



REDDING SENTINEL

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As egg prices rise, locals go straight to the source

By Justin Reynolds

According to Consumer Price Index data, the cost of eggs increased 60 percent between December 2021 and December 2022. Experts say this is due to a confluence of factors, including rising demand for eggs and the deadliest outbreak of avian flu in U.S. history, which has impacted nearly 58 million birds.

To counteract these rising costs, more and more Americans, including folks who live in Redding, are keeping chickens and enjoying fresh eggs and fatter wallets because of it.

“Raising chickens on your property is great fun,” said John Kearns, owner of Old Redding Farm. “A lot of people don’t realize how curious and individualized chickens are; they all have their own little personalities, and there are a million different breeds with all kinds of interesting feather coloring, crests, feathered feet, and more.”

According to Kearns, chickens are “relatively inexpensive” to maintain.

“The most money you’ll spend is on building or buying a quality coop and run and making sure it’s safe from predators,” he said. “Chickens are pretty low on the food chain, so there are lots of creatures out there that are interested in a backyard chicken snack. A high-quality coop and run can cost a few thousand dollars to get set up, but if you’re handy, you can build it for less than that.”

If you like the idea of raising chickens on your property but are worried you might not be legally allowed to, you’re in luck.

“Keeping chickens is allowed by our zoning regulations pretty much anywhere,” said Aimee Pardee, Redding’s Land Use Director, adding she fields a lot of questions about chickens these days. “By right, residents can have 50 chickens on their lot, or ten per 0.2 acres. If someone wants to keep more than that number, they must come before the Zoning Commission to have a Land Management Plan approved.”

While you don’t need permits to keep chickens, it’s important to remember you might need one for their housing.

“By the way, housing for animals must be kept at least 50 feet from all property lines,” Pardee explained.

Residents interested in learning more about local farming laws are encouraged to head over to the Town’s website and check out pages 107–113 of the zoning regulations.

In addition to lowering your grocery bill and keeping your breakfast table stocked with omelets, raising chickens on your property may also enable you to lower your tax bill. Depending on

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Photo by Jaime Bairaktaris

A moment of mourning and reflection last week at New Pond Farm. If you have a photo you’d like us to feature here, with credit of course, please e-mail editor@reddingsentinel.org

House fire takes young life

By Donna Christopher

Brien Karlson, a sixth-grade student at John Read Middle School, died on Wednesday, February 15 from injuries sustained in a February 14 house fire in his home on Diamond Hill Road. He was 11 years old.

The devastating fire broke out overnight on February 14. There were four occupants in the residence at the time of the fire, according to Redding Fire Marshal Mickey Grasso. Firefighters from Georgetown, West Redding, and Redding Fire & EMS responded to the scene, with mutual aid also

provided by Bethel, Danbury, Easton, Ridgefield, and Weston. Some family members were able to escape on their own, according to Grasso, with firefighters rescuing Brien.

All four of the family members were taken to Danbury Hospital where three were released with minor injuries, while Brien was then transferred to Bridgeport Hospital.

A letter from ER9 Superintendent Jason McKinnon and other school officials announced on February 15 that

Brien had died after a courageous fight.

The fire involved the entire structure “from no one place”, said Grasso. The cause remains under investigation. ■

The Sentinel sends our support to the Karlson family and our entire community as we grieve this tragic loss. Please find additional coverage in honor of Brien on page 2.

REDDING’S BIG OUTDOORS

A road through the woods Poverty Hollow south to Valley Road

By Susan Clark

“Back in the day” Poverty Hollow Road was Valley Road, and it ran all the way south to intersect with Route 58. It was a beautiful ride – whether in a car or on horseback.

Now, it’s still beautiful but no longer a road. The name was changed to “Poverty Hollow” in the early 1980’s, and the southern end was closed about 25 years ago. The section of the thoroughfare from just south of Stepney Road almost to the Easton town line is now closed to traffic. Although technically still a town road, there are barriers up at both the north and south entrances preventing vehicles to pass through.

There’s a reasonable amount of space to park before starting on a walk on the road past the last house on Poverty Hollow Road and before the barrier; however, it is tight for turning, so take care. It is a fine place for an easy stroll of about three miles round trip. The road is minimally maintained but is in very good condition with a dirt and gravel surface. Strollers, wheelchairs, or bikes can travel with ease. There are a couple of hills, but nothing strenuous in the terrain.

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Photo by Susan Clark

Finance Board approves annual report

By Rocco Valluzzo

Closing the books on fiscal year 2021-2022, the Redding Board of Finance unanimously approved the annual comprehensive financial report at a special meeting on Monday, February 13.

Presenting a summary of the report was Joseph Centofani, a partner in PKF O’Connor Davies, an accounting firm with offices in Shelton. He also offered some suggestions for future reports.

Among the highlights was an unassigned balance of \$12,520,726 in the general fund, a net change of \$1,308,271. About 25% was used for expenditures and transfers for the fiscal year. This included significant capital asset activity, such as a communications upgrade of \$2,088,801 and \$1,354,581 for road reconstruction.

Expenditures in fiscal year 2021-22 were under budget by \$1,268,164. Some of the departments that contributed largely to that difference were general government function (\$263,000), Park and Recreation (\$189,000) and education (\$342,000).

Several departments were over-expended, on the other hand. Centofani noted that this has been the norm for a couple of years.

“Normally, we would see year-end transfers to address the over expenditures,” he said. “It requires disclosure, because it’s kind of a compliance issue where the spending wasn’t in compliance with the budget by department level.”

He suggested getting the transfers completed during the summer once everything was closed, which is more the normal practice.

The Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) percentage funded increased by 19.42% to 33.58%, due to the contribution that was made to a total of \$500,000.

The Georgetown sewer fund unrestricted net position was -\$4,073,221, a decrease of almost \$420,000 from the prior year. The fund is basically running at a loss of \$205,000 for the current year.

Centofani recommended changing the Georgetown sewer fund to a special revenue fund. It is currently set up as an enterprise fund.

“The standards kind of require that if you are going to use an enterprise fund model, that it be self-supporting. Historically, I haven’t seen it ever cover expenditures,” Centofani said. “I think it’s something to look at.”

Converting the sewer fund to a special revenue fund would also allow support to be received from the generally fund annually.

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GUEST EDITORIAL

As a kid at Redding Elementary I was nicknamed “the Mayor.” As a middle schooler at John Read I was nicknamed “Jaime Stop-talking-please.” As a current Westport resident, I nicknamed myself “Executive Editor” and write a newsletter every week.

A loss for words is something I don’t experience often.

When Susan asked me to write this guest editorial, I realized I didn’t have the right words for all of you.

In the absence of words, I found myself walking the dirt paths of New Pond Farm on Saturday evening. After being an EMT for nearly a decade and working in our schools since high school, I’ve learned that the only thing to ground me is time alone under an open sky, something I attribute to my afternoons at Extended Day or weekends camping with Troop 15 - to a childhood in Redding.

The small rocks rolling under my sneakers coupled with the sound of the creek brought me to the northwestern corner of the farm, between the footbridge and the treeline. With the sun tucked beneath the ridge - I looked out over the sundrenched earth and the fading blue sky. The moment was uncomfortable as the reflection of the farm rippled off of the water; its surface tension holding the weight of the world; the breeze echoing the sigh of a community in mourning.

I still could not find words. Just my own awkward reflection as my silhouette wrinkled with the wind.

In times of sadness, grief, anger, frustration, confusion - emptiness - we look to do something; anything. We look for ways to help, to move forward, to rationalize. We look for ways to find comfort as the uncomfortable takes hold every time we stop moving forward. We look for the right words.

We avoid this pause - this awkward, uncomfortable reflection. We may also need it.

Reflect on the kindness we’ve witnessed. Reflect on the person who held the door for us, the cashier who had our coffee order ready for us, the person who waved us through the intersection, the person who smiled as they walked past us. Reflect on the warmth of the winter sunset as much as the chill of the summer rain.

Reflect on the anger we’ve felt, the frustration we’ve felt, the anxiety and the sadness we’ve felt. Reflect on the life we’ve lived and recognize the beauty and the beast that is “humanity” - that in order to feel the comfort of warmth - we must also know the shock of cold.

Reflect as we build the strength to move forward again - toddling like a child as we struggle to find the ground we were thrown from as we learned that a foundation of our community has been lost.

As we wobble and falter and fall, allow the community around us to catch you and guide you to the next set of helping hands. Your neighbors, your friends, your family, your students, your school, your clergy, your book, your soft blanket, your dirt road, your open sky.

Reflect on the good memories and celebrate every new one for all that they’re worth and watch as the community - this community - rises up around you, just as it’s done for the generations before you and before me.

As you climb back up, as the ground moves beneath you again with a familiar rhythm and new purpose, with familiar strength and new focus - put your hands out and help those who need it, help those who need the time and the space to feel and grieve and process and just *be*, just as you had *been*.

Be human. Allow yourself to be uncomfortable, to ask for help, to feel all of the emotions, to feel *no* emotion. Take a walk alone, get dinner with your friends, cast that line out far, eat that slice of cake, play chess on your Chromebook until the sun comes up, yell into the forest, sing in your car, sleep late in the day, wake up early to catch a sunrise. It’s all human.

As I stood at the pond’s edge, awkward and uncomfortable and not finding the right words for all of you, I reflected back on the common ground that we all have: the community we share. It’s blessed me with lifelong memories and it’s held me and my family and my friends up time and time again when we’ve found ourselves down, like so many of us are right now. I’m proud to be from Redding and I’m honored to be known as “Mr. B” to so many of its youngest residents and I’m grateful for so many helping hands.

As I stood at the pond’s edge, awkward and uncomfortable, I realized that I will never have the right words for all of you.

Reflect on the memories of Brien that you’ve been blessed with - his little giggle, his radiant energy, his joy. Reach out your own hands to others when you’re ready to. Nestled amongst the trees, between the ridges and the valleys, the community is here for all of us. With its strength and the help of each other: we will all find our own words. ■

*With support,
Jaime Bairaktaris, Community Member*

Community mourns loss

By Jessie Wright



Photos courtesy of BSA Troop 15



Family, friends, and community members have grappled with the loss of Brien Karlson’s young life in the days following the tragic fire at his home. Flowers have begun to pile on the stone wall in front of the Karlson home, with those who knew Brien describing him as “a curious and gentle soul” with a love for adventure and animals.

