SENTINEL KEDDING

\$3 MAY 11, 2023 REDDING, CONNECTICUT Volume 2 / Issue 4

Town sells **Treasury** bills as debt ceiling impasse looms

By Jessie Wright

As the national standoff over whether the U.S. will raise the debt ceiling increases pressure on the federal government's financial liabilities, Redding has opted to sell most of its Treasury bills in favor of investing the money in FDIC-insured certificates of deposit.

A Treasury bill (sometimes known as a "T-Bill") is a shortterm debt obligation which is backed by the U.S. Treasury. The bills mature in one year or less, and payments implicitly include the interest, which makes them difficult to roll-over.

Town Treasurer Wes Higgins notified the Board of Finance of his thinking around making the move at their meeting on April 24.

Redding at the time owned just over \$8 million in Treasury bills, with roughly \$4 million set to mature in May and \$4 million in June. Conversations around the debt ceiling and likelihood of the Treasury making a late payment on its obligations were still fluid, but the beginning of the summer had begun to take shape as a critical moment.

"The month of June has separated itself in terms of pricing," Higgins told the Board. "May is what everybody wants to buy and are willing to lose 100 basis points for that experience."

Soon after the April 24 meeting, Higgins sold the May Treasury bills for just under a 4-percent yield. He then moved the money to a firm which placed it in one-day certificates of deposit in amounts under \$250,000 with a daily resetting rate of 4.85-percent across banks with credit checks. With FDIC-insurance covering up to \$250,000, the money is still government-guaranteed, but through the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation instead of the Treasury. The rate has since increased to 5-percent.

"We made some money on it, in the range of five or six thousand dollars. It's not a lot of money, but it's my attitude that it's a lot of money for the taxpayers, and every cent I can make them is what I'm supposed to be doing," said Higgins.

As the month of May began with no debt ceiling resolution in sight, Higgins opted to then entirely "exit the conversation" and sold all of the Town's remaining Treasury bills set to mature in June as well.

"This is all part of my efforts to manage the 'float'," Higgins said. "We collect taxes twice a year, and it's the responsibility of the Treasurer to make sure the money is safe and sound, but also to earn the highest interest on it for the

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Photo by Marjorie Derven

The trees at New Pond Farm quietly celebrating Arbor Day last month. If you have a photo you'd like to see featured here, with credit of course, please e-mail editor@reddingsentinel.org

Selectmen consider Juneteenth as municipal holiday | By Jessie Wright

The Board of Selectmen is finalizing the calendar of holidays for municipal employees in the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

A request had come from Town employees to consider granting Juneteenth off, according to First Selectwoman Julia Pemberton. Juneteenth became a federal holiday in 2021 and a state holiday in 2022. It commemorates the emancipation of enslaved people in the U.S. on the anniversary of the June 19, 1865 order

proclaiming freedom for enslaved people in Texas.

After examining the employee handbook and costs associated with adding a holiday, Finance Director Jim Sanders proposed recognizing the "unnamed floating holiday" employees currently have as Juneteenth. The floating holiday had been introduced years ago when two municipal holidays - George Washington's birthday and Abraham Lincoln's birthday were combined into one.

The naming of this floating holiday as Juneteenth would take some flexibility away from employees, but guarantee the date off each year, noted Pemberton.

The Selectmen will review the proposed holiday calendar and updated employee handbook at their next regular meeting. If the change is approved, Juneteenth would become a municipal holiday in June 2024. ■

Redding's Big Outdoors

Bogus Brook Preserve By Cole Tucker-Walton



Photo by Cole Tucker-Walton

I park at the end of Chuck Wagon Lane in Danbury at 8:40 a.m. I've just been to Lowes, and I'd still like to vote in the budget referendum before I leave for the airport, but also I was mostly lying last night when I told my boyfriend I had already packed. I figure I have time for a shorter trail with minimal inclines.

From my car, the cul-de-sac looks sleepy, but as I step out and open my umbrella, the noise is stunning. Manic singing alerts me to a catbird, which then bursts into sight. Geese honk, raindrops tap, doves coo, and a hawk shrieks. I follow the catbird down a narrow grass path, through skunk cabbage and shrubs and budding trees, into Redding's Bogus Brook Preserve.

The catbird slips into a tangle of multiflora rose, behind a shrub

full of white blossoms, and checks on a nest. Below, purple-red stems of baby royal fern, rust-edged fronds of sensitive fern, and plastic-looking shoots of horsetail grow around and through the boardwalk. In a few more steps, I reach the humped sedges bordering the swamp.

Beaver Trail is the first and tiniest of the Preserve's three consecutive loops. (A side loop connects to Bethel, and a trail on the Preserve's southern border leads to an entrance on Side Cut Road.) On Beaver Trail, I follow the edge of a small peninsula jutting into the swamp. Through a gap in the reeds, I look across the water at a reddish-brown beaver lodge. A straight and limbless trunk sticks up from the water next to it like a flagpole or a mailbox post.

Completing the loop, I cross wooden boardwalks, split logs, composite deck boards - seemingly whatever could be found to keep shoes a little drier. From its northeastern edge, I can see how big the pond is. The default view on Google Maps, and even the marsh-marked map in the Book of Trails, show the Bogus Brook as a distinct stream across wetlands. In fact, the water, marshalled to the south by the Metro North Railroad tracks and to the north by beaver dams, now forms a significant swamp pond.

I fork left on the north loop of Bogus Trail, saving further water views for my return. Behind houses, I pass through a grove of dark hemlocks. The ground becomes dry, and the sharp candelabra arms of tulip poplar divide the horizon.

A detour on Top Rock Trail brings me past trunks of shagbark hickory and witch hazel glowing pinkish orange in the rain; rue anemone, Christmas ferns, and wild geranium surround my feet. Boulders with dramatic pink and grey striation sit under white oaks. The rain picks up as I reach a ledge among the treetops. I pause and admire the view. To my left, the Ives Trail, which shares 17

Continued on page 4

Selectmen OK final \$1 million in **ARPA funds**

Redding voters have their say on May 23

By Rob Sample

On Thursday, May 4, the Redding Board of Selectmen approved the final slate of projects to be funded by the Town's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant. The allocations total \$1 million and will go before Redding voters at a special representative town meeting. That meeting takes place at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 23.

Under the motion approved by the Selectmen, a host of municipal facilities improvements would receive \$530,000 in funding. In addition, Town highway projects would be allocated \$400,000, and \$16,000 would fund the purchase of five defibrillators at outdoor recreational spots in town.

Also included was an allocation of \$40,000 to the Redding Historical Society. That money will go for repairs to the Zalmon Read barn on Lonetown Road, which dates to 1755. The repairs would help preserve the historic building and enable the structure to be used in warmer months as an

event venue. Finally, the Board's motion approved \$14,000 for construction work at the John Read Middle School library commons.

First Selectwoman Julia Pemberton noted that approvals for ARPA grant funding have assisted a wide range of projects since the funds were first received early in 2022. Many of those initiatives involved non-profit organizations that serve Redding residents.

"I want to thank all of the applicants – everybody who went through the process, whether the funds were granted or not," said Pemberton. "Every project was worthwhile, and I do wish we had more money."

"And for those organizations that didn't receive money, hopefully it got them some awareness in the community that will help them shine a little brighter," added Selectwoman Peg O'Donnell.

The \$530,000 in municipal projects includes heating/ventilation/air-conditioning upgrades for Redding Town Hall and the Redding Community Center, and a new heat-pump system for the Old Town Hall building. It also includes replacing the cooling system at the Town's computing center and an upgraded audiovisual system for the Town Hall hearing room and conference

Rounding out the total are upgraded windows, siding, and insulation at the Redding Police Department headquarters.

The \$400,000 in highway funding enables the purchase of

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Editorial

May is Mental Health Awareness month, and though it receives a particular spotlight in this one month, it is of utmost importance every day.

The Connecticut Department of Public Health conducts a survey of teenagers in the state each year called the CT School Healthy Survey. Last year's results showed that 70% of teenagers reported their mental health being "not good" within the last month. The survey also showed that one-in-three students "felt sad for two weeks or more" and furthermore only one-in-four "get the help they need when feeling this way."

The National Alliance for Mental Illness reported based on data from 2021 that 531,000 adults in Connecticut have a mental health condition, and 40.6% of adults in Connecticut reported symptoms of anxiety or depression.

Here at the Sentinel, our aim is to include reporting on local mental health resources, trends, fundraisers, and activities throughout the month of May and continue that coverage throughout the year. Look to our new Health/Wellness section on our weekly page 11 Calendar of Events for resources and events, both virtual and in-person, as well as the list below of organizations and resources which Redding residents can access for mental health support:

• Redding Social Services: 203-938-3580

The Social Services Department can connect you to other local and state resources and initiatives and provide a starting place for residents needing assistance.

• 2-1-1 CT Hotline: 2-1-1

This is a free health and human service information and referral help-line. Calls are answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. 2-1-1 is certified by the American Association of Suicidology for crisis intervention and accredited by the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems.

• 9-8-8 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: 9-8-8

You can call, text, or chat 9-8-8 at any time and be connected to trained counselors that are part of the existing Lifeline network. These trained counselors will listen, provide support, and connect you to resources if necessary.

• Crisis Text Line – 741-741

Text HOME to 741-741 any time for free and get connected with a live, trained Crisis Counselor who can help move you through "a hot moment to a cool moment."

• NAMI Local Support Groups: nami.org/Support-Education/ Support-Groups

With services and support groups for those struggling with mental illness, the National Alliance for Mental Illness also hosts both virtual and in-person support groups for loved ones and family members caring for others with mental illness.

• Mental Health Connecticut - mhconn.org/service

Mental Health Connecticut's mission is to partner with individuals, families, and communities to create environments that support long-term health and wellness. MHM can keep you informed of legislative and advocacy efforts on the statewide and federal level to support mental health resources.

Person killed by fallen tree

By Donna Christopher

Aperson was seriously hurt after a tree fell on them on Marchant Road in Redding on Friday, May 5, according to Redding Police Chief Mark O'Donnell. An update that the person had died came on Saturday, May 6, though it is not clear when the death occurred.

O'Donnell said the investigation has been turned over to the Occupational Safety and

Health Administration (OSHA). Ted Fitzgerald of OSHA told the Sentinel on Monday that Redding police notified OSHA of a treerelated fatality on Marchant Road, and OSHA is currently gathering information to determine if this was a work-related incident.

No other information was available as of Tuesday, May 9. The investigation is ongoing. ■

Legal Notices

The Redding Zoning Board of Appeals has scheduled a public hearing via Zoom on Tuesday May 16th, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. to review and possible vote on the following application.

1. Application #04-01-23- 301 Redding Road (Map & Lot #37 & 42) Owner Scott MacMillan: Requesting a variance to build a roof that is an open roof structure with no walls over the riding ring. Redding Zoning Regulations Section 5.14.6 (c) be reduced from 100' feet to 40' feet. ■

Elizabeth Williams – Chairman, Redding Zoning Board of Appeals

WARNING – Notice of Special Town Meeting

The Legal Voters in the Town of Redding, Connecticut, and those entitled to vote therein are hereby warned and notified to meet at the Special Town Meeting to be held at the Redding Community Center on Tuesday, May 23, 2023 at 7:30 p.m. for the following purpose: To consider and vote upon the use of remaining ARPA Grant Funds for the following purposes:

- 1. \$930,000 for Town of Redding Capital Expenditures;
- 2. \$16,000 for AEDs for the Town;
- 3. \$40,000 for capital repairs for the Zalmon Read Barn at the Redding Historical Society; and
- 4. \$14,000 for the John Read Middle School Library Commons Modernization Pro-ject.

