy Vinal also sees the CSA program as a great way to enhance the relationship consumers have with their local farms who can provide information on the food they provide that can't be obtained from imported store-bought goods. "I love that people come here every week and could ask us questions about our products and get a connection. Having a connection with your neighbors is such an incredible thing and I feel blessed to live in a community that, especially during COVID, the outpouring of support has been really fabulous," Vinal said. Information about Woodstock Farm can be found on the farm's Facebook page where potential customers can also message the Vinals to learn more about their CSA contract. Details about CSAs can also be found at localharvest.org/csa/.






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Day Kimball Healthcare holds “Warmth & Wellness” Holiday Drive

PUTNAM — Day Kimball Healthcare’s (DKH) fourth annual Warmth & Wellness Holiday Drive collected over 50 cases of personal care and warmth items during the holiday season to benefit those in need across Northeast Connecticut.

“Day Kimball Healthcare has a long history of caring for those in our community,” said Kyle Kramer, chief executive officer, Day Kimball Healthcare. “Our annual Warmth and Wellness holiday drive is an extension of this tradition, and each year gives an incredible boost to the local organizations committed to serving those in need.”

The drive was held throughout December and into the first week of January. DKH employees and the community collected and donated hundreds of much-needed items including various toiletries, blankets, hats and mittens for children and adults.

Donated items were distributed to Thompson Ecumenical Empowerment Group (TEEG), Interfaith Human Services of Putnam’s (IHSP) food pantry and clothing closet, the DKH Family Advocacy Center, and DKH Behavioral Outpatient Services on Thursday, Jan. 28.

“We are so thankful for the DKH Warmth & Wellness Holiday Drive which provides needed items to our



Photo Courtesy

Kristen Willis, Director of Development, Day Kimball Healthcare delivers donated personal care and warmth items to the outpatient behavioral health team at Day Kimball Healthcare.

neighbors in the winter months; items that are not covered in other programs but are necessary to those we serve,” said Anne Miller, executive director,

TEEG. “This is a clear example of the way we work together in Northeast Connecticut to help wherever we can.” “A huge thank you to everyone

who supported this year’s drive,” said Kristen Willis, director of development, Day Kimball Healthcare. “The compassion of our community and our employees, especially during these challenging times we all face, never ceases to astound me. As we made the deliveries to the recipient organizations, it was extremely rewarding to see their gratitude and to know that we helped make a difference in the broader health of the community we serve.”

Since the Warmth & Wellness Holiday Drive began in 2017, more than 180 cases of personal care and warmth items have been collected for local charitable organizations in Northeast Connecticut.

About Day Kimball Healthcare Day Kimball Healthcare is a nonprofit community healthcare system comprised of Day Kimball Hospital, Day Kimball Medical Group, Day Kimball Healthcare At Home, and healthcare centers in Danielson, Dayville, Plainfield, and Putnam. Its service area includes Northeast Connecticut as well as nearby Massachusetts and Rhode Island communities. Day Kimball Healthcare’s comprehensive network offers more than 1,000 staff including nearly 300 associated, highly skilled physicians, surgeons and specialists. Its Web site is www.daykimball.org.

URI students named to the Fall 2020 Dean’s List

KINGSTON, R.I. — The University of Rhode Island is pleased to announce the Fall 2020 Dean’s List. The students represent nearly all of Rhode Island’s cities and towns, all six New England states, New York and New Jersey, and many other states and countries. The following students were named to Dean’s List: Jennifer Burdick of Danielson Moranda Chapman of Brooklyn Cadie Coderre of Moosup Ryan Humphreys of Brooklyn Nicholas Loretto of Danielson Jenna Mccauley of Danielson Zoe Hetrick of Putnam Brandy La Porte of Thompson Hannah Weiss of Thompson Ivan Asikainen of Eastford Katrina Davis of Woodstock

Allison Faist of Woodstock Katie Papp of Eastford Rose Wood of Pomfret Center To be included on the Dean’s List, full-time students must have completed 12 or more credits for letter grades during a semester and achieved at least a 3.30 quality point average. Part-time students qualify with the accumulation of 12 or more credits for letter grades earning at least a 3.30 quality point average. As a public Land Grant University in a highly competitive region in the United States, URI carefully monitors and manages its tuition and fee rates to remain one of the most affordable universities in the Northeast for both in-state and out-of-state students. An

estimated 90% of undergraduate students receive annual financial aid and institutional support The University’s total fall 2020 enrollment of 17,649 students comprises 15,393 full- and part-time undergraduate students, including 748 pharmacy six-year professional practice, and 2,256 full- and part-time graduate students. About 52% of the total student body is from Rhode Island and 48% are from out of state or foreign countries. The student body includes students from 48 U.S. states and territories, and 67 nations. The University of Rhode Island’s pioneering research in ocean, environmental and health sciences extends the University’s influence well beyond its coastal borders, while its interdisci-

plinary courses provide students with unique opportunities and experiences, Over the last ten years, the University has completed more than \$710 million in capital projects, including new construction, and renovation and rehabilitation of existing buildings across its four campuses. The University’s campus locations, include the main campus, located on 1,248 acres in rural Kingston, the Graduate School of Oceanography, located on 165 acres on Narragansett Bay, the W. Alton Jones Campus in West Greenwich, a 1,200-acre nature preserve, the Alan Shawn Feinstein College of Education and Professional Studies and the Rhode Island Nursing Education Center, both in the capital city of Providence, RI.

VACCINATIONS

continued from page A1

able to complete our plans to vaccinate our schools,” commented NDDH Director of Health Sue Starkey. “We began our vaccination

planning months ago. As soon as we learned of the Governor’s announcement on Feb.

22, we developed a comprehensive community school plan within the span of one week.

Thanks to our planning and vaccination teams, Medical Reserve Corps volunteers, and community partnerships, there is a real chance of completing this important initiative by the third week of March. Vaccine supply is the most critical component of our planning and these lofty goals.”

The new Johnson & Johnson vaccine was approved Saturday, Feb. 27, giving vaccine providers a third powerful vaccine option

to vaccinate their communities. If vaccine allocation is delivered as planned, NDDH and DKH will be positioned to administer the two-dose Moderna and one-dose J&J vaccine at school clinics.

NDDH will also continue to serve phase eligible individuals at their Vaccine Administration Management System (VAMS) clinic, held at the Quinebaug Valley Senior Citizens Center, 69 South Main St. in Brooklyn. Appointment-only clinics will be held Tuesday and Wednesday, March 2 & 3, from 1 to 6 p.m. To assist in the community effort from yet another angle, Generations Family Health Center will add general appointment slots in their VAMS scheduling platform to allow NDDH and DKH to focus on the school and childcare vaccination campaign. Vaccine supply is also expanding to retail pharmacies such as Walgreens, CVS, and Walmart.

“To best support the planning effort, we encourage all school and childcare personnel to be vaccinated at their scheduled clinic,” explained NDDH Education and Communications Coordinator Linda Colangelo. “Educators have been extremely patient, and we understand their desire to be vaccinated as soon as possible. At the same time, we are still trying to vaccinate older adults who are most at risk.”

Colangelo went on to explain that having educators vaccinated at their school-based clinics, allows other eligible individuals in the communi-

ty the opportunity to access vaccination at pharmacies, healthcare systems, and VAMS clinic providers. NDDH and DKH will arrive at school clinics with vaccine doses to match the projected numbers of vaccine recipients provided by school officials. If educators seek out other vaccine options ahead of time and then cancel or do not show at their scheduled clinic, it could leave vaccine providers scrambling to prevent the doses from going to waste.

“If you take a public slot at a VAMS clinic or pharmacy, you are taking a dose away from a person who does not have the same opportunity as you do - a guaranteed appointment at your school clinic,” she said. We have all worked hard to make getting vaccinated as efficient as possible for educators and support staff, so we sincerely hope they will partner with us to achieve the best outcomes for everyone.”

“Monday’s new phase opens to upwards of 600,000 individuals, Starkey added. “The message remains the same. Be patient. Wait your turn, then take your turn...and don’t turn your back on what works...wear your mask, watch your distance, wash your hands, avoid gatherings and stay home when you’re sick.”

Vaccination eligibility: <https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/COVID-19-Vaccination--Phases>. Eligibility for educators and childcare: <https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/Coronavirus-Vaccinations---Education-and-Childcare-Eligibility>.

NDDH primary resource for linking people to vaccination options:

<https://www.nddh.org/services/emergency-preparedness/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/covid-19-vaccination/>

SPORTS

continued from page A1

ously challenged. Pechie also scored in double figures, finishing with 10 points.

Boardman was also Woodstock Academy’s leading scorer on Monday, Feb. 22, scoring 16 points in a 46-27 victory over Lyman in Lebanon. Senior Peyton Saracina added 11 points to the winning effort.

