

REDDING SENTINEL

MARCH 28, 2024

REDDING, CONNECTICUT

Volume 2 / Issue 39

\$3

New Pond Farm revises restoration plan, hopes to begin work in June

By Rob Sample

New Pond Farm Education Center aims to pursue a simplified plan to restore its namesake pond – incurring fewer necessary reviews and approvals before beginning the project in advance of the Town’s June 30 deadline for ARPA-funded projects by non-profit organizations.

“We’ve been able to streamline our plan quite a bit,” noted Ann Taylor, Executive Director of New Pond Farm. The pond-restoration project received a \$200,000 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant in 2022. The project will restore the pond’s shoreline and create a new wetland area on the pond’s northwest side, including vernal pools.

This will create a rich habitat for wildlife. The project will also deepen the pond via dredging. The revised plan has the same goals but involves simpler processes than originally proposed, Taylor noted.

“There was a great deal of permitting involved in our original plan,” said Taylor. “So much so, that the permitting process has taken all this time [since the ARPA award was announced]. The revised plan still fulfills our ultimate goal: to improve our habitats for wildlife at the pond.”

The restoration plan aims to correct a situation that dates back more than a decade, to damage wrought by Superstorm Sandy in 2012. The storm damaged the pond’s banks and destroyed a nearby stand of large evergreens. The trees had provided shade for a marsh adjacent to the pond, providing an excellent habitat for wildlife – particularly amphibians. The plan calls for the creation of a brand-new wetland area and measures to prevent future flooding and erosion.

Under the previous plan design, New Pond Farm required permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; the State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), for water diversion; and from the Town’s Conservation Commission. The project also had to be okayed by the state’s Fisheries Division, which is part of DEEP.

“The revised design eliminates the need for approval from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,” noted Thomas Ryder, a Senior Ecologist for LANDTECH, the Westport firm providing engineering consultation for the project. The plan has also been divided in two, partly to help streamline the approval process. As part of that,

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Photo by Debora DeCarlo Rosa

Caraluzzi's prepares for Easter and the first weeks of spring gardening with bright colors and cheery blooms. If you have a photo you'd like to see featured here, with credit of course, please e-mail editor@reddingsentinel.org

Several ARPA projects now underway

By Jessie Wright

At the Monday, March 18 Board of Selectmen meeting, the Selectmen reviewed updates from several projects at local non-profits that have received American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant allocations. The deadline is approaching for these projects to utilize the funds, according to Jim Sanders, as the formal agreements between the Town and the organizations when awarding the grants included a grant termination date of June 30, 2024.

The Mark Twain Library has now broken ground on their outdoor patio and gathering space project, with construction beginning on Monday, March 18. The Library received a \$200,000 ARPA grant toward the project, with matching funds provided by their endowment fund.

The Redding Historical Society anticipates restoration work on the Zalmon Read Barn to begin within

the next three weeks. A deposit has been put down for the construction contract, and they are waiting for materials to arrive. The Barn, a historic structure now located at 43 Lonetown Road, is in need of repairs, and the Redding Historical Society received a \$40,000 ARPA grant towards that work. They are planning additional fundraising efforts to raise the rest of the funding needed for the project.

New Pond Farm Education Center received a \$200,000 ARPA grant for wetlands and pond restoration at its namesake waterway. Sanders and First Selectwoman Julia Pemberton recently met with New Pond Farm Executive Director Ann Taylor, members of the Board of Directors, and a representative from LANDTECH, the environmental engineering firm advising on the project, to talk through the status of the work.

“Really what we were trying to get a sense of were the various phases of the project,” Sanders said at the Board of Selectmen meeting. “What the timelines were, in terms of securing approval from CT DEEP as well as the Army Corps of Engineers, and how we could establish a firmer timeline and set milestones so we are better able to judge where the project will stand at June 30.”

“Their project is the most daunting,” added Pemberton. “It’s very technical. But as they’ve said, they have to do this project... without this environment, it ceases to be what it was.”

Sanders added that leaders at New Pond Farm had indicated they may simplify the original plans as they develop these timelines and attend the next Board of Selectmen meeting to present on those plans and benchmarks. ■

REDDING'S BIG OUTDOORS

These lands are your lands

By Cole Tucker-Walton



Photo by Cole Tucker-Walton

Spring in Connecticut takes its time. On Facebook, the plant identification groups are filling up with blossoms from Virginia; down in New Orleans, Graham

tells me everything is green, green, green; Redding’s Big Outdoors is...determinedly beige.

Spring takes its time, but it’s on its way. The red maples and American elms have already been dotting the sky with vibrant red for more than a week. Dappled leaves of trout lily have poked up, singly, through the leaves along Robin’s Trail; new twigs of poison ivy have stood up from the ground like watchful cobras. Every day, the flower buds on spicebush twigs become a little bigger, a little more electric, like yellow Nerds candies. Where there had been only the mottled spathes of skunk cabbage, there is suddenly a bright green head of leaves. I saw a tiny bee today.

These are the changes that

have signaled spring on this coast for thousands of years since the glaciers receded, and for millions of years before they formed. Currently, just over 1,800 plant species native to the region live in Connecticut; another thousand species grow in the wild but arrived from other corners of the continent or globe in the past four or five hundred years. Nearly a fifth of the native plant species have vulnerably small populations or only nine or fewer occurrences in the state.

Not that the early spring signs I’ve been seeing are threatened – red maples and trout lilies are prolific, and happy. American elms have been famously tortured for a century by Asian and

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Town, school boards present budgets at public hearing

By Rocco Valluzzo

All proposing increases of under 4%, the Boards of Education of Redding and Region 9 and the Board of Selectmen submitted their budgets for the 2024-25 fiscal year at the Board of Finance’s public hearing on Wednesday, March 20.

Each took into account rising costs in health care, utilities, and other factors while trying to keep increases as low as possible.

Redding Board of Education

Totaling \$25,453,622, the Redding Board of Education’s budget represented an increase of \$884,094 (3.6%). This was below the 5.8% average increase for other District Economic Reference Groups. Easton’s proposed increase is currently at 4.9%.

“The budget increases in our region are very high,” said Board Chair Laura Worosz. “One thing that has been really important to our Board is finding the right balance between a quality budget and maintaining fiscal awareness for the Town and community members as well.”

According to Superintendent Jason McKinnon, the increase is being driven by four major factors. Medical insurance costs rose 5% (\$149,967) to \$3,149,309 and certified staff salaries rose 4.8% (\$472,717) to \$11,753,228. Non-certified staff saw a 6.2% (\$215,511) increase to \$3,519,385 and transportation costs rose 5.9% (\$71,336) to \$1,279,913.

McKinnon also noted the district is in the process of extending its bus contract with First Student at a substantial savings in comparison with other transportation companies. Bids from others providers averaged 17% to 18% higher.

“For the past five years, we had an incredible bus contract with First Student,” said McKinnon. “The contract was expertly negotiated by the Board of Ed two years before Covid. Fuel prices have gone up, the cost of labor has gone up, and the cost of leasing transportation has definitely increased as well.”

Helping the Board offset rising costs are title grants. Redding has received more than \$65,000 for fiscal year 2024-25 for para-professionals, professional learning for instructional leaders, materials to support multilingual learners, instructional supplies, and health and safety supplies. In addition, it expects to receive \$92,000 to offset the salaries of special education teachers.

Besides district-wide costs (health insurance, transportation,

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EDITORIAL

The job of a lifetime

By Jessie Wright

There is a video that circulates online every year or so of a prank job interview. Hopeful candidates join a video call while a hiring manager explains the (increasingly ridiculous) requirements of an open “Director of Operations” role – “this job requires you to work on your feet virtually all the time... 135 to unlimited hours a week...there are no breaks available... requires excellent negotiation and interpersonal skills... we’re looking for someone that has a degree in medicine, in finance, and the culinary arts.” The kicker is that compensation is nothing – this job is pro bono.

While it might seem crazy to take that job, my husband and I have signed on – like millions do every year – to do it. In the next week or so, we’ll be welcoming our second child and continuing our “Director of Operations” roles as parents.

To focus on all that comes with this role, I will be taking some time away from my other job, Managing Editor of the *Sentinel*. Trading weekly deadlines and interviews for nightly wakings and feedings, I am grateful for the opportunity to focus on getting to know Redding’s newest little resident.

News never sleeps – and I won’t be doing much of that either – so the paper will be in excellent hands with our interim editor, Jeanne Ammermuller, and the team of dedicated people who make the *Sentinel* happen every week. I look forward to returning in July, and in the meantime, seeing many of our readers around town enjoying all that spring in Redding has to offer. ■

Our interim editor needs no introduction

Jeanne Ammermuller to return to the Sentinel | By Susan Clark

You’ll read in this week’s editorial that our Managing Editor, Jessie Wright, will be away from our virtual office for a few months for the very best of reasons.

Stepping in for Jessie during her three-month maternity leave is Jeanne Driscoll Ammermuller. Jeanne grew up in Redding, the seventh of eight children born to Peter and Lois Driscoll. Long-time Redding residents will remember the J.C. Driscoll Insurance Agency in the building where Black Cat Grille is now, and across the way in the now TD Bank building, the Driscoll Real Estate office.

Jeanne and her husband Ralph Braun moved back to Redding in 2014 and lived here until December 2023 when she left her role as Strategic Communications Di-

rector of Highstead and moved to Pennsylvania to be closer to her children. During those years in Redding, Jeanne founded the Redding Hikers Facebook group, was a member of the Redding Land Trust Board of Trustees, and was instrumental in the launch of the *Sentinel*, including inaugurating our Redding’s Big Outdoors column. We were fortunate to have her write for the *Sentinel* throughout her recent years in Redding.

A writer, editor, and communications strategist by profession, Jeanne has kindly agreed to take on the editorship of the *Sentinel* beginning with our next issue, continuing through June. She can be reached at editor@reddingsentinel.org.

Welcome home, Jeanne! ■

LEGAL NOTICES

Notice to Taxpayers and Legal Voters of Redding Fire District No. 1.

The annual budget meeting will be held April 1, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. at the Redding Ridge Firehouse 186 Blackrock Turnpike, Redding for the purpose of:

1) Adopting a budget of \$1,427,045 with \$1,308,045 raised by taxes for the fiscal year July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025.

2) Adopting a mill rate of 1.586
3) Approve a Capital Reserve spending plan totaling \$1,000,000. ■

Bennett Pardee
Phyllis Magnussen
David Hermenze
Commissioners

Dated March 19, 2024
William Pardee, Secretary

At a meeting of the Redding Conservation Commission on 3/19/2024, the following actions were voted:

App’l #24-02, Michael Lucchesi (owner), Michael J. Mazzucco (agent), 25 Starrs Ridge Rd. Approved with conditions an application to construct a single-family dwelling, well, septic, driveway, stormwater management system, and equestrian program. Construction materials, supplies, containers, etc. are currently stored within the regulated area.

App’l #24-03, Chelsea Harcken (owner), K. Mercado/R. Delco, Lang Pools (agent), 5 Sunset Hill Rd. Approved with conditions an application for an inground swimming pool within the regulated area.

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

David R. Pattee
Chairman

WARNING - NOTICE OF ANNUAL TOWN BUDGET MEETING

The Legal Voters in the Town of Redding, CT and those entitled to vote therein are hereby warned and notified to meet at the Annual Town Budget Meeting to be held in the Hearing Room of Town Hall in Redding, CT on Wednesday, April 24, 2024 at 3:00 p.m., for the following purpose:

1. To set the date and time for the Annual Town Budget Referendum for fiscal year July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025. Pursuant to the provisions of CGS 7-7 amended by Public Act 81-228, the Board of Selectmen voted at its meeting duly warned and held

on March 18, 2024, to remove the 2024-25 budget vote and any capital expenditure requests from the call of said meeting and send to a machine vote.

To do any and all things legal and necessary to accomplish the above-named purpose and take any other action that may legally and properly come before the meeting.

DATED at Redding, Connecticut this 18th day of March 2024. ■

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

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

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

To the Editor,

How wonderful! The epic recounting of the Hudson River trip from Lake Tear to the Atlantic Ocean at New York City in the March 21 issue... I was just as riveted as I once was in reading in the New York Times of an expedition to the source of the Mekong River a few years ago.

While the Mekong served up an account of being surrounded by lightning strikes and yellow wolves in the night, the Hudson delivered its legendary wild weather and echoing mountain howls along with dangerous topography. Even with bicycles and choices among vessels, it seemed to me a huge undertaking. Important information on micro plastics in our water – that, too.

I love rivers. Thank you. ■

Lisa McCann
Redding Ridge

Fire District No. 1 sets budget meeting for April 1 District taxes proposed to increase 16.2%

By Jessie Wright

Fire District No. 1, which owns and operates the firehouses in Redding Ridge and Redding Center, has finalized its proposed budget numbers for the 2024-25 fiscal year, which represent a 15.18% increase in expenses and 16.2% in tax revenue over the current fiscal year.

The annual budget includes funding for the district’s daytime paid EMS ambulance service, the maintenance of the two firehouses, the maintenance and operation of the district’s ambulance and fire trucks, equipment required for operations, and the district’s insurance and administrative expenses. According to communications

from the district, the budget also includes capital fund set-asides for scheduled emergency vehicle replacement, other capital projects, and future construction of a new Redding Ridge Firehouse on Black Rock Turnpike.

The proposed increase for fiscal year 2024-25 is due in large part to a \$150,000 addition to the capital reserve fund line item earmarked to fund the replacement of the Redding Ridge Firehouse, bringing that line item to \$600,000. This is likely the last fiscal year for several years with such a significant jump in taxation. The district initially added the capital reserve fund line item

in fiscal year 2022-23 at a level of \$300,000, and voters approved an increase at last year’s budget meeting to \$450,000 for the 2023-24 fiscal year. The district indicated at that time that an additional \$150,000 would be added in fiscal year 2024-25 to bring the level to \$600,000, after which the district would maintain that level of taxation for the following five years.