To do any and all things legal and necessary to accomplish the

above-named purpose and to take any other action that may legally and properly come before the

DATED at Redding, Connecticut this 8th day of May, 2023. ■

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
First Selectwoman
Julia Pemberton
Selectwoman
Margaret L. O'Donnell
Selectman
Michael Thompson

**REGISTERED VOTERS
AND GRAND LIST PROPERTY
OWNERS (name must appear
on the last completed Grand List
10/21/2022) are eligible to vote
at the Special Town Meeting.
Please bring ID and arrive 15
minutes prior to the start of the
meeting to be checked off by the
Registrar of Voters.**

Letters to the Editor

We welcome Letters to the Editor. Please be clear, civil, and concise. E-mail editor@reddingsentinel. org with submissions.

To the Editor,

I question the installation of the new stop signs on Side Cut Road. You reported that the signs were "responding to feedback and data on speeding in these locations." Show us the feedback and data. I suspect it's very limited and do not recall any opportunity for public comment. I drive on Side Cut often and have never witnessed speeding cars. In fact, it would be difficult to speed as there is already a stop sign approximately 200 yards east of the new sign by the Post Office. Side Cut is also narrow and twisty on both sides of the new stop signs, and cars are generally slowing down, either to turn on Simpaug Turnpike or to cross the train tracks. I do not recall ever reading of any traffic accidents in the area. As for the local business argument, no stores front on Side Cut. Finally, did anyone factor in the environmental cost of the new signs? Every time a car stops and starts it uses additional fuel and generates additional CO2. Multiply this by the hundreds of cars that travel along Side Cut each day and the impact will not be negligible. The new signs should either be removed, or the Town should better justify their installation.

Douglas Renfield-Miller West Redding

To the Editor,

Thanks to the Mark Twain Library for, yet again, gifting the Redding community with a wonderful event which showcases the best about our town. Certainly, the weather cooperated, and that helped bring out the hordes of Frog Frolic'ers.

I remember attending the very first Frolic, and volunteering for years at later events. I had not been in a few years – my children are all grown now. I took the opportunity to volunteer at the cupcake tent, and it was uplifting. The volunteers were all having a great time, and just seeing the faces of the young ones, eagerly seeking the "perfect" cupcake was enough to keep me smiling for days.

Just as wonderful were the "thank-you's" from young and old alike. We sure have polite people here in Redding! We all have so much in common, and so much to be thankful for. Hats off to the Frog Frolic Committee for hosting an event to remind us what community is all about.

Peg O'Donnell Chestnut Woods Road

Redding League of Women Voters looks to fill Board

The Nominating Committee of the Redding League of Women Voters is putting together the slate of Officers for 2023-24 and is looking for new people to join the Board. There are openings for a one-year term, which runs from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024.

Board of Directors meetings are held on the second Monday of each month at 4:00 p.m. with hybrid options to attend – either in person at Town Hall or via Zoom.

The Redding League of Women Voters notes, "We can promise you informative meetings, wonderful

and talented Board members to work with, and opportunities to make a positive impact on our community."

Those who are interested should e-mail or call Colleen Joyce at ctjoyce1@gmail.com or 203-470-4720 with questions.

Selectmen OK final \$1 million in ARPA funds
Redding voters have their say on May 23 / continued from page 1

several vehicles, including a tool truck, brush tractor and, most notably, a used vac/jet truck from nearby Brookfield. That town has a brand-new vac/jet truck on order and has agreed to sell its existing truck to Redding for its trade-in value. Redding has pegged that value at an estimated \$75,000, but because Brookfield is still awaiting delivery of its new truck,

the final amount might fluctuate.

The highway sum also includes \$50,000 for a road-rating software package. Part of that expenditure would include the software firm driving all Redding roads in a special truck equipped with a camera. This would form the software's initial database of road conditions for the town.

According to Jim Sanders, Finance Director for the Town of Redding, the municipal and highway expenditures are long in coming. "Those are things we've been discussing since last fall as part of the Long-Range Financial Planning Committee," he said, "and that had been included as part of our report out in November to the Board of Finance."

The municipal and highway items were later sent by the eight-person ARPA Funds Working Group back to the Board of Selectmen for a final decision. The volunteer Working Group began meeting in 2022 to consider proposals for grant funding.

The Redding Board of Education had requested \$176,000

for modernization of John Read Middle School's library commons and community room. Sanders noted that this request arrived in early April, just as the various boards were determining what funding might go before the voters in the referendum. Much of the cost involves the purchase of modular furniture for those spaces.

Budget-wise, "(the Board of Education) are essentially where they were a year ago, at about 72-percent attained, and last year they ended with a surplus of \$342,000," said Sanders. That anticipated surplus could be devoted to the balance of those facility-modernization costs, he said.

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Thank you

Correction to the May 4, 2023 Issue:

In the "Referendum results: 'Yes' to all" article on page 1, the story used an incorrect preposition in the sentence, "This marks a decrease for the current mil rate of 33.34." The sentence should read: "This marks a decrease from the current mil rate of 33.34." We regret this error.

Redding Sentinel Ltd

News and Views of Redding Connecticut

News and Views of Redding, Connecticut

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Telecommunications provided by CCi Voice
www.reddingsentinel.org
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Single copy price \$3.00 / Annual subscription \$85.00

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"Friends talk to friends"

Peer mental health support at Barlow By Donna Christopher

Once a year, freshmen in the Wellness 9 class at Joel Barlow High School have new instructors at the front of their classroom: seniors who have completed a mental health awareness full-day training program.

The older students have been trained by Maryanne Pieratti, Barlow's social worker, who covers topics including how to identify the symptoms of anxiety disorder, how to help a friend, and when to get an adult involved should a mental health issue arise.

Additionally, they learn about the mental health resources for students at Barlow, and the adults to consult with both in and outside of school. An important part of the training is also spreading awareness of the importance of destigmatizing mental health disorders and how to encourage their peers to do the same. Students learn to adopt phrases and model these to younger students such as a person "is struggling with" anorexia or bipolar disorder, rather than the person is "anorexic" or "acting bipolar," as young people might be heard saying, Pieratti noted as an example. The seniors also learn that "You can't see if somebody is struggling with a mental health

The older student presentations are a supplement to the mental health unit that is taught by the Wellness 9 teachers.

"I think it is powerful for students to be taught by their peers," said Pieratti. "They discuss the most common mental health disorders that young people experience and what may be the signs and symptoms of those disorders. They discuss and review the supports and resources within Joel Barlow High School, and then they also review the national resources like the Suicide Prevention call line and Crisis Lifeline (988) as well as text line (741-741) as well as 2-1-1 CT."

They also have time to answer questions that the ninth graders may have and share how to get involved with other mental health initiatives at school and how to sign up for the training themselves, explained Pieratti.

In addition to the class presentations, students at Barlow can take part in the Youth Mental Health First Aid club which supports the same goals as the teaching. Participants plan activities for students in Easton and Redding, such as Random Acts of Kindness and pop-up events with positive affirmations printed on hot sleeves on cups of hot chocolate, among others.

Pieratti started the program nine years ago because, "we know that students speak and share with other students (friends talk to friends). Students see their peers' social media posts and can be the first line to help a friend, peer, or classmate struggling."

Pieratti said it's essential for young people to know the signs and symptoms of a mental health disorder, and discussions center

on when a young person should get an adult involved, and who those adults can be both inside and outside the school.

Student response has been "very positive" about the program. "At the end of the training, feedback from students spoke to them knowing how to approach a peer in distress, being able to connect them to an appropriate adult, and being able to recognize and correct misconceptions about mental health to reduce stigma," she said.

Pieratti also works with the Athletic Director and speaks to sports team captains, many of whom attend the training offered every year.

Two of the students who took the training shared with the Sentinel some of the valuable takeaways from the program.

Senior Jack Baer took the training after wanting to be more adept in responding to individuals or friends who show signs of depreciating mental health. "Being in front of the 9th-grade students gives me a sense of security knowing that the freshmen students will have a baseline of understanding and those interested can pursue the training," he said.

Senior GianThomas Zuanelli took the course because his older brother had taken it and was able to help people.

"I was able to take the training my freshman year and it was great to have the training all four of my

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Meadow Ridge opens mind and memory care unit

By Rocco Valluzzo



Photo by Brittan Goetz

Meadow Ridge celebrated the opening of its mind and memory care neighborhood with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Tuesday, May 2. From left: Dan Sharp, Meadow Ridge resident and President of the Board of Directors of the Meadow Ridge Residents' Association; Paul Brown, Meadow Ridge Associate Executive Director; Christa Wilson, Program Coordinator for assisted living and mind and memory care at Meadow Ridge; Jill Adelman, Meadow Ridge memory care resident; Chris Barstein, Meadow Ridge Executive Director; and Julia Pemberton, Redding First Selectwoman.

Meadow Ridge, a continuing care retirement community in Redding, celebrated the opening of its new mind and memory care neighborhood on Tuesday, May 2. The unit offers individualized services for residents who are living with Alzheimer's and other types of dementia.

The unit was built to address the increased demand for safe, specialized care for those with impairment. surroundings, programming, and specially trained associates are all tailored to meet the needs of residents in the neighborhood.

According to Executive Director Chris Barstein, memory care was not a concept in assisted living when Meadow Ridge was built about 21 years ago. In 2016-17, a new traditional assisted living facility was built at Edgehill in Stamford, which is managed by the same company as Meadow Ridge, Benchmark Senior Living. The older part of this facility was eventually converted into memory

"That's what we have done here," Barstein said. "This has been in the works for at least four or five years. First, they had to identify a new area for the assisted living, which we did. Then we had to build new assisted living, which took about 18 months."

Once that was completed, work started on the mind and memory care unit. All the renovation was done while it was still occupied and while maintaining all services and activities for residents.

Barstein noted there are a few key elements in the design of the mind and memory care neighborhood that are specifically for the residents who are living with Alzheimer's. The lighting, while very soft and not harsh, is also very bright.

"Residents with dementia will suffer from something called 'sundowning' at the end of the day," explained Barstein. "Keeping a bright area for them is very important to keep their spirits up and keep their attention up, and also, they don't react well to very dark places."

The corridors also have different accent colors, which residents use to help locate their apartments. They can also put photos of their grandchildren or other mementos of their personal lives on their doors.

"They may not recognize this number as their apartment, or even their own name on the door, but they're going to get focused on these areas and know that they're home," he continued.

A large aquarium at the entrance of the neighborhood can serve as an engagement piece. It can be often used at times to redirect a resident who may be agitated or confused.

"When dealing with our residents who are living with dementia, typically, we never correct," said Barstein. "We never try to distract. What we try to do is to disengage them from what they are fixated on at the moment and redirect them to something else."

The staff is also specially trained to work with the residents. Every associate at Meadow Ridge receives at least one training per month.

"One of the big training programs that we have for them is something called behavioral expressions," said Barstein. "Our residents very often can't express what they want and what they need in a verbal way. We do in-depth training so (the staff) can identify behaviors and try to determine from that what the resident is looking for." ■

Great day at the Frog Frolic

By Debora DeCarlo Rosa













A beautiful, sunny spring day was the backdrop for the 26th annual Frog Frolic on Saturday, May 6. Residents of all ages enjoyed food, crafts, live music, and games outside of the Redding Community Center for the annual fundraising event for Mark Twain Library.



RAIN OR SHINE

We accept cash, checks and credit cards

Town sells Treasury bills as debt ceiling impasse looms / continued from page 1

benefit of the taxpayer."

Treasury bills are just one element of the Town's investment and cash plan to ensure money collected from taxes earns interest and is available for large Town payments like payroll. Amidst recent increases in interest rates, Redding is set to bring in close to \$750,000 in interest income this fiscal year.

