

# REDDING SENTINEL

APRIL 9, 2026

REDDING, CONNECTICUT

Volume 4 / Issue 40

\$3

## Quiet budget hearing for Region 9

By Anne Young Albanese

The Region 9 Board of Education held its annual budget hearing on Wednesday, April 1 on the 2026-27 fiscal year budget, which is proposed to increase 2.78% over the current year. Chairman Chris Parkin led the presentation.

The largest budget drivers this year are salaries and benefits; special education, which is primarily transportation; and debt service. Changes in student enrollment between Redding and Easton mean Redding will see a 7.95% increase because of an increase in the town's percentage of students attending Joel Barlow High School or receiving services from Region 9.

Minimal public comment was made, with one resident speaking about funding transportation for the swim team and with questions about the budget process.

The approved budget can be viewed at sites.google.com/er9.org/region9budget/home. The budget referendum will be held on Tuesday, May 5 from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Community Center, 37 Lonetown Road. ■



Photo by Courtney Cowles

A curious young bobcat explores a backyard on Lonetown Road. If you have a photo you'd like to see featured here, e-mail editor@reddingsentinel.org.

## Two Outstanding Educators of the Year named at John Read Middle School

By Anne Young Albanese



Photos courtesy of John Read Middle School PTA

Superintendent Jason McKinnon and John Read Middle School Principal Jennifer Desmarais notified Riley D'Agostino (left photo, middle) and James Bairaktaris (right photo, middle), of their recognition as Outstanding Educators of the Year.

John Read Middle School music teacher Riley D'Agostino and paraprofessional James Bairaktaris will both be honored on May 3 by the Connecticut PTA as Outstanding Educators of the Year.

This is D'Agostino's first year teaching at John Read Middle School. According to her award application, which was submitted by Beatrix Eriksen, President of the John Read Middle School PTA, "[D'Agostino] has a gift for

mentoring students in both music and acting. In this sense, Riley is more than a teacher; she is a mentor, a leader, and a dedicated artist. She creates an environment where students feel comfortable participating, expressing themselves, and growing as musicians and individuals."

D'Agostino is also directing the John Read Middle School musical, *Annie Jr.* that will be presented this spring. Her nominators noted that

the record audition turnout was a testament to D'Agostino's inspiring enthusiasm. "Under her leadership, the musical functioned not as an extracurricular diversion, but as a meaningful extension of the learning process," the application continued.

Bairaktaris, in addition to working as a paraprofessional, is also a John Read Middle School alumnus himself.

"Jaime has evolved from a former student into a pillar of our community. His natural ability to connect across the school community reflects intentional relationship-building that helps students feel comfortable, supported, and truly seen," Erikson wrote.

Bairaktaris wears many hats at the school. According to a nomination letter submitted by a student, "It's really unique how Jaime can do everything. One minute he is helping me with a hard math problem, the next he is fixing a glitchy Chromebook with his awesome IT skills, and then he is out on the field, coaching us to play our best."

Continued on page 3

## Board of Finance approves capital budgets

By Rocco Valluzzo

Having approved the 2026-27 operating budgets at its previous meeting, the Board of Finance slightly adjusted then approved the 2026-27 capital budgets for the Redding Board of Education, the Board of Selectmen, and the Water Pollution Control Commission at its Monday, March 30 meeting.

Together, these comprise the consolidated capital budget of \$2,910,376. Each would be funded by the Town's unassigned fund balance or other sources as determined by the Board of Finance.

Totalling \$482,376, the Redding Board of Education's budget reflected a reduction of \$18,000 in locker repair costs at John Read Middle School (JRMS). In addition, the fifth grade boys bathroom renovation at the school was deferred.

"I think a couple people were talking about whether these costs would be deferred to the following year," said Board of Education Chair Laura Worosz. "But I think we would feel pretty comfortable that you wouldn't see either of these on next year's request, and we can push them out for a prolonged period."

Board of Finance member Jenifer Wyss questioned the \$53,000 cost for zip line upgrades at Project Adventure, a group learning and outdoor activity center at JRMS. Laura Worosz explained the scope includes safety stabilization, cables, and harnesses across a large campus area, noting it is a critical safety requirement.

Covering road repairs as well as capital purchases and improvements to Town facilities, the Board of Selectmen's capital budget was approved at \$2,208,000. In addressing certain costs, First Selectwoman Julia Pemberton and Town Finance Director Jim Sanders clarified that estimates for heating, ventilation, and air conditioning work at the Redding Community Center and the Police Station were based on recent vendor quotes and historical data, though market prices for petroleum products may cause fluctuations.

"This is our best estimate, and we continue to revise it," said Pemberton. "We met again last week, even to whittle down the mileage, and so within the number that you approve, we'll do as much as we possibly can. But those are based on real-time pricing."

The Water Pollution Control Commission's capital budget of \$220,000 focuses on necessary repairs to roofs at the Georgetown Sewer Treatment Plant dating back to 1996. While there is a possibility the timing could "float" if the roofs hold up, the Board of Finance approved the amount to ensure funds are available for necessary safety and maintenance.

The combined budget, which also will include Redding's portion of the Region 9 Board of Education budget for the upcoming fiscal year, will be put to vote at a town-wide referendum on Tuesday, May 5. ■

## REDDING'S BIG OUTDOORS

### If trees could talk *Spring fling*

By Janice Rotchstein



Photo by Erin Dummeyer  
Jane Dummeyer on the Old Field Trail, Saugatuck Falls Natural Area.

"Spring is nature's way of saying, 'Let's Party,'" mused Robin Williams, actor and comedian.

How true. After winter's bitter chill, stark whites and dull grays, April starts rejuvenating the senses while boosting our energy.

The welcome festivities kick off with lingering days followed by warmer temperatures. Then the merriment really gets going with the greening of trees, canopies of colorful blossoms, and an orchestra of chirping birds, peeping frogs, and buzzing bees.

If you're ready to join the celebration, but are in search of a new adventure, consider these Reddingites' favorites.

Erin Dummeyer, *Mark Twain Library Director*, heads to the Saugatuck Falls Natural Area. Minutes from the Library and across from John Read Middle School,

"it's a perfect way," she said, "to spend a lunch hour with Jane, my six-year-old daughter, while giving my eyes a vacation from the computer."

Once across the entrance's footbridge, Dummeyer suggests one of two tracks. Turn left on the sunnier Old Field Trail to stroll along the racing river with its budding oaks, hickories, marsh marigolds, rue anemone, and red trillium. Or bear right to the Falls Trail that dallies by a frog-filled pond rimmed with foliage, pass the massive hemlock path and then head toward the rock formations to Saugatuck Falls.

"Either walk is invigorating," she added, "so we bring a backpack with water, sandwiches, fruit and Pirate's Booty!"

Continued on page 7

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# POLICE BLOTTER

## Police activity from March 30 – April 6

By Donna Christopher

Police assisted in three citizen calls, six emergency medical service calls, and issued one firearm permit.

### Traffic

Police stopped 35 motor vehicles, issuing one summons, 14 infractions, two written warnings, and 18 verbal warnings. The infraction rate was 43%.

A two-car motor vehicle accident on Black Rock Turnpike on March 30 resulted in property damage but no injuries.

A red Ford truck was reported for tailgating on Old Stagecoach Road around 4:00 p.m. on April 1. Police were unable to make contact with the driver.

Someone called to report a vehicle swerving into the opposite

lane on Lonetown Road just after 7:00 p.m. on April 1. The report was transferred to Bethel.

### Domestic arrest

A domestic altercation on Main Street resulted in the arrest of a man who was taken to the Police Department where he was processed and charged. He was given a court date and issued a no-contact condition of his release.

### Suspicious incidents

There were two reports made on April 3 of youths ringing doorbells – one report on Hill Road, the other on Cross Highway.

A noise complaint was registered on Redding Road just after 11:00 p.m. regarding a loud party. The music was turned down. ■

# LETTER TO THE EDITOR

We welcome Letters to the Editor. Please be clear, civil, and concise. E-mail [editor@reddingsentinel.org](mailto:editor@reddingsentinel.org) with submissions.

### To the Editor,

I recently received a “News & Calendar of Events” notification of a fundraising event to be held in celebration of our nation’s 250th anniversary. Tickets are \$30 which include cocktails, refreshments, and a movie screening of *Glory*. Unless I am mistaken, *Glory* is about the American Civil War — one of our nation’s worst embarrassments and certainly nothing to be proud of. Wouldn’t it be more appropriate to screen *The Patriot*, which concerns itself with the American Revolution? ■

Brad Muscott, Portland Hill Road

# LEGAL NOTICE

Certified lists of party-selected candidates for the Democratic and Republican Parties in the Town of Redding for participation as DELEGATES to the 2026 conventions of said parties specified below are on file in my office at 100 Hill Road, Redding, CT and copies are available for public distribution:

**CONVENTIONS:** State, Congressional District #4, State Senate District #26, State Assembly District #135 and Probate District #45 ■

Michele R. Grande, MCTC-MMC, Town Clerk of Redding  
April 1, 2026

## Fire District 1 passes budget with 2.75% increase | By Jessie Wright

Just over two dozen voters in Fire District 1 gathered on Monday, April 6 for the district’s annual budget meeting. Voters unanimously approved a 2026-27 fiscal year expense budget of \$1,509,661, a 2.75% increase over the current fiscal year. Tax revenues are projected at \$1,387,661, a 3% increase (the district also receives revenues from a cell tower lease and ambulance services).

“The major drivers of the increases in the budget are things you’d expect – fuel oil, the paid positions that the district employs, insurance, an increase in the cost of our auditor, and increasing our reserve fund for capital expenditures and vehicle replacement,” District

Commissioner David Hermenze explained.

A \$26,750 increase (\$331,000 total) to the line item that builds the reserve fund for capital expenditures and vehicle replacement was the largest increase of any in the proposed budget. Later in the meeting, voters unanimously approved earmarking \$25,000 of those funds for a fire hose on the new tanker that is on order and replacement hoses for current engines, and \$30,000 for a radio package for the new tanker.

“We’re allocating more for the increase of replacement costs of apparatus, namely because of the fact that we’re learning that this stuff costs more every year than we had

previously budgeted for, which is sort of a nationwide phenomenon,” Hermenze said.

