

Eversource easement clearing to resume

By Rocco Valluzzo

To prevent vegetation from interfering with its power lines, Eversource will resume tree cutting along its transmission line easements in Redding.

This will not involve cutting along roadside lines, which Eversource did little of this year, according to First Selectwoman Julia Pemberton. It involves going from easement end to easement end, over which the Town has no control.

Pemberton told the *Sentinel* last year that the Town and concerned residents had explored several legal pathways to oppose the extensive clearing, but had not found any viable options.

“There’s nothing we can do, unfortunately,” said Pemberton. “The Town has no authority whatsoever if there’s no significant impact. They have the legal authority to clear the vegetation.”

Continued on page 2



Photo by Fred Newman

A cormorant against a crescent moon as evening falls. If you have a photo you’d like to see featured here, e-mail editor@reddingsentinel.org.

Safety versus aesthetic

Approaches to traffic signage on scenic roads

By Donna Christopher



Photo by Julia Pemberton

A “stop ahead” sign installed near the intersection of Poverty Hollow Road and Church Hill Road.

Traffic and warning signs are a calming measure that officials use to make roads safer. But in a town with 17 designated scenic roads and several state roadways, some residents are sensitive to the safety versus aesthetic reasoning for new traffic signs. The recent addition

of “stop ahead” warning signs on Poverty Hollow Road near the intersection with Church Hill Road prompted discussion at Planning Commission meetings this fall about what considerations should be taken into account when posting highway signs on designated scenic roadways.

“The topic centered on the look of the signs on a designated scenic road – that comes under the purview of the Commission,” Planning Commission Chair Steve Gagnon said. There was some discussion on whether more attractive signs might be available for scenic roads.

“Understanding that the placement of such signs is non-negotiable, the Commission wants some kind of accountability for such actions, and wishes to be part of the consideration for such

actions in the future regarding the placement of signs on Scenic Roads,” according to Gagnon. He said that he planned to draft a letter to the Board of Selectmen communicating that desire.

While Poverty Hollow Road is a designated scenic road, it has a history of speeding cars and accidents. In 2020, a resident frustrated after repeated crashes into his fence and fearing for neighborhood safety made a handmade sign urging drivers on Poverty Hollow Road to slow down, the *Newtown Bee* reported, noting the speed limit on Poverty Hollow Road is 30 miles per hour.

“The (signs) on Poverty Hollow were added last year,” said Director of Public Works and Highway

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REDDING’S BIG OUTDOORS

Hunters and hikers on open space

By Anne Young Albanese



Photo by Jessie Wright

Fall and winter are the seasons when outdoor recreationalists and hunters share space most often

in Redding’s many natural areas. Ownership of the land, type of animal hunted, and type of weapon used all dictate the timing of the specific hunting season, licensing requirements, and locations permitted. Hikers should follow all posted signage and consider wearing bright colors during hunting seasons. Hunters must always have the correct license or stamp, follow all postings, and adhere to safety best practices.

Town-owned open space

The Conservation Commission determines each year if it will approve a controlled bow hunt season for deer on certain Town-owned open spaces from September 15 – January 31. (A hunt was approved for 2025-26). These licenses are limited, and hunters must fill out an application form and keep close track of deer harvest numbers. Licenses have already been approved and distributed for this year.

The approved Town-owned open spaces for the bow hunt include: Saugatuck Falls Natural

Area, Stormfield, Limekiln Natural Area, Granskog Natural Area, Little River Preserve, The Rock Lot, Gallows Hill Natural Area, Couch Hill Preserve, Turkington Falls, John W. Sanford Farm, General Parsons Preserve, Dayton Road Tract, Garnet Ridge Preserve, Town Garage/Landfill.

For those interested in obtaining a license next year, contact the First Selectwoman’s office at gfiore@reddingct.gov.

Redding Land Trust-owned space

There is no hunting allowed on Redding Land Trust-owned open space.

State-owned lands

The State of Connecticut distributes hunting licenses through the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). They can be purchased online at portal.ct.gov/ctoutdoorlicenses or obtained from the Town Clerk’s office at 100 Hill Road.

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Roadways and proposed relocations prompt questions at Georgetown community session

By Jessie Wright

A crowd of over 100 people gathered in the Joel Barlow High School Library Learning Commons on Saturday, October 4 to learn about and give feedback on three concept options for the redevelopment of the Gilbert & Bennett Wire Mill site and surrounding Georgetown area. The three concepts were developed by Pirie Associates, an architecture and consulting firm based in New Haven, after months of research and community engagement. The project is funded through a Brownfield Area Revitalization grant from the State Department of Economic and Community Development.

Pirie Associates used a visual framework of green space to characterize each of the three options and labeled each with a phrase that captures the ethos of the particular approach.

“Buildings in the landscape” is option one, presented as the approach with the least amount of development. “The whole downtown area is like a landscape that has buildings dotted through it,” explained Laura Pirie, pointing at a diagram with green space stretching in a wide oblong swath through the entire Wire Mill site and over Route 107 towards Route 57. “It’s like a frame of mind. This flips the hierarchy [of buildings and land] and says the whole parcel area, Main Street, is a big park, and there are buildings in that park.” This option proposes 280 residential units, 669 parking spaces, and a mix of retail, artisan, municipal, and arts and culture commercial spaces.

“Drop by and stay all day” is option two, shown as islands of green space and buildings throughout the project area, creating an interconnected downtown of arts, dining, recreation, and commerce activities to encourage visitors to explore Georgetown for an entire day. “[This] came from the young parents’ engagement session, where a young parent, who is in the room, said, ‘I’d love to be able to go down to Georgetown, bring my children, and stay all day. Go from place to place to place and have continuing things to engage and activate my family,’” said Pirie. This option proposes 370 residential units, 1,000 parking spaces, an anchor commercial tenant, and a mix of retail, restaurant, municipal, hospitality, and arts and culture spaces.

“Woven arts and nature” is option three, envisioned as a linear park running from the Factory Pond in the Wire Mill site across Route 107, adding green space to Main Street and ending in an outdoor amphitheater carved into the hillside on the east side of Main Street. Arts and cultural sites, anchored by The Granite at 5 North Main Street, would create an arts

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EDITORIAL

The ink is not yet dry

Last weekend, over 100 people left the blue skies of a warm October day to sit indoors and participate in the Revitalize Georgetown community session led by Pirie Associates. Three concepts for redevelopment of the area were presented, and the interest in the room from residents, community leaders, and state legislators was high.

This event was only one step in a multi-month effort to develop a master plan for the Wire Mill site and surrounding Georgetown Village, but it was one of the first times that visual renderings and some basic financial calculations were presented on what a reimagined downtown might look like. The project now is moving out of the visioning phase – “there is no wrong answer when brainstorming” worked in June, but now, actual approaches with numbers of housing units and square footage calculations are beginning to be considered.

If you have not had the chance yet to attend a community engagement session or read through the extensive story map about the project at reddingct.gov/revitalize-georgetown-project but would like your feedback to be heard, now is the time. Though it likely will be a decade or two before a master plan like what is being discussed is fully implemented, the window for residents to contribute to a shared vision is closing.

Laura Pirie, the lead consultant on the project, made a point toward the end of the session on Saturday. “There are different specialties of focus. We are asking the community at large to talk about their preference from a place and fiscal reality point of view.”

Groups with other specialties of focus will have their turn. Our elected officials, boards, and commissions will have to examine the economics of the plan and move to adopt – or not adopt – regulations that will make it possible. Our leaders will have to forge development, business, and political partnerships and make difficult decisions about how to implement a project of this size. Voters, of course, will have the opportunity to decide how we think that process is going with every election cycle.

But the chance to have your preferences captured in a roadmap for a major redevelopment is not one that every resident gets when faced with change in their town. We do have that opportunity. Let’s make sure we use it. ■

Visit reddingct.gov/revitalize-georgetown-project to submit feedback and learn more about the Revitalize Georgetown project

Notice of 18th Day Before Election Day Registration Session

By Registrar of Voters Office

Hand delivered or mail-in registration and/or enrollment of electors entitled to vote in the General/Municipal Election must be received or post marked by the office of the Registrar by **Friday, October 17, 2025.**

This is also the deadline to register to vote using the On-line Voter Registration System. (§9-23g) **No mail-in registrations post marked after this date will be accepted. No online registrations will be accepted after this date.**

For people who qualify as to age, citizenship, or residence after the last session for the admission of elections prior to this election, we will be holding a **Limited Registration session on Monday November 3 from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.** We will be holding this registration session in person at Town Hall in the Hearing Room.

Additional Legislation from 2024: Those who wish to register to vote after October 17, 2025, may come in person to the Redding Community Center October 20 thru November 2 for Same Day

Registration and Early Voting. Times and requirements are listed on our town website under the Registrar of Voters. Same Day Registration is also available on Election Day, November 4, 2025.

When registering to vote for the first time, you must have a Government Issued photo ID that shows name and address. If your ID does not show your current address (i.e. you recently moved here from a different town or state) please also bring a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or government document that shows your current name and address.

If you have any questions, please call our office at (203) 938-5012 or e-mail registrar@reddingct.gov.

Dated at Redding, Connecticut, this 2nd day of October, 2025. ■

Jessica Cishek, Democratic Registrar of Voters

Michele Meschi, Republican Registrar of Voters reddingct.gov

Eversource easement clearing to resume / continued from page 1

Much of the trimming is on an easement that goes across Mountain Road, Peaceable Street, and Umpawaug Road before stopping at Archers Lane. Some of the skipped portions between Archers Lane and Route 53 require a different permitting process before cutting can begin, because parts of the land are Centennial Watershed State Forest.

These permits must be obtained from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection first since it has jurisdiction over the watershed area. However, Eversource did jump across Route 53 and cut a swath behind John Read Middle School.

“It’s a very wide right-of-way,” said Pemberton. “If you are on 53 just north of John Read across from the Saugatuck trail, you can see this massive swath that was just cleared out.”

Although she had not checked yet to see how wide the easement is there, Pemberton plans to using the Town’s geographic information

system (GIS). She noted the area contains trails that go underneath the power lines in places. She also cited the presence of rocky outcroppings and mountain laurel.

Conservation Commission Chairman David Pattee estimated the easement’s width at about 150 feet. He noted Eversource has said they will notify the Town and any abutting landowners of trimming.

Pemberton would also like to have Eversource’s arborists meet with members of the Conservation Commission and Redding Land Trust. If the area was flagged for trimming, it would have been flagged a long time ago, she said.