The annual budget meeting for Fire District No. 1 voters will be held on Monday, April 1 at 7:00 p.m. at the Redding Ridge Firehouse at 186 Black Rock Turnpike. ■

Annual Speak Up to be held April 3 by Redding League of Women Voters

By Kim O’Rielly

Do you have questions about the town budget, the budgeting process, the Gilbert & Bennett Wire Mill Development, schools, road safety and maintenance, schools, playgrounds, services for citizens at risk, or other matters of concern? There’s an opportunity to learn about these and other issues at The Redding League of Women Voters’ Sixth *Speak Up* on Wednesday, April 3 from 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. at the Redding Community Center at 37 Lone-town Road.

Speak Up offers townspeople an opportunity to ask questions of and/or voice their concerns to the panel of elected officials and town employees present. *Speak Up*’s format is in keeping with the

League’s non-partisan mission to encourage informed and active participation of citizens in government. In the style of a New England town meeting, *Speak Up* is designed to encourage all townspeople to attend, whether to voice concerns or benefit from a unique opportunity to get to know our town officials and learn about how our town works.

The following officials are confirmed to be present at this year’s *Speak Up*: First Selectwoman Julia Pemberton, Chief of Police Mark O’Donnell, Board of Finance Chair Ward Mazzucco, Assistant Superintendent of Schools Dr. Stephanie Pierson Ugol, Director of Human Services Angelica Fontanez, and Park and

Recreation Commission Co-chairs Angela Caes and Tami O’Connor, with others expected as the date draws closer.

The Redding League of Women Voters is an entirely volunteer-run organization. The April 3 *Speak Up* will be moderated by former LWV Board Member, Colleen Joyce.

Please mark your calendars for April 3 at 7:00 p.m. and plan to attend. Come prepared with your questions, concerns, and a listening ear. ■

For more information,
e-mail Kim O’Rielly at
ReddingDebate@gmail.com

LEGAL NOTICE

Redding Fire District No. 2 / 306 Umpawaug Road / Redding, Connecticut

Commissioner’s Meeting- Special Budget Review Meeting.

Notice is hereby given to the taxpayers in Redding Fire District No. 2 that the Commissioners Meeting-special budget review will take place on Saturday April 6th 2024 at 9 am- 12 pm at the West Redding Firehouse on 306 Umpawaug Road in West Redding, Connecticut. The following issues will be discussed and/or voted on:

1. Final Budget Review.
April 6th, 2024
West Redding, Connecticut ■

District #2 Secretary
Alisha Durgin

Redding Sentinel Ltd
News and Views of Redding, Connecticut

Publisher, Susan Clark
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Single copy price \$3.00 / Annual subscription \$85.00

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Printed by Trumbull Printing
Telecommunications by CCi Voice
www.reddingsentinel.org
203.938.3800

Contact us at:
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Replacement plantings installed where Eversource mistakenly removed trees

By Donna Christopher



Photo by Jessie Wright

Replacement plantings were installed last week where trees were mistakenly removed last year as part of Eversource's Resiliency Program along Cross Highway.

The Redding Tree Conservancy notified the Sentinel and contacted officials to confirm an agreed-upon remediation plan approved by the Planning Commission in

November was followed, and it was.

Town trees were mistakenly removed at two locations on Cross Highway, including four black locusts that were not part of the utility's approved application for alteration of a scenic road as part of its Resiliency Program at the intersection of Cross Highway and Hill Road.

Planning Commission member Regina O'Brien confirmed, "The plants requested by the Planning Commission were indeed planted as agreed upon."

The replacements installed on Wednesday, March 20 were:

- 1 *Nyssa sylvatica*/Blackgum
- 3 *Cornus florida*/Flowering Dogwood
- 3 *Hamamelis virginiana*/Witch-hazel
- 3 *Amelanchier canadensis*/Shadblow

"Sam Berg (Eversource arborist) also supplied some addi-

tional plants - several *Cornus sericea*/Red-twig Dogwood - that was not on our list but are very nice to have," O'Brien added.

The utility confirmed to the Sentinel that their contractors were on Cross Highway planting trees and shrubs with supervision.

O'Brien and Berg met a day before the work to review the proposed planting. The Highway Department will water, with the water truck, the new plants once they are beyond dormancy.

First Selectwoman Julia Pemberton and Redding Tree Warden Charlie Hyatt were notified that the work would take place, and Hyatt met with O'Brien on the site to verify the planting plan, according to an exchange with The Redding Tree Conservancy. "The sight of the stone walls cleared of invasive vines is a beautiful improvement, and the plantings will be done per the plan," Pemberton said. ■

Acting fast can help save a life

Training on overdose medication Narcan to be held at Mark Twain Library

By Donna Christopher

Naloxone, or Narcan, will be available to participants along with the training on how to administer the life-saving medication on Tuesday, April 9 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Mark Twain Library.

Narcan is a medication that may reverse an overdose from opioids such as heroin, OxyContin, Vicodin, and fentanyl. Ellie Hayden, a community outreach worker and Narcan trainer at Apex Community Care in Danbury, will head the program, which is open to the public.

Apex Community Care is a non-profit, formerly the AIDS Project of Danbury, serving Western Connecticut since the AIDS crisis in the mid-1980s. With medical advances and the support of organizations like Apex, HIV/AIDS has become a more manageable disease. In addition to a commitment to prevent HIV and to provide ongoing services to the community, Apex has expanded its scope to serve individuals living with substance abuse and mental illness.

Everybody should carry Narcan and know how to use it to potentially save a life, said Hayden. The program at Mark Twain Library will provide the public with knowledge on when and how to use the drug in an emergency.

Participants will learn the signs and symptoms of an opioid overdose, how to assess a person's level of responsiveness, and if necessary, how to deliver a life-saving dose of naloxone.

It is important for anyone to have Narcan available in households with children, where friends and other people visit, and in one's possession for use in emergent situations, such as at work.

"You just simply do not know where you go throughout the day or who you can run into who could

have an overdose and need assistance. Having Narcan on you can help save a life before first responders get there," Hayden said.

Acting fast can save a life when someone overdoses on a drug.

"As we all know, an overdose is when there is too much of a drug in one's system and the body cannot register it, so time is a major concern. Therefore, the more people who have Narcan on them, the better in case a situation occurs," Hayden explained. "In a situation like this, if someone had Narcan on them, they can act fast until first responders come. Waiting too long can risk a life, which is why our Narcan Training and distribution service is so crucial for the community."

The training will help participants feel confident, comfortable, and better educated on spotting an overdose, what to do, and what course of action to take.

Participants will leave knowing how to "spot the signs and symptoms of what an overdose looks like, how to handle it, how to use the Narcan on the individual as well as the precautions and safety that go with it," Hayden said.

The step-by-step instructions will cover the medication, the body, and information about an overdose.

Hayden noted that people taking prescribed opioids are as much at risk as someone who is not, because they can still take too much of their medication. Statistics are high for addiction among people on prescription opioids.

Hayden suggests everyone be better prepared rather than be in a "what if" situation.

"Drug use is everywhere even in the quietest, sleepy, nicer, more profitable towns. Maybe in certain towns people are not using (drugs) out in the open in parks or streets.

That just means they are more discreet about using it, using it in cars or homes. Drug use is everywhere, whether it is a high class town or working class. There is a stigma and stereotype that drug usage and overdoses are higher in lower-income towns, and that is not true," Hayden said.

Naloxone, also known as Narcan, is a prescription medication that is safe and easy to use, according to information on Connecticut's Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) website.

Naloxone is only effective on opioids (heroin, OxyContin, Vicodin, fentanyl, etc.), and "Persons given naloxone who have not overdosed on opioids will not be harmed," according to DMHAS.

"Persons dependent on opioids who are given naloxone will experience opioid withdrawal. In any overdose situation, 9-1-1 should be called and naloxone should be administered if opioids are involved or suspected to have been involved."

Doctors can give you a prescription for naloxone that can be filled at any Connecticut pharmacy. Any provider who can prescribe an opioid can prescribe naloxone. Pharmacists in Connecticut who have completed training to become certified can both prescribe and dispense naloxone.

DMHAS-funded Regional Behavioral Health Action Organizations (RBHAOs) can also provide training as well as naloxone. ■

To register for the April 9 training at Mark Twain Library, visit marktwainlibrary.org

Court offers accelerated rehabilitation in animal cruelty case

By Jessie Wright

A Redding property owner who is facing 65 charges of animal cruelty could have the charges dropped after Danbury Superior Court offered an accelerated rehabilitation program.

On March 10, 2021, a search and seizure warrant was executed at Nancy Burton's property at 147 Cross Highway, and the state seized 65 goats as part of the investigation (several of the goats were pregnant at time of seizure, bringing the total to over 90). Prior to March 10, 2021, the Redding Police Department had received over 120 complaints regarding the goats and violations of local ordinances, and the Department of Agriculture had received five complaints related to the animals' condition and lack of care.

Burton is facing 65 charges of animal cruelty, a criminal case which is pending through Danbury Superior Court. There is also a separate, ongoing civil case between Burton and the State of Connecticut over custody of the seized goats and those born after the seizure.

On March 12, 2024, Burton filed a motion to update record and sustain her appeal in the civil proceedings. The motion filing included information on the accelerated rehabilitation program that she said had been offered to her in the criminal case.

"On March 7, 2024, in the Danbury Superior Court, (GA3) Hon. Maximino Medina initiated an offer to Appellant herein whereby all pending criminal charges pertinent to this matter will be dismissed without further action 30 days hence (that is, on April 8, 2024), assuming fulfillment of three conditions... The Office of the State's Attorney did not object." Burton outlines later in the motion the three conditions for the dropping of criminal charges: avoiding arrest for 30 days, not owning or possessing any goats for 30 days, and not interfering with an animal control officer for 30 days.

"Given the extreme neglect and deplorable conditions of the goats previously removed from Ms. Burton's care, it is concerning and disappointing that she may once again be allowed to own goats," said Elizabeth Benton, Chief of Communications and Policy for the Office of the Attorney General. "It is important to note that the accelerated rehabilitation was granted in the criminal animal abuse case, which is separate from and

has no bearing on our civil case regarding custody of the more than 90 neglected and injured goats seized from Ms. Burton's Redding farm in 2021."

According to the Connecticut General Assembly resources, the Accelerated Rehabilitation program is "a pretrial diversion program for people accused of most crimes or motor vehicle violations. People accused of class A or B felonies, driving under the influence, and certain other serious offenses are not eligible. Those accused of a class C felony are only eligible for 'good cause.'"

News of the accelerated rehabilitation offer alarmed some neighbors and animal advocates. On Monday, March 18, public comment was heard regarding the situation at the Board of Selectmen meeting.

"In my personal opinion, shame on the prosecutor in Danbury, shame on the judge... I guess I would love to be able to carve out an area where there would be no shame on Redding, Connecticut," said one resident. "If the state is believing that it is somehow a wise move to let her have animals, why not try to preclude at least Redding from being part of it?"

The item was listed on the Selectmen's agenda that evening for Executive Session. "We take that issue very, very seriously," said First Selectwoman Julia Pemberton.

Zilla Cannamela, President and Co-Founder of Desmond's Army Animal Law Advocates, wrote the following to the Danbury State Attorney office. "Desmond's Army urges you to consider imposing court-ordered lifetime restrictions on Ms. Burton, including limitations on the number of animals she can possess and a mandatory neutering/alter order. Another suggestion is animal welfare checks done by animal control over a period of three to five years. These measures are not only appropriate but necessary to prevent future instances of animal cruelty and safeguard the well-being of both animals and the community."

The criminal case status is now listed as "awaiting disposition" on the Connecticut Judicial Branch online system, with the next activity date listed as April 8, 2024 at 146 White Street in Danbury.

Burton is not permitted to own animals while the case is ongoing. ■

The Heritage Center at the Redding Community Center

In addition to exercise classes, meditation, bridge, and a vibrant Current Events discussion group, did you know the Heritage Center also hosts foreign language classes and groups? Consider joining:

Italian on Mondays—a new Beginner class starts April 15th, from 3:00 – 4:00 pm

J'adore parler Français

Spanish on Thursday mornings at 10:00 and 11:00 am



Parli Italiano?

A no-cost French conversation group at 4:00 pm on Wednesdays

Yo Estoy aprendiendo español.

The Redding Community Center, 37 Lonetown Road, 203-938-9725, mpilato@townofreddingct.org
Scan the QR Code to sign up for our newsletter:



Georgetown art opening draws crowds



Photos courtesy of Bob Marty

On Sunday, March 17, dozens of art and music lovers gathered at Georgetown Arts & Cultural Center for the opening of its newest gallery show *SYNCPATION: Disrupting the Rhythm*, which features the works of 25 artists. The crowds spilled out onto Main Street under sunny skies while the Ralph LaLama All Star Quartet played live music and St. Patrick's Day refreshments were served to mark the occasion. To arrange a time to view the gallery show, e-mail GTownArts@gmail.com or call 917-608-3447.

