

Bids arrive for bridge construction

By Rocco Valluzzo

With designs for new bridges to replace those destroyed by last summer’s rainstorm in hand, Redding is now beginning to receive bids from contractors for construction.

The storm, which hit on August 18, dropped over eight inches of rain in Redding and left more than \$19 million in damages in its wake. Bridges on Brookside Road, Greenbush Road, Long Wall Road, and Sport Hill Road were deemed total losses and have since been closed off to through traffic.

Redding will be reimbursed 75 cents per dollar of damages by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). It is also seeking reimbursement from Connecticut’s State and Local Bridge Program (SLBP), which would pay 50% of the cost to replace each bridge.

None of these bridges qualified for the SLBP before the flood because they were in good condition. The Town has since engaged engineering firm Tighe & Bond to do the inspections and submit applications to get these bridges to qualify.

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Photo by Rocco Valluzzo

The Class of 2025 graduated from Joel Barlow High School on Thursday, June 12. For more coverage celebrating the end of the school year, see pages 8-9. If you have a photo you’d like to see featured here, e-mail editor@reddingsentinel.org.

Police Chief retires after four decades in Redding

By Donna Christopher



Photo by Steve Peterson
Chief Mark O’Donnell will retire on June 27.

A week ahead of his retirement from Redding Police Department on June 27, Chief Mark O’Donnell sat down with the *Sentinel* and reflected on his 40 years in law enforcement, a career spent entirely serving Redding.

His head was swimming with

memories – of crimes, safety, traffic and administration, and serving as chief the past six years. Over the last four decades, he rose through the ranks in Redding from patrolman, to corporal, sergeant, lieutenant, captain, then chief.

There have been countless welfare checks, crisis interventions, and domestic violence calls, typical in a day in the life of a police officer, but stories the public rarely hears. There are medical emergencies and fire calls, and many instances of giving lifesaving support until EMS arrives.

In one such incident, O’Donnell recalled saving a man’s life with now retired Sergeant Anthony Signore. “We did two-person CPR. He lived for another five years. By

far it is the most rewarding thing, bringing somebody back from the dead,” O’Donnell said. There were other instances when, despite his best efforts, a person died.

The routine calls are mixed in with traffic enforcement, with DUIs and crashes that sometimes have tragic outcomes, he said, along with the unspeakable circumstances when police respond to a call about a suicide, which happens often enough it came up in the conversation.

“(Police work) is like a merry-go-round. It has its ups and downs and peaks and valleys. You can’t get into specific things. You see something bad, it hits you. You see something good, a Concert on the

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Revitalize Georgetown forum set for June 25

By Jessie Wright

The Town of Redding and Pirie Associates will hold a large public forum on Wednesday, June 25 from 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. to share information and engage community members in the Georgetown Revitalization planning process currently underway. The event will take place in and around the Joel Barlow High School auditorium at 100 Black Rock Turnpike.

The process to develop a comprehensive plan for Georgetown, including redevelopment of the former Gilbert & Bennett Wire Mill site and surrounding commercial and residential areas, has begun in earnest, with Pirie Associates conducting market research, economic analysis, focus groups, and feedback activities over the last several weeks. The team has also been coordinating with other redevelopment work occurring concurrently in Georgetown, including environmental and remediation studies, a sewer capacity study, and a historic building review. The project is being funded by a Brownfield Area-Wide Revitalization (BAR) Grant through the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development.

“One of our big emphases in doing this type of planning is to take a look at all the work that’s going on in parallel and make sure we’re tapping into that... and leverage the work of the other projects going on,” said Laura Pirie of Pirie Associates.

The forum on June 25 will be an opportunity for community members to offer ideas, communicate priorities, and problem-solve. The three-hour session will kick off with a presentation, during which Pirie Associates will share updates on the planning process and what they have learned during the first phase of the project. It will also include a preliminary overview of regenerative design principles, something the Town has indicated an interest in, Pirie said.

The second portion of the evening will be break-out sessions, with smaller groups of eight to 12 people working together on specific questions.

“Neighbors can sit together, they can think quietly to themselves for a moment, they can share, they can discuss in small groups, they can go deeper into a topic – and our consultant team will be floating around to all the tables offering hands-on support for the topics that are shared,” explained Pirie.

Attendees will then return to the auditorium for the final portion of the evening, sharing important take-aways from their small-group discussions and participating in a group visioning session.

“It’s a long evening, but it’s going to be very engaging and very dynamic,” said Pirie.

For those unable to attend the forum on June 25, an online survey will be posted the day after and will be open for two weeks to gather additional feedback. ■

Learn more at reddingct.gov

REDDING’S BIG OUTDOORS

Photography Show celebrates open space in all its glory

By Jessie Wright



Photo by Andrew Millard

Redding Land Trust Photo Show first-place winner, showcasing the Saugatuck Falls Natural Area.

As part of its 60th anniversary celebration, Redding Land Trust has organized and hung a Photography Show at Mark Twain Library through the end of June, showcasing the beauty of Redding’s open space. On view in the Library’s rotunda, 31 photographs – selected from more than 80 submissions – capture 23 different open spaces

neighbors, to capture the beauty of our natural landscapes, and to inspire our community to explore our big outdoors. We had many requests to hold the Photo Show again in the future, so stay tuned!” said Redding Land Trust Trustee Marjorie Derven.

Winners were announced at a festive Opening Reception on Thursday, June 5. Andrew Millard took first place with his shot of Saugatuck Falls Natural Area; Elizabeth Jensen took second capturing the Preserved Area off Ledgeway, and Rick Tango took third with another view of Saugatuck Falls Natural Area. In the student division, Nate Colman took first place (Great Ledge), Cooper Mars took second (Trappers Trail), and Sara Jones took third (Poverty Hollow and Goodridge).

The photographs can be viewed during Library hours through the end of this month. Many of the pieces are available for private sale, which is noted on the display cards. ■

For visiting hours, visit marktwainlibrary.org

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OPINION

The whole picture – and a desire for reason

By Heidi Holzer

I am writing as a proud and concerned citizen of Georgetown. We live in an extraordinary place, where neighbors reach out to one another and offer help when needed. This is most strongly exemplified by GVR, Georgetown Village Restoration, Inc., a non-profit that has co-hosted Georgetown Day every year now for 22 years in partnership with other local organizations.

For those of you who are not acquainted with the completely volunteer group’s activities, here is a small list of the most recent:

- 1. Worked with the Town and State to have signs made and installed, paid for by GVR, alerting drivers to the businesses on Main Street.
- 2. Advocated for Main Street with the Town and State to have crosswalks installed so that pedestrians could safely cross key intersections on Route 107 and Route 57.
- 3. Volunteers to help with many events for other local organizations.
- 4. Designed and financed the mural “Welcome to Georgetown” to further enhance the area.
- 5. Organizes a neighborhood clean-up every year in which volunteers pick up trash all along Route 107, Main Street, Old Mill, the Park, and many adjoining streets.
- 6. Purchased and installs the holiday lights along Main Street, Old Mill and Portland Avenue.
- 7. Created and paid for a small lending library on Main Street.
- 8. Financed and planted garden beds on Main Street and Route 57.
- 9. Collaborates with the organization Connecticut Main Street

Center to improve our Main Street.

10. During the pandemic purchased over \$5,000 in gift cards from Georgetown businesses to support them during the shutdown and donated the gift cards to the surrounding towns’ Social Services Departments for distribution to those in need.

11. In last August’s flooding, which affected a number of businesses with up to three feet of mud, volunteers showed up with boots and shovels unbidden just to help their neighbors.

The list could go on. Georgetown Day itself takes six months of planning and preparation, usually by the same core group of volunteers. This year, there was a display not anticipated or approved by GVR. A longtime contributor of WWII equipment, that has always been a great addition, added two mannequins to his U.S. Army Jeep at the last minute, in uniform, one U.S. and one Nazi. This was without the knowledge or consent of GVR, who only found out about it the next day and would not have allowed it.

GVR has apologized, they never would have allowed or condoned this display, but social media has been swift in its condemnation of all things GVR. Is this how we treat our neighbors? People wanting to believe the worst of a completely volunteer organization that exists and works hard for bettering the community? ALL of the community, regardless of race, religion, or sexual orientation. Can we please consider this in our outlooks, reactions, and responses?

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Two Wire Mill buildings approved for demolition

By Rocco Valluzzo

To help facilitate the clean-up of the former Gilbert & Bennett Wire Mill property in Georgetown, Redding has received approval from the State of Connecticut to demolish certain buildings on the site that have been deemed unsalvageable.

Although designated as historic, these buildings are scheduled for hazardous building material abatement and demolition. First Selectwoman Julia Pemberton had applied to the State Historic Preservation Office for environmental review, which has since been approved.

“There are buildings intended for demolition under an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grant that the Town has received,” said Pemberton at a Planning Commission meeting on Tuesday, June 10. “Two buildings they are going

to allow us to demolish. They are beyond saving.”

One of the buildings is an old house, which was built in Carpenter Gothic style. Pemberton noted that before it can be demolished it must be documented as well as photographed.

Another building to be demolished is the cafeteria next to the blue building.

The blue building, which has peeling paint facing the street, can be saved but needs replacement windows. Pemberton said the State will allow Redding to use historic replicas of windows from that time.

“They’re taking a very nuanced approach to it,” said Pemberton. “We’ll document all that. The good news is we’ll be able to move forward with our EPA work.”

Dog Licenses are due June 30

Visit reddingct.gov/how-do-i/obtain-a-dog-license



LEGAL NOTICES

Notice is hereby given that there will be a caucus of all enrolled Republican electors of the Town of Redding on Tuesday, July 22, 2025 at 7:30 p.m. at the Redding Community Center, Community Room, 37 Lonetown Road, Redding, CT to endorse the list of party candidates for municipal offices. ■

Jill H. Cilo, Chair, Redding RTC

At a meeting of the Redding Conservation Commission on 6/03/2025, the following actions were voted:
App'l #25-05, Cynthia Meehl (owner), Nazzaro, Inc (agent), 331 Redding Rd. Approved with conditions an application for pond restoration.

App'l #25-07, Avoric Denver Real Estate, LLC (owners), Gustave Macheras (agent), 11 Indian Hill Rd. Approved with conditions an application for construction of a stone wall within the regulated area.

