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Covering The News In Connecticut's Northwest Corner And Its Environs Since 1897



PHOTO BY JENNIFER ALMQUIST

The Great Country Mutt Show drew a record crowd of dogs and their owners Sunday, June 7.

Little Guild's Great Country Mutt Show draws record crowd

By Jennifer Almquist

SALISBURY – Sunshine, laughter and hundreds of wagging tails filled Lime Rock Park Sunday, June 7, for The Great Country Mutt Show, an annual fundraiser for the Little Guild animal shelter located in West Cornwall. Attendance more than doubled from last

year, with approximately 1,500 people turning out for the free event alongside their four-legged companions.

"This year's Great Country Mutt Show was the most successful in the event's history," said Jenny Langendoerfer, executive direc-

See MUTT SHOW, Page B1

Man drowns after kayak overturns in North Canaan

By Aly Morrissey

NORTH CANAAN – A man drowned Saturday afternoon, June 6, after a kayak overturned in a private pond near 324 Norfolk Rd. behind Freund's Farm Market and Bakery.

Wiliam Alexander Campos Vazquez, 25, of Guatemala, was pronounced dead on the scene after he was recovered from the pond and life-saving efforts were unsuccessful.

He was the sole occupant of the kayak, officials said. A preliminary investigation revealed he was paddling a kayak on the small farm pond by himself when his vessel capsized.

DEEP Environmental Conservation Police (EnCon) responded along with North Canaan emergency responders, Life Star and Connecticut State Police Troop B.

A Lifestar helicopter was seen

landing in the area near the Lone Oak Campsites in East Canaan, though it did not land on the campground property, according to employee Jean Goodall. She said the helicopter was visible from the campground.

DEEP Environmental Conservation Police are leading the investigation, which is ongoing. The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner was notified and is assisting.

LaBonne's unveils expansion plans with new blueprints

By Alec Linden

SALISBURY – Expansion may be on the horizon for LaBonne's Market, Salisbury's only grocery store, as preliminary plans call for a 4,700-square-foot addition that would create more retail space, add employee facilities and reconfigure parking around the downtown property to add more spots.

During a meeting with the Economic Development Committee on May 21, Robert LaBonne Jr., the current president and CEO of the four LaBonne's Markets locations across the state, outlined conceptual plans for an addition on the east side of the building.

According to a blueprint he shared with the group, the registers would be relocated to the new addition, creating room for longer



PHOTO BY ALEC LINDEN

LaBonne's Market is considering an expansion that would reorganize the flow of traffic on Academy Street in Salisbury.

grocery aisles within the existing store. The plans also include an expanded produce section, a café space, a second-floor area for staff facilities and a loading and storage area on the north side of the expansion.

LaBonne Jr. said the store has simply outgrown its current footprint of just over 43,000-square-feet. "It's the smallest sales space of the four," he said, the others being located in Watertown, Woodbury and Prospect, "and in the summer it does the most business."

In order for the expansion to move forward, the Academy Street corridor would be overhauled. Currently, Academy Street is a small street that provides access to the grocery store, the used bookstore Johnnycake Books, a guest house, and several private residences.

As presented in the expansion plans, the street would essentially be the center of a parking lot comprised of the current LaBonne's parking on the west side of Acade-

my Street, another plot on the east side and a third area to the north of the building, with auxiliary spaces on another parcel at the end of the street that are currently used as overflow for the store.

The conceptual plans, developed by SLR Consulting of Cheshire, Connecticut, would create a total of about 90 parking spaces across a series of plots owned by the Market Place of Salisbury, a decades-old private shareholder group that LaBonne's leases the land from. While most of the land is already owned by the Market Place, some of the proposed parking area lies on land currently owned by the town. One parcel currently houses an occupied affordable home rental, which LaBonne noted would have to be replaced elsewhere if it is removed as the plan proposes.

LaBonne Jr. noted that the plans come after years of deliberation with the town on how to proceed,

See LABONNE'S, Page A12

Affordable home project in Sharon could break ground this summer

By Alec Linden

SHARON – Construction of a new affordable home at 160 Silver Lake Shores Rd. could begin this summer after the Sharon Housing Trust secured up to \$420,000 in financing and grant money to move forward with the project.

The funding package, announced May 22, includes a mortgage commitment of up to \$270,000

"We want to be able to provide affordable housing in whichever way there's demand for it."

Sharon Housing Trust President Richard Baumann

for construction financing from Capital for Change – a Connecticut Community Development Financial Institution – and an additional \$150,000 grant sponsored by the state Department of Housing.

The home, which was designed by Cornwall architect Christine Gray last year, will be a single-family three-bedroom home in the Mudge Pond-adjacent neighbor-

hood. It is expected to sell between \$250,000 and \$275,000.

"Sharon and the towns around us are in a desperate affordable housing crunch," said Sharon Housing Trust President Richard Baumann. "We want to be able to provide affordable housing in whichever way there's demand for it."

See HOUSING, Page A12



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Online This Week

Sights and sounds

from The Great Country Mutt Show

Take a behind-the-scenes look at the Northwest Corner's most dog-friendly day. Watch online at lakevillejournal.com.

POLICE BLOTTER: TROOP B

The following information was provided by the Connecticut State Police at Troop B. All suspects are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Construction zone side swipe

On the morning of June 4, just before 11 a.m., an unknown vehicle traveling north on Salmon Kill Road in Salisbury was passing a construction zone near the intersection with Trotta Lane when it sideswiped a town-owned GMC Sierra parked within the construction pattern. The vehicle and its driver had left the scene by the time troopers arrived, and the investigation remains open. Anyone with information regarding the incident is requested to contact Trooper Kathleen Begley at Kathleen.Begley@ct.gov or via the Troop B barracks phone line, 860-626-1820.

Neighborhood fender bender

On the evening of June 4, Carol Overby, 75, of North Canaan was attempting to merge onto West Main Street at the intersection with Foote Road in North Canaan, but did not see a GMC Canyon SLT oncoming. She collided with the vehicle, driven by Joshua Reeve, 28, of North Canaan, giving functional damage to both his vehicle and her own Volvo V70 GLT. Neither driver was injured, and both vehicles were driven from the scene. Overby was issued an infraction for failure to grant right of way at a junction of highway.

The Lakeville Journal will publish the outcome of police charges. Send mail to P.O. Box 1688, Lakeville, CT 06039, Attn: Police Blotter, or send to editor@lakevillejournal.com.

Revolutionary-era music program kicks off summer concert series

FALLS VILLAGE – The David M. Hunt Library and Falls Village Recreation Commission will launch their summer concert series with “Connecticut Tunes and Tales of the Revolution” on Friday, June 26, at 6 p.m. on the library lawn.

Musician and storyteller Kent Besocke will present an hour-long program exploring Connecticut's role in the American Revolution

through music, folklore and historical stories, accompanied by acoustic guitar, banjo and mandolin. Attendees are encouraged to bring chairs, blankets and refreshments.

The series will continue with Berkshire Resilience Brass Band on July 24 and the third annual Community Talent Show/Open Mic on Aug. 28. All programs begin at 6 p.m. at the library.



PHOTO BY ALY MORRISSEY

Amenia Sips & Sweets fundraiser set for June 13

AMENIA — The Amenia Free Library is gearing up for its Sips & Sweets fundraiser.

The fundraiser is set for Saturday, June 13, from 6 to 8 p.m. at the library on Route 343.

Tickets cost \$30 per person and are available

for sale at the library prior to the event or at the door the night of. The cover price includes drinks, food and two raffle tickets.

The fundraiser is limited to adults 21 and over.

The Amenia Free Library is located at 3309 Route 343 in Amenia.

Falls Village rejects folk dancers, considers natural burials

By Christian Murray

FALLS VILLAGE — The Board of Selectmen voted June 8 to deny a request to allow a group of folk dancers to perform in town this summer, citing concerns over disruptive behavior at previous gatherings. The board also discussed a proposal that could allow natural burials — in which bodies are buried without vaults or standard caskets — in Falls Village cemeteries.

The request by the dance group sought to revive a longstanding tradition that brought Morris dancers, performers of a traditional English folk dance, back to the center of town each year.

Robin Cockerline, a Salisbury resident who wrote a letter advocating for the dance group, said Morris dancers had visited Falls Village for at least 40 years before the tradition ended following the COVID-19 pandemic, the death of longtime organizer John Dexter and what she

described as rowdy behavior at a previous performance.

In the letter, Cockerline asked the town to permit a small group of dancers to perform in Falls Village in August. Historically as many as two dozen dancers participated.

Cockerline wrote that the visiting group would be smaller than in years past and had assured organizers that previous problems would not be repeated.

First Selectman Dave Barger said he had spoken with several residents who live in the center of town and found strong opposition to allowing the dancers back.

“Based on what happened in the past, they are not happy with it, and they do have a real legitimate fear that it will happen again,” Barger said.

Selectman Judy Jacobs agreed, saying there had been issues on more than one occasion. The board unanimously denied the request.

Barger, after the meeting, said that participants at past

Morris events had been seen urinating and defecating on private property, leaving trash behind and disrupting residents.

“There was one family having a cookout with friends, and there was screaming and yelling [in the street],” Barger said, noting one of many disruptions.

Town reviews natural burial policy

In other business, the board discussed whether to allow natural burials in Falls Village's cemeteries. They are currently not permitted.

The discussion was prompted by a recent inquiry from a resident interested in purchasing a cemetery plot for a natural burial, according to Town Sexton Tracey Wilson.

Wilson told the board that Connecticut law allows municipalities to decide whether natural, or “green,” burials may take place in cemeteries they own. Unlike traditional burials, natural burials do not use embalming fluids or buri-

al vaults and instead rely on biodegradable caskets, such as pine or cardboard, or burial shrouds.

“They're becoming more and more common, and people are seeking cemeteries that allow natural burials,” Wilson said.

