

REDDING SENTINEL

MAY 14, 2026

REDDING, CONNECTICUT

Volume 5 / Issue 4

\$3

Redding Board of Education updated on principal search, capital projects

By Anne Young Albanese

While evening voters went to the polls on Tuesday, May 5, the Redding Board of Education held its May meeting. Topics from personnel to capital spending were discussed.

John Read Middle School principal search

After receiving and screening more than 43 applications for the role of Principal at John Read Middle School, Superintendent Dr. Jason McKinnon and Director of Human Resources Dr. Robert

Continued on page 5



Photo by Holly Hill

A blue heron wades and enjoys the sunshine near Sanfords town Road. If you have a photo you'd like to see featured here, e-mail editor@reddingsentinel.org.

A small-town tradition with a big heart Memorial Day Parade on May 23

By Jessie Wright



Photo by Jessie Wright

Local and state representatives marching in last year's parade. This year's event promises to be bigger than ever, featuring music, a children's push-and-pull, and a float built by Redding Grange.

Fire trucks, children on their decorated bicycles, even a bonafide float – this year's Memorial Day Parade organizers have big plans.

The event, which will take place Saturday, May 23 this year, traces its roots back to the 1960s when Earl Sanford started it as a celebration for the fire departments and local children to participate

in, according to his son Hank. "He wanted to make sure that the kids in town knew that Memorial Day is to honor the veterans," Hank explained. "It's not just a day off from school."

Hank now marshals the parade each year, taking over for his brother in 2012 who had taken over the role after their father's death in 1971. The route is a modest one

(one participant claimed it "may be the shortest parade route in all of Connecticut"), beginning at Redding Elementary School at 12:00 p.m. when the First Selectwoman will lay a wreath at the World War II Memorial at the Main Gymnasium. From there, the parade will march down Lonetown Road, past Town Hall to the green in front of the Old Town Hall at 23 Cross Highway where the flagpole and World War I memorial stone are located. A short ceremony will follow, with the Boy Scouts raising the flag and Girl Scouts placing flowers.

This year, in part because of the America 250 celebrations taking place throughout town and around the country, organizers are aiming to add elements that will make the parade a bigger event than before. The new community band George-town Marching hopes to participate alongside fire engines, groups from local organizations, and local and state elected officials. Anyone is invited to participate and march –

Continued on page 3

REDDING'S BIG OUTDOORS

Journey into the green

By Jessie Wright



Photo by Jessie Wright

Suddenly, the verdant backdrop of our woody town has returned. The buds of early spring have unfurled into millions of leaves framing our roadways, backyards, and vistas. There is something almost blinding about the bright greens of May – the saturated color overwhelming our winter-weary eyes.

I ventured down the old section of Poverty Hollow Road this week, which proved to be a journey

right into the heart of the lush new growth. The walk is on a roughly one-and-a-half-mile stretch that used to be part of Valley Road connecting Redding to Easton all the way to Route 58 but is now closed to vehicular traffic and makes a pleasant, gravel stroll. Parking at the end of the narrow "dead end" section just before Poverty Hollow Road meets Stepney Road, I set a brisk pace.

The day was chilly but offered a soft warmth anytime the sun peeked through the dense clouds. All around me, birds trilled and twittered, setting a soundtrack that felt so quintessential I was reminded of the recorded sounds played at zoos to set the enclosed animals at ease. The path was wide and even, allowing me to easily take in my surroundings as I walked on.

The woods on either side of the road are part of the Centennial Watershed State Forest, and it showed. Gurgling water from little brooks led occasionally down the slope on

my right and toward marshier lowlands to my left. I saw patches of wild ramps thriving next to ferns stretching out of their nascent spirals and fully leafed-in skunk cabbages. I could almost hear the earth holding and transporting the weekend's rain to its many stores, keeping it like a kind guardian, awaiting drier times.

I didn't have time this outing to veer off at the Aspetuck River Valley Trail, a blue-blazed half-mile walk that comes up as an option on the right-hand side about a mile in. I made a mental note to leave more time for that detour next time. The canopy likely will feel different then – more mature, sleepier, a deeper green of summertime shade.

Do you like to hit the trails?

The Sentinel is looking for additional volunteer contributors for Redding's Big Outdoors. E-mail editor@reddingsentinel.org for more information.

Voting by mail to be a universal option in Connecticut

By Mark Pazniokas

A divided Senate gave final passage Wednesday to legislation that lifts the last barriers to no-excuse absentee voting in Connecticut and will make casting ballots by mail a universal option in this year's primaries and general election.

Passage of the bill came on a 25-11 vote on the last day of the General Assembly's annual session, a day of pomp, circumstance, and exhaustion. The Senate worked overnight until 8:00 a.m. then returned Wednesday afternoon.

Once signed by Governor Ned Lamont, the measure, House Bill 5001, will repeal a law that denies absentee ballots to any voter who cannot attest to being unable to vote in person due to sickness, disability, absence, military service, religious conflicts or being an elections worker.

Until the passage of a constitutional amendment in November 2024 by a margin of 58% to 42%, those same six conditions were part of a State constitution that was unusually prescriptive on rules for absentee voting.

"This has been a long time coming," said Senator Mae Flexer, D-Windham, Co-Chair of the Government Administration and Elections Commission.

With a primary mission of implementing changes anticipated after the constitutional amendment, the bill also was the vehicle for making technical changes in how absentee ballots are issued and tracked, authorizing a commission to promote voting and addressing the State's conflicts with the president over the Federal role in elections.

President Donald Trump has repeatedly urged congressional Republicans to "nationalize" elections, a sentiment counter to the U.S. Constitution, which gives States the authority to run elections for Federal offices.

"We're concerned about the rhetoric at the national level with respect to our elections," Flexer said. "This is an example of the legislature being incredibly responsive."

The response is partisan. The bill was opposed by every member of the Republican minorities in the House and Senate.

Senate Minority Leader Stephen Harding, R-Brookfield, said he supported, in concept, no-excuse absentee ballots, but he said the expansion of their use should have been accompanied by greater protections against fraud.

Harding disagreed with Trump's assessment that fraud is rampant, and the 2020 presidential election was stolen. He called fraud relatively rare – but real.

"There is a lack of safeguards," he said.

Connecticut isn't immune to allegations of absentee ballot fraud. In Bridgeport, a number of people are facing a variety of charges related to the city's 2023 Democratic mayoral primary.

Other than closing remarks by Harding, the fight against passage was carried by a sole Republican,

Continued on page 2

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Index

Big Outdoors	1
Police Blotter	2
Legal Notices	2
Sports	4
Classified	5
Book Review	6
Library Corner	6
Music Note	7
Real Estate	8
Calendar of Events	9



POLICE BLOTTER

Police activity from May 4 – 10

By Donna Christopher

Police assisted in one fire department call, 10 emergency medical services calls, and two citizen calls. They processed one firearm permit and took in the firearms of someone whose pistol permit had been revoked.

Traffic

In 32 motor vehicle stops for the one-week period, officers issued one summons, 14 infractions, five written warnings, 10 verbal warnings, and took no action in two instances. The infraction rate was 47%.

Three two-car motor vehicle accidents occurred, in which one driver complained of injury due to airbag deployment after a collision on Redding Road on May 6.

Suspicious incidents

In a May 5 incident call to Portland Avenue, five to six youths were found attempting to access the Wire Mill property. They were located by police and warned to stay off private property.

In a suspicious incident reported at Wayside Lane on May 5, a caller reported two vehicles parked and running but the vehicles were gone upon an officer's arrival.

A suspicious bag left at the Town Hall on May 8 was determined to be donated canned food.

Man with knife

Police said they responded to the area of Newtown Turnpike at approximately 4:54 p.m. on May 6 for a report of a suspicious vehicle parked on Aquarion Water Company property. Officers determined the registered owner, a 24-year-old male from Norwich, had an active arrest warrant. The vehicle's operator refused repeated lawful commands to exit the vehicle and was observed in possession of a knife. Officers said they utilized Oleoresin Capsicum spray to take him into custody without injury to officers or the public.

The driver was evaluated at Danbury Hospital prior to being transported to the Redding Police Department for processing. He was charged with Interfering with an Officer and held on \$2,500 bond pending arraignment at Danbury Superior Court on May 7. Additionally, he received warrant charges of first-degree failure to appear. A bond amount of \$50,000 was set by the New London Superior court. ■

LEGAL NOTICES

Notice is hereby given that The Georgetown Fire District is selling a 2016 Gray Nissan Pathfinder – VIN Number 5N1AR2MM5GC648750 – with approximately 92,500 miles.