“I also want to know how they are going to access it?” she added. “Obviously, there’s the road into Archers substation, but they’re going to have to build a road. When it really gets in there, there is no road. There’s just a trail, and they get in there with those big trucks and cut everything down.” ■

LEGAL NOTICE

WARNING of November 4, 2025 Municipal Election

Pursuant to Section 9-226 of the General Statutes of the State of Connecticut, the Electors of the Town of Redding are hereby warned to meet at the polling place in said town on Tuesday, November 4, 2025, for the following purpose: to cast their votes for First Selectman, Selectman, Town Clerk, Town Treasurer, Tax Collector, Board of Finance, Board of Education, Board of Assessment Appeals, Planning Commission, Zoning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Zoning Board of Appeals Alternate, Constable, and Regional Board of Education.

Notice is hereby given that the location of the polling place is Redding Community Center, 37 Lonetown Road. Polls will be open from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. for in-person voting and same day registration. Optical scan voting machines will be used.

Early voting and same day registration will be held at Redding Community Center daily 10/20/25 to 11/02/25 from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and on 10/28 and 10/30 from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Absentee ballots are available in the Town Clerk’s office starting October 6. Absentee ballots will be counted at the polls. ■

Michele R. Grande, Redding Town Clerk
October 6, 2025

POLICE BLOTTER

Police activity September 28 – October 5

By Donna Christopher



(Left to right): Chief Robert Kalamaras, Sergeant Jenna Matthews, Sergeant Kim Peterson, and Captain Tim Succi.

Promotions

Redding Police Officers Kim Peterson and Jenna Matthews were promoted to the rank of Sergeant during a formal swearing-in ceremony held October 2 at Town Hall, where the oath was administered by Town Clerk Michele Grande.

The ceremony was attended by the Board of Selectmen along with Police Department members, families, friends, Chief David Kullgren of the Newtown Police Department, and Chief Jeff Kreitz of the Ridgefield Police Department.

The Reverend Terrence Walsh of Sacred Heart and St. Patrick’s Parish delivered the invocation, and Redding Police Captain Tim Succi led the Pledge of Allegiance.

“Tonight, we recognize two proven leaders whose judgment, compassion, and professionalism reflect the very best of Redding,” said Police Chief Robert Kalamaras. “Sgt. Peterson and Sgt.

Matthews have both demonstrated the ability to guide others and serve our community with integrity.”

“On behalf of the Town of Redding, congratulations to our newest sergeants,” said Pemberton. “Their dedication and record of service inspire confidence in our Police Department and in the safety of our residents.”

Peterson has served the Department for over 14 years, where she has built a reputation for “exceptional police work and mentorship,” Kalamaras said in an announcement.

As a Field Training Officer, she has helped prepare the next generation of officers and has successfully investigated numerous serious crimes with a steady focus on victims and community safety.

Matthews began her public service career with the Bethel Fire Department, earning Fire-fighter I and EMT-Intermediate

certifications before transitioning to law enforcement. She served six-and-a-half years with the Weston Police Department and has spent the past 10 years with the Redding Police Department.

Her professional development includes Traffic Crash Reconstruction, Fairfield County Detective School, Accreditation Management, and Crisis Intervention.

Matthews is a Field Training Officer, a POST-certified instructor, and holds a bachelor’s degree from Western Connecticut State University, along with two master’s degrees from the University of New Haven. Known for community-oriented policing, she focuses on building trust and shared responsibility for public safety.

Traffic

Officers conducted 110 traffic stops, issuing three summonses, 35 tickets, 23 written warnings, 48 verbal warnings, and taking no action in one case. The infraction rate was 34.5%.

On October 2, a two-car accident on Church Street resulted in property damage but no injuries.

Other incidents

A possible burglary involving missing power tools was reported October 1 on Birch Road and is under investigation.

Juveniles knocking and running on Orchard Drive were reported on October 2.

Someone on Sport Hill Road reported a suspicious incident on October 5 of a man in a wooded area taking photos.

A female walking on the railroad tracks near Portland Avenue was reported on October 5. ■

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Publisher, Susan Clark

Managing Editor, Jessie Wright

Creative Director, Debora DeCarlo Rosa

Assistant Graphic Designer, Connor Feeney

Marketing Operations Manager, Nicole DuBois

Reporters:

Anne Young Albanese

Justin Reynolds

Pamela Brown

Rob Sample

Donna Christopher

Rocco Valluzzo

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www.reddingsentinel.org

203.938.3800

Contact us at:

editor@reddingsentinel.org

advertise@reddingsentinel.org

subscribe@reddingsentinel.org

publisher@reddingsentinel.org

legalnotices@reddingsentinel.org

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The Georgetown Oratory welcomes faithful from across the Diocese

By Donna Christopher

The Georgetown Oratory of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus at 30 Church Street will serve not only the local community but also be available to other oratories throughout the Diocese of Bridgeport.

The news came from the Reverend Peter F. Lennox, who serves the Diocese of Bridgeport as Episcopal Vicar for Liturgy and Worship. Father Lennox is also a parish pastor at St. Roch in Greenwich and served as the administrator for the Diocese when Sacred Heart Parish and Saint Patrick Parish merged in 2021.

The ideally suited central location, midway between Danbury and Norwalk, lends itself to reaching a broader group of people for contemplation of higher things, said Lennox.

“The bishop has an initiative for The Georgetown Oratory to be available for use by all the oratories around the Diocese with the intent of bringing the faithful together,” said Lennox.

He called it a place of “beauty that lends itself to the contemplation of higher things, for the four pillars of worship, music, art, architecture, and literature in the Diocese of Bridgeport. It’s a groundbreaking new set of initiatives that encourages prayer and pilgrimage.”

What is an oratory?

An oratory is a separate entity from a Catholic parish, and The Georgetown Oratory is separate from Sacred Heart – St. Patrick Parish, though is part of the same Diocese, and utilizes the former

Sacred Heart property.

An oratory is not a parish church. “It is created primarily for the spiritual needs of a particular community, yet it remains a public sacred place. Therefore, anyone can join the Oratory and worship there if they are not a parish member,” explained Diocesan spokesperson Marie T. Oates, the Executive Director of the St. John Paul II Center for Communications.

The Reverend Michael Novajosky, Rector of the Georgetown Oratory, explained the distinction further.

Unlike the town’s Catholic parish, membership in the Oratory is not based on geography. Anyone may join and take part in the rites of the Church there, including Mass, the sacraments, and other forms of worship, he said.

“A parish is based on territory,” said Novajosky. “As a member of an oratory, anyone who expresses the desire may register.” He lives in the rectory on the property and provides pastoral care and sacramental ministry. As rector, his role is at the pleasure of the bishop, unlike a pastor of a parish church who has stability and certain rights a rector does not. For example, Novajosky could be reassigned to another role and must request permission to provide sacramental services outside the Oratory.

Before the Diocese established The Georgetown Oratory of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, the former Sacred Heart Parish and St. Patrick Parish were merged into one parish. Parish masses and sacraments are still held at St. Patrick’s Church at 169 Black Rock

Turnpike. Novajosky presides over the Oratory on the former parish property and is the priest authorized to celebrate the traditional Latin Mass, which requires the bishop’s permission.

“This is a small building,” he noted of the building at 30 Church Street, “about 24–26 pews, accommodating roughly 150 people.”

Maryann Rossi is a member of the Oratory. Her history in the neighborhood goes back a lifetime. She moved to Georgetown (the Weston section) in 1953 with her family.

“Sacred Heart Church, now (the) Oratory, has always been my church. I chose to stay with my church, now the Oratory. Mass and all the sacraments are offered there. Being an oratory simply means that anyone can join. An oratory is not restricted by parish boundaries. An individual can belong to a neighboring parish or beyond and still come to the Oratory and still belong to their parish or both. Why would I go to the Ridge when I live in Georgetown and my church of 72 years is here? My family has made First Holy Communion and Confirmation, been married and buried from Sacred Heart. It is a lovely little church; it just has a different canonical designation. We have a wonderful rector in Father Novajosky and many ways to get involved with the liturgical life of the Oratory,” Rossi said.

“I have been a member of Sacred Heart Parish and/or Oratory for 72 years. There are many Georgetowners who equal or exceed those years,” she added. ■

CLASSIFIED

Help Wanted

IMMEDIATE opening for the position of Assistant Town Clerk in Redding. Part-time 20-29 hours per week. Looking for an enthusiastic learner – knowledge of land recordings, records management, and elections preferred. Great opportunity to work in town! View job description and requirements on our website reddingct.gov under “Employment”. ■

Danger in the palm of your children’s hands

OK to Delay parent group to bring film screening to Mark Twain Library

By Rob Sample

A showing of *Can’t Look Away* – a documentary film about social media and teen mental health – will take place Thursday, October 9 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Mark Twain Library.

The documentary takes aim at tech companies’ digital practices, particularly how social media algorithms have a harmful impact on adolescents. The documentary is a production of Bloomberg News, through its Originals Division, and features Bloomberg investigative reporter Olivia Carville. The film includes personal testimonies from families and outlines current legal battles.

Can’t Look Away reflects the concern that growing numbers of people have about the impact smartphones and social media have on children and teenagers.

“People are holding tech companies accountable for dangerous algorithms – which contribute to serious mental health issues including self-harm and suicide,” noted Danielle Cacace, one of the three leaders of the Redding Chapter of OK to Delay, which is spearheading this week’s film screening.

OK to Delay is a national non-profit organization that works to convince parents and caregivers to delay the introduction of smartphones until age 14 – and social media until age 16. It has chapters throughout the United States. Cacace’s co-leaders in this group are Deanna Carley and Danielle Frenzel; all three women are mothers who work in nursing.

“Our primary focus is normalizing delaying the introduction of smartphones and social media, so that those kids will feel more supported instead of isolated,” said Cacace.

The 75-minute-long film opens with a series of heart-rending stories, including a mom grappling with her son’s suicide attempt. “I feel like TikTok just put the gun in his hand and told him to pull the trigger,” related another mother on film.

The film points out how the algorithmic structure of social media can often lead to teens being directed in places on the web where they don’t intentionally seek to go. In one example, a child experiencing a relationship break-up was fed a dark series of posts about death. The film also profiles teens who have survived such suicide attempts, often enduring numerous surgeries and permanent disabilities.

Moves to restrict social media have garnered support across the political spectrum. In a segment on MSNBC last April, host Mika

Brzezinski noted that the attorneys profiled in *Can’t Look Away* have taken on some of the biggest companies in the world fighting to change the law to prevent further harm.

“People think they know how bad it is, but it’s actually much worse,” Brzezinski said.

“Companies have been saying, oh, you know, parents need to do more, and kids should put their phones away,” said Perri Peltz, the film’s director. “This is not about that. These parents are fighting a battle that they simply cannot win. They are being outgunned. They’re being outpaced because these are companies that are creating algorithms that are designed by technicians and neuroscientists to keep children on all the time and prizing their profit over safety.”