The above-referenced files are available for inspection at the Redding Land Use Office. ■

David R. Pattee, Chairman

At the regularly scheduled meeting of the Zoning Commission held on June 11, 2025 at 7:30 p.m. in person the Commission reached the following decisions:

1. Application #25-02Z – 70 Turney (Assessor’s Map and Lot #32-7) Regional School District No. 9 (Joel Barlow High School): Agent: Mike D’ Agostino Director of Facilities & Operations. Request for a Site Plan Approval/Amendment for renovation of existing athletic team room building to add accessible public restrooms and conversion of storage building to house concessions. **APPROVED**

2. Application #25-05Z – 27 Starrs Ridge Road (Assessor’s Map and Lot #11-140) JCLE LLC d/b/a Four Oaks Day Camp LLC: Request for Minor Site Plan Approval in accordance with Redding Zoning Regulations 5.1.6 for a 16’x24’ Raised Pavilion. **APPROVED** ■

Matt Lecher, Chairman
Redding Zoning Commission

NOTICE TO TAXPAYERS / REDDING FIRE DISTRICT ONE / WEST REDDING FIRE DISTRICT TWO / GEORGETOWN FIRE DISTRICT

FIRE DISTRICT TAXES ON THE GRAND LIST OF OCTOBER 1, 2024, ARE DUE AND PAYABLE ON JULY 1, 2025.

Taxes on the Grand List of October 1, 2024, are due and payable on July 1, 2025. Payments must be postmarked by August 1, 2025, to avoid a delinquency charge. Payments postmarked ON or after August 2, 2025, will be considered delinquent and will incur interest at the rate of one and one-half percent per month, eighteen (18%) percent annually, from the original July 1, 2025, due date.

FAILURE TO RECEIVE A TAX BILL DOES NOT EXEMPT YOU FROM PAYMENT OF TAX OR PENALTY. IF YOUR TAXES ARE ESCROWED, AND YOU RECEIVE A BILL, IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO NOTIFY YOUR MORTGAGE HOLDER TIMELY.

The mailing addresses for the Fire Districts are as follows:

REDDING FIRE DISTRICT ONE	WEST REDDING FIRE DISTRICT TWO	GEORGETOWN FIRE DISTRICT
P O BOX 1130	P O BOX 266	P O BOX 518
REDDING, CT 06875-1130	WEST REDDING, CT 06896-0266	GEORGETOWN, CT 06829-0518

FIRE DISTRICT TAXES CANNOT BE PAID AT THE REDDING TOWN HALL.

Fire District Taxes can be viewed online at www.reddingct.gov.

We continue to promote contactless Payments. Please mail your payments as indicated above. ■

Patricia J Moisio, CCMC, Redding Fire District One
Christine J Quigley, CCMC, Redding Fire District Two
Wanda Cardozo, CCMC, Georgetown Fire District

NOTICE TO TAXPAYERS, GEORGETOWN AND REDDING

THE FIRST INSTALLMENT OF REAL ESTATE, PERSONAL PROPERTY, MOTOR VEHICLE and GEORGETOWN SEWER DISTRICT TAXES, ON THE GRAND LIST OF OCTOBER 1, 2024, IS DUE AND PAYABLE JULY 1, 2025.

PAYMENTS MUST BE POSTMARKED, PAID IN PERSON OR PAID BY CREDIT/DEBIT CARD ONLINE, NO LATER THAN AUGUST 1, 2025. TAXES ARE DELINQUENT AUGUST 2, 2025. FAILURE TO RECEIVE A TAX BILL DOES NOT EXEMPT YOU FROM PAYMENT OF TAX OR PENALTY. The October 1, 2024, Mill Rate for real estate, personal property and motor vehicle taxes is 29.54

Payments postmarked, Paid in Person or Online, on or after August 2, 2025, ARE DELINQUENT. Interest will be charged at the rate of eighteen (18%) percent annually or one and one-half percent per month, from the July 1, 2025, due date, as per State Statute.

Motor Vehicle Taxes are due in full between July 1, 2025, and August 1, 2025. Failure to make payment in accordance with the above will result in suspension of registration privileges in addition to interest charges. Delinquent Motor Vehicle Taxes must be paid prior to current year taxes, in cash, certified check, money order or by credit card, to obtain a registration clearance.

Taxes can be paid online beginning July 1, 2025, viewed at www.reddingct.gov or paid by calling 866-923-8245. Do NOT include Fire District Taxes with your town payment.

MAIL PAYMENTS TO: Tax Collector, P. O. Box 1061, Redding, CT 06896-1061.

The Town Hall is located at 100 Hill Rd, Redding, CT.
Town Hall hours are M-W 8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.,
Thursday 8:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. and closed on Fridays.

Patricia J. Moisio, C.C.M.C., C.C.M.O
Tax Collector, Town of Redding

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Redding Sentinel Ltd believes in supporting the community it serves. We pledge to donate all profits to local community organizations.



Visit our website

Redding residents gather for warm-up to “No Kings” protest

By Donna Christopher



Protestors gathered on Friday, June 13 for a “No Kings Pop Up” event along Route 7.



Photos by Donna Christopher
Susan Auslander, 91, organized the protest.

Calling it the “No Kings Pop Up”, around 100 people protested President Trump’s administrative agenda on Friday, June 13, standing across the pedestrian bridge along Route 7 in Branchville and spilling onto the sidewalk.

Among them was organizer Susan Auslander, a 91-year-old resident of Redding who drew many supporters, including other seniors in town and surrounding areas. They held signs and waved at the cars driving by and those stopped at the busy rush-hour traffic light.

Many drivers honked, with drivers and passengers waving and giving thumbs up. Others simply looked away, while others shouted profanities, gave the middle finger, and the driver of one pick-up truck spit in the crowd’s direction.

The mood, however, was cheery with many of the participants waving their signs. The group met for an hour with everyone dispersed by around 5:30 p.m. The gathering was organized as a warm-up to Saturday’s planned “No Kings” protests in all 50 states.

Auslander drew the participation of several 80- to 90-year-old participants “with limited energy but great determination to state their objections to myriad issues on the national and local scenes,” she said. “We are not paid protestors but retirees who feel strongly enough to get off our rockers and protest.”

Auslander said the location was chosen because the bridge was made possible by the Inflation Reduction Act and noted a good turnout, which she credited

primarily to word-of-mouth.

Interviews with the protestors revealed objections and concerns ranging from the cost of the June 14 military parade in Washington D.C. to the threat of Constitutional crisis.

“It’s across the board unacceptable,” said Bob Morton, a resident of Redding for 54 years, of the current administration. “It’s ruining this country, the loss of foreign students, the loss of academic researchers, medical research, hundreds of agencies and expertise are going away. They’re going to Europe, or they’re disappearing, or retiring. It’s terrible. Shutting down USAID, people are dying out in the world because of that.”

Some appreciated the opportunity to participate in a smaller-scale protest, rather than attend one of the large protests planned for the following day (33 protests were planned for June 14 in Connecticut, with the Hartford protest drawing an estimated 9,000-10,000 people, according to CT Mirror.)

Gavin Watson with Indivisible Fairfield County supplied many of the signs used at the protest. He held an American flag and wore a Ukrainian flag.

“We’re having fun,” he said. “Whenever you come out and do a thing like this, you’re totally energized, because otherwise you’re sitting around going, ‘all this terrible stuff has happened’, and you come out, and there are all these people. It’s a big vibe.” ■

League of Women Voters hosts cryptocurrency talk

By Anne Young Albanese

On Monday, June 2, the Redding League of Women Voters held its annual meeting featuring a talk on cryptocurrency by Jeffrey Schuyler, Staff Attorney for the Consumer Credit Division at the Department of Banking (DOB) for Connecticut.

One of Schuyler’s favorite quotes on the topic is from comedian John Oliver: “Cryptocurrency is everything you don’t understand about money, combined with everything you don’t understand about computers.”

As part of his presentation, Schuyler shared some definitions that are vital to understanding the world of cryptocurrency (or “crypto”):

- Cryptocurrencies are digital or virtual currencies that exist solely in electronic form, designed to work as a medium of exchange secured by cryptography.
- Cryptography is a complex mathematical algorithm where the entire blockchain verifies all transactions.
- Blockchain is a public distributed ledger showing all transactions maintained by all participants.
- Decentralization means that cryptocurrency is not controlled by a single entity such as a bank or a government.
- A digital wallet is the electronic place where the crypto is kept.
- A public key represents the owner’s account number. A private key provides information on how an investor accesses a digital wallet.
- Hot wallets hold crypto that is available for transfer or trade. They are connected to the internet.
- A cold wallet is offline and used for secure long-term storage.
- An exchange is a digital platform where consumers can buy or sell their crypto.

The first cryptocurrency was Bitcoin. It was the original method to send money electronically, peer-to-peer, without involving a financial institution.

One of the benefits of crypto is the ease of trading it and low transaction fees. It also provides the user with more control than other financial products. Due to the use of the blockchain, crypto transactions are public, cannot be changed, can be verified, and the currency is decentralized. This provides for transparency that is missing from other investment products.

Schuyler also identified some of the risks of crypto. It is highly volatile, and prices fluctuate rapidly and significantly. Environmental concerns exist due to the amount of energy used for each transaction. There is also the possibility of

fraud or criminal use. Since it is so new, the regulatory overview is not well understood. The federal Bank Secrecy Act covers it, but there are no federal regulations specifically for crypto, although 35 states have requirements. Connecticut is one of those states.

In Connecticut, crypto is covered by the DOB’s Money Transmission Act., which allows the DOB to oversee businesses that engage in money transmission activities within the state. Anyone who conducts business dealings with crypto must have a Money Transmitter License. Similarly, owners and operators of virtual currency kiosks (physical ATMs where owners can withdraw cash by selling their crypto) must be licensed under the Money Transmission Act.

The State of Connecticut emphasizes consumer protection in its regulations, which focus on transparency and security. One of the most important is the requirement for disclosures about risks, such as potential losses from fraudulent transactions and the irreversibility of transactions. The Banking Commissioner adopts regulations and orders governing the business of digital financial products.

Since crypto is so sparsely monitored, anyone can create a cryptocurrency. In addition, scammers often use crypto to make tracking payments difficult. Because of crypto’s volatility, numerous celebrities, including Madonna, Tom Brady, and Jimmy Fallon, have been sued for fraud due to their endorsement of specific cryptocurrencies that failed.

The Office of Legislative Research developed an Issue Brief on virtual currency. It can be found online at <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2024/rpt/pdf/2024-R-0183.pdf>. For additional information, the DOB offers several articles on its website at <https://portal.ct.gov/dob>.

Other business at the meeting included the election of officers and directors. Mary Ann Carman and Kim O’Rielly were elected Co-Presidents. Phyllis Rhodes will serve the second year of her two-year term as Vice President. Karen Gifford was elected Treasurer. Laurie Heiss and Priya Desai were elected as Directors, while Virginia Cohen and Virginia Keim will serve out their second year of their term as Directors. Allison Rudary is the Membership Chair and Appointed Director. In 1974, the League allowed men to become full and equal members. Women and men from all political parties are invited to join the League of Women Voters. ■

Learn more at lwv.org/local-leagues/lwv-redding

Historical display sparks controversy after Georgetown Day

By Jessie Wright

An historical display by a local area resident at Georgetown Day on June 8 caused objections and at times heated discussions on social media following the event after an attendee pointed out a Nazi uniform had been on view.