Fire District 1 is a taxing district which owns and operates the Redding Ridge firehouse on Black Rock Turnpike and the Center firehouse on Hill Road. The 2026-27 increase of 2.75% is a modest one compared to recent years; taxpayers faced over a 19% increase in 2023-24 and 16% increase in 2024-25 as the district stepped up building a capital reserve to fund the construction of a new Redding Ridge firehouse, a project they hope to be able to finance by 2028-29.

Voters also approved a new mill rate of 1.673. ■



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## New Police Officer to start field training



Photo courtesy of Redding Police Department

The Redding Police Department congratulated Police Officer Kayla Bryce on Friday, April 3 after she graduated from the New Britain Police Department’s Police Academy. Officer Bryce now begins her 400 hours of Field Training with the Redding Police Department with senior officers. (Left to right): Redding Police Chief Robert Kalamaras, Captain Tim Succi, Officer Kayla Bryce, and Sergeant Kimberly Peterson.

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*News and Views of Redding, Connecticut*

**Publisher, Susan Clark**  
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**Marketing Operations Manager, Nicole DuBois**

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**Printed by The Republican, Springfield, MA**  
Telecommunications by CCI Voice  
[www.reddingsentinel.org](http://www.reddingsentinel.org)  
203.938.3800

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

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# Preparations underway for Frog Frolic on May 2

By Pamela Brown



Photo by Debora DeCarlo Rosa

One of Redding's biggest spring events is hopping back into town. The 29th annual Frog Frolic Family Festival, a beloved outdoor community fair, is a day for family fun, community connection, and enjoying the great outdoors while supporting Mark Twain Library. This year, it will take place on Saturday, May 2 and feature new and exciting activities for all ages.

"The Frog Frolic has grown tremendously over its 29-year history. What began as a small fundraiser on the Redding Town Green, organized by a group of moms raising money for story time cushions, has evolved into one of the Mark Twain Library's three major annual fundraisers," said Joanna Ruvo, Chairperson of the Frolic and MTL Board Trustee.

Mark Twain's short story *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County* inspired the annual event, and the amphibian main character became the unofficial mascot of the Frog Frolic.

"What makes it so special is the strong sense of community it fosters," Ruvo continued. "Many middle and high school students who grew up attending the Frolic now return as volunteers, and it's often one of the first events new residents experience. It's a true reflection of Redding's spirit."

The free outdoor event will take place on May 2, rain or shine, from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at the Redding Community Center at 37 Lonetown Road. In case of severe weather, activities will be moved indoors. Concessions, games, and

crafts are available by redeeming tickets that can be purchased throughout the event.

According to Library Director Erin Dummeyer, the Frolic is not only fun, but is also an extension of Mark Twain Library's mission.

"Part of our mission is to be a destination for connection, and there's no better way to connect with your neighbors than in the middle of froggy games, face painting, or over a snow cone on a sunny day," Dummeyer said. The event is one of the Library's biggest fundraisers, run by a team of volunteers, with all proceeds benefitting Mark Twain Library, which is an association library, not a municipal one funded solely by the government. "Money raised at the Frolic goes directly toward supporting all the fabulous programs and books that the Library offers. We could not make our annual operating budget goals without it."

The family-friendly event will feature something for everyone. "It's a day filled with energy, laughter, and community spirit. Kids are literally frolicking from one activity to the next," said Ruvo, noting there will be an array of activities for children, with some new ones added this year, including a Make Your Own Slime station where kids can create their own slime with custom colors, charms, and add-ins; and an interactive Scavenger Hunt. In addition to numerous classic carnival-style games of chance, each with fun prizes, there will be Bounce Houses, a Bubble Garden, face painting, and more. A new

Cornhole Tournament with prizes for the winning teams is being introduced this year with both children and adult divisions. Ruvo noted participants can sign up through the Library website.

Eight food trucks will offer a variety of choices, from pizza to paella. There will be a Beer Garden, with other adult libations including coffee available for purchase. The entertainment line-up, still being finalized, will feature live music from local musicians and other performances throughout the day. "With live music, food trucks, and a wide range of activities, many families spend the whole afternoon enjoying the event. Guests are welcome to bring chairs or blankets to relax on the lawn, and tables and chairs will also be available throughout the space," said Ruvo.

Once again, the Library will have a Book Tent where visitors can purchase books. New Pond Farm will also be on hand, bringing along frogs, salamanders, and turtles from the farm.

"Children can observe and learn about them. We'll also have materials available that highlight our program offerings. Our educators will be on hand throughout the event to help guide the experience and introduce our animal ambassadors," said Priya Desai, New Pond Farm's Executive Director.

Ruvo noted the Frog Frolic is run by an incredible team of volunteers. "The Mark Twain Library has been meaningful for my family since we moved to Redding in 2021 – it was one of the first places we visited. Through my involvement, I've seen firsthand the dedication and passion of the volunteers who make events like the Frog Frolic possible," said Ruvo. "My hope is that attendees feel that same sense of community and appreciation. We hope attendees leave feeling connected – to the library, to their neighbors, and to the community as a whole." ■

For more information or to sign up to volunteer, visit [mtlfrogfrolic.org](http://mtlfrogfrolic.org) or call the Library at (203) 938-2545



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# Will higher gas prices help mass transit?

By Jim Cameron

Who's *not* upset about higher gas prices? Proponents of mass transit.

Transit advocates might be accused of a little *schadenfreude*, taking satisfaction in drivers' pain at the pump. Or maybe they're renewing their long term dream: *Maybe this will finally push people out of their cars and onto the train and bus!*

Maybe not.

In 2008, when gasoline spiked, ridership on Metro-North surged. Connecticut commuters did the math and decided the train beat sitting on I-95 burning \$4 gas. But these days, gasoline is not the main cost of driving. Sure, the price of gas is just the most visible expense ... the one glowing at you on every street corner. But for most drivers, that's only a fraction of what they're already paying. The real costs are "sunk:" car payments, insurance, maintenance, depreciation. Whether gas is \$3 or \$5, you're still writing those checks every month.

Your car doesn't get cheaper just because you leave it in the driveway. It just sits there like a very expensive lawn ornament, depreciating.

So, when gas rises by a dollar a gallon (as it has in a month), the typical commuter might spend an extra \$30 or \$40 a month. Painful, yes. But not exactly life-changing when you're already paying hundreds monthly for the car itself.

Gas prices are the classic example of an inelastic market. Prices go up... and people grumble, but they keep driving – in many Connecticut locales because it's the only option.

Of course, the transportation equation depends on what alternatives to driving you might have. Is there a bus? When's the train? How frequent and reliable is the service? And what's the fare?

Assuming there are mass transit alternatives to the daily drive, some commuters may become part-time transit riders. They'll drive some days, take the train others, especially when traffic or the weather are brutal. Or maybe when gas spikes even higher. Or when parking in Stamford or New Haven feels like highway robbery.

Early signs are already there. Commuter ridership on Metro-North Railroad was ticking up even before the Iran war. That may continue.

Ironically, the railroad is now running a social media campaign encouraging riders to avoid standing in the aisles and vestibules on crowded trains, instead sitting in that dreaded middle seat on the three-seat side. They say this will "avoid crowding." That's putting the mass back into mass transit.

So, the real "trigger price" for behavior change in commuting isn't just a number on the gas pump. It's a combination of factors: sustained high prices, lousy traffic, expensive parking, and most of all, whether you actually need to make the trip at all.

Work from home seems a lot more attractive these days, something we didn't have as an option in previous oil "shocks." Thank you, Covid, the ultimate commute-killer.

Let's be honest: you can't argue with the convenience of driving. But to save money, people will adjust: combine trips, carpool, skip errands, shop online. Or even rethink that low-mileage SUV.

PS: Just as gas prices rise, there's another 5% fare increase coming this summer for commuter rail in Connecticut ... and a potential 30% cut in Bridgeport bus service. Timing is everything. ■

*This column originally appeared in CT Mirror*

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## Two Outstanding Educators of the Year named at John Read Middle School / continued from page 1

"I am honored to have received this award from the CT PTA. Being recognized, specifically by the parents and families of our district, is an incredible gift that shows the close-knit community that the Redding schools foster between its staff, students, and families," said Bairaktaris.

Students and parents who submitted letters for D'Agostino recognized her combination of kindness and organization. According to her application, "Managing multiple classes, rehearsals, and performances would be impressive for any experienced educator, yet Riley handles it all with remarkable professionalism and enthusiasm." Students' comments included, "She always brings a lot of energy to class and encourages everyone to try their best, even if they feel nervous." "Sometimes middle school can be stressful, but the music room is always a safe place. Ms. D'Agal-

ways notices if someone is having a bad day and knows how to make us feel better."

"I am humbled and honored to be named the Middle School Teacher of the Year by the Connecticut PTA. This recognition reflects the strength of our school community, where teaching and learning are shared efforts shaped by dedicated colleagues and supportive families," said D'Agostino.

Every year, the John Read Middle School PTA Board has the challenge of determining which educators to nominate. It typically receives letters of support identifying numerous educators in different categories, and then has the challenge of determining which recommendations most closely align with the state PTA's desired categories. This year, the school's PTA started receiving letters of recommendation for JRMS professionals before even requesting them. ■

# SPORTS

## Falcons fall to Rams in opener

Boys lacrosse | By Rocco Valluzzo



Photo by Rocco Valluzzo

Joel Barlow High's Alan Gurney, left, clashes with Cheshire's Ollie Donroe during a boys varsity lacrosse game on Saturday, April 4. Barlow lost 4-16 in the season opener.

The season opener served as a learning experience of a sort for the Joel Barlow High boys varsity lacrosse team.

At times, the Falcons had difficulty in passing as well as maintaining possession when they hosted Cheshire on Saturday, April 4. The Rams, however, fared better in these respects, translating to a 4-16 loss for the hosts.

"They pass and catch better than we do, and they have a higher lacrosse IQ than we do at this point in time," said Barlow Head Coach

Taylor Leahy. "That's really all it was."

Things appeared to start on the right foot for the Falcons, who took a 1-0 lead less than two minutes into the first quarter when freshman Matt Branca netted his team's first goal of the season. Cheshire, however, responded in kind with a scoring run that lasted until the second half.