Public inspection will take place on Tuesday May 19 from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Sealed bids must be submitted in person at the Georgetown Fire District located at 61 Redding Rd, Redding CT 06896. Sealed bids will be accepted until May 26 at 9:00 a.m.

Bids will be opened on May 27 at 10:00 a.m.

The successful bidder will be required to submit payment and remove the vehicle by June 1 at 3:00 p.m. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of the bid award, and the Georgetown Fire District reserves the right to award the sale to the next highest bidder.

The Georgetown Fire District reserves the right to reject any and all bids. ■

William Ely, Commissioner

LEGAL NOTICE OF DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS

Redding, CT – Democratic Town Committee

To enrolled members of the Democratic Party of the Town of Redding, Connecticut Pursuant to the Rules of the Democratic Party and State election laws, you are hereby notified that a caucus will be held on: May 21, 2026 at 7:30 p.m., at Redding Town Hall, 100 Hill Road, Redding CT, to endorse a candidate for Registrar of Voters and to transact other business as may be proper to come before said caucus. ■

Dated at: Redding, Connecticut, on the 14th day of May, 2026

Redding Democratic Town Committee

Diana M. Carlino, Chairperson

Congressman Himes talks national issues at Meadow Ridge

By Donna Christopher



Photo by Carol Morgan

Congressman Jim Himes addressed a group of Meadow Ridge residents on Monday, May 4.

On a May 4 visit to Meadow Ridge, U.S. Representative Jim Himes met with residents to discuss an array of major national issues. His hour-long presentation covered topics including the Iran conflict, Congressional reform, and Social Security policy. Himes took questions from residents as well.

The District Four Congressman received a warm reception and apologized for arriving late due to attending a “shadow hearing” in New Haven on election protection and security with U.S. Representative Rosa DeLauro.

Himes's focus was primarily on the war in Iran, describing it as a serious concern over the past two months. He emphasized that Congress did not declare war, highlighting the constitutional requirement for Congressional approval and the importance of public debate given the gravity of such decisions. While noting that this tension between Congress and presidents is not new nor partisan, Himes said it is important for elected representatives to weigh in, especially given the human and economic consequences. “There aren't many more serious decisions that the government can take than to go to war,” he noted.

He pointed out the impacts of the conflict, including American service members who have been confirmed killed in the Iran conflict. “We've very sadly lost 13

Americans in the initial days of the conflict there,” he said.

Himes shared that under the War Powers Act, military engagement beyond 60 days requires Congressional authorization, but noted the Administration's claim that a ceasefire pauses that timeline, despite ongoing actions like maritime blockades.

Himes, the Ranking Member of the House Intelligence Committee, described the Iranian regime as deeply problematic, citing violence against its own people and destabilizing actions globally, while also noting that it has survived U.S. military pressure. He cited “the murder of 30,000 or 40,000 of their own people because of the protests” and warned that Iran has learned it can endure attacks and disrupt global trade by closing the Strait of Hormuz.

Rising gas prices and increased fertilizer costs due to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, which will likely lead to higher food prices, were also discussed.

Himes concluded the topic by expressing concern that political pressures may push the President to accept a deal to reopen the Strait, though the terms of such a deal are unclear.

On domestic issues, Himes, speaking to a mostly elderly audience, shared his views on Social Security reform and longevity.

“Here's the thing: the average longevity for a guy like me who wears a suit to work and will wear a suit to work his entire life, is radically higher than an African American laborer who you know is a firefighter or a worker. You know, there's a 10-year difference in longevity there. So, when you say we're going to raise the retirement age by a year or two, remember that those of us who are very lucky to do white collar work, that comes at the expense of people whose life spans, because of the nature of the work they do, will be lower.”

On immigration, he told residents that he believes the U.S. needs

secure borders, but we also need legal immigration for jobs in agriculture, building trades, and infrastructure as well as skilled worker visas for the technology sector. “Our economy relies on it,” he said. He also expressed the need to approach immigration enforcement in “a humane way.”

Someone in the audience asked about gerrymandering and representation, arguing that district manipulation (gerrymandering) distorts political representation and should be reversed, noting “the State of Virginia is 40% Republican, and they're going to have 10 representatives that are Democrats and one representative who's Republican.”

“We need to reverse the gerrymandering so that people don't feel like they're underrepresented in the House of Representatives,” replied Himes.

Someone asked the Congressman about what can be done so that, during a government shutdown, all three branches (including Congress, the President, and the Supreme Court) are not paid, just like regular Federal employees who are affected by shutdowns.

“If any element of the Federal government is shut down, no member of Congress, no Senator, gets a dime, doesn't get paid until the shutdown gets fixed,” he said. “To me, that would be a very good idea, because more and more now, we're starting to think of shutdowns as a way of getting what we want. That's not the way this process is supposed to work.”

He stressed that shutdowns should not be used as bargaining tools and believes Congress should feel the same consequences as Federal workers when government operations halt.

In response to an inquiry about whether Congress members must buy health insurance on the open market, Himes confirmed members of Congress have been required to use the exchanges since the Affordable Care Act (2009). ■

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Voting by mail to be a universal option in Connecticut / continued from page 1

Senator Rob Sampson of Wolcott. He offered eight amendments, including a requirement for photo identification to vote, a ban on anyone making unsolicited distributions of absentee ballot application, and a mandatory minimum sentence of one year in prison for certain acts of voter fraud.

Sampson bemoaned that each one failed on a 25-11 party line vote. He also complained, after a night of his speaking for hours on other bills, that there was so little time to explore all 73 sections of a bill that did far more than establish no-excuse absentee voting.

“I think it's a travesty, the way this process is working,” he said.

He was the only senator who did not participate in a bipartisan end-of-session activity with Lieutenant Governor Susan Bysiewicz, who presides over Senate debates, and the other 35 senators: posing in the Senate for a formal group portrait, a memento for five senators who are not seeking reelection.

“You'd think that our State government, our State legislature, would be operated in a way that was with a little more decorum than the way it has been,” Sampson said. “I couldn't be more frustrated by the past couple of days and the way this place is operated.”

He praised Flexer for her work on one element of the bill: A provision that establishes risk-limiting audits that manually examine a statistical sample of paper ballots

and guarantee a specified risk limit, which the bill caps at 5%.

But he faulted her for feeling “the need to interject Federal politics and Trump.”

“I hear it constantly,” Sampson said. “What's going on across this country, there is a narrative that's being generated to pull the wool over the eyes of the people across this country, and particularly in the State of Connecticut by the majority party, that somehow national politics has something to do with what's happening in this room. And it doesn't.”

The bill also increases the penalty for harassing election workers from a misdemeanor to a felony on a second offense, including publicizing a worker's name or address with intent to intimidate. It also makes tampering with an absentee ballot drop box a felony.

A measure sought for several years by Miles Rapoport, the former Secretary of the State, to explore ways to produce a 100% voter turnout also is in the bill.

With E.J. Dionne Jr., Rapoport has written a book, *100% Democracy: The Case for Universal Voting*.

House Bill 5001 imposes no such mandate. It establishes a nine-member task force to study efforts to achieve 100% voter participation in Connecticut by January 1, 2030 ■

This article originally appeared in CT Mirror

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News and Views of Redding, Connecticut

Publisher, Susan Clark
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Assistant Graphic Designer, Connor Feeney
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Advertising Sales Representative, Atticus Upson

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Single copy price \$3.00 / Annual subscription \$95.00

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Printed by The Republican, Springfield, MA
Telecommunications by CCI Voice
www.reddingsentinel.org
203.938.3800

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Branchville Cemetery deed holders asked for help to identify graves



Photo by Jessie Wright

The Ridgefield Graveyard Committee is working to identify those who own deeds for future burial at Branchville Cemetery and as many graves as possible at the site. Committee members will be at the Branchville Cemetery on Brook Lane on Sunday, June 14 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and encourage anyone with a deed for the cemetery to bring it for duplication and record-keeping. Those who know where someone is buried at the site are also asked to come to assist in locating and mapping graves. Questions can be directed to Nancy Selander at (203) 438-5395; at first message, hit 3 to make the phone ring.

A small-town tradition with a big heart / continued from page 1

simply arrive at Redding Elementary School by 11:30 a.m. to line up. A “push and pull” section is planned this year, in which children can decorate their bicycles, wagons, or strollers and be part of the festivities.