The controversy centered on a display of World War II-era items collected by Andy Knapp, one of close to 100 booths hosted by a variety of local organizations, businesses, and neighbors at the annual event. A video posted to Instagram by attendee Jonathan Gregg showed a restored World War II-era U.S. Army vehicle with two mannequins in the back seat – one dressed in a U.S. Army uniform and the other in a Nazi uniform.

“We saw this sweet Army Jeep... I’m really interested in it, we’re checking it out. And they got these guys back here, and there’s just a [expletive] Nazi,” Gregg said in the video, showing the mannequins sitting side-by-side with empty bottles on a table in front of them.

“On a personal note, my Jew-

ish wife and kids casually coming across a Nazi catching a ride while having a meal and a Coke was definitely a jarring moment,” he replied to one commenter on the posting.

Gregg did not respond to requests for comment by press time, but Georgetown Day organizers say they were not aware of that part of the display ahead of time, nor was it reported during the event.

“The Georgetown Day Executive Committee would like to state that we did not know until the day after the event that there was an offensive item put on display at the event. Had we known about it before or during the event we would have removed it,” they said in a statement.

Knapp, who organizers said have displayed items from his collection in past years, said the display was “in no way meant to be malicious.”

“My apologies to the Georgetown Day Committee and those attendees of Georgetown Day who may have been offended by the WWII display. The display was

inappropriate. My lack of discernment was in no way meant to be malicious. Georgetown Day is a wonderful event with so many people volunteering their time and efforts and should be celebrated by all without distress,” said Knapp.

Georgetown Day is an annual, family-friendly event that brings thousands to the Main Street area of Georgetown and is organized by an all-volunteer committee, with members this year from Georgetown Village Restoration, Inc., Georgetown Volunteer Fire Company, Georgetown Community Association, and the Georgetown Lions Club.

“We are sincerely and deeply sorry for the distress caused by the item. We are developing policies to ensure we are doing everything we can to prevent an incident like this from happening in the future. We do not condone messages or symbols of hate, and do not tolerate antisemitism, racism, and any other discrimination and bigotry,” said the Georgetown Day Executive Committee. ■

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SPORTS

Falcons finish in Class M semifinals

Boys lacrosse | By Rocco Valluzzo



Photo by Rocco Valluzzo

Joel Barlow High's Andrew Watson, left, and Sean Gabriel battle East Catholic's Jared Macaluso during a state Class M boys lacrosse quarterfinal game on Saturday, June 7.

Having already reached their conference title game, the Joel Barlow High boys lacrosse team had its sights set on getting to another championship as the state Class M tournament got underway.

To get there, the second-seeded Falcons first had to get past third-seeded Guilford for a semifinal game last Wednesday, June 11. Despite jumping out to a five-goal lead, the Falcons could not hold off a comeback by their opponent in a 7-8 upset loss at Waterbury's Municipal Stadium.

The Falcons had started the tournament in strong fashion when they hosted seventh-seeded East Catholic of Manchester in the quarterfinals. A big scoring run spanning both halves was enough for a 16-4 win during periods of rain on Saturday, June 7.

Barlow did trail briefly when the Eagles scored the first goal in the early minutes to go up 1-0. After that, however, the Falcons dominated the action.

Spencer Skidell tied it at 1-1 off a pass from Luke Bonanno with 7:56 left in the first quarter. Skidell added another less than a minute later after Kaden Holub put the Falcons in the lead. While the Eagles did answer with a goal at 4:46, they would not score again

until early in the fourth quarter.

In the meantime, Barlow's attack went to work. Joey Bonanno, Luke Bonanno, Sean Gabriel, Frankie Branca, Holub, and Skidell combined for a dozen goals, giving the Falcons a 15-2 lead.

East Catholic then managed to stop the streak early in the final frame. By then, the Falcons began to rest their starters, making frequent substitutions for the remainder of the game.

"It was nice to get some of the young guys there, that fourth quarter especially," said Barlow Head Coach Taylor Leahy. "There were a lot of freshmen out there, so it was good to give them this playoff experience to help them get better moving forward and to help us get better."

Joey Bonanno led Barlow with six goals. Skidell was next with four and had an assist. Branca (four assists) and Holub each netted two while Luke Bonanno (three assists) and Gabriel had one apiece.

Weather conditions were much improved in the semifinals for the Falcons, who were seemingly off to a good start. Goals by Joey Bonanno, Luke Bonanno, and Skidell put them up 5-0 in the second quarter.

The Grizzlies then responded

with a goal by Pierce Pappert. Chase Bonanno added one for Barlow, and it was a 6-1 game going into halftime.

When play resumed, Guilford began to claw at the lead, winning face-offs, ground balls, and taking advantage of Falcon penalties for scoring opportunities. Rob Scott got things going for the Grizzlies on a goal off a pass by Reed Hovick with 10:23 left in the third quarter to mark the beginning of a seven-goal run.

"They controlled possession in the second half," said Leahy. "We didn't really get too many opportunities, and every time we did, it seemed their goalie made a big stop."

Ryan Gribbon tied it at 6-6 with 7:15 left in the game. After a Falcon turnover, Guilford took the lead courtesy of Aidan Connelly a minute later before taking advantage of another turnover to make it 8-6 with 2:45 left.

The Falcons stopped the streak with 51 seconds to go on a goal by Branca. It was still enough time to net the potential equalizer, but Mike Lawton saved a late shot by Chase Bonanno as the Grizzlies moved on to the finals.

Joey and Luke Bonanno each had two goals. Chase Bonanno, Skidell, and Branca each had one apiece.

It marked the final high school game for Chase, Joey and Luke Bonanno, Skidell, Scott Romano, Andrew Watson, Quinn Pranzo, and Rohan Reddy.

"This senior group, I'm really proud of them," said Leahy, who also coached them in youth lacrosse. "I've known them for most of their lives. It stings that we came up short, in both the South-West Conference and here, but I'm proud of everything they've accomplished as players and people over the last seven or eight years that I've known them. I know they're going to find success in college, both in and out of lacrosse."

Barlow finished the season at 15-6 overall. ■

Falcons are Class M state champs

Boys volleyball | By Rocco Valluzzo



Photo by Rocco Valluzzo

Joel Barlow High's James Pereira goes up for a kill during the state Class M championship on Friday, June 13.

What was an up-and-down season eventually ended on a high note for the Joel Barlow High boys volleyball team.

The Falcons, who had a shaky start in some non-league matches against teams from the Fairfield Country Interscholastic Athletic Conference (FCIAC), eventually found their rhythm. They reached the South-West Conference (SWC) championship but lost a tough 3-1 decision to Masuk.

Moving onto the state Class M tournament, Barlow would not give a repeat performance against New Canaan. Holding on in some close sets, the Falcons finished the season with a 3-1 (25-20, 25-23, 21-25, 25-22) win on Friday, June 13 at Newtown High.

It is Barlow's first state title since 2022 and third in five seasons.

"We started off 6-4 and came back up and really fought," said Barlow Head Coach Kevin Marino, whose team also defeated New Canaan in 2022. "I'm proud of these guys for getting it done."

A one- or two-point affair for much of the way, the opening set featured 12 ties as well as six lead changes. With things tied at 19-19, Barlow's Mark Meschi served up two consecutive aces. After a few hitting errors on New Canaan's part, Barlow took the opening set.

Much like the first, the second set was also a back-and-forth affair early. With Barlow up 10-8, Sam Stinson reeled off six straight service points, capped off by Erik Schmid's kill to put the Falcons in seemingly good shape with a 16-8 lead.

Helped by kills from Saivinish Akavaramu and Zane Tickoo, the Rams chipped away at the lead, cutting it to three (18-15) before the Falcons called a timeout. Kills by Meschi helped the Falcons hold on to take a 2-0 lead in sets.

Now in a must-win situation, the Rams jumped out to an 11-6 lead in the third set. Kills by Pereira, Schmid, and Meschi helped Barlow cut the lead to 21-20, but it came no closer, forcing the match to go to four sets.

"When you're playing the FCIAC champions, things are going to be hard," said Marino. "They had the best setter in the state in Dylan Ho."

Taking a 12-8 lead in what would be the final set, Barlow again had to deal with strong play at the net by New Canaan, which eventually went up 17-16. Meschi's kill, followed by a service point by Alex Stinson, gave the Falcons back the lead and they never lost it, closing out the win on Mike Murcia's block.

"I kept telling them all year, after losses, we're training for June," said Marino. "They trusted me and that's what it takes sometimes."

Barlow finished the season at 21-6 overall. ■

Barlow faces tough batting in Class M quarterfinals

Baseball | By Rocco Valluzzo

Hard hitting opponents are not something the Joel Barlow High varsity baseball team has often seen this season.

On just two occasions, the Falcons' pitching had given up more than seven runs in a game during the regular season. It was a different situation in the quarterfinals of the state Class M tournament.

Ranked fifth, Barlow found it hard to keep Stonington off the bases on Sunday, June 8. The fourth-ranked Bears pounded out 12 hits en route to an 8-5 win on their home field and to end Barlow's season in the process.

The Bears threatened early, loading the bases on a walk and two errors with one out in the bottom of the first inning. A double play by Barlow's Logan Cady got the visitors out of the jam and they proceeded to score their first run in the top of the second. Will Gregor doubled to left field, advanced on a ground ball, and scored on a wild pitch to give the Falcons a 1-0 lead.

Although the Falcons held off Stonington in its next turn, it plated three runs in the bottom of the third. Singles by Jace Wolfradt and Mike Keefe put two runners aboard. Both advanced on a sacrifice bunt. Cam Ogden's sacrifice fly to left field tied it and Nick Canella's RBI double made it 2-1. He eventually scored on a single by Jake Schrage. Despite loading the bases with

no outs in the top of the fourth, Barlow did not score. The Bears, however, tacked on two in the bottom of the frame with RBI doubles by Keefe and Canella to make it 6-1. Getting one back in their next turn, the Falcons scored when Gavin Maryott walked before coming in on Gregor's RBI double.

Connor Thomas relieved starting pitcher Gregor in the bottom of the fifth, retiring the side, and the Falcons also went quietly in their next turn. The Bears then widened their lead in the bottom of the sixth on Ogden's two-run homer.

Down to their last turn, the Falcons threatened when two walks and an error loaded the bases in the seventh. Singles by Maryott and Gregor brought in two runs and the Falcons added one on Billy Bardani's sacrifice fly to center, but that was all the visitors could manage.

Gregor led Barlow with three hits, including two doubles, two RBI, and a run scored in his final high school game. TJ Baer had two hits (one double) and a run scored in his last game. On the mound, Gregor went four and two-thirds innings, giving up six runs on nine hits with three strikeouts and two walks. Thomas went two and one-third, surrendering two runs on three hits with one strikeout.