Richie Muli tied it 1-1 less than a minute-and-a-half later, and the Rams then added four more in the period. On a couple of occasions,

the Falcons were down a player due to penalties and the visitors took advantage of the situation. Cheshire also won several face-offs, which helped it build a 1-5 lead at the end of the first quarter.

Barlow's attack had little luck breaking through in the next frame as well. The Ram's scoring run continued as they tacked on four more goals courtesy of Muli (two), Mike Mesite, and Trey McCauley for a 1-9 advantage at the break.

"We have some guys that aren't as experienced playing for the first time," said Leahy. "It's going to be a work in progress like it is every year."

The Ram's lead increased to ten (1-11) in the third quarter. Barlow broke the streak with 4:03 left in the quarter on a goal by Frank Branca. But before the frame ended, the visitors tacked on two more courtesy of Simon Levine and Muli for a 2-13 lead.

Play was more competitive in the last quarter, with the Rams outscoring the Falcons by just one goal. Completing his hat-trick, Frank Branca netted two more before time expired. Cheshire led 23-15 in shots on goal.

"We had a lot of self-inflicted errors," said Leahy, whose team had ten turnovers total. "They did a much better job of making the right play than we did tonight. That was really the difference."

Barlow, now 0-1, visits Mahopac (NY) on Thursday, April 9 at 5:00 p.m. and is at Conard of West Hartford on Saturday, April 11 at 11:00 a.m. ■

## Joel Barlow sports results and schedules

### Baseball

#### Next games:

April 9: away at Fairfield Ludlowe at 4:00 p.m.  
 April 11: away at New Milford at 1:00 p.m.  
 April 13: home versus Kolbe Cathedral at 4:15 p.m.  
 April 15: away at Masuk at 4:15 p.m.

### Softball

#### Next games:

April 10: home versus Weston at 4:15 p.m.  
 April 13: away at Kolbe Cathedral at 4:00 p.m.  
 April 15: away at Masuk at 4:15 p.m.

### Girls golf

#### Results:

March 31: Weston 192 / Joel Barlow 226

#### Record:

Joel Barlow 0-1

#### Next match:

April 9: home versus Pomperaug at 3:00 p.m.

### Boys lacrosse

#### Results:

April 4: Cheshire 16 / Joel Barlow 4

#### Record:

Joel Barlow: 0-1

#### Next games:

April 9: away at Mahopac at 5:00 p.m.  
 April 11: away at Conard at 10:00 a.m.

### Girls lacrosse

#### Results:

April 4: Fairfield Warde 12 / Joel Barlow 3

### Record:

Joel Barlow 0-1

#### Next games:

April 9: away at Pomperaug at 7:00 p.m.  
 April 14: away at Stratford/Bunnell at 6:30 p.m.

### Boys track and field

#### Next meet:

April 21: home versus Bethel, New Fairfield, Pomperaug at 4:00 p.m.

### Girls track and field

#### Next meet:

April 21: home versus Bunnell, Kolbe Cathedral, New Milford at 4:00 p.m.

### Boys tennis

#### Next match:

April 10: home versus Masuk at 3:45 p.m.

April 13: away at Immaculate at 3:45 p.m.

### Girls tennis

#### Next match:

April 10: away at Masuk at 3:45 p.m.

April 13: home versus Immaculate at 3:45 p.m.

### Boys volleyball

#### Results:

April 4: Joel Barlow 3 / St. Joseph 0

#### Record:

Joel Barlow 1-0

#### Next match:

April 10: away at Ridgefield at 5:30 p.m.  
 April 14: home versus Glastonbury at 12:00 p.m.  
 April 15: home versus Newtown at 4:30 p.m.



# April 18th

# 10am - 2pm

Activities include  
**Inflatable Obstacle Course & Free Swim**  
 in the Pool, STEM,  
 Gymnastics, Sports,  
 Art, Camp Activities,  
*and more!*

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# Redding's Odyssey of the Mind team heads to World Finals

By Anne Young Albanese



Photo courtesy of Kristina Scaviola

The proud Redding team members show off their medals (From left to right): Benjamin Funk (4th grade), Ryan Perez (5th Grade), Zoe Rossov (3rd Grade), Max Scaviola (3rd Grade), Teo Scaviola (5th Grade), and Avery Bruton (4th Grade).

The Redding Park and Recreation Odyssey of the Mind team is headed to the World Finals at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa, from May 27 – 30. The team recently came in second in its Long-Term Problem division overall. Not only that, but the team also won the Jill Riggles Award for Excellence in Spontaneous for earning the highest Spontaneous score in its division.

The Long-Term Problem in Odyssey of the Mind competitions is a challenge that the team starts working on early in the school year. There are five different categories: the "Vehicle" problem, the "Technical/Performance" problem, the "Classics" problem, the "Structure" problem, and the "Performance" problem, which is the category

the Redding team selected. Scoring is based on the team's performance and on ensuring that the solution includes specific elements the problem requires.

This year's Performance problem was called "Taller Tales of John Jivery." Teams had to create and present a humorous performance that tells an original tall tale. The tall tale had to include an incredible feat performed by a team-created John Jivery character, a unique origin story, and a surprise for the audience. Each of these events had to be accompanied by a visual weather effect that represents an emotion.

The Spontaneous problem is a challenge that the students have not encountered before the day of the competition. They may practice

different challenges, but they do not know what category the Spontaneous problem will represent until they get into the problem area.

While this year's Redding team is sponsored by the Redding Elementary School PTA, it is named after Redding Park and Recreation because two fifth graders wanted to participate (Redding Elementary School only teaches students through fourth grade). Since most elementary schools teach through fifth grade, the fifth graders were able to participate in the elementary school category, but not through a school they do not attend.

Attending the Odyssey of the Mind World Finals is an expensive proposition. The team will need to travel to Iowa, pay for room and board, and pay a registration fee for each participant. The team is accepting donations through a GoFundMe campaign. Along with donations, the team will also develop a fundraiser that will be announced soon. Kristina Scaviola, the team's coach, wants the students to have the experience of raising funds themselves. ■



The team is currently accepting donations to fund their trip to Iowa to participate in the World Finals.

# Barlow Robotics qualifies for CT State Championship

By Rob Sample



Photo by David Zegarelli

Barlow Robotics team members and mentors were all smiles after the team's second tournament, held on March 28-29 in Revere, MA. The team will compete in the upcoming CIAC State Robotics Championship on May 17.

Thanks to its excellent performance during two recent tournaments, the Barlow Robotics team has qualified to compete in the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) State Robotics Championship. The event is set to take place on May 17 in Glastonbury.

"We are so proud of the team, as this is the second time they have qualified to compete in the State Championships since the team's inception in 2013," noted Serene Zegarelli, a Barlow Robotics mentor and an executive at New York Life. "The first time was just last year."

The team's two recent regional tournaments were the Waterbury event, which took place at Wilby High School March 21-22, and the Greater Boston event, which was at Revere High School in Revere, MA, on March 28-29. "The Barlow students produced a competitive robot and, teamed with a strong alliance, placed second at the Waterbury event," said Zegarelli. "They then took the week in between to make several enhancements to the bot and performed even more impressively in Boston."

"Our students built on the success of last year and represented our school and the towns of Easton and Redding with distinction, winning the Gracious Professionalism Award and competing in the playoffs," said mentor Jon Stinson. "There's still lots to be done with

the robot in preparation for the State Championships; but that said, we feel great about the team's performance and our chances at States."

The Gracious Professionalism Award is a FIRST Robotics team-attribution award and is awarded at regional tournaments and championships. In the organization's view, gracious professionalism is a way of doing things that encourages high-quality work, emphasizes the value of others, and respects individuals and the community. It also recognizes that fierce competition and mutual gain are not mutually exclusive.

The Greater Boston tournament was a new destination for Barlow Robotics, as tournaments usually take place in Connecticut. Teams must pick first and second location choices for each event, but teams aren't guaranteed spots for any first choices. The Hartford tournament was a popular pick among robotics teams in both Connecticut and Massachusetts, so Barlow Robotics was assigned to Revere – which is just outside Boston – for its second event.

"Qualifying for the State Championships has been thrilling for the students," said Zegarelli. She noted that the team has seven new members this year, and all are spread over the multiple departments – or disciplines – that make up Barlow Robotics.

"New people and backup leads were trained in most of the team's departments," Zegarelli pointed out. "So, we're well staffed this year, and the team strengthened its expertise. This should be very helpful not just this year, but in helping to build the capabilities of next year's team as well."

FIRST Robotics competitions begin in earnest at the official kickoff, which took place January 10 and included, as happens every year, the release of the competitive game for tournaments and at the championship. This year's game is "Rebuilt," and encourages the application of past skills and developments to creating something entirely new.

After the January 10 kickoff, the team met frequently to create prototypes, discuss strategy, test code, and practice driving and operating the robot. "Our team members put in very long days during the build season – especially as we approach competition dates, often getting to school at 7:00 a.m., going through the school day and then staying to work on robotics until 9:00 p.m.," said Stinson.

"We're all very proud of them and their efforts," he said. "During both tournaments, students and parents were very engaged and stayed through very long days at the tournament site – which begin at 8:00 a.m. and went through 8:00 p.m. each night."

**Note:** Based on its strong performance at the two tournaments, the team qualified to compete in the upcoming FIRST Robotics District Championship. It is scheduled for April 16-18 in West Springfield, MA, but the team elected not to participate. The FIRST organization made a recent change to the date for that event and, as a result, it coincided with Joel Barlow High School's spring break – for which many participating students and their families had already made travel plans. ■

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# Student Council leads efforts for making connections at Redding Elementary School

By Rob Sample



Photo by Ginger Smith

A set of specially-developed cards are at the heart of the Let's Chat program. Each contains a question designed to spark conversation, helping students get to know one another. (Left to right): Student Council members Mia Cohn, Waverly Huszagh, Mateo Mejia-Morneau, and Emma Fox.

At a time marked by division and disconnection, Redding Elementary School's Student Council is helping with a schoolwide initiative designed to build ties among people and their communities.