Thank you to our advertisers

- Chipman Mazzucco Emerson LLC
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- The Heritage Center
- Mark Svanda Painting
- New Pond Farm Education Center
- Redding Land Trust

SPORTS

Falcons strive for league, state crowns

Boys volleyball season preview | By Rocco Valluzzo

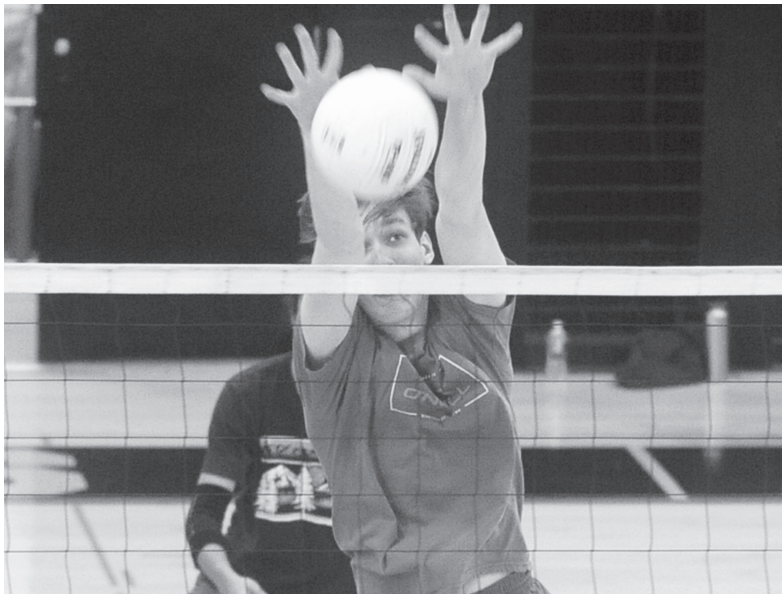


Photo by Rocco Valluzzo

Junior Erik Schmid goes up for a block during Joel Barlow High boys volleyball practice last week. The Falcons hope to reclaim league and state titles this season.

With the start of the 2024 season just around the corner, the Joel Barlow High boys varsity volleyball team should be in good shape to accomplish a couple of things in particular.

After coming up short a year ago, the Falcons hope to reclaim the South-West Conference championship. Taking back a state title is also high on the list.

“The goal is to put two banners on the wall, as it is kind of every year for us,” said Head Coach Kevin Marino. “I’m lucky that is always an achievable goal. The guys take that really seriously.”

Serving as Assistant Coach is Mark Ogilvie, former professional player and Director of the Northeast Volleyball Club in Norwalk.

“He brings a lot to the table,” said Marino. “We’re excited to have him.”

About 31 players turned out for the program this year, which has varsity and JV teams. Among those numbers are more than ten freshmen, who will make a big difference in a couple of years.

“We’re excited about it,” said Marino. “It’s nice to have kids who are eager to learn.”

This season, however, Barlow will count mainly on those coming back from last year’s varsity team. A year ago, the Falcons again advanced to the SWC championship but were dethroned by Pomperaug. They surrendered their state Class M crown after getting upset by New Canaan in the first round of the tournament, finishing at 20-3 overall.

A few key players have graduated since then, including former captains Ryan Schmid and Nick Collins. The former, a hitter,

missed a number of matches due to a back injury but was still named an All-SWC selection. The latter was a libero and was named to the All-SWC team as well. Barlow also graduated hitter Wade Eubanks.

Barlow will count on a number of returning players who saw varsity time a year ago. Three are senior captains Cameron Lynn (All-SWC second team), Grayson Vanderburg, and Alex Llach (All-State, All-SWC).

Lynn will be at setter and could also help as a hitter at the net. Vanderburg will be a libero, and Llach will be an outside hitter.

Also back is classmate Dan Parkin. From the junior class are hitters Mark Meschi (All-SWC second team) and James Pereira. Erik Schmid will be a setter and hitter and should be a big contributor on the varsity squad, according to Marino.

In order to achieve its goals, Barlow has to first get past some good competition. In the SWC, Marino expects Pomperaug to be good again, as well as Newtown and Masuk.

It will also be in Class L this year with these opponents, not to mention New Canaan as well. With the talent it has, Barlow’s chances are good.

“All these guys are the ones who had to play last year,” said Marino. “These guys are hungry.”

Barlow scrimmages New Canaan on Thursday, March 28 at home at 4:00 p.m. and officially opens the season on Saturday, March 30 at Danbury at 12:00 p.m. ■

Barlow hopes to be in the hunt Girls lacrosse season preview

By Rocco Valluzzo



Photo by Rocco Valluzzo

Freshman Caroline Lippoth looks for an open teammate during Joel Barlow High girls varsity lacrosse practice last week. The Falcons have many starters back from last year and expect to contend in the post season.

Building on its performance from last year will serve to inspire the Joel Barlow High girls varsity lacrosse team as it prepares to start the 2024 season.

While the Falcons qualified for both the South-West Conference playoffs as well as the state Class M tournament last year, they hope to go further in each this time around and contend for the championships as well.

“We played a lot of close-scoring, competitive games last season and we lost a handful of those games by one (goal),” said Barlow Head Coach Melissa Sportini. “We are focused this year on closing out our games.”

With 40 players in the program (19 on varsity), the Falcons have the numbers. Sportini also feels her team not only has the experience but also the leadership as well.

“We are returning a lot of our scoring power from last season, so I expect our offense to pick up where it left off,” said Sportini. “We also return three starting defenders.”

Finishing with a 10-8 record last season, the Falcons qualified for the SWC playoffs before losing to New Fairfield. They were later upset by Branford in the first round of the Class M tournament.

The Falcons graduated some key players since then, including All-State All-South-West Conference goalie Drew Ann Williams. Marin Kalamaras (All-state second team, All-Patriot Division)

is missing from the midfield, and Olivia Jones (All-Patriot honorable mention), who was on attack, has also graduated.

In addition, Barlow lost midfielder Allison Wick (All-SWC), who transferred to boarding school.

Fortunately for Barlow, it has a number of varsity players coming back. A slightly more mature team this year, it has seven seniors.

Four are captains Elyssa Kalamaras, Carmindy Herrman, Madi Stietzel, and Avery Santangeli. Kalamaras, who missed part of last season after getting sidelined due to a knee injury, will be back on attack. Herrman, Stietzel, and Santangeli will anchor the defense.

Barlow will have much experience on attack with seniors Savannah Herrman and Julia Champagne, both All-Patriot selections. The former led Barlow in points (goals and assists) last year, and the latter led in goals. Also on attack is Daniela Catterino.

The Falcons also have a number of athletic juniors who will fill key positions. These include midfielders Allie Ogden, Helena Zima, and Maggie Valenti, who could also play on defense.

Ruby Ludwig returns on attack and Ella Hotchkiss will take over for Marin Kalamaras on defense. Taking over for Williams in goal is Isabella Sgritta.

Barlow also has one freshman who will see varsity time. Caroline Lippoth will be in the midfield.

Once again, the SWC will feature a number of competitive teams, including defending champ Newtown, defending Class S champ Weston, New Fairfield, Pomperaug and Masuk. Come playoff time, Sportini expects her team to be right there along with them.

“I felt we under performed in the playoffs last year,” she said. “We are focused this season on staying the course and winning in the post-season.”

Barlow opens the season on Saturday, March 30 at Watertown at 10:00 a.m. ■



Pitching will be deep for Barlow

Baseball season preview | By Rocco Valluzzo



Photo by Rocco Valluzzo

Will Gregor fields a ball at first base during Joel Barlow High varsity baseball practice last week. With a deep pitching rotation, the Falcons should contend for league as well as state Class M titles.

Having a pitching rotation as deep as it has, the Joel Barlow High varsity baseball team should be a force to be reckoned with in the 2024 season.

On the mound, the Falcons will be about eight or nine deep. They also appear to be solid on defense as well as offense.

“From a pitching staff perspective, we’re extremely deep, both in numbers and quality, so we’re set up really well for tournaments,” said Head Coach Matt Griffiths, now in his eighth season with the team. “Of course, we have to get there first.”

As far as numbers are concerned, the Falcons have 35 players in the program, which includes varsity and JV teams. They will be an experienced group, with 11 seniors, many of whom saw playing time last season and were a big part of Barlow’s success.

“Numbers are healthy,” said Griffiths. “More importantly, we have quality over quantity.”

Posting a 19-7 record, the Falcons won their first South-West Conference championship and their first league title in 31 years last year. The defending state Class M champs, they reached the quarterfinals but lost to New Fairfield.

Barlow graduated a number of key players from last season, including Will Scott, Charlie Basta, Braeden Kurtz, Will Iuzzolino, and Carter Jarvis. An All-SWC selection as an outfielder, Scott was also part of the Falcons’ pitching rotation.

Basta saw time in the outfield, as did Kurtz. Iuzzolino was an infielder and Jarvis played first base.

Having a large senior class, the Falcons also return many of their starting players from last season, including their number one and

two starting pitchers, Christian Nilsen and Ian Nilsen. The former, an All-SWC selection, also played first base, and the latter (All-Colonial Division) will also be in the outfield.

Lachlan Ellis will also start on the mound for the Falcons. Lucas Asanovic is Barlow’s closing pitcher and can also play the infield.

Back at shortstop is Cameron Forte (All-Patriot honorable mention). Also back are infielders Noah Capetanakis and Charlie Gettings; infielder/outfielder Liam Kelly; and pitchers Charles Kennedy, Kyle Dobbins, and Aidan Simonson.

“We’re heavy on seniors, but we do have a solid core of underclassmen as well,” said Griffiths. “It’s probably the most solid senior class we’ve ever had.”

Anchoring the junior class will be catcher Bill Bardani. T.J. Baer (All-Colonial Division) will be in the outfield and can also pitch. Will Gregor is a possible first baseman, and Logan Kady is a second baseman. Other juniors include Conner Thomas and Dan Smith.

“We return a lot of our starting core from last year,” said Griffiths. “We’ve got some new additions that will fill in nicely.”

As far as the competition is concerned, Griffiths expects the SWC to be solid again this season. Brookfield, which Barlow defeated for the league championship, should be strong this season, as should New Fairfield and Bethel in particular.

“I think our offense is solid top to bottom,” said Griffiths. “We know we’re going to pitch and play defense. If we figure out how to get a few runs across, I think we’re going to be in really good shape.”

Barlow opens the season on Monday, April 1 at Ridgefield at 4:00 p.m. ■

Park and Rec considers future of community ice rink

By Jessie Wright



Photo by Jessie Wright

After the second winter season in a row where the ice rink at Redding Community Center was open for fewer than five days due to warm weather conditions, the Park and Recreation Commission discussed the future of continuing the offering at its Monday, March 4 meeting.

While there are alternative surfaces available that do not

require extended periods of freezing temperatures to be skateable, the costs are considerable. Members of the Commission agreed to do research on alternatives and explore what other towns may be doing in the face of warming winters.

No decisions were made on the future of the ice rink. ■

Region 9 Board of Education meets to discuss and vote on a variety of topics

By Anne Young Albanese

On March 19, the Region 9 Board of Education met for its first regular meeting after accepting its 2024-25 annual budget. The board had several things to discuss regarding the district.

Student events and accomplishments

The meeting kicked off with Joel Barlow High School (JBHS) junior Owen Fellows giving a report on important student happenings. A JBHS student recently placed third at a statewide poetry competition, and six JBHS students have been accepted to the Connecticut Music Educators Association All-State Festival which will take place in April. Two seniors who lead the JBHS Eco Club were regional winners of the 2024 annual recycling billboard contest. The grand prize winner will be presented on April 24. The winner will have their art featured on Connecticut public transportation buses across the state. In addition, the JBHS Robotics team received the Imagery Award at the New England District Waterbury competition.

The St. Baldricks annual head shaving event on March 18 raised \$17,707 dollars for the shaving of 39 participants from JBHS, John Read Middle School, and Helen Keller Middle School. Ten additional participants assisted with running the program. In the ten years that JBHS has participated, it has donated more than \$170,000 toward childhood cancer research.

JBHS students also took their first digital SATs on March 15. One benefit to this change is no longer needing to search for No. 2 pencils the night before the test. In addition, students can take the test at JBHS rather than having to go to a different school. Students were welcome to bring their own computers, while JBHS provided

computers for those who did not bring them.

Language courses and international trips

The Curriculum Committee recommended changes to some of Barlow's language classes. Advanced English 2 will become English 2 Honors. Spanish and French 4 advanced classes will also become honors classes. The workload will change to meet JBHS honors requirements as well as changing the classes' ratings. This recommendation was approved unanimously by the Board.

Teachers also asked the Board to approve two trips for the 2024-25 school year. The only costs to the District are for substitutes to cover the teachers traveling with the groups. The first is a four-day trip to Walt Disney World Resorts for choral and instrumental students. The students would miss only two days of school and would have the opportunity to participate in Disney teaching artist workshops and perform at Disney Springs. Students are held to professional standards during the trip. Disney considers the students as cast members rather than guests, and school trip students are expected to maintain Disney standards. The Board voted unanimously to support the Disney trip.

French teachers are also planning a trip to France during February break next school year. Students and chaperones would miss only one day of school. This trip will allow students to explore France while practicing their foreign language skills. The trip includes a stay in Paris as well as the opportunity to live with French families for a few days. The Board also provided unanimous support for the trip.

Utilities and busing

Mike D'Agostino, ER9 Facilities and Operations Manager

informed the Board that JBHS's electricity was down 106,000 KWHs from last year. Further into the meeting, he discussed the changes to the First Student transportation contract which will end on June 30, 2024. Changes will include charges for gas costs that cover the travel from the bus depot to the first bus stop. Drivers will also receive pay increases to bring salaries for ER9 bus drivers in line with other school districts. He noted that bus routes and vehicles have been decreasing since 2018 due to lower enrollment at all three ER9 schools. The new bus contract will cover the next five years. Parents can opt out of bus service which will lower the number of students taking the bus, although the number of students on buses has been increasing since Covid-19. The motion to accept the new bus contract passed with seven votes in favor and one opposed.

The Board also set a date for a public district hearing for the 2024-25 school operating budget for electors and citizens qualified to vote. This will be held on Monday, April 1 at 7:00 p.m. in the Library Learning Commons at JBHS, located at 100 Black Rock Turnpike.