The Killingly High girls’ basketball team improved to 4-0 with a pair of wins recently, 49-27 over Plainfield High on Saturday, Feb. 27, and 44-41 over Putnam High on Monday, Feb. 22.

Junior Sophia Moore paced the win over the Panthers with 13 points, four assists and five steals while classmate Emma Carpenter added 12 points and four assists. Freshman Hannah Grudzien continued her impressive varsity career by adding 11 points, 10 rebounds and five steals to the win. Sophomore Ella Lach added seven points and seven steals.

PREP SCHOOL BASKETBALL

It was a tough 24 hours for the Woodstock Academy Gold Team as it dropped a pair of games to South Kent, 85-67 on Saturday, Feb. 20, in Woodstock, and 65-55, Sunday Feb. 21, in Kent.

In the Saturday loss the Centaurs rallied from a 21-point halftime deficit to cut the Cardinals’ lead to eight points, but a complete comeback was not to be. Dominic Strothers led WA with 23 points while Julian Soumaoro added 15, all his points coming in the second half. In Sunday’s loss Dashon Gittens scored 10 points for the 1-2 Centaurs. Soumaoro and Pipe Ajayi each added nine points.

In the same 24-hour period the Woodstock Academy Blue Team won a pair of games against South Kent, defeating the Cardinals, 74-48, in Woodstock and 81-71, in Kent.

In the home win the Centaurs’ Nomar Tejada came off the bench to score all 12 of his points in the first 6-1/2 minutes of the second half to spark WA. Milo Scheve and Kyle Alcy each added 10 points to the winning effort. In the road win Ethan Edwards scored 19 points, Jayden Beloti 17, and Chris DeJesus 10 for the 2-1 Centaurs.

BOYS’ HOCKEY

It was a 1-1 week for Woodstock Academy, the Centaurs defeating the Northeastern Shamrocks Hockey Club, 3-1, on Saturday, Feb. 20, before falling to Suffield/Granby/Windsor Locks (SGWL), 3-1, on Friday, Feb. 26.

Senior Nick Chubbock, with a pair of third-period goals (off assists from junior Zach Girard and senior Alex Wojciechowski) led the way in the win over the Shamrocks, with senior Guerin Favreau, tying the game, 1-1 in the second period with a shorthanded goal. It was the 2-1 Centaurs’ second win in as many nights. Favreau potted his third goal of the season in the loss to SGWL.

GIRLS’ HOCKEY

Junior Sydney Haskins scored two goals and assisted on another while classmate Bella Chaves added a goal and two assists to lead Woodstock Academy to its first win of the season, 6-2, over the Shoreline Sharks in a game played at the Northford Ice Pavilion On Sunday, Feb. 21, 2021. Middle-schoolers Alex Lee, Juliana Buoniconti and Maci Corradi also scored for the 1-1 Centaurs.

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DON'T MISS A THING!

Financial gender gaps persist, but change is happening – here’s why that’s good for everyone

As Vice President at Weiss, Hale and Zahansky, I’m somewhat of a finance industry anomaly – research shows that less than a quarter of senior leadership roles within financial services firms are held by women. That gender gap in the finance industry itself is a reflection of a similar gap in investment and wealth building activities among women in general. Even putting the issue of equity aside, these disparities can have serious consequences. Not just for women, but for the families that they increasingly support at an equal or greater level than their male partners.

The good news is that change is happening, and at a faster rate now than perhaps ever before. But the events of the last year have also heightened many of the existing challenges that women face in building wealth and financial security for themselves and their families.

Here’s what’s important for both women and men to understand about these changes and challenges, and what they can do to push things in the direction of improved equity and financial health for everyone.

Women continue to lag in financial leadership – both in the finance industry and in the household.

Women’s involvement in the finance industry as well as in household finances has no doubt evolved quite a bit over the last several decades. But there’s a



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lot of growing yet to do before equity is achieved. Women may have gotten their foot in the proverbial finance door, but few have taken a seat at the boardroom (or kitchen) table in a position of leadership.

A 2020 report by Cerulli Associates, a research firm focused on the financial services industry, shows that women represent only about 18 percent of all financial advisors. The situation is similar when it comes to personal finances in the household. Other research by Cerulli found that only 28% of women own stocks compared to 44 percent of men.

Societal forces present the major challenge that women face in gaining financial security and leadership – and while some recent events show positive change, others are heightening those challenges even further.

That women continue to lag behind their male counterparts when it comes to finance is the result of many complex reasons, but it’s largely due to the broader gender inequalities that they continue to face.

A woman working full time still earns roughly 81 cents for every dollar that a man earns in the same position, leaving them with less financial security in the present, not to mention less to contribute to retirement savings and other investments for the future. Women are also more likely to leave the workforce to raise children or to care for sick or

aging family members, further lessening their earning power – which even further compounds their savings and investments power over time.

The pandemic has hit women especially hard. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that as of January, 2021, nearly 2.4 million women had exited the workforce since the pandemic began in February, 2020, as compared to 1.8 million men.

When people have less to invest in the first place, they will almost always be much more cautious in their investment decisions in order to protect what they do have. That’s very likely why women tend to be more conservative in their investment choices than men, and in particular much less likely to invest in the more volatile but much higher-yield stock market. All of these factors combine to result in women ending up with less capacity to build wealth.

What’s very interesting and encouraging though, is that when women do choose to enter the stock market, their more cautious and balanced approach tends to earn them better returns over time. In other words, they more often adopt the long-term thinking that forms the foundation of our Plan Well, Invest Well, Live Well™ process here at Weiss, Hale and Zahansky. And that’s a great thing.

The end result will likely be exactly the kind of informed, measured and healthy growth in wealth that should be the end-goal for all of us – and not only women but all of society will benefit. So,

as work continues to address the gender disparities in other areas of life that stunt earnings, women must also feel confident in taking a leadership role in their personal finances.

And, I’m happy to say, there are also many efforts now underway to bring gender equity to leadership in the finance industry as well. I’d encourage all the girls and women out there who are interested in finance to check out organizations like 100 Women in Finance, Women of Wall Street, Fintech in Action and others that are working to increase opportunities and advancement for women in finance. I hope to see more of you with a proverbial seat at the table of finance leadership with me in the years to come!

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POSITIVELY
SPEAKING

GARY W.
MOORE

I’ve written about this several times and in different ways. If I comment on “the beauty of God’s creation,” most will see visions of stunning landscapes and the beauty of the oceans. When I ponder the beauty of God’s creation, my mind goes to my fellow human beings and their kindness.

I understand if you have difficulty going there. All you must do is go to the political opinion columns and talk shows. They’re full of hatred for others whether you are on the left or right. “If you disagree, your spreading hate!” Both sides make the same claim. How sadly absurd.

Most of you know that I’m battling Stage 4 Stomach

Cancer, and wow ... it’s been a roller coaster of a journey. I’m writing you today from my local hospital where I spiked a fever after my recent surgery and was admitted last night.

When I was rushed into the ER, I was surrounded by caring nurses. Because I didn’t get permission, I’ll not use real names. Bill, the triage nurse didn’t ask me who I voted for but instead showed genuine concern. He saw me, my value, and my worth - not by my political party - but because I am simply human. And I saw him - a human. I asked his name and about his family. He seemed grateful.

Bill passed me into a treatment room in the ER where I was quickly met by a Dr. He also saw me not by my political party, but as a human who needed care and attention. He showed genuine concern

and compassion. The subject of climate change never came up, but instead we were two humans who saw value and worth in one another.

I was taken care of by a nurse’s aid named Sam. I found out he’s finishing up his RN certificate and said, “I’m excited to make a difference.” I assured him that he already is ... he paused, smiled, and said thank you. I’m guessing he may be twenty. The last thing I said to him was, “Sam, your parents must be so proud of you.” His face lit up and he said, “I’ll tell them you said so.”

I was then moved to a room on the fifth floor. I make it a point to get everyone’s name, ask them where they were from, and compliment them on something. In return, the care I’ve received has been amazing ... and through it all

there was not a single political discussion, and everyone smiled. Here, we are humans who have value and worth, not predicated by our political affiliation, but simply because we are humans who are created in the image of God.

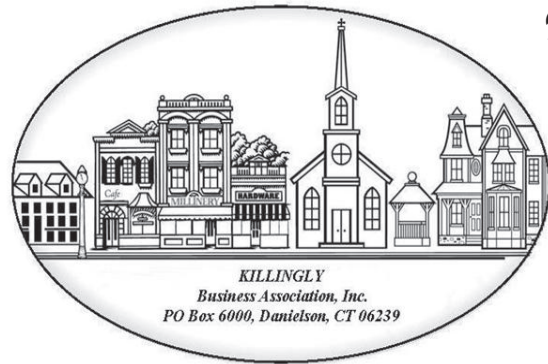
I’ve really enjoyed my time here being kind and receiving kindness in return. I’ve tried to get them to open as I opened myself to them. I’ve experienced the beauty of God’s creation, up close and personal.