Local interest in the topic also has been growing. There are currently 188 members of the group for the OK to Delay Redding chapter. The Easton-Redding-Region 9 school districts also introduced new cell phone policies this school year, including an outright ban in the elementary and middle schools and a uniform policy against phones in classrooms and instructional spaces for Joel Barlow High School.

Still, the makers of the film say there is more work to be done.

“As well-intentioned as these ‘ban phones in school’ bills are, they don’t address the core problems of these algorithms,” noted film producer Matthew O’Neill. “They’re being fed things they’re not looking for.”

Can’t Look Away also shows some of the testimony the topic received on Capitol Hill earlier this year. A bill to impose strict regulations on social media companies passed the U.S. Senate by 93 to 3 last spring but has stalled in the House. There, House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-La.) said he supports the concept of online safety but fears that the bills as currently written could lead to censorship.

Johnson does face headwinds from his side of the aisle. A recent story in the *National Review* highlighted calls by two Republican senators to investigate minors’ suicides – and attempted suicides – following these children’s interaction with artificial intelligence (AI) chatbots.

Those interested in attending the film screening can sign up on the OK to Delay – Redding Facebook page, or by sending an e-mail to OktoDelayRedding@gmail.com. The film is also available to be rented and streamed at jolt.film/watch/cantlookaway ■

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Safety versus aesthetic / continued from page 1

Superintendent James Gracy. “I am unsure of any study for the stop sign on Poverty Hollow. I was not opposed to that stop sign, since I personally witnessed a jogger almost get killed one day. The Chief of Police is the LTA (local traffic authority) for Redding; our Department installs and works closely with the LTA to make a safe and smart decision. It is not only accidents that we consider. Pedestrian traffic as well. Stop signs do not always slow traffic down. Sometimes a stop sign can make an intersection more hazardous,” he continued.

Redding Chief of Police Robert Kalamaras detailed the process for installing a stop sign.

When a resident in Redding requests the installation of a stop sign, the Town follows a structured process to ensure consistency with state and federal safety standards, he said.

“The Police Department receives and documents the request, and then we review local crash data,

past traffic complaints, and conduct on-site observations of vehicle and pedestrian activity at the location in question,” he explained.

Kalamaras said because stop signs are regulated under the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), the Department must apply strict criteria before approving them.

“Stop signs are not installed to slow traffic, but only where safety warrants exist. These include locations where a minor road meets a major road, restricted sight distances that create unsafe conditions, or a crash history that indicates a stop sign could reduce collisions,” explained Kalamaras.

As part of its review, the Police Department works with the Director of Public Works to measure sightlines, analyze roadway design, and confirm traffic volumes.

“If a location meets the warrants, the recommendation may also need to be presented to certain Town bodies for their approval,” said Kalamaras. For roadways

under State jurisdiction, such as Routes 53, 58, or 107, the request is forwarded to the Connecticut Department of Transportation for final determination.

“This process ensures that stop signs are installed only when they are truly warranted and enforceable, maintaining both roadway safety and compliance with state law,” continued Kalamaras.

First Selectwoman Julia Pemberton described driving on Poverty Hollow Road recently where one of the new “stop ahead” warning signs is posted ahead of a hill before the stop sign.

“From further away the stop sign is barely visible and the intersection itself is fully obscured,” she noted. Approaching the intersection with Church Hill Road, drivers can see the roadway, but the view of traffic entering the intersection from the side is obscured.

“This is a classic instance of an intersection where this kind of sign would be installed. But I’m no expert,” said Pemberton. ■

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SPORTS

Bobcats cruise far out of Falcons’ reach

Football | By Rocco Valluzzo



Photo by Rocco Valluzzo

Joel Barlow High’s Kaden Holub tries to bring down Brookfield’s Tyler Buttendorf during a varsity football game on Friday, October 3. Barlow came up short 13-47.

A taste of the competition came early and often for the Joel Barlow High varsity football team when it visited Brookfield last week. The Bobcats were a force to be reckoned with on both sides of the ball. Making a number of big plays, they cruised to a 47-13 win under the lights on Friday, October 3. Brookfield was ahead to stay early in the night. On only the second play from scrimmage, Bobcat running back Tyler Buttendorf swept down the right side on a 54-yard run for a touchdown. The extra point was good, and the hosts were up 7-0. The mishandled squib kick-off that followed gave the Bobcats back the ball and set up another

score. This one came on a 25-yard pass from quarterback Thad Balzi to Matt Ackerly, making it 14-0. After the Falcons went three and out, the Bobcats embarked on another scoring drive for a third touchdown in less than nine minutes. Although the visitors appeared to be making progress on their next series (reaching the Bobcat 29 on runs by Kaden Holub and Jack Hall), the drive ended when quarterback Tyler Young was sacked on fourth down. Wasting no time on their next series, the Bobcats found the end zone again this time when Buttendorf went 67 yards down the right side. With the extra point, it was 28-0 with just over 10 minutes left in the half.

Despite managing a couple of first downs on their next series, the Falcons again surrendered the ball on downs, this time on their own 42. This set up a 44-yard pass to Buttendorf for another touch-down. Although the extra point attempt hit the left upright, Brookfield still led 34-0 with 1:31 left in the half. Such was enough time for the Bobcats to score again, getting a break when the Falcons fumbled on their own 18. Two plays later, Jack Alger scored on a nine-yard run and the Bobcats went into halftime up 40-0. Things were a bit more competitive when play resumed. Brookfield rested several of its starters in the second half, and the Falcons actually outscored their opponents. The Falcons got on the board in the third quarter. A 12-yard run by quarterback Tyler Young got the visitors into the end zone to end the shutout. Brookfield, however, had also scored in the period and sat atop a 47-6 lead going into the fourth quarter. Barlow’s other touchdown came in the fourth quarter on an 18-yard-run by Holub on the option play, and the score was final at 47-13. Holub led his team in rushing with 102 yards. Hall finished with 36. On defense, Jacob Cummings led the Falcons with three solo tackles. Holub, Keyan Araujo, Frank Branca, Dylan Vibbert, and Ben Noome all had two apiece. Barlow, now 1-3 overall, has a bye next weekend before resuming its schedule on October 18 at Pomperaug at 6:00 p.m. ■

Panthers answer early Falcon lead

Boys soccer | By Rocco Valluzzo



Photo by Rocco Valluzzo

Waldy Vasquez, right, scored the lone goal for the Joel Barlow High boys varsity soccer team in its game at Pomperaug on Saturday, October 4. Barlow lost 1-2.

Things appeared to start on the right foot for the Joel Barlow High boys soccer team in its game at Pomperaug. For only the second time this season, the Falcons took the lead against an opponent. But with plenty of time left to play, the Panthers responded with two goals of their own and held off the visitors 1-2 on Saturday, October 4. Barlow came out on the offensive early. Just over 13 minutes into the action, Sean Connolly found Waldy Vazquez, who then settled the ball before taking a left-footed shot into the net for his first goal of the season and a 1-0 Falcon lead. Protecting its lead was a different matter for Barlow. Around the midway point of the half, the Panthers netted the equalizer, coming on a long ball by Gabriel Panasci that was headed in by an unmarked

Christian Bernardi with 19:45 left, and it was a new game. The Panthers were not done, however, scoring on a similar play five minutes later. Another long ball from Panasci found the head of Anthony Santo, who redirected it in to put the hosts up 1-2. “This is what’s happened all year,” said Barlow Head Coach Paul Winstanley, describing Pomperaug’s two goals. “There are always critical times when we just don’t rise to the occasion. And that’s been basically the story of the season.” The Panthers came close to increasing their lead on a few other occasions later in the half, including a shot that just cleared the crossbar and another that went wide left. Barlow also missed a good chance with two minutes left in the half when a shot by Nick Niles was a little too high. In the second half, the Falcons picked up the pace a bit but had few opportunities. Pomperaug, however, came dangerously close on a few occasions, including two shots by Kainoa Daniels that bounced off the post in the first 11 minutes. “We could have easily lost 3 or 4-1,” said Winstanley. “The kids are doing what they can do. This year it just isn’t making the grade.” Tom Swabsin made four saves in goal for the Falcons, who are now 1-7-1 overall. They visit defending South-West Conference champ Bethel on Thursday, October 9 at 6:00 p.m.

“We’re hoping to see if we can rally and get into the state tournament,” said Winstanley. “It’s a rough season.” ■

Open House gives Barlow Robotics a running start

By Rob Sample



Photo by Serene Zegarelli

The Barlow FIRST Robotics team held an open house this fall which helped the program recruit its largest-ever number of participants.

The Barlow FIRST Robotics team held its first-ever open house on Wednesday, September 24 – recruiting seven new members and bringing the group’s current size to 30 students. That is the team’s biggest count ever and portends good things for the program, which numbered 25 last year, noted Serene Zegarelli who, along with Jon Stinson, serves as co-lead mentor for the team. Moreover, Zegarelli said, the Barlow team delivered an exceptionally strong performance last year, and team members are excited about the opportunity to surpass that performance in this year’s competition. “The team had one of its best years ever last year,” said Zegarelli. “The team earned its way to both the state and regional championships in the New England district.” The district event took place April 2-5 at the Eastern States Exposition (also known as the “Big

E”) complex in West Springfield, Massachusetts. The Connecticut State Championship followed on May 18 at Glastonbury High School. All Joel Barlow students and families were invited to the open house, which provided an overview of what Barlow Robotics team members do – and, importantly, the work of the various departments that make up the team, including fabrication, electrical, mechanical design, scouting, coding, and outreach. Unlike in years past, the team is fortunate this season to have retained student leadership across each of the departments, providing continuity and helping to ensure they build on last year’s success. “I couldn’t be more excited about our chances this season,” said mentor Stinson. “We had enormous talent last year, and with so many returning student leaders, we’ve already been able to take on more

advanced learning topics and built an ambitious plan of action for the year.” The open house took place in Joel Barlow High School’s technology and engineering area, providing visitors with a look at these facilities as well. Perhaps the most important element was the 15-minute presentations each department lead gave on what they do and why it matters to the overall functioning of the team. “We had several rehearsals beforehand for all the presentations, so by the time everyone arrived, the leads did a fantastic job,” noted Zegarelli. This is the pre-season phase for FIRST Robotics teams; the busy “build” period begins in January. “The pre-season period gives us an opportunity to focus on building the team’s areas of strength, and offers plenty of learning opportunities all around,” noted Zegarelli, who is a corporate vice president for New York Life. “That’s especially true for team members who don’t have a background in engineering, and for kids who have not been involved in robotics before.” The pre-season phase is also an opportunity for students whose expertise is in one discipline to learn more about others. The kick-off for the build phase is set for January 10, 2026, when the FIRST Robotics organization releases the game plan for competitive events. The announcement is simulcast via a computer link. “That’s always a very exciting day for our team,” said Stinson, noting that the team schedules a pizza party for the team members who attend. “We all will find out what the game will consist of –

Continued on page 5

Barlow sports results and schedules

Boys cross country

Results: September 30: Joel Barlow 27 / Notre Dame 31, Kolbe Cathedral 24 / Joel Barlow 33, Joel Barlow 15 / Bassick 50 Record: Joel Barlow 4-8 Next meets: October 15: away at SWC championship at Bethel at 3:00 p.m.