"When the Federal Reserve raises rates, Treasury bills seem to react first. Banks are slow to raise their deposit rates. And so, to be sure to get the best possible interest, we have the ability to buy Treasury bills. We also have this strategy where we can put it in FDIC-insured deposits. And the relationships between those move around. There's also an account at the bank where we can hold money, which is handy from a transactional point of view. But as usual, banks aren't the most generous in paying interest."

"What we're simply doing is matching up our payments with our investments," Higgins continued. "This isn't betting on the market or actively trading. The key to making the kind of interest we have in the last couple of years is just developing a plan and trying to get as much interest while the money sits. This is just cash management and diligence to make sure the money is always working." ■



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SPORTS

Barlow goes one for three



Photo by Rocco Valluzzo

Joel Barlow High's Aidan Stant was second in the 100 high hurdles at a boys track meet at Brookfield on Monday, May 1. Barlow lost to Brookfield and Weston but defeated Kolbe Cathedral.

Missing athletes in several events put the Joel Barlow High boys track and field team at a disadvantage in its meet at Brookfield

A small team this year with only 18 athletes, the Falcons did not have entrants in many of the track events on Monday, May 1. This allowed the host Bobcats to gain several uncontested points to win 77-55. The Falcons also lost 114-45 to Weston.

The day was not a total loss for Barlow, however, as they scored enough points to defeat Kolbe Cathedral 71-40.

Focusing on personal-best times and qualifying athletes for the post-season, Barlow did not compete in five track events (100, 200, 400, 800, and 1,600), falling behind the Bobcats and the Trojans. They were a dominant force in the 3,200, however, taking three of the top four places overall, each featuring personal records.

Matthias Galban led the way with a winning time of 10:02.7. It was a one-two finish for Barlow,

with Jackson Sobelman close behind him in 10:08.6. Fourth went to Devin Tala in 10:15.3.

Aidan Stant represented Barlow in both the 100 high and 300 intermediate hurdles, taking second overall in both behind Weston's Jack Haythorn. Stant ran the former in 18.8 and posted a 43.9 in the latter, which was also a personal record.

The Falcons fared well in the field events, placing in most of them, including the shot put. Here, Liam Kiernan was second with a toss of 32 feet, 2.5 inches.

They also cracked the top three in the discus, with Thomas Johnson getting 99 feet 3.5 inches, a personal record. Winning the javelin, Ian Sandor had a throw of 117 feet 3 inches.

Weston dominated the high jump, capturing the top three spots. Barlow took two of the top three in the pole vault with Alex Dyar clearing 8 feet 6 inches for second and Lucas Jandura getting 8 feet, a personal record and good for third.

The same two spots went to Barlow in the long jump. Nate Dyar led the way for his team with a second-place leap of 17 feet 5 inches and Sean McTague was one foot behind him, setting a personal record.

Barlow, now 3-6 overall, hosts Notre Dame of Fairfield and Stratford on Monday, May 15 at 4:00 p.m. in its final meet of the regular

Falcons vanquish Bobcats, Cougars | By Rocco Valluzzo

Having depth in a few key events was enough for the Joel Barlow High girls track team to keep a few steps ahead of Brookfield and Kolbe Cathedral last week.

The Falcons earned crucial points in the sprints and relay events on Tuesday, May 2. While such was enough to overcome the Bobcats 78-60 and the Cougars 90-21, they came up short 80.5-60.5 to host Weston.

Three of the top four places went to Barlow in the 100 meters, including the win. Jenna Najjar led the way with a first-place time of 13.2 seconds, 0.1 seconds ahead of Kolbe's Miranda Thomas. Barlow's Olivia Taylor followed 0.1 seconds later, and teammate Sedonia Holub was in turn 0.1 seconds behind her.

Two scored for Barlow in the 200. This time, Najjar was second in 27.4 and Taylor was fifth in 28.1, a personal record.

It was a fast field in the 400, with Barlow's Kate Krug getting fifth in 1:31.1. Ally Bardani was runner-up in the 800 in 2:33.8 and Sydney Borofsky took fourth in 2:36, a personal record.

Representing Barlow in the 1,600, Ella Walker was third in 6:39, and Olivia Kotula won the 3,200 with a personal-best of 13:11.3.

While the Falcons did not score in the 100 meter high hurdles, they finished second in the 300 intermediate hurdles with Sofia Benitez in 54 seconds, just ahead of Brookfield's Sofia Maldonado.

A number of points came Barlow's way in the relays, as it

won two of three. Taylor, Holub, Najjar, and Emma Bourgeault led the way in the 4x100 in 52 seconds.

For the 4x800, Kotula, Mia Tartaglia, Borofsky, and Bardani had the winning time of 10:52.4 and Barlow was second behind Weston in the 4x400.

The field events proved more difficult. Weston placed first in each and went one-two in most of

Barlow's points in the shot put came from Lauren Klein Wassink, whose toss of 31 feet, four inches was good for second and a personal record. Besides Weston, Brookfield also had some good throwers in the discus. Here, Sydney Hawks was fifth with 60 feet 4 inches, which was also a personal record.

The Trojans went one-two-three in the high jump before Barlow took fourth with Benitez clearing four feet, just ahead of fifth-place Bourgeault (personal record) based on number of attempts.

Four of the top five places in the pole vault went to Weston, but the Falcon's Jordan Carr was second with a height of 10 feet 6 inches. Carr was third in long jump based on number of attempts and was among three contestants to leap 14 feet 11 inches. Taylor was fourth with the same distance, and both had personal bests.

Carr totaled 31 feet 0.5 inches for third in the triple jump, and Ruby Candee also scored with 28 feet 6 inches, taking fifth.

Barlow, now 8-1, hosts Notre Dame of Fairfield and Stratford on Tuesday, May 16 at 4:00 p.m. in its final meet of the regular season.

Falcons tame Wildcats, ride Wave

By Rocco Valluzzo

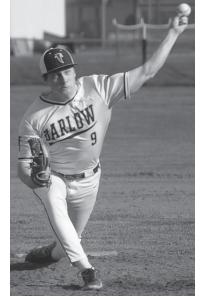


Photo by Rocco Valluzzo Starting pitcher Lachlan Ellis went five-and-two-thirds innings to get the 3-2 win for the Joel Barlow High varsity baseball team against New Milford on Friday, May 5.

A few timely hits, plus taking advantage of some opportunities, kept the Joel Barlow High varsity baseball team a couple steps ahead of Bethel last week.

The Falcons totaled only seven hits last Wednesday, May 3. They came at key times, however, and they took advantage of an early error by their opponent to take the lead in what ended in a 3-1 victory at home.

A Wildcat error put Barlow's Ian Nilsen on second with two outs in the bottom of the first inning. Nilsen's brother Christian followed with an RBI single, and the Falcons were ahead to stay.

Barlow was in good shape to score a few more in the second when Bill Bardani walked, followed by singles by Will Gregor and Charlie Basta to load the bases with one out. Will Scott's sacrifice fly to right field played a run, but Bethel pitcher Liam Solomon struck out the next batter to avoid further damage, as Barlow led 2-0.

The Wildcats got one run back in their next turn. Jim Muthersbaugh led off with a single, and Jackson Wein walked. Max Foster's single loaded the bases. Pitcher Christian Nilsen struck out Angelo Centrone but walked Sean Fallon, forcing in a run before a fielder's choice and a ground ball kept Bethel in check.

An insurance run came Barlow's way in the bottom of the fifth, courtesy of back-to-back doubles by the Nilsen brothers.

Christen Nilsen pitched a complete game for Barlow, allowing one run on five hits while striking out five and walking five. He also helped his cause offensively with three hits and drove in a pair of runs. Gregor had two hits while Basta and Ian Nilsen each had one.

It was also a close contest two days later when the Falcons trav-

elled to New Milford. After giving up a couple of runs in the first inning, the visitors settled down and worked their way back to a 3-2 win, avenging a one-run loss to the same opponent a week earlier.

After drawing two walks, the Green Wave took the lead on a two-run single by Ryan Gabianelli. Barlow pitcher Lachlan Ellis then settled down, allowing no runs and just one hit the rest of the way.

In the meantime, the Falcons got one run back in the top of the third. Basta led off with a single and scored on Will Scott's double. T. J. Baer singled, but the Falcons stranded both runners.

They took the lead in the fourth. Bardani singled while Logan Kady and Basta bunted safely to load the bases. Baer later followed with a two-run single to put the Falcons ahead.

Offensively, Baer and Scott each had three hits. The former also drove in two runs and the latter one. Bardani, Kady, and Basta also had hits.

Ellis went five-and-two-thirds innings, giving up two runs on two hits. Gregor relieved him in the sixth for the save.

Barlow, now 10-4, visits Immaculate on Saturday, May 13 at noon and is home against Pomperaug on Monday, May 15 at 4:15 p.m. in the last game of the regular

Redding's Big Outdoors: Bogus Brook Preserve / continued from page 1

miles of trail in four towns, continues over the border into Bethel. There, on a nine-hole golf course abandoned in the 1980s, it passes just south of Bogus Mountain, site of one headwater of the Saugatuck

I take the hairpin turn to my right, crossing back below Top Rock and overlooking train tracks I hadn't noticed on my ascent. I rejoin Bogus Trail and continue south through a forest of barberry and waist-high elms, witch hazel, and viburnum. A few marcescent leaves cling like wet ghosts to the branches of a young beech tree.

I bear left onto the south loop of Bogus Trail. The land becomes wet, then dry again, and soon I'm feet from the railroad tracks, at the perfect height to wave to commuters. Just as I'm reading a brown sign from Metro North, which states that the trail is not permitted to cross the functioning railroad, I hear a whirring in the distance. Suddenly, up the tracks, I see the triune headlights of a southbound train. The Husking Bee roars past, its silver cars pushed by a black and red diesel locomotive.

After looking both ways, I cross the tracks. I take Side Cut Trail down a pile of rocks and follow the railroad's east bank. New foliage on the facing hill could be a desaturated autumn: orange, vellow, chartreuse, and pink. The hillside disappears as the trail leads me into a forest of maples. Their straight young trunks and gracefully fountaining limbs form a distinctly friendly canopy. Why friendly? Is it that uncrowded, gentle curve of the branches? The warm color of the bark? The fluid wrinkles, more human than the rigid argyle of other trees?

I check the time and get nervous. I can hear cars, and figure the road is near; over a stone wall and under vaulted euonymus, I approach a backyard. Two turkeys are fully inflated, a third picks between her shoulder blades dispassionately, and a fourth wanders away toward a shed. Through a blanket of escaped pachysandra and some spotted lungwort, I reach Side Cut Road. There's enough room on the shoulder to park a car or two, and a sign reminding

hikers to pick up after their dogs. Tacked to a tall stump, a printed flyer is smearing red and blue in the rain; it asks for volunteers to maintain the Ives Trail.

My umbrella is down, and my pace is hurried on the return. But when I reach the south loop and the water's edge, I can't help but stop. From behind me, a heron glides north, and I see Canada geese on some sort of island in the pond. As I pass a huge oak, the geese begin honking. Three ducks glide overhead and skid to a landing in front of the distant reeds.

The mossy trail follows the shore among highbush blueberry shrubs already hung with delicate flowers. I pass bush after bush, some of them taller than I am. The geese, which I can now see are sitting on top of an old beaver lodge, keep honking as long as I'm in view. A red-winged blackbird sits on top of another lodge some hundred feet away. As I approach this second lodge, the heron trades places with me, landing on the south loop spit where I had just been taking pictures. I stop yet again - how can I rush when the setting is so peaceful? How can I believe that in a few hours, I'll have parked in the garage of a mall in Flushing and be hopping in a cab to get on a plane to fly to the steamy Gulf with its lizards and jasmine?