Barlow finished the season at 19-6. ■

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Dean Ahlberg retires after 35 years at First Church of Christ

By Pamela Brown

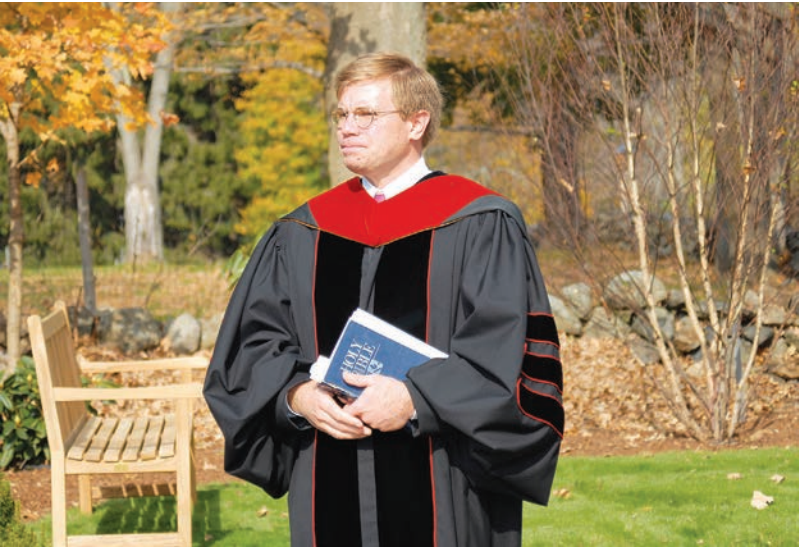


Photo courtesy of First Church of Christ
Ahlberg's last sermon will be on Sunday, June 22

It's been 35 years since Reverend Dr. Dean Ahlberg was named Senior Minister of First Church of Christ, Congregational, the second longest pastorate in the church's history.

"I'm honored and perfectly content with this distinction. The gold medal tenure of 57 years goes to Reverend Nathaniel Bartlett (1753-1810) – a feat to which I don't aspire," said Ahlberg, who will offer his last sermon on Sunday, June 22 as he steps forth into retirement.

"Though it's gratifying to reflect on my years at First Church, and the time feels right to step down, it's bittersweet," he said. "I will miss our congregation. We've been through the joys and sadnesses, the triumphs and tragedies that come with living, and those bonds run very deep."

Reflecting on his tenure, Ahlberg is filled with gratitude. "Gratitude, for the loving and unwavering support of my wife, Jennifer, and our family; for the privilege of being invited into people's lives at tender and joyful times; and for the

inspiring and contagious commitment, energy, and generosity of our parishioners," he said. "We see ourselves as part of God's wider world and have engaged, worked beside, and learned from people in a wide variety of settings – from Jamaica to Bridgeport, from New Haven to New Orleans to Danbury, from Appalachia to Maine, from the Cheyenne River Lakota reservation in South Dakota to a mountain village in Costa Rica to a university in Bethlehem, from assisting a housing ministry in Georgia, to helping repair the homes of hurricane victims in North Carolina, Texas, and New Jersey."

The church has enjoyed a period of vibrancy under Ahlberg's leadership, something he hoped to achieve when he began his role there.

"My hope was to take my turn in a long line of clergy who, over nearly 300 years, worked with parishioners to keep First Church relevant, faithful, joyful, and vital. The church is healthy and well-positioned for its next chapter," said

Ahlberg of the congregation of over 400 members.

Events through the years have brought him great joy, including attending the annual First Church Congregational Fair; watching youth help to build nearly two dozen affordable houses with a partner church in Jamaica; hosting two family weddings in the meeting-house; narrating the annual outdoor Live Nativity pageant; and taking a sabbatical to study the life, art, and faith of Vincent Van Gogh.

Ahlberg has also weathered challenges, including navigating zoning processes for the expansion of church buildings and pivoting to online worship during the Covid-19 pandemic.

In retirement, Ahlberg looks forward to relishing free weekends. "It will be a new experience. We'll travel a bit, and perhaps explore New England in more depth," said Ahlberg, whose wife Jennifer is a senior scientist at Boehringer-Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals. Their two married children, Chris and Emily, live locally with their families, and their son, Anders, currently lives with them in their Redding home.

First Church will have an interim minister while a search committee is formed to seek a settled pastor, a process that can take a year or more. "I will remain active in a church. But our denomination's ministerial code of ethics dictates that I distance myself from First Church for a period of time, so that a new leader has the space necessary to form pastoral relationships," he said. Still, he had this wisdom to offer his successor: "Listen. Be patient. Bring a sense of humor. And consider yourself very blessed. You've just landed the best job in the best congregation one could ever hope to serve." ■

Mary Lou Carlson's art show

By Christina Mattinson



Photo by Debora DeCarlo Rosa

For Mary Lou Carlson, art has never been just a pastime or a profession – it has been a life-long dialogue with the natural world, a celebration of light, texture, and the deep emotional resonance of place. Now, with a new exhibition on view at the Easton Library through June 30, visitors have a rare opportunity to witness the breadth and depth of a creative journey that spans more than 50 years.

The exhibit brings together a vibrant selection of Carlson's paintings and photographs, tracing her evolution as an artist through acrylic, watercolor, and mixed media collage. From early experiments in abstraction to richly textured landscapes painted *en plein air*, her work is unified by an abiding sensitivity to the natural world.

A long-time resident of the area, Carlson draws from places both near and far – Redding, Easton, Weir Farm, and further north to Maine, Massachusetts, and Vermont. Her canvases and paper works transport viewers to meadows, woodlands, brooks, and coastal shores, often painted on location, capturing the fleeting quality of light and atmosphere with grace and emotional depth.

Though she has explored various artistic media over the years, it is in painting – particularly in watercolor and acrylic – that she has found her most resonant voice. Her love of gardening and the outdoors infuse her work with authenticity and vitality.

Carlson's journey as an artist began early. As the youngest of three children, with siblings nearly a decade her senior, she was given free rein with art supplies by a mother eager to keep her engaged. That early encouragement blossomed into a dedicated pursuit: she earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts from Wittenberg University, followed by a Master's in Teaching from Southern Connecticut State University and another in Arts and Learning from Sacred Heart University.

For years, she shared her passion with young artists as a beloved art teacher at Fairfield's Ward High School, where she also served as the Program Coordinator and was named Connecticut Art Teacher of the Year.

A highlight of the current exhibit is a piece from a series of 14 untitled abstract works, inspired by Carlson's fascination with Chinese cloud painting. Created in the 1970s, these pieces use collage and acrylic to suggest forms that emerge and dissolve – inviting the viewer to find personal meaning within the atmospheric layers. It's a striking contrast to her more representational landscapes, but the through-line is the same: a reverence for the mystery and beauty of the world.

Carlson's work can also be seen in regional art associations, the annual Mark Twain Library Art Show, and the current Redding Land Trust Photography Show. ■

Visit eastonlibrary.org for hours



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Anonymous Society show examines “moments that define us”

By Donna Christopher



Photo by Donna Christopher
The opening reception for *If / Only / And / Then*

Visitors spilled out onto a shaded deck overlooking a wooded area at Anonymous Society on Thursday, June 5 when the near-dusk early summer light cast its painterly hues. The backdrop was apt, as artists, neighbors, and friends enjoyed the opening of the gallery’s newest show *If / Only / And / Then*.

The show features painting, mixed media, and ceramics, with work by Sonja Langford (North Carolina / Connecticut), Faye Pamintuan (Philippines / Texas / New York), and Rachel Volpone (Connecticut).

It traces how language – spoken, unspoken, imagined – shapes the course of our lives, offering a means to reauthor the self in moments of both fierce protection and quiet surrender, according to Anonymous Society’s owner and curator Nicole Bricker.

“It centers on the moments that define us – the decisions, disruptions, and relationships that shape identity in all its complexity,” she said.

The three showcased artists include two MFA students – Langford at UCONN and Pamintuan at

Cornell – along with Volpone, who makes abstract paintings and mixed media collages. While their work is all different, Bricker sees them in conversation.

“I really enjoy curating shows that have distinct differences between the artists, and then when I hang the show, I love showing them in ways that are unexpected,” she said. “So, when you come in, you wouldn’t necessarily think, ‘Oh, these all go together,’ but they kind of go together.”

Langford is showing four pieces in *If / Only / And / Then*, portraying a women’s hospital in New York, a clinical drawing of a patient on a gynecology exam table, and gynecological instruments. Each of the works stand on its own and together tell a “fragmented story about women’s health, bodily autonomy, and the long shadow of historical narratives,” Langford explained.

Much of the source material comes from archives: medical texts, patient records, and scans.

“I use those fragments not to replicate the archive, but to question it – to trace what gets recorded, what gets lost, and who gets to decide,” she continued.

The show – which is on view through Sunday July 20 – is one of several that Anonymous Society has held since its opening last year at 268 Simpaug Turnpike just steps from the West Redding train station. All the art is for sale, along with other pieces found hung throughout the building.

“Like many galleries, we keep a small inventory of available work. But because our space is intimate, our storage is more personal – it lives in the back studio and office area, where I work every day. It’s

a reminder that these pieces are not forgotten; they’re still part of the living, breathing ecosystem of the gallery, waiting for their next chapter,” Bricker said.

“Loveseat” by Michele Riche is one such work, hanging at the back of Anonymous Society. A self-portrait of the artist as a child, Riche said the piece has been reworked many times through a process of painting and sanding over and over, creating an “undoing”. “The resulting surface is smooth and soft, with figures that seem to fade like a memory,” she said. Riche’s work was featured in the first show Anonymous Society held last year.

“I’m really excited about what Nicole is doing at Anonymous Society. I think we’re lucky to have the gallery and her vision,” Riche said.

The gallery also showcases art through its Flat File Project, a year-long initiative featuring work by over 20 artists whose pieces are all under 24 inches and priced with accessibility in mind. The project is designed to support both emerging and seasoned collectors by offering compelling, small-scale works while also providing artists with an ongoing platform to exhibit and connect directly with new audiences. The works are available both in the gallery and online.

Bricker encourages any community members to stop by for a visit.

“You don’t need to be an expert to participate, just bring a sense of openness and curiosity,” she said. “It’s a meaningful way to connect with contemporary culture and discover something new.” ■

Learn more at anonymoussocietygallery.com

Fun at Georgetown Day



Photos by Debora DeCarlo Rosa

The 22nd annual Georgetown Day on June 8 delivered a full day of fun for the community, with live music, booths by local organizations and businesses, a chili cook-off, family activities, and food.

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Redding-Georgetown DTC announces student awards

By Redding-Georgetown DTC

We would like to congratulate all the students who received awards and accolades at the annual Joel Barlow High School Awards. In particular, we would like to recognize those students honored with the following awards, sponsored by the Redding-Georgetown Democratic Town Committee:

Caleyse Miserendino – The Alvin Ruml Environmental Studies Prize, which is awarded each year to the student who, through excellence in the subject area, best demonstrates an interest in, and awareness of, the importance of our natural environment.

Finn Bermingham – The Dr. Hugh Claremont Service Award, which is given each year to a student who, through excellence in the subject area, demonstrates an interest in science.