A letter sent on February 15 from ER9 Superintendent Jason McKinnon and other school officials to district families described the news as “devastating” and offered support and resources for students and staff as they process this loss.

“During times of tragedy, we are reminded of the strength and capacity to support and care for one another as a community,” the letter reads. “As we grieve the loss of one of our students, we will find strength in our ability to show compassion as fellow community members, colleagues, and friends.”

A GoFundMe page set up on February 16 by Jessica Jacob and Elissa Williams to support

the Karlson family raised over \$140,000 in just 24 hours as donations and condolence messages poured in from friends and neighbors. Several local organizations sent messages to their communities, encouraging people to give through the page. To date, over 2,200 people have donated, raising over \$255,000.

“So many wonderful family and friends have reached out to see what they can do,” Jacob and Williams wrote. “When we experience our darkest moments, it is the people that lift us up that help us see the light.”

Jacob Cedusky, Committee Chair of Boy Scout Troop 15, said that “the way the community has come together has been inspiring” in the wake of the tragedy. He shared with the Sentinel some of the photos printed here of Brien reveling in his time as a scout, his love for nature and his friends on joyful display. ■

Donations can be made at gofundme.com/f/help-for-the-karlson-family

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We welcome letters to the Editor. Please be clear, civil and concise. Please e-mail us at editor@reddingsentinel.org

To the Editor,

Last Wednesday, Troop 15 lost a troop member and a friend. Brien’s loss has left an immense hole in our hearts.

We will always remember Brien for his easy smile, curiosity, love of nature, and tireless sense of adventure and fun. He loved to camp (even in winter), build fires, whittle, and be with his buddies. We regularly found Brien exploring in the woods, surveying a stream, or observing wildlife. After being in the troop for only four months, he attended summer camp at Sequassen and impressed our veteran leaders with his knowledge of the outdoors and survival skills. He loved being a scout and his energy and determination endeared him to all of us in the short year he was with the troop. His strength, kindness, and spirit will be greatly missed.

Troop 15 salutes Brien Karlson, our fellow scout and brother... taken from us too soon. ■

BSA Troop 15

To the Editor,

I would like to send my deepest condolences to the Karlson Family and hope they are feeling the love from our Redding community. For those seeking resources on navigating grief and trauma, the Mark Twain Library staff have compiled a list for young people and parents. ■

*Erin Shea Dummeyer
Director, Mark Twain Library*

To the Editor,

The Board and Staff of New Pond Farm Education Center send prayers and heartfelt condolences to the Karlson Family for their unimaginable loss, and to everyone in our treasured Redding community. We are all affected by this devastating tragedy. There are no words to adequately reflect our profound sadness and concern.

During these difficult times, our schools have shared many important sources of support with Redding families. In addition, if you’d find it helpful, we would like to extend an open invitation to our neighbors and friends to visit the farm for a peaceful walk. Spending time surrounded by the beauty of our rolling pastures, contented farm animals, and resident wildlife can be quite healing, and they are here for you. ■

*Ann Taylor
Executive Director, New Pond Farm Education Center*

To the Editor,

Sending deepest condolences to the Karlson family. ■

*Alice Smith
Staff member, Redding Town Hall*

OBITUARY

Brien Francis Karlson

April 11, 2011 – February 15, 2023



Brien Francis Karlson, 11, of Redding passed away on February 15, 2023.

Born in Norwalk to Tara Nan (Driscoll) Karlson and Scott James Karlson on April 11, 2011, young Brien brought immeasurable joy and laughter to his parents, sister, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, friends, and troop mates with his quick wit, easy laugh, and tireless sense of adventure.

A young but avid outdoorsman, Brien could often be found searching for frogs in the stream behind his home, trolling the water with his minnow trap, or carefully pacing the creeks of Nantucket searching for his precious sea creatures with a 5-gallon bucket and his net.

Brien’s pure, compassionate heart was evident in his every action, as was his love for all of God’s creatures. When a recent barefoot adventure ended with a snake bite to his foot, Brien emerged muddy and smiling as he noted how sorry he was to wake the sleeping reptile.

A member of Redding Boy Scout Troop 15, Brien put his expert knowledge of nature to work during the troop’s many overnight outings, projects, and other good works.

The pride and joy of his parents, Brien’s love of the outdoors was no accident. He would spend long hours with his mother and father deciding which bait was best for the day’s tide and peering through binoculars. An early riser, he treasured quiet mornings with his father and caring for his many animals alongside his mother.

And most of all, Brien got an absolute kick out of his sister.

They were a mischievous pair.

Brien’s memory will be cherished and kept alive by all who survive him, including his parents Tara and Scott; sister Kelly; grandmother Kathy Karlson of Danbury; grandparents Francis Xavier and Pamela Driscoll of West Haven; aunts and uncles

Teresa Karlson of Danbury; Lynda Zamolsky (Peter) of Summerville, SC; Andrew Karlson of Danbury; Brienne “BrieBrie” Driscoll of Norwalk; and Frisk Driscoll (Kristina) of Long Beach, CA; cousins Gwen Karlson and Alexis, Adam, and William Zomolsky; as well as many, many great aunts and uncles and second cousins. Brien was predeceased by his grandfather, Jim Karlson of Danbury.

May God bless Brien Francis, a one of a kind child who will be remembered forever by the many lives he touched.

All are invited to join the family in celebrating the life of young Brien.

A Memorial Service will be held on Thursday, February 23, 2023 at 3:30 p.m. at Jesse Lee Memorial United Methodist Church; 207 Main Street, Ridgefield. Interment will take place privately.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly asks donations be made in Brien’s honor to Redding Boy Scout Troop 15 and Cub Scout Pack 118; 382 Newtown Turnpike Redding, CT 06896. ■

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

ARPA proposals sent to Selectmen for consideration *Investments in fire protection, restoration recommended*

By Rob Sample

On February 16, Redding's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds Working Group sent several grant proposals to the Board of Selectmen for consideration.

The first group of proposals would augment the Town's fire-protection capabilities. This recommendation came in the wake of a devastating February 14 house fire on Diamond Hill Road in West Redding. The fire destroyed the residence and took the life of 11-year-old Brien Karlson, a sixth grader at John Read Middle School.

The three fire-protection proposals include:

- A proposal from the West Redding Fire District to help fund the purchase of a new state-of-the-art rescue pumper that would have the ability to carry water to the scene of a fire.
- A second proposal from the West Redding Fire District to purchase a new emergency generator as well as a larger ancillary propane tank. The generator and tank are expected to cost roughly \$50,000. The district's grant proposal totals \$250,000. The new pumper is expected to have a total price tag of more than \$1 million, with other sources of funding to be identified.
- A grant application for \$119,980 from the Georgetown Fire District. It would enable the installation of solar panels on the roof of the firehouse, cutting electricity costs.

Wes Higgins, Redding's Treasurer and head of the ARPA Funds Working Group, said the facts surrounding the February 14 fire must first be investigated by Town authorities – including the responding fire departments. The group's recommendation is that the Board of Selectmen should regard

any expenditure as compliant with laws and regulations governing the use of ARPA funds, he added.

"Is it fair to say that this would expedite improvements to our fire services...which might otherwise be delayed?" asked working group member Ward Mazzucco.

First Selectwoman Julia Pemberton responded that the ultimate goal is to ensure Redding's fire departments have the capability to respond to events such as the February 14 fire. "We want to look at our fire services holistically... to ensure we have the right equipment," she said.

Ultimately, any purchases will hinge on the recommendation of the Town's fire marshals, Pemberton said. "This equipment is still many months away," she noted.

Working group members voted unanimously to send the three proposals to the Board of Selectmen for study and possible approval. If the Selectmen give these proposals their thumbs up, Redding voters will then vote on them directly in a specially scheduled Representative Town Meeting.

The group also sent to the Board of Selectmen a \$250,000 grant proposal from BeFoundation to restore Georgetown's Granite Church. The remodeled church would serve as a community arts center, offering concerts, dances, classes, plays, and arts exhibits, and would have an on-site café. It would also host private events.

Working group members were largely enthusiastic about BeFoundation's plans. "I think this is a fabulous project that would be a catalyst for future development in Georgetown," said member Chris Parkin.

Working group member Brianna Carvalho noted the far-flung nature of Redding's neighborhoods. "We need spaces (like this) to come together in

Redding," she said.

A more nuanced approval was given to a recent proposal from the Redding Historical Society (RHS). RHS asked for \$71,600 in ARPA funding to help restore the historic Zalmon Read Barn. The working group recommended that the Board of Selectmen consider an ARPA grant of \$40,000 for the barn project, with RHS responsible for the remaining \$31,600.

"I walk by this building every day – when I see it, I'm home," said Higgins. "It's imperative that the community support its restoration." The grant recommendation earned unanimous support.

Of note, the Redding Historical Society requested additional ARPA funding for restoration of the Lonetown Farmhouse and Umpawaug Schoolhouse. However, because those buildings are both Town-owned, the working group members indicated that their restoration would more appropriately be borne by Redding's long-range capital planning budget.

Pemberton cautioned against viewing the latter two projects as work that might never happen. "We know this work is important, and we will look for money where we can get it," she said.

The group voted not to recommend a proposal for \$6,500 in ARPA funding to the Redding area chapter of the National Charity League. This was even after working group member Mary Dale Lancaster proposed to reduce the group's request to \$3,250, as the chapter draws about an equal number of members from Easton as from Redding.

"I was not convinced that the same financial need was present here that existed in other non-profits – such as the Grange and Redding's Boys Club/Girls Club," said working group member Jim Sanders. ■

Town Hall reopens

By Jessie Wright



Photo by Susan Clark

Town Hall staff situated themselves back at their regular desks on Tuesday, February 21, with many saying, "It's so nice to be back" as locals filtered in for a range of municipal business, some simply admiring the newly-renovated space.

The building had been closed for extensive repairs and renovations following a December 25, 2022 failure in the sprinkler system. A broken T-connection in the piping above the Health Department office allowed six thousand gallons of pressurized water to spread throughout the building on Christmas Day.

Over the last eight weeks, files and documents sat housed in large containers in the Town Hall parking lot while the building's flooring, carpeting, and bathrooms were replaced. Town Hall staff members worked from other locations or remotely, with residents conducting town business online or by appointment. The disruption in normal office

operations was challenging; however, the experience has presented a financial silver lining for the Town.