Girls cross country

Results: September 30: Joel Barlow 17 / Notre Dame 47, Joel Barlow 15 / Kolbe Cathedral 50, Joel Barlow 15 / Bassick 50 Record: Joel Barlow 8-4 Next meets: October 15: away at SWC championship at Bethel at 4:30 p.m.

Field hockey

Results: September 29: Immaculate 7 / Joel Barlow 1 October 4: Fairfield Ludlowe 6 / Joel Barlow 0 Record: Joel Barlow 3-6-1 Next games: October 10: home versus Pomperaug at 4:00 p.m. October 15: home versus Newtown at 7:00 p.m.

Football

Results: October 3: Brookfield 47 / Joel Barlow 13 Record: Joel Barlow 1-3 Next games: October 18: away at Pomperaug at 6:00 p.m

Boys soccer

Results: September 27: Old Saybrook 1 / Joel Barlow 0 Record: Joel Barlow: 1-7-1 Next games: October 9: away at Bethel at 6:00 p.m. October 14: home versus New Fairfield at 5:00 p.m. October 7: away at New Milford at 6:00 p.m.

Girls soccer

Results: October 1: Brookfield 0 / Joel Barlow 0 October 4: Joel Barlow 0 / Pomperaug 0 Record: Joel Barlow 4-3-3 Next matches: October 9: home versus Bethel at 5:00 p.m. October 11: home versus Immaculate at 10:00 a.m. October 13: away at New Fairfield at 7:00 p.m.

Girls swimming

Results: September 30: Joel Barlow 93 / New Milford 76 Record: Joel Barlow 5-2 Next matches: October 10: home versus Newtown at 4:00 p.m.

Girls volleyball

Results: September 29: Joel Barlow 3 / Notre Dame 0 Record: Joel Barlow 11-2 Next matches: October 9: away at Masuk at 7:00 p.m. October 11: away at Bethel at 11:30 a.m. October 14: away at New Fairfield at 5:30 p.m.

John Read Middle School starts Science Olympiad team

By Anne Young Albanese



John Read Middle School (JRMS) has started a new team to compete in the nationwide Science Olympiad. The team trains weekly and attends practice tournaments once a month. The practice tournaments allow the students to gain exposure to competition events and practice against teams throughout the Northeast.

The team is coached by John Lo, who helped coach a local homeschoolers Science Olympiad team for three years. JRMS Principal Jennifer Desmarais is the faculty advisor. In addition, a small group of parents supports the kids. “I proposed the idea, and Jennifer Desmarais fully supported it,” said Lo.

“I am thankful for the time and commitment of our volunteer coach, Mr. John Lo,” said Desmarais. “He has introduced a new, exciting, and meaningful extracurricular experience opportunity for interested students. His passion for science gets transferred to team members. Our students dedicate over five hours per week to preparing for upcoming competitions. It is exciting to watch their growth.”

Teams have 15 students who compete in 23 challenge topics during a competition. These can range from building physical projects to answering core knowledge questions. Each student is assigned between two and four topics, and each topic supports two students.

The Science Olympiad season started in September. The group trains weekly at the school to prepare for the monthly Northeast Region practice tournaments, in which JRMS team members will compete against other Connecticut schools and ones from New York, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. The results of the practice tournaments will not affect future qualifications, but they provide the students with the experience of going against very competitive teams.

The Connecticut State Science Olympiad will take place in March in Coventry. The winning team will qualify for the National Competition, which will take place in May at the University of Southern California.

Lo said additional parent volunteers would be a welcome addition to the team.

“Our parents (are) committing their time and energy to help students learn and grow. We also welcome volunteers that are interested in supporting STEM education – teachers, professionals in science and engineering, life and earth science experts, and even retirees eager to give back to the community.”

The team is sponsored by JRMS and the parents of student participants, but they also are looking for corporate sponsors. Anyone interested in volunteering or sponsoring the program should e-mail Desmarais at jdesmarais@er9.org. ■

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newpondfarm.org



Open House gives Barlow Robotics a running start / continued from page 4

after which students really get into the engineering process and come up with the strategy for what the robot should try to accomplish.”

Some teams also elect to receive a parts kit, though the Barlow team does not.

“Rather than opting to purchase a kit, the Barlow team creates most of its own parts for its robot,” said Zegarelli. “Our team has chosen to mill and fabricate the parts ourselves.” This gives members the chance to design and build a machine that reflects their own engineering creativity and strategic choices, rather than relying on a

standardized “kit bot.” By building from scratch, the team gains valuable hands-on experience in problem-solving, fabrication, and iteration – skills that more closely mirror real-world engineering challenges.

Stinson noted that retaining the same team leaders aims to accomplish yet another goal: talent succession. “We had a couple of seniors graduate last year, but we also have quite a few returning members,” said Stinson, who is an executive director at Morgan Stanley. “Now, some of our seniors are in key positions on the team –

which is a good thing for training the next generation of Barlow Robotics leaders.” ■

Note: Angela Humphrey, team captain last year, is now a freshman at Dartmouth and a member of a team there designing a Formula 1 racecar. Alex Weiss and Em Ploss, FIRST Robotics co-captains two years ago, are engaged in similar pursuits at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Weiss is on the Formula 1 race car team and Ploss is involved in the school’s spaceflight society.

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ELECTION 2025

W. Wesley Higgins – Town Treasurer

Endorsed by Republican and Democratic Town Committees

By Pamela Brown



W. Wesley Higgins was first elected to office in 2017 and is serving his fifth term as Town Treasurer. Additionally, he has served as temporary treasurer for a past elected Treasurer who was on leave. Higgins has been married to Betsy for 24 years; they have two children (19, 20), plus two from his prior marriage (31, 34). Away from work, Higgins spends time

working on and sailing wooden boats, hiking along the trails in town, and spending time in the garden.

How long have you lived in Redding?

I first bought a house in 1998 and we spent the weekends here. Later, we moved in full time in 2003.

What are some of the things you enjoy about living here?

It's a beautiful town and full of interesting, friendly people. When taking a walk on the roads, people drive past and usually wave hello – it feels like a place from an earlier era when we had time to chat and got to know our neighbors.

Why would you be a good fit for this role in public office? What experiences or expertise will you draw from?

The job of Treasurer is to safely handle and invest the taxpayers' cash until it is needed for the Town's payments. Most people would find the work a bit dull, but for me, it's like a puzzle to solve – how to invest in the safest way to earn the most interest.

My career was on Wall Street working with the largest bond investors and traders in the country. Over 35 years and in multiple roles, I learned a great deal, most importantly the lessons of humility as no one knows what the future will bring. Being responsible for other people's money demands careful thought and study.

What got you interested in serving as Treasurer? Why are you hoping to serve another term?

I was asked to fill in when the Town's Treasurer had to take a

leave of absence in 2016. I think I can earn the taxpayers the most interest in the safest manner. Last year, the interest earned was over \$1.4 million, the highest in Town history.

What do you see as the top priorities facing the Treasurer's position in the next three years?

The Treasurer's role isn't a policy position like that of the members of the Board of Education or Board of Finance. The Town operates according to rules that were devised in the 18th century, and that disperses power across several boards. It requires a significant amount of explanation and coordination before any action on budgets can occur. I have taken the assignment as Chair of the Long Range Financial Planning Committee to assist the three boards who spend the capital

funds of the Town (Board of Selectmen, Board of Education, and the Water Pollution Control Commission) to facilitate their communication of their priorities and projects with the Board of Finance that oversees the spending and determines how to finance each project. The challenge of keeping our roads, schools, and public spaces in top condition in a time of rising costs will require our elected officials to make thoughtful decisions in allocating our limited funds.

What do you hope to accomplish in the upcoming term, and why?

To the extent I can maximize the interest earned on the Town's cash balances, it helps to keep tax increases down and pays for more services for my neighbors. That's satisfying work. ■

Michele Grande – Town Clerk

Endorsed by Republican and Democratic Town Committees

By Pamela Brown



Michele Grande has served as Town Clerk since January 2004 and is currently serving her 11th term. Next May, she will be celebrating 50 years of marriage to her husband, Thomas. They have four grown, married children and nine grandchildren. Grande enjoys

reading, walking, gardening, and lunching with friends.

How long have you lived in Redding?

39 years.

What are some of the things you enjoy about living here?

I love the small-town atmosphere of Redding. It's been a wonderful place to raise our children. They all attended school here and were involved in sports, Scouts, music, theater, and church.

Why would you be a good fit for this role in public office? What experiences or expertise will you draw from?

I'm a people-person and love my position as Town Clerk. It has been an honor and pleasure to get to know the residents and assist them in any way I can. The Town Clerk's office is a wealth of information,

whether you're buying or selling a house, or want to vote in an election, license your dog, or obtain a vital record.

My prior experience of 25 years working as a paralegal in real estate and probate law and then as Redding Probate Clerk gave me a strong foundation of knowledge that has been put to good use in my role as Town Clerk. Over the last 22 years, I've attended numerous educational and training programs and conferences through my state association and have achieved state certifications of Certified Connecticut Town Clerk and Master Connecticut Town Clerk, as well as nationally recognized certifications of Certified Municipal Clerk and Master Municipal Clerk. Continuing education has enabled me to keep up to date with changes in legislation and common practices affecting this office.

What got you interested in serving as Town Clerk? Why are you hoping to serve another term?

I feel I'm making a difference. I pride myself on running a friendly, efficient office and am very lucky to have an amazing Deputy working with me for the past 20 years. We're willing to go out of our way to assist our residents.

What do you see as the top priorities facing the Town Clerk's position in the next three years?

Moving forward in the Town Clerk's office means more digitization as we're quickly running out of space in the vault for permanent records. As records manager for the Town, it's imperative that we preserve all our records for the ongoing history. The administration of elections is also changing, and I'm

hoping new legislation will help streamline the early voting process so that it's not such a burden (time-wise and financially) on the Registrars of Voters and my office.

What do you hope to accomplish in the upcoming term, and why?