Wilson said Falls Village could operate as a hybrid cemetery system, allowing traditional burials, cremation burials and natural burials within the same cemetery. Such an arrangement would allow family members who choose different burial methods to remain buried together while also giving residents another burial option.

The board initially considered approving such burials but instead voted to have Wilson develop guidelines outlining how the practice would be implemented before taking formal action.

The policy would establish what qualifies as a natural burial and set standards for burials conducted in town cemeteries.

Sharon median home price climbs to \$762,500

By Christine Bates

SHARON – Prices for single-family homes in Sharon, excluding condos, continued to rise, reaching a 12-month trailing median sales price of \$762,500 for the period ending May 31, 2026. That is the highest 12-month median price since September 2024, though it remains below the all-time high of \$880,000 reached in August 2024.

The latest median represents a 33% increase from the \$575,000 recorded for the 12 months ending May 31, 2025, and an 18% increase from the \$647,500 recorded for the comparable period ending May 31, 2024.

Despite the rise in prices, sales activity remained relatively stable. A total of 42 single-family homes sold during the 12 months ending May 31, 2026, compared with 41 sales during the same period a year earlier and 38 sales two years ago.

As of June 6, there were 16 residential properties listed for sale in Sharon — 15 single-family homes and one condominium — compared with 11 a month earlier. Even so, Sharon remained a seller's market, particularly at the lower end. Eleven of the listings were priced above \$1 million, while just four were listed below the town's median sale price of \$762,500.

Ten parcels of land are listed for sale on MLS with only one parcel smaller than five acres.

Summer rentals are still available, ranging from \$6,000 a month to \$25,000 for the season with only one unfurnished year-round, two bedroom apartment available for \$2,300.

Transfers

338 Calkinstown Road – 5 bedroom/5.5 bath mansion on 35.74 acres transferred on May 1 by Jason Semmel and Sylena Goodman to Northern Land Preservation for \$5,750,000

Douglas Road Lot 290

and Bartram Road Lot 323 – Two vacant .08-acre parcels transferred on May 6, 2026, by Eric Klinger to Silver Pond LLC for \$25,000

45 Herrick Road – 2 bedroom/2 bath home plus 1 bathroom studio on 3.65 acres transferred on May 6, 2026, by Dennis Asher LLC to Anna and Andrew Andriuk for \$700,000

59 Cornwall Bridge Road – 3 bedroom/3 bath home on 3.24 acres transferred on May 6, 2026, by Trustees Lindley Kirksey, Ridgely Straka, and Nathaniel Young of Allen Young Revocable Trust to Virginia Liberatore and Ste-

ven Simon for \$1,175,000

86 Cornwall Bridge - 3 bedroom/1 bath Cape Cod house built in 1950 on .75 acres transferred on May 18, 2026, by Daniel George to Pace Home Buyers LLC for \$300,000

86 Upper Main Street – Property adjacent to 84 Upper Main Street transferred on May 26, 2026, by David Larkin to Brendan and Roxanne Lee for \$27,000

12 Silver Hill Road – 3 bedroom/2.5 bath contemporary home on 3 acres transferred on May 29, 2026, by John North and Guillermo Torres to George Ernest

Wallace and Elizabeth Anne Houson Wallace for \$895,000

* Town of Sharon real estate transfers recorded between May 1, 2026, and May 31, 2026, provided by Sharon Town Clerk. Transfers without consideration are not included. Current market listings from Smart MLS and market statistics from Info-sparks. Note that recorded transfers may lag sales by a number of days. Compiled by Christine Bates, Real Estate Salesperson with William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty, Licensed in CT and NY.

YOUR NEWS

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- Ocean State Job Lot

Non-profit SPOTLIGHT

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Correction

In the May 27 issue in the article about the Pop-Up fix-it event at the Salisbury Congregational Church held on May 23, fixer Rob Buccino's name was spelled incorrectly.

Our Towns

Sharon BOE opts into Region One survey, releases new favorability data

By Aly Morrissey

SHARON – The Sharon Board of Education voted unanimously June 8 to participate in Region One’s organizational study, a year-long effort aimed at evaluating the district’s K-8 structure and exploring options to ensure long-term educational quality, equity and fiscal sustainability.

To date, Cornwall, Falls Village, Sharon and Housatonic Valley Regional High School have agreed to participate, and no schools have opted out.

Region One superintendent Melony Brady-Shanley said the district has not conducted a comprehensive

organizational study in roughly a decade and described the effort as an information-gathering process rather than a plan for immediate change. The study will take place during the 2026-27 school year, with progress reports scheduled for October, February and May before the final findings are presented in June.

The study will examine a broad range of topics, including enrollment and demographic trends, educational programming, staffing, transportation, finances, facilities, governance structures and community impacts.

Brady-Shanley faced

questions from the board about why she and Region One Business Manager Sam Herrick plan to conduct the study in-house, rather than hiring outside consultants.

“We are a very unique district,” she said, adding that the learning curve an outside consultant would face would waste time and money when she believes they have well-qualified resources in-house. She added the pair will rely on existing district data and draw from outside expertise when needed.

Board member Pam Carlson questioned whether the project was realistic given the administrators’ existing responsibilities,

saying it “does not seem doable.”

Brady-Shanley said the study will be one of her primary goals for the coming year and she is confident the district has the expertise to complete it internally.

Favorability rises among parents, students

The board also reviewed preliminary results from Sharon Center School’s latest “School Culture and Climate Survey.”

The initial data – which is still being analyzed – measured general favorability among parents, teachers, and students. Overall parent favorability rose from 68% to 77% over the past two years. Student favorability among grades 3-5 increased from 63% to 85%, while grades 6-8 climbed from 44% to 73%. Staff favorability declined from 71% to 64%.

Principal Carol Tomkalski said the data will be reviewed more extensively to draw conclusions, but noted that this year’s action plan focused heavily on strengthening students’ sense of belonging, which could have contributed to the positive results.

“To actually see that our results have jumped to that extent is just indicative of the efforts that our school culture and climate team and all the staff have been working on,” Tomkalski said.



PHOTO BY ALY MORRISSEY

Layne Beman (left), Gunnar Begley (middle) and Nathan MacMillan are recognized for building chess tables that will serve future students.

SCS graduates leave lasting legacy with handmade chess tables

By Aly Morrissey

SHARON – Three Sharon Center School eighth graders were recognized by the Board of Education June 8 for creating a new class legacy project.

The students built three wooden chess tables that have been placed in the school’s new Leadership Lounge, where students from different grade levels can gather and play.

Principal Carol Tomkalski praised the trio for launching what she hopes will become

a tradition for future graduating classes.

“You’re paving the way for a new tradition to follow, so thank you,” Tomkalski said.

The students signed their names to the tables, ensuring they will be remembered by generations of Sharon Center School students to come.

Tomkalski said she hopes to put the tables to use with a future chess tournament, tapping into a student body that includes enthusiastic players as young as second grade.

New Sharon Land Use Director to begin July 1

By Alec Linden

SHARON – Nichole “Nikki” Blass of Sharon will take over as Land Use Administrator on July 1, following the retirement of longtime town employee Jamie Casey. Blass is a seven-year veteran of the Land Use Office and also serves as the second lieutenant and secretary for Sharon Ambulance.

Casey said Blass’ experience working as the Office’s assistant has set her up well to succeed in the role.

The Land Use Administrator is the town’s zoning enforcement officer, responsible for handling all applications related to construction, development and landscape alterations and issuing citations when zoning code is broken. It is a paid role that is appointed by the First Selectman.

“To me, she was the only choice for the job,” Casey said. “She knows the town inside and out, and she grew up here. That’s important, too.”

Blass’ appointment was announced during the Board of Selectmen’s May 26 meeting. In previous weeks, selectmen interviewed Blass and another candidate for the position.

Blass said she was first introduced to Casey and the Land Use Office through her involvement with Sharon Ambulance. She was initially hired to handle filing duties but quickly took on additional responsibilities as the workload increased during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“When Covid hit, we were so inundated with projects and work that I just jumped in,” Blass said, saying that she and Casey worked naturally together. “It was sink or swim.”

Blass said when she takes office in July, she plans to focus on organization to support several large-scale projects that are ongoing or pending review. Those include the development of an office facility for Jasper Johns-affiliated nonprofit Low Road Foundation and a controversial housing development on Hospital Hill Road which is currently facing litigation from neighbors.



PHOTO PROVIDED

In July, Nikki Blass, right, will take over as Sharon’s Land Use Administrator when Jamie Casey retires after more than three decades in Town Hall.

She said replacing Casey will be a challenge. Still, she said her time working in the office with Casey has prepared her well for the flexibility and depth of knowledge the position requires.

“Every situation that comes through the door is not the same as the one that was before it,” Blass said. “Being able to handle that kind of thing is the most valuable lesson she could have taught me.”

Blass is stepping into a complex role, Casey said, “but I know she’s more than capable of doing it.”

Plus, “she’s a Sharon girl,” Casey said.

Meanwhile the Selectmen have been conducting interviews to replace Stanley MacMillan Jr., the town’s building inspector and fire marshal of three decades, who is also retiring at the end of the month. No hire had been announced as of June 4. Town Hall is also seeking to hire a replacement for Blass’ current position to assist both the Land Use Administrator and Building Inspector, and will be soliciting candidates this month.



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OBITUARIES

For another obituary, see page A12

Susanne Cecilia Berberoglu

SHARON — Susanne Cecilia Berberoglu, beloved wife, mother, grandmother, and friend, passed away peacefully on May 14 surrounded by the love of her family.



Born on Fe 13, 1951, in New Milford, Susanne lived a life filled with warmth, adventure, compassion, and dedication to those she loved.

A graduate of Brookfield High School, Susanne went on to work as a travel agent, a career perfectly suited to her adventurous spirit and love of discovering the world. She especially cherished her travels to Australia, London, and Hawaii, creating memories that she carried throughout her life.

Susanne had a lifelong passion for antiques and found joy in collecting and appreciating beautiful pieces filled with history and character. She was also deeply devoted to her beloved

Boston Terriers, whom she lovingly raised and cared for over many years. Her home was always filled with warmth, laughter, and the companionship of the dogs she adored.