"The building looks great," said First Selectwoman Julia Pemberton. "I know it's a cliché, but lemonade from lemons really does apply here. Carpeting and bathrooms hadn't been touched since the renovation of Town Hall over 20 years ago. We were in dire need of updates that would have become a budget item. The work and ancillary expenses, all covered by insurance, could be as much as of \$250,000. Our insurance deductible was \$1,000."

Handsome, patterned grey carpeting now covers the floors, and the walls all have a fresh coat of paint. Artwork will be re-installed selectively in the coming weeks, in such a way that it can be periodically rotated.

The building has resumed its regular hours of Monday – Thursday, opening at 8:30 a.m., as of Tuesday, February 21. ■

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SPORTS

Knights fend off late attack

By Rocco Valluzzo



Photo by Rocco Valluzzo

Joel Barlow-Weston-Abbott Tech's (JBWA) Theo Spitzer sends the puck past Bethel-Brookfield-Danbury's Jordan Perrotti during a hockey game on Saturday, February 18. JBWA won 5-4.

What its offense started, its defense ultimately had to finish for the Joel Barlow-Weston-Abbott Tech (JBWA) hockey team on Saturday, February 18.

Taking on Bethel-Brookfield-Danbury (BBD), the Knights had built a seemingly comfortable lead at one point. Not about to go quietly, the host Ice Cats managed to cut the lead to one before the Knights emerged with a 5-4 win at the Danbury Ice Arena.

"We did the job, and at the end of the day, we got the win," said JBWA Coach Bob Stearns. "I'll take that."

The Knights, who defeated the same opponent earlier in the season, wasted no time in going on the offensive early with several shots on the BBD goal. Some key saves by Ice Cat goalie Thomas

Fernandes would keep the Knights off the board for the time being.

JBWA would not be denied. With 10:46 left in the first period, Spencer Thomas scored on a wraparound shot from behind the goal to break the stalemate. Kai Smith got the assist for a 1-0 lead.

About six minutes later, the Ice Cats answered. Reter Delco managed to sneak a shot by Knight goalie Connor Thomas to tie it at 1-1. Brody Dietter got the assist.

Despite the Knights controlling the puck for much of the time remaining and with many shots on goal, it remained a 1-1 game at the close of the first period.

When play resumed, the Knights kept up the pressure, and it paid off with a three-goal spurt in the span of little more than two minutes.

Picking up his second goal of the day, Spencer Thomas found the net at 12:41 as Tommy Kane and Emmet Arees assisted to get their team back in the lead. Only 22 seconds later, Smith made it a 3-1 game.

At 11:37, a shot by Graham Jacobs was slowed down by Fernandes, but the puck ultimately escaped his reach and trickled into the goal to put the Knights up 4-1.

"We're just trying to get a lot of pucks to the net," said Stearns, noting his team focuses on that in practice. "We did that. We had a lot of good shot opportunities."

It would be a 4-2 affair after three frames when Dietter scored at 2:32 with Kevin Dykes assisting.

Spencer Thomas completed his hat-trick at the 9:48-mark of the third period by skating past the defense to send the puck into the net as Smith assisted.

With a lot of time remaining, the Ice Cats still posed the threat, especially in the last four minutes. BBD cut the lead a bit with 3:50 left, as Zach Kappus made it 5-3 with Dietter getting the assist. Less than a minute later, the latter got another assist, this time on a goal by Giovanni Smeriglio, who scored on a breakaway to make it a one-goal game.

"He's quick," said Stearns. "We made a couple of mistakes as well, but good hockey players force people to make mistakes. We knew they weren't going to give up."

Down by a goal heading into the final minute, the Ice Cats pulled their goalie in exchange for an extra skater but were turned away by the Knights.

JBWA, now 10-6-1, ends the regular season on Saturday when it visits Cheshire at 7:00 p.m. ■

Romano wins Class M gold medal for Falcons

By Rocco Valluzzo



File photo

Joel Barlow High's Scott Romano (top) was the winner of the 138-pound class at the state Class M wrestling championships on Friday and Saturday, February 17-18.

The toughest competition of the season to date awaited the Joel Barlow High wrestling team at the state Class M tournament.

The Falcons were one of 31 teams competing at the two-day tournament. With representatives in nine out of the 14 weight classes, they took 21st overall with 51 points at Jonathan Law High School in Milford on Friday and Saturday, February 17-18.

Avon was the winner with 196.5 points, a half-a-point ahead of runner-up RHAM of Hebron. Foran was third with 187.

Barlow's best performance and gold medal came courtesy of Scott Romano. Ranked first in the 138-pound class with a 22-4 record, he won all four of his matches for the championship.

Receiving a bye in the first round, Romano then pinned 16th-ranked Emilio Crocco of North Haven in one minute, 13 seconds. He then took on ninth-ranked John Murphy of Avon and won by a 12-4 decision.

This advanced him to the semi-finals, where he took on fifth-seeded Nicholas Koops of Berlin and got the victory by a pin in 5:28.

It was a battle of the top two seeds for the championship. Romano did not allow a point in a 7-0 victory over Foran's Craig Mager.

In the 106-pound class, the Falcons were ranked 13th. Sophie Brault needed only 37 seconds to pin Foran's Elizabeth Diblase in her first match but then was pinned by Peter Annis of Suffield/Windsor

Locks in 4:56.

Ryan Knob also received a victory in his opening match at 120 pounds. Ranked 16th, he pinned Law's Jared Saludes in 33 seconds but was pinned by Bethel's Jerry Hill in 1:05 in the next round.

Fifth-ranked Stryder Hanson received a bye in the first round of the 132-pound class. He had a close match against Platt's Edward Walters before hanging on for a 12-10 decision but was pinned by North Branford's Carter Burgess in 4:58 in the quarterfinals.

Anthony Azzara was seeded 17th at 145 pounds but was upset in the first round when he was pinned by 18th-ranked Harley Emmons of RHAM. Max Singleton also lost in the first round of the 152-pound class when he was pinned in 1:26 by Kevin Chen of Foran.

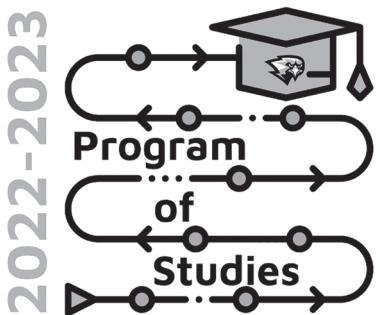
Getting a bye in the first round of the 160-pound class, Logan Bacas won in the second round by pinning Law's Luciano Mazella in 2:48. He ran into some trouble in the quarterfinals getting pinned by second-ranked Conlan Simard of Berlin in 34 seconds.

Jacob Erdo was ranked 13th at 170 pounds and opened with a pin against Masuk's Andrew Ronaghan in 2:36. He was then pinned in 2:28 by Ellis Tech's Xavier Dietz.

Also competing for Barlow, Dylan Cook was ranked 13th at 182 pounds but was upset by 19th-ranked Jhandel Marchial of New London with a pin in 1:59. ■

Barlow Beat

By Griffin Ellis



JOEL BARLOW HIGH SCHOOL
Regional District #9
Easton-Redding, Connecticut

At this time of the year, 8th graders through 11th graders are choosing their classes for next year. Joel Barlow High School offers an abundance of courses, with 17 of them being taught at the AP or college level. To graduate, students must take three years of science, math, and history; four years of English; and acquire credit in wellness, fine and applied arts, world language, the junior writing portfolio, and, new this

year, mastery-based learning, where a student demonstrates how they have used their skills and learning to enrich the communities of Redding and Easton. These graduation requirements ensure that students experience an interdisciplinary approach to learning. However, as long as these requirements are met, students have the freedom to choose their own courses throughout their four years of high school.

As a senior, I have experienced the process of choosing courses at Barlow and have taken classes at different levels of rigor. Some of my favorite classes have been Jewelry and Metalsmithing, Biology, Sculpture, and United States History. Some other highly regarded classes include Computer Programming, Psychology, and Forensics. Students are aided by their guidance counselor to take courses that match their interests and offer a manageable workload.

Eleventh graders are starting

their Junior Parent Conferences, where juniors and their parents will work with the Counseling Office to talk about post-secondary planning. During these meetings, counselors introduce the college admissions process to students and their parents, which will help students prepare and apply to colleges over the course of the next year. Meanwhile, seniors are finalizing their post-secondary decisions, with many of them hearing back from colleges and choosing where they would like to attend college in the future.

For more information on Barlow's offerings and college acceptance statistics, go to the school website (joelbarlowps.org), and under school resources you will find the "School Profile 2022-23". This document is also used by college admissions officers to better understand what's available to students at our high school. ■

ERU Soccer

By Jessie Wright

Registration for spring in-house and traveling soccer through the Easton Redding United Soccer Club is now open.

The in-house program is Redding-based and for children entering Pre-K through second grade. Practices are scheduled to begin April 19, with the season running through June 10.

The travel program is for

children ages 8-15 and is geared to competitive players who are willing to make a significant time commitment. The deadline to register is March 4. Practices will begin in late March, with the season running through June 11. ■

For more information and to register, visit erunited.org



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Saving a sycamore

Tree relocated from Community Center to Town Green

By Donna Christopher



Photos by John and Marion Hichwa

Contractors painstakingly uprooted a sycamore tree on Thursday, February 16 from the pickleball courts at Redding Community Center next to the parking area and brought it to the Town Green for replanting.

The tree fills a void on the Town Green left by the removal of a dead tree some years ago, which created “a big gap,” First Selectwoman Julia Pemberton said.

The sycamore is “an absolutely beautiful tree” that will now provide shade in the area on the green where performers set up for the Concerts on the Green.

“They perform in the blazing sun that time of day,” Pemberton said. “We notice the audience will be seated far away. As the tree

grows, it will provide shade.”

Pemberton recalled when the dead tree was removed from the Town Green, the Park and Recreation Department asked for a budget item for its replacement. No replacement has been planted until now.

The tree was among a row of trees that were planted when the Community Center was completed on Lonetown Road and was slated for removal with the building of the courts.

“When the pickleball courts were built, I was aware that tree would have to be taken down. To lose that tree was something I did not appreciate having to contemplate,” Pemberton said. “I posed a question. What would it

cost to move it to the Green? To his credit, Rob Blick (Park and Recreation Director) remembered we talked about the tree.”

Marion and John Hichwa were playing pickleball on Thursday when they saw the tree being uprooted.

“We were intrigued by how the workers spent hours meticulously digging around the trees to get it ready to transplant it on the Redding Green,” the Hichwas said in an e-mail to the Sentinel. “Three cheers to the Town of Redding for saving the tree!”