Brady Decker – The John G. Atwood Good Government Prize, which is awarded each year to a junior who best demonstrates an understanding of and appreciation for our form of government, its unique contribution to history, and its status as an inspiration to peoples of the world.

Abigail Avidon – The Mary Anne Guitar Award, which is given each year to a junior female student who is a leader amongst her peers and a strong community activist.

Students were selected by the Joel Barlow High School Awards Committee. ■

Barlow alumni celebrate 50th reunion

By Jessie Wright



Photo by Jessie Wright

Smiles, hugs, and exclamations of “I remember you!” filled The Redding Roadhouse on Saturday, June 7 as members of the Joel Barlow High School Class of 1975 met for their 50th reunion.

About 50 members of the Class of 1975 gathered to connect,

Continued on page 11

Barlow Awards recognize 144 students

By Anne Young Albanese

On Thursday, May 29, Joel Barlow High School held its annual award ceremony, presenting awards and scholarships to over 140 students who have stood out in academics, athletics, music, art, civic engagement, and for contributions to the school and local community. For a list of the awards the following students won, visit reddingsentinel.org/barlowawards

Abigail Avidon
Abigail Bonoff
Agnes Davis
Ahmed Ibrahim
Alexa Stark
Alexandra Bardani
Alexia Sanchez
Allena Ogden
Alyssa Marushak
Andrew Gutowski
Angela Humphrey
Anthony Azzara
Antoinette Peters
Ari Alvarez
Arianna Pereira
Audrey Gil
Ava Gillon
Ava Racette
Avery Young
Brady Decker
Brian Weiss
Brooke Ambrosio
Bryce Hopkins
Cade Fravel
Caleyse Miserendino
Caroline Beihl
Catrina Hansen
Chad Pranzo
Charles Dunlop
Cheyrl Southlea
Christopher Gagliardi
Connor Thomas
Conrad Newell
Daniel Marin
Daniel Murcia
Dillon Bargagna
Ella Anderson
Ella Cederbaum
Ella Hotchkiss
Emery Oppenheim
Emily Capeci
Emma Sarkinovic
Eneas Freyre
Erik Schmid
Ezra Nemore
Fariha Kudia
Finn Bermingham
Gabriela Boehlert

Gianna Onofrio
Giulia Dos Santos
Grace Blawie
Graham Ollendorff
Greyson DiBlasi
Griffin Speck
Hannah Emerito
Hannah Gourad
Helena Glatzel
Helena Zima
Isabella Sgritta
Isabelle Wildgoose
Jessica Hakim
Joseph Bonanno
Julia Spinelli
Julian Fusco
Juliana Qiu
Kaden Holub
Kaelen Kunar
Kate Krug
Kenji Perretz
Kieran Nevins
Kosta Nani
Kristina Stranik
Lauren Klein Wassink
Lila Reyes
Lucas Perales – Hudson
Luis Diez
Luke Bonanno
Luke Matuski
Maansi Tibrewal
Maggie Jimenez
Maggie Stablein
Maggie Valenti
Mary Duque
Massimo Plastina
Mateo Jara
Matthew Arnold
Matthew Harr
Maya Acosta
Maya Wantke
Melissa Ploss
Michael Mininberg
Michael Murcia
Michael Sherman
Michelle Carneiro
Milo Lee
Monica Charmoy

Natalie Wantke
Nathanael Hill
Nickolas Palvinski
Nikita Vitikov
Olive Heres
Olivia Gatti
Olivia Kotula
Owen Fellows
Penny LaMastro
Pierce Counter
Priti Kiefer
Quinn Pranzo
Quinn Williston
Randy Rivera
Rihanna Romeus
Ruby Candee
Ryan Puglio
Sadie Watson
Sage Oliver
Sameer Khan
Sarah Asghar
Sarah Ballas
Sassy Wood
Scott Romano
Sebastian Zuanelli
Sierra Lynn
Simone Lupo
Skylar Giblin
Sofia Benitez
Sophia Kelly
Sophia Tian
Sophie Peterson
Stephanie Bardani
Sydney Toro
Talia Itah
Tess Geaney
Thomas Baer
Timothy Hart
Tyler Ingram
Tyler Young
Victoria Becker
Victoria Grzybowinski
Victoria Zhou
William Bardani
William Kopec
Willow Bradford
Yu-Min Cho
Zoriana Olexy

Redding schools name teachers and staff of the year

By Anne Young Albanese

Redding Elementary School (RES) and John Read Middle School (JRMS) have announced their teachers and staff members of the year, including fourth-grade teacher Jennifer Weissauer, behaviorial technician Karen Rude, eighth-grade social studies teacher Christine Antipas, and cafeteria worker Janet Dyroff. Weissauer was also chosen as the teacher to represent the Redding School District in Connecticut’s Teacher of the Year program.

Weissauer is involved with the Redding Elementary School math club and the fourth-grade student council. As part of her nomination, one supporter recognized how closely she works with students outside the classroom.

“Jen continually impresses us with her openness to feedback and her commitment to growth. She approaches every challenge with a positive, growth-oriented mindset and consistently steps outside her comfort zone to support both colleagues and students,” said Principal Melissa Labroschiano and Vice Principal Kim Roy. “This mindset

shines through in the way she refers to her students as ‘teammates,’ emphasizing the strong relationships she builds within her classroom community.”

Rude’s nomination recognized her work as a behavioral technician, assisting children in living, communication, socialization, and self-help skills.

“She is always willing to help and is extremely kind and supportive of our staff and students,” said Labroschiano. “Karen is one of our behavioral technicians who is truly exceptional. Her patience, dedication, and unwavering commitment to each child’s growth are inspiring. She brings consistency, care, and professionalism to every child she works with. Karen’s impact is felt not just by the students, but the entire RES community.”

According to Antipas’s nominator, she is passionate about social studies at John Read Middle School and designs lessons to engage her students and actively instill a love of history.

“When she teaches, she has her students involved in the learning.

From her multicultural event to her mock political gathering, she has her students up and moving,” noted Jen Desmarais, Principal at John Read Middle School. “They are not allowed to just sit and take notes; they are actively involved in the learning process. Being in her room every day, she had me laughing and moving around like one of her students!”

Dyroff was nominated because, along with ensuring students receive their meals promptly, she does a lot behind the scenes. This includes keeping student financial information private as students move through the payment line and noting changes in student behavior; she makes time to visit those students and share her observations with school staff.

“Janet has been holding our cafeteria together for many, many years. She has seen it through staff cuts, challenging hires, and changes in vendors and food quality. Yet, she remains a constant for students and staff – working through any challenges quietly and without the need for any recognition,” said Desmarais. ■

Willow Bradford wins RTC’s Matthew L. Berry Scholarship

By Thomas Derderian

Willow Bradford has been awarded the Redding Republicans’ Matthew L. Berry Memorial Scholarship.

The scholarship, which is sponsored by the Redding Republican Town Committee and funded by the Berry family, is given annually to a graduating high school senior who demonstrates a commitment to using his/her higher education for the purpose of becoming an enlightened citizen who will make a difference in the world. The scholarship is in memory of Matthew L. Berry, a 2009 graduate of Joel Barlow High School and a 2013 graduate of Tulane University.

Bradford, a high honors student throughout her four years at Joel Barlow, graduated with a Diploma with Distinction. She was a member of the National Honor Society, the Tri-M Music Honors Society, and was the 2024 winner of the Redding Republicans’ Dwight D. Eisenhower Book Award for excellence in science and mathematics. At this year’s Barlow Awards ceremony, Bradford was also the recipient of the Joel Barlow High School Outstanding Achievement in Academics and the Arts Award, the Joel Barlow Scholarship Fund Award, and the Louis Armstrong Jazz Award. She was also cited as a 2025 Senior Speak-out Finalist for excellence in public speaking.

Bradford also has been active in the Joel Barlow Jazz Band, the Joel Barlow Red Cross Club, the Joel Barlow Habitat for Humanity Student Chapter, The Columbiad Newspaper, Safe Rides of Redding and Easton, and the Improv Troupe. An accomplished pianist, she has performed frequently at the First Church of Christ, Congregational as well as a number of assisted living homes. She has attended the Georgetown University HOYA American Politics Intensive Program and the Boston University Summer challenge program in Law and Chemistry of Medicine. She has also been a camp counselor for Redding Park and Recreation.

This fall, Bradford will be attending Barnard College and plans to major in Political Science.

“I am honored to receive the Matthew L. Berry Award and sincerely appreciate the generous scholarship to help me in the next stage of my education,” she said.

Leonard Berry, Matthew’s father, said, “We are very pleased to award the Matthew L. Berry Scholarship to Willow, who is clearly a very bright and talented young woman who has distinguished herself in so many ways and been the embodiment of an engaged and contributing member of both her school and community.”

Jill Cilo, Chairman of the Republican Town Committee added, “It’s an honor for us to co-sponsor this award, together with the Berry family, and pay tribute to such an outstanding young person.” ■



ons Graduates

Class of 2025

Class of 2025 makes plans for next year

College, gap years, and more, see where some of our seniors plan to go | Compiled by Jessie Wright