In today’s polarized environment, and often behind computer screens, we demonize one another by spewing hateful words simply because someone else voted differently than I did. As one Pastor Andy Stanley once remarked, “You’re scaring the kids!” And for what?

The deeper we dive into God’s creation, the more we

realize, there’s so much we don’t know. And yet, so many act as though they are experts, and the rest of the world is foolish. But what if it isn’t our job to know? What if our purpose is much more significant and even simpler than knowing everything? What if we are fighting over the wrong thing? What if we are missing the mark entirely? Maybe it’s just this simple: we are here to love and be loved. Perhaps one of the greatest reminders comes from Jesus himself, “Love your neighbor as yourself.” I think he was onto something.

Gary W. Moore is a freelance columnist, speaker, and author of three books including the award-winning, critically acclaimed, “Playing with the Enemy.” Follow Gary on Twitter @GaryW Moore721 and at www.garywmoore.com.



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by Ann-Marie

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BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

Reserve your judgment

We see it on Facebook, and other social media accounts — seemingly happy people carrying on about their lives without a care in the world. As we scroll, we tend to pass judgements on what is in reality, a blip in the lives of those who’s photos we are currently looking at. A mere moment that perhaps lasted less than a second is captured, and in that moment, we feel that we are free to make a distinction on what that individual is going through in the moments and days prior, or what they may be feeling like in the moments just after. Don’t do that.

The best way to find out how a friend, co-worker or family member is, is to simply ask them. With the past year being what it was, mental health issues and rates of suicide are sky rocketing. Is this really a time to pass judgement? Or is this an opportunity to lift those up around us and to make sure that we’re all hanging in there?

As humans, some of us can handle any given situation with more grit than others. Some can carry on for just so long until it just becomes too much. Those that have that grit, are those who have the ability to extend their hand, tell someone that they will be ok and that they are not alone. Support for a person overwhelmed, depressed or anxious is paramount to their well being. Sure, it feels good to act tough, and announce that X, Y, or Z doesn’t bother you, but the world is not all about you and it never will be. Be kind, it just feels better.

When a person breaks their leg and can no longer work for a time, they are sent flowers, offered encouraging words of support, given sick time and sent home with casseroles. If a person with a mental health condition takes time off to regroup and to seek the help and therapy that they need to ya know... live...it becomes an issue. Because you can’t SEE the injury. What you might see is a smile that lasted a split second, and you pass judgement — “Oh they aren’t really sick.” Guess what — you are wrong. Make no mistake, we all go through challenging times, but that doesn’t mean that we all handle them in the same way.

Discrimination against a person with any health issue, wether it be physical or mental, is illegal. Furthermore, it is morally wrong. Do we really want to be a society that has stopped supporting one another? We vote no. When we see a neighbor plow the driveway of the house down the street, or three neighbors pulling a strangers car out of a ditch, we are reminded of how at our cores, we are all kind.

Take note — mental illness is not a character defect. There are many reasons a person may develop an issue, wether it’s temporary, brought on by stress, illness or whether it’s genetic. Some anxiety may resurface as an adult, due to childhood trauma. Either way, we don’t know, unless we know.

When people do not understand mental illness, they tend to exhibit prejudice against those who admit they have an issue. Those people are often treated as though they don’t have a real health issue and are then discriminated against. This leads to shame in the person who openly admits that they need help, and so the stigma surrounding mental health is born.

Many workplaces have excellent support systems in place for employees who need help, these to include police and fire departments. These places are to be commended for looking out for one another.

Here are ways to decrease the stigma, be in the know and help your neighbors. Educate yourself, be aware of your attitude towards those who confide in you, pay attention to your judgements and choose your words carefully. When you do educate yourself, spread the word. Treat those around you with respect and offer encouragement, or a slice of pizza; anything goes. We say it often — take care of each other, now more than ever. You will find that it’s easy to be kind.

OPINION

Opinion and commentary from the Quiet Corner

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Best of luck on the other side, Rush

To the Editor:
 Rush Limbaugh — “R.I.P” or “good ride-dance”; it all depends on your perspective. To many people, he was a right-wing folk hero; to many other people, he was a vicious homophobic racist. Doesn’t matter anymore — he’s dead and gone. For those who believe,

he’s now being judged by a much higher authority.
 Best of luck with that, Rush!

TODD PATRIE
 POMFRET CENTER

Eastford selectmen deny citizens an opportunity to speak

To the Editor:
 Monday night, the Eastford Board of Selectmen held their regular monthly meeting. But what was highly irregular about the meeting was that citizens’ comments were omitted from the agenda. Over 20 members of the public were listening in for most of the Zoom meeting. When the selectmen had the opportunity to add citizens’ comment to the agenda, the motion was made to do so by Selectman Ashlyn Ellsworth and seconded by Selectman Jim Trowbridge. The motion did not pass, with First Selectman Jacqueline Dubois and Selectman Jim Trowbridge voting “No.”

The March 1 meeting included discussion of the proposed budgets of the Eastford Board

Limbaugh leaves a sad legacy

To the Editor:
 Ed DeLuca’s remembrance of Rush Limbaugh in your Feb. 26 edition demands a response.

Although I wasn’t a “hater” of Mr. Limbaugh, I often hated what he said and how he said it. I cannot mourn his death. At the same time, I did not wish him, or anyone else, to suffer from cancer or the drug addiction which prompted him to illegally obtain prescription drugs.

But the fact cannot be ignored that our country has been enormously damaged, perhaps irreparably, by Limbaugh’s lies and his often hateful, racist, misogynistic, homophobic and xenophobic diatribes. Perhaps his most damaging lie was repeatedly saying that Joe Biden did not win the election, but the sheer number of his lies is mindboggling.

The state legislature is looking to take away your rights

To the Editor:
 Public education of your kids and the use of land in your town are inherently local matters. By voting in elections, you have a direct say in who represents you as town officials. By voting at town meetings and at budget referenda, you have a direct say in what happens in your town and how your town spends your tax money. This is a time-honored tradition in New England because it has been shown to work. Why fix something that is not broken? You would not want local decision making in your town taken away from you and others who live in your town.

Yet, this is exactly what is being attempted by the state legislature: taking away your rights as a citizen to have a direct say in what happens in your town regarding public education and land use zoning.

This is an effort to transfer local decision making from you to state government, putting things in the hands of people who do not live in your town and who do not know your town. This is not common sense. If these efforts succeed, then they will have a direct impact upon your family and you. Pure and simple, these efforts are a power grab (and a money grab too).

Time and time again, state government thinks it knows better than you what you should do and what your town should do. State dictates that are a one-size fits all approach to doing things have been shown to be like trying to pound a square peg into a round hole. They do not work. They create unintended consequences. They lead to frustration (especially if your town is getting hammered in the process).

The unfunded state mandates associated with these efforts have to be paid. Your town uses the property tax mill rate to pay the tab. Hard working people like you and job-creating small businesses that employ people like you pay these taxes. At the same time that the state legislature is taking steps to increase your taxes and to make your town divert some of its tax money to the cities, it is taking steps to disenfranchise you from having a direct say in what your town does and how it spends your tax money. This is not common sense.

Public education is important. Reasonable and lawful use of land is important. The legislature needs to look at the underlying problems of why some school districts are under-performing despite being given large sums of money in education grants each year.

of Education and the Eastford Independent Fire Company.

By omitting citizen comments from the agenda and refusing to add them, two of the Eastford selectmen sent a strong message that they were not interested in hearing what the public had to say about these proposed budgets as well as other topics discussed during the meeting.

I served on the Eastford Board of Selectmen for over a decade. I cannot remember another time when the Selectmen did not provide an opportunity for public comment during their regular meetings.”

TERRY COTE
 EASTFORD

Dittoheads who totally agreed with Limbaugh and stood behind him unquestionably are neither “conservative” nor “open-minded.” Instead of using his considerable talent to make well-reasoned arguments for his political positions, he preferred to entertain his listeners with lies and insults. That he enjoyed such a large audience is a sad commentary on contemporary American politics.

But Limbaugh acolytes need not worry about the void he leaves. Hate radio will likely continue to have a large following; a considerable segment of the American population prefers that sort of entertainment to serious consideration of authentically conservative ideas.

BILLY G. TAYLOR
 KILLINGLY

The legislature needs to look at why the cities are expensive places to live and to work in, making things unaffordable for hard working people. Until then, addressing these problems by blaming Connecticut’s towns and the people who live in towns like your is no solution at all.