Every year, the Connecticut State Library offers grants to our offices. I have applied for and received grants for records management every year since 2004. My grant this year is to digitize all our maps so they can be viewed online – currently only maps filed after 2004 are viewable online. I also plan to concentrate on organizing and scanning the town meeting books which contain the records of town meetings and ordinances, elections, appointments and resignations – the history of each year, all in one place. ■

Roadways and proposed relocations prompt questions at Georgetown community session / continued from page 1

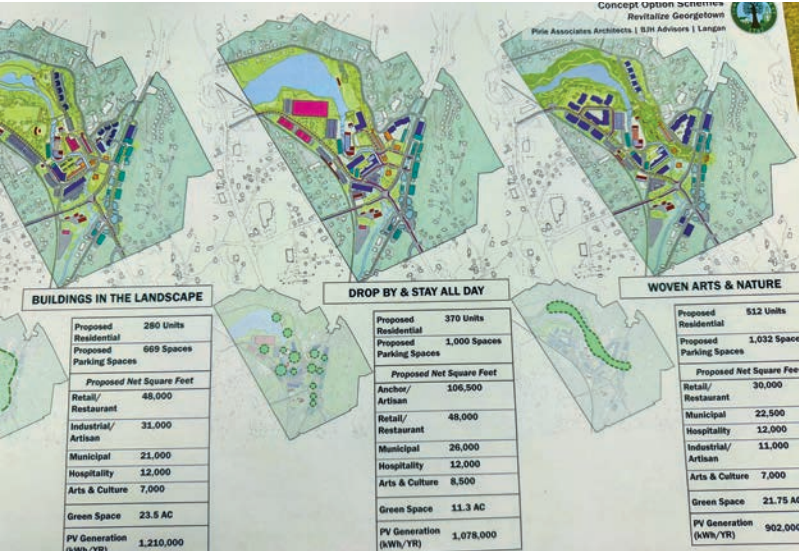


Photo by Jessie Wright

An overview of the three concept options for Georgetown

hub, along with artisan work/live spaces and nature-based recreation. "This linear park pulls nature down through the heart of everything," said Pirie. This option includes the most amount of development, with 512 residential units, 1,032 parking spaces, and slightly lower square footage of new commercial space.

Before presenting the options, Pirie noted a list of elements that all three options have, including arts and culture uses, landscape, historic preservation of the Wire Mill buildings, residential development (either new build or densification strategies), complete streets (streets made not only for cars, but for people), and recreational trails. Pirie also noted that all three options require detailed refinements, trail connections, navigation of parcel ownership, bonding resolution, local partnerships, and multiple development partnerships.

"All of these strategies are set up in mind not with one, big developer coming in and running the whole thing through, but for it to be done incrementally, over time, and with considered partnerships," said Pirie.

The other element that all three options include is the addition of a traffic signal at the outlet of Brookside Avenue on Route 107 and a proposed narrowing of Route 107 for the portion where it parallels Main Street, creating a stretch of downtown Georgetown where traffic is signaled to slow down. Trees, banners, seating, and streetscape elements could be installed on that portion of Route 107 to communicate to drivers to lower their speed.

The roadways where Portland Avenue and North Main Street currently outlet would also be narrowed in all three concepts, with

the Georgetown Firehouse being relocated to another site nearby.

"Right now, Portland Avenue comes in and, because of the sweep of the fire station and the fire trucks needing to get out, North Main coming together with Portland Avenue, with a signal there to turn onto Main Street, it's so wide," Pirie explained. "It's taking all of that vehicular maneuvering and putting it right where you want to put people."

Hands started to shoot up in the room when these changes were presented, with several residents concerned about traffic heading towards and coming from Route 7 already backing up during rush hour and other busy times.

"We're talking about adding more cars, and more traffic, and we're talking about slowing and narrowing, and we still have cars from 107 trying to get to Route 7, and there's been no bypass created. This is going to force cars onto all these roads we're trying to avoid," said one resident.

"There's a natural pressure in Georgetown – which is your biggest asset and, just like with the water, is the biggest challenge," said Pirie. "We can choose to continue to prioritize automobiles in the conversation, or we can choose to prioritize or create more balance between multiple needs of the (village) center. And then maybe folks will find a different route to take, or maybe folks will add five minutes to their commute, or other things might adjust along the way," said Pirie.

Concept options two and three do propose the extension of Route

57, creating a new outlet for the state road further north on Route 7 just over the railroad tracks which could alleviate some of the traffic in that area. Currently, Route 57 terminates at Route 107, but in the proposed extension, it would continue into the Wire Mill site behind Caraluzzi's. Options two and three also include the addition of a Georgetown Metro North train station. Option two includes a reworking of Portland Avenue to conjoin and continue up a widened Brookside Avenue, meeting Route 107 further south than Brookside Avenue currently outlets.

"It's always about prioritizing what is most important to you," continued Pirie. "So, if a vibrant, walkable village center where the Wire Mill factory adjoins to Main Street, with all of your businesses and restaurants and things that are there and makes a larger vital center, then we have to do something with 107. And what we're suggesting in our options is making a compromise with the cars. Right now, the cars are the boss. People are not the boss."

Several attendees asked if a traffic study had been completed on the area.

"We've used best practices from what we know as planning, professionals, of tools that either we've used in other communities or tools we know our peers are using, and what we know DOT (Department of Transportation) is approving in other communities. Is there any possibility to have a traffic study done? Anything can happen after this based on folks' feedback," said Pirie.

Part of the tension comes from the inherent reality of a planning process such as this one – the community's priorities and vision for an area must be established first in order to identify some of these specific constraints and more fully explore them. It can sometimes feel like "putting the cart before the horse," Pirie explained.

"This is a big, complex area with lots of change. Change is hard. Imagining something new is hard. But you have to start with a vision. You have to start with an idea. You have to start with where you want to go. And then you know what challenges you have to solve along the way," she said.

Community members submitted feedback at the meeting; for those who were unable to attend or needed more time to digest the information, feedback can be submitted for the next few weeks at <http://reddingct.gov/revitalize-georgetown-project/>, where a video of the session and materials will be posted. Pirie encouraged people to view the three concepts not as separate, final options, but as approaches across which elements and ideas can be mixed and matched to create a final consensus.

That final plan will be presented at another community session sometime in December. Pirie Associates will also deliver a financial analysis of the option and draft land use amendments. ■

Review all the Revitalize Georgetown materials and the project story map at reddingct.gov/revitalize-georgetown-project

Book Review

Tom Casey, on writing

By *Tom Casey*

*Editor’s Note: Tom Casey has been writing the Redding Sentinel’s book reviews since the newspaper launched three years ago. He graduated from Indiana University in 1972 with a degree in English Literature, then joined the U.S. Air Force as a pilot of cargo planes. After that, he flew for American Airlines for 30 years, based at John F. Kennedy Airport. He is the author of three published novels, **Human Error**, **Strangers’ Gate** and **Unsettled States**. In 2021, he released a documentary film, **Flying Boat**. This week, he shares his perspectives on writing, reading, and literature.*

Did you know that you were a writer early in life?

I would say, yes, but the response from friends and family was not resoundingly affirmative. As a teenager, I mentioned the word “doctor” to my mother and was given a stethoscope instantly as encouragement to pursue medicine. Later, I said I’d like to fly airliners. My mother once took flying lessons and was somewhat sympathetic; my father suggested dentistry and later urged me to have a “better look” at business. One night, I mentioned that perhaps I’d like to write novels. The parental response was immediate and stern: “That’s nothing but a pipe dream.”

But I was serious about life. I learned that we are who we are and will do what we must in spite of obstacles, which are many – and tough beans if we don’t like it – that’s just the way it is. I became an airline pilot; I have flown across the oceans many times. And I have written and published three novels and made one film. If searching was my personal metaphor, the quest was simple: I flew to pursue what body and soul needed, but I wrote for what the mind and spirit desire. Talent and tenacity notwithstanding, the pendulum for fiction as art continues to swing between insight and irrelevance. Writers choose their poison and define their ground. But for artful pursuits, facts and truth remain the guiding beacons. The audience for literature’s core values stays devoted. Though their numbers are diminished and it is hard to make a living at it, serious writers and artists will carry on.

Working a career at almost anything is precarious, but purposeful and necessary: you will eat. To work solely as a writer or artist is worse than precarious, and you might not eat. But probably you will drink. I will tell you that writing fiction can be slow-going – you will learn patience. Story encapsulates contradiction – you will learn to speak with forked tongue to yourself – no one else is there. The novelist Robert Stone was my early mentor. He gave me this bit of wisdom: “Nobody cares whether you write a novel or not. But if you keep doing it, eventually you will write honestly. Truth is the goal.” And for good or ill, he was correct.

As an airline pilot, over the years I adapted to the continuing evolution of technology and technique. As a writer, change has also come. I have watched (nervously) the process of market capitalism applied to the arts, undermining into mediocrity Hollywood filmmaking and popular music. As an American novelist, I see the same conditions threatening publishing. In addition, there seems a shift of reader taste in a direction away from existential subjects of social realism towards celebrity addiction memoirs or novels about graduate students writing (or not writing) term papers. A legitimate fear is that, as a modern corporate entity, publishing has lost artistic

direction to the bottom line. Some fiction writers fear that using substandard selection criteria or commercial guessing brings inferior work into consideration, and that diminished quality is a beast that feeds itself and negatively affects choices editors are making.

Is writing fiction a career? Is it a hobby? Should I do it?

Writing every day eventually grabs you. Soon you will want to keep at it. Memory is vague. Permanence intrigues. History defines. Writing a journal or diary makes a permanent record of moods and events. It gives you greater insight into your days. What was hard at the beginning becomes necessary to do and difficult to stop. That is the moment when writing a novel seems plausible. Martin Amis called writing an illness. I call it an affliction. But – do people want to read what you write? Perhaps, perhaps not. Does it matter?

Writing a poem or a novel is deeply personal, and it is always autobiographical, but not directly so. Metaphor and allegory tell story in a different way. When you write anything, how you did it or why you did it or how much you were paid to do it does not matter. Only your faith in facts matters – and honesty, and truth in what you write. For better or worse, that will come through. Who you are as a writer will offer the reader whatever you can. It might be flat, but it can be magical.

What is the ability to write? Some part of ability is native, like singing on key. And you can learn how to breathe for it. But artistic expression is probably inborn and can’t be taught. Singing with soul, for example. (If Frank Sinatra tried to sing like Little Richard, he’d be Pat Boone). But whatever you write, your work will have larger or smaller significance to the world according to its perceived universality. And you will learn facts from the act of writing that you might not otherwise encounter. You will discover that insights gained from what you have done have been absorbed into yourself and are possible to share.

What is literature?