I recross the streams near the Preserve's entrance, and a rocky boardwalk gives me one last view of the pond and a beaver lodge. Back on Chuck Wagon Lane, a landscaping truck has arrived, and a man is unloading bags of mulch. I'd forgotten about the mulch in my own trunk, which I had also intended to unload before leaving. The man and I wave as I get in the car, say hi. As I turn onto Old Lantern Road, I slow down: four geese are crossing, guiding two groups of fuzzy yellow goslings. They waddle safely into the water and float away down Bogus Brook. ■

> Cole Tucker-Walton is a member of the Redding Land Trust Board of Trustees

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Meet Connecticut's top paraeducator:

Redding's own Shannon Cormier By Justin Reynolds



Photo by Tara Patrick

10, Cormier decided that she didn't

want to go home after school to be

by herself since her mom worked.

Little Thinkers, who we knew real-

ly well," Cormier said. "She said

I could come volunteer and work

there after school. I ended up real-

ly liking it, and the owner thought

I had a knack for it, so I stayed

her passion in college and even-

tually ended up teaching at Land-

mark Academy in Georgetown.

After taking time off to raise her

two daughters - both of whom

grew up in the Redding school sys-

tem - Cormier resumed her career

"assistant teacher," helping stu-

dents who are typically 4 years

old and need more educational

support. At the same time, she

also helps teachers achieve their

goals and objectives by providing

a much-needed extra set of hands.

need an extra hand because of how

young they are," Cormier said.

"Paraeducators are invaluable in

a classroom environment. It's im-

portant to make connections with

these little guys and gals - espe-

"We have a lot of students who

Cormier views her role as an

as a paraeducator in Redding.

Cormier continued to pursue

with it through high school."

"My mom spoke to the owner of

Shannon Cormier with students at the April 26 dinner for the CT PTA Outstanding Educators awards.

Redding's got talent.

Shannon Cormier, a fixture at Redding Elementary School for the last 17 years, was recently given the Connecticut PTA's Outstanding Educator Award for the paraprofessional category, celebrating the honor at an awards dinner that took place April 26.

"Shannon embodies the heart and spirit of Redding," said Tara Patrick, President of Redding Elementary School's PTA. "She's touched so many lives and done it tirelessly and with genuine caring and devotion."

Two other ER9 educators – Dr. Jason McKinnon, Superintendent, and Nora Gaydos, teacher at John Read Middle School - also earned awards this year.

Cormier, who works with preschoolers at Redding Elementary School, has more than 40 years of experience as a paraeducator.

"I started as a counselor in training when I was 10," said Cormier, who lives in Redding with her family. "I've only ever taught preschool-age kids."

Cormier grew up in Bethel, living with her mom, a single parent. When she was young, she attended a nursery school called Little Thinkers. By the time she turned

cially since some of them are leaving their parents for the first time. We want their experience to be positive and happy, because it sets the tone for the foundation of their educational journey." While Cormier is beyond

thrilled to have earned the award, she was totally surprised when she learned the news.

"I was completely floored - I had no idea the award even existed," she said. "Tara came walking into the classroom with flowers and told me the news. I had no clue, but my team all knew because they had written letters of recommendation for me."

The way Cormier sees it, her team should be winning awards,

"I wish we could all get these awards, because I feel like everyone deserves it," Cormier said. "Everybody is doing their best, and I just wish that my coworkers could also have this feeling of euphoria – a feeling that you matter, and you made a difference."

A few years ago, Cormier had an opportunity to take a job at a different district, but she declined because she loves being part of the Redding community.

"Financially, it would have been better for me," Cormier continued. "But I didn't want to leave my team and my town."

One of the biggest perks of Cormier's job is seeing so many friendly faces around town at events like the Concert on the Green series and the Frog Frolic.

"When you go to these things as a paraeducator, you feel like a rockstar. Kids come up to you and say, 'There's Miss Shannon.' It's a very nice feeling," she said. "I love going to a town event and seeing all my friends and my little preschool friends."

If Cormier has her way, she'll stay in Redding even as her two daughters, now 25 and 21, move on with their lives.

"I like that it's a nice tight community where people look out for each other," she explained. "It's just a lovely, good-vibe town." ■

Talented students take on The Hunchback of Notre Dame | By Jessie Wright



Photo by Matt Farina

"What makes a monster and what makes a man?"

This line in the musical The Hunchback of Notre Dame, running at Joel Barlow High School from May 19-22, occurs at both the beginning and the end of the show, bookending the production with a powerful, fundamental message.

"The judgment of others, how we treat people who are different, how groups of other people are treated, all of that is central," said Matt Farina, the production's Director, Choreographer, and Technical Director.

Farina has led the high school's drama productions for the last two years. His choice to stage two musicals in one school year (the fall production was Rodgers and Hammerstein's Oklahoma!) is unique but he said it felt right for the talented group of students involved and the energy around the return of live theater following the shutdowns of the pandemic.

"Disney is always a draw for audiences and for students as well. I like to challenge myself, the students - cast and crew - and I like to challenge audiences," he

The musical, which features a soaring score by Stephen Schwartz with many of the same songs from the Disney animated movie, also incorporates elements from Victor Hugo's classic novel. As Farina describes, the show is "dark Disney" with important themes, but also suitable for audiences of all ages.

Barlow's talented students have made the production their own, performing on a set featuring two rolling staircases which are utilized to create Notre Dame and other settings in 15th century Paris. Elements of the choreography are rooted in research on traditional dances of the Romani people; their use of skirts and clothing in dance, the use of body percussion, and other elements infuse the staging.

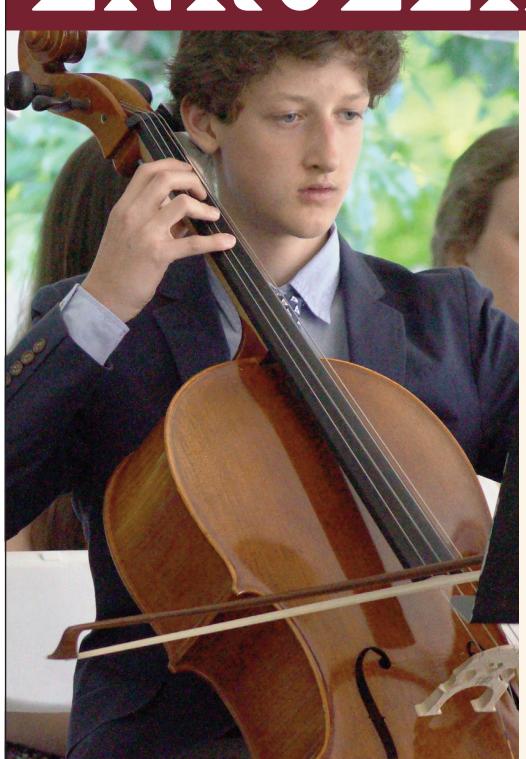
Much of the production is student-led, with an 18-member cast and 16 students making up the crew who manage everything from lighting to sound to costumes. Work began last winter, with production design starting in January, casting in February, and rehearsals beginning in March. Farina, who works full-time as a Gifted and Talented teacher at Redding Elementary School, noted that creating the show together is a huge time commitment, but never feels like work and provides students with invaluable experiences.

"It is so valuable: teamwork, collaboration, problem-solving, teaching what a commitment is and follow through - it is truly a collaborative art form - the camaraderie that always comes with being part of a cast and crew, public speaking, being brave to do something that is out of the ordinary," he highlighted.

The production runs Friday, May 19 at 7:00 p.m.; Saturday, May 20 at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.; and Sunday, May 21 at 2:00 p.m. The performances are all at Joel Barlow High School at 100 Black Rock Turnpike, and tickets are available online and at the door.

> For more information, visit jbhs.booktix.com

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PRE-K THROUGH 8TH GRADE

Giving kids with cancer unforgettable memories on the

open seas | By Justin Reynolds



Photos courtesy of Valiant Voyages



For Tim Dokter, diving and sailing have been lifelong passions. To say he's put these passions to good use would be a massive understatement.

Since 2015, Dokter, who's lived in Redding for nearly 30 years, has been at the helm of Valiant Voyages, a non-profit organization that gives kids with cancer and other life-threatening illnesses the opportunity to forget about their worries for a day while sailing on the ocean with their families.

"We take one family out at a time," Dokter said. "Everybody has a nice day out as a family, getting away from everything they deal with every day and making good memories."

Valiant Voyages operates out of Mystic and Charleston, S.C., working with children's hospital social workers to identify potential candidates.

"We're not affiliated with these children's centers, but they put out our brochures or hand them to families, and if someone's interested, they'll call me and I'll set it up," Dokter said.

The organization's fleet includes three boats: Delphis, a center cockpit ketch built in 1979; Shenanigan, a center-cockpit Gulfstar Ketch built in 1979; and The Violet, a 45-foot Scots Zulu built in Scotland in 1911.

"The whole idea is to get them out on the water and give them

responsibilities," Dotker said. "We get them to hold the rigging and steer the boat once we're sailing, so they gain confidence and a sense of self-worth."

Not only are these experiences great for the kids, but they're also beneficial for parents.

"What's amazing is that, once we get the kids busy and they're doing stuff — I have a good captain and a good crew, so I kind of sit down," Dokter said. "Most of the time, the mothers sit with me because they need to talk with somebody."

Dokter is originally from Michigan, growing up right on Lake Michigan.

"I was a salvage diver in the Great Lakes," he said. "We dove shipwrecks and historic sites, taking stuff off of ships and putting it in museums. Sometimes, you'd see a bump on a radar, and we'd go down and see what it was."

After college, Dokter worked as a respiratory therapist in an intensive care unit, treating patients with ventilators and helping those with emphysema.

His wife, originally from this neck of the woods, wound up working in Michigan, which is where the two met. Eventually, her job moved back here, and Dokter followed her, launching a woodworking business in Connecticut. While he stills takes on small woodworking jobs every now and then, he spends the bulk of his time running Valiant Voyages.

"We try to use classic boats that are steady and just go right through the water," he said. "No one gets sick, no one bounces around. It's so wonderful to get out there and forget about your cares."

If you're interested in learning more about Valiant Voyages, how to get involved, or how to make a tax-deductible donation, visit valiantvoyages.org

Keystone and Torch Clubs to return at Boys & Girls

Club Leadership and service opportunities for middle and high school students | By Jessie Wright

The Boys & Girls Club of Redding-Easton is bringing back two programs this year – Keystone Club and Torch Club – that had been put on pause during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Keystone and Torch Clubs are service and leadership programs through the national Boys & Girls Club of America that encourage self-directed, community-based service.

"The idea is it's community, service-based, leadership," said Erin Tiernan, member of the Boys & Girls Club of Redding-Easton Board of Directors. "The kids form leadership roles within the group, they pick out what projects and directions they are going in, what groups they want to work with – it's very hands-on for the kids."

Projects and service activities can be small, like shoveling neighbors' driveways, to larger undertakings, like working with social service organizations that may need extra help.

The Boys & Girls Club will be holding two information meetings this month for parents and kids who may be interested in learning more and joining in. These meetings will help gauge the interest for the programs and inform the exact schedule for when the clubs will kick off and meet throughout the year.

Keystone Club For all Easton/Redding students currently in grades 8-11

Information meeting: Monday, May 15 at 6:15 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. at 170 Cross Highway

According to Boys & Girls Club of America, Keystone Clubs "provide leadership development opportunities for young people ages 14 to 18. Youth participate

in activities in three focus areas: academic success, career preparation, and community service. With the guidance of an adult advisor, Keystone Clubs aim to have a positive impact on members, the Club, and community."