Maya Acosta	New York University	Farah Foley	Drexel University	Isabella Paniccia	College of Charleston
Ari Alvarez	University of Albany	Caden Freyre	Bucknell University	Lindsay Pasierb	Virginia Tech
Brooke Ambrosio	Fairfield University	Tess Geaney	Endicott College	Sophie Peterson	University of Massachusetts Amherst
Kyle Araujo	Gordon College	Audrey Gil	Carnegie Mellon University	Quinn Pranzo	Bucknell University
Sarah Asghar	University of Connecticut	Jack Gilbert	Gap Year - Travel	Chad Pranzo	Catholic University
Anthony Azzarra	University of Michigan	Anna Renee Gormley	Merrimack College	Ava Racette	Iona University
TJ Baer	Marist University	Victoria Grzybowinski	University of Tennessee	Ogden Ragsdale	Vanderbilt University
Bailey Bai	University of Pittsburgh	Jessica Hakim	Pennsylvania State University	Rohan Reddy	Western Connecticut State University
Mary Bauersfeld	University of South Carolina	Catrina Hansen	University of Connecticut	Jamie Riley	Jmass Boston
Caroline Beihl	University of Tennessee	Olive Heres	University of Maryland	Scott Romano	University of Tennessee
Celestina Bellulovich	University of Tampa	Ella Hotchkiss	Providence College	Rihanna Romeus	High Point University
Sofia Benitez	Loyola University of Chicago	Angela Humphrey	Dartmouth College	Samantha Ronen	University of Kansas
Grace Blawie	University of Massachusetts Amherst	Tyler Ingram	Sacred Heart University	Alexia Sanchez	Southern Connecticut State University
Gabby Boehlert	University of Colorado-Boulder	Makeda Is Ra El Ali Bey	Loyola University New Orleans	Haileigh Sanzari	Elon University
Sophia Boehlert	Syracuse University	Maggie Jimenez	Sacred Heart University	Emma Sarkinovic	Fairfield University
Joey Bonanno	Endicott College	Georgia Juhre	University of Buffalo	Efi Schahar	Sarah Lawrence College
Luke Bonanno	Wagner College	Logan Kady	University of Alabama	Maddy Schultz	Appalachian State University
Cole Bonanno	Wagner College	Marlowe Kaye	Regent's University London	Lucas Sergi	Lafayette College
Tristan Bricker	Southern Connecticut State University	Alex Keenan	University of Connecticut	Isabella Sgritta	Salisbury University
Jadyn Brier	American University	Lauren Klein Wassink	Yale University	Spencer Skidell	University of Tampa
Ruby Candee	University of Richmond	Kate Krug	McGill University	Lauren Skidmore	Marist University
Jordan Carr	Clemson University	Jenny LaMastro	Stony Brook University	Griffin Speck	McGill University
Jaime Ciambra	University of Rhode Island	Jack Lippoth	Michigan State University	Julia Spinelli	Elon University
Zac Colangelo	New York University	Ruby Ludwig	College of Charleston	Alexa Stark	Clemson University
Anthony Cortina	Rochester Institute of Technology	Simone Lupo	SUNY Purchase	Ben Straborny	Coastal Carolina University
Dylan Crawford	Wheaton College	Sierra Lynn	Elon University	Aubrey Street	Saint Joseph's University
Shannon Darmofal	American University	Isabella Mancini	University of Connecticut	Anneliese Sulzberg	University of Connecticut
Agnes Davis	University of Delaware	Daniel Marin	Sacred Heart University	Connor Thomas	University of Tennessee
Owen Demilio	Coastal Carolina University	Tyler Marshall	Temple University	Sydney Toro	Binghamton University
Connor Desautels	Wayne State University	Alyssa Marushak	Sacred Heart University	Maggie Valenti	Clemson University
Luis Diez	Amherst College	Mark Meschi	Illinois Wesleyan University	Annelise Van Breems	Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences
Tristan DiZenzo	Roger Williams University	Amanda Meschi	Salisbury University		Providence College
Grace Downey	Western Connecticut State University	Pablo Morineau	Dean College		West Virginia University
Charles Dunlop	Norwich University	Poppy Motuski	Miami University		University of Utah
Mary Duque	Loyola Maryland	Luke Mutuski	Emory University		Purdue University
Nathan Dyar	High Point University	Kieran Nevins	Ithaca College		Colby College
Luke English	Texas Christian University	Allie Ogden	University of South Carolina		College of Charleston
Sophie Marie Fanzo	Catholic University	Sage Oliver	York College of Pennsylvania		
Lexi Flaherty	University of Scranton	Colter Ordway	Gettysburg College		

Responses submitted by students with permission to publish. If you or your student did not submit your information in time for inclusion, please send an e-mail to editor@reddingsentinel.org to be included in a later issue.

Barlow Beat | By Juliana Qiu

The end of the academic year has a way of sneaking up on students, of forcing us to face the fact that time always moves forward, relentless and unyielding. For current seniors at Barlow, this year’s conclusion feels particularly poignant. It holds the emotional weight of knowing that, for many of us, these will be the last days we walk these halls as students – the final moments of an era we can never quite return to.

The senior trip to Lake Com-pounce on Friday, June 6 was the kind of day that felt like it had been plucked straight from a blueprint for high school’s last hurrah. We piled into buses in the early morn-ing, tired but excited, and spent the day bouncing between roller coast-ers and water slides. Taking on classics such as the award-winning Boulder Dash or soaking in the re-freshing fun of Crocodile Cove, we weren’t thinking about college plans or the future. It was the first time many of us felt the pressure of senior year fade, replaced by the lightness of simply being present in a manner that meant nothing more than having fun and being carefree.

On Tuesday, June 10, the Se-nior Banquet at Tashua Knolls of-fered another chance to celebrate and enjoy ourselves. We wore our elevated white attire and entered a venue that was filled with the sound of laughter and smell of delicious food. But, in the end, it was the raf-fle that stole the show – an unantic-ipated yet intriguing activity during which we each selected a prize from a line of tables. Ranging from AirPods and HBO subscriptions to mattress toppers and Brita water

pitchers, the items were the kind of things that didn’t necessarily matter much in the grand scheme but nev-ertheless felt like a tangible reward for all our hard work over the past four years.

For our final senior event on Thursday, June 12, as we walked through our old elementary and middle schools, tears were finally shed, and an overwhelming sense of nostalgia seemed to hit. Seniors residing in Easton immersed them-selves in the familiar atmosphere of Samuel Staples Elementary School and Helen Keller Middle School, while those from Redding retraced the halls of Redding El-ementary School and John Read Middle School. There was no fan-fare, just a quiet recognition of how much we’d changed. In our eyes, the classrooms that once felt so big now seemed small, and it served as a reminder of how the passage of time, in all its subtlety, had shaped us in ways we couldn’t fully grasp until this very moment.

And then, Graduation: Thursday, June 12. An evening full of cre-atively decorated caps and freshly ironed gowns, familiar faces, and the slight buzz of humidity in the air. The ceremony opened with a welcome from the Head of School, Dr. Almeida, along with two lovely performances by the school choir. Then came the speeches: an address from Dr. McKinnon, ER9 Superin-tendent, followed by remarks from seniors Sage Oliver and Lauren Klein Wassink. As I reflect on the feeling of engaging in the festi-vities, especially in tossing my cap along with everyone else to close

the ceremony, I now realize there was something powerful about the slow, deliberate process of experi-encing graduation as a collective – proud and relieved, ready for what comes next. Together.

Perhaps what I’ll remember most about Barlow aren’t the con-ventional milestones and major events, but the subtle undercurrents that have shaped my four years here. This school has been a mi-crocosm of the world beyond it, a place where I learned not only how to memorize the periodic table and rhetorical devices but also how to exist in a space full of people who are, at their core, as unsure yet cu-rious as I am. In those fleeting ex-changes in cramped hallways that we often took for granted, Barlow gave me an understanding of what it means to be part of something greater than oneself. It comes in the form of realizing, even if a little too late, that we’ve changed, and in doing so, have become a little more ourselves.

For all the excitement and anx-iety about the many unknowns that lie ahead, I’m forever grateful for what Barlow has taught me – and, of course, for the people who have walked beside me along the way. Here’s to the Class of 2025, and to all the moments – the good, the bad, and especially the ugly – that have brought us here. In the words of the late David Foster Wallace: *I wish you way more than luck.* ■

Juliana Qiu is a 2025 graduate of Joel Barlow High School

Graduation celebrations



(Row 1-3, from top): Photos by Rocco Valluzzo - Joel Barlow High School Graduation festivities on Thursday, July 12. (Row 4, left): Wooster School’s Class of 2025 graduated on Friday, June 13. (Row 4, right): Seniors at Immaculate High School celebrated their graduation on Saturday, June 7.

Book Review

Bird on a Blade

By Rosanne Cash and Dan Rizzie

115 Pages / University of Texas Press / \$19.95

Bird on a Blade, by Rosanne Cash and Dan Rizzie, is a project that urged itself on a poet and an artist quite naturally. It would have to. They don’t address the difficulties, but a creative collaboration of different media between intensely expressive solitaires is rare because it is difficult. The proper moment arrived, and a melding of two art forms commenced, just for the heck of it, to see if something else could grow from it. In a brief forward, they speak in one voice: “...we have been musing about the making of a book together – one that would tie art and lyrics together in a way that encourages a fresh encounter with both...we hope [the cross-pollination of visual and language] sparks a picture to your ear or a word to your image...”

Bird on a Blade is an experiment put forward to achieve an artful synergy of some kind and, in mysterious ways, it succeeds. Music in our day brings us the poetry of our time. Just as Shakespeare wrote for the everyman of his era, Rosanne Cash belongs to the poets’ guild that delivered Bob Dylan as literature’s Nobel laureate to the world. *Bird on a Blade* attempts to bring art to music and music to art in a free-form expression of separate sensibilities that share universal intention. What Cash and Rizzie are reaching for is how a phrase or an image can make you feel larger in spirit. The how and why of it are left for avid discussion outside the parameters of the text.

When, in the 1960s and 1970s, popular music assumed a cultural mantle that included poetic

expression, it presumed a non-specific place with art and film. But, as we know, the universe abhors a vacuum. Defining and claiming that place was begun initially by Andy Warhol. Warhol understood and achieved identification successfully between art and commerce, but he achieved only partial success mating art with music and film. This connection is still not wholly resolved. But one sees in *Bird on a Blade*, that the impulse exists undiminished. This more recent effort by Rosanne Cash and Dan Rizzie pairs her lyrics as stand-alone statements of living spirit with Dan Rizzie’s stand-alone impressions of wonder, conflict and confinement. Respecting the integrity of each form, the two make artful offerings side by side to present a dynamic for contemplation that reaches for synergy greater than the sum of the parts.

We live in a culture that relies on a scientific method for analytical answers to life while our brains function with metaphor and allegory to explain what appears inexplicable. Like dreams, art famously resolves contradiction. Opening your mind to contemplation of art requires time and a positive attitude to unconscious process. Rosanne Cash and Dan Rizzo offer a quiet roadmap for how this opening of sensibilities might proceed in pleasurable musing. ■

Review by Tom Casey,
author of *Human Error*,
Strangers’ Gate, and
Unsettled States

Good books for good readers

By Margi Esten

I know I have written about Anthony Horowitz in the past, but as I just began to read his most recent publication, I am moved to revisit this author.

Anthony Horowitz is an English novelist and screenwriter in mystery and suspense. It’s a little complicated to explain the various “series” of his: His editor/detective Susan Ryeland is featured in *Magpie Murders*, *Moonflower Murders*, and now his newest is *Marble Hall Murders*. Susan is/was a high-powered literary editor for a fictional British publishing house. She represented the author of *Magpie Murders* and then become overly involved in his mysterious death. She goes on to follow leads and solve crimes in the following two novels, all the while listening to that author’s fictional detective, Atticus Pund.

Horowitz also has written five novels featuring private

investigator Daniel Hawthorne and himself as a chronicler of Hawthorne’s cases: *The Word is Murder*, *The Sentence is Death*, *A Line to Kill*, *The Twist of a Knife*, and *Close to Death*. I have read, and reread, all of these and still never completely guess the ending!

In addition to the above novels, the estate of James Bond-creator Ian Fleming chose Horowitz to write Bond novels utilizing unpublished material by Fleming: *Trigger Mortis* in 2015, *Forever and a Day* in 2018 and *With a Mind to Kill* in 2022. This incredibly prolific author also has written for television (*Agatha Christie’s Poirot*, *Midsomer Murders*, *Foyle’s War* and more). He also penned the Alex Rider series for young adults featuring a 14-year-old British boy who spies for MI6.