Above all else, Susanne treasured her family. She is survived by her devoted husband of 54 years, Tayfun Berberoglu Sr.; her loving daughter, Jennifer; her son, Tayfun Berberoglu Jr.; and her cherished granddaughters, Faora and Sybella. Her love, kindness, strength, and gentle spirit will forever remain in the hearts of all who knew her.

Susanne will be remembered for her caring nature, adventurous soul, and unwavering love for her family, friends, and animals. Her memory will continue to inspire all whose lives she touched.

The Kenny Funeral Home has care of arrangements.

Francoise Albertine Kelz

SHARON — Our beloved and greatly respected Francoise Albertine Kelz of Sharon passed away peacefully on May 17, 2026, at the age of 103. Born on Sept. 10, 1922 in New York City, she was the first and only child to Albertine Durand and Francois Kelz. She grew up in New York City and eventually moved to Scarsdale, New York in 1926 and finally to Sharon in 1967. She grew up during the Depression and upon her graduation from Scarsdale High School in 1940, France had fallen to the Germans during WW II. D-Day coincided with her graduation from Barnard College in 1944. These milestones were often repeated in her love of storytelling over the years. She shared countless and amazing tales as she reminisced about her life.

Her father's family was from Bavaria, Germany and he was one of nine children. He and several of his brothers came to the US by boat and settled in the Bronx in the 1890's. He was Maitre'd at the Old Ritz Carlton where he met mother who worked as a receptionist. Mother was from Normandy, France where her family owned a large farm. Father was also employed at the Rainbow Room and Savoy Plaza as well as the famous 21 Club in NYC. Francoise was a treasure of information and spoke of the days of prohibition and other fascinating tales of history. Mother was an artist and a weaver. She designed and taught weaving and produced many tapestries on her looms passing this talent along to Francoise who was also a skilled weaver and loved to sew, embroider and knit.

Francoise was strong willed and possessed a sharp wit and a wonderful sense of humor. She learned early on the value of an education, especially for girls. Her maternal grandmother had been "cheated" out of an education years ago and so she vowed to get the best education and the best opportunities that she could. And so she did.

She attended Barnard College in NYC where she studied Botany. She was the winner of the Herman Botanical Prize and graduated

in 1944. In her later years she referred to the college as the "Barnyard." She would intone this in a teasing way but with great pride and loving affection. She was deeply devoted to Barnard for over 85 years. In 2004, Francoise received the Award for Service to Barnard at her 60th Reunion. She held nearly every position of class leadership, serving multiple terms as president, vice president and fundraising chair. With her characteristic generosity of time, energy and spirit she spearheaded the creation of the Class of 1944 Memorial Scholarship Fund to honor the memory of classmates who had passed away and to continue the link with future generations of Barnard students. She also established the Durand-Kelz Scholarship Fund, recognizing her maternal grandmother, who was not given the opportunity to pursue a college education of her own.

After Barnard, Francoise attended Wellesley College and Columbia College to obtain her Master's degree in Botany. She taught at Columbia Pharmacy College in NYC from 1946-1965, and eventually became chairman of the Scholarship Committee at the college.

Francoise began to teach at Kent School in the Fall of 1965 where she taught Biology until her retirement in 1988. Francoise was considered a pioneer as one of the first full time female faculty members and completing an illustrious career on the Hill Campus in an ever developing science department. She is dearly remembered by her former colleagues and students for her deep love of science and her tremendous energy and enthusiasm. She led a long and distinguished career as a teacher and never slowed down after retirement.

Francoise and her mother were very close and they loved to take long drives off the beaten paths. On one of their many trips, Francoise found and instantly fell in love with the "story book" town of Sharon where she

Nicholas Gandolfo Jr.

CANAAN — Nicholas Gandolfo Jr., 94 of East Canaan passed on June 4, 2026, after a courageous battle with kidney cancer and CLL Leukemia.



Nicholas was born and raised in East Canaan to Nicholas Gandolfo Sr. and Marie Zuccho Gandolfo both Italian immigrants, a heritage Nicholas embraced with pride.

During his youth Nick had a passion for the outdoors especially hunting and fishing which he enjoyed throughout his lifetime.

Nick served in the Korean war as a Marine. During his heroic service he received many medals and citations, most notably for saving his platoon even while sustaining injury himself during the famed Battle Of The Hook. Nick showed selfless dedication to serving the needs of others. He was involved with the Marine Corps League with whom he established a scholarship fund, the Canaan Couch Pipa VFW, providing durable medical equipment (and Girl scout cookies) to various VA homes and hospitals including Walter Reed in Washington. Nick also aided and assisted in other charita-

ble causes not just limited to veterans, he served his community, for example, by providing thanksgiving dinners to needy local families.

Nicholas served as a volunteer firefighter for the town of Canaan for 25 years.

He will be remembered for his quick wit, and his fiery disposition. He was a shameless flirt who competed with his pals on who would receive the most hugs at any social gathering. With his charm, he always won.

Nicholas is predeceased by five brothers and his longtime partner Marlene Stratman. He is also predeceased by his daughter, Karen Gandolfo.

Nicholas leaves behind his loving daughters and their partners, his grandchildren and their partners and his great grand children. He is also survived by his only remaining brother, Robert Gandolfo, with whom he greatly valued his love and support. Nick also leaves behind numerous nieces and nephews. In his words, he had a special relationship with nieces Melissa Gandolfo and Lynne Gandolfo.

The family wishes to thank Salisbury Visiting Nurses.

Celebration of Life

Jim Dresser

A Celebration of Jim Dresser's Life
Saturday, July 18, 12 – 3 p.m. At Hill Acre Camp on Mt. Riga, Salisbury, CT.
Call Laura Carlson with questions.

Memorial Service

Rafael Porro

SALISBURY — Rafael Porro passed away on January 6, 2026.

Family and friends are invited to attend a memorial service in his honor on Saturday, June 13, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. at St. John's Epis-

copal Church, Salisbury. The family welcomes all who knew and loved Rafael to join them in remembering and celebrating his life. The Kenny Funeral Home has care of arrangements.

Memorial Service

Walter E. DeMelle

LAKEVILLE — Friends are invited to participate in a memorial service for Walter E. DeMelle on Saturday, June 27 at 2:00 p.m. at The Hotchkiss School Chapel, Lakeville, Connecticut.

Full obituary at: <https://lakevillejournal.com/walter-earle-demelle-jr>

Send obituaries to obituaries@lakevillejournal.com

Worship Services Week of June 14, 2026	
<p>Christ Church Episcopal in Sharon 9 South Main, Sharon CT Sunday Holy Eucharist at 9:00 A.M. Transitioning through prayer All welcome to join us 860-364-5260 www.christchurchsharon.org</p>	<p>The Congregational Church of Salisbury, U.C.C. 30 Main Street, Salisbury, CT Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here! Worship, Sundays at 10 am, in-person and streaming www.salisburyucc.org Sharing God's shalom: Wholeness, harmony, justice, and joy! (860) 435-2442</p>
<p>Trinity Episcopal Church 484 Lime Rock Rd. Lakeville Offering companionship along the Way Sundays at 8 and 10:30 a.m. Livestream at 10:30 found at www.trinitylimerock.org trinity@trinitylimerock.org (860) 435-2627</p>	<p>St. John's Episcopal Church 12 Main Street, Salisbury, CT SUNDAY SERVICE 10:00 a.m. Eucharist with music (Rite II) Rev. Dr. Johan Johnson, Priest-in-Charge In-Person and on You-Tube www.stjohnssalisbury.org</p>
<p>North Canaan Congregational Church, UCC Joyfully opening our hearts and doors to all God's people 172 Lower Rd./Rt. 44, East Canaan CT Worship services Sundays at 10 am www.Facebook.com/northcanaancongregational 860-824-7232 FISHES & LOAVES FOOD PANTRY, A MISSION OF OUR CHURCH is at Pilgrim House, 30 Granite Ave., Canaan Tuesday 4-6 pm & Thursday 12-2 pm www.fishesandloavesnorthcanaan.org</p>	<p>Unitarian Fellowship of NW CT Cobble Living Room, Noble Horizons Sunday, June 14 at 10:30 a.m. For information, contact Jo Loi at jokialoi@gmail.com All Are Welcome</p>
<p>Congregation Beth David A reform Jewish Synagogue 3344 East Main St., Amenia SERVICES SATURDAY 10:30 AM Twice Monthly • Followed by Oneg (Calendar at congbethdavid.org) ALL ARE WELCOME Rabbi Jon Haddon 845-373-8264 info@congbethdavid.org</p>	<p>ST. MARTIN OF TOURS PARISH Immaculate Conception, 4 North Street, Norfolk St. Joseph, 4 Main Street, Canaan St. Mary, 76 Sharon Road, Lakeville MASS SCHEDULE Saturday Vigil 4 pm, St. Joseph Church Sunday 9 am, Church of St. Mary Sunday 11 a.m., Immaculate Conception Church DAILY MASS SCHEDULE Wednesday 6pm St. Joseph Chapel or Church Thursday 8am Immaculate Conception Church Friday 8am Church of St. Mary ALL ARE WELCOME! For information, please call 860-824-7078</p>
<p>The Lakeville United Methodist Church 319 Main St., Lakeville, CT 06039 9:15 a.m. Worship Service 9:15 a.m. Sunday School "Open Hearts - Open Minds - Open Doors" The Rev. Dr. Anna C. Camphouse 860-435-9496 Lakevillemethodist@snet.net</p>	<p>UCC in CORNWALL Cornwall Village Meeting House Worship Sunday, 10 am Outstanding Church School (10 am) Mission Opportunities Warm Fellowship following Worship 860-672-6840 www.uccincornwall.org Rev. Micki Nunn-Miller, Minister Welcoming all - including the LGBTQ Community</p>
<p>Falls Village Congregational Church 16 Beebe Hill Road, Falls Village 10:00 a.m. Family Worship Coffee Hour A Friendly Church with a warm welcome to all!! 860-824-0194</p>	<p>The Chapel of All Saints, Cornwall Holy Eucharist: Sundays at 9 a.m. Trinity Retreat Center Chapel Lower River Road, West Cornwall in person and on zoom Warm fellowship following service All Are Welcome! www.allsaintscornwall.org Rev. Mary Gates</p>
<p>The Sharon United Methodist Church 112 Upper Main Street, North End of Sharon Green Touching Lives - Lifting Spirits 10:30 a.m. Worship Service, Nursery Care No Sunday School in Summer The Rev. Dr. Anna C. Camphouse 860-364-5634 sharonumc5634@att.net</p>	<p>St. Thomas Episcopal Church 40 Leedsville Road Amenia Union, NY SUNDAY WORSHIP @ 10:30 IN-PERSON AND ONLINE Visit our website for links 845-373-9161 www.stthomasamenia.com A Community of Radical Hospitality</p>
<p>The Smithfield Presbyterian Church 656 Smithfield Valley Rd. Route 83, Amenia, NY Services every Sunday 10 a.m. www.thsmithfieldchurch.org 21st Century Theology in an Historic Building</p>	<p>Promised Land Baptist Church 29 Granite Ave., Canaan, CT Where you will find: A Warm Welcome! Helpful Bible Messages, A Place to Grow! Sunday School - 10am Sunday Worship - 11am Wednesday Bible Study and Prayer Meeting - 7PM (860) 824-5685 VISITORS WELCOME! www.promisedlandbaptist.org</p>
<p>All Saints of America Orthodox Christian Church 313 Twin Lakes Rd., Salisbury, CT Vespers Saturday at 5:00 P.M. Divine Liturgy Sunday at 9:30 A.M. Special Services Online Rev. John Kreta 860-824-1340 allsaintsofamerica.us</p>	<p>Canaan United Methodist Church 2 Church St., Rte 44, Canaan, CT 8:00AM - Worship Service 2nd & 4th Sunday "Open Hearts - Open Minds - Open Doors" The Rev. Dr. Anna C. Camphouse 860-824-5534 canaanctumc@gmail.com We hope you will join us!</p>
<p>Sharon Congregational 25 Main Street, Sharon, CT Sunday Service 10:30 a.m. Visit our website sharoncongregationalchurch.org for Sunday services Contact us at 860-364-5002 or info@sharoncongregationalchurch.org</p>	