What needs to be done is to look seriously at the state economy and how state government spends your tax dollars. There must be strategic decisions made about supporting local businesses, smart investments done in public education programs, and help collaborated with and for municipalities (and holding them accountable when they make bad decisions – especially not bailing them out when they make very bad decisions, like what was done for Hartford). The real reform that needs to be done is a reimagined way of doing things in state government and a realignment of how tax money is spent. An improved and sustainable economy can provide people with good jobs. A strong public education system can provide people with skills and knowledge to seek these good jobs. It is a symbiotic relationship that helps build up both. More people can afford the housing to live, work, and raise families in Connecticut, including in the cities. The economy and what it creates provides solid revenue to Connecticut’s towns, cities and state government without a reflex to increase and expand taxes that dampen the economy. Connecticut needs to look at what other states have succeeded in doing and acknowledge what it has done itself that has failed. Connecticut must look to what towns like yours have been doing using common sense and fiscal responsibility, with your say in what happens, to provide public services without big tax increases.

The problems being faced in Connecticut are not ones that your towns have caused or that you have created. Taking away your voice in determining what is best for your community cannot solve these problems. These times call for your voice to be heard as big decisions are being made. These times call for us to continue to work together for our communities. Let your legislators know that you do not want state government taking away your local control of public education and zoning in your town. Otherwise, it will be too late and your rights will be gone.

JEFFREY A. GORDON
 WOODSTOCK

Hiraeth and renewal

March 1 is St. David’s Day, the patron saint of Welsh people. I’m half Welsh, and for about three decades, I’ve given a party either on or near the 1st of March. Some years, the snow was deep and we had to plow the field for parking. Recently, it was so warm that we moved the bar outside and people stood around in sunshine. No matter the weather, we forged ahead, determined to keep up a tradition that had become important to our family and quite a few others.

Last year, we cancelled after friends and our daughters urged me to pay attention to the warnings about COVID. I had sent out invitations, ordered food and baked goods from Phyllis’s Bakery and lined up cases of leeks at Stop& Shop. Several florists were ordering daffodils. I really wanted to have the party, but I listened to reason. Our traditional celebration could have been a

super spreader event if one person had been infected. A year later, I heave a sigh that while two years will pass without our gathering, the future looks promising.

My paternal grandparents came from Wales at the end of the 19th century. My grandfather was a slate worker in Vermont. Later his parents and brothers followed him and remained in Fair Haven, where they are buried in a Welsh cemetery. My grandfather, handsome, charming and a good amateur musician, according to all accounts, married my grandmother, who was sent to Vermont to stay with her grandfather, a geologist. She came from a prosperous background and later inherited property in Pomfret, where they lived. They had one child, my father.

Everyone has his or her own ancestry story, and mine is as accurate or inaccurate as most. My grandparents were older when my father was born, and the same is true for me. Long years between generations makes every story foggy. There were trunks of letters in the attic, but most were tossed out. Several Welsh Bibles and my grandmother’s collections offer a glimpse of who they were and what they valued: Psalms and pressed seaweed.

Both of my parents had died by the time I was in my mid-20s. In my 30s, I began putting daffodils in the church on the Sunday nearest March 1 in their memory. In a few years, I had a pile of Welsh recipes, a good reason to have a party and a perfect way to welcome spring. A new tradition began.

Always held on a Sunday afternoon so families could come, the party featured as many daffodils as I could find and well as branches of forsythia, and pussy willows. Friends brought witch hazel, bouquets of spring flowers and dishes to share. I served Welsh rarebit, leeks au gratin, ham cooked in cider and Welsh cakes. Cecelia Bray tended bar and friends, Gail, Tim and James made the parties run smoothly. I’m sharing the details because I believe the past year of isolation has taught us many things, but key among them is the importance of traditions. Out of loneliness, I created an annual event that brought people together to celebrate spring and enjoy each other.

There’s a word in Welsh, hiraeth, that means nostalgia, even for a place that may never have existed. We’ve been through a great deal this past year. Let’s enjoy the traditions of our families, or create some new ones. Soon they will become the foundations of memories. Welsh food is simple, but add the scent of daffodils, spring weather, old and new friends and mix together for a sense of renewal.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Voter fraud claims aren’t fooling anyone

To the Editor:
Back on Nov. 13, 2020, William Hull wrote the Editor of this newspaper insisting that “Democrats caused this mess [presumably the delayed election result], which has been further compounded by outright cheating in Democratic controlled cities such as Chicago and Philadelphia.” He cited “cheating by back dating ballots, ignoring signature mismatches, and in Wayne County Michigan, tens of thousands of 100 percent Biden ballots suddenly being dumped on the counter at 4:30 a.m. the day after voting.” Mr. Hull offered no evidence for these claims initially, and subsequently ignored requests from fellow letter writers for evidence. The Trump campaign and others filed 86 lawsuits contesting election processes, vote counting, and the vote certification process in Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. Virtually none of them succeeded, and absolutely no evidence of significant voter fraud was found. Many of the judges involved took pains to point out the “frivolous” nature of these lawsuits. Since then, a few things have happened. On Jan. 6, a rabid mob, driven to fever pitch by the President himself, many members of the Republican party, a number of Senators and Congresspeople, and such familiar faces as Rudy Giuliani and Roger Stone, and attempted a coup (or technically, an autocoup), killing five people in the process and desecrating the Capitol building to the tune of well over \$30 million. On Feb. 22, the United States announced the 500,000th coronavirus death, along with at least 28 million people who have been infected. And two winter storms, of the sort we are seeing more of due to climate change, knocked out power to 4.5 million homes and businesses in Texas, primarily due to frozen natural gas lines and instruments, and the fact that Texas is not connected to the two major US electrical grids. But, ignoring those events, 105 days after his first letter on the subject, Mr. Hull chose a return to the topic: “The election has been over for nearly four months now. Biden is our President. Nevertheless, there are 75 million people out there who did not vote for Biden. Many, if not most of these people, feel the election was somehow stolen. However, they did not and do not have sufficient rock solid proof to base their stolen election claim on. Still, their faith in the integrity of our election system has reached a new low.” “What, then, are we to do as a nation to heal this unease and restore faith and creditability(sic) in our election process for all voters?” What? You got to be kiddin’ me! Talk about snowflakes! Yeah, 75 million

did not vote for Biden...but 80 million did. That’s called an election. And they “feel” the election was stolen? What’s that thing about “feelings” that you see on Republican bumper stickers and signs? Either it was stolen or it wasn’t. And it wasn’t — at least according to 86 lawsuits and 80 million votes. “Their faith in the election has reached a new low.” Could Laura or Sean or Jr. have anything to do with that? It’d be sort of like if, in the 2013 World Series, Cardinals’ fans, after seeing their team lose four games to two, complained about how balls and strikes were being called and MLB were to mandate ophthalmologist eye exams for umpires before each game — so that “fan faith in the umpires” would be restored. But, the Republicans and Mr. Hull aren’t fooling anyone. Republicans were fine with mail-in voting when it was used to get their voters’ ballots counted. It’s not so fine when it brings out voters in Atlanta, Milwaukee, Detroit, Philadelphia, and Chicago. Once again, Paul Weyrich, co-founder of the Heritage Foundation, Moral Majority, and multiple other right-wing organizations said it best: “Now many of our Christians have what I call goo-goo syndrome — good government. They want everyone to vote. Elections are not won by a majority of the people, they never have been from the beginning of the country and they are not now. As a matter of fact, our leverage in the elections quite candidly goes up as the voting populace goes down.” That’s all this is about and Mr. Hull isn’t fooling anyone. He describes spending at least \$220, filling out a bunch of stuff online, and driving to Willimantic to renew his CDL license (?from Pomfret) implying that a similar rigorous process should be applied to citizens living in big cities (a.k.a. the “inner city;” a.k.a.) So, what would Mr. Hull suggest that an 85 y/o widow living alone on Social Security in an apartment in North Philadelphia do? She has a quad cane, doesn’t drive, last voted in 2008? She’s got all her buttons but doesn’t have much money. Would Mr. Hull eliminate all early voting on Sundays? Would he get rid of mail-in voting? Would he purge from the rolls someone who hasn’t voted in the last two presidential elections? How far would she have to go to vote? I don’t think many people (Republican or Democrat) are fooled by the stated motivation behind the “voter fraud” push; it is just voter suppression pure and simple. It has a nasty history. We should want nothing to do with it.