The next regular Region 9 Board of Education meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 23 at 7:00 p.m. in the Library Learning Commons at JBHS. The public is welcome to attend and will have the opportunity to give public comment. ■

Music, food trucks, and fun coming this spring

Frog Frolic set for May 4 | By Lisa Goldstein



Photo by Brian Haeffele

On Saturday, May 4, the outdoor space in front of the Redding Community Center will be transformed into an all-day festival filled with live music from local bands, an array of food trucks, games and crafts, and bounce houses and a bubble garden for the littlest ones. The Annual Frog Frolic Festival, organized by and benefiting the Mark Twain Library, is in its 27th year as a mainstay that welcomes spring in the community by creating a place where people of all ages can come together in a relaxing setting.

"I love the atmosphere of the Frolic," said Meghan Huszagh, who is chairing the event this year. "I love that families can come and hang out, grab lunch at a variety of food trucks, and jam out to music! All while their kids eat too much cotton candy and play games and crafts galore!"

Originally created as a fundraiser with a focus on entertaining the younger residents in town, over the last few years, the Frog Frolic has expanded to attract those from all walks of life by adding live music and an assortment of food trucks as well as a beer tent and coffee offerings.

Fan favorites from last year's music line-up will be back this year, including the folk band Hitch and the Giddy Up and the Country/Americana group North County, plus original rock from the local high school student trio that make up VooDoo Dream. Two new additions for this year are Moonrise Cartel and the Joel Barlow High School A Capella Group.

Food truck offerings will include sweet treats from All Belgium waffle truck, paella from Redding's own Salas Foods, Polish cuisine from Colossal Kielbasa, and pizza from 900 Degrees Pizza Truck. In addition to food for purchase from the trucks, a concession stand and homemade cupcakes from the Redding Neighbors & Newcomers can be purchased, as well as caffeinated drinks from Redding-based Quartertone Coffee and beer and hard seltzers at the beer tent.

This year, the Frolic's planning committee hopes to attract the teen and tween demographic as well. "We really focused on the games this year," explained Huszagh. "We love the fair feel of the games and how timeless they are, so we worked hard to add onto that feel and elevate some of them to appeal to older kids. This year we have a few new games being added such as Tadpole Roll (skee ball)!"

The spirit behind the Frog Frolic is the much-loved short story by Mark Twain, The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County, which introduced the world to the author's signature witty voice. The first Frog Frolic was hatched to raise a few dollars for art supplies for children's story times and eventually grew to an event that adds considerable revenue to the Library's bottom line.

"The Frog Frolic Family Festival is special to the Mark Twain Library, because it lets kids join in on the fundraising fun by doing what they do best - being kids," added Mark Twain Library Director Erin Dummeyer. "And you may just see some adults getting in on the action as well."

Additional Frolic attractions include a robust Silent Auction open to all to bid online, plus a demonstration from students taught by local karate master Sensei June, who has been a regular at this event over the years.

Continued on page 9

REDDING LAND TRUST

Small Town, Big Outdoors.

Please join the Redding Land Trust for our Annual Meeting and Spring Gathering on Sunday, April 7, from 4:00 - 7:00 pm, at Highstead.

A brief open meeting, including the introduction of our newest Trustee, will be followed by a reception with drinks and appetizers. Come spend an evening with neighbors who share a love for open space, and learn what your land trust is doing to preserve Redding's natural beauty!

Space is limited; register today at ReddingLandTrust.org (or scan the QR code). Questions? info@reddinglandtrust.org

Join us outdoors...become a member today!

OBITUARIES

Carolyn Mary (Beach) Roche

August 2, 1951 – March 10, 2024



Carolyn Mary (Beach) Roche, age 72, of Redding passed away on Sunday, March 10, 2024, surrounded by family.

Carolyn was born August 2, 1951 in Danbury, daughter of the late Howard and Rosemary (Setaro) Beach. Carolyn's career choices followed her true calling as a caretaker starting off as a vet tech followed by a long career at Danbury Hospital, and finally as a group home manager with Ability Beyond for the past 20 years.

She put her heart and soul into every patient and their needs. Her consumers and work colleagues were not just a part of her career, they were family to her.

A most loved mom and nana, Carolyn spent all her free time with her family and close friends. Her main source of joy was to provide for her grandkids; whether it be through new school clothes, making sure ALL the Christmas gifts on their wish list were checked off, but mostly creating fun experiences for them. One of her favorite ways to spend time was hosting parties and bringing people together, always with a batch of homemade meatballs, a tray of lasagna, and her famous carrot cake. Carolyn was a huge animal lover, avid gardener, and she loved baking. She adored her Dunkin' Donuts coffee, holidays with the family, poker games with friends, and spoiling her grandkids.

The loss of Carolyn will be deeply felt by all who knew her. She'll be remembered for her sense of humor, the passion she had for her beliefs and her generous way of giving to anyone in need.

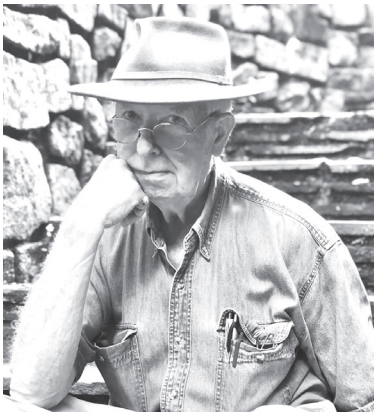
Carolyn is survived by her children: Eric Roche and his wife Sarah of Newnan, GA; Matthew Roche and his wife Jennifer of Bethel; Meggin Lundstrom and her husband Christer of Redding; her sister Susan Poirier of Chepachet, RI; and her eight grandchildren: Benjamin, Jackson, Madeline, Emily, Nathaniel, Cooper, Porter, and Emma.

Carolyn's family will host a celebration of life at the Cornell Memorial Home 247 White Street, Danbury on Sunday, April 14, 2024 from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Funeral services and burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to Ability Beyond. ■

George A. Konow

May 12, 1937 – March 13, 2024



George A. Konow, age 86, of Gloucester, VA, formerly of Redding, passed away peacefully on March 13, 2024. He was the son of the late Edward and Elsie Konow.

Born on May 12, 1937, and raised in Woodhaven, Queens, NY, George joined the US Navy as a young adult serving aboard the USS Valley Forge and the USS Intrepid where he trained to become a helicopter pilot, his life-long passion. After his naval career, he flew for New York Airways and

Unisys Corporation. In 1961, he married the first love of his life, Carol Scott, and they raised their two children in Redding. After Carol's passing in 2012, George was fortunate enough to connect with a childhood friend, Barbara Kiefer, and they wed in 2014; they enjoyed six happy years together until Barbara's death in 2020.

Known as 'Mr. Fix-It', George could repair or build just about anything. He was involved in his community, serving on various committees, including Scoutmaster of Boy Scout Troop 40 in Georgetown, Water Pollution Control Commission Chairman, member of the Redding 'Anti-Litter' Committee, and was a strong supporter of the Steichen Lake / Topstone Park project in the early 1970s. He volunteered at the USS Intrepid Museum, serving for a number of years as Chairman of the Flag Program for the Former Crewmember's Association. He was an avid antique car and model train enthusiast.

In addition to his wives, George was predeceased by a brother, Edward Konow. He leaves behind a son, Gary Konow, of Gloucester, VA; daughter Sharon Jennings (Brian) of Gloucester; a sister, Barbara Lepkowski of Long Island, NY; grandchildren Andrew Jennings (Emily) and Brittany Ammons (Kris); great-grandson Caleb Ammons; great-granddaughter Wren Jennings; stepchildren Jon Kiefer (Wendy), Georgia Gunter (Johnny), and Priscilla Hammond (Hank); and a host of other relatives whom he loved dearly.

You were a wonderful father and friend, dad, and we will miss you very much.

A private memorial service will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Riverside Walter Reed Hospice 7358 Main Street Gloucester, VA 23061. Andrews Funeral Home, Gloucester, assisted the family. ■

Dorothy Shapiro

March 9, 1934 – March 13, 2024

Dorothy Shapiro died peacefully in Redding on March 13, 2024, after having celebrated her 90th birthday surrounded by her loving family. She was born on March 9, 1934 at Coney Island Hospital in Brooklyn, NY to Russian immigrants, Elsie Freidlander and Samuel Arluck. She was the youngest of seven siblings.

On June 25, 1953, she married her great love and soulmate

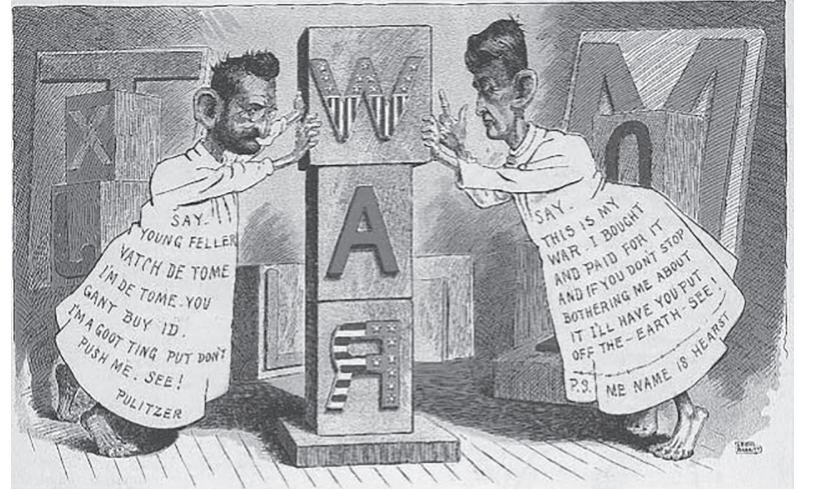
Howard, who predeceased her in 2007. They bore four children, Jay, Lawrence, Gail, and Daniel, who survive her. Dorothy, known as Dot, by some of the people who knew her best, was an intellectual with a love for linguistics. After rearing her children, she attended Brooklyn College, achieving a Masters Degree in Education. She went on to teach first grade in the New York City School system for 25 years.

In retirement, she took up painting, becoming a skilled and prolific artist producing watercolor and pastels. In her later years, she doted over 13 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. She was active in her retirement community, serving on the board of her cooperative building and supporting various senior programs. ■

OPINION

The only constant in life is change

The role of media in war and politics | By Robert E. Moran



Editorial cartoon by Leon Barritt, 1898

Newspaper publishers Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst dressed as the Yellow Kid as satire of their newspapers' role in drumming up U.S. public opinion to go to war with Spain.

Since the beginning of time, man's own perception of reality – and his distortions thereof – rules. Our tiny take on existence is but a dust mote in God's eye, something readily understood by Heraclitus, who in 500 BC stated, "The only constant in life is change." Ignore this wisdom at your peril.

In the 5th century B.C., *The Art of War*, an ancient Chinese military treatise, was written. In it, the roles of deception, how one views reality, and the importance of competency and situational awareness are explored as essential to defining success or failure.

- "All warfare is based on deception."
- "It is only one who is thoroughly acquainted with the evils of war who can thoroughly understand the profitable way of carrying it on."
- "He will win who knows when to fight and when not to fight."
- "If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle"
- "We are not fit to lead an army on the march unless we are familiar with the face of the country – its mountains and forests, its pitfalls and precipices, its marshes and swamps."

A look even farther back in history to 1275 BC and The Battle of Kadesh illustrates how different people can view the same event in very different ways, and in doing so, write history. The Battle of Kadesh, sometimes called the first world war, featured one of the largest-ever chariot battles. It was fought in 1275 BC in present-day Syria between the Egyptians under Pharaoh Ramses II and the Hittites under King Muwatalli II.

The battle ended in a draw; Ramses II loudly proclaims victory after barely escaping with his life, while Muwatalli II states his side won as they held onto Kadesh in spite of being attacked by the Egyptians. The warring parties then quietly sign a peace treaty. Subjectivity rules – every person views reality in his or her own way.

Taking this aspect of human nature and introducing the machine of media historically has been a dangerously transformative combination.

Wag the dog: Propaganda 101

The Spanish-American War (April–August 1898) is considered to be both a turning point in the history of propaganda and the beginning of the practice of yellow journalism, a term for journalism that presents little or no legitimate, well-researched news but uses eye-catching headlines for increased sales.

It was the first conflict in which military action was precipitated by media involvement. The war grew out of U.S. interest in a fight for revolution between the Spanish military and citizens of their Cuban colony. American newspapers fanned the flames of interest in the war by fabricating atrocities to justify intervention in a number of Spanish colonies worldwide.

Frederic Remington, an artist hired by Hearst to provide illus-

trations to accompany a series of articles on the Cuban Revolution, soon became bored with seemingly peaceful Cuba and wired Hearst in January 1897: "Everything is quiet. There is no trouble. There will be no war. I wish to return." To which Hearst's alleged reply was: "Please remain. You furnish the pictures and I'll furnish the war."

Selling the big lie

In 1928, Edwin Bernays, nephew of Sigmund Freud, writes *Propaganda*.

"The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses is an important element in democratic society. Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government which is the true ruling power of our country. We are governed, our minds are molded, our tastes formed, and our ideas suggested, largely by men we have never heard of.... It is they who pull the wires that control the public mind."

In 1933, Joseph Goebbels, channeling Bernays, creates the gospel of Nazism.

"Make the lie big, make it simple, keep saying it, and eventually they will believe it... National Socialism is a religion. All we lack is a religious genius capable of uprooting outmoded religious practices and putting new ones in their place. We lack traditions and ritual. One day soon, National Socialism will be the religion of all Germans."

In 1948, George Orwell writes *1984*

"Doublethink means the power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one's mind simultaneously, and accepting both of them... If you want to keep a secret, you must also hide it from yourself... It's a beautiful thing, the destruction of words."