HVRHS *today*

Housatonic Valley Regional High School's Student Newspaper



JUNE 2026
Volume 5 • No. 1

Kate from Baltimore wins 'Battle of the Bands' for third year in a row

By Peter Austin

On Friday, May 22, Housatonic's class of 2027 hosted the fourth annual Battle of the Bands, where five bands across all grades performed a wide variety of music. Kate from Baltimore took home first place for the third consecutive year, and Elizabeth Forbes and Percussion Talk took a second place finish.

Marathon, headed by sophomore Kartel Henry, opened up the night. This was the band's first time at the competition, and Henry's first time performing live, although he has amassed over 1 million listeners on Spotify for his solo project, COSIGNS. "[Marathon is] going to start releasing music," he says. "I think I can use my platform to expose Marathon to more people."

Next, freshman Samantha Silvernail and Adrian Dykeman performed for the first time as well. The pair showed ambition and composure in front of a large audience, and look like a formidable group should they find more Metallica fans to play covers with next year.

For the third year, Abram Kirshner's Blossom returned to the stages of Housatonic Valley. The band played two original songs composed by Kirshner and his band members, and covered The Head And The Heart's "Rivers and Roads," featuring Anna Gillette's harmonies with Kirshner. "I think Battle of the Bands really helped build my confidence on stage," Kirshner said. He began playing music and writing songs less than two years ago, and is continuing his music career at college. "It helped me get used to that sort of pressure."

Defending last year's title, Kate from Baltimore played fourth with



PHOTO BY SIMON MARKOW

Members of the bands Kate from Baltimore and Elizabeth Forbes and Percussion Talk enjoy time on stage together after their performances at Housatonic Valley Regional High School's "Battle of the Bands."

a very talented squad once again. The band has performed with a few different musicians over the years, but has consistently produced some of the most exciting performances of the night. "Our band practiced a lot and we just had a lot of fun together," said lead singer Sophia Fitz. "Even if they don't know if they're going into music professionally, it still lets everyone show off their talents and lets them practice their instruments."

This year, the class of 2027 took

on the role of hosting the annual event, led by juniors Danny Lesch and Carmela Egan. "It was Danny Lesch," Fitz said. "Look, I mean, he just blew it out of the park."

However, the night wasn't all smooth sailing.

Prior to the show starting, there were many miscommunications about when the performances would actually begin. A school announcement claimed it began at 7 p.m., however the organizers claimed the show would begin at 6:15 p.m. Ultimately, the show began around 6:45, with enough time for all the bands to set up while ensuring everybody would arrive in time.

There was also some deliberation about the order that the bands would play in. Blossom was initially set to play first, however band order was determined at a sound check that Blossom wasn't able to attend. Feeling as if opening for the third year in a row, especially as seniors, was unfair, the band protested, and eventually resolved to trade with the newer band Marathon.

With stress creating high tensions in the room, Senior Elizabeth Forbes stepped up to remind the bands that, "We're all here for fun, ok. This is not something to stress or freak out or get mad at each other

over, we're all just musicians who enjoy playing music."

Elizabeth Forbes and Percussion Talk played last, covering crowd favorites including "Iris" by The Goo Goo Dolls, and ending the night with the song "Your Toy" from Forbes's EP Dear Leo.

As a solo artist, Forbes played with juniors Jasper Oyanadel, and first time percussionist Jacob Robles. "I think we did good," Oyanadel said. "As a band itself we did great ... Very few practices, but we definitely picked it up and we stepped up."

"I thought it was a great experience," Forbes said. "Everybody in the beginning was a little stressed, and we kind of just all made a big group circle and we were all like, let's not stress about this, let's just go out there and jam."

"I mean, it was, honestly, it's not even a battle of the bands," Fitz said. "It's more like everyone just loves performing. Like, it's just so fun to perform. And, like, no matter if you win or don't win, like, the performance is what everyone comes there for."

Housy seniors lay out their post-grad plans

By Hannah Johnson and Anna Gillette

On June 19, the class of 2026 will receive their diplomas at the Housatonic Valley Regional High School graduation, marking the last milestone all of these students will share. With life after high school approaching, graduates are doing big things in lots of different directions.

Next fall, senior Wes Allyn can be spotted playing football while wearing a University of New England jersey. With offers from multiple schools, Allyn described his decision making process. "I would go on visits for football, and then tour the school regularly, so that way I'd kind of see every side of the campuses," he said. "After doing all that, I kind of just felt the best at the University of New England." Allyn plans on majoring in athletic training.

In order to get recruited for football, Allyn reached out to coaches at several schools. "That was a really important step," Allyn said. "I probably sent out over 15 emails and I was in contact with at least seven coaches."

He credits HVRHS for teaching him how to properly compose emails and communicate professionally, although he didn't feel entirely prepared for other aspects of this process. "I feel like it would be beneficial if they had a program or something to help athletes who have aspirations of playing in college."

To prepare for the fall season, Allyn has been increasing his workout intensity after recovering from a knee surgery. His pre-season will begin in mid-August. Allyn is confident that he can manage class work while playing a sport.

Post-grad plans
Continued on page A6



PHOTO BY SIMON MARKOW

Adam Hock, left, and Abram Kirshner take a bow after their performance.

Housatonic Valley FFA charts big wins in spring competitions

By Hannah Johnson

Each spring, FFA students compete in a variety of career and leadership development events, commonly known as CDEs and LDEs. This year, Housatonic Valley FFA had over forty students compete across ten different events, demonstrating their knowledge and dedication to the agricultural area of their choice.

On March 24, two Mechanics teams each consisting of 4 students traveled to Cobleskill College to show their understanding of equipment mechanics. Housatonic's A team took first place in the state, led by senior Hayden Bell who was the competition's top ranking individual.

Eight weeks later on May 15, six teams traveled to University of Connecticut with one securing

first place. Students had a great time showing their skills within their designated areas which included agricultural sales, veterinary science, dairy judging, natural resources, farm businesses management and the winning agricultural communications team led by freshman Olivia Simonds who placed second in the state individually.

The agricultural sales team, which has been vigorously preparing for their competition for months, just fell short of the win taking home second as a team. Member Riley Mahaffey led her team in points. "Being so close to winning felt so rewarding knowing we gave it our all and were so close," Mahaffey said. "It made me want to continue growing in that area."

On Saturday, May 30, eight stu-

dents competed in the opening and closing ceremonies CDE along with two individuals, Hayden Bell and Christopher Crane, competing in prepared public speaking and Byron Bell competing in extemporaneous public speaking.

The opening and closing ceremonies team and Crane each took home first place and will join the ag communications and mechanics teams at national convention next fall. "Hearing my name called as first place made all of the practice, stress and anticipation worth it," Crane said.

Housatonic's FFA chapter president Riley Mahaffey praised the chapter for its students' dedication. "Seeing so many kids involved in various activities this year has shown the true strength and capacity of our chapter," he said.

HVRHS *today*

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Mia DiRocco, Cornwall
Shanaya Duprey, North Canaan
Anna Gillette, Lakeville
Hannah Johnson, North Canaan
Ibby Sadeh, Falls Village
Peter Austin, Kent

Nathan Miller, Lakeville Journal Program Lead
Caitlin Hanlon, Lakeville Journal Production

The HVRHS Journalism Program

Last spring, The Lakeville Journal launched a journalism initiative at Housatonic Valley Regional High School. Through this program, students work with Lakeville Journal editors throughout the school year to report on what's important and interesting to them and their community.