Torch Club For all Easton/Redding students currently in grades 5-7

Information meeting: Wednesday, May 24 at 6:15 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. at 170 Cross Highway

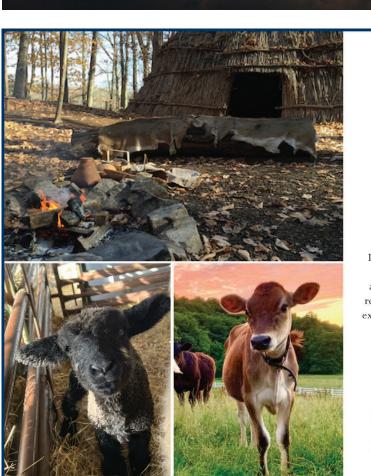
Torch Club helps to meet the special character-development needs of younger adolescents at a critical stage in their life. The Boys & Girls Club of America describes it as, " a powerful vehicle through which young people develop and strengthen their 21st-century leadership skills, giving them a firm foundation of good character and integrity." The club members elect officers and implement projects in four focus areas: service to Club and community, education, health and fitness, and social recreation.

"I think it's going to be a good thing to bring back to the community," Tiernan added. "The idea is to bring service opportunities to the community and to get kids involved with things again."

To register for an information meeting, visit signupgenius.com/ go/30e0f44acae22a4fa7-bgcre1 or e-mail executive@bcgre.org

Follow the Boys & Girls Club of Redding-Easton on Facebook or Instagram for updates on new programs and offerings







PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR SPRING OPEN DAYS! Sundays, May 7 & June 4

Drop by anytime between 1 and 4 PM and spend a joyful afternoon with members of our staff and board. Meet some of our youngest barnyard residents, tour our Woodland Indian encampment, explore our trails, visit with our delightful program animals, and enjoy a delicious farm treat!

We can't wait to welcome you!

If you have any concerns about the weather, please check our website after 9 AM.



101 Marchant Road West Redding, CT 06896 203-938-2117 newpondfarm.org

Special May events at New Pond Farm Education Center | By Ann Taylor

Seasonal rhythms are one of the many things we look forward to at New Pond Farm Education Center. Along with the greening of our pastures and the emergence of our pollinator gardens, our paddocks, barnyard, and piggery are filling with new life.

This is also a season when our talented staff members will have the opportunity to work with 2,300 eager young explorers from area schools. They will be joining us for hands-on programs where they will begin to discover the many wonders of our wetlands, woodlands, and farm.

In addition to our engaging programs for members and students, we are also getting ready for two very special May events: our Annual Golf Outing and our Spring Auction.

On May 16, we will celebrate our 20th Annual Golf Outing. This amazing event was started by our former Board President, Sharon Coates. To make this a uniquely "New Pond" event, Sharon and her husband, Parker, created dozens of large hand-painted wooden roosters, pigs, sheep, and cows to greet the golfers along the course and to serve as signposts to thank our generous sponsors. Through the years, we have looked forward to bringing "the farm" to the Redding Country Club for a very

special day.

When Sharon moved from Redding, she passed the Outing's chairmanship onto the tireless Sue Dorenbosch, who is an inspiration to all of us. This joyful event has netted over \$600,000 in support of the Education Center and its programs through the years, and we would like to thank the 111 businesses and individuals who have come together to sponsor this

year's event – a record number.

Our Spring Auction will also take place on May 16. With 80

exciting offerings, there will be something for everyone, so we hope Sentinel readers will visit newpondfarm.org starting May 15 to participate. Thanks to months of creative effort on the part of our hard-working committee, another group of generous donors has been inspired to offer incredible gifts such as: premiere seating and parking for four at the Yankees and Astros baseball game; a spectacular two-night getaway in NYC; trips to Antiqua and Barbados; glorious artwork from Redding artists - including one by Robert Mars, entitled "Dom Perignon 2023", which has been created in celebration of this anniversary year; cooking lessons and dinners with celebrated chefs; premier wine baskets; handmade jewelry; and golf foursomes and lessons. Children will love the selection of items designed for outdoor fun and exploration.

Proceeds from both events will support our programs, our scholarship fund for students from urban schools, and help to keep this beautiful 102-acre property with its many buildings and animals in the best possible condition. Thank you to the entire Redding community for your support.

Ann Taylor is Executive Director, New Pond Farm Education Center

Putnam Park to bring history alive to students | By Pamela Brown



Photo courtesy of Friends and Neighbors of Putnam Memorial State Park

The Revolutionary War is brought to life for school children this spring as they're immersed in the historical time of the founding of our country. For over 20 years, the Friends and Neighbors of Putnam Park (FANS) have hosted their annual School Days program to provide an interactive educational experience to over 1,000 elementary school students.

"The kids are studying the Revolutionary War in school, so this is an extension of history class," said Barbara Wyton, Director of School Days and a member of FANS. School Days runs from May 18 through the 26 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. "The program exposes children to how life was in the Revolutionary times, gives them a perspective of history, and also exposes them to the oldest public park in the state." The park will remain open to the public during the School Days programming. "If you happen to be taking a walk during these days, check it out," she added.

Serving as a fundraiser for FANS for the development of future educational programs, artifact conservation, and museum upkeep, the program draws about 150 students each day from thirteen different schools in Western Connecticut, including John Read Middle School. New this year are homeschooled groups and students from Port Chester, New York. "This event is my favorite way to kick off the Park's active season, because it combines all the best aspects of what we do. It gets students some much-needed fresh

air and exercise while allowing students to experience history in context. And it's lots of fun," said Ellery Thomas Leary, Interpretive Guide and President of FANS.

The event is both educational and fun, with students traveling to various stations throughout the park to watch and listen to seven 18th-century reenactors and artisans, including a cook, a potter, a spinner, a blacksmith, a musician, soldiers, and others, as they demonstrate and discuss the facets of life in the late 1700s. "The entertaining elements are crucial for capturing students' attention and making them want to learn more. Students sometimes struggle to connect with history in the classroom, and for those students, engaging all their senses can change and enrich the way they experience history education," said Leary. Hands-on, students are invited to experience some of the activities, such as using a pottery wheel. "Historic interpreters in period-accurate clothing help children imagine what their lives might have been like during the Revolutionary War and allow them to fill in the blanks to visualize the bustling 1778-9 encampment around its present-day remnants."

One of the reenactors is Billy Michaels, of Bethel, who has been playing a British soldier and a shanty singer for the program for many years. Shanty (or chantey) is the term for a folk song sung by sailors on vessels to help the crew adjust the ropes on the sails. "I introduce the students to some of the most fantastic songs during

the Revolutionary period," said Michaels, who spent 25 years at the Public House at Old Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts. Dressed in 18th-century attire and speaking with an accent, Michaels plays an instrument and offers a presentation. "I sing songs about the Boston Tea Party, songs that were sung all the way back in the 1600s that were transformed in the 1700s with different words. Soldiers under the command of General George Washington would change the words to be fitting for their time and sing toasting songs to Washington's health that were sung in the taverns," he explained. Michaels likes asking students if they know Francis Hopkinson. "He was the number one songwriter the Elton John of the Revolutionary War period. He will be singing the commonly known 'Yankee Doodle', Connecticut's state song, as well as its original lyrics. "It's very relevant. The kids sing the refrain with me. I'm shocked that children of a digital age would be so enamored by this. They know a lot. I'm surprised by how much they know and how enamored they are. I feel good they're genuinely

interested and fascinated." In addition, students are introduced to the history of Putnam Park while walking the park's trails and visiting the sites where the soldiers encamped and reading the signage beside the statues. They also tour the Park's Museum where a guide offers information on exhibits and historical material including artifacts unearthed at the campsite archaeological excavations, stop in at the Visitor's Center, and browse the store to purchase handmade items made by the reenactors. At the conclusion of the day, students gather around a soldier who shoots off a cannon. "We tried that for the first time last year, and it was quite effective," said Wyton.

A former fifth grade teacher, Wyton knows kids love field trips. "At that age, kids remember certain things because they're actively involved. They love this trip," she said. "Some of the same schools come back every year, because it's such a great field trip." ■

Local professional actors to mount live staged reading of Steel Magnolias

By Pamela Brown



Photo by William Roberts

The cast of Steel Magnolias from left to right: Diana Canova (director), Phoebe Madden, Áine Duffy, Andrea Barrett, Alexandra Fortin, Ellen Cody, and Mary Jo Duffy

Three generations of stellar actors will be coming together later this month to present an intimate staged reading of the iconic play Steel Magnolias. "It's an exciting opportunity to see a live reading featuring top local stage talent. For every one of these women who've given a lot of their life energy to teaching, it's really fun for us to be together," said Phoebe Madden, a member of the cast and owner of a vocal and acting studio in Redding. "It takes very close teamwork to do a play like this."

Seeking an opportunity to bring together an ensemble of likeminded professionals, Madden was inspired to organize this two-fold event that serves as a fundraiser for the Mark Twain Library and raises awareness of the Open Insulin Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to making safe, affordable, high-quality insulin accessible to everyone.

Madden was grateful that Diana Canova was willing to direct it. The actress, known for her role in the TV sitcom Soap and now professor at Manhattanville College, directed youth theater in Redding public schools for over 30 years. Under Canova's direction, Joel Barlow High School's theater program won several awards from the Connecticut Drama Association.

"I love to direct and the opportunity to work with wonderful local actors, most who are friends, and to do something for the Library was appealing to me," said Canova.

The reading takes place Sunday, May 21, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Mark Twain Library. Honoring the play's wedding scene, an all-pink reception, including an armadillo-shaped groom's cake and pink lemonade, will follow the reading. There will also be a musical surprise during the event.

A comedy-drama written by Robert Harling in 1987, Steel Magnolias was adapted as a film in 1989 starring Julia Roberts and Academy Award-winners Sally Field and Shirley MacLaine. It centers on a group of women from a small-town Southern community who meet up at a beauty parlor using humor to strengthen their friendship as they navigate life's challenges. "While a delightful and delicious comedy, the play also deals with a young woman's struggle with Type 1 diabetes," said Madden whose family member has the disease.

In addition to Madden, the cast includes five other local theater professional actors, educators, and voice coaches, including Aine Duffy, Andrea Barrett, Alexandra Fortin, Ellen Cody, and Mary Jo Duffy. "Two of the six are mother and daughter, which is fitting since the play largely revolves around a mother and daughter and their close friends," explained Madden, grateful to work with Fortin, a former student of hers. "This production would fall short if it didn't have caring actresses who listen well to one another," said

Madden. Sounds effects and stage directions will be provided by Marty Robinson and Annie Evans, respectively.

Madden explained the format is perfect for the play. "Staged readings are all about the dialogue and the relationships of the people. It's a beautiful way for a play to come to life without all the bells and whistles of sets, costumes, and lights," she said. "People will hear the dialogue in a very fresh way without any distraction."

Canova noted there's an immediacy between actor and audience. "It's like listening to a radio show, and these ladies are right in your midst and play off each other. It's very real," said Canova. "The play is so good and touches on different relationships between these women. There's much emotion going on in this piece - care, anger, love - that people can relate. I wanted them to make these characters their own and be true to the author's words and not worry about the film's

Steel Magnolias is meaningful to Madden, who earned her Actors' Equity card (the union for professional actors and stage managers) playing Annelle and has performed in the play two other times, and she noted that the theme resonated with other cast members. "They either have personal health struggles or their family members are overcoming health challenges," said Madden.

Canova hopes the audience feels a connection to the storyline. "I think everybody has been touched by this disease. I want them to be entertained, moved, and hopefully they'll look up the insulin project," she said. "My goal is for people to have a moment's escape. What is so wonderful about this piece is it's incredibly sad, it's incredibly funny, and if you can make someone laugh and make someone cry, that's good writing."