The initiative, Let's Chat, began at Redding Elementary in January as a partnership with local non-profit SOAR Together. Recently, SOAR Together's Christopher Caldwell and Ginger Smith met with the RES Student Council to help the initiative spread throughout the school. Later this month, Smith will meet with the school's parent-teacher association (PTA), to acquaint parents with the program as well.

SOAR stands for Social, Occupational, Artistic, and Recreational, and aims to foster connections on those fronts. Let's Chat is just one of its newest initiatives and incorporates a specially-designed set of cards that spark impromptu, fun conversations – and build ties with classmates in the process.

"We had a wonderful, engaging session with the Fourth Grade Student Council and its teacher-advisor, Jen D'Addario," said Smith. "We encouraged the Student Council members to think of the questions on the Let's Chat cards as prompts leading to follow-up questions and dialogues."

Smith noted that one underlying goal is to help students build confidence in their communication skills, ultimately creating connections and a sense of belonging. "As soon as the cards were in their hands, the conversations were off and running," Smith said. "It was a true joy to step back and observe the engagement and bond-building in real time."

Later, Caldwell and Smith asked each student to reflect on the exercise – and what they learned proved the program's value. "Their recall was thoughtful and reflective of the aim of Let's Chat: To learn something new about a peer in order to better connect and communicate," said Smith.

D'Addario noted that students often just need a prompt or activity to start conversations they normally

might not have. "Tools like the Let's Chat cards are a simple way to help students connect and learn more about their classmates, which can help build a stronger sense of community in the classroom," said D'Addario.

Melissa Labroschiano, Principal of Redding Elementary, noted that the fun and flexible nature of the Let's Chat program is already helping to have a positive impact at RES. "Rather than being a formal program with a fixed schedule, the cards are used flexibly by staff throughout the school day," Labroschiano said, "in ways that support relationship-building and positive peer interaction."

The Student Council members then took the exercise a step further. To help spread the news about Let's Chat throughout the school, they discussed it and the prompt cards during one of their "Morning Meetings" video sessions which is broadcast schoolwide.

Council members have planned more outreach activities. One of those will be to visit other grades' lunch sessions to demonstrate how the cards make for fun conversation. A Student Council member will sit at each table and facilitate conversation. They also had the idea to create a table-topper with some of the questions. In this manner, these questions can be available during lunch for anyone who wants to try starting up a conversation – without the presence of a Council member.

The launch at Redding Elementary School marks another stage of growth for Let's Chat. It was previously implemented at East Ridge and Scotts Ridge Middle Schools in Ridgefield and at Fairfield Ludlowe High School in Fairfield.

"We love how the cards have been a launching point for more organic conversation that can happen anywhere," said D'Addario, "including the bus line, the playground, the lunchroom, et cetera. We are all excited to be bringing Let's Chat to Redding Elementary."

## OBITUARIES

**Hilda Anna (Budelman) Foster** *February 20, 1933 – December 16, 2023*

Hilda Anna (Budelman) Foster passed away peacefully at her home on December 16, 2023. She joins her husband, Francis Foster, and her son, Paul Foster. She awaits her three remaining children: Nancy, Jill, and Norman, their spouses, as well as nine grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. The Fosters were residents of Redding between 1959 and 1988. Nancy, Jill, and Norman are graduates of Joel Barlow High School ('76, '78, and '88 respectively).

Hilda was born to her German immigrant parents in 1933, and grew up in Westwood, NJ. Her parents' only child, Hilda was tall in stature as a young lady and gifted with intellect. She was honored as Valedictorian of her High School

class, in 1950. With the inspiration and support of her High School Mathematics instructor, she was able to matriculate into Saint Lawrence University (SLU). During her undergraduate studies at SLU, she became fascinated with how the chemistry of human blood can be interpreted to understand (and help) the physical conditions of the people of her time, and for those in the future. Hilda received her Bachelor of Science of Chemistry. Her studies became supported, and led to her graduate degree: Master of Science of Chemistry, in 1955.

Hilda was hired by the Bausch +Lomb Corporation in Rochester NY, in 1955. She was quickly added to a new computation-related department, because of her

scientific and analytic background. This department was one of the earliest groups that used "large scale directed mechanical/electrical devices" to solve engineering problems, the supercomputers of its day. Hilda "programmed" these early supermachines and contributed to what today is called "machine language." Within three years, she became head of that department, a remarkable achievement at that time. It was there that she met Fran Foster, an optical engineer, whom she would marry.

Throughout her entire life, Hilda believed and trusted in her personal Savior: Jesus. Lutheran by upbringing, and spiritually orthodox, Hilda believed in the redeeming Grace that God provided through His

manifestation, Jesus, and in His sustainment through the Holy Spirit. Hilda put her faith into action in many ways during her life, some overt but mostly subtle. She was a regular church organist, liturgical speaker, and member of churches in New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and Georgia.

In her later years, she would often remark: "Don't worry about me, I will be more alive than I ever was."

And so she is.

The family of Hilda (Budelman) Foster will hold a memorial service at: Trinity Lutheran Church, State College, PA on April 18, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. Everyone is welcome. A private interment will follow later that day in Bethel Park, PA. ■

**Matt Krupanski** *November 9, 1977 – March 28, 2026*

doing, not just talking. He had little patience for pretense, a strong sense of purpose, and a way of making people laugh even when the moment did not seem to allow for it.

Born on November 9, 1977, in Springfield, Massachusetts, Matt was the son of George and Carla Krupanski. He was raised in Glen Rock, NJ, and Newark, DE, places that helped shape his early life and interests. He liked to draw; played football, baseball and drums, and from the beginning seemed wired for rhythm, momentum and making things happen.

At 16, he began touring as the drummer for Boyssetsfire. For a few years, he played with his brother, Marc, by his side on bass. Music opened up the world to him and set the course for much of what followed. It sharpened his sense

of justice, deepened his interest in people and place, and led him into travel and global studies. His time with Village Health Works in Burundi, Africa was especially formative, helping clarify the connection he would later pursue in his career: creating spaces that people could move through, feel and take part in, rather than simply stand back and view.

In 2012, Matt graduated with honours from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn with a bachelor's degree in architecture. Brooklyn suited him: its energy, its edge, its constant movement. He went on to become Design Director at Ralph Appelbaum Associates, where he worked on immersive experiences for major cultural institutions, including the American Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian's

National Museum of African American History and Culture, Carolina Museum of the Marine, National Veterans Memorial and Museum, and the Punk Rock Museum. At the time of his death, Matt was set to begin a new position at Hadley Exhibits, Inc. as Director of Engineering. He was excited about the new gig, and they were thrilled to welcome him.

He cared deeply about music and design, but the center of Matt's life was his daughter, Georgina – his Georgie. She was his greatest love and his clearest joy. They shared music, laughter and a love of the Mets (and Jets!), and he loved being her dad above everything else.

Matt was not someone who sat still for long. He was always making, fixing, clearing, rebuilding, carrying, climbing or tinkering

with something, whether that meant getting up on the roof to clear ice, rebuilding a classic Mustang, or piecing together old stereo equipment into something new. He liked action, momentum and a project with some life in it. That was true of his work, and even more true of the way he lived.

Matt died on Saturday, March 28, 2026, at 48, following infection and complications after a car accident.

In addition to his daughter, Georgina, and her mother, Jen Harvey, Matt is survived by his parents, George and Carla Krupanski; his sister, Melissa Gardi and her husband, Dino; his brother, Marc J. Krupanski and his wife, Leela Van Balkom; and his beloved partner, Nina Luckman. He will be greatly missed. ■

**Anita S. MacIntyre** *1931 – 2026*

Anita S. MacIntyre, 94, died peacefully at her home in Redding on February 14, 2026.

Born in White Plains, NY in 1931 to Sam and Anita Schlosser, Anita spent her early years in Scarsdale, NY. A happy and enthusiastic child who loved the outdoors and any and all animals. Anita enjoyed playing piano and saxophone, camping, sports, skiing, and of course sailing. She met her husband Malcolm Scott MacIntyre through their mutual love of sailing, and they were married at the Larchmont Yacht Club in 1955.

Anita attended Roanoke College

in Virginia and Colby College in Maine, receiving her BA from Colby in 1953. She then went on to get her MA in teaching from SUNY New Paltz, NY. She taught 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade in Larchmont and Mamaroneck, NY and then 2nd grade in Redding. After her children were enrolled in school, she returned to teaching, co-founding the Village Preschool in Bethel in 1971.

Anita and Malcolm loved traveling and adventure. They spent a year in Mexico in 1960 and rented a house in Scotland in 1973/1974, traveling around the British Isles

and Europe with their children in their '74 VW Westfalia Camper. They loved learning new skills and doing things together, from redecorating rooms to building an addition on their house. Family and friends were an important part of Anita's life, everyone always greeted by her warm smile. She loved "playing tour guide" as she put it, driving visitors all over to see the sights. She enjoyed helping others and treated everyone like they were part of the family.

Survivors include her daughter Robina MacIntyre Marshall, her son Scott MacIntyre, her grandchildren

Callie MacIntyre and Malcolm "Callum" Marshall, and her sister Brenda Hawkins. She was pre-deceased by her brother Arthur (d.1999) and her husband Malcolm who died in 2017 after 62 happy years of marriage to Anita.

Services will be held on Saturday April 11, 2026 at 10:30 a.m. at the First Church of Christ Congregational, 25 Cross Hwy, Redding with Rev. Suzanne Wagner officiating. Burial will follow in Kensico Cemetery in Valhalla, NY. ■

**Michael Kent Weibel** *May 30, 1941 – March 29, 2026*

Michael Kent Weibel passed away peacefully on Sunday, March 29, 2026, in Danbury, surrounded by his family.

Born May 30, 1941, in Sioux City, IA, to Michael M. Weibel, Mike graduated from North High School in Des Moines, IA, in 1959. At Iowa State University he earned a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry but more importantly met the love of his life, Jennifer Deale Dodge. Soon after they moved to Texas and Purdue University where he completed his PhD in Chemistry.

A faculty position at UPenn brought them to Philadelphia, where they started their family. After accepting an R&D leadership role at Novo Nordisk in Wilton,

their search for a home brought them to Redding. During an early visit, Mike noticed kids playing in the woods and felt that it was the perfect place for them to raise their family. They raised four children in Redding.