Former Town Tree Warden Sean McNamara was consulted about the placement of the sycamore at its new location, Pemberton said.

Boardwalk at Lonetown Marsh now complete

By Jessie Wright



Photos by Alice Smith

Repairs to the boardwalk through Lonetown Marsh are now complete, following several months of work this winter. Nazzaro Inc., an excavation and construction company based in Georgetown, performed the job.

Redding’s Conservation Commission had been working towards repairing the boardwalk for many years, but they had run into some delays related to the

planning and supplies for the project. After being approved as a capital project by the Town two years ago, the boardwalk received an approval for additional funds to complete the work by the Board of Finance on December 19, 2022.

The quarter-mile wooden pathway, now wheelchair-accessible, winds to an observation platform in the marsh, where people can observe the wetlands

and wildlife in any season.

As Redding’s first purchase of open space in 1967, Lonetown Marsh is an important piece of land in the area, with its purchase spurring the creation of the State’s first Inland Wetland Regulations. It has been used in the past as an outdoor classroom area for students, conveniently located directly across Lonetown Road from Redding Elementary School.

Redding Sentinel



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As egg prices rise, locals go straight to the source / Continued from page 1



the scope of your farm operation, you may be able to receive farm status, which would lower your per acre use value, according to John Ford, Redding’s Assessor. That, in turn, would decrease a property tax bill.

Property owners wishing to qualify for farm status need to submit an application to the Assessor’s office between September 1 and October 31 of any given year.

“After the application is received, I would inspect the property to see what type of property the applicant is engaged in,” Ford said. “The property owner would have to demonstrate they were engaged in farming,” he said, which they can do by showing crops under cultivation, livestock, or poultry egg production, for example.

According to Ford, if you’re approved as a farm, “the tax impact is significant.”

“There are eight farm classification values ranging from \$40/acre to \$1,880/acre,”



Photos by Jessie Wright

Ford said. “The Town uses the State Department of Agriculture recommended farm values that are updated every five years.”

On the flipside, most land in town is valued between \$15,000 and \$25,000 per acre, according to Ford.

Currently, there are approximately 34 farm operations in Redding, Ford said.

Which begs the question: Will your property become the 35th? ■



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“The exhilaration of bridging cultures” Founding member of the Peace Corps reflects on its early years

By Pamela Brown



Photo by Carol Morgan

Dan Sharp, a Meadow Ridge resident, helped to establish the Peace Corps amidst a long career in international affairs.

Peace Corps Week is recognized February 26 to March 4 to commemorate March 1, 1961, the day President John F. Kennedy established the agency. According to peacecorps.gov, more than 240,000 Americans have served the U.S. and countries around the globe as Peace Corps volunteers since its founding.

As one of the founding members of the Peace Corps, Dan Sharp hoped to bridge the gap between the U.S. and foreign countries to advocate for peace.

“The more we understand the cultures, economics, and policies of other countries, the more America will effectively communicate with world leaders,” said Sharp, 90, now a resident at Meadow Ridge. “I was unusually interested in foreign affairs, highly motivated, and proud to represent the U.S. government.”

The Peace Corps is an agency of the U.S. government whose mission is to promote world peace and friendship by providing trained volunteers to interested countries and promoting better understanding of one another.

“The notion was the Peace Corps volunteers would become

ambassadors of good will and mutual understanding and make a contribution to help other countries,” explained Sharp, who worked with the Corps for seven years – overseas and in Washington, D.C. “It was valuable to them and to the country because they bring back an understanding of, and a positive feeling about, the country they were working in.”

In 1951, Sharp left his position as Deputy Attorney General of California and traveled to D.C. to help create the structure of the Corps and draft its first legislation. “Sargent Shriver, Kennedy’s brother-in-law and Director of the Corps, had me named to our U.N. (United Nations) Delegation, reporting to Adlai Stevenson, the delegation head, to negotiate the first treaties to start the Peace Corps. Later he sent me to 30 different countries to handle problems between the Corps and the country’s government,” said Sharp, who speaks French, Spanish, and Portuguese.

Sharp was instrumental in negotiating the first five treaties that started the Peace Corps in Rome, Italy (Food and Agriculture Organization), Geneva, Switzerland (World Health Organization) Paris, France (UNESCO), Montreal, Canada (ICAO), and then the Corps in Lima, Peru and La Paz, Bolivia.

“It was exciting. I worked with the most interesting, motivated people in the country. It was an incredibly influential experience,” said Sharp, who after the Peace Corps served in numerous roles, including founder of the Adlai Stevenson Institute of International Affairs, CEO of Eisenhower’s American Assembly at Columbia University, and designer/leader of policy programs for many international events.

Sharp’s extensive career also included roles as Advisor to the Secretary General of the Club of Madrid in Spain; Founder/CEO

of the Royal Institution World Science Assembly; Director of the first worldwide Rule of Law conference in Vienna; and CEO of the Eisenhower Foundation. He also worked with the World Health Organization and Centers for Disease Control to alert the world to pandemics. Earlier, he had a successful career with Xerox in NYC and was an adjunct professor at Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs.

Growing up in San Francisco, Sharp had an interest in international affairs from an early age. He was influenced by his father, an admiralty lawyer. “I was more sensitive than most kids to what was going on in the world and totally immersed in international affairs my whole life,” said Sharp. He was the president of his high school and university debate team, an officer in student government in college, and head of the UC Delegation to Model U.N. Upon graduating from the University of California-Berkeley with a degree in International Affairs, he served in the Army during the Korean War, rising to the position of acting Division Provost Marshal and Captain of Judge Advocate General Corps. He graduated from Harvard Law School and became Deputy Attorney General in California and Chairman of the Young Adult Study Group of the World Affairs Council of Northern California.

Sharp’s passion for politics continues at Meadow Ridge. He now serves as moderator of its Great Decisions program on world affairs.

“Every job I had required me to bridge a culture and make some sort of contribution to cross that bridge – improving relations, and to make the world a better place,” he said. “When you get the exhilaration of learning how to bridge cultures, you don’t want to give it up.” ■

Fairfield County’s Giving Day

Redding non-profits participate in 10th-annual fundraiser

By Jessie Wright

Fairfield County’s Giving Day, an annual 24-hour giving marathon powered by Fairfield County’s Community Foundation, is taking place on Thursday, February 23. Non-profit organizations from around Fairfield County have registered to participate, with people encouraged to donate on Thursday to the organizations and causes that make an impact in their community.

Five non-profits with services or addresses in Redding are participating this year: Mark Twain Library, New Pond Farm Education Center, Westbrook Nature School, Responder Wellness Inc., and Danbury Area Refugee Assistance. With focuses ranging from education and the natural world to services for first responders and immigrants, these organizations are part of a local non-profit community that makes a difference in many people’s lives.

A complete list of participating organizations in this year’s Giving Day can be found at fcgives.org and can be searched by location, organization, and cause. Each non-profit hosts their own fundraising page, with some offering challenges and incentives to inspire higher levels of giving.

Fairfield County’s Giving Day has been an initiative over the last ten years to address the fundraising capacity needs of local non-profits by providing tools and resources so organizations of any size can maximize their efforts year-round. Organizations that register to participate are provided with online training, tips, and tools for successful fundraising.

Fairfield County’s Community Foundation announced last November that the 2023 Giving

Day will be the tenth and final time the foundation will present the online event, looking to focus on serving local non-profits through other responsive programming after this year.

“As we close this chapter, we look forward to celebrating this last traditional Giving Day as a true testament of how our community can collectively strengthen the organizations on the front lines of creating positive impact,” said Mendi Blue Paca, President & CEO of Fairfield County’s Community Foundation. “With our new strategic focus, we will be increasingly guided by the people and organizations closest to the issues facing our county. We couldn’t be more inspired by the possibilities.”

Since launching in 2014, Fairfield County’s Giving Day has raised more than \$13.75 million for area non-profits. Last year, over 400 nonprofits received more than \$2.2 million through almost 17,000 gifts, by nearly 13,000 individuals and families – with many of those contributions under \$100.

Fairfield County’s Community Foundation, the foundation behind the annual Giving Day, works to “create a county where every person has an equitable opportunity to thrive.” The foundation partners with local organizations, non-profits, businesses, and philanthropists to address challenges and identify opportunities to create a stronger, more vibrant community. The foundation has awarded more than \$390 million in grants to non-profits in Fairfield County and beyond over the last three decades. ■

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REAL ESTATE

January 2023 real estate report

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

Believe it or not, the spring real estate market traditionally begins and starts to pick up speed after the Super Bowl! Since the beginning of February, 217 new listings have hit the market in Fairfield County. In Redding, three new listings have come onto the market with 38 new listings in the surrounding towns which we track for our monthly real estate report.

Bottom line, the best advice to potential sellers: it is never too soon to prepare for the spring market and be in a position to list sooner rather than later. Buyers would like to enjoy their new houses in time for this summer!

Redding Sold - December	Sale Price	List Price	%/ List Price	Days on Market
352 Black Rock Turnpike	\$371,000	\$375,000	-1%	61
563 Redding Road	\$675,000	\$675,000	0%	24
74 Seventy Acre Road	\$743,000	\$743,000	0%	35
Average	\$596,333	\$597,667	-0.20%	40

January 2023													
Town	Current Inventory	Homes Sold		Average Days on Market		Average List Price		Average Sale Price		Percent Sale Price >/< List Price		Average Price/SqFt	
	As of February 18	January	2023	January	2023	January	2023	January	2023	January	2023	January	2023
Redding	8	3	3	40	40	\$597,667	\$597,667	\$596,333	\$596,333	0%	0%	\$374	\$374
Ridgefield	33	17	17	60	60	\$1,017,571	\$1,017,571	\$1,027,118	\$1,027,118	1%	1%	\$332	\$332
Weston	16	7	7	47	47	\$1,098,571	\$1,098,571	\$1,070,714	\$1,070,714	-3%	-3%	\$305	\$305
Wilton	21	7	7	37	37	\$1,017,571	\$1,017,571	\$1,036,714	\$1,036,714	2%	2%	\$324	\$324
Easton	14	6	6	76	76	\$887,833	\$887,833	\$767,250	\$767,250	-14%	-14%	\$349	\$349
Bethel	8	12	12	50	50	\$454,717	\$454,717	\$454,992	\$454,992	0%	0%	\$255	\$255
Newtown	29	14	14	48	48	\$560,621	\$560,621	\$554,786	\$554,786	-1%	-1%	\$261	\$261
Average	18	9	9	51	51	\$804,936	\$804,936	\$786,844	\$786,844	-2%	-2%	\$314	\$314

John Talley and Bill Whitehead are Realtors with Vincent and Whittemore Real Estate.