“When I grew up, we all took playing cards and put them in the spokes,” recalled Linda Mitchell, a resident helping spread the word about this year’s parade. “So, get out your cards and decorate!”

One local group that is eagerly preparing for the event is Redding Grange, whose members have been working to build an agriculture-themed parade float just for the occasion. Edward Staunton and Mike Mitchell are the construction leaders of the project, building a frame onto a donated trailer that will be pulled down the route by a vintage tractor. “We’re making a structure out of two-by-fours for the float, which will then take all the decorations. We’ll surround it with decorations and signage – it’s going to be a very festive ‘Grange-y’

float,” noted Staunton, who said his history as a cabinet maker may be one of the reasons he was tapped for the job.

Mike’s own family has a long and rich history with planning the annual event. His father, Charlie Mitchell, was instrumental in bringing Redding veterans of Operation Desert Storm back to town for the 1991 parade to be honored after seeing the demoralizing reception many veterans of the Vietnam War had received upon their return home.

The Grange plans to host a decorating party at 4:00 p.m. the day before the parade for anyone who wants to help prepare the float for its debut. Interested community members can e-mail community@reddinggrange.org for more details.

Traffic control will be provided by the Police Department. Residents who aren’t marching in the parade are encouraged to line the route and then meet at the World War I stone following the procession for the brief ceremony. ■



Photo by Mike Mitchell / Painting by George T. Hamilton

A painting by George T. Hamilton of the 1991 Memorial Day Parade in which Redding troops who fought in Operation Desert Storm were honored.

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SPORTS

Falcons dominate, sweep their respective meets *Boys and girls track and field*

By Rocco Valluzzo



Photo by Rocco Valluzzo

Joel Barlow High's Nathan Duque placed first in the 110 high hurdles at a boys track meet in Brookfield on Tuesday, May 5. Barlow swept the competition, defeating the hosts 140-103, and also beating Bassick 119-24 and Immaculate 104-40.

Boys track and field

Simply having athletes in certain events would be an advantage for the Joel Barlow High boys track team when it visited Brookfield.

The Falcons were the only team represented in six events, making for some easy points on Tuesday, May 5. Given these events and scoring way ahead of the competition in others, the Falcons outscored the hosts 140-103 and beat Bassick 119-24 and Immaculate 104-40 to sweep the meet.

The Falcons were the only competitors in the 4x800-meter relay at the start of the meet. Didier Mejia-Morneau, Ryan Wheatley, Rowan Weiss, and Logan Seo posted a time of 11:2.40 for the win. They had more competition in the other relays, but did get second in the 4x400 with Lucas Jandura, Brian



Photo by Rocco Valluzzo

Joel Barlow High's Vivian D'Amico was second in the pole vault at a girls track meet on Tuesday, May 5. The Falcons edged host Brookfield 69-68 and easily defeated Immaculate 97-25 and Bassick 103-15.

Rudd, Caleb Rudd, and Kieran Lueker finishing in 3:54.41.

Barlow had only two athletes in the 110 high hurdles, but they were the only ones. Nathan Duque was the winner in 20.63 and Chris Caldwell followed in 21.04, a personal best. It was a similar situation in the 300 intermediate hurdles, another sweep. Josh Hamilton won it in 53.85, with Caldwell in second in 54.43 (personal best), and Duque in third in 54.87.

While Immaculate went on to sweep the 1,600, the Falcons took two of three places in the 400. Second went to Ethan Peters in 50.23 (personal best) and Kaelen Kunar was third in 55.31.

Jandura scored Barlow's only points in the 200, taking fourth overall in 24.72. Wheatley had Barlow's best showing in the 3,200,

taking third in 12:12.52 (personal best). Mejia-Morneau was sixth in 15:22.55.

With superior numbers in their favor, the Falcons dominated many of the field events, including the javelin. Noah Beninati led a sweep, taking first with a throw of 150 feet, 11 inches. Sam Walker followed with 138 feet, 4 inches, and Jandura was third with 109 feet, 3 inches (personal best). Jandura went on to win the javelin in 33 feet, 10 inches, and Ethan Rose was second with 32 feet, 10 inches, both personal bests.

It was a one-two-three finish for Barlow in the discus for another sweep. Walker led with 117 feet, 8 inches, an inch longer than Rose. Beninati was third with 105' 0". All were personal bests.

"I'm really happy with how well the throwers have been doing this season," said Barlow Head Coach Ryan Paola. "Mike Intemann is the throwing coach and has a loyal group of guys who have really bought into throwing."

Leading a sweep of the long jump, Peters went 17 feet, 11 inches. Next was Bauer Heres only a half-inch behind him. Third went to Gregor Parry with 16 feet, 7.25 inches.

Peters and Sean Connolly were the only competitors in the triple jump, going one-two with distances of 38 feet, 6 inches and 32 feet, 10.75 inches (personal best) respectively. Kunar cleared six feet to win the high jump.

It was a similar situation in the pole vault, as Heres went 12 feet, 6 inches for the win, with Ben Azara (11 feet) and Max Mehner (10 feet, 6 inches) following. All were personal bests.

Girls track and field

A strong finish at the end of the meet was the difference for the Joel Barlow High girls track team when it visited Brookfield.

With only one event to go, the Falcons needed to finish ahead of the hosts in the 4x400-meter relay to secure victory. Taking no chances, they had time to spare, placing first in the event and the meet for a 69-68 win on Tuesday, May 5.

Barlow had much more breathing room against the rest of the competition, easily upending Immaculate 97-25 and Bassick 103-15 to even its record to 6-6 overall.

The Falcons started the meet on a winning note, as Mila Baker, Alessandra Costello, Lucy Zima, and Vivian D'Amico combined to form the 4x800 relay team that placed first in 11:55.38. Although the Falcons did not place in the top three in the 4x100, they won the 100 high hurdles with Phoebe Cora Smith finishing in 17.01.

Vika Abukhovich scored points for the Falcons in the 100 meters, taking third in 13.35.

With a 5:47.41, Clara Mehner took victory in the 1,600. Kate Duggan did likewise in the 400, breaking the one-minute mark in 59.71, a personal best. It was a personal best for Stephanie Bardani in the 800 as well, winning in 2:36.39.

"I think that our mid-distance crew is doing a phenomenal job progressing and seems to be trending to peak at just the right time in the post season," said Barlow Head Coach Ryan Swift. "Stephanie and Clara have been great in the 1,600 and 800, along with freshman Kate, who has proved herself to be a top contender in the 800 for the post season."

More points came in the 200, as Olivia Taylor was second in 26.81. Third went to Smith in 27.82.

Mehner and Bardani had their best times of the season in the 3,200. The former was third in 14:10.43 and the latter followed a mere 0.04 seconds later.

The Falcons needed a strong performance in the 4x400 and secured victory there as well, with Abukhovich, Taylor, Smith, and Duggan posting a time of 4:06.73, beating the competition by more than 40 seconds.

There was much competition between Brookfield and Barlow in the field events. The hosts took first in the javelin, but the Falcons placed second and third, as Taylor and Duggan had throws of 75 feet and 74 feet, 9 inches respectively, both personal bests.

Another personal best was in the shot put with Hannah O'Brien's winning toss of 23 feet, 9 inches. Following a Brookfield win in the discus, O'Brien was second with 65 feet, 8 inches, and third went to Francesca Curatilo in 56 feet, 4 inches (personal best).

Taylor leaped 16 feet, 9 inches to place first in the long jump. Brookfield swept the triple jump, but the Falcons took third in the high jump when Elizabeth Kimball cleared 4 feet, 2 inches.

It was a one-two finish for Barlow in the pole vault. Duggan got her second individual win of the day with 9 feet, and D'Amico was second with 8 feet.

Both boys and girls teams finish their regular seasons this week before the South-West Conference championship on Tuesday, May 19 at New Milford High School. ■



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A “hard knock” hit John Read Middle School’s Annie Jr. wows crowds

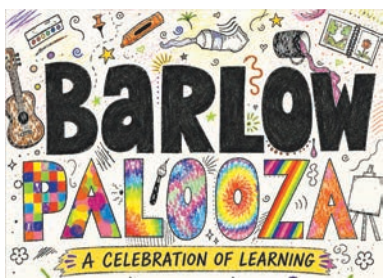


Photos by Jessie Wright

A talented cast and crew from John Read Middle School put on a nearly sold-out run of *Annie Jr.* at Joel Barlow High School auditorium from May 7-9. (From top left, clockwise): Sonja Friedman as Annie opens the show with a heartfelt, glorious rendition of “Maybe”; Members of the cast and crew gather for their final dress rehearsal, led by Director Riley D’Agostino; The orphan ensemble charm the audience in “Hard Knock Life”; Chase Saris as Bundles McCloskey and Hadley Schuchard as Miss Hannigan bring their comedic skills to the stage, ever flirtatious and funny.