For more information about the program, please contact Lakeville Journal Publisher, James Clark, at publisher@lakevillejournal.com.

The Lakeville Journal

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Graduating seniors call attention to higher ed barriers

By Shanaya Duprey

As the school year comes to a close, Housatonic Valley Regional High School seniors are beginning an uncharted part of their lives. With many pursuing higher education at universities, the cost of continuing school has prompted some students to voice concerns about access to continuing education.

Meadow Moerschell, a junior at HVRHS, said she sees value in a university education. "I do feel that pursuing a college education is worth the challenges since it is such a valuable experience, both socially and academically," Moerschell said. "College seems like a time to grow, learn, and meet new people in a safer environment than the real world, while still having a lot of independence." Other students, such as graduating senior Mollie Ford, voiced conflicted feelings on college spurred by apparent barriers to access. "I have mixed feelings about college," Ford said. "It's obviously a business, but I also think that it's hard to be successful without a degree." Ford will be going into Fordham University's Class of 2030 in the fall.

Despite the barriers, she also advocates for a college education. "I think it's necessary, I think kids should seek it out," Ford said.

While the views around college's value vary, Housy students generally view university education as inaccessible. "I don't think higher education is accessible, I

think it's wildly expensive," Ford said.

It's not only the costs of the school that are of concern. Students drew attention to pre-college standardized testing and how more affluent families can often spend more to give their students an advantage in applications. "When someone has more money they have a huge advantage in higher education, since they'd be able to take the SAT as many times as they want, pay for study courses, travel to visit schools, pay application fees, and so many more factors that give kids a leg up in the college process," Moerschell said.

Rachel Matsudaira, HVRHS's scholarship coordinator, has a more optimistic and hopeful outlook. "In a merit-based educational system, one's hard work determines one's outcomes," Matsudaira said. "In America, public school is free, and access to college is still based on merit. If a student works hard during the free education years, they will be able to earn scholarships and attend college if they so choose."

Ford believes that there is a certain group at a significant disadvantage when it comes to college costs. "The most disadvantaged group I'd say are average middle class people. When you're thinking about finances, they're overlooked when you think about scholarships or FAFSA. You have to be really wealthy or really below the line."

As a high school, HVRHS pro-

vides various support systems for students going into college. The perceived success of these support systems varies. "I think that HVRHS works hard to support its students in the college search through the CCRC, college fairs, advice panels, and yearly meetings with counselors," Moerschell said. "However, with only about half or something of the Housy population going to college, there's only so much that they're going to be able to do for the kids considering college after school."

The school's counseling office was highlighted as an adequate resource. "Our supports are extremely personalized, with one-on-one assistance throughout the process," Matsudaira said. "Our school counselors meet 1-on-1 with every student at least once a year to check in and access student goals. Additionally, students can make appointments to meet with their counselors whenever they need, throughout their 4 years here."

When compared to other schools, however, some believe that HVRHS could provide more support. "Other schools like private schools in the area have a college advisor per ten students, the difference in ratio is kind of shocking," Ford said. "I think that Housy does support students seeking higher education, but I don't think there's a big enough support system, like Mrs. Termini shouldn't be the only college counselor."

With HVRHS being such a small school, there are advantages and disadvantages beyond the support systems that impact students. Matsudaira said the school's small, rural status actually helps students stand out in applications. "In our merit-based education system, a student who shows rigor from a small rural high school that doesn't offer SAT prep courses and doesn't have much classroom competition—that student will stand out to college admission teams," she said.

Ford also credited the high school's extracurricular programs. "It is easy to find niche opportunities, like niche internship opportunities or summer programs," Ford said. "We have a lot of things that you can do that make your application stronger."

With advantages comes the downside of coming from a small high school. A key issue, Ford said, is what she describes as a lack of specific guidance.

"There's not enough teachers here telling kids what to do and how to do it correctly," she said. "Kids at Hotchkiss or at Berkshire have adults telling them you should do these activities, it'll make it [college application] stronger, but we don't have that. We're kind of doing it by ourselves."

Finances are a major stressor for students pursuing college, but there are social challenges as well. "The biggest stressor is that college culture has become really intense," Ford said. "A lot of kids are more worried about the name of their school or the vibe of their school more than actually receiving an education in college."

Matsudaira offered advice to parents and students that she hopes can alleviate some stress.

"Make sure you have examined the cost vs. value equation for yourself and your family," Matsudaira said. "Make sure the college is a good fit for you. Do not go into any debt to pay for college."

Ford suggests that students "Apply to as many schools as you can, and as many Connecticut schools as you can. The admissions process is so competitive, and like everyone is applying to college, and it's so expensive, so you have to have options in Connecticut."



PHOTOS BY DANIEL CHIARENZA

Silas Tripp crosses the finish line at a track meet.

Spring sport captains reflect on sportsmanship and teamwork

By Mia DiRocco

As spring sports face their endings, senior captains prepare for the end of their sports careers at Housatonic. Each took on their roles as mentors and leaders for their teammates, and brought Housatonic sports to the end of a highly successful spring season.

Senior Wes Allyn has been one of the three Housatonic baseball captains this season. The team which made it all the way to states this year on June 1, has had an 8-12 record this season. This year, Housatonic baseball will be saying goodbye to seven seniors: Owen Riemer, Hunter Conklin, Tyler Roberts, Anthony Foley, Nick Crodelle, Abram Kirshner, and Wesley Allyn.

Allyn described his role as a senior captain as "A little bit different than being a captain for other sports. The main responsibilities I had were setting a good example and making sure things got done, like bringing equipment up for away games or picking up after home games and practice."

For many seniors on the team, this goodbye will be a difficult one. "I will miss the culture me and the other seniors created in our four years here," said Allyn. "We transformed our team from being just a team to more of a family."

Senior Silas Tripp has participated in track for all of his four years at Housatonic, and has committed to run track and cross country at University of Hartford next year. "For us captains we

really just aim to serve as a role model for the younger athletes on our team, whether that's providing encouragement during practice or just remaining a positive attitude during a hard workout," he said. "These make all the difference for our team chemistry."

Captains, especially seniors, are highly responsible for the team's environment and players' experience. While it can be difficult at times, Tripp has greatly enjoyed his time as a track and field captain. "It's hardest just knowing it's my last high school sports season, but it's been a really amazing season and I can't complain about any of it," he said. This season, track and field will be saying goodbye to seniors Olivia Brooks, Ava Segalla, Katie Crane, Hannah Johnson, Maddy Johnson, Joseph Villa, Anthony Labbadia, Peter Austin, Cohen Ceccinato, Cole Simonds, Simon Markow, and Silas Tripp.

"Everyone on the team is very close and it really does feel like another family that supports you," said Tripp.

Housatonic Girl's Tennis has senior Victoria Brooks, her final year as captain of the girls' tennis team has not been an easy one. Recovering from a severe wrist injury during her basketball season, Brooks began the season being unable to practice at all, missing the first two matches. After recovering from her injury, Brooks went on to become a Berkshire League Tournament all-star and semi-finalist this season.

Post-grad plans
Continued from page 1



PHOTO PROVIDED

Housy seniors sport merch showing off the colleges and universities they each plan to attend after graduation.

"I know the University of New England has mandatory study halls for freshmen," he said. "I'll definitely have dedicated time to do all my work, so that way I won't be falling behind."

Another difficulty about college applications is entering into a competitive field, but that didn't stop Chloe Hill. Set on majoring in nursing, Hill applied to 14 programs before settling on the University of Rhode Island.

Hill described the application process. "It was really discouraging," she said, "There was one week where a lot of the decisions came back, and five days in a row, I got five different rejections."

To ensure getting into a nursing program all four years, Hill applied to a direct entry program for each school. This made the process more competitive. "I knew it was gonna be a struggle," she said. "[The University of Rhode Island] offered me a lot of money, it was the perfect distance away from home, and they have a really good nursing program, so it all kind of worked out," Hill said.

Ever since getting her certi-

fied nursing assistant license, Hill has been working at Geer Village as a nursing assistant. "I feel a lot more confident," she said. "I've met a lot of people and learned a lot about the career I'm going into."

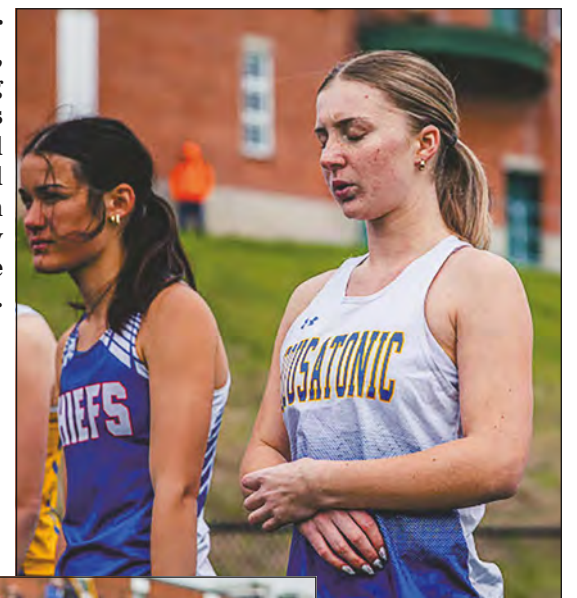
Not all graduates are continuing their education next fall. A large portion of students are pursuing a career in the workforce. For example Ashton Osborne plans to continue working to grow his business.

It is not uncommon for students at Housatonic to enlist after graduation. This year only one student has taken that challenge. Senior Nick Crodelle will be joining the Coast Guard. "I can't sit in school for four more years," Crodelle said. This among his need for adventure is why Crodelle chose to enlist.

His next steps will be to prepare physically. "I've been running before school," he said. "I've got to start swimming and lifting a little more."

His dedication shows how committed he will be to the organization. "I mean, you get to protect, save, and serve your country," Crodelle said.

HVRHS senior Olivia Brooks, right, runs long distance races for the track and field team and participated in cross country running in the fall.



Housatonic runners get set for a long-distance race.