Mike lived a life defined by curiosity, energy, and deep devotion to his family. A scientist, professor, and entrepreneur, his work spanned biochemistry, medicine, food science, and technology. Mike was a builder of traditions, a creator of joy, and a constant source of energy, inspiration, and imagination among his friends and family.

Mike approached life with discipline and playfulness, whether running in the rain, long bike rides,

playing tennis, or pickleball. A resident of Redding for more than 50 years, he played a key role in establishing the local pickleball program and courts, leaving a lasting contribution community members continue to enjoy.

He had a gift for transforming moments into lasting memories. From legendary Easter egg hunts mapped out with precision to Christmas mornings filled with music, he created family traditions that will live on for generations. He instilled in his children the values of persistence, discipline, loyalty, and independence, often turning life lessons into games that rewarded effort, strategy, and patience. His determination and resilience were

evident throughout his life, as he embraced new challenges and remained active and engaged.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Jennifer Deale Dodge; his children, Michael A. Weibel, Douglas Weibel, Amy Photopoulos, and Corey Weibel; his sons-in-law, David Paniccia and Tim Photopoulos; and ten grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his infant daughter Kristin Weibel.

A private service was held. He will be deeply missed. The adventures he started and the memories he created will continue to live on in all who loved him. ■

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## BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

# Full-circle moment brings healing studio to West Redding

By Justin Reynolds



Michelle Ferreira Lopes has opened the first commercial venture in the newly renovated historic building at 3 Side Cut Road.

The first commercial tenant at the newly renovated building at 3 Side Cut Road in West Redding is now open for business.

In March, Ethereal Healing Studio – a boutique studio offering deep tissue, myofascial, lymphatic, and prenatal massages and other wellness services – greeted clients for the first time.

The 700-square-foot studio is the brainchild of Michelle Ferreira Lopes, who worked as a licensed massage therapist, craniosacral therapist, and energy worker for 13 years before deciding to start her own practice.

“This is my first studio – the first location that I’m running myself,” Michelle said. “Ethereal is one of my long-time dreams come true. It’s a sacred sanctuary for nourishing ourselves through the healing arts. I wanted to create a space where people feel comfortable being exactly who they are, feel inspired to make adjustments that improve their wellbeing, and find the beauty in doing it.”

Michelle grew up in Fairfield County and moved out West after high school, graduating from the

Arizona School of Massage Therapy in 2013. She then trained to become a yoga teacher, learned additional healing techniques at the Southwest Institute of Healing Arts, received certifications in Reiki and craniosacral therapy, and began working professionally in Arizona and then California.

In 2019, Michelle came back to Connecticut for the holidays and met the son of her family’s long-time friends. They hit it off, got married, and now live in Danbury with their two-and-a-half-year-old daughter.

“I was already transitioning out of LA and was thinking about moving to Europe, but I ended up meeting him and decided to move back home,” she said. “It was perfect timing.”

As she settled into motherhood, Michelle knew it was time to take the next step in her career, but also that she had to do it in the healthiest way for her family.

“Once you become a mother, you have to direct your energy where it’s going to be most efficient,” she said. “I wanted something where I could put 100% of myself into. I do this for the love of doing it, but it is also my business. It was important to find the perfect balance of work and life.”

After deciding to open her own studio, Michelle began searching for a space and came across the location at 3 Side Cut Road. Having grown up in the Danbury and Bethel area, she was already familiar with the neighborhood.

“It feels special to be the first commercial tenant at 3 Side Cut Road,” she said. “I’ve driven by and been intrigued by this building for decades, so to be here now feels like a fun little full-circle moment.”

When exploring the space, she fell in love with the fact that the building used to be a train station and still carries that energy today.

“It’s almost like the building feels alive and has its own personality,” she said, adding that Yoga

Station was originally set to be the first tenant until construction delays pushed owner Whitney Cocco to open at her current location on Brookside Road in Georgetown. “It feels like the building wanted to be a healing space.”

Michelle also was drawn to the space’s proximity to Topstone Park, where she grew up hiking.

“I wanted to be somewhere that’s close to nature,” she said. “There’s refreshing energy in this community. The neighbors have been super sweet, super kind, and generous. It’s nice to be here.”

In addition to one-on-one bodywork, Ethereal Healing Studio also offers red light and biomat sessions. It is open by appointment only and welcomes drop-in visits on Sundays from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. to check out the space, say hello, and browse the studio’s selection of products, including organic oils, herbal tinctures and teas, and artisanal goods from mostly women-owned businesses.

“I put a lot of energy into every little detail from choosing natural materials like organic cotton massage sheets to blending textures in the design, like animal hides, crystals, shells, fossils, and plants, all responsibly sourced,” Michelle said.

While Michelle is the studio’s main practitioner, she also has two other contractors: Kylie, who offers mat Pilates on Fridays, and Meg, who offers yoga on Saturdays.

Michelle views her work as much more than a basic massage.

“People think they’re coming in for a massage, and they leave a changed person, they leave transformed,” she said. “My work is kind of sneaky in that way. It’s much more impactful than a physical massage. I’m not just offering a physical experience. I’m offering something that is life-altering.”

To learn more about the studio’s classes and offerings, visit [etherealhealingstudio.com](http://etherealhealingstudio.com)

## MUSIC NOTE

# A “bucket list” concert comes to Ridgefield

Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 performance with full orchestra, vocalists | By Pamela Brown

Spring marks the start of many glorious seasonal celebrations, and the Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra (RSO) is presenting *HOME*, a celebratory concert on April 18. “*HOME* is also the title of our entire 2025/26 season. This season is an inspiring and exciting year of music as we’ve explored the meaning of ‘home’ – in our world, our country, our community and as individuals,” explained Laurie Kenagy, Executive Director.

“We’re excited to perform the upcoming concert as it features the iconic *Symphony No. 9* by Ludwig van Beethoven, the only piece on this concert’s program. This symphony is considered a masterpiece of Western classical music and one of the greatest achievements in the history of music,” said Kenagy. “It’s important to RSO to present the great staples of the classical music canon.” The concert will be conducted by RSO Music Director Eric Mahl. It takes place at 7:30 p.m. at the Anne S. Richardson Auditorium at Ridgefield High School.

Guest performers include Sarah Joyce Cooper, soprano; Emily Hughes, mezzo soprano; Christopher Longo, tenor; and Claude Cassion, bass. “The soloists for the fourth movement, and choral finale, of the *Symphony No. 9* were selected for their superb vocal talent. As vocalists, they are not members of the RSO but specifically engaged by the orchestra to sing this incredible music,” said Kenagy. The soloists will be accompanied both by the RSO and choruses from Music on the Hill, whose Festival and Chamber Choruses will take part in the final movement of the symphony.

Music on the Hill, a Wilton-based community of amateur and professional musicians committed to artistic excellence, will have

70+ members in the choruses. “It’s wonderful to collaborate with Music on the Hill to perform one of the greatest pieces of music ever written. When our Music Director decided to program Beethoven’s *Symphony No. 9* over a year ago, we approached Music on the Hill’s Artistic Director, Ellen Dickinson, about their musicians singing the choral movement of the piece. They were excited to work with the RSO, and we look forward to a marvelous collaborative performance.”

According to Kenagy, the concert amplifies RSO’s mission by enriching the cultural lives of the citizens of Ridgefield and surrounding communities by presenting musical performances of the highest artistic quality. “Beethoven’s *Symphony No. 9* is one of those works that everyone should have the opportunity to hear and to experience at some point in their life. It’s that epic!” she said. “Only a full symphony orchestra, with vocal soloists and a large chorus can present the work as it was written, so it’s a big undertaking, but some would say it’s incumbent upon orchestras to perform this work periodically to give audiences the opportunity to share the experience of hearing this piece performed live.” said Kenagy. “At our April 18 concert, audience members will experience a powerful, moving, inspiring, and unique live orchestra experience. Hearing and seeing nearly 150 musicians on stage as one ensemble is something that can only be fully experienced in person. Music touches and affects everyone individually, but being in a concert hall with others and listening to the same music creates a true sense of community.”

For concert and ticket information, visit [ridgefieldsymphony.org](http://ridgefieldsymphony.org) or call (203) 438-3889

### Redding’s Big Outdoors: If trees could talk *Spring fling / continued from page 1*



Photo by Stuart Green

Twisted trunks of laurels seem to be dancing, Rock Lot/Scott Preserve.

Stuart Green, *Lead Trail Tender*, favors the Rock Lot/Scott Preserve.

Each footpath has seasonal surprises and subtle aromas, he remarked, from red blossoming maples to the shimmering leaves covering the twisted limbs of mountain laurels; from fern glens to towering oaks, hemlocks and tulip trees; from bloodroot and trout lilies to hundreds of ephemerals.

Green admitted he has a soft spot for the terrain. Twenty years ago, it was the first area he helped make “trail accessible” as an apprentice to his predecessor, Fred Schroeder. “I love all our properties, but Rock Lot will always be meaningful to me,” he said.

Victor DeMasi, *naturalist* and leader of Redding’s annual butterfly count, loves to stroll Redding’s mile-long segment on the Norwalk River Valley Trail.

He enters on Picketts Ridge Road and slips back in time as he

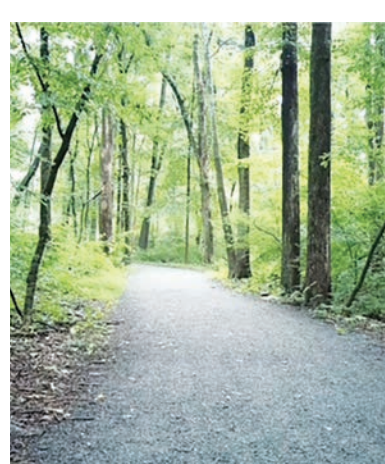


Photo courtesy of NRVT

Step back in time on the NRVT “Redding Mile.”

steps onto an old Native American pathway that later morphed into a wooden cattle road for settlers. DeMasi’s chosen hike passes a glistening pond, meandering stone walls, wetlands and woodlands, even the remnants of a sheep farm.

For this jaunt, he advised, “Leave your earbuds at home.” Why? “Nature provides the soundtrack: a quiet, rolling river, pollinating bees, croaking frogs, and drumming woodpeckers.”