WHY REDDING?

John and Marion Hichwa Arriving six decades ago... and choosing to stay | By John Karrel



Photo by Michael Hichwa
John and Marion Hichwa, with their dog, Sammy.

The Sentinel profiled John and Marion Hichwa in its September 1 issue last year, celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary and their six decades of living in Redding.

Having reconnected in recent months with “Mr. Hichwa”, my Phys Ed teacher at Redding Elementary School and John Read Middle School in the 1960’s, I couldn’t resist the chance to probe a bit further during my first-ever visit to their home, discussing the reasons that brought John and Marion to Redding initially and that now account for their not thinking of living anywhere else today.

How did they hear about Redding?

A job listing for Redding Elementary School on a 3x5

notecard at Springfield College first caught John’s eye when he was seeking out Phys Ed teaching experience. Having grown up in Bristol – a “great place to be from” – he had some familiarity with the state, but not Redding. John was interviewing for other jobs in Connecticut at the high school level, in Delaware and Stonington, for instance, where he would be part of a team of teachers. The Redding Elementary School position would allow him to “be my own boss”, and that’s the offer he accepted. John started in the fall of 1960, liked his first-year experience, and returned for the 1961-62 school year.

What qualities made Redding seem like a good place to live?

John lived happily with an

elderly Redding couple for those first two years, paying a \$25 weekly rental. He had his own upstairs room and shared TV viewing with his hosts, who provided daily breakfast and dinner. He felt welcomed by the other Redding Elementary faculty members, and they responded to his enthusiasm. He vividly recalls meeting “Annie” Marshall – legendary fourth-grade teacher for many decades – who asked him what he was going to do in his fifties, referring to the amount of physical movement that went into his teaching. (He’d never considered the question before!) He taught fourth, fifth, and sixth graders four 30-minute classes each week and was very involved in each class.

He would frequently approach the more experienced teachers to compare impressions of individual kids, and they started to do likewise with him. He loved his work, thought the other teachers were great, and reveled in the kids and their energy. (Among other recollections, he notes the author of this column appearing in full catcher’s equipment for a pick-up baseball game.) The Hichwas also can’t forget a shower thrown for Marion by the teachers in the spring of 1962 at the West Redding Firehouse, a few weeks before their June wedding.

What makes their home special to them?

Their Beauiles Lane home

rewards their love of the outdoors and, notably, Marion’s passion for gardening. Their prior Redding home was a rental on Lonetown Road. The Hichwas’s desire for a house they could call their own led them to a piece of land on Beauiles Lane; construction began in the spring of 1967, with move-in Thanksgiving that year. One of Marion’s initial projects was creating a path for John’s daily walk to and from John Read Middle School, where he had started teaching the year before, when it opened. Today, the Hichwa property is notable for Marion’s yards and yards of stone walls, her gardens, and a tennis court that has gotten significant use over the decades.

Has anything surprised them about living here?

They are ceaselessly aware of their good fortune to have landed here and feel close to nature every day. They raised three kids here who have gone on to create their own lives beyond Redding – including raising the Hichwas’s five grandchildren.

What do they like most about living in Redding?

“You can be very friendly with people, or you can be left alone.” An initial instance of the town’s friendliness was a call John received not long after he arrived from the artist Alan Hermes, asking

him to come over for tennis. For years, the two would play on Alan and Helen Hermes’ Route 107 court on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons at 4:30 p.m. John and Marion cite the Mark Twain Library, the Redding Community Center, New Pond Farm, and the Land Trust as vibrant parts of the community.

What would they like to see changed or improved?

After moments of reflection, they concede there is progress to be made in the years ahead in the realm of diversity (not unlike much of Fairfield County).

What are their favorite things to do in town?

Pickleball, Tuesday through Friday mornings, leads their list, possibly representing a permanent segue away from their decades of tennis. They also appreciate the diversity of offerings at the Mark Twain Library, and attending basketball games at Barlow, often because current players are offspring of John’s former students.

Six decades of local friendships and experiences – all stemming from a 3x5 notecard on a college job board in 1960. ■

Finance Board approves annual report / Continued from page 1

Centofani also addressed how the Redding Board of Education is funded during the fiscal year. Currently, purchase orders are done on a check-by-check basis instead of from a pre-set amount.

The accounting system pays the purchase orders (POs) before the close of the financial records for the year. This can delay when the Town’s financial records can be submitted for an audit.

“Waiting to pay all the open POs is what’s delaying the process,” said Centofani. “The whole PO system was designed so that you don’t hold up the close.”

In order to accommodate the

Board of Education’s financial records for fiscal year 2021-22, the Town needed an extension from the State. Closing the records by October 1, or November 1 at the latest, would avoid such necessity in the future.

“The norm is to have more of a fund and settle up the next year as far as what’s not spent,” said Centofani. “It’s something to look at to be able to get the financials done a little bit sooner. It takes the timing of their close off the table for the Town. Holding the year all the way into December, when you’re still paying against last year’s budget in December – it’s

impossible that you’ll ever get an audit done on time.”

Redding Finance Director Jim Sanders said the Board of Finance should not allow a close that extends into November and December. Instead, it should re-evaluate what the close process is with the Board of Education to ensure that by September 1, the Board of Finance can move forward with a final set of numbers and start the reporting process to complete the Town’s audit in time. ■

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BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Taking the stage at Wiremill Academy

By Justin Reynolds



Photos courtesy of Wiremill Academy

Since 2011, Mary Jo Duffy has been helping local students cultivate their acting and musical theater chops as the Artistic Director and Co-Founder of Wiremill Academy, a performing arts school located at 12 Old Mill Road in Georgetown.

"There are a lot of places where kids can be in a show, but there aren't as many places where they can actually learn and spend time working on a scene and experience what it takes to be an actor or actress," Duffy said. "We love to teach kids how to rehearse, we teach private voice and acting lessons, and we also do audition prep to help students who want to major in music or theater."

Wiremill Academy produces two main shows a year: one in the fall and one in the spring. In April, Wiremill Academy students will be performing *The Little Mermaid* at Wilton High School's Little Theater. Additionally, the academy runs three summer camps – one for the youngest students (grades 1 through 5), one for middle school-age students (grades 3 through 9), and one for high schoolers and older middle school students. For kids who want to hone specific skills, Wiremill also offers improv classes, acting classes, piano classes, and musical theater classes.

"Most of the time, kids want to do the shows; they're the most popular because they're a lot of fun," Duffy said. "But we also incorporate teaching them how to audition, teaching them how to be good company members, and teaching them how to support one another."

According to Duffy, average



class sizes hover between 8 to 12 kids, and shows involve 40 to 45 kids.

Wiremill Academy was founded twelve years ago by Duffy and two partners who've since moved out of state; all three of them were professional actors.

"As we got older and had families of our own, we realized we didn't want to go on the road as much," Duffy said. "We wanted to be available for our families, so we went into teaching."

Growing up, Duffy was "blessed with incredible teachers" – voice teachers, theater teachers, and other mentors. She originally started teaching herself to help out at her daughter's school.

"At the time, I didn't know if I had the ability to be a good teacher," Duffy said. "But once I started, I never looked back. I love to listen to a child and say, 'Oh, I know how to fix this!'"

For Duffy, teaching has become a calling.

"When you see someone who can't match pitch when you meet them, and then they're going off to college to study voice, it's really gratifying," she said.

Some of Duffy's students have gone on to become performance arts professionals. But in Duffy's opinion, that's not the most important part of enrolling in a school like Wiremill Academy.

"My concern is helping them study theater and teaching them how to work together as a group," she said. "It doesn't matter if it impacts what they end up doing for a living. They learn how to be good friends; they learn how to think outside the box. When kids go through a theater program and

find themselves standing in front of a board room giving a speech a few years later, their experiences here are so valuable."

Students are also taught how to manage expectations and how "the puzzle of casting has nothing to do with their talent."

"I've auditioned for good friends and wasn't given the role because I wasn't the right fit," Duffy said. "We teach kids how important the ensemble is and how important every part is. We teach them how to create a character. Even if it's a background character, we teach them to make a whole history for that person, what their favorite colors are, and why they're crossing the stage with a shopping bag, for example."

Most of Wiremill Academy's classes are held after school. Recently, however, Duffy has been trying to gauge whether she should start offering classes during the day to serve an ever-growing contingent of homeschooled students.

Primarily, Wiremill Academy serves students from Redding, Wilton, Ridgefield, and Weston, though some come from further distances. Its central location near Georgetown has helped students from those four towns, who may otherwise never have met, build lasting friendships with one another.

If you're interested in learning more about Wiremill Academy, Duffy suggests visiting wiremillacademy.com and taking it from there. "Some people sign up for classes right away," Duffy said. "Other students are more shy. Come take the first class. If you like it, great, if not, no problem."

Recently, a grandmother who is a former teacher and picks her granddaughter up after class twice a week gave Duffy some words of encouragement.

"She told me that she sees her granddaughter and her friends running and laughing, happy and frolicking, after they get out of class and she said, 'I don't know what you're doing, but you're doing something right,'" Duffy recalled. "That's the exact kind of atmosphere I'm trying to create."

Police department round-up

By Donna Christopher



Photo by Lisa Kuller

A car stuck on the railroad tracks at the Topstone Road crossing February 6.

Vehicle vs. trees on Route 53

A 30-year-old man was taken to the hospital after he struck two trees in a motor vehicle accident on February 7.

Police said Alexis Rodriguez was driving southbound on Route 53 at 3:53 p.m. when his vehicle hit the trees causing damage to its passenger side and front.

The motorist told the responding officer he had an accident at work earlier and had dental work and was in pain, and that he was thinking about that when he hit the trees, police said.

Rodriguez was transported by Redding Ridge EMS for treatment.

Three incidents of ID fraud

A local citizen was a reported victim of three incidents of identity fraud this month. The resident reported the alleged crime to Redding police at department headquarters on February 11, police said.

The individual said she received a text notification on her phone related to her Discover credit card for a charge of \$157.10 she did not authorize and from Chase Bank for a charge of \$144.96 she also did not authorize, according to police.