'Project Graduation' returns to offer venue for drug-free fun

By Anna Gillette

A years-long tradition is returning to Housatonic Valley Regional High School, aiming to provide a safe and fun environment for seniors to celebrate their graduation.

The annual event, called Project Graduation, takes place after seniors receive their diplomas on June 19. HVRHS Assistant Principal Steven Schibi promoted the event as a drug and alcohol free alternative to private parties outside of school grounds.

"It's just to give our seniors one last fun moment with each other that is free of alcohol or drugs," Schibi said. "We just want a dry, fun place to be, with food and games for the seniors." The night starts at 10 p.m. "That way kids can go home or go out to eat with family if they want," Schibi said.

The night will have a range of activities to keep students entertained throughout the six hour long event. The activities include axe throwing, karaoke, laser tag, hide and seek, bouncy houses and a raffle to conclude the event. "We use the auditorium to show movies, and the band room for video gaming," Schibi said. "Kids can do laser tag in the hallways. Last year they went out and played manhunt in the fields."

Class president Madison Graney helped organize the event. "There's definitely going to be lots of food, candy, and an ice cream bar," she said. "We're going to play games all night."

For the most part, students are able to move freely throughout the school. "It's not a free for all," Schibi said. "But it's a lot of fun." Teachers volunteer to stay for different shifts or throughout the entire night, ensuring everyone's safety and monitoring activities. Senior class advisors

Leticia Garcia-Tripp and Jeffery Tripp will spend the entire night, along with superintendent Melony Brady-Shanley.

"I feel like most people won't sleep," Graney said. The celebration ends at 4:30 a.m. but students can leave any time before then if picked up by a parent.

Students who face difficulties organizing a ride home will be dropped off at the middle school in their town by PTO members. "Nobody drives home," Schibi said.

Garcia-Tripp emphasized the upside of staying until the end. "If you want to get a raffle prize, stay," she said. Raffle prizes include things like microwaves, mini fridges, electronics, and gift cards. These items are donated through an annual appeal to community members and businesses.

But students have to stay the whole time to participate in the raffle. "If people choose to leave, then they leave, and they don't get to partake in the raffle," Schibi said.

The event is primarily organized by Schibi and FFA secretary Sara Jack, along with help from senior class advisors, class officers, and a few contributions from junior parents. "Their role is to go out and solicit businesses for the food portion, and to pick up and drop off food the day of," Schibi said. "Some of them will come and help decorate or set up tables and stuff like that. We've even had a couple that would stay overnight."

Putting together this event takes a lot of work, but year after year it proves to be worth the effort. Students have a memorable experience, leave with a prize, and keep themselves out of harmful situations. "It's going to be the last time that we're all together as a class, so I think it's going to be really special," Graney said.



PHOTO PROVIDED

A group of Housatonic Valley Regional High School students participate in the NEXT women symposium in New York City.

Back-to-back field trips trigger questions about classroom disruptions

By Ibbly Sadeh

One week in April saw some students missing classes for three field trips in a row, prompting questions about the impacts that back-to-back trips have on classroom performance.

The trips — one each on April 7, April 8 and April 9 — took many of the same students out of the classroom for each one. Students and teachers expressed a range of responses to the back-to-back trips, acknowledging a field trip's ability to enhance classroom learning but expressing frustration over how trips can sometimes disrupt in-school learning.

Housatonic Valley Regional High School senior Sara Ireland went on three trips to New York City that week. "To some it might

sound like a nightmare but I really did enjoy it," Ireland said.

The first trip was NEXT Women Symposium, to talk to seven professional women and hear their experiences in male dominated fields, organized by Abby Auerbach. The second was for the AP Lit and English 12 Honors class to see "Death of a Salesman" on Broadway, providing hands-on experience with a Broadway production as the class learned and read plays. The third was for Chorus, Band, and the musical theater society to see Haddesdown and The Great Gatsby on Broadway. "These field trips weren't just fun outings, they were genuine experiences that help to shape student's interest, help their futures, and of course are still fun," Ireland said.

Social Studies teacher John Lizzi is generally supportive of field trips, but he said trips should be a supplement to classroom schooling. "I think in general field trips can be extremely valuable depending on the class, depending on what the experience offers and I think there are times when they really need to happen. Teachers should be looking for those types of really unique opportunities for their students when they apply to the curriculum," Lizzi said. "Teachers should try to get everything they can out of the classroom experience, what can be done inside the classroom, and that should be the primary focus, but there's always going to be things that you cannot do in the classroom, so we should have those opportunities." Ireland called attention to the impact of getting out of the classroom. "It can feel really overwhelming being stuck in a classroom day after day and often doing the same stuff over and over again," she said.

Lizzi also called attention to a disparity in student involvement in field trips. He said higher-level courses take students on trips more often, leaving students that aren't enrolled in more rigorous classes without opportunities to take trips. While he acknowledged the current data may be incomplete because the year hasn't ended, it is still an important thing to consider as field trips are planned. Lizzi said teachers and administrators are looking to improve inclusivity. "There was total agreement that opportunities need to be available for everyone in the student body, not just certain classes or groups," Lizzi said.

But field trips can have negative consequences too, especially three back-to-back trips. For Ireland, the impacts vary from class to class. "I've had incidents where teachers have told me field trips aren't any excuse for not being ready to take a test or be behind and that it is solely our responsibility to keep up in class while on these field trips," Ireland said. This has made her feel discouraged and not supported by certain teachers, turning what is supposed to be a class enhancing experience into a stressful one.

Lizzi gave a teacher's point of view. "As a teacher, students being taken out of classes for field trips can be really frustrating," Lizzi said. "I think that we have to work to improve. It's not that it's happening, it's being unaware that these trips are taking place or that they're coming up at the last second." This problem is exacerbated because field-tripping students also have many other classes together, so one trip can disrupt an entire day's worth of learning.

Students, teachers debate best order for advanced placement english courses

By Ibbly Sadeh

A decision last year to allow for flexibility in the order that students take two advanced placement English classes has prompted debates among students about the benefits of completing the courses out of order.

Starting last school year, HVRHS allowed AP students to choose their own path in the order that they took English classes.

This means students could pick between AP Literature and Composition or AP Language and Composition first. In the years before that, language was the path for Juniors, and literature for Seniors. At the end of Sophomore year, students talked to their English teacher about which class they were recommended to take first.

A majority of students opted to take Language in their Junior year, but a small group broke with tradition and enrolled in Literature. Last year's Literature class was made up of mostly Seniors and these few Juniors, but this year's Literature class is just Seniors, with the few who took Literature last year taking Language now with mostly Juniors.

The decision to let students take it in either order was mostly to help scheduling. Lori Bucco, who teaches AP Language, said providing more options meant juniors could still take an AP English class even if the Language course conflicted with another desired course.

"The problem, and the reason we started to negotiate it in this building, is that we're such a small school," Bucco said. "If a kid wanted to take French 4, or Spanish 4, or ECE Environmental, and it bumped

up against my class, then that put them into the honors English class when, if they could take AP Lit, they would."

Damon Osora, who teaches AP Literature, explained the difference between the two courses. He said AP Language is centered around rhetoric and the use of language for persuasion, while AP Literature is meant to focus on subtext and teaching students to read between the lines to figure out what the author really means. The differences in the classes means different skills have to be put to work.

He also said that the English faculty at the school try to consider a students' strengths as they rise into their junior year. "Ms. Freese's philosophy has been to build on the demonstrated strengths at the end of sophomore year," Osora said. This contributes to an easier pathway for sophomores into junior year, and into their first AP English class. The hope is these students would have more confidence going into the second AP English class.

For senior Mollie Ford, who opted to take AP Literature first, "I think that it was worth it being in Lit as a junior, because it was more of the English that I liked to do, and because it was my junior year, I really wanted to make sure that I could get good grades in my classes, so that when I sent my transcripts into colleges, it looked better," Ford said. The class where she had stronger

skills to be successful is not only important because of transition, but because of the significance of junior year.

"Lang, for some people, it's an easier class because you are reading large books, but I think that I would have struggled last year in that class,

“

The reason we started to negotiate it in this building is that we're such a small school. If a kid wanted to take French 4, or Spanish 4, or ECE Environmental, and it bumped up against my class, then that put them into the honors English class when, if they could take AP Lit, they would.

Lori Bucco, teacher of AP Language

so I am thankful that I took AP Lit," said Ford.

Alexa Meach, senior, had a different perspective which both Lori Bucco and Damon Osora agree with.

"Ms. Freese actually put me into Lit, but after talking to some of my teachers, I thought it would be better to be with peers that were of my own age, because I think that I learn better that way. I think that it was the right choice because just being with people that I knew and that I had previous classes with in my high school experience helped a lot."

The decision does have some social aspects to it. Bucco says, "It's a lot about social grouping, kids want to be where their friends are. So if all your friends have been recommended to go into AP Lang, but Ms. Freese is talking to an individual say-

ing, "you would do well in AP Lit," you suddenly are gonna leave your, like, camaraderie, this group that you've, and take that class on your own, which could be really good for kids, but it's also very intimidating." Students are afraid or not willing to stray from their friends even if the other class would be better for them.

Additionally, Osora said that students who took AP Lit last year as juniors were more independent and comfortable in themselves in order to be taking a class of mostly seniors.

For the actual AP test itself, Bucco will let her kids know the format, she said. When talking about AP Lang, Meach said, "we got to go through the structure of the test, and as somebody with test anxiety, having a lot riding on one assessment, I liked having the time to go through step by step, which you get a little bit with Mr. Osora, but not as much because that's not how his course was designed."

With this being one of the first AP tests that many students take it can be stressful. Having a teacher that will review even just the design of the test can help students feel more prepared. Since this is such a small school, having the conversation with the teachers is possible and was helpful for many. For AP Lit this year, "I think that we were prepared for the test, but I think that I was prepared mainly because I had the background of taking it already, and so I knew the outline and layout much beforehand," said Meach.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Hannah Johnson, left, and Christopher Crane show off their water guns.