Erin Shea Dummeyer, Library Director, is delighted to be hosting a reading of the beloved play. "It's our honor to present this group of top local theater talent to our community bringing together the opportunity to raise funds for the Library while increasing awareness of Type 1 diabetes," she

Madden believes theater is a very powerful, therapeutic, and spiritual tool. "I'm hoping the audience will have a good laugh, they'll have felt an experience where they cared deeply about the people in front of them, and they'll want to go home and love the people in their lives even better." ■

> For more information and tickets, visit marktwainlibrary.org For more information on the Open Insulin Foundation, visit: openinsulin.org

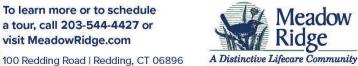


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WorkspaceCT: A collaborative educational facility for learners of all interests By Justin Reynolds





Photos courtesy of WorkspaceCT

Whether you're looking to learn how to record music in a professional studio, build your own cutting board, or become a better singer, the folks at WorkspaceCT have you covered.

WorkspaceCT is a collaborative educational facility located at 16 Trowbridge Drive in Bethel. The 32,000 square-foot space is owned and operated by two area Regional Education Service Centers -Cooperative Educational Services in Trumbull and EdAdvance in Litchfield – both non-profits that support school districts in western Connecticut, including Redding's.

We are uniquely positioned support learners of all ages and abilities throughout Connecticut," western said Richard Reynolds, Director of WorkspaceCT. "We are open to all learners who want to try something new, expand their skills, or create something extraordinary."

The facility, which has been open for just under two years, caters to audiences of all sorts.

"We offer a lot of professional development and training to teachers in our region, and many local superintendents bring their staff here in the summer to plan for the next school year," Reynolds said. "In addition to this, we offer a wide variety of enrichment programs for kids when school isn't in session, as well as classes for adults to broaden their horizons or try something new."

WorkspaceCT operates out of the former Cannondale Bicycle headquarters, whose founder, Joe Montgomery, was a longtime Redding resident. The spacious facility features a black box theater, recording studio, culinary program, woodshop, dance studio, makerspace, VR suite, sewing lab, and much more. It also hosts a small home-school community that meets a few times a week and the ACCESS high school program, an alternative school setting for high school students who benefit

from a different type of learning environment, Reynolds said.

"We are also growing strong community ties to offer event or meeting spaces for local organizations, community programs, and businesses," Reynolds said. "Supporting our local community is one of our biggest goals."

According to Reynolds, the facility was previously owned by a home-schooling organization for a few years after Cannondale Bicycle relocated to Wilton.

"Covid hindered their ability to meet and keep the building open," Reynolds said. "It sat vacant for a while before the previous owners decided to sell. CES and EdAdvance jumped at the opportunity to embark on a shared facility and all the possibilities the building can offer."

WorkspaceCT is a truly unique operation. "Nothing like WorkspaceCT exists," Reynolds continued. "This makes it hard

to market all the options and capabilities."

For example, the facility acts at times like a public school with students attending classes and programs regularly. It also offers several professional development opportunities for local educators, "who can work together in innovative ways and bring more experiential learning experiences to their students," Reynolds said.

"We are also like a community center because we offer enrichment activities for kids and adults during the day, evenings, and weekends," Reynolds continued. "Everything from adult cooking classes for couples to 3D printing basics or financial literacy classes. Some of these programs are specifically scheduled when schools are closed so families can have an option for a full-day camp for their children."

WorkspaceCT is also available to rent for corporate events, parties, and meetings.

"We recently hosted a six-year-

old's birthday party, a karaoke dance party, and a live music concert," Reynolds explained.

WorkspaceCT is focused on staying flexible in terms of programming and the facility itself.

"We have renovated about 20% of the space in a short time and built new classrooms, offices, and shared community space for our high school program," Reynolds continued. "We have fantastic technology like virtual reality, laser cutters, programmable lighting and sound systems in the theater, and 3D printers. The recording studio and industrial kitchen are second to none. Students can also grow vegetables in the WorkspaceCT greenhouse and vegetable gardens and utilize the produce in the kitchen."

Events and programming are constantly changing, and WorkspaceCT is happy to take suggestions for new offerings, too.

"We are truly a community and family-oriented, experiential learning environment where you can experience hands-on cooking classes with a certified culinary teacher or build your own wood cutting board with a certified CTE professional while, right down the hallway, your child practices MMA skills from an award-winning sensei or creates a virtual reality video game," Reynolds said. "All of these amazing opportunities are right in your backyard." ■

> For more information, visit workspacect.org or follow them on Facebook @ *WorkspaceCT*

Treat your mom on Mother's Day | By Pamela Brown

In 1914, then-President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed the second Sunday in May as the first Mother's Day to publicly thank every mother in the U.S. for all that they

According to an annual survey by the National Retail Federation, this year people are expected to spend a record \$35.7 billion on Mother's Day gifts, nearly \$4 billion more than last year. They reported the most popular gifts are flowers and greeting cards (74%) and special outings, such as dinner or brunch (60%). Treat mom to a delicious brunch at one of the delightful local restaurants that are serving up something special to honor this special day.

Lombardi's Trattoria 22 Main Street

(203) 544-9447; lombarditrattoria.com

Instead of their usual 4:00 p.m. Sunday opening, on Mother's Day Lombardi's Trattoria will open at noon. Along with their regular menu is a Specials Menu, featuring fresh Tuna Carpaccio, Lombardi's Surf and Turf, broiled New

Zealand Lamb Chops, and Risotto del Mare, among others. All ladies will receive a complimentary long stem rose.

Milestone

2 Main Street (203) 587-1700; milestonect.com

If Mom enjoys jazz, take her to Milestone for a cool Jazz Brunch on Mother's Day from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The Chris Coogan Trio – a local band known for its straight-ahead jazz, fusion jazz, and boogie-woogie - will be playing live starting at noon. The restaurant will be serving its regular Brunch Menu, featuring delicious cocktails, and eggs served up with sausage, steak, or vegetables, brioche French toast, huevos rancheros, fresh fruit, home fries, heritage smoked bacon, and more. "Mother's Day is a particularly special day to celebrate for me as my mother was my inspiration to open this restaurant," said owner Peter Fine. "I grew up in her restaurant, Soup's On, in downtown Westport some 40 years ago. Her food and warm and engaging personality have always been an inspiration to me."

Redding Roadhouse 406 Redding Road

(203) 938-3388; thereddingroadhouse.com

The Roadhouse's Mother's Day Brunch will have two seatings -11:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Guests can dine either indoors or on the outdoor patio. Brunch includes a wide selection of appetizers, meat and veggie burgers, soup, salads, and eggs in a variety of styles. In addition, there will be Mother's Day specials, including Berkshire ham steak and eggs, olive oil poached salmon, and much more. Bloody Marys or mimosas are unlimited.

Note: A \$25 deposit is required for the table.

Black Cat Grille

58 Redding Road

(203)587-1276; blackcatct.com Opening a half hour earlier than usual, the All-American-style-pub will be serving a special Mother's Day Brunch from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. In addition to steak and eggs, there will be Eggs Florentine and Benedict, Crab Benedict, Omelette of the Day, and French Toast. Moms have a choice of a complimentary Bellini, Bloody Mary, or

Mimosa. Customers can dine indoors or on the outdoor patio.

Uncle Leo's Not Just Donuts and Coffee.

19 Main Street (203) 587-1050;

facebook.com/uncleleos

In honor of Mother's Day, Uncle Leo's will be baking up some hand-cut donuts. Treat mom to breakfast or lunch. Leo's offers all kinds of baked goods, breakfast sandwiches, a variety of egg dishes, bagels, and more. For lunch, there's hot and cold sandwiches, salads, burgers, hotdogs, and other lunch specials. ■

specially-decorated old-fashioned



April Showers Bring May Plant Sales!

We're so excited to announce the return of our Annual Plant Sale on Saturday, May 13th from 10am - 2pm at 130 Picketts Ridge Road in Redding!

We have an unbelievable variety of productive heirloom vegetable, herb, and flower seedlings ready for planting. All our seedlings are certified organic and grown with love in our 100' greenhouse on site.

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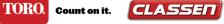


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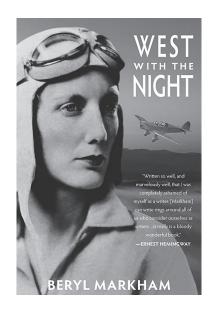


BOOK REVIEW

West with the Night

By Beryl Markham

293 p.p. / MacMillan / \$17.00



Beryl Markham was an aviation pioneer, race-horse trainer, and writer with great grace and a natural style. She had a world-class desire for adventure, a matching libido, native fearlessness, and a capacity to convert her experience of living into poetic elation. In West with the Night, we see her unique childhood and later how she lived outside conventions of the day. She acted out her destiny without inhibition.

Whatever Markham writes about achieves great clarity. On learning to fly: "We swung over the hills, and over the town, and back again, and I saw how a man can be master of a craft, and how a craft can be master of an element. I saw the alchemy of perspective reduce my world, and all my other life, to grains in a cup. I learned to watch, to put my trust in other hands than mine. And I learned to wander. I learned what every dreaming child needs to know – that no horizon is so far that you cannot get above it or beyond it."

West with the Night is unique as part memoir, part history, part adventure story, and all of it detailing sensibilities of a person who could not be other than who she was. This was in an era of

few rights granted to women. Not formally schooled, Markham's remarkable writing revealed a rare natural talent uncorrupted by Procrustean education, and unconventional attitude punctuated by high achievement in several spheres.

Raised on a small ranch area near Nairobi, Africa, she experienced her father moving to Peru while she was still a teenager. While missing him keenly, she learned to be self-sufficient and independent. By standards of the day, she was considered wild. She learned to fly and became the only female bush pilot in Africa. Her epic love affairs were the stuff of legend and scandal. They included, among others, two sons of King George V: Edward, Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII), and Henry, Duke of Gloucester. She didn't bat an eye. She controlled her fate and did not allow even powerful men to do it for her. She granted herself license to be free and took her interests to remarkable achievements.

As a teenager and young adult, she trained horses, an activity she returned to at the end of her life. As a professional pilot, she spotted elephant herds for safari hunters in the bush. To culminate her flying career, she was the first person to fly east to west across the Atlantic Ocean. Her understanding of Africa was personal. "All nations lay claim to Africa, but none has wholly possessed her yet. In time she will be taken, yielding neither to Nazi nor to Fascist conquest, but to integrity equal to her own and to wisdom capable of understanding her wisdom and of discerning between wealth and fulfillment." Nothing can be said against that sentiment.

> Review by Tom Casey Tom is the author of **Human** Error and Strangers' Gate

LIBRARY CORNER

By Erin Shea Dummeyer

I am not the best person to give advice for how to raise a reader, because I am not a trained children's librarian, and my kids are still far from "raised". But, I can share what has worked for our

I was lucky to receive a lot of books from colleagues when I was expecting my first baby. One colleague served on a children's book award committee the previous year and gave me all her leftovers. Friends and family knew we would appreciate books because of what I do for a living. And appreciate them we did - and still do! Night after night, and book after book.

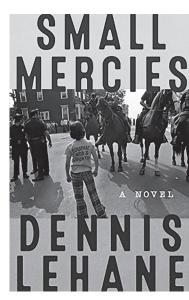
I once read a parenting book that told me that to instill a love of reading in your child, you should model the behavior yourself. I hadn't really thought about this. Most of my reading time is reserved for after the kids are in bed. But recently, I found myself reading my Kindle when perhaps I should have been paying more attention to my three-year-old. (It was a really good book!) My daughter asked me what I was doing. "I'm reading a grown-up book," I replied.

"But mommy, why are you not saying the words?"