Michael Carpenter, *noted birder*, favors an incredibly active yet relatively unknown aviary where more than 90 species can be found throughout the year.

He rises early to get to this birding “hotspot” – a woody loop that winds behind the Community Center past the Municipal ballfields and up to the Community Garden. It’s the native Connecticut trees, he stated, red oak, black birch, hickory, red and sugar maples, beech, white pine and cedar – that are the



Photo by Michael Carpenter

Yellow warbler spotted in Community Garden and Community Center area.

magnet for different species migrating through or staying for the season.

As he walks, the sounds rival the sightings: warblers, sparrows, thrushes, chickadees, orioles, blue jays, woodpeckers, and more. If you’re game, Carpenter recommended, you can keep up with who’s who by taking along good binoculars and *Sibley Birds East* by David Allen Sibley.

So, whether you’re looking to hike with the kids, step back in history, enjoy the fragrance of the season, or marvel at the flocks, it’s all here in Redding. And as Williams might have said: “Party on!”

Have a favorite tree story for this column? Contact [reddingtreeconservancy@gmail.com](mailto:reddingtreeconservancy@gmail.com)

## Notes from a neighbor

Switching to sandals | By Carter Wiseman

Beyond the city limits, the coming of warm weather launches a flurry of time-honored rituals. There is the spring clean-up, gathering the branches snapped by winter storms, sharpening the garden shears, and, depending on the acreage, tuning up the mowers and the blowers. The downside of the last exercise is the noise and the exhaust that result. Happily, a growing number of towns in our area seem to be changing over to electric equipment, so the roars may eventually be replaced by mere hums.

In any case, one of my most satisfying seasonal rituals takes place entirely indoors, and is totally silent. It is the swapping of winter clothes for those of summer. First are the turtle-necks, heavy sweaters, and woolly scarves, which move from the front bedroom bureau to the back. From the back bedroom bureau come the T-shirts, polos and shorts – which have been waiting patiently since November – to replace them.

Each bureau has a distinctive smell, which lingers on the clothes at least until the first washing. One bureau, a vintage highboy passed down through my family, still gives off a faint whiff of the cedar it was made from. The other smells slightly of pine from a little sachet I brought home from an Adirondack vacation. The odors instantly flash images of the past on my mental screen. And although I’ve seen these imaginary movies twice a year, they still surprise me with the message that a new season is about to begin, especially in the spring.

Welcoming as the switch from

heavy clothes to light ones is at this time of year, the item that marks the end of winter with the greatest power isn’t in either bureau. Tucked into the back of our main coat closet, where they’ve been waiting out the cold behind some Kamik boots – bought after a monster snowstorm some years back – are my Teva sandals.

As a boy, I was never much for sandals. The leather ones were ruined if they got wet, and the plastic flip-flops always came off at the wrong time. And, to be candid, sandals didn’t seem very manly. Enter Velcro! The hook-and-eye gripping straps made the footwear of ancient origin easy to put on and take off, and let me stride into rivers and lakes without fear of losing my footing. It didn’t hurt that the catalogs of outfitters like REI and EMS featured grizzled hikers wearing some variation of the original while portaging canoes in the wilderness.

While still in college, I scaled some small mountains and climbed some risky rock faces. Not being much of an outdoorsman anymore, I am content to take pleasure in the triumph of the humble sandal over its image as the footwear of the poor or the ascetic. But most of all, I am happy for my summertime feet: No more Topsiders, no more sweat socks, no more replacing broken laces for my New Balance 990s.

By November, I know I will be happy to welcome those Kamiks again – especially if we get snow again next winter. At the moment, though, my toes are savoring the coming of the sand. ■

## BOOK REVIEW

### I'm Writing You from Tehran

*A granddaughter's search for her family's past and their country's future*

By Delphine Minoui / 320 pages / Picador / \$18

Delphine Minoui was born and raised in Paris, the daughter of an Iranian immigrant father and French mother. *I'm Writing You from Tehran* is structured as a letter to her beloved Babaji, her grandfather, who died when she was 23.

Her paternal grandfather represented Iran at UNESCO in Paris during the 1950s. An educator and lover of poetry, he made frequent visits to Minoui's family in Paris, and grandfather and granddaughter forged a tight bond.

After her grandfather died, Minoui left Paris for Tehran to learn more about the country of her ancestors. This book is the story of her early career as a foreign correspondent, and of her discovery of Iran – its traditions, cultures, peoples, politics, and language.

As a member of the press, Minoui is under the watch of the intelligence services and undergoes frequent, usually frightening, interrogations. Occasionally, her press pass is revoked. She understands it will be returned if she collaborates and provides information about the Iranian diaspora. (She refuses.)

She meets and becomes friends with intellectuals, artists, militia men and women, and people who just want to party. She is under the watchful eye of her grandmother, in whose home she lives. Some of these new friends fall afoul of the regime and are killed or disappeared.

Through these relationships,

Minoui tells us about the Iran she has come to love as much as she loved her grandfather. The revolutions, one after another after another, as if lessons can't be learned. The intertwining of religion and politics so foundational to the country and so unfamiliar to someone brought up in France. The resilience of individuals who have learned to take calculated risks to preserve their lives and humanity. The resilience of the "state" which never seems to change no matter who is in charge.

She delights in learning more than the few words of Persian she learned through poetry shared by her grandfather. She is taught by a young woman, eventually becoming fluent, and through her is introduced to the hidden world of blogs that escape the eye of the censors.

Life becomes more complicated, and sweeter, when she falls in love and marries an Iranian-American. Together, they end up being forced to flee Iran after yet another political upheaval. They now live in Lebanon.

This is a heartfelt memoir of a young correspondent's coming of age. The narrative device of writing to her grandfather is fine but, to this reader, unnecessary. Her story is a compelling one on its own, and she tells it with curiosity and compassion. Her years as a journalist come through in her clear and strong writing. ■

Review by Susan Clark

## Reserve Your Bike & Join Me in September!

Ride through the South Bohemian countryside on a bike or e-bike just as the hops are harvested and the vineyards in the Wachau Valley turn gold.

- Stopping for "Sturn" (young, fermenting wine) in Austrian Villages
- The transition from legendary Czech Pilsners to elegant Austrian Rieslings

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## LIBRARY CORNER

### Make poetry part of your day

By Erin Shea Dummeyer

April arrives with its usual promises: evening light, buds on branches, the first real hint of warmth. It also means the start of National Poetry Month. In a culture that often prizes speed and efficiency, poetry invites us to slow down and to concentrate on all five of our senses.

Reading a poem takes only a few minutes, but its impact can linger far longer. A handful of lines can sharpen our awareness of the world around us – the sound of rain against a window, the rhythm of a commute, the feeling of nostalgia for the past. Poetry reminds us that

language is not just a tool, but an art form capable of astonishment and depth. To celebrate National Poetry Month this April, we invite Mark Twain Library visitors to take a poem from the "poetry jar" on our circulation desk during their visit.

On Thursday, April 16, we are hosting Ira Joe Fisher at 7:00 p.m. to talk about his craft and share some selections from his latest published poetry collection, *The Birth of Snow*. Fisher is a two-time Emmy award winner and explores themes of memory, aging, loss in his work.

This April, consider making poetry part of your routine. Read a poem with your morning coffee. Share one with a friend. Try writing a few lines at the end of the day. In doing so, you may find that poetry is not an abstract or distant art, but a living, accessible practice – one that enriches both our inner lives and our connections to the world around us. ■

Erin Shea Dummeyer is  
Director, Mark Twain Library



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# THE NATURAL WORLD

## Why dahlias have become the darlings of many Redding growers

By Donna Christopher



Photo courtesy of Sarah Hawkey

Sarah Hawkey, a classical singer and vocal teacher, finds time to unwind in her garden in Redding Center.



Photo by Jessie Wright

While dahlias are typically not temperamental, they do require that gardeners dig up the tubers before the ground freezes and store them indoors. They reward this effort with brilliant colors and varied shapes each summer.



Photo courtesy of Sarah Hawkey

Dahlias come in thousands of varieties, with varied colors, shapes, and sizes.

Dahlias chirp a colorful kind of music, their layered blooms catching the late-summer breeze in a display that feels almost like a song.

It's a fitting scene in the garden of Redding-based singer and voice teacher Sarah Hawkey, who runs Blossom Voice Studio, where expression is usually measured in sound. At her home in Redding, though, she trades the studio for the soil, tending to dahlias – vibrant, sun-loving tender perennials grown from tubers. The flower is a headliner in her garden, admired for its long-lasting color and dramatic form.

The National Dahlia Society cites “over 57,000 registered varieties classified into 14–15 main groups.” Types vary from “tiny 2-inch pompoms to 10-inch ‘dinnerplate’ blooms,” and shapes include “spiky cactus, tightly rolled balls, and ruffled lacinated forms, spanning every color except blue.”

“I first heard about dahlias right before I bought my house,” Hawkey explained. “I tried to grow one or two when I was renting in Redding, and it was quite unsuccessful. I now understand that’s because I didn’t have the right environment.”

Once she settled in her new house, Hawkey took an online course on flower farming, Floret’s Flower Farming Workshop and visited Floret Flower Farm, a family-run flower farm in Washington State’s Skagit River Valley. Founders Erin Benzakein and Chris Benzakein have spent the last 15 years building the business and are featured in a television show about their experience.

“I just devoured it,” Hawkey said. “That’s really what pulled me into dahlias.”

Hawkey now generously shares her knowledge of dahlias with others. She gave a lecture to the

Redding Garden Club about the flowers, she said, which was “so much fun to do.”

Hawkey isn’t alone in being taken with colorful summer blooms. In March, Redding Flower Farm’s “The Dahlia Workshop” sold out, filled with enthusiasts and novices.

Jen Harvey of Redding Flower Farm said dahlias are “impressive, easy to grow, and come in truly beautiful colors and forms.”

“As my mom says, ‘If you want everyone to think you’re a brilliant gardener, grow dahlias.’ I think this perhaps is one of the biggest factors of dahlia popularity – they make an impressive gift from your garden into the homes and parties of your friends and family,” Harvey pointed out.

Harvey said many growers will catch the “dahlia bug” once they get started and will vie for the hot new dahlia varieties and trends which change yearly.