High school to open its doors for annual Barlow Palooza

By Anne Young Albanese



Barlow will host its 20th annual Barlow Palooza on Thursday, May 21 from 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m., inviting the Redding and Easton communities to celebrate and explore many of the activities happening at local schools.

The event will feature a concert performed by Nothing but Trouble and A Chaired Taste, Barlow’s two award-winning *a cappella* groups alongside Barlow’s jazz band and the student-run music group CMT (Connecting Through Music). Timothy Huminski, an English teacher at Barlow and Barlow Palooza Coordinator, also is looking for other musical groups to perform

pop-up performances throughout the event.

The Barlow Art Show will feature pieces created by all art students who are studying AP (Advanced Placement) art, drawing and painting, art experience, ceramics, sculpture, photography, and jewelry. In addition, there will be live and interactive student demonstrations. Barlow Palooza also will showcase a Future Falcons Art Show, featuring artwork from Redding and Easton’s K-8 schools, John Read Middle School, Helen Keller Middle School, Redding Elementary School, and Samuel Staples Elementary School.

Science students and guest speakers will conduct a science symposium to provide attendees with examples of experiments to demonstrate the “S” of Barlow’s STEM programs. The Barlow Robotics team will be on hand to demonstrate the students’ competition robot.

The Youth Mental Health First Aid Club will hold a mental health

fair. This is a two-day event that is open to students on May 20, and to all attendees of Barlow Palooza the evening of the event as well. There will be stress-relieving activities, spending time with service dogs, painting kind messages on rocks, and a bingo booth with mental health questions.

Barlow Palooza will feature Personal Interest Projects and Invention Convention inventions from students at John Read Middle School and Helen Keller Middle School. These projects are driven by the students for personal exploration. Five Barlow students will present their Passages projects, and 12-13 AP seminar students will be doing presentations throughout the evening as well. ■

Barlow Palooza will take place at Joel Barlow High School at 100 Black Rock Turnpike

Barlow Beat A student looks ahead at the final weeks of school

By Victoria Flishenbaum

As the end of the school year draws near, students at Joel Barlow High School find themselves caught up in the excitement and pressure of finishing the year strong. With finals, projects, and last-minute assignments piling up, stress and anxiety increase, but there is plenty of celebration as well.

From sports to beloved end-of-year traditions, there is growing excitement at Barlow.

To start with athletics, boys volleyball made a statement away win on May 7, sweeping Newtown High School 3-0. The win brought their season record to an impressive 12-3, a testament to the team’s hard work throughout the season. But that’s not all. The girls’ tennis team traveled to Bunnell on Monday May 4 and secured an amazing 7-0 win, pushing their overall record to 8-2. Both teams are maintaining

strong form throughout the season and have given students a lot to cheer on about.

Excitement at Barlow extends beyond athletics. One of the most anticipated community events hosted at the school is Barlow Palooza, which is just around the corner, coming up on May 21 at 5:00 p.m. (See the article above for all the details). With contributions from students across multiple departments, Barlow Palooza is a true celebration of community and hard work.

Of course, no overview of end-of-year celebrations would be complete without mentioning Prom. On Friday, May 15, juniors and seniors will rush out of school to put on their formal attire as they come together for one of the most anticipated events of the year. The excitement has been building for weeks, as students discuss who to

go with, and what to wear while counting down the days.

And finally, the milestone that every senior has been working toward for their entire high school career: Graduation. As the Class of 2026 prepares to close a long, hardworking chapter and move on to the next, whether it’s college, a career, or something else, it serves as a reminder of how quickly time passes. As for the rest of the student body, it’s an aspirational moment that makes the finish line feel more attainable. With so much happening in such a short time frame, the final weeks of the school year at Barlow are turning out to be truly memorable. ■

Victoria Flishenbaum is a junior at Joel Barlow High School

Students use creative talents to help spread the word about recycling

By Jessie Wright



Photo courtesy HRRRA

Estella Simon’s winning poster design.

Five Redding students were selected as winners for this year’s billboard artwork contest held by the Housatonic Resources Recovery Authority in coordination with local schools. The contest theme this year was “recycling textiles,” and students in grades K-12 from all 14 towns in Western Connecticut were invited to submit their original artwork for consideration.

Estella Simon (1st grade) took home first place in her age category;

Ella Ackerson (5th grade), and Liam Son (kindergarten) took second place; Maia Simon (4th grade) took third, and Maisie Castellano (2nd grade) took third place. Winners were honored last month at a banquet, where First Selectwoman Julia Pemberton and Public Works Assistant Paige Silva were on hand to help celebrate. View the artwork of all the winners at hrra.org/billboard-contest-2026 ■



Photo courtesy HRRRA

Four of the Redding student winners attended the awards banquet with Paige Silva (back left) and First Selectwoman Julia Pemberton (back right).

Redding Board of Education updated on principal search, capital projects

continued from page 1

Miller narrowed the pool to eight candidates.

These candidates were invited to on-site interviews, where the entire selection committee spoke with each candidate. The number of candidates was then narrowed down to three, who are proceeding to the final stage. On Friday, May 8, these three candidates were asked to demonstrate a performance task, which allowed the selection committee to see them think on their feet, present data, present an entry plan, and a 30-, 60-, and 90-day plan. The tasks were based on the responses to the surveys that were completed by John Read Middle School stakeholders. The Board anticipates that the new principal will be announced before current principal Jennifer Desmarais retires on June 30, 2026.

Generator replacement

When large portions of the town lost power on March 9, 2026 due to a falling tree, a power surge destroyed John Read Middle School’s 30-year-old generator. The generator needs to be replaced, at a cost of approximately \$108,000; however, Mike D’Agostino, Director of Facilities and Operations noted that the generator is covered by insurance, so the total cost to the Town will be only \$2,500. Delivery of the new generator has not been scheduled, but installation is expected to be a weekend or summer project, depending on its arrival.

Project Adventure

Project Adventure is a nationwide program of adventure-based learning in which John Read Middle School participates to build social and emotional skills, group development, and wellness. Students

typically report loving the class because, along with developing interpersonal skills, it is a lot of fun. The Project Adventure challenge course currently is in the woods behind John Read Middle School. Elements have become unstable due to the growth of the trees and shifting natural surroundings. The Board felt that it would be safer to bring the equipment out into the open rather than have it dependent on the forest environment. Making the equipment more accessible will not be dangerous when it is not in use, because key components will be removed when the course is not in session.

The Board of Education had approved \$57,784 of capital spending to replace three of the course’s high elements, as well as purchase an additional one. At the May 5 Board meeting, McKinnon proposed purchasing new low elements at this time as well to save costs on installation. The new elements will add \$16,162 to the project’s expense.

The district also hopes to develop an area that finishes off the space, including tables and benches that would incorporate a memorial to Luke Sorce, a seventh grader who died earlier this year. Luke loved nature, so McKinnon thought it would be a fitting memorial. The addition of the finished area doesn’t have a final price yet, because the administration wanted to wait for approval from the Board to solicit bids.

The Board voted to allocate up to \$36,000 from the unexpended funds account for the additional Project Adventure equipment and the memorial for Luke. ■

CLASSIFIED

My name is Adriana
If you need an extra hand I can help you!
Certified CPR, child care, light cleaning,
washing and ironing. Comfortable with pets.

References upon request. Own transportation.
Text: 475.366.4976 Thanks!!

LIBRARY CORNER

Historical heist lives on

By Erin Shea Dummeyer

Behind a locked case in our Mark Twain Room, visitors to the Library will find a “Folk Model of the Riverboat Eclipse” with the inscription “Made by a repentant burglar.” The model of this ship was presented to Mark Twain Library after Twain’s death by his daughter Clara and it comes with a fascinating back story.