Anthony Horowitz is not to be missed. ■

Bids arrive for bridge construction / continued from page 1

According to First Selectwoman Julia Pemberton, the Town has already received six bids with varying costs for Long Wall Road. A firm will be selected based on quality of construction rather than the lowest bid necessarily.

“The difference between the quotes is significant, so we’re digging a little deeper into each proposal to see why they are different,” Pemberton said. “We don’t have to take the low bidder, but there is a gap.”

Pemberton hopes to have enough information in time for a special town meeting on June 23 in order to request permission to award a contract for Long Wall Road. Requests for proposals for the remaining bridges are already posted.

The 30-day bid process and the applications for the SLBP are now

closed. By July, Redding should receive word whether it is getting any funding from the program, though Pemberton noted she does not expect to receive funding for all four bridges.

“We’re using 30 days so that there can be no question, especially with bridges,” said Pemberton. “I don’t want to hear from FEMA, ‘Oh well, you only went two weeks.’ We require 30 days, even though we’re not getting the money up front. We’re asking for a reimbursement.”

She also noted that the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development has procurement guidelines that require 25% of the work go to a minority-owned business for projects over a certain amount of money. ■

Library Corner

Kick off summer reading

By Mary Hoskinson-Dean

This year, summer reading at Mark Twain Library is a family affair! From toddlers to seniors, we have something fun to offer. A bountiful selection of books, special programs and activities, reading rewards, and raffles for all ages are on our summer agenda.

Check Out Chat and Chew is our weekly summer morning get-together, which will be held on Tuesday mornings this year. Families have an opportunity to hang out with friends old and new over coffee, donuts, and bagels. Kids can play with piles of toys – and everyone can browse the stacks (or board book bins) for a new read!

Our immensely popular preschool story times with Miss Lisa will continue on Wednesdays throughout the summer. Those who sign up for this special treat for little ones will get their own bubble wands.

Our most extensive summer reading program is for children entering grades K-4 in the fall. They are the ones who need lots of support in gaining both reading fluency and in acquiring the habit of reading. To entice them toward these important goals, we have created a reading rewards program entitled GROW YOUR MIND: READ! Kids who register (online – easy peasy) will receive a fun backpack and a program poster. When they reach their reading goals, they will have earned colorful plush flowers – or even more colorful buggy finger puppets.

There will be lots more to enjoy.

Popsicle parties, family story times, build-it workshops, and pizza lunches are all on offer. But the highlights of our summer program are the performers who will present songs, reptiles, and wild and crazy science... but not all at the same time! First up are the Science Heroes, who emphasize the entertaining side of science. Next up is the Reptile Nook, which will bring a fascinating group of animals for the audience to observe – and perhaps pet. And finally, Tom Sieling, a true “one-man-band”, will lead his young listeners in a sing-along concert as he plays a variety of instruments.

Readers in grades 5 – 12 have been having a wonderful time this spring with our new teen librarian, RYANNE Shemanskis. Week after week she has offered the most awesomely creative activities – and she will continue to do so all summer. Sign up for craft workshops – as well as Friday chat and chews, movie nights, flashlight walks, and more.

Middle school students and high schoolers, however, don’t get as much of an academic break over the summer – both groups have school assignments to complete – but we are pleased to partner with John Read Middle School and Joel Barlow High School in supporting them. John Read Middle School has a great online reading challenge, which offers quite unusual and imaginative reading recommendations and thoughtful, book-based projects. Joel Barlow High

School has its usual wide-ranging list of summer reading suggestions; the Library has multiple copies of required titles.

Both groups of students are eligible to participate in weekly raffles; each book read counts as a raffle ticket for a grand prize at the end of summer. (An exciting innovation for teens this summer: when you register for summer reading, you get a special scratch-off ticket – which could be an instant raffle winner – and will be an entry for an end-of-summer grand prize!)

And last but not least: as the *New York Times* recently discussed, “Summer Reading Challenges aren’t just for kids”. Adult readers at Mark Twain Library can register for summer reading. If they sign up online, they earn a scratch-off game ticket – which is either an instant winner or will be entered into an end-of-summer Registration Raffle. There will also be a Grand Prize Drawing; to be entered, you must record at least five books online or finish a row on our Book Bingo sheet. And finally, each book read and entered in the ReadSquared log will be entered into our weekly raffle.

But wait – there is one more summer reading activity we need to remind you about – there is no place nicer to read a book than on our beautiful new loggia. Come and visit soon! ■

Mary Hoskinson-Dean is
Assistant Director,
Mark Twain Library

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Nod to the pod

Antiques Roadshow Detours: “The Most Dangerous Book”

By Amy Maloof

A one-episode recommendation from a podcast you might love.

With roughly seven million streaming services offering nearly infinite content choices, I didn’t know how many people still watched Antiques Roadshow. After discovering this podcast, I was encouraged to learn: Lots. Produced by Boston’s public television station WGBH since 1997 – based on the original British version that premiered in 1979 – the program travels to different U.S. cities, showcasing the appraisals of people’s vintage trash and/or treasures. Audiences typically only see the highlights – the big-ticket items, the fun flops, or whatever makes the best story. Background history from the participant (“my grandpa was gardening and unearthed this crusty root beer bottle under the roses”)

and educational tidbits from the appraiser round out each session.

The show moves at a pretty fast clip – scores of people come out for each roadshow (I love to see the hordes wandering aimlessly in the background) and there’s a lot to get through in under an hour – so there’s rarely a follow-up segment on appraised items. Someone might be told their painting is worth a cool mill, but what happens after the camera stops rolling remains a mystery. This pod gets into the weeds on what goes down after the show. Hosted by the television show’s producer – and obsessive fact checker – Adam Monahan, it’s very nerdy and very fun. And very digestible at 25 minutes or so.

I chose this particular episode because it’s got especially funny banter between the different guests

(I love the running opening segment between Monahan and his boss, who has the most wonderful Boston accent) but also because I love collecting vintage books – and it’s all about how those beautiful old tomes can be poisonous. Dun dun duuun!

It seems *Antiques Roadshow* was always on at whatever domicile I inhabited from my late teens through my mid-twenties. In the background, while I finished a paper or ate a bowl of cereal, it was there, quietly teaching me through television osmosis. I just love these mainstay, educational shows and I love knowing they’re staying relevant by branching into the podcast realm, reaching listeners seeking out the slower, more meaningful programming PBS reliably delivers. ■

The Natural World

Lessons in empathy and responsibility from an unexpected friend

By Emma Ogden



Photo by Emma Ogden

Emma Ogden and Llama Samuel Clemens

I am a rising junior at Joel Barlow High School and have been working at Poverty Hollow Llama Farm for a year. Here is my story:

This all began when I was a little girl. My family went on yearly trips out West where we visited ranches and farms. I always loved being around the animals, whether they were big or small, and that sparked an interest in me that I might want to pursue a job in farming. Since I live in Easton, there aren’t many ranches or farms where you can work directly with the animals, which was my interest. I reached out to some farms in town, but they only needed my help with landscaping and planting.

Then, I attended the National Llama Appreciation Day at the Redding Historical Society. I learned that there might be a job opening for younger kids, like me, and I was immediately interested. The first thing I saw when I walked up were kids leading a llama around that was much bigger than they were. I was so stunned and intrigued. I knew absolutely nothing about llamas, but my father encouraged me to go around the booths to check them out and ask my questions. It

was a really hot day, and I was so impressed with how behaved these animals were and so willing to let little kids run around them. Right away I had grown a respect for these animals I previously knew nothing about, and I hadn’t even been up close to one yet.

We walked over to a booth that had a display of llama fiber and clothing. I spoke to the owner, Dr. Jane, about a future job working on her farm. She started by introducing me to Llama Tuck. She explained to me about llama life which was completely new, yet so interesting. She asked me to come to her farm the next week so I could learn how it runs.

Afterwards, I was so excited thinking that I could potentially get to work with real llamas. My dad slowed me down and told me that it was indeed exciting, but I should understand that I probably wouldn’t be working with the llamas for a while. Everyone starts somewhere, and I most likely would have to pick up “llama beans” and do chores before I could work directly with llamas.

This was, in fact, not the case. My first day at Poverty Hollow Llama Farm, Dr. Jane met me out front with Llama Samuel Clemens. He trotted right up to me, stuck his nose out to my nose, and gave me a big llama kiss. I was told to keep my hands down and just let it happen. Clemens only wanted to say hello.

From this moment forward, Clemens became “my man” on the farm. He really showed a liking for me, and I reciprocated. Clemens was very well trained. In the initial days, learning to become a llama handler was very easy for me. Reflecting on it now, I learned more from him than he did from me. He

already knew how to walk beside me when we hiked. He knew a lot of words and commands which he responded to quickly and obediently. I started to appreciate so many things about this species – their soft fiber, their gentleness, their intelligence, and their affection. It surprised me how quickly I was able to form a relationship with them and build their trust.

Poverty Hollow Llama Farm hires kids with an interest in building human-animal connections. This experience is so incredibly important for younger teenagers, as the animals play a key role in teaching us empathy, responsibility, and compassion. I truly believe that caring for an animal as intelligent and gentle as a llama grounds a deeper appreciation for life, nature, and hard work.

I’d like to point out the misconception around llamas spitting on people. Llamas generally don’t spit on humans unless they are abused. Llamas use spitting as a means of protection, like a skunk uses its scent. Additionally, the guardianship and protective instincts of llamas are admirable. I have witnessed many times how llamas will alarm-call to each other when danger approaches. They will protect each other and won’t back down until they are sure the danger is gone.

Now I am in high school, and even with all the busy school and sport activities, I have the opportunity to work outside at my dream farm. I want to share my story by inviting everyone to come meet “my man” Llama Samuel Clemens at the Redding Historical Society (43 Lonetown Road) on Sunday, June 22 from 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. during this year’s National Llama Appreciation Day. ■

Farmers markets welcome the summer season

By Pamela Brown

It’s always a good time to shop local, and in summer, numerous local farmers markets offer a one-stop shop to purchase locally-grown fruits, vegetables, and herbs, along with baked goods, handmade items, and more. Plus, some of these markets offer a fun atmosphere filled with music, socializing, and food. The best news is many of the markets run through October. ■

Farmers Market	Opening Dates	Day and Time	Items offered
Bethel 67 Stony Hill Road	May 17	Saturdays: 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Locally-made gluten-free baked goods, coffee; greens, jams, soap, bread, ready-to-take meals, fresh eggs, and more. Market yoga at 9:30 a.m. \$5 donation suggested.
Wilton Wilton Town Green 101 Old Ridgefield Road	June 4	Wednesdays: 12:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Seasonal and organic produce; fresh baked goods and pastries, lunch food vendors, fresh seafood, local artists and crafters, natural and organic skincare; eco-friendly home-goods, healthcare products; gourmet food items; and native plants and flowers. Also has weekly entertainment or programming.
Georgetown 4 Old Mill Road	June 8	Sundays: 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Produce, fresh baked goods, sweet treats, and more.
Newtown Fairfield Hills Campus	June 10	Tuesdays: 2:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.	Products from local and organic vegetable farms, local meats and eggs, baked goods, locally-made jams and jellies, and prepared foods. Live music and seating at each market.
Danbury Patriot Garage 21 Delay Street	June 21	Saturdays: 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Fresh locally-grown fruits and vegetables; specialty food items, such as salsas, spreads, and jams, baked goods, eggs, soaps, crafts; plants; and flowers. Live music along with nutrition, health, and fitness activities.
Ridgefield Jesse Lee Church grounds 207 Main Street	June 21	Every Saturday: 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Organic produce, baked goods, and specialty items along with family activities and live music on Main Street.
Weston Lachat Town Farm 106 Godfrey Road	June 27	Last Friday of the month: 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.	Food trucks, local fresh produce, hearth baked breads, local honey, jewelry, soaps, clothing, and more. Live musical performances at every market.
Redding Grange #15 The Grange 399 Newtown Turnpike	August 30 and September 20	Saturdays: 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Small-scale market offering fruits, vegetables, flowers, and other products exclusively grown in Redding. Free coffee with purchase. Kids welcome.