Literature and poetry are considered literary art. Art seeks to answer three questions. 1. Who am I? 2. Who are you? 3. What is happening? Serious literary novelists exist in every genre. Ultimately, they write to understand and express life’s ambiguities, misdirection, and mortal embarrassments within a specialized framework. Their writing is sound. Their portrait of humankind seems real. Less serious fiction writers exist in the mix and bring insights youthful and less formed, and one has a sense that these writers work from the outside in, rather than from the inside out. Their work reflects a segment of the world legitimate to literary fiction, but risks banality.

Why read?

Let’s talk about how metaphor, through artful manipulation, expands the living experience. Art can express contradiction and synthesize paradox. Art seeks essence while asserting infinite possibility. Do chimes of freedom flash? Bob Dylan says they do, and tells me how and why, and convinces me. Art holds truth as an ideal involved with mysteries, pleasures, fears, desires, and dread. A writer’s mind is his world, what Thomas Wolfe called, “The insoluble prison of being.” The writer has to be comfortable being there for long hours without distraction. These are insights important for a writer to absorb. And for a reader, too. ■

Library Corner

Happy haunting | By *Erin Shea Dummeyer*

Loyal readers of this column will know that, although I enjoy sequins, ice skating, and the color pink, my favorite book genre is horror. And isn’t this the best time to delve into some spooky reads? Recently I have found myself on a haunted house book kick. Here are a few of my favorites:

How to Survive a Haunted House by Mallory Arnold

It’s not often I describe books as “fun,” but this book was just good, old-fashioned spooooooky fun. After acclaimed horror author Mortimer Queen dies, seven of his contemporaries are invited to his creepy mansion for a live reading

of his will. These seven authors are hoping for part of Mortimer’s inheritance but instead find themselves caught in a game that is reminiscent of an Escape Room in a SAW movie. It’s like Disney’s Haunted Mansion ride in book form.

Play Nice by Rachel Harrison

After the death of her mom, Clio agrees to go back to New Jersey to fix up her mother’s house and sell it. This is the same house her mother bought during her messy divorce and where she raised Clio and her sisters. It is also the house where her mother went crazy and lost custody of her kids. So, is the house really

possessed or did Clio’s mom make it all up? Clio will find out.

Kill Creek by Scott Thomas

Best-selling horror author Sam McGarver, along with three other horror writers, is invited to spend Halloween night at the Finch House, located in the Great Plains of Kansas. The publicity stunt, organized by their publishing houses, quickly turns terrifying as the house begins to use their presence for something else. If creepy, very old houses give you the willies, this one is for you. ■

Erin Shea Dummeyer is Director, Mark Twain Library

Good books for good readers | By *Margi Esten*

Readers, I hope you don’t mind if I revisit one of my favorite contemporary literary fiction authors and urge you to read him or, if the case may be, re-read him!

Amor Towles began writing following a career in investment banking and is best known for his three beautifully written and masterfully plotted novels: *Rules of Civility*, *A Gentleman in Moscow*, and *The Lincoln Highway*. He was born and raised in Boston, and has degrees from Yale and Stanford University, where he was a Scowcroft Fellow.

Rules of Civility, published in 2011, is sophisticated and entertaining as we meet the uncompromising 25-year-old Katey Kontent. Set in New York City in 1938, the novel tells of a chance encounter which alters certain young lives. It follows their choices and how the experience shapes their identities over time while exploring themes

of social class, luck, and the pursuit of self-definition. The *San Francisco Chronicle* said, “Even the most jaded New Yorker can see the beauty in Amor Towles’ *Rules of Civility*, the antiqued portrait of an unlikely jet set making the most of Manhattan.”

A Gentleman in Moscow, his second novel, was published in 2016 and is in part historical fiction. Widely considered to be his best book, it was a finalist for the prestigious Kirkus Prize for Fiction & Literature and longlisted for the Dublin Literary Award. It tells the story of Count Alexander Rostov, an aristocrat sentenced to house arrest in the luxurious Metropol Hotel in Moscow following the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. The story takes place over several decades and explores themes of dignity, friendship, and finding purpose. This spectacular novel was also

adapted into a drama series on Paramount/Showtime starring Ewan McGregor as the Count.

The Lincoln Highway, published in 2021, is set in 1954 and tells the story of four young men on a road trip from Nebraska to New York. We are shown that our personal journeys are never as predictable as we might hope. The actual Lincoln Highway – one of the first transcontinental highways in the United States and one of the first highways designed expressly for automobiles – still exists, not as a single unified highway but as a collection of historic segments, local streets, and numbered routes that follow its original path. The novel spans 10 days and is told from multiple points of view. It is a multi-layered tale of misadventure and self-discovery populated by a host of eccentric characters. ■

Nod to the pod | *Strangers on a Bench: “Deli Meets”* By *Amy Maloof*

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

Tom Rosenthal, a British singer-songwriter, started something quite beautiful when he began talking to strangers sitting on park benches around London, recording their conversations as they unfolded – with permission, of course. It all sounds intimidating to me – knowing nothing about your subject beforehand, with no idea of what might develop – but Rosenthal handles it all with a nimble hand. Even when he stumbles into awkward territory, his warm and lightly goofy personality defuses any tension.

There’s no preamble or formal intro to the show, simply a cold open wherein Rosenthal asks a stranger if they’re available to speak for a bit and can he record their conversation? In this episode,

he (very gently) approaches an older woman and explains the premise, asking for just 15 minutes of her time.

“Do you want to give it a go?” She does.

I’ve been known to bail too quickly on podcasts broaching difficult subjects. Something about the medium – swelling music, probing questions – just makes tender topics even more intense.

So, when Rosenthal’s conversation turned toward some of these areas early on, I felt my finger itching to press stop. But because this show is, if anything, underproduced, I was able to stick with it. Because in real life, conversations meander. Something sad is touched upon, then you comment on the dog walking by, then you sneeze, then you might turn back to the original subject until maybe that

evolves into a chat about what you’re cooking for dinner that night. Such is this conversation; a winding walk through heartache, the little joys of life, romantic love, teen parenthood, meeting a famous songwriter in a deli, some sniffles, and a little coughing.

Their conversation is allowed to go where it naturally goes, with a little very quiet piano music smoothing over the segues. The overall effect is quiet, slow, and absorbing. It feels almost sacred, learning about an anonymous woman’s life, and hearing stories I would never hear without this tinny recording. And in the last few moments of the episode, there’s a true goosebumps-on-the-arms moment, a reminder that when life feels predictable and maybe a little sad, something magical might be just around the corner. ■

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BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Cutting a new path
TV veterans launch knife-sharpening business | By Justin Reynolds



Photo courtesy of Mike Ollek

In 2020, the television industry started slowing down, changing rapidly, and becoming increasingly unpredictable. So, husband-and-wife industry veterans Liz and Mike Ollek decided it was time for a change. Donning their entrepreneurial caps, they recently launched Redding Knife Sharpening.

“We sharpen and refurbish knives and tools of all kinds,” Mike said, adding that the business also offers a small selection of fine Japanese cooking knives. “One person can eat an apple, but if you have a sharp knife, you can share it. Sharing food is one of the greatest joys in life. It’s cliché, but this is a people business, and knowing that I may be helping someone maintain their passion for cooking is very rewarding.”

Working in television production as a director of photography, Mike traveled for many years, shooting reality shows and documentaries. The industry changed drastically in 2020, so Mike started looking for something new.

“I dabbled in instrument building and piano tuning,” he said. “Several of my TV colleagues and I started sharpening knives together. Now, we all live apart, but we consider ourselves a guild and trade sharpening tips and tricks over Zoom calls.”

For sharpening, Mike uses low-speed belt sanders and bench grinders with a variety of abrasives. “I’ve become a bit of an abrasive nerd; surprisingly, there have been amazing advancements, and sandpaper is just the beginning,” he said. “My favorite thing now is dental abrasives. I had to 3D-print a special mount to adapt them to a jewelry buffer, and I’m in love.”

The Olleks sharpen knives and tools in their garage workshop at home, and they also have a mobile workshop in the back of a van for house calls and events.

“If you find me at a farmers market or I come to your house, I can sharpen while you wait a few minutes,” he said. “You can also drop them at my house, and I can typically turn them around in a day, or leave them on your front porch if you’re not home, and I sharpen out of my van in your driveway.”

Ideally, you should sharpen your knives and tools every month if you use them regularly, Mike advised.

“Time spent sharpening the axe may well be spared swinging it,” he said. “Hairdressers or stylists, the same. And try not to put your blades in the dishwasher.”

According to Mike, many people incorrectly think that their ordinary knives are not worth sharpening.

“You do not need fancy knives to make healthy and delicious food

for your family,” he said. “Bring me whatever you have, and I will clean them up. You will walk away with a more efficient tool, and a safer tool, and hopefully you will be inspired to try a new recipe or pick up that odd-looking vegetable at the farmers market and try something new.”

Most of the business’s customers are home cooks, with some chefs sprinkled into the mix. Now that the Olleks have added shear-sharpening to their offerings, they hope to start serving the hair stylist community, too.

The Olleks moved to Redding in 2024.

“We were looking for a smaller town and a close-knit community,” he said. “We absolutely love it and spend a lot of time hiking and bike riding with our four-year-old son, Walker. We also have two fur babies, Mimi and Rey. Mimi sometimes rides co-pilot in the van.”

While Mike still shoots some TV, he’s hoping to turn his passion for knife sharpening into a full-fledged career.

“Liz and I feel so supported by Redding friends and [the] community,” he said. “We think it’s such a special gem of a place and are inspired to help serve in this way.”

While Mike always recommends keeping knives and tools sharp, a couple of upcoming events make it even more important than usual.

“Halloween pumpkins and Thanksgiving turkeys need sharp knives,” he added.

Looking ahead, Mike plans to start marketing “block parties,” where a whole street can come and get their knives sharpened from a neighbor’s driveway or cul de sac.

“Order up some pizzas and have a cocktail,” he suggested. “Make it a fun neighbors’ event.” ■

For more information, text (631) 338-6720 or e-mail reddingknives@gmail.com

MUSIC NOTE

Music on the menu
By Pamela Brown

The local music scene is hopping, with many restaurants offering varied line-ups of performers and bands this fall.

Milestone
2 Main Street
(203) 587-1700
milestonect.com

Live music is on the menu year-round. “We’re an authentic, neighborhood gathering spot supporting all types of local causes. It’s a natural for us. People need live music in their lives to bring them happiness, especially in today’s world,” said Susan Young, Milestone’s front of house coordinator. Every Saturday features local bands from 9:00 p.m. – midnight with a \$5 cover charge. “Vetted, tried-and-true, local favorites play on Saturday evenings. These bands are well known to folks in the area and draw quite a crowd.”