On September 17, 1908, Henry Williams and Charlie Hoffman took a train from Norwalk to Redding with the plan to rob Samuel Clemens’s house. After getting off the train in Redding, they had to ask a farmer for directions to Stormfield. Once there, they waited until the house went dark. Then, they snuck in through an opened window and found a sideboard full of the family’s silver. One of the burglars removed a brass bowl from the top of the sideboard and placed it on the floor. They carried the entire sideboard out of the house so they could break it open and rifle through it without disturbing the sleeping household. But after they returned to the house to steal other things, one of the burglars tripped on the brass bowl, which woke up Isabel Lyon, Mark Twain’s secretary. Upon seeing Isabel, the burglars ran out of the house and walked up the road until they found the Bethel train station.

Meanwhile, Lyon woke up Claude Bluchotte, Mister Clemens’s butler, who telephoned Harry Lounsbury, their nearest neighbor. Redding had no established police force in

1908, so Lounsbury called the part-time Sheriff. On the burglars’ train back to Norwalk, they were recognized and the Sheriff arrested at least one of them at the next stop. Henry Williams was sentenced to spend 10 years in a Connecticut State prison. While serving his time there, he grew to love the work of Mark Twain and fashioned the model riverboat while incarcerated. By the time he left prison, Samuel Clemens was no longer alive, but Henry Williams was able to give this model riverboat to his daughter Clara who later gave it to Mark Twain Library.

A newspaper reporter found the following note on the front door of Twain’s house the morning after the burglary:

NOTICE. To the next Burglars:

There is nothing but plated ware in this house, now and henceforth. You will find it in that brass thing in the dining-room over in the corner by the basket of kittens. If you want the basket, put the kittens in the brass thing. Do not make a noise – it disturbs the family. You will find rubbers in the front hall, by that thing which has the umbrellas in it, chiffonier, I think they call it, or pergola, or something like that.

Please close the door.
Very truly yours,
S.L. Clemens ■

Erin Shea Dummeyer is
Director, Mark Twain Library

SPARK: Arts & culture in Redding and beyond

Art where you least expect it

By Julie Durkin Marty



John Runa Lansden Hartman
at The Georgetown Owl

Running a gallery is hard. The costs are real, the foot traffic uncertain. In recent years, Connecticut has lost several gallery spaces that gave artists a place to show their work and gave communities a place to gather around it. Each closure means fewer walls, fewer opportunities, fewer chances for someone to walk in off the street and be stopped cold by something they weren’t expecting. That loss is real – not just for artists but for all of us. Art is how a community understands itself, marks time, and stays human.

So, artists find other ways – restaurants, bars, the occasional library or coffee shop. It’s not a new idea, but right now it matters more than it used to. These spaces don’t ask anything of you except that you show up. No admission, no pressure, no agenda. The art meets you there. And when you buy a piece, or simply tell someone about a show you saw, you become part of what keeps it going.

Daisy Gesualdi:
Painting & Drawings
April 26 – June 21
La Zingara, 8 PT Barnum Square,
Bethel

There’s something quietly surprising about walking into a bar for a drink and finding yourself standing in front of a painting that stops you cold. La Zingara, the beloved Bethel restaurant and bar, is not

your typical gallery. Its exposed brick walls and warm atmosphere are more likely to host a bottle of Barolo than a formal opening reception – which makes it exactly the kind of place where art can catch you off guard and land. The Bethel Arts Association has made it their home, and right now they are showing Daisy Gesualdi’s solo show. It works.

Gesualdi paints fish, birds, clouds, botanical forms, the horizon line – subjects that feel drawn from some private world, images that show up again and again in her work like recurring dreams. The anchor piece, “Contained” (oil on panel, 11” x 24”), hangs against the brick wall with a quiet confidence. A pale fish floats within a dark oval against a vivid orange-red ground. It seems neither trapped nor free – just suspended, mid-thought. You find yourself looking longer than you expected to.

Nearby, “Wreath” is gentler – botanical shapes arc upward as if caught mid-spin and frozen. And “Gather” pushes into stranger territory: small human figures arranged around a sphere above a golden mountain, suggesting ritual or maybe something you can’t quite name. It’s the most intriguing piece in the show.

What holds it all together is that Gesualdi keeps returning to the same shapes – the mountain, the circle, scattered plants and stems – and each time they feel a little more like her own.

John Runa Lansden Hartman
Through May 2026
The Georgetown Owl,
19 Main Street

Here in Redding, The Georgetown Owl is doing something similar. John Runa Lansden Hartman’s

Continued on page 7

BOOK REVIEW

The Glass Key | By Dashiell Hammett | 214 Pages | Black Lizard | \$18.91

The mystery/crime/detective/police genre has a replete back-list inventory, and fans should certainly explore it for vetted summer reading pleasure. When you pick up any Dashiell Hammett novel, for example, be prepared for sharp elbows and angry words from guys and gals, cops and saps. To a great extent, crime stories have attitude. The characters living in these sagas are often defined by their etiquette, which, like their English, is wanting. They are frequently angry men who are loners. This seems appropriate to the genre. Like a killer, a loner is an outsider. He thinks and often acts like a criminal, and the reader is taken into confidence with the author, whose implicit promise is not to break trust. The plot will be seeded with small redemptive opportunities to feel provisionally allied to the “good” guys, often not bright, but usually benign.

Dashiell Hammett is a preeminent American crime novelist. *The Glass Key* was published in 1931, and has all of the elements of crime drama that Hammett made famous: greeting a morally ambiguous world with simple rules of loyal behavior. Hammett was born in Maryland and grew up in a time of political corruption. He used corrupt social descriptions to underscore the importance of loyalty. *The Maltese Falcon* was also written by Hammett (and so was *The Thin Man* series). The film adaptations of Hammett’s books alternately introduce Sam Spade, detective, and Nick and Nora Charles, a street-wise independently fixed couple.

These novels and adaptations show Humphrey Bogart at his best (*The Maltese Falcon*), and conflate the frivolity of the 1920s (the conspicuous drinking and unique status of Nick and Nora Charles) with the sobering realities of the 1930s (*The Thin Man*).

Characters of the day (and particularly this genre) were not introspective. The detective (or detective type) is typically a louche, street-smart sort, who drinks liquor, smokes cigars, and spits (on carpets to show contempt, or in spittoons, because they are there). It is a masculine world. Women in most (but not all) noir mystery/crime novels are ancillary props to dominantly masculine interests, like gambling. Travel is by ship or train. No detective has been graduated from college. In fact, there is a simmering anti-elite sentiment that equates privilege negatively with credulity. As a matter of type, the detective character has anti-authoritarian instincts that border on anti-social or schizoid. In the case of Hammett, Sam Spade (*The Maltese Falcon*) or Ned Beaumont (*The Glass Key*) are solitary men with strong natures tied to personal integrity. Their strength is courage from canny knowing.

Reading any of the top detective/crime novelists, especially of noir crime, is like stepping back in time. The stories are driven by character and plot, and they capture the reader, and keep him or her under something like a spell. The best writers in the genre create characters like Hercule Poirot, Sam Spade, Philip

Marlowe, and Sherlock Holmes. Authors like Arthur Conan Doyle, Dashiell Hammett, Raymond Chandler, J.D. MacDonald, Agatha Christie, and many others have earned a legitimate imprimatur of success through time and written enduring books about detectives and their cases. Dashiell Hammett’s Ned Beaumont (gambler/fixer of *The Glass Key*) and J.D. MacDonald’s Travis McGee, not a detective, but a “salvage consultant,” are exceptions, though their personalities are not.

The Glass Key, like so many other vetted and available books in this genre, gives a full measure of voltage. The characterizations are terse, and often followed immediately by confirming action. What a modern reader will notice are changes in society. The world of 1925 was very different from the world of 2025. The main characters seem to growl from fixed emotionally-stunted and intransigent social roles. Women are infantilized. The relationships between citizen and government are often corrupt. The relationships between men and women are characterized mainly by suspicion, infatuation, or betrayal. These are simple, but comprehensible reasons for violent crimes of person and property. Because in the mystery/detective genre, crime abides; and the author provides.

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

Business news in brief | *By Jessie Wright*

Main Street gets free WiFi

Georgetown Village Restoration, Inc. (GVR) announced this month that free continuous WiFi is now available along Main Street, thanks to a partnership with Home Media Designs. Bandwidth from GTown Arts, The Georgetown Owl, and Auburn Landing Builders also contributed to the successful installation.