The third incident was when the resident notified Discover of the unauthorized charge and found out her Social Security number was on the dark web.

The resident told police she reported the fraudulent activity

to authorities after being directed by Experian to file a police report before opening an account with the credit protection company.

Car stuck on railroad tracks

A car became stuck after turning onto the railroad tracks at Topstone Crossing on February 6 and was pushed off the track by officers "without incident", according to Redding Police Department Chief Mark O'Donnell.

O'Donnell said, "(Police) were able to push the car and contact Metro-North Railroad. No train arrived."

A witness to the incident said she called 911 when a motorist turned onto Simpaug Turnpike but ended up stuck on the railroad tracks. The witness lives near the crossing and said she has seen several cars become stuck, and some struck by trains, at that location before.

In a previous December 5, 2017 incident, a car that was caught on the tracks at the same location was hit by a Danbury line train traveling through Redding, according to WTNH. The driver in the incident was not hurt, the report said.

On January 12, 2018, a driver was traveling on back roads from Danbury when their GPS instructed them to drive in the direction of the train tracks on Topstone Road, according to The News-Times. In that incident, the driver was able to get out of the car before it was struck by an approaching train. ■

Riverside Fence buys Homefront Farmers

Redding residents add to business portfolio that also includes Nod Hill Brewery

By Justin Reynolds

Homefront Farmers, the Redding-based company that brings an organic yard-to-table dining experience to local households, has new owners.

On January 27, Redding residents Rob and Nancy Kaye became the new owners of Homefront Farmers after their company, Riverside Fence, closed the deal to buy the business from John Carlson and Taffy Miller.

Moving forward, the Kaye family – who also own Fence Source, Silvestri Fencing, and Nod Hill Brewery – will lease the business's 11-acre headquarters at 130 Picketts Ridge Road from Carlson and Miller, who still own the property.

"We're excited to join forces with the Riverside Fence team," said Marissa Perri, Director of Sales and Marketing at Homefront Farmers, in a press release. "The announcement is bittersweet as it closes a chapter in our company's history under the leadership of our founder, John Carlson, who laid the foundation for what we have become today, but we're looking forward to this next chapter under the guidance of the Riverside Fence team."

In an interview with the Sentinel, Perri said that Carlson started thinking about selling his business after being diagnosed with a motor neuron disease last spring.

"Given the diagnosis, John and Taffy want to live their lives as fully as possible, which started with John hiking 500 miles on the El Camino in Spain," Perri said. "The trip was meditative and transformative for their family, and

ultimately culminated with the sale of the business so that John and Taffy could enter this next chapter of their lives untethered."

According to Perri, Homefront Farmers and Riverside Fence were already business partners, with the fencing company building garden enclosures for Homefront.

"With similar cultures and approach to white-glove client service, it was a natural progression for the Kaye family to purchase the business and fold Homefront Farmers into the Riverside Fence umbrella," she said.

Since a partnership was already established between Homefront and Riverside, the decision to sell the business to the Kaye family was an easy one for Carlson and Miller.

"They were encouraged and reassured that Rob would grow the business, and that the management team they put in place would faithfully continue the mission to inspire environmental stewardship through organic home gardening," Perri continued.

Though the Homefront team will miss their former owners, they're enjoying getting to know the new ones.

"I've been working closely with the Kayes for the last several months on this business transition, and we are all really excited about the new energy they are bringing into the company," Perri said.

Homefront Farmers adds to an expanding portfolio of businesses for the Kaye family. If all their ventures have something in common, it's a major focus on sustainability.

"Something I've really started

to understand since working with Rob and Nancy is that sustainability and our impact on the environment is very important to them," Perri said, adding that Nod Hill Brewery and Riverside Fence headquarters, located at 137 Ethan Allen Highway in Ridgefield, is 100% solar-powered. "They have a pollinator meadow and myriad other sustainable practices not common in businesses today. There's a synergy and continuity to the mission of all of our businesses with a focus on our environmental impact and footprint."

Despite new ownership, current Homefront Farmers customers should expect the same caliber of

service they've grown accustomed to, Perri said.

"The quality of our craftsmanship and our white-glove service that separates us from other gardening companies will remain the same," she said. "Under the guidance of Rob Kaye and Riverside Fence, we're looking forward to refining and streamlining our processes to make garden construction and repairs as seamless as possible for our clients."

Looking ahead, the future is bright for Homefront Farmers.

"We adore and respect John and Taffy and wish them the best in their endeavors," Perri

said. "There's an undercurrent of excitement around future growth opportunities and bringing the 'Homefront experience' to other markets." ■



For more information on Homefront Farmers, visit homefrontfarmers.com

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BOOK REVIEW

Icarus in Love

By Antoinette Brim

Poetry. 90 pages. \$14.00.



It was apt timing to read *Icarus in Love*, the second collection of poems published by Connecticut Poet Laureate Antoinette Brim-Bell (at the time of the book's publication, she was Antoinette Brim), over Valentine's Day week.

Her contemplations – at times tender, at others, fierce – of love's many shapes contain moments of the mundane (“*I shake my head slowly; add a copious splash of bleach to the dishwater / and begin to scrub away what remains from the evening meal.*”) and the fanciful (*My heart lights a cigarette, stains its filter lusty red and exhales impatience.*)

Not limited to romantic love, Brim-Bell's poems explore the depths of relationships between family, self, God, and the love across generations and those who came before. The collection is divided into four parts: “Lift-off”, “A Meditation on the Film Killer of Sheep”, “We Are the Bread,” and “Soon”, each including its own titular poem.

The metaphorical thread of the myth of Icarus is woven throughout the collection, though at times it feels unnecessary to the artistic moments Brim-Bell so beautifully hangs together. Her meditations on womanhood, blackness, and heartbreak are particularly compelling.

As the book progresses, there is the gentle yet powerful feeling of Brim-Bell using her work to both heal her own wounds and to invite the reader to re-explore his or her

own pain in new light. She invites the reader into a relationship as she writes, beckoning toward glimpses of light. By urging herself to shed the fears of past failures, she asks the reader to look once more to the sky.

“I will pad quietly into your rooms wrap you in quilts made from old men's suits.

Come, we will trace the constellations with our fingertips.

You will be amazed at how close the stars really are.”

Her poetry echoes the lyricism of an artist who lives and works between mediums. In addition to being a poet, Brim-Bell is also a printmaker and collage artist. Some of her past exhibitions shown around Connecticut have combined both her written word and prints and photography, incorporating at times the musical tradition of jazz.

Brim-Bell was named Connecticut's eighth Poet Laureate in 2022 and will serve in the honorary position until 2025. The role was established in 1985 by the State of Connecticut to serve as an advocate for poetry and promote the appreciation of – and participation in – poetry and literary arts activities among Connecticut citizens.

I was struck by the richness of her talent and the value she brings to the landscape of contemporary poetry here in our state. She serves as Secretary of the Board of Directors of Indolent Arts Foundation based in New York City, is a past Board Member of OneWorld Progressive Institute, and a past President of the Board of Directors of the Creative Arts Workshop in New Haven, in addition to being a Professor of English at Capital Community College in Hartford.

What a treasure we have here in our own backyard. ■

Review by Jessie Wright

LIBRARY CORNER

By Erin Shea Dummeyer

There are two invitations I will always say yes to no matter what – one hundredth birthday parties and library ribbon cutting ceremonies. After all, how many chances will we have in life to attend a 100th birthday party or the opening of a brand-new library? This is how I found myself in New Canaan on February 14 attending the opening of their brand-new library. More than three years after unveiling their plans for the new \$40 million building, the library is finally open to the public.

The state-of-the-art building features a modern lobby, a grand staircase, a coworking space upstairs, a gorgeous auditorium, and a colorful, inviting children's library. There was a brief ceremony before the ribbon cutting ceremony at 9:00 a.m. and the excitement in the crowd was palpable. The library welcomed roughly 3,000 people on their first day. To provide some context, the Mark Twain Library welcomes between three and four thousand people in a month.

A new library opening is a win for libraries everywhere, and this event made me think about small changes we could make to our facilities and furniture to improve the already exceptional customer service that we offer. New Canaan Library's use of flexible space, self-service, and open and inviting spaces is certainly inspiring. I encourage you to check it out. ■

Erin Shea Dummeyer is Director, Mark Twain Library

Good books for good readers | By Margi Esten

I was packing some books to take along on an upcoming trip and, as always, was overly optimistic about how many I will actually get around to reading! But I've pulled together an eclectic collection I thought I would share with you:

Shrines of Gaiety by Kate Atkinson. Followers of this column already know how much I love Kate Atkinson, and this is her most recent novel; it has been patiently waiting on my desk to be read. Essentially historical fiction, it takes place in 1926 as a restless London is still recovering from WWI. With a Dickensian flair,

this novel opens a window into a long-lost era, beneath the dazzle of SoHo's gaiety where London is teetering between the old world and the new.

Cape Cod Noir, edited by David Ulin. Pretty much my favorite spot on earth, Cape Cod is featured in 13 stories of malice and mayhem simmering beneath the surface of one of America's favorite vacation areas – it should satisfy those with a “hankering for a taste of the dark side” (Publisher's Weekly).

Snow: A Novel by John Banville. Another favorite of mine, I have read most of what this Irish novelist has written. This

is a murder mystery which takes place in Ireland in 1957. Detective Inspector St. John Stafford is investigating the apparent murder of a priest.

Rebecca by Daphne du Maurier. One of my go-to books, I am returning to this 1938 Gothic novel written by renowned English author Daphne du Maurier. A young woman unexpectedly marries a very wealthy widower and owner of his ancestral home (actually, castle), Manderley, and he is haunted by the ghost of his late wife, Rebecca. ■

“Conversations” series brings community together on complex issues | By Lisa Goldstein



The Mark Twain Library (MTL) and the Redding League of Women Voters (LWV) have kicked off the “Conversations” series for 2023 with the second program of this award-winning series coming up on Thursday, March 2 at 7:30 p.m.

In this virtual program, Western Connecticut State University psychology professor Daniel Barrett will moderate a discussion about the powerful role of technology as a driver of history, identity, and racial consciousness. The program focuses on some pivotal moments in recent history that are described in the book *Seen & Unseen: Technology, Social Media and the Fight for Racial Justice*. Barrett, who will be speaking with the book's co-authors, journalist and historian Todd Brewster and journalist and author Marc Lamont Hill, has moderated four other “Conversations” programs in the past.