Music is performed in the tap room and on the patio, weather permitting. “Music will range from ‘90s to today’s music, from country to classic rock and everything in between,” said Reilly. The entire fall slate of music isn’t yet set, but October’s line-up offers a variety of genres.

October 3: Mike Milazzo, a masterful singer and guitarist whose music blends raw emotion with powerful melodies about love, life, and experience; October 17: Connecticut-born, Brooklyn-based songwriter Jaime Garamella who blends folk and country with rock and roll; October 24: Joey and Zully, a brother-sister duo who bring energy and heart to Latin-inspired music.

Rancho Alegre
6 Main Street
(203) 544-9464
ranchoalegrect.com

This mainstay Mexican restaurant in Georgetown offers live mariachi music every Thursday from 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. “The musicians will walk to your table and sing for patrons on the side of the table,” said Arturo Hernandez, owner. The band plays traditional Mexican folk music featuring lively harmonies and upbeat rhythmic music. “We selected mariachi music because it represents Mexican music, and it will help us to provide a better Mexican experience to all our patrons visiting our place,” Hernandez added.

Wire Mill Saloon & BBQ
12 Old Mill Road
(203) 544-9988 or wiremillbbq.com

Free live music is featured every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday on the patio from 5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. throughout the fall season. Performances are outdoors, so all events are weather dependent.

Lombardi’s Trattoria
22 Main Street
(203) 544-9447
lombarditrattoria.com

Recently finished with a modern refresh of the restaurant, the owners noted that Lombardi’s new look will accompany the same, authentic Italian cuisine it is known for. Although the restaurant does not have a set music schedule in place, the owners said there will be upcoming live performances. Check back on their website for details.

The Georgetown Owl Saloon & Restaurant
19 Main Street
(203) 292-2695
georgetownowl.com

Live music continues on Sundays at the restaurant through October 12 with Dan Kessler. Known for his wide range of musical influences including folk, reggae, bluegrass, cover, and rock, he plays American-born songs along with his own renditions of modern music. The owners hope to continue his performances as his schedule allows. There is no cover charge. ■

Food, fire safety, and fun at Oktoberfest



Photos by Jessie Wright

The Georgetown Volunteer Fire Company hosted its 4th Annual Oktoberfest & Fire Prevention Day on Sunday, October 5. Amidst seasonal fun like a stein-holding competition, pumpkin decorating, and hay rides, attendees learned about fire safety and emergency planning. Live music, delicious food, and great weather combined for a memorable afternoon.

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The Natural World

If trees could talk *Autumn ambles* | By Janice Rotchstein



Photo by Jessie Wright
Huntington Pond in Collis P. Huntington State Park



Photo by Jaime Bairaktaris
Newtown Turnpike at Glen Road



Photo by Danielle Dimston
Colors underfoot at Topstone Park



Photo by Cole Tucker-Walton
Autumn on the Dan Beard Trail

Fall in Redding never ceases to amaze. It’s magical to see the trees ablaze with color and watch their leaves cascading like festive confetti.

Our shorter days and cooler nights make it happen, as do factors like drought and summer heat. All trigger a biochemical response in each leaf’s green pigment to bring us stunning foliage that can stop us in our tracks.

Dogwoods are the first to transition, mainly because in Connecticut they live in the northernmost region of their growing zone. The trees’ burgundy and crimson shades are joined by the birch trees’ brilliant yellows and maples’ bright oranges and reds.

Soon, beeches turn bronze or amber; ginkgoes, fluorescent yellow; black gums, a brilliant scarlet; butternut hickories, gold.

Horse chestnuts join the party with leaves of vibrant rust, and oaks follow with a cloak of red, russet, or brown.

But this kaleidoscope is fleeting; you need to catch it while you can. If you’re searching for last minute places to “leaf peek”, you might consider these spots favored by Reddingites.

An Arborist’s View

Sean McNamara of Redding Nursery suggests canoeing on Huntington Pond: “I first went as a Boy Scout and then often with my parents. We’d slip into an alley of water off Dodgingtown Road and paddle from inlet to inlet, under the footbridges and alongside turtles and ducks,” he recalled.

It was wondrous then, and it is today. He added: “Not to be missed: Docking on the sand and walking

the trail around the pond. The majestic sugar maples with their orange, red, and gold leaves are spectacular this time of year.”

Our First Selectwoman’s Vista

Julia Pemberton, avid jogger, takes to Saugatuck Reservoir weekdays at 6:00 a.m. She steps onto a tree-lined, challenging terrain off Glen Road, then heads toward lookouts like the Great Ledge for vivid views that demand sunglasses.

Pemberton took up running in college because that’s how she and her crew teammates got to the boathouse. It wasn’t until Redding that she experienced the ease of sprinting on soil. “I like the ground’s comfort underfoot, the peace of our open spaces, and the path that takes me to Georgetown for a good cup of coffee,” she said.

An Artist’s Angle

Danielle Dimston, a painter, sculptor, and drawing artist, spends time in Topstone Park. She starts the weekend with a 7:00 a.m. dog-owners meet-up by the pond: “I adore it as does Josie, my French Brittany. She’s made great friends, and I like how everyone checks in on each other.”

Along the way home, Dimston and Josie climb Topstone Mountain for “incredible” autumnal scenes of Georgetown and Ridgefield bathed in color. “After the walk,” she added, “I’m filled with ideas: leaf patterns inspire my watercolors; tree roots make me rethink a sculpture, and strangely-shaped mushrooms beg to be photographed.”

A Naturalist’s Choice

Cole Tucker-Walton, Redding Land Trust Trustee, opts for the

Dan Beard Trail, entering just behind John Read Middle School. “You’re immediately immersed in the glowing yellows of hickories and maples,” he said, “and once on the hilltop, you’re in a dome of red and orange oak leaves.”

The scenery reminds him of when he was a fifth grader at John Read observing fall from its windows. And isn’t that what this season is all about: Watching Mother Nature put on a show! ■

These ambles and more at reddingt-landtrust.org/bookoftrails

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

It’s a dog-eat-brunch world *Milestone to host special event for furry friends October 26*

By Pamela Brown

Milestone at 2 Main Street in Georgetown will be hosting “An Afternoon of Dogs, Treats, and Jazz” on Sunday, October 26, its first-ever dog-focused event. The festivities will take place from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. in collaboration with Earth Animal, a pet supply store in Westport whose mission is to improve, preserve, and enhance the quality of life for animals and the environment. Leashed dogs of all sizes are welcome.

“The main purpose of the event is to bring dog owners and lovers together to enjoy brunch, listen to jazz, and support local businesses,” said Susan Young, front house coordinator. “At Milestone, we love our dogs and love what Earth Animal stands for. Earth Animal creates healthy alternatives to rawhide and kibble, offers wellness solutions, and focuses on making the highest-quality pet products.”

The brunch menu is dog-friendly, because dogs will be allowed on the restaurant’s covered deck and

outdoor patio. The menu includes their all-time classics along with the “Fire Hydrant,” a special hibiscus mimosa cocktail. Live jazz music will be performed by On the Count of Two, a high school freshman jazz duo featuring Hudson Paul in saxophone and Ahan Ghosh-Rao on keys, from 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. on the outdoor stage. Every pup will go home with complimentary No-Hide dog chews and goody treat bags.

Fetch Rescue, a foster-based dog rescue group, will be offering dog adoption information. Established in 2023, the non-profit is dedicated to saving shelter, abandoned, stray, abused, neglected, and owner-surrendered dogs of all breeds and ages. It follows a comprehensive adoption process for placing rescued dogs in qualified, responsible, caring, lifelong homes.

Proceeds from the event will go towards The Mitten Project, Earth Animal’s annual holiday initiative, now in its 18th year.

“It raises funds for CT Foodshare to fight hunger in our local community. Since 2007, it has provided hundreds of thousands of meals to families in need, with this year’s goal set at \$80,000 to help offset funding cuts and rising demand,” said Young. “This matters to Milestone because, like Earth Animal, we believe in supporting our neighbors. Highlighting The Mitten Project allows us to stand with a local partner making a real impact and to connect our guests to a mission rooted in compassion, community, and giving back.”

Young noted the laidback vibe of Milestone helps foster relationships. “Dogs breed (no pun intended) conversation, so it will be a very social event. We want everyone to know Milestone is a special and unique neighborhood spot to eat, drink, listen to, and dance to live music. If folks don’t want to leave their doggies home alone, bring ‘em on down, and we’ll greet them with a smile and a bowl of water.” ■

Redding’s Big Outdoors: Hunters and hikers on open space *continued from page 1*

State-owned hunting locations in Redding and surrounding towns:

Location	Type of Hunting	Town
Bennett’s Pond State Park	Waterfowl, Bow Deer, Turkey	Ridgefield
Centennial Watershed State Forest	Deer only (special permit from Aquarion required)	Easton/Weston
Collis P. Huntington State Park	Bow Deer only	Bethel/Newtown/Redding
East Swamp WMA	Small Game, Waterfowl, Bow Deer, Turkey	Bethel
Paugussett State Forest (see map on DEEP website)	Small Game, Waterfowl, Deer, Turkey	Newtown
Wooster Mountain State Park	Small Game, Waterfowl, Turkey, Bow Deer	Danbury
Great Swamp Flood Control Area	Bow Small Game, Waterfowl, Bow Deer, Turkey	Ridgefield
Centennial Watershed State Forest (Areas where Daily Permit is required)	Bow Deer (special permit from Aquarion required)	Easton/Weston

Fall hunting seasons underway or beginning soon:

GAME TYPE	SEASON DATES
Waterfowl	
Ducks, Mergansers, and Coots	October 11 - 13; November 11; November 15 - January 20
Scaup	November 11; November 15 - December 26; December 27 - January 20
Canada Geese	See Connecticut Migratory Bird Hunting Guide for specifics
Snow Geese	October 1 - January 10; February 17 - March 10
Brant	December 16 - January 19
Wild Turkey	
Fall Archery	
Private Land (Zones 11 and 12)	January 1 - 31
Private Land (All Zones)	September 15 - December 31
State Land Bowhunting Only Areas	September 15 - December 31
State Land	September 15 - November 18 and December 24-31
Fall Firearms	
State and Private Lands	October 4 - October 31
Small Game Mammals	
Gray Squirrel	January 1 - February 28 and September 1 - December 31
Cottontail Rabbit	January 1 - February 28
European Hare	October 18 - December 31
Snowshoe Hare	January 1 - January 31 and November 15 - December 31
Woodchuck	March 15 - November 15
White-Tailed Deer	
Bowhunting	
Private Land (Zones 11 and 12)	January 1 - 31
Private Land (All Zones)	September 15 - December 31
State Land Bowhunting Only Areas	September 15 - December 31
State Land	September 15 - November 18 and December 24-31
Shotgun - State controlled areas	
No lottery season	November 19 - December 9
Deer Lottery	
Archery-only lottery	September 15 - December 31
State Land Lottery "A" Season	November 19 - 28
State Land Lottery Regular Season	November 19 - December 9
Deer Shotgun/Rifle/Revolver	
Private Lands	November 19 - December 9
Landowner	November 1 - December 31
Deer Muzzleloader	
Private Land	December 10 - 31
State Land	December 10 - 23