If it bleeds, it leads

Prior to the death of John F. Kennedy, news on the tube as a money maker was a non-starter. After the tragedy, it became a goldmine. Shortly after Kennedy's assassination in Dallas on November 22, 1963, the TV networks demonstrated their sensitivity to the tragedy by canceling commercials and devoting all their airtime to the story for several days. CBS President Frank Stanton would later call it "the longest uninterrupted story in the history of television." At one point, 93% of all U.S. TVs were tuned into the coverage.

Estimates vary, but the networks' decision to forgo ads may have cost them as much as \$19 million – which is \$191 million in 2023 dollars. But no longer ...

Ultimately, the chaotic, cacophonous, and confusing decade of the 1960s would end up launching the hyper-commercial media world we live in today. Chasing sensational investigative stories, such as Watergate and the Iran-Contra arms-for-hostages scandal, would generate higher ratings and more advertising revenue, and turn broadcast journalists into national celebrities.

The original values animating

Continued on page 7

Tired of picking up your *Redding Sentinel* each week?



Photo by John Hichwa

Jill Hichwa delivering newspapers in Redding in 1982 with her Shetland pony, Sam.

Subscribers' issues are delivered right to their mailbox.

(these days via USPS and rarely by pony!)

Sign up at reddingsentinel.org/subscribe

HOUSES THAT MAKE REDDING SPECIAL

238 Black Rock Turnpike: A backdrop for soldiers, students, lovers, and family

By Geoffrey and Kate Gwin



Several years ago, I found myself navigating Route 58 for the first time, blissfully ignorant of the towns I sped through. My phone was my guide, navigating the shortest distance to a home that was for sale in Redding.

Black Rock Turnpike winds through quintessential New England countryside – follow it long enough and, eventually, it comes to a four-way stop in Redding. That corner is about as ordinary as any newbie New Englander could envision, but at that corner, you are at the heart of Redding's history.

At first glance, it is a simple corner with a church, a few old homes, a field, and a flagpole. Most North-bound travelers who pull up to that four-way stop look down an enticingly long straight road ahead, oblivious to any historical significance, only aware that they are closer to their destination, late, and in a hurry. All too few take their time, knowing they are driving through Redding Ridge, one of the highest and scenic ridges in the area. In my case, I was searching for and found the large white house right on the road. There it stood, concealed behind a hedge of weathered privet, a sizable Georgian home with three dormers. My initial reaction was awe. It was substantial, and it was seemingly mere feet from the main road. I wondered at the road's busyness, which now seems rather absurd since it was, indeed, busy, and always has been.

Over the course of five years, my wife and I gradually began to “see” the house we now call home. Often referred to as The Redding Ridge School, it has remained there steadfast, in many forms, for 245 years. Our experience has been the same with the Redding community – it took a while, but we saw it; a town and house that marches along at a fraction of the pace of life. Which brings me to my first theory of Redding: Based on my math, one day in our house is about a week according to world time. And that is how I now see

Redding. It is a place that changes at a glacial pace and consumes hordes of people through time.

A good starting point to consider this view is to start with the well-known story of some 2,600-strong British Redcoats traveling the same road I did to pause at that same four-way stop, probably lounging in what is now Karraker Field, or possibly on our property, whilst eating lunch. Since then, Benedict Arnold only a few hours later and countless travelers over the next two centuries have raced passed the church, field, and some have stopped at the house.

The house's history is both simple and intricate – a farmhouse, likely built around 1789 by Lemuel Hawley, was significantly expanded in the 19th century and later owned by a successful farmer and Irish immigrant Thomas Ryan. In 1906, it was acquired by Daniel Sanford, a renowned educator who revitalized his father's Redding Institute. A year later, Sanford expanded the building with two large additions to accommodate more students. Later, he added a gym (now the home on the corner). In the 1930s, it evolved into the Redding Ridge School and in the summer months, the Ridgewold Inn. It closed after the war, marking a half-century of bustling activity and lots of people passing through life.

Today, 238 Black Rock Turnpike sits quietly, and at first glance bears no witness to those it has hosted. If you were to walk into the north entrance, you would find numerous references to the house from the last century – renderings, maps, books, even old postcards depicting boarding school days or weekends at the Inn. From those images, some things have changed, but much has stayed the same. Now, the interior is traditional, furnished with Georgian style antiques, botanical prints, and chintz, a decor that echoes our Southern and English heritage. But at the turn of the century, you would have entered through a portico. The house had

shutters, five – not three – dormers, and to some adventurous nocturnal students, a back fire escape. Since the removal of those features, the house looks largely the same, except of course for the missing grand additions, the dormitory and eating hall. The property was subdivided in 1956 by a well-known architect and house mover. Those wings created two lovely homes now located on Church Hill Road.

The reason it has taken a long time to “see” the house is because of my second theory of Redding: If you stay long enough, the past will resurface. And that began to happen with us. Gradually the history unfolded, figures from the past appeared, and former residents made connections.

It started in the basement where parts of the foundation all looked different; wiring and pipes started from nowhere and ended after a few feet. These footprints filled in the gaps of the house's record, like the massive walk-in meat locker circa 1905 that served the likely insatiable appetites of young boys.

The grounds began to share a past too. After one particularly dry summer week, a square pattern emerged on the lawn as if the ghost of the Sanford School was rising from the yard. We realized that while they moved the dormitory section, they didn't take out the foundation; on long dry summer weeks, the grass above the buried foundations dies, leaving an outline of what once was. Deeper in the woods was even more evidence of hundreds of boys over many years playing baseball, camping, and taking out the garbage to an old well. They couldn't help themselves – they tossed and broke every discarded bottle, cup, and glass object likely against the well and an old car fender. Mysteries of the past in tiny pieces of glass seemed to slowly rise from the yard; they speak about active boys, many boys, nameless and lost to history who lived and experienced life on the Ridge. One particular prized

artifact that survived the breakage, a porcelain teacup largely unbroken with the crest of the Sanford school: of course, a seed throwing boy wandering in a field.

Untold number of boys and later girls passed through the school, as well as vacationers and honeymooners. We learned that a nine-year-old Cesar Romero took the stage in the school's 1916 production of *The Merchant of Venice*, a very early role before mastering the 1960s-era *Joker*. The list of people that have passed through this building is hard to believe – like *Liberace* – maybe? Maybe not. We have learned much thanks to the priceless collection of records kept at the Mark Twain Library, our own Town Historian, Bruce Nelson, and most recently from the Brownrigg family who owned the home from 1967 and remained through the end of the 20th century. Their daughter Ann visited and shared her memories of how cold the house could get and how her brothers, who were relegated to the top floor, lost plumbing to a frozen toilet. My wife and I got a taste of that existence during our first winter here and what General Putnam's troops likely experienced in the winter of 1778-9. New Marvin windows were a must after the first winter – we replaced as much corn cob insulation as we could.

Curiously though, Ann did remark how as a child she remembered the random visitor stopping unannounced with a familiar, “We just had to stop, I went to school here!” or “We honeymooned here when it was an Inn.” She told us that over the years, those visitors stopped coming, and with them, so many stories lost to time. Other stories did survive, like the smokey boozy bridge nights hosted in the “Red Room” (our front parlor) with melodies of the Boston Pops wafting from an old stereo over the Turnpike. These stories are like that lucky porcelain cup – somehow, they survived long odds, years in the dirt.

As those before us, we have replaced broken bits here and there, repainted and updated, but continue to maintain the integrity of the 1840s version of the house the best we can. Moving and restoring the circular driveway is next. We won't be putting back the original sidewalk along Route 58. Hard to believe there was a need for one.

For the grounds, we have focused mainly on the back side of the house, albeit much smaller than the 300 acres Thomas Ryan managed. We added a formal English greenhouse and potting shed which has brought us profound joy and transformed the three-acre landscape. Turns out, we have gardening in our blood.

Like many of the other stewards of this marvelous home, we've enjoyed what so many countless other Ridge dwellers have enjoyed even long before the house was there – a setting sun across Karraker Field. On clear late afternoons, the sun casts long shadows and great colored rays of light on the old white house. For our family, this is when inspiration happens, where impulsive, wonderful decisions are made. Like when the painters had just finished painting the house, and my wife standing in tall summer grass, gazing up, declared, “It's too white!” The house had to have a trace of color, a hue that contends with the final rays of the setting sun. So, I begrudgingly agreed to have it repainted as Professor Sanford, a young Cesar Romero, frugal John Brownrigg, and the rest of them looked on.

She was right, the house on the road was asking for more. So today, if you drive by slowly, you may catch a glimpse of this game it plays as the sun casts its last light of day. The house tosses it back, over your head, across Karraker Field, as if glowing back youthful memories from days gone by. ■

Opinion: The only constant in life is change *The role of media in war and politics / continued from page 6*

network broadcast journalism at its inception would surrender to more lucrative formats. *60 Minutes* – a CBS News production – eventually became the most valuable network-owned programming property in the history of American television, and by the 1980s, almost every local news station had launched its own “I-Team” investigations group.

1955-1975: Vietnam... A disaster based on a lie

The 1964 Gulf of Tonkin event began the nightmare of Vietnam in earnest thanks to Robert McNamara lying to President Johnson about the three-ship Vietnamese navy “attacking” the largest naval force on the planet. The destroyer, USS Maddox, initiated contact by firing three warning shots at the three torpedo boats, thus kicking this disaster into overdrive to enable the military industrial complex to reap billions at the cost of millions of lives (58,000+ US soldiers and 1.29 million South and North Vietnamese) along with untold numbers of maimed and wounded participants.

Documents and tapes released in 2005 and 2006 provided new insights into the August 2, 1964 attack on the USS Maddox and established that there was no fol-

low-up attack against the destroyer.

1979-1989: Russia invades Afghanistan

Often invaded both in ancient and modern times, Afghanistan has been rightly called “the death of empires” due to its difficult terrain, the fierce loyalty of the people, and the sheer remoteness of the country. In 1979, the Russians invade yet again, ignoring the lessons of Vietnam, the wisdom of *The Art of War*, and the essential fact that indigenous fighters don't have to win, just outlast the enemy. After decimating the country, the Soviets left Afghanistan in 1989.

2003: Another fiasco based on a lie

Anthony Zinni, the former commander of the U.S. Central Command, was interviewed by Ted Koppel on Nightline. He was rather sharp in his assessment of George W. Bush's policy in Iraq. Before the war, Zinni, who had been an envoy for Bush in the Middle East, opposed a U.S. invasion of Iraq, arguing that Saddam Hussein did not pose an imminent threat. On Nightline, Zinni compared Bush's push for the war with the Gulf of Tonkin incident and challenged “the credibility behind” Bush's prewar assertions

concerning Iraq's possession of weapons of mass destruction and its association with anti-American terrorists. “I'm suggesting,” Zinni said, “that either the [prewar] intelligence was so bad and flawed – and if that's the case, then somebody's head ought to roll for that – or the intelligence was exaggerated or twisted in a way to make a more convenient case to the American people.”

2007: Digital becomes personal

Even though the PC and the Mac became watchwords in computing in the '80s and '90s, the real change for mankind came with the advent of the iPhone in 2007, as nearly everyone now has personal access to said device 24/7. With the advent of such persuasive tech, Apple becomes the most profitable company in the world in tandem with the Internet becoming the connect for the world and social media becoming the personalized source for real “news” tailored just for you.

“The war is not meant to be won, it is meant to be continuous.” - Orwell

Albert Einstein famously said, “The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result.”

In 2009, yours truly wrote this about Afghanistan and the futility of fighting yet another war eerily reminiscent of Vietnam, the poster child on how to not to fight one:

“For starters, the Taliban don't have to win, just persevere. The U.S. will not be in Afghanistan forever, so just showing up is enough. Afghanistan is a huge country, inhospitable to occupiers as seen throughout history via defeats placed on Alexander the Great, the British and the Russians.”

In 2021, the Taliban won just as the Viet Cong did in Vietnam.

The cost of said wars in the Middle East since 9/11, all of which the US lost, comes to a cool \$8 trillion, not to mention countries destroyed, people killed, and a never-ending hatred of the United States.

2024: Ghost in the machine

Outside of the current nightmare happening in Israel/Palestine and a rematch between Trump and Biden is this ...

“GPT-4 is full of ghosts. Gemini is also full of ghosts,” said Ethan Mollick, a professor at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania in a recent blog post. “There is a weirdness to GPT-4 that isn't sentience, but also isn't like talking to a program... It

is the illusion of a person on the other end of the line, even though there is nobody there.”

The concept of a ghost residing in the “machine” of artificial intelligence (AI), is eminently logical based on the continued hoovering of data 24/7 by the Gemini's of the world, pointing out the fact we have, in effect, lost control of a rapidly evolving tech making its way toward sentience. This open-ended tech will forever remain unknowable, due to the fact that code itself has to write code in order to react to the real world in real time.

Humanity has been bad enough throughout the centuries at heeding the wisdom of *The Art of War* and the need for situational awareness in order to succeed. In an AI reality, this is all but impossible.

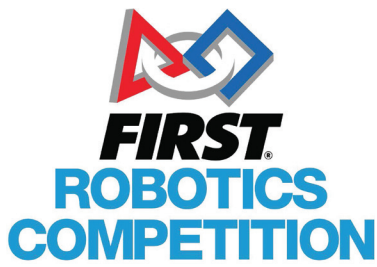
Whistling past the graveyard applies. ■

Robert E. Moran is C.E.O. of Digital Constructs Inc.

First things FIRST

How FIRST Robotics put these Barlow grads on solid career paths

By Rob Sample



Possessing scientific and technical acumen is a great way to bulletproof one's career choices, especially in today's highly competitive job market. Some Joel Barlow alumni now report that involvement in the school's FIRST Robotics program set the stage for their success in college and, later, in technical careers.