She had never witnessed me silently reading, and she was flabbergasted when I told her that grown-ups can read inside their heads. If you're trying to raise a reader in your household, I invite you to make the library a regular trip in the course of your week. Pretty soon, it will be on the same route as getting gas and going to the grocery store. Our children's librarians love choosing books for burgeoning readers. And for those who have already raised a reader, I think of you whenever my daughter asks me to read the same book for the fourth time. I will miss this one day. ■

> Erin Shea Dummeyer is Director, Mark Twain Library

Good books for good readers | By Margi Esten



I didn't get much sleep last night. My just-published copy of Dennis Lehane's new book, Small Mercies: A Novel, arrived in my mailbox the other day. I started reading and, true to form when it comes to Lehane, it was almost impossible to put down. In fact, the New York Times said, "You'll be lucky if you read a more engaging novel this year. Small Mercies is thought-provoking, engaging, and can't put-it-down entertainment."

The novel is set in the "Southie"



area outside of Boston during the tumultuous months in 1974 when the city's desegregation of its public schools exploded into violence. Incredibly timely (in 2023!), it is indeed a thriller, yet also a snapshot of the dark heart of American racism. And few authors can depict such circumstances as mesmerizing as Lehane can.

Apologies, as I know that I have written about Dennis Lehane in earlier columns, but he deserves the recognition. This novel's characters are reminiscent of those in an earlier book of his - Mystic River – and, as with that story, the reader can hear clearly not only the South Boston accents, but also the gravity of their desperate situations.





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Damsel in distress

Once upon a time, there was a damsel in distress. A princess, of course, who was tired of the curses and the dragons and the towers and the mattresses. She wanted a normal, happy life, without so much stress. So, she decided to clean

She covered her mirrors and cut her hair. She donated her ball gowns and brought her pet frogs back to the river. She was going to just go forward on her own. She was done with the past, with the fairy tale ending that never quite came true.

She gathered her determination and put her foot down: "I am ready!" she declared. "Ready to go forward. Move on. Leave this misery behind. Ready. Ready." Ready." But nothing happened.

No magic. No white horses. It was just her. There. Alone. So, she tried again, "I'm really ready

now." But the energy was draining out of her like air from a balloon. "Well, maybe I'm ready. I'm just about ready...to be ready. Time to go out and live life with joy... Right?! Really almost possibly ready...now..." Did it work?

Well, not so much. Despite her declarations and bold statements, she had only changed the outside elements. Inside, she was still angry. She still blamed the witches and the giants and the funny little guy who sang around the fire. I'm okay, she thought, but they they're jerks.

And that's where she fell right back into the dungeon.

She was trying to move forward by putting the material parts behind her, but she was still taking the emotional baggage with. She was still angry and disappointed, vengeful and bitter - still withholding her forgiveness.

Now, we all love a good sob story. They're very addictive. "He did her wrong," or "Did you hear what she did!" or "They were so superior and look how they fell from their throne!" But the problem with this sort of thinking is that it cements us back into a role that only cuts us off at the knees: the role of victim.

Like the princess, we often want to move beyond the miseries of our former life, we want to feel a sense of victory, a sense of our own power, but those are very high vibrations. And they aren't accessible to us when you are stuck in a lower vibration. And playing the victim is a low vibration. It is very difficult to get to a high vibration of "happy ever after" from the state of victimhood and blame.

The magic key to get you out of this dungeon is forgiveness. If you're stuck anywhere in your life,

ask yourself, "Who have I not forgiven yet?" This is the place where you're still defining yourself as the victim, seeing something as

And most of the time, the person we don't forgive is ourselves. Everyone else is allowed to not live up to expectations, but not us. We have higher standards. We are nobility. We need to make a good impression on others. We need to have a good impression of ourselves. We want to be the princess who was wronged. Even if we have to make up all sorts of fairy tales to be able to keep ourselves in our delusions.

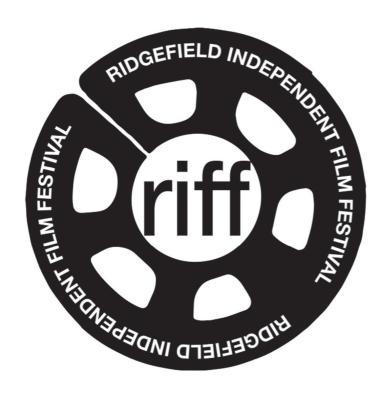
There is no nobility in not forgiving yourself. We aren't better people because we don't forgive ourselves. In fact, the opposite is true: we will treat everyone else worse because we don't forgive ourselves. We cannot give others

a depth of compassion that we do not first extend to ourselves. We see ourselves as unworthy, and then we project that onto everyone around us.

What if for just a few seconds, we allowed ourselves to forgive ourselves? What if you closed your eyes just for five seconds right now, and for those five seconds, you stopped hating anything about yourself: what you did, what you didn't do, what you thought, how you felt. What if for five seconds you allowed every single moment in your life to be perfect.

What happens in the next mo-

See if you don't see the course of your life with just a little bit more fairy dust.



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The Natural World

Summer in the state parks

No Child Left Inside programming beckons families to get outdoors | By Rob Sample



crafts.

Photo courtesy of CT DEEP

Instructors from Connecticut

Aquatic Resources Education will

be on hand to provide lessons in

fishing, fly casting and fly tying.

Adults and kids will also be able

to take part in trout stocking, take

a nature hike, and make arts and

somewhat preliminary, that initial

weekend event will be followed

by Family Wellness Day on May

20. The fun takes place at Stratton

Brook State Park in Simsbury, also

from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Family

Wellness Day happens in conjunc-

tion with similar events scheduled

throughout the U.S. at state and

State Park will be among the open-

house events scheduled for nature

centers and museums statewide on

Memorial Day Weekend (May 27-

29). The other parks in this week-

end program include, in order of

proximity to Redding: Kellogg

Environmental Center and Os-

borne Homestead Museum in Der-

by, Dinosaur State Park in Rocky

Hill, Meigs Point Nature Center

(located at Madison's Hammon-

assett Beach), Gillette Castle in

East Haddam, Fort Trumbull State

Park in New London, and Good-

win Conservation Center in Hamp-

Redding's Putnam Memorial

national parks.

While the program is still

Family fun in the great outdoors is the stuff fond memories are made of – and with 110 state parks and 32 state forests, including two in Redding, getting outside in Connecticut is never difficult.

Now in its 18th year, Connecticut's "Families in the Parks" program (also known as No Child Left Inside®) recently announced a summer full of fun and exploration for all state residents – and it's all entirely free of charge. Begun in 2006, the program aims to connect kids to the wonder of nature at a time when the lure of consumer electronics keeps many children indoors for large blocks of time.

"Our goal is to get kids and families to disconnect, get outside, and enjoy everything our state parks and forests have to offer," noted Kristen Bellantuono, No Child Left Inside Coordinator for Connecticut's Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). "This year, we've changed the program to offer a greater variety of activities, aiming to attract a larger number of families and children.

"Our kickoff event is on Saturday, May 13: a free family fishing day at Wharton Brook State Park on the Wallingford/North Haven line, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.," Bellantuono continued. "No license is necessary to fish."

Weekend, from June 3-4. The program will offer sponsored hikes, walks, and programs at state parks and forests, which are yet to be announced.

Participating families will also

Participating families will also have multiple opportunities to take part in boating. The first Boating Day is set for June 10 at Burr Pond State Park in Torrington, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The second takes place at Hopeville Pond State Park in Griswold on July 22. The final Boating Day will be at Lake Waramaug on August 19 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. "We've tried to make it possible for people from all parts of the state to take part in activities such as this, at a park that is close to them," Bellantuono said.

Among the other popular events scheduled for summer will be Dinosaur Day at Dinosaur State Park (August 5) and Saltwater Fishing Day (August 12) at Fort Trumbull State Park. The hours for both events are 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

The program now extends into the fall and winter, including several holiday celebrations in December. "We've formatted 10 events throughout the rest of the year in which people can take part," said Bellantuono.

Those events won't be as frequent, however, and some – such as an ice-fishing event at Burr Pond next February – are subject to cancellation and rescheduling if weather conditions are poor.

More details will be posted online as this year's program is finalized. To register for any of the programs, visit portal.ct.gov/NCLI. ■

> For more details, visit portal.ct.gov/NCLI/About-NC-LI/Our-Programs

Butterflies in our backyards

Watch out for Tiger Swallowtails

By Victor DeMasi



Photo from the Connecticut
Butterfly Atlas
Adult Tiger Swallowtail at nectar

Five people responded to my request for Mourning Cloak butterflies heading into April. One includes my spouse who forwarded an excellent photo. I saw none but was glad to know they are still part of our fauna. Thanks to all. Still no sightings reported of spring Azures.

Spring is slow to come and so is the appearance of our Aurelian beauties. On the positive side, all this rain contributes to fresh succulent growth, which the caterpillars of butterflies and moths will dine enthusiastically on when the sun finally arrives.

Tiger Swallowtails' large and vibrant yellow when freshly eclosed from their chrysalis challenge Monarchs as our most spectacular butterflies. They have two broods locally, one first emerging late May/ early June, and the second brood midsummer usually in greater numbers. On a warm day, look for the odd Tiger Swallowtail highballing and, if you are lucky, settling for a sip of nectar at a spring bloom most reliably lilac. The biology of these early fliers is poorly understood. Are they a third brood which occurs in more southern states?

If you see Spring Tiger Swallowtails, send me a message at monarchvictor@gmail.com and a picture too if you can sneak in close enough. I am entering all sightings in the Peabody Museum database.

Victor DeMasi is a curatorial affiliate at the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History His field work with butterflies contributed almost a thousand citations to the Connecticut Butterfly Atlas

"Friends talk to friends"

Peer mental health support at Barlow / continued from page 3

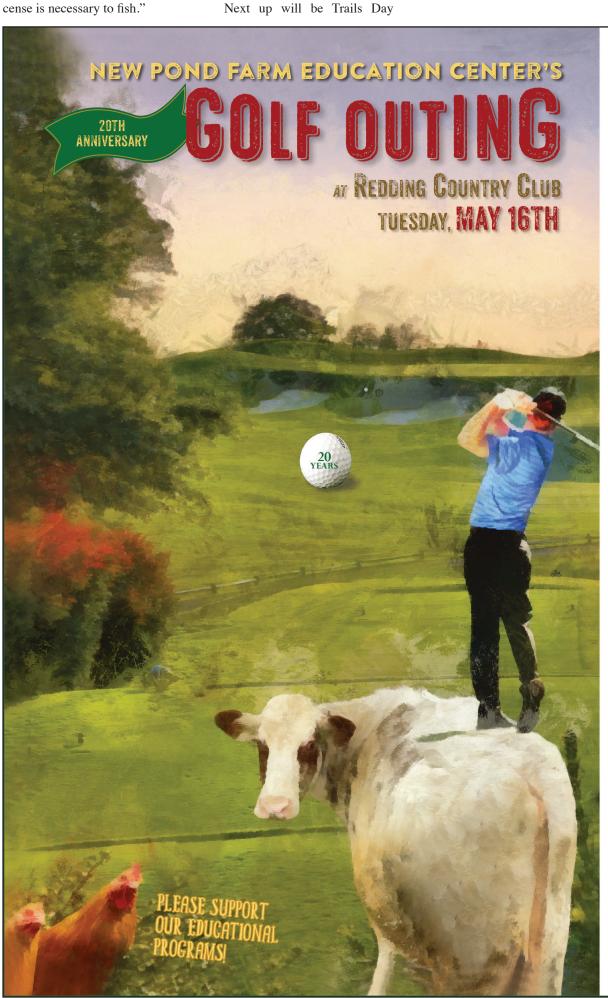
years," Zuanelli said. "I think the Wellness 9 presentation is valuable. It lets the freshmen know that there are upperclassmen that you can reach out to and get some assistance if you need it."