A firsthand account of the dangerous ‘Senior Splashin’

By Peter Austin

Housatonic Valley Regional High School seniors challenged each other to a ruthless battle involving water guns, sneak attacks and friendship-threatening double-crosses called “Senior Splashin’.”

The competition pitted seniors against each other in a free-for-all where “assassins” were assigned “targets” that they had to hunt across Region One and try to squirt with water.

The following is a first-person account of the events on the watery battlefield.

Monday, April 27

Senior Splashin starts at five o’clock today. I’m safe on school property but as soon as I leave track practice I’m in danger. At five o’clock today, I will receive a target, and I will need to hunt them down. Living in Kent gives me an advantage, since it’s unlikely that somebody will drive that far, but I still need to watch out.

Friday, May 1

I’m writing from the couch at my friends house—I just watched Chloe get Burke. I was telling him all night to keep his goggles on, but he didn’t listen, and Chloe took her opportunity. My goggles are still on, so for now I’m safe. Cole was the first person out; Hannah got him leaving our track meet on the second day. Some other people as well. After seeing Chloe ruthlessly eliminate Burke, there’s no way I’m taking off my goggles.

Monday, May 4

Seven people were eliminated this week, 35 of us are left. The days are long, and the nights are dangerous. It seems like everybody is hunting, or nobody is. You never know who’s out to get you, so you have to trust your friends if you decide to pair up. Checking your target’s location isn’t always reliable, so intel from others is valuable. Know where they live, where they work, where to hang around, and you might just have a chance to take them out.

I wasn’t able to eliminate my target. They were sneaky, and careful, always wearing goggles, never letting their guard down. But that’s just the first week, and I’ll receive a new target today. There was no penalty for my failure, but I need to get my target this week or I’ll be out.

Sunday, May 8

This weekend was a bloodbath; nine people were eliminated over the course of three days. There was a purge on Friday, where nobody was safe regardless of goggles or targets, which resulted in many fatal splashes. I tried to help my friend get his target on Thursday—while we didn’t succeed, it meant she let her guard down and my friend was able to get her out at the purge the next day. I had a plan to get my target yesterday, but I didn’t even need to since somebody else got him during the purge. Next week, I might not get so lucky.

Tuesday, May 12

I was hiding in the bushes when I heard the car door open. I ran out but my target saw me, and quickly got back inside the car before I could get him. My friend, who’d dropped me off a few houses down came to investigate. After explaining my failure, I thought about a new course of action—my target was trapped in his car, and I’d wait all night if I had to. Just then, I felt a splash of water on my neck.

Startled from my thoughts, I turned my head to see a green plastic water gun, a phone recording, and my best friend of many years behind it. ‘No,’ I said as the sun set behind the mountains. ‘I’m sorry,’ he said, but it was too late. I was out, in front of the water gun I had given my friend just weeks earlier. To be betrayed is first to be trusted.

Monday, May 18

Although I’ve been eliminated, the game still plays on. On Saturday, I was the only one of only two who’d been eliminated, so the moderators called a second, surprise purge on Sunday. Two people were eliminated, and a total of eight people moved on to the next round. The track season is over, the baseball season is in full swing, and the game has never been more intense.

Monday, May 25,

As of today, five people remain. In a terrible twist of fate, my former target Dev, who my friend Abram tried to help me get before splashing me in the back, returned the gesture by getting Abram after the Battle of the Bands.

Another shocking assassination came from a nail appoint-

ment turned setup, where Liv viciously eliminated Celeste; she didn’t even offer the dignity of a true water gun, and Celeste’s run ended in the face of a hair spray bottle. The last kill came from Hannah when she splashed down Joey from the trunk of his car, although he bought back into this round.

Envirothon team celebrates 24 years at Housy

By Shanaya Duprey

One of the many extracurricular offerings at Housatonic Valley Regional High School is Envirothon, a unique competition that challenges students to explore and learn about environmental conservation.

The team, which originally formed at HVRHS in 2002, is headed up by David Moran. “Envirothon is North America’s largest Environmental competition for high school students,” Moran said.

The competition consists of two parts — an in-the-field competition and a presentation — covering five key topics. Every year, students have to research and present on soils and land use, forestry, aquatics, wildlife biology and a changing “current issue.” This year’s current issue focuses “non-point source pollution,” Moran said, which means pollution that can’t be traced back to a single particular source such as rain runoff washing pollutants into a watershed.

On paper, it’s an annual competition and display of knowledge and teamwork, but for Owen Schnepf, an Envirothon team member, it’s much more. “To me, Envirothon is much more than that one day in May,” Schnepf said. “It is really the season, the entire year that leads up to the competition. This is when we really build teams and learn.”

Housy’s Envirothon team started in 2002, but the competition as a whole has been around for far longer. Moran explained the competition was founded in 1979 in Pennsylvania and originally known as the “Environmental Olympics.” “It was designed as a hands-on, outdoor competition for high school students to test their knowledge of natural resources,” Moran said.

Since its start 24 years ago, the HVRHS Envirothon team has seen consistent success. “In our 24 year history our teams have placed in the top three state teams consistently,” Moran said. “We have won the state event 10 different times, and so compet-

Housy students bring young group to local ‘No Kings’ protests

By Mia DiRocco and Ibbey Sadeh

On March 28, dozens of Housatonic students gathered to join the No Kings Protest at The White Hart in Salisbury. It was a windy and cold Saturday morning, but students joined together nonetheless. Months later, Housatonic is still feeling its lasting impact.

For participant Eliana Lang, Sophomore, this was her first No Kings Protest experience. “I decided to go because it was really local to me, and I think it’s really important for people, especially young people, to voice their opinions and beliefs and stand up for what they believe in,” she said. “I would definitely go again, I think it was really important for us all to show up, and show what people from different generations think about these issues, and how they respond in times of need,” said Lang.

The Housatonic students present were called on stage for recognition. The speaker that day acknowledged how grateful the organizers were to have young people in attendance. Throughout the morning, the students recall being approached by fellow protesters who were excited to see younger faces in the crowd.

“It is helpful to show that these problems are affecting everyone and everybody no matter what

age cares about them. People want to help no matter what age they are,” said Lang. “In a small town area, a gathering like this is harder to come by, but that should not mean that people should not have access.” Youth participation in rural areas is dwindling, but the students in attendance believe in its necessity.

The median age of No Kings protesters is 48 years old, and polls indicate that people aged 18-29 make up approximately 8% of rallies nationwide. Youth participation since the first wave of protests has been a consistent struggle even in large cities, and in rural communities, some have no student participation at all. However the students who participated in Salisbury were active in promoting participation on social media and encouraging other students to join. “I hope it encourages other people to do things in the future,” said Paul Losh, Sophomore. The protest at the White Hart was his first protest as well, but he remarked that he plans to continue participating in the future.

“I think spreading the worry is really important, just inviting people to come and support the cause,” said Losh. While there are no immediate plans for the future, it’s likely that the next local No Kings Rally will have many familiar student faces present.

ed at North America’s those 10 times. We have won the North American competition against 50+ other teams in 2007, and been in the top 10 on several occasions.”

The Envirothon consists of the two separate parts — an in-the-field component and an indoor presentation. “The works of Emerson, Thoreau, Pinchot, Roosevelt, Leopold, and Carson are all threads in the fabric of our work,” Moran said.

Students work through the year to build an understanding of the five topics. A notable part of the competition, and what Schnepf finds to be the biggest challenge, is the “current issue.” “When we first find out about the current issue topic — usually in the wintertime — we begin with rigorous research,” Schnepf said. “Once we have developed a plan of action, we have to make the slideshow to present to judges. As a team, we prepare to present and answer questions. Every year, we present at FFA Open House, the week before we finally have to do it in front of the judges at the competition.”

To prepare for such an event, the Envirothon team is immersed in the world of natural resources and conservation year round. “Teams of five students compete after a year of study in the environmental field, along with workshops led by biologists, technicians, and industry professionals,” Moran said. Schnepf elaborated, saying “This year, Mr. Moran began with what he called ‘inspiration meetings.’ This is when we drove around our area to talk to professionals in the environmental field. So far this year, we have met with professional foresters, environmental analysts, environmental photographers, and land board committee members.”

Schnepf continued with details of the team’s year-long journey. “In the winter time, we begin diving into the material for four of the categories: wildlife, forestry, soils, and aquatics. This is when we nerd out with water testing

kits, soil testing kits, animal pelts, tree samples, GPS devices, and so many more gadgets ... In the final couple of months of the season, we double down on the current issue.”

In order to learn such a vast amount of material, many may assume that team members are delegated to specific positions. But Schnepf said there is no division of labor.

“There are no formal roles in Envirothon, such as a team captain,” Schnepf said. “People naturally take on responsibilities. Within the first few meetings, you can usually see someone who is leading the group in the right direction. For example, someone who is very good at identifying birds will take charge of the wildlife portion, while someone else who works in a logging business will focus on the forestry.” For such a group dynamic to work, teamwork is an integral part of Envirothon. Schnepf emphasized the necessity of cooperation. “Envirothon is very much comparable to a team sport like volleyball or soccer, where everything depends on how we work together,” he said. “On the competition day, the only way to win is to put our heads together.”

The teamwork building skills are not the only valuable aspect of being a part of the HVRHS Envirothon team, Moran said. “The importance of Envirothon is in developing a life-long land ethic and to develop stewardship practices. In the short term, teamwork, knowledge, fun, scholarships, resume builders,” he said. This is shared by the student team members as well.

Becoming a part of Envirothon does not require much more than a desire to participate. Despite its similar philosophy to Housy’s FFA program, involvement in the FFA program is not necessary to join Envirothon. “There have been many successful Envirothon team members over the past 24 years that were not FFA Members,” Moran said. “The two are not always tied together, but sometimes they are.”