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If trees could talk “Forest bathing”

By Janice Rotchstein

Photo courtesy of Shutterstock/mangostock

Have you ever had one of those days?

A dear friend sensed it in my voice. “I’ll be there in five,” she said.

Once in the car, I was told: “We’re going forest bathing.”

“Don’t be absurd! I didn’t bring a towel, and what woman my age walks in flip flops?”

Within minutes, she stopped her SUV where Poverty Hollow Road dead ends. Ahead lay a dirt path edged with tall trees.

“Just follow me.”

I was bewildered. Rarely do I go into the woods. And never in my 70+ years have I been on a hike. But, for the next 15 minutes, we walked in silence. Then sat.

I began to feel strangely calm. My friend smiled. “Time I take you home.”

And that’s how I became a forest bather.

The slow, quiet ramble worked wonders. I wanted to know why. I discovered that the ritual originated in Japan during the 1980s when the country became more industrialized and the workers depersonalized. Called Shinrin-yoku, it is now part of that land’s national health program.

Today, millions worldwide are practicing this rite: in groups, as families, or by themselves. That’s gotten scientists involved. Studies by Stanford University School of Medicine indicate forest bathing can lower blood pressure, diminish cholesterol, reduce stress, cause a boost in the immune system and provide relief from depression – not only in adults, but also in children.

Diana Beresford-Kroeger, author of *To Speak for the Trees*, says woodland excursions connect a human’s biochemistry to a tree’s through the exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide. The effect causes natural healing. Simultaneously, our National Institutes of Health adds that nature’s green and blue colors are proven to relax our bodies.

Game to see what this walkabout can do for you? Try what works for me – and then make your own rules. Select a woods. Mute digital devices and forget that to-list. Move slowly, taking deep breaths – exhaling twice as long as you inhale. Meander. Feel the breeze on your skin. Listen to the sounds of a rippling brook. Sit quietly under a tree, lean against the trunk, and sense its strength as branches sway in the wind. Let scents surprise you from pine needles to moist earth. Marvel at what crosses your path: a bunny nibbling clover; bees heading for their hive; squirrels dashing home with acorns.

After 20 minutes of wandering and resting, I bet you’ll feel more at ease, less fatigued, and tingling with energy. Some people continue for up to two hours, but you decide when to end your immersion. Once you do, the feeling of being at peace will linger, and don’t be astonished if you sleep better that night.

Fortunately, thanks to Redding Land Trust and the Town of Redding’s Open Space Plan, there are more than 8,000 acres to immerse yourself in this practice. Most are open year-round. All are accessed at no cost.

Isn’t it amazing to know that there is an easy way to take the stressful bite out of any day? But even better, to realize that moving quietly through our forests can be an invigorating and mentally soothing tonic at every age. ■

Note: Selecting a route for Forest Bathing is easy with the Redding Land Trust “Book of Trails” at reddinglandtrust.org or the Centennial Watershed State Forest map at portal.ct.gov/deep/state-parks/forests/centennial-watershed-state-forest/maps

If you have a favorite tree you’d like featured in this column, contact reddingtreeconservancy@gmail.com

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

\$ = fee applies
R = registration required

This Week’s Featured Events

Make Music Georgetown Saturday, June 21 10:00 a.m. – 11:45 p.m. Live performances across Georgetown Main Street makemusicday.org/Georgetown	National Llama Appreciation Day Sunday, June 22 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Meet llamas, do crafts, take photos, no dogs allowed 43 Lonetown Road povertyhollowllamas.com	Public Meeting – Georgetown Revitalization Wednesday, June 25 6:00 p.m. Joel Barlow High School / Auditorium 100 Black Rock Turnpike	First Annual Pride Picnic Saturday, June 28 1:00 p.m. Bring picnic and blanket Beverages and ice pops Town Green 100 Hill Road
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ARTS

- Saturday, May 31 – Saturday, July 26**

Summer Dreams Group Exhibition
Contact for appointment
Georgetown Arts & Cultural Center
5 Main Street
gtownarts.com
- Thursday, June 5 – Sunday, June 28**

Redding Land Trust 60th Anniversary Photography Show
On view during Library hours
Mark Twain Library
439 Redding Road
marktwainlibrary.org
- Thursday, June 5 – Sunday, July 20**

If / Only / And / Then Art Exhibition
Featuring artwork by Sonja Langford, Faye Pamintuan, and Rachel Volpone
Anonymous Society
268 Simpaug Turnpike
anonymoussocietygallery.com

CHILDREN | TEENS

- Monday, June 23**

Toddler Popsicle Party and Story Time
10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Mark Twain Library
439 Redding Road
marktwainlibrary.org
R
- Monday, June 23**

The Reptile Nook
4:00 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.
Ages 4-10
Mark Twain Library
439 Redding Road
marktwainlibrary.org
R
- Tuesday, June 24**

Puzzles on the Patio
4:00 p.m.
Teen event, grades 5+
Mark Twain Library
439 Redding Road
marktwainlibrary.org
R

SEASONAL | HOLIDAY

- Friday, June 20**

A Celebration of Summer Solstice: Crystal Cymbalogy
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Mark Twain Library
439 Redding Road
marktwainlibrary.org
R
- Friday, June 20 – Saturday, June 21**

Juneteenth Freedom Day Celebration
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Friday
12:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Saturday
Music, culture, food, and community
1 Ives Street and 181 White Street
Danbury
events.cawct.org/events/2025-danbury-juneteenth-freedom-day-celebration
- Saturday, June 28**

First Annual Pride Picnic
1:00 p.m.
Bring picnic and blanket
Beverages and ice pops
Town Green
100 Hill Road

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

- Saturday, June 21**

Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off
9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Bethel High school
300 Whittlesley Drive
Bethel
reddingct.gov/events
- Sunday, June 22**

National Llama Appreciation Day
1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Meet llamas, do crafts, take photos, no dogs allowed
Hosted by Poverty Hollow Llamas and Redding Historical Society
43 Lonetown Road
povertyhollowllamas.com
- Tuesday, June 24**

Lunch Series: Sushi
12:00 p.m.
Heritage Center lunch catered by Sushivill
37 Lonetown Road
RSVP mstillman@reddingct.gov or (203) 938-9725
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- Thursday, June 26**

Author Event: Liv Constantine book release
7:00 p.m.
Presented by Byrd’s Books
Greenwood Features
269 Greenwood Avenue
byrdsbooks.com
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- Saturday, July 12**

Rock ‘n Roots Music Festival and Fireworks Show
4:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.
Presented by Redding Historical Society
Lonetown Farm
43 Lonetown Road
ticketleap.events/tickets/redding-history/rock-n-roots-2025
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RELIGIOUS SERVICES

- Bethlehem Lutheran Church**
Sundays at 10:00 a.m.
44 Portland Avenue
bethlehemlutheranct.org

- Calvary Independent Baptist Church**
Adult and Child Sunday School at 10:00 a.m. / Worship 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 Sacred Heart Church:**
Saturday Confessions: 10:00 a.m. at Pryor Hubbard Hall
Saturday Vigil Mass: 4:00 p.m.
Saturday Eucharistic Adoration: 6:00 p.m.
Sunday Mass: 9:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.
12:00 noon LATIN
Weekday Mass: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8:30 a.m.
Wednesday 6:00 p.m. LATIN
30 Church Street
- St. Patrick Church:**
Saturday Vigil Mass: 5:00 p.m.
Saturday Confessions: 4:00 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.
Sunday Mass: 8:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m.
Weekday Mass: Monday – Friday at 8:30 a.m.
Weekday Confessions: Mondays and Thursdays: 7:30 p.m., before or after mass, or by appointment
Eucharistic Adoration: Mondays and Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.
169 Black Rock Turnpike
sacredheart-stpat.org
- Temple B’nai Chaim**
Friday, June 20
Pride Shabbat
7:00 p.m.
82 Portland Avenue
templebnaichaim.org

MEETINGS

- Monday, June 23**

Public Hearing re: CT Neighborhood Assistance Act
6:00 p.m.
Town Hall / Hearing Room
100 Hill Road
- Monday, June 23**

Special Town Meeting
6:30 p.m.
Town Hall / Hearing Room
100 Hill Road
- Monday, June 23**

Board of Selectmen Special Meeting
7:00 p.m.
Town Hall / Hearing Room
100 Hill Road
- Monday, June 23**

Board of Finance
7:30 p.m.
Virtual
- Tuesday, June 24**

Redding Board of Education
7:00 p.m.
John Read Middle School / Community Room
486 Redding Road
- Tuesday, June 24**

Planning Commission
7:00 p.m.
Town Hall / Hearing Room
100 Hill Road
- Wednesday, June 25**

Public Meeting – Georgetown Revitalization
6:00 p.m.
Joel Barlow High School / Auditorium
100 Black Rock Turnpike
- Wednesday, June 25**

Zoning Commission
7:30 p.m.
Town Hall / Hearing Room
100 Hill Road
- Thursday, June 26**

Democratic Town Committee
7:00 p.m.
Town Hall / Hearing Room
100 Hill Road
- Thursday, June 26**

Redding Fire District No. 2 Commissioners' Meeting
7:00 p.m.
306 Umpawaug Road
- Tuesday, July 1**

Conservation Commission
7:30 p.m.
Town Hall / Hearing Room
100 Hill Road

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Today we celebrate Juneteenth—a powerful reminder of freedom, resilience, and unity. As we honor this important moment in history, we also welcome the arrival of summer, a season full of energy, possibility, and new beginnings. Whether you’re looking to make a move or just enjoying the sunshine, now is a great time to explore the opportunities in our vibrant real estate market. We’re here to help—reach out anytime!



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Team

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