“It might sound like a small thing, but continuous Wi-Fi in our growing business district means a lot to the community as well as the new and existing businesses here,” said Nic Palazzo, President of GVR. “Georgetown has until now been a dead zone for most cell providers, where visitors and shoppers couldn’t connect. This is yet another sign of the momentum we’ve got going here.”

Number One Café closes

After only seven months at its 8 Main Street location in Georgetown, The Number One Café has closed

its doors. The restaurant had moved to Redding last fall after its lease was not renewed in Sandy Hook. The business had offered home-made breakfast, lunch, and dinner fare, with vegan options and an eclectic menu. Despite its closure, the restaurant had maintained its 5-star review score on Google reviews.

Love + Light moves back to Georgetown after flood damage

A burst pipe and subsequent flood this winter forced a multi-month closure of Love + Light Salon Studio’s location at 8 Main Street. The salon operated at a satellite location at Clarke Culture Salon in Ridgefield while repairs were completed. A GoFundMe campaign raised over \$4,000 to help the business cover ongoing expenses.

Love + Light owner Jocelyn Furtado announced that the business is moving back into 8 Main Street and resuming Georgetown operations as of May 11, 2026.

Georgetown Collective announces closure

Founder Jess Tyson announced on Friday, May 8 that Georgetown Collective’s physical space at 28 Main Street will close at the end of this month. The coworking and community space opened in September 2023 and booked coworking areas as well as hosted special interest groups and community building events. Tyson cited wanting to spend more time focusing on her family, writing pursuits, and the growth of her new ADHD coaching practice as reasons behind the decision.

Coworking will be free through May 22, 2026, and the space will host an ADHD Support Group on May 27 and Full Moon Women’s Circle on May 31. Registration is at georgetowncollective.org.

Tyson indicated that the community built over the last three years will still gather and hold events after the closure, just not at the same physical location. ■

SPARK: Arts & culture around Redding and beyond / *continued from page 6*

drawings currently hang inside the Georgetown restaurant and bar, and they reward the discovery.

The image that stays with you is a large unblinking eye at the center of the page, flanked by two wing-like pink shapes, with small flowers and strawberries scattered below like an offering. Two smaller eyes hover at the edges as if keeping watch. It’s strange in the best way – the kind of image that doesn’t explain itself and doesn’t need to. Hartman works with charcoal and mixed media on paper, building up layers that give the work a raw, searching quality. This is someone following a vision without apology.

Kathy Coe April 24 – May 23 Ridgefield Library, Lower Level, 472 Main Street, Ridgefield

Not every unexpected art space is a bar. Sometimes it’s your local library. Kathy Coe’s current show at the Ridgefield Library is the kind of thing you might stumble into on a Tuesday afternoon and leave thinking about for days.

Coe paints portraits, still lifes, and figures – but she’s after something beyond a good likeness. She wants the person, not just the face. The mood of a room, not just the objects in it. Working from life in natural light, she lets each painting

find its own pace rather than forcing it somewhere.

Her teacup paintings are a good place to start if you’re new to her work. Small, painted on linen, each one is just a cup with light falling across it. Nothing is happening and everything is. That’s what Coe does consistently – she finds the quiet moment just before or just after the story and stays there. You end up staying there too.

Coe also is bringing a series of portraits to G-Town Arts at 5 Main Street in Georgetown from May 15 – June 13 in “Seen.” A different body of work from that at Ridgefield Library, and a good reason to see both shows. ■

MUSIC NOTE

Baroque love songs to close The Granite’s Classical Music Sundays | *By Pamela Brown*

Sarah Hawkey, a Redding-based stylistic opera singer and vocal coach, will bring love to life at her upcoming concert on Sunday, May 17 at The Granite. *Love’s Arc: Desire & Heartbreak in English Baroque Song*, takes place at 3:00 p.m. and will close out the organization’s Classical Music Sunday series that returns in the fall.

Though Hawkey has been involved with The Granite’s other classical musical programming, this is the first time she herself will be performing at the venue. “It means so much to me to be performing right here in my hometown. When I moved to Redding in 2019, I immediately started looking for opportunities to perform in the community and share my gifts, but there weren’t concert series in our area that I could find to be part of,” said Hawkey. “Neighbors, friends, and voice students have been asking me all these years, ‘When will you be performing in our area?’ Performing here truly feels like a dream come true.”

“The Granite is thrilled to host Sarah’s performance. Her voice is magnificent and the Granite Church is a perfect setting to present this show,” said Richard Wenning, The Granite’s Executive Director. “We are so fortunate to have Sarah now as a local resident, joining the amazing talent around the Georgetown area.”

Hawkey will be presenting an intimate afternoon of English Baroque music. “The acoustics are warm and beautiful at The Granite,

and they complement intimate chamber music really well,” said Hawkey. “This program focuses on early English Baroque composers such as Dowland (1563–1626) and Purcell (1659–1695) whose music explores themes of love, longing, and reflection through beautifully crafted poetry.”

Hawkey will be joined by lutenist Kevin Payne who will be playing the archlute, an instrument from the 16th and 17th centuries with a deep, resonant sound.

“The archlute has a calming, expressive tone that contrasts beautifully with instruments like the harpsichord. Its warmth often blends with my voice in a way that makes the two feel like one instrument. This repertoire was originally meant for intimate settings, and the lute’s sound perfectly supports the poetry and emotional depth of the music,” Hawkey said.

There are about 20 pieces in the program. “One of my favorites is ‘Flow My Tears’ by Dowland. It feels like a timeless heartbreak song. The poetry is stunning, and emotionally it feels just as relevant today as any modern breakup song,” said Hawkey, who is pleased that more people are becoming interested in classical music.

“I see audiences becoming more curious and engaged. Classical music never gets old, and audiences really are hungry for live performance.” ■

Learn more at thegranitechurch.org/events

Redding Land Trust Open Space Photography Show Opening Reception

celebrate our big outdoors - light refreshments - prizes



Andrew Millard, Saugatuck Falls Natural Area (detail)

**Wednesday, June 3
5:00 - 7:00 PM**

**Mark Twain Library
439 Redding Rd**

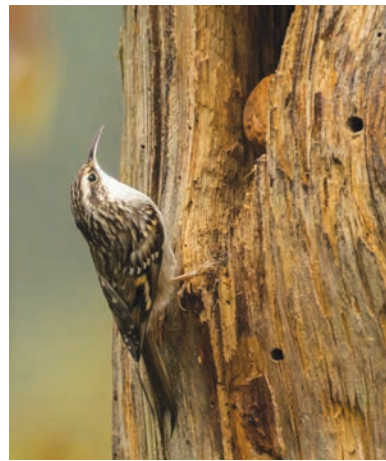


Register free at
reddinglandtrust.org/photoshow
or scan the QR code



If trees could talk

“Treehouse redefined” | By Janice Rotchstein



Ground floor apartment: Creeper



Mid-level condo: Robin



Penthouse: Red-tailed hawk

Have you ever *really* looked at your backyard trees in May?

Now is the time to grab those binoculars and scan each one – from trunk to canopy, branches to bark.

If you think your own house is full of D-I-Y activity, that nearby oak, walnut, maple, birch, cedar, or pine will put you to shame. Practically every tree is a thriving, multi-storied home filled to the rafters with a multitude of bird species. Each is building nests to live separate lives, perch on different levels, and exist in harmony.

You’ll usually find raptors and orioles in the canopy. Songbirds, woodpeckers, bluebirds, and chickadees at mid-level. Creepers and nuthatches on the lower “floors.”

This niche marvel of Nature makes you realize we have a lot in common with our feathered friends.

Both of us search for the perfect home and then decorate to our taste. I mention all this because May is one of the busiest months

for real estate decisions – not only for people but also for avians. Ironically, each selects a sanctuary for similar reasons.

Location. Location. Location: First on every bird’s list is a habitat close to food (insects, berries, fruit and seeds); water, and building supplies (foliage, twigs, spider nests, etc.).

Security: Safe surroundings are essential. Paramount is security against predators as well as protection and shelter from the elements.

Low maintenance: A tree’s structural integrity (or good bones) is a must to ensure a nest’s foundation. That translates to strong branches, deep cavities, and healthy U-shaped forks (where the tree splits off from the main stem).

Design preferences: Humans often consider such styles as Early American, Modern, or Mediterranean. Avians too have favorites – hanging baskets, cup nests, platforms, etc. – which drives their tree choice and level.

Open house visits: It’s not unheard of for a bird to view and test up to a dozen locations before settling on “the one.” For example, the Cerulean Warbler crouches down and puffs up her belly to see how comfortable the potential sublet might be.