“This will be the first to focus on very contemporary events that have been displayed quite widely in the media,” said Barrett, who does extensive research to prepare for each discussion, including reading multiple books and watching hours of video interviews of the guests before compiling his questions.

The Library and the Redding LWV started the “Conversations” series in 2019 in an effort to provide information on issues about race, justice, and democracy in a safe environment with the hope of encouraging an open dialogue about challenging issues facing our society today. In the initial program, the two groups invited Williams College professor

Charles Dew, who had written a memoir, *The Making of A Racist: A Southerner Reflects on Family, History and the Slave Trade*, to speak to several community groups in Redding in person. That one-time event began a partnership between the Redding LWV and the Mark Twain Library. Recognizing the impact that continued conversations would have within the community, the partners decided to add additional programs and provide an ongoing series which ultimately came to be known as “Conversations: Truth, Myth and Democracy.”

“I am so in awe of this Redding LWV-MTL collaboration” stated Kim O'Rielly, President of Redding's League of Women Voters. “Each planning committee member has contributed their time and talents over and over again to bring thought provoking and innovative forums and book discussions to our community. My life has been enriched by these events – and, I believe, our greater community as well. Yes, a little town in Connecticut can have an impact in opening our minds and hearts.”

This groundbreaking series is entering its fourth year and won the 2022 Connecticut Library Association's Award for Excellence in Public Library Service. The programs feature historians, journalists, and academics who are invited after much discussion, research, and planning by committee members.

“I do not hesitate to bring

up controversial or ‘hot button’ topics, provided that they are germane to the overall themes of the ‘Conversations’ series and about which the guests will be able to comment authoritatively,” added Barrett.

Moving the programs onto a virtual platform during the pandemic allowed the series to include a greater field of experts, which is part of the reason it remains a virtual program today.

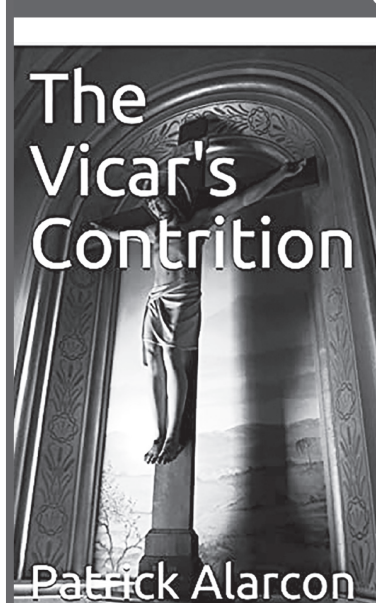
“The Mark Twain Library feels very lucky to host such a prestigious line-up of academics and thought leaders for ‘Conversations,’” said Mark Twain Library Director Erin Dummeyer. “We are grateful to the League of Women Voters and our committee of volunteers for their thoughtful diligence in continuing this popular series.”

Following the March 2 event, the next “Conversations” program, also moderated by Barrett, is scheduled for May 4 and will feature author Jeff Miller, who will discuss how the practices of Ancient Greek democracy can help us rethink the problems within our government today. Additional programs are still being developed for later in the year.

Next week, the “Conversations” organizers also launch this year's “Read and Reflect Discussion Group,” which is a set of four separate programs where participants read a particular text in advance and meet virtually to discuss the content in a conversation led by Tom Kilbourn, ordained Episcopal priest and retired Joel Barlow High School English Teacher. Redding LWV's Mary Ann Carman said, “The discussion groups are meant to build empathy and understanding about ourselves and the complex issues we face.” ■



Redding Author



As a severe Nor'easter falls upon St. Thomas Seminary, a seminary student named Timothy is murdered by Jesuit assassins for his investigation of a secret society operating within the Vatican. His classmates, guided by their Professor, seek to avenge their friend by finding his hidden diary and sharing his work. Their quest brings them around the world, as they try to avoid entanglements with local law enforcement who have a growing interest in the case. All the while the assassins are on their trail, seeking to finish the job and prevent them from revealing the truth.

About the Author

Redding resident **Patrick Alarcon** is a graduate of St. Thomas Seminary and a retired high school science and history teacher. He is currently an Adjunct Professor at Sacred Heart University in Fairfield. In addition to *The Vicar's Contrition* he has recently published *Deadly Beacon*.



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THE NATURAL WORLD

New Pond Farm Education Center looks to the skies

Monthly astronomy program brings wonder, calls for volunteers | By Jessie Wright



Photo by Ann Taylor

Cliff Wattley explains how the telescopes work to Jessie Wright from the Sentinel.



Photo by Jessie Wright

New Pond Farm Education Center's astronomy facilities include a heated classroom, observation platform, and two telescopes.



Photo courtesy of New Pond Farm Education Center

Craig Borders, using the 14" Celestron telescope to view the recent comet, ZTF.

"Earth is a spaceship, and in the evening, we are able to see the universe," said Cliff Wattley, one of four passionate volunteer astronomers who guide adults and children alike in celestial discoveries during New Pond Farm Education Center's monthly astronomy programs.

Wattley spent a recent morning with me at New Pond Farm, showing me around the astronomy facilities at a unique time of day to see the equipment up close. (Wattley is typically there once a month in the evenings once darkness falls and the stars blink on.)

Dew gathered on our shoes as we traipsed up "astronomy hill", bluebirds chirping in the unseasonably warm February air.

Nestled atop a rolling hill in the center of New Pond Farm's 102-acre property, the astronomy area was initially developed around 1984. A professor from Western Connecticut State University had approached New Pond Farm's founder, Carmen Mathews, about establishing an astronomy site for his students after searching to no avail for a suitable spot in the area. The 360-degree vista at the top of the hill offered a unique window to the heavens, and the observation area was born.

The site now includes a wooden observation deck, heated classroom

building, and a roll-away shed housing two equatorially mounted SCT Celestron telescopes – a 14" and a 9.25" HD Edge. These are impressive pieces of technology, affording professional and amateur astronomers alike views of some of our most distant neighbors in the solar system.

"We have 'go-to' capabilities, so if they want to look at something in particular, they can tap it in, and the telescopes will swing across to that spot in the sky," explained Ann Taylor, New Pond Farm's Executive Director, who joined us for the tour.

"It's really nicely thought out," Wattley said, adding that for a public program like New Pond Farm's, the ability to track celestial objects with the telescopes' capabilities greatly improves the experience.

The astronomy programs are typically held each month on Saturday evenings, the timing of which depends on sunset and the time of year. In the winter, participants can warm up inside the classroom in between using the telescopes, where Wattley and his colleagues have developed slideshow presentations which help to provide greater context to the objects participants are observing in the night sky. Hot chocolate made fresh from the farm's dairy operations is in no

short supply, either.

Wattley himself came to astronomy from a young age, growing up in East Hartford with a father working in the aerospace industry and watching Sputnik launch at the age of seven. Getting his first telescope at age 11, he then pursued engineering in college and found himself volunteering at Ridgefield's (now shuttered) Discovery Center. It was through his work there that he became connected with New Pond Farm, now offering astronomy programs in Redding for over two decades. "I like getting in front of people, and I love doing this," he said.

He and his three colleagues, Craig Borders, Laird Calia, and Scott Mitchell, make up a close team of volunteers, taking turns manning the telescopes and providing additional educational materials in the classroom. They are eager to grow the program beyond its once-a-month schedule, but they need extra hands.

Wattley hopes they can recruit additional volunteers soon – either with experience in astronomy, or an enthusiasm and eagerness to learn. He is even thinking outside of the box on some new ideas for building the program and they types of people who may want to help. "You've got all these constellations that have all these embedded stories... somebody who knows those stories would be interesting," he said. "There's a broad range there."

The team would provide training and ensure anyone volunteering would be up to speed on the operation of the professional-grade equipment.

"We would love to be able to offer more programs," Taylor agreed. "We'd love to have more hands and more people training so that we could offer alternate dates."

Working with New Pond Farm families and sharing his love of astronomy is clearly a passion for Wattley. As our tour wrapped up, I asked him if he had a favorite thing to look at in the night sky. "Saturn," he answered without hesitation. "The rings are very obvious... people go up and look and just say, 'Wow, wow, wow.' And then they come back and say, 'Can I look again?'" ■

The Way Through the Woods

by Rudyard Kipling

They shut the road through the woods
 Seventy years ago.
 Weather and rain have undone it again,
 And now you would never know
 There was once a road through the woods
 Before they planted the trees.
 It is underneath the coppice and heath
 And the thin anemones.
 Only the keeper sees
 That, where the ring-dove broods,
 And the badgers roll at ease,
 There was once a road through the woods.
 Yet, if you enter the woods
 Of a summer evening late,
 When the night-air cools on the trout-ringed pools
 Where the otter whistles his mate,
 (They fear not men in the woods,
 Because they see so few.)
 You will hear the beat of a horse's feet,
 And the swish of a skirt in the dew,
 Steadily cantering through
 The misty solitudes,
 As though they perfectly knew
 The old lost road through the woods,
 But there is no road through the woods.

A road through the woods / Continued from page 1

The road runs through woods on both sides for the most part, although there is a section of marsh to the east at one point about a third of the way. In that area, there is a good wooden walkway.

Although a lovely walk at any time of year, this road through the woods is particularly nice in the heat of the summer, when the tree canopies shade your route. Because of the marsh, the path is a good place for birdwatchers. The woods are part of the Centennial Watershed State Forest.

Three-quarters of the way to the end of the road, there is a trail off

to the right. Part of the Aspetuck River Valley Trail, it is a blue-blazed trail and well worth the detour. This part of your outing is not stroller or wheelchair accessible. It is about half-a-mile roundtrip and takes you to a rushing waterfall made strong as it runs through a narrow channel of rock.

The walk is a tempting one for dog owners. But a word of caution. Dogs are allowed, even off leash if under control, on the road itself. If Fido steps off the road into the woods on either side, however, he is in the Centennial

Watershed where pets are strictly forbidden (note that the side-trip onto the Aspetuck River Valley Trail also does not allow dogs). So, bring your pup, but bring his leash as well. ■

Do you like to hit the trails? The Sentinel is looking for additional volunteer contributors for Redding's Big Outdoors. E-mail editor@reddingsentinel.org for more information.





New Pond Farm Education Center

We Invite You to Celebrate the New Year with Us and to Enjoy Exciting Outdoor Adventures!

Please visit our website to learn more about:

Members-Only Programs:
 Birthday Parties, Snowshoeing, Family Campouts, Night Hikes, Pancake Breakfasts, Farm Chores, Old Fashioned Egg Hunts, Caroling and more.