Privately-owned land

Property owners also can consent for individual hunters to hunt deer and/or turkey and can grant or deny permission to hunt on Sundays on their private land. The property owner should complete a form that the hunter must carry while hunting, which can be found on the DEEP website. Private property hunters are still limited to specific hunting dates and the number of prey from each category. If

you are hunting on your own private land, certain exemptions to licensing requirements apply if the property is 10 or more contiguous acres, though an annual permit is still required. ■

The 2025-26 Hunting and Trapping Guide is available at portal.ct.gov/deep/hunting/2025-connecticut-hunting-and-trapping-guide

League of Women Voters hosts fall kick off



Photos by Mary Ann Carman and Ginny Keim

The Redding League of Women Voters held a fall kick off on Tuesday, September 30 at New Pond Farm Education Center, featuring Tim Keyes presenting on the dangers of microplastics. (Left): Co-President Mary Ann Carman with Tim Keyes and Co-President Kim O’Rielly; (Right): Jinny Cohen and Susan Durkee.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

\$ = fee applies
R = registration required

This Week’s Featured Events

Portal Open for Redding Land Trust Photography Show Submissions Thursday, October 9 Submit photographs of Redding’s open spaces for a chance to be exhibited at Mark Twain Library in June 2026 reddinglandtrust.org/photoshow \$, R	Open Mic Night Thursday, October 16 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Evening of music, doors open at 6:00 p.m. Redding Grange #15 399 Newtown Turnpike reddinggrange.org	Harvest Festival Saturday, October 18 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Sheep shearing, fall crafts, food, pumpkins, bird demonstrations, and more New Pond Farm Education Center 101 Marchant Road newpondfarm.org	Want to feature an upcoming event? E-mail us at advertise@reddingsentinel.org for more information.
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ARTS

Thursday, October 16 Open Mic Night 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Evening of music, doors open at 6:00 p.m. Redding Grange #15 399 Newtown Turnpike reddinggrange.org	Friday, October 17 Artist Talk and Demo with Janice Mauro 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Anonymous Society 268 Simpaug Turnpike anonymoussocietygallery.com	Saturday, October 18 Curator and Artists Talk with Closing Reception 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Georgetown Arts & Cultural Center 5 Main Street gtownarts.com
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Sunday, October 19 Stone Free Arts Harvest 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Immersive live improvised performances are a backdrop to a food and toy drive and arts bazaar The Granite 5 North Main Street thegranitichurch.org/events
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CHILDREN | TEENS

Thursday, October 10 Fall Craft 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Grades 5+ Mark Twain Library 439 Redding Road marktwainlibrary.org R	Monday, October 13 Pumpkin Painting 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Grades 5+, snacks provided Mark Twain Library 439 Redding Road marktwainlibrary.org R	Tuesday, October 14 Pie Party 4:00 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. Grades 6+ DIY pie party Mark Twain Library 439 Redding Road marktwainlibrary.org R	Sunday, October 19 Redding Scout Day 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. All-age activities for those interested in joining a BSA troop West Redding Fire Department 306 Umpawaug Road	Thursday, October 23 Family Scarecrow Decorating 5:00 p.m. You bring the clothes and accessories, Park and Recreation provide hay and string Redding Community Center 37 Lonetown Road reddingct.gov/parks-and-recreation R
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FUNDRAISERS

Saturday, October 25 DAWS Making a Difference Gala 6:00 p.m. Support Danbury Animal Welfare Society and the animals in their care Amber Room Colonnade 1 Stacey Road Danbury dawsgala2025.givesmart.com \$, R	Friday, November 7 Bright Futures Boys & Girls Club Bash Light bites, open bar, live music, and silent auction to support Boys & Girls Club of Redding-Easton Redding Country Club 109 Lonetown Road bgcre.net \$, R
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HOLIDAY | SEASONAL

Saturday, October 11 Fall in Love with Ridgefield 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Vendors, face painting, DJ, scarecrow competition, concert, and book sale Main Street Ridgefield chamber.inridgefield.com	Saturday, October 18 Harvest Festival 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Sheep shearing, fall crafts, food, pumpkins, bird demonstrations, and more New Pond Farm Education Center 101 Marchant Road newpondfarm.org
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Saturday, October 18 5th Annual Pumpkin Fest 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Pumpkins, fall games, costumed colonial docents, and fresh cider and donuts Wilton Historical Society 224 Danbury Road Wilton wiltonhistorical.org	Saturday, October 18 Halloween Spooktacular & Trunk or Treat 4:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Enjoy games, arts, an inflatable bounce house, a “haunted” house, Trunk or Treating and more Riverbrook Regional YMCA 404 Danbury Road Wilton wiltonymca.org \$, R	Saturday, October 25 Bethel Trick or Treat Street 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Trick or treat at businesses and compete in a costume contest held at 3:00 p.m. Greenwood Avenue and Municipal Center Bethel bethelchamberofcommerce.com
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Saturday, October 25

Redding Neighbors & Newcomers Trunk or Treat 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Trunk or treat around decorated vehicles and host stations – admission is one bag of candy per child Redding Community Center 37 Lonetown Road reddingneighborsandnewcomers.org R

NATURE

Thursday, October 9 Portal Open for Redding Land Trust Photography Show Submissions Submit photographs of Redding’s open spaces for a chance to be exhibited at Mark Twain Library in June 2026 reddinglandtrust.org/photoshow \$, R	Saturday, October 18 Redding Community Hiking Club – Autumn Hikes 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Hike to Great Ledge led by Redding Land Trust trustee – register by October 16 Devil’s Den Preserve marktwainlibrary.org R	Monday, October 20 Redding Garden Club: The Art of Flower Arranging 1:00 p.m. Stephany Sanderson, proprietor of Lily Astraea in Georgetown, will provide insights into the art of flower arranging; non-members welcome got \$5 fee Redding Community Center 37 Lonetown Road reddinggardenclub.org \$
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Sunday, October 26

4th Annual Redding Grange Agricultural Fair 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Competition categories, food, games, and educational displays Redding Grange #15 399 Newtown Turnpike reddinggrange.org
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SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Sunday, October 12 Redding Preservation Society Annual Meeting 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. The Granite 5 North Main Street R	Tuesday, October 14 Navigating Travel in a Changing Word 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Panel discussion live and virtual on changing dynamics of international travel Mark Twain Library 439 Redding Road marktwainlibrary.org R
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Wednesday, October 15

Forensic Archaeology: Bone Detectives 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Virtual program with State Archaeologist Emeritus Mark Twain Library marktwainlibrary.org R

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

Bethlehem Lutheran Church Sundays at 10:00 a.m. 44 Portland Avenue bethlehemlutheranct.org	Calvary Independent Baptist Church Adult and Child Sunday School at 10:00 a.m. / Worship Sundays at 11:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Wednesday prayer meeting at 7:00 p.m. Nursery provided for all services. 711 Redding Road cibcredding.org	Christ Church, Episcopal Sundays at 9:00 a.m. 184 Cross Highway christchurchredding.org	First Church of Christ, Congregational Sundays at 10:00 a.m. 25 Cross Highway firstchurchredding.org	Long Ridge United Methodist Sundays at 11:30 a.m. 201 Long Ridge Road Danbury longridgeumc.com	Sacred Heart / St. Patrick Parish St. Patrick Church: Saturday Vigil Mass: 5:00 p.m. Sunday Mass: 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Monday-Friday: 8:30 a.m. Confessions: Saturdays 4:00 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. and Mondays and Thursdays 7:30 p.m. – 8:00 a.m. and before/after Weekday Mass Eucharistic Adoration: Mondays and Thursdays 7:00 p.m. 169 Black Rock Turnpike sacredheart-stpat.org
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Georgetown Oratory of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus Saturday Vigil Mass: 4:00 p.m. Sunday Mass: 9:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m., and 12:00 p.m. (Latin) Tuesday and Thursday: 8:30 a.m. Wednesday: 6:00 pm. (Latin) Holy Days: 8:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. First Fridays and Saturdays: 8:30 a.m. Confessions: Saturdays 7:00 a.m. – 8:15 a.m. and Wednesdays 5:15 p.m. – 5:45 p.m. Eucharistic Adoration: Saturdays 5:00 p.m. following Vigil Mass 30 Church Street
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Temple B’nai Chaim Friday, October 10 5:30 p.m. Family Sukkot Shabbat templebnaichaim.org
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Please check church and temple websites for holiday and special services

MEETINGS

Thursday, October 9 Redding Historic Cemetery Committee 2:00 p.m. Town Hall / Hearing Room 100 Hill Road	Thursday, October 9 Gilbert & Bennett Wire Mill Advisory Committee 6:00 p.m. Town Hall / Hearing Room and Virtual 100 Hill Road and Zoom	Thursday, October 9 Fire District #2 Commissioners Meeting 7:00 p.m. West Redding Firehouse 306 Umpawaug Road	Tuesday, October 14 Planning Commission 7:00 p.m. Town Hall / Hearing Room 100 Hill Road	Tuesday, October 14 Redding Fire District 1 7:00 p.m. Redding Ridge Firehouse 186 Black Rock Turnpike	Wednesday, October 15 Water Pollution Control Commission 7:30 p.m. Virtual	Thursday, October 16 Historic Review Committee 6:00 p.m. Virtual	Thursday, October 16 Democratic Town Committee 7:00 p.m. Town Hall / Hearing Room 100 Hill Road	Monday, October 20 Early Voting and Same Day Registration 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Redding Community Center 37 Lonetown Road	Monday, October 20 Board of Selectmen 7:00 p.m. Town Hall / Hearing Room 100 Hill Road	Tuesday, October 21 Early Voting and Same Day Registration 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Redding Community Center 37 Lonetown Road	Tuesday, October 21 Conservation Commission 7:00 p.m. Town Hall / Hearing Room 100 Hill Road	Tuesday, October 21 Region 9 Board of Education 7:00 p.m. Joel Barlow High School / Library Learning Commons 100 Black Rock Turnpike	Wednesday, October 22 Early Voting and Same Day Registration 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Redding Community Center 37 Lonetown Road	* Town offices will be closed Monday, October 13 for Columbus Day
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