Easy commute: Birdies – like us – prefer not to travel tiring distances for business or pleasure. Fortunately, their “hippocampus,” part of each species’ brain, acts as a built-in GPS. It keeps them focused on the route and signals familiar landmarks that lead them home.

So, if you hear excessive chirping this month, see movement in trees, or spot birds carrying building material to a favorite oak – you know you’re a landlord! When those sounds turn to cheeps, take a bow – you’ve just ushered in a new generation of Reddingites! ■

If you have a favorite tree story for this column, contact redding-treeconservancy@gmail.com

Notes from a neighbor

To pave, or not to pave | By Carter Wiseman



Photo by Jessie Wright

This winter has been brutal to our driveway. After the back-to-back two-foot snowstorms, the ice, and the rain, we are looking at potholes that could swallow one of the low-slung Maseratis I see in the neighborhood these days.

To be fair, we have brought some of this on ourselves. When my wife and I moved into our 1930s house many years ago, we decided to keep the existing gravel driveway rather than pave it. We thought gravel would preserve a rural effect, rather than create yet more impermeable runoff. It also tends to slow delivery drivers who realize that tires don’t grip well on crushed stone. Yet another appeal is the sound; there is something musical to my ears about the crunch of tires on gravel that the hiss on a hard surface can’t match.

Many of our newer neighbors evidently feel differently. After a mega-mansion goes up, the black-top rolls out. It is usually ornamented with an apron of Belgian block and guarded by stone pillars. These are often topped by snarling concrete lions to let visitors know that they are entering pricey precincts

that are prepared to bite, even before you are in range of the security cameras. The more ambitious driveways have motorized gates activated by electronic keypads. It all makes dropping in on one’s neighbor unannounced for a cup of coffee a potentially life-threatening venture.

These symbols of wealth and anxiety remind me of estates I have seen in other countries, where the message is to keep one’s distance – or else. If kidnapping and home invasion by drug cartels are common, this makes sense, but I like to think that our little piece of New England is not there yet.

When the weather finally eased up this spring and revealed the extent of the damage to our driveway, we talked briefly about changing our ways and surrendering to tarmac. Instead, we asked our landscaper to patch the holes with some stone dust and add a new layer of gravel.

As a result, when that Amazon truck crunches up with my shipments of second-hand books and Dickies socks, I can still hear it in time to get out and greet the driver. Apart from the bad traction, he already knows to take it easy to avoid our dog. The Lhasa Apso was bred to defend Tibetan monasteries, but our member of the litter must have flunked the aggression test. He welcomes all comers, especially the UPS driver, who knows him well enough to address him by name.

This sort of relationship takes time – and crunchy driveways. ■

REAL ESTATE

April 2026 real estate report

A look at trends in the local housing market | By Bill Whitehead and John Talley

April proved to be another anemic month for sales in Redding, with three properties trading hands versus seven one year ago. There are 16 properties currently under contract in Redding versus 19 at this time in 2025. Still, for the year, the average price of houses sold in Redding increased by 3% from \$1,057,422 to \$1,093,312. The average price-per-square-foot of houses sold this year rose by 9% from \$342 to \$372 per square foot.

The inventory of houses for sale in Redding is 25, versus 24 in 2025 at this time. The spring market continues to pick up steam, with many individual sellers receiving multiple bids and sale prices going significantly over asking price. ■

Bill Whitehead and John Talley are realtors with Berkshire Hathaway Home Services

April 2026													
Town	Current Inventory	Homes Sold		Average Days on Market		Average List Price		Average Sale Price		Percent Sale Price >/< List Price		Average Price/SqFt *	
	As of May 11	April	2026	April	2026	April	2026	April	2026	April	2026	April	2026
Redding	25	3	18	106	192	\$1,007,967	\$1,141,872	\$1,000,000	\$1,093,312	-1%	-4%	\$345	\$372
Ridgefield	43	15	53	67	109	\$1,782,067	\$1,530,604	\$1,750,667	\$1,508,412	-2%	-1%	\$512	\$447
Weston	25	6	19	76	107	\$1,614,667	\$1,308,526	\$1,759,667	\$1,359,889	9%	4%	\$489	\$432
Wilton	21	14	40	55	90	\$1,209,214	\$1,366,075	\$1,362,929	\$1,490,905	13%	9%	\$467	\$491
Easton	18	4	17	69	88	\$1,204,500	\$1,079,000	\$1,250,750	\$1,092,106	4%	1%	\$377	\$355
Bethel	14	10	37	93	97	\$634,440	\$620,870	\$633,437	\$626,326	0%	1%	\$277	\$287
Newtown	37	17	69	95	101	\$645,688	\$648,510	\$647,077	\$649,250	0%	0%	\$299	\$299
Average	26	10	36	80	112	\$1,156,935	\$1,099,351	\$1,200,647	\$1,117,172	3%	1%	\$395	\$383

REDDING SOLD - April	Sale Price	List Price	%/ List Price	Price/Sqft*	Days on Market
2 Brick School Dr	\$925,000	\$925,000	0%	\$361	98
74 Seventy Acre Rd	\$950,000	\$899,900	6%	\$387	51
41 Deer Hill Rd	\$1,125,000	\$1,199,000	-6%	\$288	169
Average	\$1,000,000	\$1,007,967	-1%	\$345	106

REDDING CURRENTLY FOR SALE	List Price	Price/Sqft*	Days on Market	REDDING CURRENTLY FOR SALE	List Price	Price/Sqft*	Days on Market
219 Redding Rd	\$499,000	\$404	67	281 Newtown Tpke	\$1,349,000	\$266	25
70 Dayton Rd	\$649,000	\$676	31	313 Umpawaug Rd	\$1,450,000	\$493	20
39 Seventy Acre Rd	\$799,000	\$474	4	74 Black Rock Tpke	\$1,495,000	\$317	49
268 Umpawaug Rd	\$799,000	\$313	40	42 Topstone Rd	\$1,595,000	\$414	42
30 Highland Ave	\$799,900	\$359	6	12 Werf Dr	\$1,649,900	\$409	125
123-A Peaceable St	\$925,000	\$257	73	74 George Hull Hill Rd	\$1,695,000	\$354	12
33 Toplege Rd	\$929,000	\$333	3	7 Long Meadow Ln	\$1,699,000	\$316	95
86 Seventy Acre Rd	\$938,000	\$598	12	2 Longwood Dr	\$1,849,000	\$295	126
299 Redding Rd	\$949,000	\$363	126	229 Umpawaug Rd	\$7,495,000	\$1,116	364
19 Marchant Rd	\$995,000	\$283	31	63 Turney Rd	\$8,600,000	\$913	148
5 Musket Ln	\$1,180,000	\$403	14	81 Pinetree Rd	\$825,000	\$339	1
98 Hopewell Woods Rd	\$1,250,000	\$337	54	128 Black Rock Tpke	\$1,499,000	\$380	2
10 Chapman Pl	\$1,325,000	\$300	7	Average	\$1,729,512	\$429	59

Listings continue on right side of table

* Calculated using livable square footage

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

\$ = fee applies
R = registration required

This Week's Featured Events

Conversations: Immigration in the United States – Then and Now
Thursday, May 14
7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Virtual discussion with William & Mary professor Brianna Nofil
Mark Twain Library
marktwainlibrary.org
R

Annual Community Tag Sale
Friday, May 15
9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Redding Community Center
37 Lonetown Road
E-mail mpilato@reddingct.gov or (203) 938-9725 to sign up as vendor

Homefront Farmers Plant Sale
Saturday, May 16
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Nod Hill Brewery
137 Ethan Allen Highway
Ridgefield
nodhillbrewery.com

Redding Grange's Acoustic Open Mic
Thursday, May 21
6:30 p.m.
Sign up at 6:30 p.m., music starts at 7:00 p.m.
399 Newtown Turnpike
E-mail community@reddinggrange.org with questions

MEETINGS

Thursday, May 14

Gilbert & Bennett Wire Mill Advisory Committee
6:00 p.m.
Town Hall / Conference Room and Virtual
100 Hill Road and Zoom

Thursday, May 14

Redding Fire District #2
7:00 p.m.
West Redding Firehouse
306 Umpawaug Road

Monday, May 18

Board of Selectmen
7:00 p.m.
Town Hall / Hearing Room
100 Hill Road

Tuesday, May 19

Region 9 Board of Education
7:00 p.m.
Joel Barlow High School / Library Learning Commons
100 Black Rock Turnpike