Catherine and John Kearns, who started Old Redding Farm on Old Redding Road before moving operations to Sandy Hook and changing the name to Bearlya Farm, grow beautiful dahlia blooms and sell tubers as part of their farm offerings.

“Dahlias come up in late June and July and are super long-lasting cut flowers. If you cut them when they’re at their peak, the blooms last a solid week,” Catherine explained.

While all the growers interviewed characterized dahlias as relatively non-temperamental, they do take a bit of effort when planting in Connecticut’s hardiness zone.

In Connecticut, dahlia tubers generally must be taken out of the ground before the first hard frost each year and stored indoors over the winter. “If you leave them in, they freeze, like a potato, and turn to mush. In warmer climates,

like California, Texas, or Mexico, growers can leave them in the ground and just mulch over them. But here, you really have to dig them up,” Hawkey said.

Dahlias can be planted back in the ground in late spring in a sunny area after the frost is gone and the soil is warm.

“Dahlias love nutrient-rich, well-draining soil. I use organic leaf compost as well as blood meal. Make sure the medium you’re growing in has been given enough attention. They love full sun, as they originated from the mountains of Mexico,” Harvey said.

Harvey also recommends pinching the flowers when they reach 10 inches tall to give more branching and blooms. Her best tip is “the more you cut them, the more they bloom and the more tubers they produce.”

The Kearns appreciate how low maintenance they are, apart from the seasonal digging up.

“We don’t stake or fertilize. They come all charged up and ready to go. You’ll see pretty flowers come up, every color in the rainbow except blue,” Catherine said.

Another tip from these expert growers? When possible, source your tubers from local farms or domestic suppliers rather than imported, machine-harvested tubers.

Domestic tubers are hand-harvested, not machine-harvested, which offer fresher and more vivid blooms.

“You put the tuber in the ground, and from that one, you can grow and propagate easily. Domestic, small-farm tubers are fresh, while imports are often machine-harvested, dried out, and prone to gall,” added Catherine. ■

## REAL ESTATE

### March 2026 real estate report

A look at trends in the local housing market

By Bill Whitehead and John Talley

In March, three properties sold versus seven in 2025. The inventory of properties for sale is increasing as the spring market begins to pick up after a slower start due in large part to our coldest and snowiest winter in recent memory. The average price of houses sold year-to-date is \$1,111,974 and price/square-foot is averaging \$378. There are currently eight properties under-contract that we would expect to close in the next 30 to 45 days.

Until next month, when we recap April’s real estate activity, happy spring market to all sellers and buyers! ■

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

March 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 April 6	March	2026	March	2026	March	2026	March	2026	March	2026	March	2026
Redding	16	3	15	433	209	\$2,116,633	\$1,168,653	\$1,925,000	\$1,111,974	-9%	-5%	\$260	\$378
Ridgefield	26	15	36	146	120	\$1,645,733	\$1,449,757	\$1,607,383	\$1,430,699	-2%	-1%	\$417	\$421
Weston	17	4	13	128	121	\$843,000	\$1,167,231	\$833,750	\$1,175,377	-1%	1%	\$420	\$400
Wilton	18	15	26	107	108	\$1,582,267	\$1,450,538	\$1,723,333	\$1,559,816	9%	8%	\$510	\$504
Easton	14	2	12	80	92	\$1,225,000	\$1,050,000	\$1,267,500	\$1,055,233	3%	0%	\$422	\$351
Bethel	15	14	27	96	98	\$629,593	\$615,844	\$642,500	\$623,693	2%	1%	\$285	\$292
Newtown	43	19	52	116	104	\$600,147	\$649,433	\$598,377	\$649,960	0%	0%	\$324	\$299
<b>Average</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>\$1,234,625</b>	<b>\$1,078,779</b>	<b>\$1,228,263</b>	<b>\$1,086,679</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>\$377</b>	<b>\$378</b>

REDDING SOLD - March	Sale Price	List Price	%/ List Price	Price/Sqft*	Days on Market
41 Sullivan Dr	\$835,000	\$875,900	-5%	\$249	101
22 Ledgewood Rd	\$940,000	\$979,000	-4%	\$263	158
241 Black Rock Tpke	\$4,000,000	\$4,495,000	-11%	\$269	1039
<b>Average</b>	<b>\$1,925,000</b>	<b>\$2,116,633</b>	<b>-9%</b>	<b>\$260</b>	<b>433</b>

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	32	74 Black Rock Tpke	\$1,495,000	\$317	14
71 Picketts Ridge Rd	\$529,000	\$569	64	42 Topstone Rd	\$1,595,000	\$414	0
101 Sport Hill Rd	\$699,000	\$305	4	12 Werf Dr	\$1,699,900	\$421	90
172 Gallows Hill Rd	\$699,000	\$509	12	7 Long Meadow Ln	\$1,837,500	\$341	60
268 Umpawaug Rd	\$849,000	\$333	5	2 Longwood Dr	\$1,849,000	\$295	91
30 Highland Ave	\$899,000	\$391	27	229 Umpawaug Rd	\$7,495,000	\$1,116	329
123A Peaceable St	\$925,000	\$257	33	63 Turney Rd	\$8,600,000	\$913	113
2 Brick School Dr	\$925,000	\$361	53				
98 Hopewell Woods Rd	\$1,275,000	\$343	17	<b>Average</b>	<b>\$1,991,900</b>	<b>\$456</b>	<b>59</b>

Listings continue on right side of table

\* Calculated using livable square footage

# AMERICA 250: UPCOMING LOCAL EVENTS

\$ = fee applies  
R = registration required



**January 23 – July 25**  
**For Which it Stands Exhibition**  
Museum hours  
Exhibition of depictions of American flag beginning in WWI  
Fairfield University Art Museum / Bellarmine Hall Galleries and Walsh Gallery  
1073 North Benson Road  
Fairfield  
fairfield.edu/museum

**March 16 – September 27**  
**Unfurling the Flag: Reflections on American Patriotism**  
Museum hours  
Exhibition exploring the complex ideological and political power of patriotism in the United States  
Yale University / Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
121 Wall Street  
New Haven  
beinecke.library.yale.edu/exhibitions-visiting/special-exhibitions

**Saturday, April 11**  
**Spring Awakening Hikes – Redding History Hike**  
11:00 a.m.  
Historical hike led by Town Co-Historians Bruce Nelson and Brent Colley and Park Historian Ellery Leary  
Putnam Memorial State Park  
499 Black Rock Turnpike  
redding250.com  
R

**Wednesday, April 15**  
**Stars & Stripes (for Kindergarten-Grade 2)**  
4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.  
Print-making workshop for kids  
Ridgefield Library  
472 Main Street  
Ridgefield  
ridgefieldct250.org  
R

**Thursday, April 16**  
**Boston Tea Party STEM Challenge (Grades 3-5)**  
4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.  
Students learn about Boston Tea Party and create a crate to keep tea dry using only four materials  
472 Main Street  
Ridgefield  
ridgefieldct250.org  
R

**Monday, April 20**  
**The Battle of Charcoal Run**  
6:30 p.m.  
Historical presentation on Civil War skirmish fought in Connecticut  
Bethel Public Library  
189 Greenwood Avenue  
Bethel  
bethel-ct.gov/bethel250-events  
R

**Wednesday, April 22**  
**250 Years of American Music – Part II: Copland and Bernstein**  
7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.  
In-person and virtual event with musicologist Gil Harel  
Mark Twain Library and Zoom  
439 Redding Road  
marktwainlibrary.org  
R

**Thursday, April 23**  
**Cocktail Party and Screening of *Glory***  
7:00 p.m.  
Fundraiser event for Redding's America250 concert  
Greenwood Features  
269 Greenwood Avenue  
Bethel  
redding250.com  
\$, R

**Saturday, April 25**  
**The Remembrance Parade**  
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
Presented by The Cannon Ridge Chapter and National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, parade honoring patriots and veterans in battle for American independence  
Parade route from Jesse Lee Memorial United Methodist Church to Ballard Park  
207 Main Street  
Ridgefield  
ridgefieldct250.org/events/the-remembrance-parade

**Saturday, April 25**  
**The Remembrance Ball**  
6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.  
Black tie gala to celebrate nation's semiquincentennial  
Lounsbury House  
316 Main Street  
Ridgefield  
ridgefieldct250.org/events/the-remembrance-ball  
\$, R

**Sunday, April 26**  
**Feeding the Body Politic: Culinary Satire and the Print Market in an Age of Revolution with Nancy Siegel**  
2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
Lecture and historical food tasting  
Wilton Historical Society  
224 Danbury Road  
Wilton  
wiltonhistorical.org/america-250-wilton-300  
\$, R

**Thursday, April 30**  
**Charles Ives, His Life and Music**  
7:00 p.m.  
Learn about Charles Ives and his musical legacy and the ties to the upcoming May 30 concert celebration put on by Redding's America 250  
Mark Twain Library  
439 Redding Road  
redding250.com  
R

**Thursday, April 30**  
**The Importance of Connecticut to the Revolution with Mike Allen**  
7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.  
Learn about key people and events in Connecticut during the Revolutionary War with noted storyteller and journalist  
Wilton Historical Society  
224 Danbury Road  
Wilton  
wiltonhistorical.org/america-250-wilton-300  
\$, R

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## Celebrate America's 250th Birthday

with a full calendar of events, culminating in a concert of patriotic music featuring the Greater Bridgeport Symphony.

### Putnam Park History Hike

**APRIL 11 | 11:00 AM | Putnam Memorial State Park**  
Join Redding Town Historians and members of the Redding Land Trust for a historical walk through this Revolutionary War encampment site.

### Cocktail Party & Screening of *Glory*

**APRIL 23 | 7:00 PM | Greenwood Features, Bethel, CT**  
Gather for cocktails and a screening of the award-winning film *Glory* (1989).

### Charles Ives, His Life and Music

**APRIL 30 | 7:00 PM | Mark Twain Library**  
Discover the story of Redding's own pioneering composer at the Mark Twain Library. Presented by our Town Historians.

### Redding 250 Concert

**MAY 30 | 7:00 PM | Joel Barlow High School**  
The Greater Bridgeport Symphony will perform the music of Redding's own Charles Ives along with popular American music in collaboration with the students of Joel Barlow High School.