JOHN A. DAY, JR
WOODSTOCK VALLEY

In response to Bill Hull

To the Editor:
Interesting letter from you in the Feb. 26 Woodstock Villager. Let’s take a few minutes to dissect it and see what it really means.
“Biden is our President.” Good for you to acknowledge this fact. Thank you!
“Many...feel that the election was somehow stolen...” A perpetuation of The Big Lie. This is not helpful to our community, nor our nation. There is no evidence of any significant fraud, and it is time to stop pushing this notion. In the words of the late, great Daniel Patrick Moynihan, “You are entitled to your own opinions but you are not entitled to your own facts.”
“I believe we need to tighten up the voter process similar to many other things... My recent experience renewing my CDL...” Bill, there really is no equivalency between renewing a driver’s license and registering to vote and casting a ballot.
“...proof of legal residence in the United States...” Legal residence is not the same as citizenship; the note that you used your passport is disingenuous at best. There are many people who are citizens of the US who do not have passports.
“...all of which remains in the DMZ record...” Good point. We will return that that later.
“...provide a valid medical certificate...” Again, no equivalency with voter registration and casting a ballot. Anyone who drives a large truck (or pilots an airplane) had better be in good physical condition for the safety of others.
You have now spent six column inches telling us how to obtain a CDL (full disclosure, I have been through the same process, sans passport, for the same reason). Again, no equivalency to voting.
“...This can lead to multiple registrations by the same individual...” See point 5 above. State voter registrations are maintained in a database. It is nearly impossible to register twice. Furthermore, once a person votes, they are effectively shout out from voting again. Mail-in ballots are bar coded with the voter’s information. Think of this the same way you would a concert ticket that you obtain online. When you present that ticket to the theater and it is scanned, that bar code is no longer valid. Any copies of that online ticket are automatically rendered invalid.
“...as well as non-citizens...” States have permission to use a federal resource of data, called the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements, or SAVE, for the purposes of verifying that voter registration applicants are citizens. Implemented in 1987 and administered by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, SAVE was originally intended to verify eligibility for government benefits, such as Medicaid. SAVE is not a database of people who are U.S. citizens, but it will show a person’s immigration or citizenship status. Furthermore, any non-citizen who later applies for US citizenship will be subjected to a background check which includes a history

of their voting record. If it is shown that they voted illegally, their application for citizenship will be denied and they will be deported. That’s a pretty strong deterrent.
“Clean up the voter rolls.” This notion is abused in several states - especially in the south, purging voters who have not voted in several cycles or do not respond to queries from the election boards. This is also known as disenfranchisement, sort of the opposite of automatic voter registration.
“Limit mail in ballots” First of all, thank you Bill for not going down the Absentee vs. mail-in ballot rabbit hole. They are one and the same. There are currently five states that vote exclusively via mail-in ballots: Colorado, Hawaii, Oregon, Utah, Washington. This has been the case for years with no reports of any significant anomalies. Furthermore, limiting the ability to utilize mail-in balloting will effectively disenfranchise hundreds of thousands of voters who cannot get to the polls. The ill and infirm, the poor who do not have reliable transportation or who cannot take the time off from work, those who are immune-compromised and don’t want to face the random person who will not wear a mask at the polling place because of his political affiliation, those who live in rural communities or on reservations and cannot drive to the polls (more on that later), and so forth.
“Ban vote harvesting” We need to be careful how we define this term. Vote harvesting (technically ‘Ballot Harvesting’) has two different meanings. A person scooping up ballots, filling them out and then submitting them is indeed breaking the law. This has happened, but rarely. One instance that comes to mind was in North Carolina when Leslie McCrae Dowless Jr., was accused of directing workers to collect and mail in other people’s absentee ballots during the 2018 Republican congressional primary and the 2016 general election. It is notable that he was indicted for that – an indication that our system of monitoring voter fraud actually works. The other use of ‘Vote/Ballot Harvesting’ involves communities who appoint one person to collect everyone’s completed, sealed ballots to deliver to the nearest drop box, which may be many miles away. Indigenous communities are very reliant on this approach as are rural communities in general.
Bill, I appreciate your concerns, but we need to be careful that we don’t try to enact measures without fully understanding the potential ramifications. A little research will reveal that there is in fact very little actual voting fraud that occurs in this nation. This is not to say that it doesn’t ever occur and that we shouldn’t be vigilant in protecting our democracy, but in the interest of equity we should not engage in the potential wholesale disenfranchisement of wide swaths of voters.
BRUCE P. SHAY
POMFRET CENTER

Grow an earlier and more abundant tomato harvest



GARDEN
MOMENTS
.....
MELINDA
MYERS

Be the first in your neighborhood to enjoy a garden-ripe tomato. Then continue harvesting an abundance of flavorful tomatoes throughout the growing season. A little planning and strategic planting can help you get an earlier and bigger tomato harvest.
Jumpstart the season by warming the soil for an earlier start. Cover the planting space with a floating row cover, clear plastic or a cloche. Once the soil is warm, you are ready to plant your tomatoes. Use the row cover or cloche to protect your plants when cold temperatures or frost is in the forecast. You will get a two- to four-week jump start to the season.
Further shorten the time to harvest by planting an early ripening tomato like Early Girl, Fourth of July, and Quick Pick. Check the catalog description or plant tags for the number of

days the tomato variety needs to reach maturity. Growing these or others that require fewer days between planting and harvesting means you’ll be enjoying fresh tomatoes sooner.
Train at least one of your tomato plants onto a stake for an earlier harvest. Loosely tie one or two stems to a tall stake. Continue securing the stems throughout the season as the plant grows. Remove the suckers, the small branches that form between the main stem and leaf, as they appear. You’ll have fewer fruit, but they will be ready to harvest sooner than those caged or grown sprawled on the ground.
Staking also saves space and helps reduce the risk of disease. If staking seems like too much effort, grow your tomatoes in cages. Use tall, sturdy cages for larger indeterminate tomatoes that grow, flower, and produce fruit until frost. Caging tomatoes also increases airflow and light penetration for greater yields and fewer pest problems.
Save even more space while bringing the harvest to your kitchen door, balcony, or window box with compact tomato varieties, like Patio Choice Yellow Sweet and Neat or Tumbling Tom. Plant one in a 10-inch pot or grow several in a larger container. You’ll have a large crop of bite-sized tomatoes in about two

months.
To improve the quality of your harvest, choose disease- and crack-resisting varieties. Cooks and canners will love Early Resilience Roma-type tomato. It is resistant to late blight, blossom end rot and several other common tomato diseases. This determinate tomato plant only grows two feet tall, so will not need staking. It is great for containers, small spaces, and traditional vegetable gardens. Reducing the risk of disease means a bigger harvest with less effort on your part.
Further reduce your workload and increase your success with mulch. Spread a two-inch layer of shredded leaves, weed-free straw, or evergreen needles over the soil surface around your plants. You will conserve water, suppress weeds, and improve the soil as the mulch decomposes.
With a little planning you will be ready to enjoy an early and bountiful harvest of tasty tomatoes from this season’s garden.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including Small Space Gardening. She hosts The Great Courses “How to Grow Anything” DVD series and the nationally-syndicated Melinda’s Garden Moment TV &



All-America Selections – Courtesy Photo
All-America Selections winner Patio Choice Yellow Sweet is a compact tomato variety perfect for containers, patios or balconies.
radio program. Myers is also a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine. Her Web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.

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*Community Kitchen in Woodstock celebrates
sixth anniversary*

WOODSTOCK — The Community Kitchen at the First Congregational Church of Woodstock celebrated its sixth anniversary Monday by distributing a record 154 meals, 54 bags of assorted groceries, 40 bags of produce as well as donated baked goods.

Since opening in March 2015, the FCCW site has served a total of 22,993 meals.

“This past year, in response to the coronavirus pandemic, we have been forced to become a drive-thru meal and food distribution operation,” said site coordinator Bob Kirk. “For our first five years, we would serve our guests in-person downstairs in our dining area. We would visit with one another, play bingo, tell jokes and sing songs together before serving a hot meal at noontime. All that has had to change, of course, because of the pandemic.”

Volunteers distribute free meals and food stuffs every Monday from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. from a blue pop-up tent on the church's parking area. Cars line up along Cemetery Road as they wait to be served.

Site coordinators Kirk and Bruce Lyman stressed the collaborative nature of their Community Kitchen. FCCW partners with East Woodstock Congregational Church, South Woodstock Baptist Church, and Christ Church in Pomfret, each church preparing the meal one Monday

a month, with Pomfret Congregational Church preparing the meal on fifth Mondays. Soleil & Suns Bakery, Putnam Stop & Shop and Price Chopper donate baked goods, and Big Y in Danielson donates fresh produce. The nonprofit Community Kitchen of Northeastern Connecticut, Inc. provides food for meals and distribution, which comes from the Connecticut Food Bank/Foodshare.

“For six years, our Community Kitchen has been a way for neighbors to help neighbors in the most basic ways,” commented Rev. Kevin Downer, pastor of FCCW. “Through practical assistance and simple gestures of kindness, our guests are reminded that no one is alone, that people in our community care—which is a hopeful sign in these challenging and divided times.”

In addition to the Monday meal at the FCCW, Community Kitchen of Northeastern Connecticut, Inc. also distributes meals and food on Tuesday at Central Village Congregational Church, Wednesday at the United Methodist Church in Danielson, and Friday at the Moosup United Methodist Church. All meals are free and everyone is welcome. Donations can be made by visiting their Web site at <https://www.communitykitchensnect.org>.