Additionally, Zuanelli said having the training "bridges the gap between students and faculty." He explained that while the training for students "is not meant to make the student a counselor, it is to assist them and educate them on the resources that are available and how to help peer access those resources. Some students struggling with mental health may be afraid to

share because of stigma, and the training helps us to educate others on mental health to reduce stigma."

Baer added that he thinks "peers are aware" when a friend is acting differently and being trained helps him know how to respond and help someone get assistance if they need it.

"Some kids may not know where to go or the specific help, but the training arms you with an understanding of how and where you can correctly help and support your friend," he said.





New Pond Farm Education Center

20TH ANNUAL GOLF OUTING MAY 16TH

Our enthusiastic foursomes are in place, the RCC greens are in beautiful shape, and there is still time to support this fantastic event by joining our flock of generous sponsors!

All proceeds will support the environmental and agricultural programs that we share with schools, children, families, and adults throughout Fairfield County.

Please visit our website or follow this QR code to see the many levels of tax-deductible sponsorship that are still available!

Thank You!



newpondfarm.org

Arts

Thursday, May 11

CLOUDMAN:

E-mail Bob Marty at

bobmarty@gmail.com

The Photos Of Craig Peyton 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Photography exhibition opening Exhibition also on view weekends from 12:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. and by appointment. Georgetown Arts & Cultural Center 5 Main Street

Thursday, May 11

Redding Grange's First Acoustic Open Mic Night

6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Hosted by Scott Smith. Musician sign-up at 6:30 p.m., music begins at 7:00 p.m. Call Scott at 203-803-8015 with questions. Redding Grange #15 399 Newtown Turnpike reddinggrange.org

Friday, May 12

Coffee House at Joel Barlow **High School**

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Joel Barlow High School 100 Black Rock Turnpike joelbarlowps.org

Saturday, May 13

Easton Arts Council Art Reception

7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. Reception celebrating the Easton Arts Council's 25th Anniversary and their spring exhibit, Art in the Country. Easton Public Library / Community Room 691 Morehouse Road Easton eastonlibrary.org

Thursday, May 18

Photography Workshop -**Composition, People & Places** Part II

6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Zoom Mark Twain Library 439 Redding Road marktwainlibrary.org R

Friday, May 19 - Sunday, May 21

Joel Barlow High School's **Production of** *The Hunchback*

of Notre Dame 7:00 p.m. on May 19 and May 20 2:00 p.m. on May 20 and May 21 Joel Barlow High School 100 Black Rock Turnpike joelbarlowps.org R

$C_{\mathsf{HILDREN}}, T_{\mathsf{EENS}}$

Saturday, May 13

STEM at New Pond Farm (**Grades 1-4**)

10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. New Pond Farm Education Center 101 Marchant Road newpondfarm.org \$, R

Acoustic Open Mic Night

Musician sign-up at 6:30 p.m.,

music begins at 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, May 11

6:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Hosted by Scott Smith

Redding Grange #15

reddinggrange.org

399 Newtown Turnpike

Saturday, May 13

Junior Staff: Animal Caretaker

12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. For middle and high school students New Pond Farm Education Center 101 Marchant Road newpondfarm.org \$, R

Monday, May 15

Informational Meeting on Keystone Club

6:15 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Grades 8-11 Boys & Girls Club of Easton-Redding 170 Cross Highway signupgenius.com/ go/30E0F44ACAE22A4FA7bgcre1

Tuesday, May 16

College Application Timeline Workshop

7:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Zoom Mark Twain Library 439 Redding Road marktwainlibrary.org R

R

Wednesday, May 24

Informational Meeting on Torch Club

6:15 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Grades 5-7 Boys & Girls Club of Easton-Redding 170 Cross Highway signupgenius.com/ go/30E0F44ACAE22A4FA7bgcre1 R

CRAFTS

Saturday, May 13

Redding Artisan Spring Fair 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

John Read Middle School 486 Redding Road facebook.com/reddingartisanfair

$H_{\text{EALTH}}, W_{\text{ELLNESS}}$

Thursday, May 11, 18 and 25

Midday Recharge: Spring **Meditation Series**

12:00 p.m. – 12:30 p.m. Zoom Mark Twain Library 439 Redding Road marktwainlibrary.org R

Friday, May 12

Play for Luke -**Boys Volleyball Match**

5:30 p.m. Charity match of the Barlow Boys Volleyball team raising money and awareness for mental health and suicide prevention. Joel Barlow High School 100 Black Rock Turnpike joelbarlowps.org

Saturday, June 3

Mindful Movement Outdoors at Westbrook

10:30 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. Low impact 45-minute outdoor class with a blend of Pilates, Barre + Yoga. All levels welcome. Westbrook Nature School 7 Long Ridge Road westbrooknatureschool.org \$, R

Nature

Saturday, May 13

Redding Garden Club Spring Plant Sale

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Redding Historical Society 43 Lonetown Road reddinggardenclub.org

Saturday, May 13

Homefront Farmers Plant Sale

10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Organic and heirloom produce varieties for sale. Homefront Farmers 130 Picketts Ridge Road homefrontfarmers.com

Saturday, May 13

Spring Birdwatching Walk

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Grace Farms 365 Lukes Wood Road New Canaan gracefarms.org \$, R

Saturday, May 20

Georgetown Volunteer Fire Company 2nd Annual Plant Sale and Swap

10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Preorder by May 12 or purchase day of the sale. Plants for swap can be dropped off day of or between 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. May 19. Granite Church 5 North Main Street E-mail gvfcauxiliary@gmail.com

Saturday, May 27

Gardening Basics: Spring Planting

2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.Drop-in program New Pond Farm Education Center 101 Marchant Road newpondfarm.org

Religious Services

Bethlehem Lutheran Church Sundays at 10:00 a.m. (in

person) or 10:15 a.m. (Zoom) 44 Portland Avenue bethlehemlutheranct.org

Calvary Independent Baptist Church

Adult and Child Sunday School at 10:00 a.m. Sundays at 11:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Wednesday prayer meeting at 7:00 p.m. Nursery provided for all services 711 Redding Road cibcredding.org

Christ Church, **Episcopal**

Sundays at 9:00 a.m. 184 Cross Highway christchurchredding.org

First Church of Christ, Congregational

Sundays at 10:00 a.m. 25 Cross Highway firstchurchredding.org

Long Ridge United Methodist

Sundays at 11:30 a.m. 201 Long Ridge Road Danbury longridgeumc.com

Sacred Heart / St. Patrick Parish Saturday Vigil: 4:00 p.m.

(Sacred Heart) and 5:30 p.m. (St. Patrick) Sundays: 8:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. (St. Patrick); 9:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. (Sacred Heart); 12:00 p.m. (Sacred Heart - Latin) Weekdays: 8:30 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays (St. Patrick); 8:30 a.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays (Sacred Heart); 6:00 p.m. Wednesdays (Sacred Heart – Latin) Eucharistic Adoration: 7:00 p.m. on Mondays (Sacred Heart); 7:00 p.m. on Thursdays (St. Patrick) Sacred Heart Catholic Church 30 Church Street St. Patrick Catholic Church 169 Black Rock Turnpike sacredheart-stpat.org

Temple B'nai Chaim Fridays at 7:30 p.m.

82 Portland Avenue Wilton templebnaichaim.org

Special Programs

Thursday, May 11

The Great British Baking Tour 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Culinary tour of the U.K. marktwainlibrary.org

Saturday, May 13

Household Hazardous Waste & **Electronic Waste Drop-Off**

9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.Newtown Public Works Garage 4 Turkey Hill Road Newtown hrra.org

Wednesday, May 17

Something Old, Something New - CT Weddings Throughout the Ages 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

In-person and Zoom Mark Twain Library 439 Redding Road marktwainlibrary.org

Friday, May 19

Heritage Center Tag Sale

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Sign up now as a vendor or save the date if you want to shop. Heritage Center Parking Lot 37 Lonetown Road E-mail mpilato@townofreddingct.org to register as a vendor R

MEETINGS

Thursday, May 11

Gilbert and Bennett Wire Mill Advisory Committee

6:00 p.m.

Town Hall / Hearing Room (subject to change to virtual or hybrid) 100 Hill Road townofreddingct.org

Tuesday, May 16

Region 9 Board of Education

7:00 p.m. Joel Barlow High School / Library Learning Commons 100 Black Rock Turnpike er9.org

Tuesday, May 16

Zoning Board of Appeals 7:00 p.m.

Zoom townofreddingct.org

Tuesday, May 16

Conservation Commission

7:30 p.m. Old Town House 23 Cross Highway townofreddingct.org

Wednesday, May 17

Region 9 BOE Curriculum Committee

1:30 p.m. Zoom er9.org

Wednesday, May 17

Water Pollution Control Commission Public Hearing & Regular Meeting 7:30 p.m.

Zoom townofreddingct.org

Thursday, May 18

Historic Review Committee 6:30 p.m. Zoom

townofreddingct.org

Thursday, May 18

Democratic Town Committee 7:30 p.m.

Town Hall / Hearing Room 100 Hill Road townofreddingct.org

Thursday, May 18

West Redding Fire District Annual Budget Meeting

7:30 p.m. West Redding Firehouse 306 Umpawaug Road townofreddingct.org

Monday, May 22

Board of Finance 7:30 p.m.

Town Hall / Hearing Room Subject to change to virtual or hybrid 100 Hill Road townofreddingct.org

Tuesday, May 23

ER9 Joint Boards of Education 7:00 p.m.

Joel Barlow High School Library Learning Commons 100 Black Rock Turnpike er9.org

Tuesday, May 23

Planning Commission

7:30 p.m. Town Hall / Hearing Room 100 Hill Road townofreddingct.org

Tuesday, May 23

Special Town Meeting

7:30 p.m. Redding Community Center 37 Lonetown Road townofreddingct.org

This Week's Featured Events **Redding Grange's First Homefront Farmers Redding Artisan**

Saturday, May 13 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Organic and heirloom varieties for sale



Plant Sale

Homefront Farmers 130 Picketts Ridge Road homefrontfarmers.com

Spring Fair Saturday, May 13

10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Shop handcrafted items made by local and student artisans John Read Middle School 486 Redding Road facebook.com/reddingartisanfair

Want to feature an upcoming event? E-mail us at

advertise@reddingsentinel.org for more information.

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Carol Hanlon 203.240.1233



George Hanlon 203.240.1234



Deb Haws 203.241.7977



Charlie Knoche

203.731.7770

In the Town of Redding, you will find distinctive Colonials, both antique and new(er) construction. Redding offers a peaceful, private lifestyle while offering many amenities!



39 Station Road, Redding | \$750,000

Character and charm abound in this nostalgic 1875 Colonial with extensive Saugatuck River frontage, bordering Aquarian and Boy Scouts protected land. Electricity in Barn, fishing dock, two-story Playhouse with a loft. Four Bedroom septic installed in 2006 and the oil burner is two years young. Listed by: Marilyn Sloper | 203-770-6240



68 Goodridge Road, Redding | \$1,430,000

Pristine, custom-built Center Hall Colonial situated high on a private, six acres with gorgeous views. The six-acre parcel includes a second potential building lot along with dazzling sunrises and sunsets. A beautiful, rural setting yet close to all amenities. Listed by: Margi Esten | 203-241-8453



Sharon Hoverman 203.733.5073



Jodi Langford 203.733.8804



Marge Lanzara 203.994.5301



Heather Lindgren 646.932.4075



Carissa McMahon 203.442.4159



Heather Payne 203.470.7069



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Ira Stone 203.240.5754



Terri Tournas 203.561.5893



Nicole Van Alstyne 203.648.8172



203.241.7957



Call Tim to discuss your mortgage options.





Tim Martin SVP of Mortgage Lending C: (203) 917-2800 grarate.com/timmartin O: (203) 974-5253 tim.martin@grarate.com 230 Greenwood Ave, #1A, Bethel, CT 06801



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