Barlow's FIRST Robotics program began in 2013 and has grown in popularity among students ever since. It has racked up some impressive achievements along the way. This includes placing first in a regional tournament in 2020 – right before the entire program was shut down due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The team is formally called BARlow RobAutics.

Paula Panos, Guidance Director at Joel Barlow High School, says involvement in FIRST Robotics is a perfect prelude to higher studies in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields. "Robotics provides an opportunity to think creatively and to solve problems," said Panos, whose son, Josh, was a member of Barlow's FIRST Robotics team before majoring in engineering at Purdue University and heading that school's robotics team.

"Each year, our students in Barlow robotics build an entire robot themselves, with adult input from teachers and mentors," said Panos. "This is invaluable if you are pursuing a career in engineering or other STEM fields."

FIRST Robotics has had a positive impact on Joel Barlow as well. In recent years, the school has introduced new science and engineering offerings and is now launching a new STEM Academy – which will also dovetail with the STEAM program at John Read Middle School. (As an acronym, STEAM adds "art" to the STEM equation.)

"In this last competitive season, the team has done extremely well," said Panos. "That will only fuel future interest – in both robotics and in the STEM program in general."

Josh Panos graduated from Joel Barlow in 2016 and is now a verification engineer for Nvidia, living in Westford, MA. The Boston area has had a history of being a hotbed for technology companies, and both FIRST Robotics alumni interviewed by the *Sentinel* have ended up living there.

"During my freshman year at Barlow, I got involved with a group of individuals who got the robotics team off the ground," said the younger Panos. "It was a bit daunting at the time, in that a lot of existing teams at other schools had a body of built-up knowledge. We were rookies."



Photo by Bill Kinahan

The 2017 Barlow Robotics team. Libby Albanese, pictured left of center wearing black, is one of several students to have gone on to work in a STEM-related field.

Nonetheless, those pioneering students remained focused. Initially, the six-week time frame during which their entry robots had to be built was challenging, but each year, during tournaments, they got to see what other teams had accomplished. This helped them to improve each year until after several years they had a solid team in place.

"This definitely got my interest in engineering super-piqued," Panos said. "And a lot of the lessons I learned at Barlow guided my path in college. For instance, our advisor, Mr. [Daniel] Rivers always told us not to 'overcomplicate things', to address the core issues of what we were doing, and to keep it simple. This was very good advice."

At Purdue, Panos joined a college-level robotics team that held different kinds of competitions than had taken place in high school. One of its first assignments was to design a roving lunar vehicle to mine rocks and regolith, the technical term for the moon's dust and soil that overlays its rock layer. The team traveled to Florida for the final competition, in which it placed near the top.

Panos's current role as a validation engineer involves simulating designs for Nvidia's powerful semiconductor chips, which now dominate the artificial intelligence market. Panos works to ensure there are no bugs in a design before it goes into production.

"The basic element of many engineering initiatives is interdisciplinary interaction, which is what I now do for Nvidia," said Panos.

Libby Albanese, daughter of *Sentinel* reporter Anne Young Albanese, graduated a year later than Panos but has followed a similar path. She completed a double major in mechanical and biomedical engineering at Tufts University in suburban Boston.

"I was always one of those kids who was good in math, good in science, but I wasn't sure what I wanted to do in college," said Albanese. "I had friends on the FIRST Robotics team, and they roped me into it. It was my first introduction to engineering, and

gave me that path to pursue, so I'm glad they did."

Even way back then, Albanese worked on the electronics part of the team. This included both the design of the robot's electronic components and integrating them. "This was all super-new to me, as I had never really been involved in electronics, engineering, or robotics," she recalled. "I ended up really liking it."

Albanese chose Tufts because its engineering program was well-regarded but small in comparison to others. This gave her an opportunity to take other classes that she described as helping to make her a more well-rounded person. Those included art and theater classes, and a course in American Sign Language (ASL).

"When I joined the robotics club at Tufts, it consisted of five guys – and me – in a basement," said Albanese. "That was kind of rough, but I stuck it out and in my junior and senior years I was its president. We were able to expand to 50 people, and the gender ratios became more balanced as well."

Albanese took a job as a hardware engineer for H2OK Innovation, a Boston start-up, soon after graduation. Her role is interdisciplinary by nature: The firm specializes in optimizing production processes for a variety of industries, with an eye toward minimizing water and chemical usage. Albanese gets involved in tasks as diverse as printed-circuit-board design, systems integration, product design, and assembly.

"Having a good background in robotics definitely helped me in this role," she said. "Being involved in FIRST was a pivotal moment that set me on a path to learn engineering and, ultimately, understand how to design and integrate electro-mechanical systems." ■

Redding women honored with "Service Above Self" award

By Pam Robey



Kimberly Adams (left) and Susan Farrell (right) were recently recognized with the "Service Above Self" award for their fundraising efforts and contributions to support The Center for Empowerment and Education in Danbury.

In recognition of their support for The Center for Empowerment and Education (CEE) in Danbury, Kimberly Adams and Susan Farrell received the "Service Above Self" honor at The Center's annual Hearts of Hope Breakfast on March 6. CEE supports survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault in Danbury and surrounding towns in northern Fairfield and Southern Litchfield counties.

"Every day, we dedicate our efforts to raising funds to ensure every single victim and survivor has a safe place to turn for support, advocacy, and safety," said Ashley Dunn, President and CEO of CEE. "Having women like Sue and Kim in our corner raising funds and awareness for our mission is a significant lift for our organization. We are so incredibly grateful for them."

In 2022, Kim and Sue founded the Redding Country Club Fashion

Show and since have raised over \$60,000 to benefit CEE.

"RCC members embrace an extraordinary commitment to service and building connected communities," said Tim Seifert, Redding Country Club General Manager. "We are proud of Mrs. Adams and Mrs. Farrell and are honored to support them as they raise funds and shine a spotlight on the mission of CEE."

"Thank you to Redding Country Club and its members for their incredible support and contributions to The Center over the past two years," said Farrell. "CEE provides support and education to 13 towns in our community, and if we have a shared commitment to making a difference, we can positively impact the lives of so many men, women, and children." Adams added, "I quickly learned what kind and generous members we have." ■

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Barlow Robotics: how is the team doing?

By Rob Sample

The global organization FIRST Robotics was founded in 1989 by inventor Dean Kamen and stands for "For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology". FIRST Robotics now has participants worldwide in grades four through 12.

Bill Kinahan is a Sikorsky retiree and the chief mentor for BARlow RobAutics, Joel Barlow High School's FIRST Robotics team. "During our last match at Wilby High School in Waterbury, our robot performed extremely well," said Kinahan. "Yet, we had some really tough matches against some top teams in the region, which hurt our win-loss ratio."

It's still uncertain whether the Barlow team will compete in the New England regional tournament – scheduled for April 3-6 at the Eastern States Exposition fairgrounds in Springfield, MA.

"The rules call for the top 96 teams to compete in the regional – and right now, we're at 56," said Kinahan. "However, while we have already completed our two

qualifying tournaments, a good number of the 185 teams in the region have just had one."

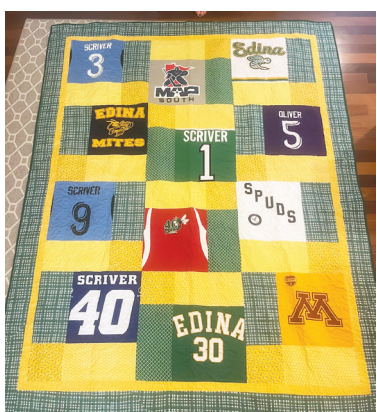
As a result, their standing may change. Still another variable is the \$4,000 regional tournament entry fee. BARlow RobAutics has managed to raise funds all year long, so this would not prevent the team from entering. However, other qualifying teams might have to bow out if they are unsuccessful at raising the required \$4,000.

"If we compete, we'll have to do some additional fundraising to backfill the funds spent for the entry fee," said Kinahan. That would be money well spent, because it would also give BARlow RobAutics a chance to compete in the international FIRST Robotics Championship, scheduled for April 4-17 at the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston. ■

Want more information about FIRST Robotics at Joel Barlow? Contact Kinahan at kinahawi@yahoo.com by e-mail, or by phone at (203) 243-4254.

National Quilting Day celebrated this month

Meadow Ridge resident reflects on two decades of creations



Though National Quilting Day was celebrated on March 16, Susan Mason has been quilting for 20 years and has made more than 150 quilts, including 33 for her grandchildren. "I have 18 grandkids and made them each one when they were born and one when they turned 16. I have three left to make," Mason said. "She's kept just eight of her quilts; the rest, she's given away. Several have been displayed at Meadow Ridge, the continuing care retirement community in Redding where she now lives. "Each one tells a story," Mason said. "Every one of them is special to me and to the people I give them to."

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BOOK REVIEW

Foster

by Claire Keegan

Grove Press | 92 p.p. / \$20

Foster by Claire Keegan is a novella about a sensitive child character stuck between circumstances, only some of which she can comprehend. “I am in a spot where I can neither be what I always am nor turn into what I could be.” This is the character’s many-layered and precocious summary of predicament. Caught between childhood and adulthood, between her actual family and one she stays with for a summer, between observation and growth, and between what a young observant mind sees and childhood’s emotional incomprehension, we follow her unsure awakening. A rural Irish girl in the 1980s, the unnamed narrator is emerging from innocence when taken in for a summer by a neighboring family that we later learn has lost a son. Keegan writes with a terse polish that is as much poetry as prose. This penetrating style serves her stories admirably. *Small Things Like These*, her most recent book, also reviewed here, will soon be made into a feature film starring Oscar-winner Cillian Murphy. Keegan, writer and artist, has found a worldwide audience.

In *Foster*, the child narrator is taken from home to stay with family intimates for the summer in her mother’s last months of pregnancy. Like travel to a foreign country, the child sees different ways of living, and experiences more compassion, affection, and thoughtfulness than she has known. She begins to compare her father invidiously to her foster father for the summer, John Kinsella. Kinsella sees to her care with his wife, Edna. They parent her with devotion and affection

she is unused to. She notices how Kinsella holds her hand when they walk, while her own father forgot to say good-bye to her. She tries to understand the deeper nuances of interaction, and how intentional and unintentional unkindness can be present in the character of those who may or may not mean what they say. She is at a stage of development where thinking is replacing feeling, and it is a joy for the reader to see how her ambiguity finds certitude, so very tentatively at first.

Elegance in prose comes from genius in the writer. Talent is the ability to tell a story that will draw a reader in. If brilliant writing is the play of genius and talent in balance, pleasure comes in our response to harmonized language, felt but not perceived. The elements of story are here presented in such a way that an underlying human exchange seems real to the reader in ways that seem magical. Keegan’s writing reaches for a deeper path to truth.

Art asks three questions only: Who am I, who are you, and what is happening? Keegan’s young narrator in *Foster* is struggling with those questions as a normal response to the catalyst of changed living circumstances. She finds in her summertime experience a way to answer some questions she has had about her own family. Her awakening begins with an answer she gives to herself in the last sentence. ■

Review by Tom Casey

Tom is the author of *Human Error* and *Strangers’ Gate*

LIBRARY CORNER

By Erin Shea Dummeyer

Last week, the Redding Neighbors & Newcomers hosted a fabulous open house at the Library to introduce the community to their social club and bring a bit of Redding historical trivia to attendees. Bruce Nelson and Brent Colley, co-founders of the Redding CT History Project and our town’s Co-Historians, served as the entertainment, and they kicked things off with a Q&A about Redding history.

If you are not familiar with Bruce and Brent’s work, they are both town treasures with a fountain of Redding knowledge. I was talking to Bruce before the program about how I’d like him to come in and record an oral

history about his connections to Redding. Recording oral history is important in towns like this, because when history is passed down from generation to generation, the smallest piece of misinformation can eventually become fact if there is no written record to refute it. Bruce provided the perfect example of this phenomenon and what I will call one of his personal “false history pet peeves”: the elephant wall that runs north of Great Pasture. If you’ve ever driven past it, it’s a classic New England stone wall, but what makes it stand out is that it’s about twice as thick as a typical stone wall. There is a rumor that has gone around for years that it was built by P.T. Barnum for

elephants to graze on their way to Bridgeport. This is patently false. No elephants were ever kept in Redding...yet the lore prevails.

So, I had to chuckle when after Bruce and Brent’s local history presentation, the first question from an audience member was about whether the so-called “elephant wall” was really built for elephants to graze. Bruce Nelson is here to tell you: it’s a very thick stone wall because the ground in Redding has so many stones that they had to go somewhere. But the elephant story is far more entertaining! ■

Erin Shea Dummeyer is Director, Mark Twain Library

Good books for good readers | By Margi Esten

I almost always learn something new when I sit down to write this column and do a bit of research. *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens was originally published in 1861, and although it was his 13th novel, it is only the second novel after *David Copperfield* that is narrated in the first person!

The novel follows the childhood and young adulthood of Pip, a blacksmith’s apprentice in a small country village in the

marshes of Kent, England. He – very suddenly – comes into a great fortune from an unknown and mysterious benefactor and immediately moves to London to enter high society and pursue his dream of becoming a gentleman.

As with most of Dickens’s stories, we get to meet some truly unforgettable – and colorful – characters such as Abel Magwitch, the scary escaped convict; Miss Havisham, who has remained

frozen in time with her clocks literally stopped at 8:40 a.m. after being jilted at the altar; Mr. (Herbert) Pocket, Pip’s devoted friend; and Mr. Jaggers, the highly successful London lawyer through whom most of the novel’s characters are linked. But, again, as with most of Dickens’s writing, the message is simple: affection, loyalty, and conscience are more important than social advancement. ■

Redding’s Big Outdoors: Topstone Park: Chase Long View Trail / continued from page 1

European fungi and beetles, but they’re still around. They glow on my morning walks along the streams of Newtown Turnpike.