Tuesday, May 19

Conservation Commission
7:00 p.m.
Town Hall / Hearing Room
100 Hill Road

Wednesday, May 20

CT State District #135 Democratic Convention
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Town Hall / Hearing Room
100 Hill Road

Wednesday, May 20

Water Pollution Control Commission
7:30 p.m.
Virtual

Thursday, May 21

Democratic Party Caucus & Democratic Town Committee Meeting
7:00 p.m.
Town Hall / Hearing Room
100 Hill Road

Tuesday, May 26

ER9 Joint Boards of Education
7:00 p.m.
Joel Barlow High School / Library Learning Commons
100 Black Rock Turnpike

Tuesday, May 26

Planning Commission
7:00 p.m.
Town Hall / Hearing Room and Virtual
100 Hill Road and Zoom

Tuesday, May 26

Board of Finance
7:30 p.m.
Town Hall / Hearing Room (subject to change to virtual or hybrid as necessary)
100 Hill Road

Wednesday, May 27

Zoning Commission
7:00 p.m.
Town Hall / Hearing Room
100 Hill Road

Monday, June 1

Park and Recreation Commission
7:00 p.m.
Redding Community Center
37 Lonetown Road

Monday, June 1

Republican Town Committee
7:30 p.m.
Town Hall / Hearing Room
100 Hill Road

Tuesday, June 2

Redding Board of Education
7:00 p.m.
John Read Middle School / Community Room
486 Redding Road

**Town offices will be closed on Monday, May 25 for Memorial Day

AMERICA 250

Friday, May 15

From the Declaration to the Constitution – Our Rights and Responsibilities
7:00 p.m.
Presentation by State Senator Sujata Gadkar-Wilcox
Easton Public Library
691 Morehouse Road
Easton
Register at
contact@eastonctdems.com
R

Saturday, May 30

Redding 250 Concert
7:00 p.m.
Performance by
Greater Bridgeport Symphony Orchestra and
Joel Barlow High School musicians of patriotic music, including *Three Places in New England* by Charles Ives
Joel Barlow High School
100 Black Rock Turnpike
redding250.com
\$

ARTS

Friday, May 15

Swing Dance with Too Blue and Friends
7:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.
Learn to swing dance with introductory lesson then dance the night away
The Granite
5 North Main Street
thegranitechurch.org/events
\$

Saturday, May 16

In Bloom & Seen/Kathy Coe
4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
G-Town Arts
5 Main Street
gtownarts.com

Sunday, May 17

Love's Arc: Desire & Heartbreak in English Baroque Song
3:00 p.m.
Soprano Sarah Hawkey and lutenist Kevin Payne
The Granite
5 North Main Street
thegranitechurch.org/events
\$

Thursday, May 21

Redding Grange's Acoustic Open Mic
6:30 p.m.
Sign up at 6:30 p.m., music starts at 7:00 p.m.
399 Newtown Turnpike
E-mail community@reddinggrange.org with questions

CHILDREN | TEENS

Monday, May 18

Colorful Cupcake Decorating Story Time with Bus from RES
3:10 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Grades K-4
Mark Twain Library
439 Redding Road
marktwainlibrary.org
R

Friday, May 22

Stories & Strolls (Age 1-5 with adult)
10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Seasonal stories and seasonal walks
New Pond Farm Education Center
101 Marchant Road
newpondfarm.org
\$, R

HEALTH | WELLNESS

Tuesday, May 19

Musical Rounds: Where Music Meets Medicine
7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Explore what happens when live, improvised music is played in a hospital room
Mark Twain Library
439 Redding Road
marktwainlibrary.org
R

HOLIDAYS | SEASONAL

Saturday, May 23

Memorial Day Parade
12:00 p.m.
Local parade with community groups, fire engines, floats, and kids' push and pull – open to anyone to march
Route begins at Redding Elementary School and ends at Old Town House
23 Cross Highway
reddingct.gov

Saturday, May 23

Memorial Day Picnic
1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Family picnic, games, food trucks, beer garden
Boys & Girls Club of Redding-Easton
gbcre.net
\$

NATURE

Saturday, May 16

Homefront Farmers Plant Sale
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Nod Hill Brewery
137 Ethan Allen Highway
Ridgefield
nodhillbrewery.com

Saturday, May 16

New Pond Farm Open Day
11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Explore the farm's property and programs
New Pond Farm Education Center
101 Marchant Road
newpondfarm.org

Saturday, May 16

Life Beneath the Surface – Freshwater Exploration
1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Family program with hands on exploration of farm's stream and pond
New Pond Farm Education Center
101 Marchant Road
newpondfarm.org
\$, R

Wednesday, June 3

Redding Land Trust Open Space Photography Show Opening Reception
5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Refreshments and announcements of prize winners
Mark Twain Library
439 Redding Road
marktwainlibrary.org
R

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Thursday, May 14

Conversations: Immigration in the United States – Then and Now
7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Virtual discussion with William & Mary professor Brianna Nofil
Mark Twain Library
marktwainlibrary.org
R

Friday, May 15

Annual Community Tag Sale
9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Redding Community Center
37 Lonetown Road
E-mail mpilato@reddingct.gov or (203) 938-9725 to sign up as vendor

Saturday, May 16

The Weston Edit: Town-Wide Tag Sale
9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Shop for treasures and enjoy refreshments
The Norfield Grange
12 Good Hill Road
Weston
facebook.com/NorfieldGrange146

Thursday, May 21

Barlow Palooza
5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Explore student presentations, arts, and sciences
Joel Barlow High School
100 Black Rock Turnpike
joelbarlowps.org

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 St. Patrick Church:

Saturday Vigil Mass: 5:00 p.m.
Sunday Mass: 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.
Monday-Friday: 8:30 a.m.
Confessions:
Saturdays 4:00 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. and Mondays and Thursdays 7:30 p.m. – 8:00 a.m. and before/after Weekday Mass
Eucharistic Adoration:
Mondays and Thursdays 7:00 p.m.
169 Black Rock Turnpike
sacredheart-stpat.org

Georgetown Oratory of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

Saturday Vigil Mass: 4:00 p.m.
Sunday Mass: 9:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m., and 12:00 p.m. (Latin)
Tuesday and Thursday: 8:30 a.m.
Wednesday: 6:00 pm. (Latin)
Holy Days: 8:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.
First Fridays and Saturdays: 8:30 a.m.
Confessions:
Saturdays 7:00 a.m. – 8:15 a.m. and Wednesdays 5:15 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.
Eucharistic Adoration: Saturdays 5:00 p.m. following Vigil Mass
30 Church Street

Temple B'nai Chaim

Friday, May 15
Shabbat at Meadow Ridge
5:00 p.m.
100 Redding Road
templebnaichaim.org

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 @AlexisBennettSellingCT



15 Limestone Terrace, Ridgefield
 \$699,000
 Listed By Tim Dent | 203.244.2277
 TimDentTeam.com



66 Pumping Station Rd, Ridgefield
 Rent \$8,500/month
 Listed By Heather Lindgren | 646.932.4075
 HeatherLindgrenHomes.com



Alexis Bennett
 203.313.3110



Marilyn Caravetta
 203.512.1822



Kim Cuniberti
 203.733.6976



Tim Dent
 203.470.5605



Margi Esten
 203.241.8453



John Frey
 203.240.0624



Jefferson Guthrie
 203.788.9400



Carol Hanlon
 203.240.1233



Sharon Hoverman
 203.733.5073



Charlie Knoche
 203.731.7770



Heather Lindgren
 646.932.4075



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 203.770.6240



Terri Tournas
 203.561.5893

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1. & 2 Based on information from Greenwich Association of REALTORS, SmartMLS Inc. 4/1/2025-3/31/2026. The property information herein is derived from various sources that may include, but not be limited to, county records and the Multiple Listing Service, and it may include approximations. Although the information is believed to be accurate, it is not warranted and you should not rely upon it without personal verification. Affiliated real estate agents are independent contractor sales associates, not employees. ©2026 Coldwell Banker. All Rights Reserved. Coldwell Banker and the Coldwell Banker logo are trademarks of Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. The Coldwell Banker® System is comprised of company owned offices which are owned by a subsidiary of Anywhere Advisors LLC and franchise offices which are independently owned and operated. The Coldwell Banker System fully supports the principles of the Fair Housing Act and the Equal Opportunity Act.