Photo Courtesy

Volunteers load free meals and bags of food into cars at the Community Kitchen at the First Congregational Church of Woodstock every Monday from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Thompson man sentenced for kidnap and assault of Massachusetts girl

THOMPSON — Leonard C. Boyle, Acting United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut, announced that Joshua Besaw, 37, of Thompson was sentenced earlier this week by U.S. District Judge Michael P. Shea in Hartford to 240 months of imprisonment, followed by 20 years of supervised release, for kidnapping and sexually assaulting a 12-year-old girl.

According to court documents and statements made in court, on May 31, 2019, Besaw encountered a 12-year-old girl (“minor victim”) at a park in Webster and tricked the minor victim into entering his vehicle. Besaw, who identified himself as “Chuck,” then drove the minor victim to a wooded area in Thompson, where he sexually assaulted her. After the assault, Besaw drove the minor victim back

to Massachusetts, where he released her in a neighborhood that was unfamiliar to her and refused to return her cellphone. The minor victim then borrowed a phone from a stranger to contact her parents, who picked her up and brought her to the police station to report the incident. Later that day, a sexual assault examination of the victim was conducted at a medical facility.

Besaw was identified as a suspect after an extensive investigation led by Webster Police with support from the Connecticut State Police, which included analysis of surveillance video collected from numerous residences and businesses in Connecticut and Massachusetts.

On July 10, 2019, investigators conducting surveillance of Besaw collected cigarette butts that Besaw had discarded. The

DNA evidence collected from the discarded cigarette butts matched DNA evidence collected from the minor victim on May 31, 2019.

Besaw was arrested on July 17, 2019. He pleaded guilty on March 13, 2020.

Besaw has been detained since his arrest.

This matter was investigated by the Webster Police Department, Connecticut State Police and Federal Bureau of Investigation, with the assistance of the Massachusetts State Police Crime Laboratory. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Nancy V. Gifford.

Acting U.S. Boyle thanked the Windham State's Attorney's Office for its cooperation in the investigation and prosecution of this case.

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OBITUARIES

David R. Cutler, 76

NORTH GROSVENORDALE— David R. Cutler, 76, of Buckley Hill Rd., died Saturday morning, February 27, 2021 at home. He was the loving husband of Linda (Simpson) Cutler. Born in Putnam, he was the son of the late Raymond and Rita (Roy) Cutler, Sr.

Mr. Cutler was a graduate of the H. Ellis Technical High School. On March 4, 1967, in Putnam, he was united in marriage to the former Linda Simpson.

Mr. Cutler worked as a tool and die maker for the H. T. Machine Company in Webster, MA for many years.

He enjoyed riding his motorcycle, gardening, and was an avid outdoorsman.

David is survived by his wife of fifty-three years, Linda (Simpson) Cutler of N. Grosvenordale; his children,



David R. Cutler, II of N. Grosvenordale, Dawn Marie Pedchenko and her husband Timothy of Chepachet, RI. Angela A. McWilliams and her husband Arthur of FL, and Christina Marie Rybacki of Putnam; his siblings, Raymond Cutler, Jr. and his wife Deborah of Pomfret, Joanne R. Mortellite of Largo, FL, Anita L. Cutler of Pomfret, and Susan M. Rhodes and her husband Jerry of Colorado Springs, CO; his five grandchildren, Kaitlyn, Brianne, Taryn, Ashley, and Amber; his four great grandchildren, William, Blake, Adalynn, and Courtney; and several nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his siblings, Russell E. Cutler and Elaine T. Auger.

Funeral services are private and have been entrusted to the Gilman Funeral Home & Crematory, 104 Church St., Putnam, CT 06260. For memorial guestbook visit www.GilmanAndValade.com.

Irene F. Espinosa, 94

Irene F. Espinosa, 94, of Brooklyn died Wednesday, February 24, 2021 at Davis Place in Danielson. She was the beloved wife of the late George Espinosa, he died in 1995.

Irene was born on November 10, 1926 in East Killingly, daughter of the late George and Lila (Mathewson) Boucher.

She was a dedicated and loving mother raising four children. Irene loved Celtic music and enjoyed watching performances of Celtic music on tv.

She leaves her daughters; Dale Larson and her husband William of Brooklyn, Sandra Simmons and her husband



Bruce of Brooklyn, grandchildren; Tammy Day, Bruce Simmons, Jr., Brian Larson, Paul Larson, Carrie Gancarz, great-grandchildren; Kimberly Day, John Day, Jailyn Gancarz, Jason Gancarz, Jr., Brendon Larson, Bradley Larson, Jasmine Larson, Corey Larson, Konnor Larson, and many nieces and nephews. Irene was predeceased by two sons; Robert Espinosa, Michael Espinosa, siblings; Joyce Mercer, Helen Steele and George Boucher, Jr.

A graveside service was Monday, March 1, 2021 in Holy Cross Cemetery, Maple Street, Danielson, CT, servicers entrusted to Gagnon and Costello Funeral Home, 33 Reynolds Street, Danielson, CT. Share a memory at www.gagnonandcostellofh.com

Richard H. Erskine, 61



Richard H. Erskine, 61, of Danielson, Ct. passed away on January 23, 2021 at Day Kimball Hospital in Putnam Ct.

Richard was born in Putnam, Ct. on February 2, 1959. Son of the late Reginald and Gertrude (Currier) Erskine. Richard

is survived by his daughters Christina Erskine and Jessica Erskine, his broth-

er Herbert and Karen (Kramer) Erskine, his grandchildren Noah Curtis, Jacob Longe, Adam Amine and Sarah St.Jean and also many nieces and nephews. He is predeceased by his brothers Albert, Reginald, Edward and William and his sisters Helen Welch and Pauline Russell.

Richard most recently worked at Frito Lay for many years. He always enjoyed fishing and hunting.

Private services will be held at a later date.

Paul Barrows, 70

Paul R. Barrows passed away peacefully at the age of 70 on February 25, 2021 in his home. Originally from Danielson, CT, Paulie relocated to Tarpon Springs to enjoy all that Florida had to offer in retirement. Prior to retirement, Paul worked as a surveyor for the IUOE Local 478 for over 25 years among his many union brothers including his son, Shawn, brother, Ronnie, nephew, Christopher, and dear friend, Robert Avery.

In life, Paul enjoyed coaching and umpiring youth sports as his children and grandchildren grew. He took great pleasure in his children's and grandchildren's extracurricular activities supporting them from the sidelines, never missing a game. He was always up for a round of golf and was an avid pool player competing in numerous leagues.

Paul brought a good time to any party with his quick wit and larger than life personality. He contained a lot of life in a small package, often referred to as "Troll Man" for his short stature.

In his later years Paul's health began to decline, but he still found joy in the simple pleasures of muscle cars and motorcycles, incredibly proud of both his Dodge Challenger and Harley.

Though divorced, Paul leaves behind his good friend and companion, Mary Barrows of Inverness. Paul is survived by his children, René Cummings and her husband David of Danielson, Shawn Barrows of Inverness, and Jenna Demers and her husband John of Woodstock, CT. Additionally, Paul is survived by his four grandchildren Hailey and Nicolas Cummings both of Danielson, Zachary Cummings of Inverness and Harrison Demers of Woodstock, great grandchild, Elena Cummings, of Inverness, his stepfather, Frank Warren, of Tarpon Springs, and his brothers, Ronnie Barrows, of Bonita Springs, FL, Mark and Jay Barrows, of Killingly, CT.

Paul is predeceased by his mother, Jeanette Warren, of Tarpon Springs, and his brothers, David, Bruce and Scott Barrows.

A memorial service will be planned at a later date in conjunction with a bike run in "Pappy's" honor.



Gail S. McElroy, 85

POMFRET— Gail (Sutherland) McElroy, 85, of Blossom Dr., passed unexpectedly on January 14, 2021 at Day Kimball Hospital, a month shy of her 86th birthday. Born in West Roxbury, MA, the daughter of the late John and Sarah (Cameron) Sutherland, one of seven children.

She left the Boston suburb with her childhood sweetheart, love of her life, and, husband of 59 years, Robert McElroy.

They relocated to Pomfret to be near family. After arriving, Gail immediately got involved in the Pomfret Senior Association, Pomfret Democratic Town Committee, & recently, Quiet Corner Shouts. She worked for many years bookkeeping at the Learning Clinic in Pomfret. Small in stature, Gail never let that get in the way of her expressing her strongly held opinions, especially, politics. Gail was recognized in 2018 with a citation from Governor Malloy for her commitment and service to her community and Town Committee. No election passed that she was not engaged by letter writing, phone banking, envelope stuffing, or driving candidates, door to door.

Gail loved to bring people together, cook elegant meals, and entertain friends and family from near and far. Any occasion with Gail in attendance was enriched by her presence and posi-

tive personality.