Programs For One and All:

- Story Times and Programs for ages 3-5
- Weekly adventures in science, nature, and the outdoors for students
- Adult Natural History, Art, and Culinary Programs
- Special events: Harvest Dinner, Art Show, Play Reading, and Golf Outing



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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

\$ = fee applies
R = registration required

ARTS

**Monday, Jan. 9 -
Friday, Mar. 24**

Easton Arts Council Winter Celebration of the Arts + Member Art Show
Check eastonlibrary.org for open hours.
Works by 50 artists and photographers from Easton and neighboring towns. Contact Elizabeth Katz at katz.elizabethi@gmail.com with questions.
Easton Public Library
691 Morehouse Road
Easton
eastonartscouncil.org

Saturday, Feb. 25

Winter Musical Moment
3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Soulful jazz by saxophonist Irwin Hall.
Grace Farms
365 Lukes Wood Road
New Canaan
gracefarms.org
R

Thursday, Mar. 9

The Allen and Helen Hermes Arts Series presents: Compton and Newberry
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
An evening of new and traditional American music, with roots in bluegrass, early country, blues, gospel and string band music.
Mark Twain Library
439 Redding Road
marktwainlibrary.org
R

Sunday, Mar. 12

Danbury Concert Association Daedalus Quartet
3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Chamber ensemble concert, free for anyone under 18
WCSU Visual & Performing Arts Center
43 Lake Avenue Extension
Danbury
danburyconcert.org
\$

Sunday, Mar. 12

Music on the Hill – March Winds
3:00 p.m.
Festival Chorus, Jubilate Ringers, and the Community Children's Chorus will perform in this spring concert.
The Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Westport
10 Lyons Plain Road
Westport
musiconthehillct.org

CHILDREN, TEENS

**Friday, Feb. 24 –
Friday, Mar. 31**

Caregiver & Child Series (Ages 18 – 35 months)
6 Fridays from
10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
New Pond Farm Education Center
101 Marchant Road
newpondfarm.org
\$, R

Saturday, Feb. 25

Junior Staff: Animal Caretaker (Middle & High School)
12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Free for members
New Pond Farm Education Center
101 Marchant Road
newpondfarm.org
\$, R

Saturday, Feb. 25

Kids' Drop-off: Waning Winter
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Explore what is happening in Connecticut forests this time of year.
Drop-off program open to children ages 6-12.
Great Hollow Nature Preserve
225 Route 37
New Fairfield
greathollow.org
\$, R

Tuesday, Feb. 28

How to Find the Right College for You (Teens and Adults)
7:30 p.m.
Zoom
Mark Twain Library
marktwainlibrary.org
R

Saturday, Mar. 4

Succulents: Terrarium Workshop (Middle and High School)
3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
New Pond Farm Education Center
101 Marchant Road
newpondfarm.org
\$, R

CRAFTS

Sunday, Feb. 26

Make Zines with Bethel CT Pride (Teens and Adults)
2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Create original writing or drawings, collage, blackout poetry, or whatever your heart desires.
Mark Twain Library
439 Redding Road
marktwainlibrary.org
R

Saturday, Mar. 4

Annual Rug Hook-In
10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Hook rugs for the day or watch rug hookers work.
Mark Twain Library
439 Redding Road
marktwainlibrary.org

Sunday, Mar. 5

Knitting & Spinning by the Fire
12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Enjoy a relaxing afternoon of knitting projects with Nutmeg Western CT Spinners Guild.
New Pond Farm Education Center
101 Marchant Road
newpondfarm.org
R

Sunday, Mar. 12

Basketry Workshop
10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Open to ages 15+
Intermediate basket-making workshop with birch bark.
New Pond Farm Education Center
101 Marchant Road
newpondfarm.org
\$, R

FOOD

Saturday, Feb. 25

Backyard Syruping Workshop
10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Learn how to make maple syrup – please dress for the outdoors.
New Pond Farm Education Center
101 Marchant Road
newpondfarm.org
\$, R

Saturday, Feb. 25

From Prep to Plate – Yogurt Dip Recipe Challenge
2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Teams prepare, experiment, and share their delicious yogurt dip which incorporates farm fresh foods.
New Pond Farm Education Center
101 Marchant Road
newpondfarm.org
\$, R

Saturday, Feb. 25

Mardi Gras Party with Bottoms Up Dixieland Band & Chef Jeff Taibe
6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Cajun buffet and two set of New Orleans-style jazz
Nod Hill Brewery
137 Ethan Allen Highway
Ridgefield
nodhillbrewery.com
\$, R

Saturday, Mar. 11

Gourmet Pancake Breakfast
8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
BSA Troop 306 fundraiser features pancakes, omelets, juice, coffee and tea
Snow/rain date Sunday, Mar. 12
West Redding Fire House
306 Umpawaug Road
reddingtroop306.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
cibcredning.org

Christ Church, Episcopal
Sundays at 9:00 a.m.
184 Cross Highway
christchurchredding.org

First Church of Christ, Congregational
Sundays at 10:00 a.m.
25 Cross Highway
firstchurchredding.org

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

Sacred Heart Catholic Church

Saturdays at 4:00 p.m.
Sundays at 9:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.; 12:00 p.m. (Latin)
Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8:30 a.m.
Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. (Latin)
30 Church Street
sacredheart-stpat.org

St. Patrick Catholic Church

Saturdays at 5:30 p.m.
Sundays at 8:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., and 5:00 p.m.
Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 8:30 a.m.
169 Black Rock Turnpike
sacredheart-stpat.org

Temple B'nai Chaim

Fridays at 7:30 p.m.
82 Portland Avenue
Wilton
templebnaichaim.org

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Sunday, Feb. 26

NY Rangers Bus Trip – Rangers vs. LA Kings
12:00 p.m. – Bus leaves Redding Community Center
5:00 p.m. – Game begins
\$155 tickets in section 223 - Madison Square Garden
Depart from Redding Community Center
37 Lonetown Road
townofreddingct.org/parks-and-recreation
\$, R

Thursday, Mar. 2

Seen & Unseen – Conversations: Truth, Myth & Democracy
7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Mark Twain Library
Zoom
marktwainlibrary.org
R

Friday Mar. 3

Chat & Chew with Superintendent Dr. Jason McKinnon
8:30 a.m.
Join Superintendent of ER9 schools Dr. McKinnon for a 2023-2024 budget presentation, bagels, coffee and Q&A.
Sponsored by the JRMS PTA and Mark Twain Library
In-person and Zoom
Mark Twain Library
439 Redding Road
marktwainlibrary.org
R

Monday, Mar. 13

Plant Propagation for the Home Gardener
11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Redding Garden Club's March meeting for members and guests.
Redding Community Center
37 Lonetown Road
reddinggardenclub.org
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Saturday Mar. 18

Gardening Basics: Planting Cold Weather Crops
2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Drop-in program
New Pond Farm Education Center
101 Marchant Road
newpondfarm.org

MEETINGS

Thursday, Feb. 23

ARPA Funds Working Group Special Meeting
5:00 p.m.
Zoom
townofreddingct.org

Thursday, Feb. 23

Region 9 Board of Education (budget presentation)
7:00 p.m.
JBHS Library Learning Commons
Joel Barlow High School
100 Black Rock Turnpike
joelbarlowps.org

Monday, Feb. 27

OPEB Trust Board
6:00 p.m.
Zoom
townofreddingct.org

Monday, Feb. 27

Board of Finance
7:30 p.m.
Zoom
townofreddingct.org

Tuesday, Feb. 28

Region 9 Board of Education Budget Workshop
7:00 p.m.
JBHS Library Learning Commons
Joel Barlow High School
100 Black Rock Turnpike
joelbarlowps.org

Tuesday, Feb. 28

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

Wednesday, Mar. 1

Brown Bag Lunch with First Selectwoman
12:00 p.m.
Redding Community Center
37 Lonetown Road
townofreddingct.org

Thursday, Mar. 2

Redding Safety Committee
4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Zoom
townofreddingct.org

Monday, Mar. 6

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

Monday, Mar. 6

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

Tuesday, Mar. 7

Economic Development Committee
8:30 a.m.
Town Hall / Conference Room
100 Hill Road
townofreddingct.org

Tuesday, Mar. 7

Redding Board of Education
7:00 p.m.
John Read Middle School
486 Redding Road
johnreadps.org

Tuesday, Mar. 7

Conservation Commission
7:30 p.m.
Refer to town website for up-to-date location information
townofreddingct.org

This Week's Featured Events

Backyard Syruping Workshop

Saturday, Feb. 25
10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Learn how to make maple syrup – dress for the outdoors.
New Pond Farm Education Center
101 Marchant Road
newpondfarm.org

NY Rangers Bus Trip - Rangers vs. LA Kings

Sunday, Feb. 26
12:00 p.m. - Bus leaves from RCC
5:00 p.m. - Game begins
\$155 tickets in section 223
Madison Square Garden
Depart from RCC
37 Lonetown Road
townofreddingct.org/
parks-and-recreation

Chat & Chew with Superintendent Dr. Jason McKinnon

Friday, Mar. 3
8:30 a.m.
Attend a 2023-24 budget presentation with breakfast and Q&A with ER9's Superintendent.
In-person and Zoom
Mark Twain Library
439 Redding Road
marktwainlibrary.org

Want to feature an upcoming event?

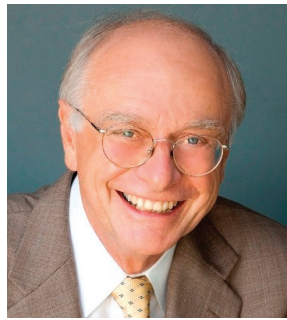
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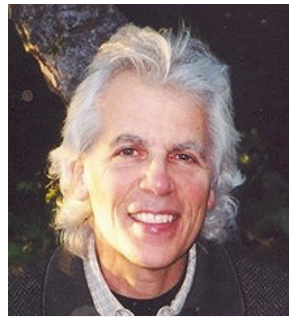
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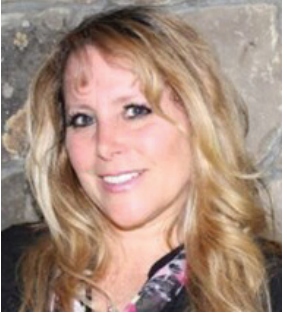
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Call Tim to discuss your mortgage options.



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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



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