On Sunday, I spent a few minutes on a slope overlooking Robin’s Trail, considering a much more recently beleaguered tree: the American beech. The day before, at the 40th annual Connecticut Land Conservation Council Conference at Wesleyan, I’d heard researcher Robert Mara discuss Beech Leaf Disease. At home, I was curious if I could find winter buds engorged with thousands of nematodes; some buds looked big, but not disfigured as in Mara’s slides. The handful of leaves left from fall, however, were plainly diseased, either small and aborted or cupped where the nematodes had chemically transformed the leaf cells into bloated sugar bags. I was pretty sure that half of the saplings also had Beech Bark Disease.

Mara and his co-presenter had recommended applying PolyPhosphite-30, a fertilizer that seems to boost beeches’ resources enough to regrow after losing buds. The presentation could have used some PolyPhosphite, too; heedless of the mere minutes left in the session, the earnest co-presenter went from saying, “You’ll see a flat area. That’s a pond,” (it was a picture of a pond) to saying something about a “thirty-foot differential of about one hundred feet.”

An earlier workshop had focused on grants to cover the cost of various forest management activities. Nobody there asked about Beech Leaf Disease, though; everyone wanted money to fight invasive plant species. A representative from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, who had clearly heard the question before, said funds are not given for standalone tasks. After a “walk and talk” in the woods, working out current site conditions and long-term landowner goals, invasive species management might be one step for a particular stand of trees – but nothing gets approved except as part of a Forest Management Plan.

Tom Worthley, a professor at UConn, stood up at the back of the room and addressed the audience. He said he understood that land

trusts were starting to shift their attention. “The focus has been on acquiring the land. Now you own it. It’s a responsibility. What do I want that land to be in 50 years? And for that to happen in 50 years, what do I need to do tomorrow?”

His question echoed a statement by State Forester Andrea Urbano during the conference’s introductory panel: “The number one thing you can do [for the climate] is have a plan for your land!” Bronson Griscom, in the conference’s keynote address (less a keynote than a post-tonal panoply), had said that improved forest management has the potential to make an enormous impact on national carbon sequestration and storage. This is relevant to almost everyone in our densely wooded Redding; roughly 17% of Connecticut’s extensive forest is owned by families and individuals in plots smaller than 10 acres.

Early spring is as good a time as any to start thinking about stewardship. I know my attention has been awakened. The Conservation District plant sales are in full swing, and Earth Tones Native Plants will open in a few weeks; soon it’ll be time to plant my new rain garden; the seeds I started in screened pots and old juice bottles in January are germinating; turfgrass devotees are advertising their services on Facebook; my neighbor is asking me what to plant by her driveway.

The distinction between garden and forest is, of course, willed into existence by human beings, as is the distinction between this wood and that. Behind my neighbor’s house, the woods contain a patch of swamp. My back woods contain a patch of swamp. So do the yards of the houses I see through the trees in winter. It’s one swamp, one large, harmonious system of plants, animals, water, soil, fungi, and bacteria. It’s ringed with cinnamon and interrupted ferns, highbush blueberry, and, on some sides, skunk cabbage. It’s filled with summersweet, the scent of which fills the air behind our houses in July and August. It’s a beautiful place to wander. We each, through our deeds, have taken on some portion of responsibility for the swamp.

For me, the questions of what

to plant, and where, become less overwhelming when I stop, step back, and practice seeing the bigger picture that contains my yard. Look at the trees out back. Look at the twiggy shrubs quietly making themselves a home along the road. Look at where the water enters and leaves. Look across the property lines to see what’s happening next door, behind the stone wall, in the common swamp.

Redding’s Big Outdoors does not end where Land Trust or Town land ends; it’s the interconnected foundation of our lives. Even if, say, we picked the town mainly for a school or mainly because somebody dragged us, it is to Redding’s Big Outdoors that we have entrusted our health and our loved ones’ health.

As for becoming a more active steward of the back woods – well, nobody’s born knowing the difference between pignut hickory and tulip poplar bark, between black birch and black cherry seedlings. But changes are happening around me whether I know it or not, and many of the more startling changes have a human factor. I watched my ash trees die, like most everyone else in Connecticut; now I’m looking at the beeches, wondering what to do.

Do I want to try to save a couple? If I don’t, and they die, will the resultant sprouts start crowding out other important species? Or will Beech Leaf Disease kill the trees so thoroughly that they leave empty, sun-filled holes in the forest? Will invasive species take their place? If any of this worries me, does that mean I want to start thinning out the beech trees now, while there are relatively few clones?

In the meantime, I take – not mere comfort, but delight, and hope – in the forest life that is happy to teach me what goes where, if I learn to see what I’m looking at. Around my ankles, amid the barberry and roses, new white pines, new black cherries, new white oaks, new spicebushes, new black raspberries... ■

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

Music, food trucks, and fun coming this spring *Frog Frolic* set for May 4 / continued from page 5

The Frolic takes place outside from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in front of the Redding Community Center at 37 Lonetown Road. Attendees are encouraged to bring a blanket or a chair and stay all day as the entertainment is free and will be ongoing throughout the

festivities. Tickets are on sale on location to participate in the games and crafts and for food items from the concession stand. Food truck fare will be available for purchase. All proceeds benefit the Mark Twain Library. ■

To find out more about the *Frog Frolic*, to volunteer and/or for sponsorship opportunities, visit mtlffrogfrolic.org



Chipman Mazzucco Emerson LLC
ATTORNEYS AT LAW



Attorney **Tiffany P. Robertson** joins Chipman Mazzucco Emerson LLC as part of the firm's trusts and estates team. She brings with her extensive experience working closely with clients, accountants, financial planners, and insurance specialists in connection with estate planning and probate matters. Her work includes advising clients on avenues for achieving their estate planning goals, as well as providing their loved ones with guidance through the trust and/or estate administration process after they pass away.

Tiffany is a 1994 graduate of Boston University and received her law degree from American University's Washington College of Law in 1998.

A native of Ridgefield, CT, Attorney Robertson now resides in Newtown, CT. She looks forward to meeting with clients in our Danbury, Westport, and Southbury offices.

www.danburylaw.com
tpr@danburylaw.com
203-718-3514

THE NATURAL WORLD

Saving native plants through seed conservation

By Jen Wastrom



Joe Pye Weed in South Windsor, CT

Joe Pye weed is a gardener's delight. It flowers from summer to fall and is a butterfly favorite. Lore has it, it was used by a medicine man named Joe Pye to cure typhus for the colonists.

Joe Pye weed grows naturally throughout the eastern half of the U.S. This popular garden perennial is available at most local

nurseries; however, many of the plants available come from distant sources in the Midwest.

Areas that share similar physical and climatic features are called 'ecoregions.' An ecotype native plant comes from the local ecoregion and has developed genetic traits optimized for growing in the local geology, soil, and climate. Therefore, planting plants sourced from the local ecoregion improves the likelihood of success and helps to preserve genetic diversity.

A collaboration of botanists, growers, and conservationist groups is helping to build a native plant pipeline called the Northeast Seed Network. The groups plan to further the availability of ecotype plants in the Northeast. The goal is to increase the accessibility of source-identified seeds and plants for the ecoregions of the Northeastern U.S.

"Thankfully, many groups in New England are working to protect native plants through seed initiatives," said Geordie Elkins, Executive Director for Highstead, a regional conservation non-profit. "These organized partnerships are advancing the goal of land conservation in New England, with an emphasis on reinforcing biodiversity."

Native Joe Pye often grows near streams and likes plenty of sun. The stalks might be seven feet tall with deep pink blooms, probably buzzing with pollinators. If you're lucky enough to spy some in the wild, know that you are witnessing Mother Nature's miraculous harmony at work. If you'd like to add some to your own landscape, strive to plant ecotypes when available. ■

Reprinted with kind permission of Highstead

The Novice Gardener

What do I do with my wet garden?

By Janet Ozzard



In today's paper, we're introducing *The Novice Gardener*. Every other week, Janet Ozzard, who can't keep a houseplant alive, will ask Redding experts to help solve a problem in their garden. Have a question for *The Novice*? Send it to us at editor@reddingsentinel.org.

Q: We've had storm after storm this winter, and my yard is mud. What are some ways I can get ready for spring? Can I even start planting anything?

A: The short answer is simply to wait. Wait until your yard, garden, and beds dry out before trying to plant anything. Use the time to browse online or through your seed catalogs for inspiration, visit local nurseries for advice, and dream about a yard full of happy plants.

The more nuanced answer is, it depends. You can get started in your vegetable garden with a little preparation. First, assess if soil is too wet to plant by doing a squeeze test. Squeeze a handful of soil; if it forms a sticky ball, it is too wet. To get the right

consistency and improve drainage, add organic material like seasoned compost. Planting in a raised bed will improve drainage. This time of year, you can safely plant cold-tolerant crops like spinach, kale, and peas.

More interested in landscape plantings? Spring is a good time to add flowers, shrubs, and small trees to your yard. Choose plantings that tolerate wet conditions like iris, winterberry, and willow. There's a popular saying in gardening – match the plant to the habitat, not the habitat to the plant.

Finally, notice and track how water moves around your property and where it pools. Consider digging trenches or swales to help slow, divert, or catch runoff. This spring's excessive rainfall may not be an anomaly, and there may be more challenging conditions ahead. Resourceful, creative gardeners lead to healthy, thriving gardens. — *New Pond Farm Education Center Staff* ■

New Pond Farm Education Center
WINTER-SUMMER 2024

Announces Three Seasons of Fun!

Please check out our website, newpondfarm.org, and discover outdoor adventures, science activities, culinary programs, crafting classes, outdoor workshops, Special Events, and **SUMMER CAMP EXPERIENCES!**

Please call for more information **203.938.2117**

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

New Pond Farm revises restoration plan, hopes to begin work in June / continued from page 1

the actual work can begin sooner. "Phase I will consist of creating vernal pools for wildlife and cleaning the contents of the pond," said Taylor. "This work will take place during the summer and fall of this year." Phase I also just requires Conservation Commission approval: no other government entities will need to review and okay the plans before any work proceeds.

During her tenure at New Pond Farm, Taylor has seen the pond cleaned and dredged on multiple occasions. "It's a relatively simple process," she said. "Dealing with the Army Corps of Engineers would have added a new layer of

complexity, which now we can avoid."

The second phase of work would take place during the spring and summer of 2025. "Phase II will include replacing both the inlet culvert, removing the existing dam at the outlet, and replacing the latter with a subsurface erosion control structure," explained Ryder. "These routine activities require a water-diversion permit from the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, which should be granted by spring 2025."

Under the Town of Redding's terms for project completion, non-profit organizations must start

any work associated with an ARPA grant by June 30, 2024. While the federal deadline for spending ARPA money is December 31, the Town moved the deadline forward by six months to give it time to consider other uses of the funds if a project could not ultimately move forward. Any unused funds must be returned to the Federal government by December 31, 2024.

"LANDTECH has been wonderful to work with," said Taylor. "In the beginning they advised us that permitting would take longer than any of us could have imagined. They were right." ■

Town, school boards present budgets at public hearing / continued from page 1

utilities), which account for 26.1% of the budget, other cost centers include pupil personnel services (23.9%), Redding Elementary School (22%), and John Read Middle School (19.4%).

The district was able to reduce its allocation for health care by using the majority of unspent funds from last year to put into a health reserve account. Should health care claims come in much higher next year, they will be covered by this account.

Region 9 Board of Education

Reflecting an increase of 2.4%, (\$595,674), the Region 9 Board of Education's budget came in at \$25,407,041, driven mostly by special education costs and bond principal and interest payments. McKinnon noted these have gone up and down in recent years.

In 2021-22, bond principal and interest payments totaled \$2,130,275. For 2024-25 they have decreased to \$1,382,275. Special education costs increased from \$5,111,533 in 2021-22 to \$5,225,887.

"As those two main drivers start to level off, meaning debt principal and interest isn't declining as much as it has been over the past three or four years and special education increases slightly, we made the contention that those two areas have influenced our percent increases over the past four years," said McKinnon. "For the past four years, budget increases in Region 9 were lower because of those variables. But in 2024-25, the increase from 2023-24 was 2.4%."

The cost centers that make up the majority of the Region 9 budget are Joel Barlow High school (41.6%), district-wide costs (25.4%), and pupil personnel services (20.6%).

Due to a decline in enrollment over the last couple of years at Barlow, some staffing changes were made, including a reduction of certified staff by 3.03 full-time employees and 3.4 full-time employees for non-certified staff.

As in Redding, Region 9 also received title grants to offset costs. More than \$51,000 total will help pay for professional services, school instructional supplies, and instructional technology and professional services.

Board of Selectmen

A budget of \$16,961,130 pro-

posed by the Board of Selectmen represented an increase of 3.95% (\$644,576) for 2024-25. This was a decrease from the initial proposed increase of 4.59% at its budget workshop in January.

Before 2021-22, according to First Selectwoman Julia Pemberton, the Town was looking at lower percentage increases. After that, it began to see a post-pandemic bump in fuel, insurance, and personnel costs.

"You're seeing that reflected this year certainly," she said. "Insurance and salaries for new hires have significantly increased, and we are dealing with the fallout of that."

One of the main budget drivers was salary increases. The Town has contractual obligations to the Police and Highway Departments as well as the emergency dispatchers. Police and Highways both have a 3.5% increase in salaries, and Pemberton expects the dispatcher increase to be in line with these as well.

Health insurance costs have increased 11% (\$183,055), which is more than double that for fiscal year 2023-24. Pemberton noted the Town switched providers in 2019-20, going from Anthem to Connecticut and saw an initial decrease of 13%.

"Several years later, we are just about at the same rate as we were with Anthem," she said. "It worked out for us."