Scan the code to learn more and purchase tickets!



Visit [Redding250.com](http://Redding250.com) to learn more!

Or follow us on Facebook: [Redding Celebrates America 250](#)

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

\$ = fee applies  
R = registration required

## This Week's Featured Events

### The Secret Lives of Artists Part II

**Thursday, April 9**  
7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.  
Meet a panel of celebrated artists living in our community  
Mark Twain Library  
439 Redding Road  
marktwinlibrary.org  
**R**

### Spring Awakening Hikes – Redding History Hike

**Saturday, April 11**  
11:00 a.m.  
Historical hike led by Town Co-Historians Bruce Nelson and Brent Colley and Park Historian Ellery Leary  
Putnam Memorial State Park  
499 Black Rock Turnpike  
redding250.com  
**R**

### Healthy Kids Day

**Saturday, April 18**  
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.  
Community event with activities, vendors, and more  
Riverbrook Regional YMCA  
404 Danbury Road  
Wilton  
wiltonymca.org

### Want to feature an upcoming event?

E-mail us at [advertise@reddingsentinel.org](mailto:advertise@reddingsentinel.org) for more information.

## ARTS

### Thursday, March 19 – Monday, April 20

**Submissions open for Redding Land Trust Photography Show**  
Submit photos of Redding's open space for a chance to be showcased in juried show in June  
[reddingctlandtrust.org/photoshow](http://reddingctlandtrust.org/photoshow)  
\$, **R**

### Thursday, April 9

**The Easton School of Artists Opening Reception**  
4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.  
Easton Public Library  
6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Greiser's  
Celebrate works from 16 Easton artists  
Easton Public Library  
691 Morehouse Road  
Easton

### Thursday, April 9

**The Secret Lives of Artists Part II**  
7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.  
Meet a panel of celebrated artists living in our community  
Mark Twain Library  
439 Redding Road  
marktwinlibrary.org  
**R**

### Friday, April 10

**She Sings Dylan**  
8:00 p.m.  
Female-fronted take on Bob Dylan's catalog  
The Granite  
5 North Main Street  
[thegranitechurch.org/events](http://thegranitechurch.org/events)  
**R**

### Saturday, April 11

**Weavings, Wires, Roots, and Branches: Artist Talk**  
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
Kate Keeler discusses her current exhibition, intertwining nature, local history, visual arts, and music  
The Granite  
5 North Main Street  
[thegranitechurch.org/events](http://thegranitechurch.org/events)

### Sunday, April 11

**Lindsay Foote**  
8:00 p.m.  
Music blending folk and pop with a rock edge  
The Granite  
5 North Main Street  
[thegranitechurch.org/events](http://thegranitechurch.org/events)  
\$

### Sunday, April 12

**A Bird Came Down the Walk**  
3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Evening pairing poetry and music with violist Shane Barker  
The Granite  
5 North Main Street  
[thegranitechurch.org/events](http://thegranitechurch.org/events)  
\$

### Wednesday, April 15

**Bus Trip to NYC to See Wicked**  
9:00 a.m. Leave Redding  
Community Center  
2:00 p.m. Performance  
Meet at Redding Community Center  
37 Lonetown Road  
[ctreddingweb.myvscloud.com](http://ctreddingweb.myvscloud.com)  
\$, **R**

### Thursday, April 16

**Listen Up! Jazz Appreciation – Allen & Helen Hermes Art Series**  
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.  
Program with Greg Wall, aka the Jazz Rabbi  
Mark Twain Library  
439 Redding Road  
marktwinlibrary.org  
**R**

### Thursday, April 16

**National Poetry Month – with Ira Joe Fisher**  
7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.  
Hear selections from *The Birth of Snow*  
Mark Twain Library  
439 Redding Road  
marktwinlibrary.org  
**R**

## CHILDREN | TEENS

### Now through Wednesday, April 22

**Applications open for The 2026 Mary Clinton Scholarship**  
Redding high school seniors pursuing studies in a number of environmentally-related fields can apply for a \$2,000 award through Redding Garden Club  
[reddinggardenclub.org](http://reddinggardenclub.org)

### Sunday, April 12

**STEM Sunday (Grades K-4)**  
10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.  
Hands-on experiments and team projects  
New Pond Farm Education Center  
101 Marchant Road  
[newpondfarm.org](http://newpondfarm.org)  
\$, **R**

### Monday, April 13

**Cupcake Decorating**  
2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
For grades 5+, all supplies provided  
Mark Twain Library  
439 Redding Road  
marktwinlibrary.org  
**R**

### Sunday, April 19

**Take a Hike! (Grades 5-12)**  
1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.  
Outdoor adventure group  
New Pond Farm Education Center  
101 Marchant Road  
[newpondfarm.org](http://newpondfarm.org)  
\$, **R**

## FOOD | WINE

### Thursday, April 23

**A Wine & Spirits Showcase**  
5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.  
Presented by Redding Wine & Spirits and Redding Country Club, enjoy 80+ wines and spirits and light bites  
Redding Country Club  
109 Lonetown Road  
E-mail [frank@reddingwineandspirits.com](mailto:frank@reddingwineandspirits.com)  
\$, **R**

### Saturday, May 2

**Tickets on sale now: Troop 15 Spaghetti Dinner**  
5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.  
West Redding Firehouse  
306 Umpawaug Road  
[reddingtroop15.org](http://reddingtroop15.org)  
\$

## HEALTH | WELLNESS

### Saturday, April 18

**Healthy Kids Day**  
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.  
Community event with activities, vendors, and more  
Riverbrook Regional YMCA  
404 Danbury Road  
Wilton  
wiltonymca.org

## NATURE

### Tuesday, April 14

**Mapping Redding's Big Outdoors: The Book of Trails, Updated**  
7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.  
Explore the first new print edition by Redding Land Trust charting open space and trails in 21 years  
Mark Twain Library  
439 Redding Road  
marktwinlibrary.org  
**R**

### Friday, April 17

**April Astronomy**  
8:45 p.m. – 9:45 p.m.  
Family program with volunteer astronomers  
New Pond Farm Education Center  
101 Marchant Road  
[newpondfarm.org](http://newpondfarm.org)  
\$, **R**

### Saturday, April 18

**Community Hiking Club: Poliak Preserve**  
11:00 a.m.  
Visit a beaver lodge on this hike led by Kevin Tschudi  
Registration closes April 16  
Poliak Preserve  
[reddingctlandtrust.org/hikingclub](http://reddingctlandtrust.org/hikingclub)  
**R**

## SPECIAL PROGRAMS

### Mondays – Fridays

**The Breakfast Club**  
7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.  
Ongoing Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, every weekday  
Christ Church Episcopal  
184 Cross Highway

### Wednesdays

**Progress Not Perfection**  
6:00 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.  
Weekly AI-Anon meeting for family and friends of alcoholics  
St. Patrick's Church / Conlisk Hall  
169 Black Rock Turnpike

### Friday, April 10 – Saturday, April 11

**The Given Inn – Soft Opening**  
9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.  
Stop by for a treat, community connections, and get to know Georgetown's newest café  
The Given Inn  
4 Old Mill Road  
[thegiveninn.com](http://thegiveninn.com)

### Friday, April 10

**Brevi Bag Workshop**  
6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.  
Wine, antipasti, and ritual as participants create folk Italian protection amulets  
The Georgetown Collective  
28 Main Street, A  
[georgetowncollective.org/events](http://georgetowncollective.org/events)  
\$, **R**

### Thursday, April 23

**Let Your Groove Bloom: Dance Party**  
4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
First annual spring dance party, live music, light bites, BYOB  
Ages 35+  
Redding Community Center  
37 Lonetown Road  
E-mail [studio06896@gmail.com](mailto:studio06896@gmail.com)  
**R**

## RELIGIOUS SERVICES

**Bethlehem Lutheran Church**  
Sundays at 10:00 a.m.  
44 Portland Avenue  
[bethlehemlutheranct.org](http://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](http://cibcredding.org)

**Christ Church, Episcopal**  
Sundays at 9:00 a.m.  
184 Cross Highway  
[christchurchredding.org](http://christchurchredding.org)

**First Church of Christ, Congregational**  
Sundays at 10:00 a.m.  
25 Cross Highway  
[firstchurchredding.org](http://firstchurchredding.org)

**Long Ridge United Methodist**  
Sundays at 11:30 a.m.  
201 Long Ridge Road  
Danbury  
[longridgeumc.com](http://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](http://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**  
Shabbat at Meadow Ridge  
5:00 p.m.  
100 Redding Road  
[templebnaichaim.org](http://templebnaichaim.org)

## MEETINGS

### Thursday, April 9

**Redding Historic Cemetery Committee**  
2:00 p.m.  
Town Hall / Conference Room  
100 Hill Road

### Thursday, April 9

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

### Thursday, April 9

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

### Monday, April 13

**League of Women Voters**  
4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.  
Town Hall / Conference Room  
100 Hill Road

### Tuesday, April 14

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

### Tuesday, April 14

**Redding Fire District 1**  
7:00 p.m.  
186 Black Rock Turnpike

### Wednesday, April 15

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

### Thursday, April 16

**Democratic Town Committee**  
7:00 p.m.  
Town Hall / Hearing Room  
100 Hill Road

### Monday, April 20

**Park and Recreation Commission**  
6:00 p.m.  
Redding Community Center  
37 Lonetown Road

### Monday, April 20

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

### Tuesday, April 21

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

### Wednesday, April 22

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

### Thursday, April 23

**Annual Town Budget Meeting**  
3:00 p.m.  
Town Hall / Hearing Room  
100 Hill Road

### Friday, April 24

**Region 9 BoE Select Committee on Academic Rigor, Standards, and Grading**  
8:30 a.m.  
Joel Barlow High School / Room A108  
100 Black Rock Turnpike

### Friday, April 27

**OPEB Trust Board**  
6:00 p.m.  
Virtual

\*See meeting agendas and minutes at [reddingct.gov/agendas-minutes](http://reddingct.gov/agendas-minutes)



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1 & 2. Based on information from Greenwich Association of REALTORS and SmartMLS sold by date range 03/01/2025-02/28/2026. Source data is deemed reliable but not guaranteed. 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. All listed 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 franchised 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.