Gail was predeceased by her husband Bob six years ago when her heart was broken. Life without Bob was lacking the spark that made life so meaningful. Gail missed him dearly.

Gail's survived by her sons, Kevin McElroy (Lynell) of Danbury, and Kenneth McElroy of Pomfret; sisters, Linda Witkowski and Pamela Soucy both of Farmington; her brothers-in-law; John McElroy, Richard McElroy, and grandchildren; Caitlin Moore, Kelly Jean McElroy, Jonathan Sakolsky, and Russell Sakolsky. She was predeceased by her siblings; Robert Sutherland, Jay Sutherland, Patricia Bringham, and Joan Chesney.

A celebration of life, along with visitation and Mass of Christian Burial, held at a later date when it is safe for family, friends, and acquaintances to come together and celebrate Gail.

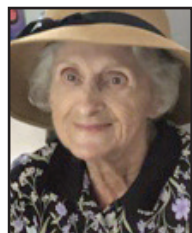
Arrangements have been entrusted to the Gilman Funeral Home & Crematory, 104 Church St., Putnam, CT. For memorial guestbook visit www.GilmanAndValade.com.

Donations may be made in Gail's honor to NAMI Windham County (National Alliance on Mental Illness) at 22 Frank St., Putnam, CT 06260-1710, (860) 928-5947, billterri39@att.net, Go Red for Women at American Heart Association, PO Box 417005, Boston, MA 02241-7005, or the Pomfret Democratic Town Committee, 233 Pomfret Street, Pomfret Center, Ct 06259



Medora Lucienne Brouillard, 91

Medora Lucienne (Verrenault) Brouillard age 91 of Brooklyn, CT. passed away peacefully surrounded by her loving family on February 21, 2021. Medora, always known as Memere mainly enjoyed the simple pleasures of everyday life. Sitting outside taking in the warmth of the sun was one of her favorite pastimes. However, she will be remembered most of all for her dedication, love and devotion to her family. Memere enjoyed her daily interactions with her children and grandchildren, she was a constant presence and light in their lives. When the grandchildren were young they found joy in walks, baking



cookies, taking wagon rides and endlessly being pushed on swings. As her children and grandchildren got older, she very much enjoyed the daily banter that came with their interactions. While Medora was small in stature her presence was mighty and will be sorely missed. Medora spent her last couple of years residing with her son Randy and devoted loving daughter in-law Tracie. She was predeceased by her husband Ronald in 1989. Medora is survived by her children, Ronnie, Rhonda, Renee and Randy and six grandchildren, Melodie, Lukas, Benjamin, Brooke, Alex and Aaron. Medora also leaves behind a brother Henry (Jackie) Verrenault as well as, a niece and dear friend, Eleanor (Bunny)Montgomery. In keeping with her nature and wishes, funeral services are private. tillinghastfh.com

Philip James Lovely

Philip James Lovely, a long-time resident of Attawaugan, CT, passed away February 19, 2021 in his home surrounded by his wife and children. He was a dedicated and loving husband, father and grandfather. He loved fishing, scratch tickets, playing Nintendo with his children and grandchildren, sitting on the porch with his dog Lucky, and doing puzzles with his granddaughter Autumn. Philip was born in Carlingford New Brunswick, Canada on March 7, 1937 to the late Norris Benjamin and Winnifred (McMann) Lovely. He and his family became naturalized citizens in 1943. He and his wife moved to CT in 1963. Philip worked at Acme Cotton and



Hale Manufacturing as a mechanic for 45 years until his retirement. He was in the National Guard, 136 Engineer Combat Co. from 1955 to 1958. He was also a member of the Auxiliary State Police, Troop D, from 1964 to 1970. Besides his wife of 64 years Martha Rae (Tracy) Lovely, Philip is survived by his two sons Philip James Lovely Jr. and wife Carolyn of Plainfield, and Gordon William Lovely and wife Lisa of Parkman, ME. His two daughters Patricia Jean Wood and husband Barry of Hudson, ME, and Renee Theresa Gates and husband Doug of Danielson. A brother Edward T. Lovely and wife Ruth of Killingly. Eleven grandchildren, 16 great grandchildren, one great great grandchild, and long-time friend Sean T. Ray of Brooklyn. Philip was predeceased by his son Norris Edward Lovely, five sisters and two brothers. A public graveside service for Philip will be held at Corinthian Cemetery in Corinth, ME May 15, 2021 at 1 pm. tillinghastfh.com

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Le Moyne College names Kobe Akana to Dean’s List

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — Kobe Akana, a Junior History major from Thompson, has been named to the Le Moyne College Fall 2020 Dean’s List. To make the list, students must achieve a GPA of 3.5 or above.

Located in a suburban setting on a picturesque 160-acre campus in Syracuse, N.Y., Le Moyne College is one of only 28 Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States. Offering more than 30 majors, Le Moyne provides a values-based education that helps students explore their potential through academics, experience and service. In 2020, for the eighth consecutive year, Le Moyne was ranked by The Princeton Review as one of the nation’s best institutions for undergraduate education, an honor achieved by only 15 percent of the colleges and universities in the nation. A Le Moyne education provides students with the intellectual skills necessary to succeed in the world and the will to use their abilities to promote a more just society.

Vendor registration for Eleventh Village is officially open

THOMPSON — Thompson’s Economic Development Commission is pleased to announce that vendor registration is officially open for the Eleventh Village seasonal retail shops in Thompson’s Riverside Park!

Under planning and development by the EDC since 2019, currently two of the miniature shops are available. Vendors will sign up for a minimum of 2 consecutive weekends between May 1 and Oct. 24, with the option of committing to a longer period. Most of the designated two-week sessions feature one or more special Town events to drive additional visitors. May 1, Opening Day, will also feature more than 60 tent vendors and food trucks for the second Thompson Maker Fair. For a complete list of the available dates, registration and vendor agreements, visit the Thompson Recreation Department Web site: https://thompsonrec.org/info/activities/program_details.aspx?ProgramID=29875.

Planned and developed by EDC since 2019, the Eleventh Village will gradually come to include 10 custom built mini-shops, each with a decorative facade modeled on notable buildings from each of Thompson’s 10 historic villages. Local craftsman Dave Eddy of Orchard Products provided the prototype structure, which was on display and in use at Community Day in October of 2019. Orchard Products will continue to construct additional shops as funding permits, with up to 3 new structures hoped for in summer of this year. As new shops become available, additional registrations will be opened on the Thompson Rec Web site.

Exciting things are happening in Riverside Park this year!

Local college students enroll at Eastern Connecticut State University

WILLIMANTIC — Eastern Connecticut State University welcomed 140 new students to campus this spring 2021 semester. The new students include first-time and transfer students who are enrolled in full-time and part-time undergraduate and graduate programs.

Among the new enrollees are:

Michael Raheb of Danielson, a full-time graduate student who is majoring in Secondary Education.

Amanda Thompson of Danielson, a part-time graduate student who is majoring in Secondary Education.

Michael Flaherty of Danielson, a part-time sophomore who is majoring in Psychology.

Maxwell Hayes of Danielson, a full-time freshman who is majoring in Computer Science.

Candice Koolhaas of Danielson, a full-time junior who is majoring in Psychology.

Kristie Wallis of Danielson, a part-time sophomore who is majoring in Criminology and Business Administration.

Willard Brin of Woodstock, a full-time junior who is majoring in Secondary Education and History and Social Science.

Hunter Campbell of Woodstock, a full-time junior who is majoring in Computer Science.

Todd Stevens of Woodstock, a part-time junior who is majoring in History.

Joy Fredette of Putnam is a part-time junior who is majoring in Business Administration.

Eastern Connecticut State University is the state of Connecticut’s public liberal arts university, serving more than 4,000 students annually at its Willimantic campus and satellite locations. In addition to attracting students from 162 of Connecticut’s 169 towns, Eastern also draws students from 33 other states and 20 countries. A residential campus offering 40 majors and 60 minors, Eastern offers students a strong liberal art foundation grounded in a variety of applied learning opportunities. Ranked as the #1 public regional university in New England by U.S. News and World Report in its 2021 Best Colleges ratings, Eastern has also been awarded “Green Campus” status by the Princeton Review 11 years in a row. For more information, visit www.easternct.edu.

Kylie Kusnarowis graduates from CCU

CONWAY, S.C. — Coastal Carolina University recognized nearly 700 students during its in-person Fall 2020 commencement ceremony held Friday, Dec. 11, in Brooks Stadium. Among the graduates was Kylie Kusnarowis, a Biology major from Woodstock.