The Town also had an increase in retirement contributions of \$150,000. Debt service, however, was reduced by \$111,659.

The proposed Park and Recreation budget increase was reduced \$80,000 by removing a line item for a recreational spaces study. In addition, the Mark Twain Library requested budget increase was reduced by \$15,000 to \$35,000.

"The budget we the Board of Selectmen present to you this evening is the product of many months of working collaboratively with our department heads and finance team to produce a budget that would ensure the Town continues to meet the needs of residents for public services," said Pemberton. "We set high standards and strive for continuous improvement to provide high quality services as efficiently and as cost effectively as possible." ■

LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS OF REDDING

Wednesday, April 3 7-9 PM

Redding Community Center 37 Lonetown Rd

6TH ANNUAL SPEAK UP

WHAT IS A SPEAK UP?
An open community forum where Redding's elected leaders, chairs of appointed boards, committees, and commissions, and key town and school officials take questions from Redding residents about our community and government issues.

YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO:

- ASK QUESTIONS
- GET INFORMED
- VOICE YOUR CONCERNS

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF REDDING

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

\$ = fee applies
R = registration required

This Week's Featured Events

Easter Egg Hunt at Marchant Farm

Saturday, March 30
3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Egg dying, activities, ponies, refreshments, and more.
The Serenity Project
Marchant Farm
55 Chestnut Woods Road
eventbrite.com/e/easter-egg-hunt-at-marchant-farm-tickets-861734259367
R

Speak Up hosted by Redding League of Women Voters

Wednesday, April 3
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Hear from local leaders and let your voices be heard.
Redding Community Center
37 Lonetown Road
E-mail Kim.orielly@gmail.com

All About Eve: A Play Reading

Saturday, April 6
7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Local and professional actors present a lively reading to raise funds for New Pond Farm.
New Pond Farm Education Center
Sacred Heart Church Parish Hall
30 Church Street
newpondfarm.org

Want to feature an upcoming event?

E-mail us at advertise@reddingsentinel.org for more information.

ARTS

Thursday, March 28

True North Jazz Project
6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Hudson Valley-based jazz quartet plays a free, live show.
Nod Hill Brewery
137 Ethan Allen Highway
Ridgefield
nodhillbrewery.com

Saturday, April 6

Art Reception - Roderike Pohl
2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Meet the artist and view her work
Easton Public Library
691 Morehouse Road
Easton
eastonlibrary.org/calendar-list

Saturday, April 6

All About Eve: A Play Reading
7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Local and professional actors present a lively reading to raise funds for New Pond Farm.
Sacred Heart Church Parish Hall
30 Church Street
newpondfarm.org
\$, R

Sunday, April 7

The Allen and Helen Hermes Arts Series presents - Broadway Tails: Strays and Stars
4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Learn about training animals for the stage and screen from Tony-Award nominee William Berloni.
Mark Twain Library
439 Redding Road
marktwainlibrary.org
R

CHILDREN | TEENS

Thursday, March 28

Finding College Scholarships
7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Virtual
Mark Twain Library
marktwainlibrary.org
R

Tuesday, April 2

Storytime for Children Ages 1-5 with Adult
10:30 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.
New Pond Farm Education Center
101 Marchant Road
newpondfarm.org
\$, R

Thursday, April 11

Reading to Rover (Grades K-4)
3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Practice reading out loud to Gromit, a trained therapy dog.
Mark Twain Library
439 Redding Road
marktwainlibrary.org
R

Sunday, April 14

STEM at New Pond Farm (Grades K-4)
10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Sky science
New Pond Farm Education Center
101 Marchant Road
newpondfarm.org
\$, R

Sunday, April 14

Topstone Family Story Time
10:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
Co-sponsored by the Redding Park and Recreation Department
Topstone Park Beach
72 Topstone Road
marktwainlibrary.org
R

FOOD | WINE

Saturday, April 6 and Sunday, April 7

In the Kitchen, cooking Earth Day Cookies
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Saturday (Grades 2-5)
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Sunday (Grades 6-12)
New Pond Farm Education Center
101 Marchant Road
newpondfarm.org
\$, R

HEALTH | WELLNESS

Tuesday, April 2

Free Community Yoga Class at Open Farmhouse
9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
For beginner to advanced, in partnership with Yoga Station and Open Farmhouse.
Open Farmhouse
11 John Read Road
yogastationct.com/book-class
R

Tuesday, April 9

Narcan Training
7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Mark Twain Library
439 Redding Road
marktwainlibrary.org
R

Sunday, April 14

Archery Open House
3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
No experience necessary, equipment provided.
Riverbrook Regional YMCA
404 Danbury Road
Wilton
wiltonymca.org
R

HOLIDAY

Friday, March 29

2024 Egg Hunt
2:00 p.m. Games and activities
3:00 p.m. Hunt begins
Rain date: Saturday, March 30.
Open to kids 8 and under
Presented by BGCRC Torch Club and Redding Neighbors & Newcomers
Boys & Girls Club of Redding-Easton
170 Cross Highway
bgcre.net
\$, R

Friday, March 29

Easter Egg Hunt
3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Giggling Pig Art & Party Studio
4 Library Place
Bethel
Call (203) 919-1153
R

Saturday, March 30

Easter Festival 2024
2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Talent show, easter activities, food trucks, meet the Easter Bunny.
CityCenter Danbury Green
1 Ives Street
Danbury
citycenterdanbury.com

Saturday, March 30

Easter Egg Hunt at Marchant Farm
3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Egg dying, activities, ponies, refreshments, and more.
The Serenity Project
Marchant Farm
55 Chestnut Woods Road
eventbrite.com/e/easter-egg-hunt-at-marchant-farm-tickets-861734259367
R

NATURE

Wednesday, April 3

Bonsai Tree Workshop in the Backspace by Bonsai Bar
6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Beginner workshop with bonsai tree to take home.
Nod Hill Brewery
137 Ethan Allen Highway
Ridgefield
nodhillbrewery.com
\$, R

Saturday, April 6

Vernal Pool Walk
10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Program run in partnership with Ridgefield Conservation Commission and Norwalk River Watershed Association.
Woodcock Nature Center
56 Deer Run Road
Wilton
woodcocknaturecenter.org
R

Monday, April 8

It's a Solar Eclipse!
2:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Enjoy the solar eclipse with New Pond Farm's astronomers.
New Pond Farm Education Center
101 Marchant Road
newpondfarm.org
R

Saturday, April 13

Astronomy: Viewing the Night Sky
8:30 p.m.
Outdoor program - dress accordingly.
New Pond Farm Education Center
101 Marchant Road
newpondfarm.org
\$, R

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Sundays at 10:00 a.m. (in person) or 10:15 a.m. (Zoom)
44 Portland Avenue
bethlehemplutheranct.org

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

Christ Church, Episcopal
Thursday, March 28 (Maundy Thursday worship) at 6:00 p.m.
Friday, March 29 (Good Friday liturgy) at 6:00 p.m.
Sunday, March 31 (Easter worship) at 9:00 a.m.
184 Cross Highway
christchurchredding.org

First Church of Christ, Congregational
Thursday, March 28 (Maundy Thursday) at 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, March 31 (Easter Sunday) at 6:00 a.m. sunrise service at 442 Rock House Road.
Sunday March 31 (Easter Sunday) at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.
25 Cross Highway
firstchurchredding.org

Long Ridge United Methodist
Sundays at 11:00 a.m.
201 Long Ridge Road, Danbury
longridgeumc.com

Sacred Heart / St. Patrick Parish
Sacred Heart Church:
Thursday, March 28 - Maundy

Thursday: Mass with procession at 9:00 p.m.
Friday, March 29 - Good Friday: Solemn Liturgy of the Passion at 3:00 p.m.
Candlelit Stations of the Cross at 6:00 p.m.
Lenten Soup and Bread
Saturday, March 30 - Holy Saturday Blessing of Easter Foods at 10:00 a.m.
Eater Vigil at 8:30 p.m.
Sunday, March 31 - Easter Sunday Mass at 7:00 a.m., 9:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 12:00 p.m.
30 Church Street

St. Patrick Church:
Fridays during Lent:
7:00 p.m. Stations of the Cross
Saturday Vigil Mass: 5:30 p.m.
Sunday Mass: 8:30 a.m. & 10:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m.
Weekday Mass:
Monday - Friday at 8:30 a.m.
Mondays and Thursdays
Eucharistic Adoration: 7:00 p.m.
169 Black Rock Turnpike
sacredheart-stpat.org

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Wednesday, April 3

Habitat for Humanity Chat & Chew (Teens and Adults)
4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Join members of Housatonic Habitat for Humanity and Joel Barlow chapter in discussing the housing crisis.
Mark Twain Library
439 Redding Road
marktwainlibrary.org
R

Wednesday, April 3

Speak Up hosted by Redding League of Women Voters
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Redding Community Center
37 Lonetown Road
E-mail kim.orielly@gmail.com

Thursday, April 4

Egypt's Golden Couple - Meet the Authors
7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Mark Twain Library
439 Redding Road
marktwainlibrary.org
R

Thursday, April 4

Founders Circle
6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Group for female-identifying founders and entrepreneurs.
Donations of \$20 welcome.
Georgetown Collective
28 Main Street, A
georgetowncollective/events
R

Friday, April 5

The Nest Project Community Meeting
4:00 p.m.
Learn about The Nest project, building plans, and enjoy refreshments.
Joel Barlow High School
100 Black Rock Turnpike
er9.org

Saturday, April 6

Household Hazardous Waste Drop-off Event
9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Open to all residents, bring identification.
Danbury Public Works
53 Newton Road
Danbury
hrra.org/household-hazardous-waste

MEETINGS

Thursday, March 28

Presidential Preference Primary - Early Voting
10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Redding Community Center
37 Lonetown Road
townofreddingct.org

Thursday, March 28

CT DOT Virtual Public Information Meeting
6:00 p.m.
Virtual
portal.ct.gov/DOT300-215

Thursday, March 28

Republican Town Committee Special Meeting
7:00 p.m.
The Redding Roadhouse
406 Redding Road
townofreddingct.org

Thursday, March 28

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

Saturday, March 30

Presidential Preference Primary - Early Voting
10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Redding Community Center
37 Lonetown Road
townofreddingct.org

Monday, April 1

Region 9 Board of Education Annual District Hearing
7:00 p.m.
Joel Barlow High School / Library Learning Commons
100 Black Rock Turnpike
er9.org

Monday, April 1

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

Monday, April 1

Redding Fire District #1 Annual Budget Meeting
7:00 p.m.
Redding Ridge Firehouse
186 Black Rock Turnpike
townofreddingct.org

Monday, April 1

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

Monday, April 1

Board of Finance
7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Town Hall / Hearing Room
Subject to change to virtual or hybrid.
100 Hill Road
townofreddingct.org

Tuesday, April 2

Presidential Preference Primary
6:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Redding Community Center
37 Lonetown Road
townofreddingct.org

Tuesday, April 2

Georgetown Fire District Meeting
5:00 p.m.
61 Redding Road
townofreddingct.org

Tuesday, April 2

Redding Board of Education
7:00 p.m.
John Read Middle School / Learning Room
486 Redding Road
er9.org

Tuesday, April 2

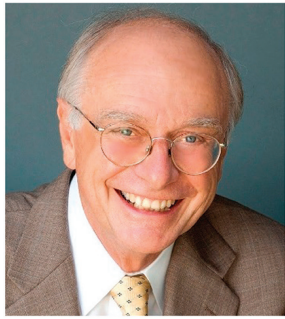
Conservation Commission
7:00 p.m.
Town Hall / Hearing Room
100 Hill Road
townofreddingct.org



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Mike Anderson
203.770.3349



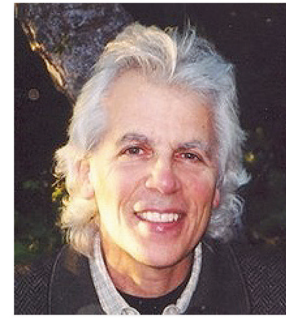
Jack Baldaserini
203.788.4040



Peri Barto
203.240.5919



Alexis Bennett
203.313.3110



Kim Cuniberti
203.733.6976



Lemon DeLucia
203.241.1614



Tim Dent
203.470.5605



Donna DiBartolo
203.858.0597



Margi Esten
203.241.8453



Joan Florczak
203.615.4913



John Frey
203.240.0624



Liz Furrer
203.733.0678



Debbie Gore
203.417.5692



Joanne Grasso
203.733.9344



Jefferson Guthrie
203.788.9400



Carol Hanlon
203.240.1233



Sharon Hoverman
203.733.5073

May you experience peace and joy as you celebrate Easter together with family and friends. If you feel ready to sell your current nest or ready to find your new nest, hop on over to our Ridgefield and/or Redding office to find an experienced REALTOR® to assist you!



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Jodi Langford
203.733.8804



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203.994.5301



Heather Lindgren
646.932.4075



Peter Lunde
631.601.7906



Rita Craig Rush
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Ira Stone
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Nicole Van Alstyne
203.648.8172



Adrian Voss
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AFFINITY

Call Tim to discuss your mortgage options.



Tim Martin

SVP of Mortgage Lending

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O: (203) 974-5253 tim.martin@grarate.com

230 Greenwood Ave, #1A, Bethel, CT 06801

Applicant subject to credit and underwriting approval (20221021-1745808)
EQUAL HOUSING LENDER Tim Martin NMLS ID: 16273; CT - 1801 - ML-1598647 | GRA NMLS ID #1598647 (Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System www.nmlsconsumeraccess.org) • CT - Lic # MCL-1598647



Joseph Porricelli *Branch Vice President*

203.515.6310

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Ridgefield Office 398 Main Street, Ridgefield, CT 06877 | 203.438.9000

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