Coastal Carolina University is a dynamic, public comprehensive liberal arts institution located in Conway, just minutes from the resort area of Myrtle Beach, S.C. The University offers baccalaureate degrees in 95 major fields of study. Among CCU’s graduate-level programs are 27 master’s degrees, two educational specialist degrees, and the doctorates in education and in marine science: coastal and marine systems science. The most popular undergrad-

uate majors are marine science, management, exercise and sport science, communication and psychology. CCU boasts a growing array of internship, research and international opportunities for students, as well as numerous online programs through Coastal Online.

More than 10,000 students from across the country and around the world interact with a world-class faculty, and enjoy a nationally competitive NCAA I athletic program, an inspiring cultural calendar, and a tradition of community interaction that is fueled by more than 120 student clubs and organizations.

Visit coastal.edu for more information.

LEGALS

TOWN OF KILLINGLY
METERED USE LEGAL NOTICE
Payments will be received in the Revenue Office, 172 Main Street Killingly CT 06239, as follows; Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 9-4pm Tuesday 9-5pm Friday 9-11am.
Second installment metered use is due March 1, 2021 If payment is not received on or before March 31, 2021 the installment becomes delinquent and subject to interest at the rate of one and one-half per cent of such tax for each month or fraction thereof which elapses from the time when such tax becomes due and payable until the same is paid. A minimum of \$2.00 interest will be charged for each delinquent bill and installment.
Please visit our website for full details and online payments www.killinglyct.gov.
Dated at Killingly this 12TH, day of February 2021
Patricia Monahan CCMC
REVENUE COLLECTOR FOR THE TOWN OF KILLINGLY
February 19, 2021
March 3, 2021
March 26, 2021

TOWN OF THOMPSON
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

LEGAL NOTICE
The Thompson Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing on Monday, March 8, 2021 beginning at 7:00 PM via Zoom.
ZBA 21-01 – Michael Barch, owner of 622 Fabyan Road, Map 17, Block 81, Lot 42 C, Zone RRAD, for a variance from the Amended Zoning Regulation, Article 42, Development Standards, Section 3, Footnote #2, Accessory Building Setback.
File may be reviewed on line, Town of Thompson website, Zoning Board of Appeals. Written communication will be accepted prior to the meeting
Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Beno, Chairman
February 26, 2021
March 5, 2021

Borough of Danielson
The Audit Report of the Borough of Danielson for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2020, as prepared by Hoyt Filippetti & Malaghan, LLC, Certified Public Accountants, is on file in the office of the Town Clerk, 172 Main Street, Danielson, Connecticut, and is available for public inspection, in accordance Section 7-394 of the 1993 Revision of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Dated at Killingly, Connecticut, this 22nd day of February 2021.
Borough of Danielson Administrator
March 5, 2021

LEGAL NOTICE
TOWN OF WOODSTOCK
BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS
Citizens of Woodstock are hereby informed that the Board of Assessment Appeals for the Town of Woodstock will hold its sessions on the following dates:
March 8, 2021 – Monday, beginning at 6:00 PM
March 9, 2021 – Tuesday, beginning at 6:00 PM
March 10, 2021 – Wednesday, beginning at 6:00 P.M
Appeal forms are available by calling the Assessor's Office at (860)928-6929 ext. 327 or downloading the form from the website at www.Woodstockct.gov
Such sessions are held solely for appeals on Real Estate and Personal Property for the 2020 Grand List and 2019 Grand List Supplemental Motor Vehicles. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, meeting format to be determined.
Notice given of sessions held to conform to section 12-110 of the General Statutes of the State of Connecticut.
BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS

Rebecca Hyde
Ronald Cabana
March 5, 2021

TOWN OF THOMPSON
At the February 9, 2021 meeting of the Thompson Inland Wetlands Commission the following action was taken: Application #IWA21002, Lisa M. Audette, 0 Robbins Rd (Assessor's Map 87, Block 53, Lot 8A-1) - construction of a stone ford across an intermittent watercourse / wetlands and grading in the upland review area to develop access for pedestrian and tractor use associated with the construction of a proposed new daycare facility.
George T. O'Neil, Chair
February 26, 2021

TOWN OF THOMPSON
On January 19, 2021 the following wetlands agent approval was issued: Application # WAA20031 approved with conditions, Madison Avenue Investments, LLC, 0 Madison Avenue (subdivision lot 11) (Assessor's Map 103, Block 31, Lot 6K) - Construction of a driveway in the upland review area for a new single family home.
Marla Butts, Wetlands Agent
March 5, 2021

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3 ways educators can use newspapers in the classroom



Educators can help the next generation of readers recognize the importance of local newspapers by taking various steps to incorporate newspapers into their lessons.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact on communities across the globe. No individual, household or industry was unaffected by the pandemic, and the ripple effects of the virus may be felt for years to come. Though many effects of the pandemic have been devastating, one unforeseen and potentially positive consequence

of the spread of COVID-19 was a growing recognition of the invaluable role played by local newspapers. Responses to the virus and strategies regarding how to combat it varied greatly, and local newspapers were a go-to resource for citizens who wanted to learn about rules and regulations in their towns. For example, in England the Bishop's

Stortford Independent, a local weekly paper in Hertfordshire, experienced a significant monthly web audience growth during the pandemic. Prior to the global outbreak in January 2020, the paper's monthly web audience was 260,000. By October, that number had spiked to 360,000, reflecting a growing need for local news outlets as readers across the globe sought to learn about the pandemic within their own communities and how local officials were responding to the threat posed by COVID-19. If the pandemic illustrated the vital role local newspapers can play, it's important that readers recognize that role won't be any less valuable when COVID-19 is in the world's rearview mirror. Educators can help the next generation of readers recognize the importance of local newspapers by taking various steps to incorporate newspapers into their lessons. 1. Employ newspapers when teaching current events. Everyone was directly affected by the COVID-19 virus, making the story of the pandemic one of the most unique in modern history. Though children are often sheltered from global news stories about conflicts or economic crises, no such sheltering was possible during the pandemic, as kids were forced to learn from home and confront life with little or no access to extracurricular activities. Educators can show how local newspapers reported on the pandemic when teaching cur-

rent events, using that example as the foundation for teaching current events in the future. 2. Utilize the newspapers when teaching ESL. Students who do not speak English at home or as their primary language can benefit greatly from their local newspapers. It might be easy to learn how to say certain words in English, but reading them in a newspaper gives ESL students a chance to see the words they've learned in context. And because local newspapers feature sections on everything from news to sports to entertainment, ESL students are sure to find a few articles that appeal to their existing interests. 3. Use newspapers to encourage a love of reading. Just like ESL students are bound to find something that interests them in the local newspapers, their English-speaking classmates are sure to find a recap of their favorite team's most recent game or a review of the latest superhero movie or a local news story about their town to pique their interest. Students may not realize it, but they're learning when reading such stories by developing their vocabularies, fine tuning their comprehension skills and catching up on current events. The valuable role played by local newspapers was on display during the pandemic. That role won't be any less valuable in a post-pandemic world, and it's a lesson teachers can apply in their classrooms.

Clever and quirky crafts to try today

Being forced to spend more time at home during the COVID-19 pandemic has led enterprising individuals to seek ways to pass the time. Is it any wonder that creative pursuits have become so popular over the last year? Crafting can help people fill their time, reduce stress, inspire new relationships, and serve as a source of pride when an item is handmade from start to finish. In an online study published in the British Journal of Occupational Therapy that surveyed 3,500 knitters, respondents felt there was a relationship between knitting frequency and feeling calm. Experts surmise that the rhythmic, repetitive movements and focused attention of certain crafts might produce a calming effect not unlike meditation. Crafting helps exercise sev-

eral areas of the brain, including those responsible for problem solving, creativity and concentration, states Craft Courses, an online crafting course company. The following are some unique crafts for those looking for something new. • Quilling: This craft also goes by the name paper filigree. It involves twisting, rolling or looping thin strips of paper and then gluing them together to make designs. They can adorn the outside of homemade cards, or be attached to stock and then framed. • Decoupage: Another paper craft, this one involves sticking small pieces of paper of any kind to another item and then coating the object with varnish. Just about anything can be improved and customized with decoupage. • Marquetry: Marquetry involves

applying pieces of wood veneer to a structure to form a decorative pattern or picture. Think of it as paint-by-number but with wood veneer. The technique often is applied to small objects or furniture. • Bead crochet: Crochet artists may want to take their crafting up a notch with bead crochet, which incorporates beaded string or yarn into a crocheted item. • Water marbling: Water marbling is a unique craft that produces a different result each time it is done. The crafter fills a tub roughly two-thirds full of water, adds a special chemical to allow oils to float on the water's surface, then drops different colors of oil-based paint onto the water. The colors can be swirled and manipulated. A paper or piece of canvas is then placed on the



surface of the water so that the design can transfer onto the material. • Pyrography: Pyrography involves using a heating source and burning designs into a piece of wood. The term literally means "writing with fire." These lesser-known crafts can be good diversions and help individuals learn new skills.



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