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HVRHS

Roosevelt's local legacy shines as 32 students join National Honor Society ranks

By Ruth Epstein

FALLS VILLAGE – The candles flickering across the stage at Housatonic Valley Regional High School Wednesday evening cast light on the accomplishments of 32 students inducted into the Eleanor Roosevelt Chapter of the National Honor Society.

The inductees included 22 juniors, nine sophomores, and one senior. While most seniors were included last year, this marked the first year sophomores were eligible for membership.

In his welcome, Principal Ian Strever reflected on the school's history and Eleanor Roosevelt's legacy.

"Few schools can boast a history as rich and distinguished as ours, built through funding from the federal Public Works Administration during the Great Depression and visited by the most influential First Lady in the history of the presidency. It is fitting that our National Honor Society is named after someone who dedicated her life to the service of others."

Faculty advisor Peter Vermilyea recounted Roosevelt's connection to Housatonic, including her appearance at a 1958 National Honor Society induction ceremony. Afterward, she wrote in her national "My Day" column that Housatonic was "an ex-



PHOTO PROVIDED

Candles illuminate the stage as 32 HVRHS students are inducted into the National Honor Society on June 3.

ceptional school."

The ceremony focused on the four pillars of the National Honor Society, including service, scholarship, character and leadership.

Student speakers Shayana Duprey, Madison Melino, Richie Crane and Madison Graney each reflected on one of those principles.

Duprey encouraged classmates to view education as a path not only to achievement but also to understanding others.

"There is always importance in striving for good grades, working towards your goals and achieving success in your pursuits," she said.

A good leader must stand with their peers, giving them the resources they need to be successful. But a good leader must also stand up to their peers, when they are misguided.

Madison Graney, HVRHS student speaker

"But I implore you to view scholarship and education beyond that. I wish for you to be scholarly not only to find success, but to find compassion for those beside you and those across the globe."

Speaking about service, Melino said stepping outside oneself in order to meet the needs of others is paramount.

"Real service is demonstrated in actions, not words,"

Melino said. "Too often we think of acts of service as intentional, selfless actions that transcend the ordinary, or go behind typical societal expectations. Ideally, acts of service would also be instinctive, not necessarily extraordinary but part of an individual's natural daily life."

Crane said he has finally come to realize that what others think about him should

not determine how he views himself. His speech focused on kindness and respect.

"The definition of good character focuses on integrity, accountability and empathy," Crane said. "I can confidently say that the students on this stage would not be here if they did not demonstrate these characteristics."

Leadership, said Madison Graney is "the ability to lift up your peers, working together to achieve the same goals." She knows about leadership having served as class president for the past three years. "A good leader must stand with their peers, giving them the resources they need to be

successful. But a good leader must also stand up to their peers, when they are misguided."

Title I teacher Elizabeth Foulds was named this year's honorary chapter member. In presenting the award, Principal Strever praised her advocacy for students and her leadership as local union president.

Strever said Foulds has "lobbied for the rights of teachers, while respecting the demands of administration and the district as a whole."

State Sen. Stephen Harding, R-30, was the guest speaker who told the students that the attributes that got them selected for the National Honor Society will serve them well in life.

The new inductees are: Hayden Bachman, Byron Bell, Mia Belter, Sophia Camphouse, Karen Chavez-Sanchez, Georgie Clayton, Adeilyn Diorio, Carmela Egan, Kellie Eisermann, Lydia Fleming, Grace Graney, Taylor Green, Sydney Howe, Jonas Johnson, Aiden Krupa, Eliana Lang, Daniel Lesch, Makenzie Lidstone, Paul Losh, Finian Malone, Lily McCabe, Alison McCarron, Logan Miller, Meadow Merschell, Katherine Money, Daniel Moran, Logan Padel, Gustavo Portillo, Karmela Quinion, Owen Schnepf, Ishaan Tantri and Ivy Zheng.

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LET'S HEAR IT...

THIS WEEK

Region One officials are beginning a yearlong study of how its schools are organized. The study is expected to look at long-term questions around enrollment, costs and how schools serve students across the region. Consolidation is not the only question, but it is likely to be one of the most closely watched.

What should matter most as Region One studies the future of its schools: cost, educational opportunity, town identity, travel time or something else?

Send your responses to publisher@lakevillejournal.com by Monday, June 8 at 10 a.m. or comment on Facebook or Instagram. We'll publish a selection in next week's paper.

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION

Where do you shop for groceries? How do price, selection, distance, hours, or transportation shape where you go?

"Mostly Stop & Shop in Canaan - the cost of the gas to get to and from anywhere else completely negates any savings from going somewhere less expensive, unless I happen to be going that way already."

— Ashlee Baldwin, North Canaan

"Big Y in Great Barrington, Stop and Shop in Canaan for anything quick, and BJ's in Torrington/Costco in Waterbury for bulk stuff."

— Wintress Ross

"We shop at LaBonne's Markets here in Salisbury. It's convenient and their employees are all very friendly and always helpful. Their meat and seafood are top quality and the available products in every department are too. I tend to plan our meals around their weekly flyer and it works very well for the two of us."

— Barbara Marshall, Salisbury

"Guido's in Great Barrington because you can't beat the quality of foods and staff. Farmer's Market and farm stands for produce and local meats. The Local in West Cornwall for produce and local meats. For a few items in between Guido's runs, we go to Sharon Farm Market or Kent IGA depending on what other errands I'm running."

— Michelle Shipp Schatz-Mullins, Cornwall

"I live in Sharon so I visit Sharon Market 3 times a week for cold cuts, bread, prepared foods or a sandwich. I also shop at LaBonne's in Salisbury twice a month. For major shopping I go to Stop & Shop in either Canaan or Torrington"

— Johnny Martin, Sharon

"Aldi's is definitely worth the drive, what costs over \$150 at Big Y or Stop & Shop is usually around \$50 there."

— Tony Baker

"Canaan Stop & Shop and once a month trip to BJ's. Plus, I will bike to LaBonne's for something special."

— Roxi Foster, Falls Village

"TriCorner FEED in Millerton. As single mom and head of household they are a life saver with their income based sliding scale memberships. Plus everything is local and fresh and they do a good latte!"

— Ali DeProdocini, Salisbury

TURNING BACK THE PAGES

NORMA BOSWORTH

125 years ago — June 1901

John Green of Canaan mountain killed a wild cat weighing 25 pounds near his home last week. Green shot at the cat but missed it when it sprang at him from a tree. Green's dog then tackled the cat, and after a fierce fight the creature was killed by a blow from the man's gun stock. A young cat which was with the mother was shot by Green.

Jacob, "Jakie," son of Colonel Surdam of Mt. Riga, aged 10 years, died suddenly and mysteriously last Friday night. — Had not complained; retired as usual; about midnight one of his older brothers with whom he was sleeping was awakened by him. The parents were called; they saw at once that "Jakie" was very ill. Dr. Sellew was summoned, but "Jakie" died before the doctor arrived. He was buried in the cemetery on Riga. There was a large number of people at the funeral.

SHARON — The Salisbury Savings Bank has donated the use of the Malleable

Shop bell to the Firemen for an indefinite length of time, and instead of calling men to work will be an alarm for fire.

R.N. Eggleston now has the S.N.E. telephone.

100 years ago — June 1926

The auto road hog is about as popular as a boil on the nose, and most of us would prefer the boil if we could choose.

SALISBURY — Miss Virginia Parsons has entered the employ of the Oxy-Crystone Corporation.

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Scott are recovering very nicely after being injured when the car in which they were riding hit a train at Norwich, N.Y. Saturday May 29th. Mrs. Scott is still in the Memorial Hospital at Norwich, but her speedy recovery is hoped for.

Machinery and invention are accomplishing wonderful things nowadays. Pretty soon

Continued next page



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Trump's smash and grab of the Treasury

GUEST COMMENTARY JAMES F. SPEYER

On the very first day of his second term, Donald Trump pardoned all of the "J6ers" — those Trump supporters who, at his behest, sought on January 6, 2021 to prevent the peaceful transfer of power to Joe Biden by laying siege to the Capitol and violently attacking the Capitol police defending it. Hundreds of these traitors were convicted of felonies and imprisoned.

The pardons were a monstrous and unparalleled breach of the public trust and poured salt on the gaping wound the country suffered on that darkest of days for our democracy.

On May 18, 2026, Trump plumbed even greater depths of depravity. Through his acting Attorney General Todd Blanche — that thug with a law license who had previously served as Trump's criminal defense attorney — he announced the creation of a \$1.776 billion "anti-weaponization" fund, which he subsequently made clear was intended to reward the pardoned J6ers. Even some Republicans could not contain their disgust. Senator Mitch McConnell, for example, described it as a "slush fund to pay people who assault cops" and called it "morally wrong" and "utterly stupid."

The fate of the slush fund is unclear. After some initial Republican pushback, Blanche told Congress that he does not intend to move forward with it, but he refused to put that pledge in writing. Even after Blanche's comments, Trump told the press he "loves" the slush fund and "think[s] it's so important." Senate Republicans, meanwhile, killed a proposed bill that would have abolished the fund. So the matter is far from dead, and it remains important to understand why this unholy scheme is so rotten, even apart from the moral indefensibility of enriching cop-beating traitors.

Under the Constitution, only Congress holds the power of the purse, and the slush fund has not been sanctioned by Congress. So where do Trump and Blanche intend to get the money to pay the J6ers? The answer is that they devised a scheme

to circumvent the constitutional bar on appropriations unapproved by Congress and pay the J6ers out of the United States Treasury, with our taxpayer dollars. This plan is probably the most brazen act of corruption in presidential history. It is based on a criminal conspiracy to defraud the United States. Here's how it works and why it's illegal:

According to Blanche, the money for the slush fund will come out of what's known as the Judgment Fund of the Department of Justice. On a regular basis, Congress appropriates money to this Fund to enable DOJ to pay out court-ordered judgments and settlements. Congress granted DOJ a certain amount of limited discretion to disburse these funds, in order to avoid having to make a separate appropriation for each of the thousands of judgments or settlements it pays out each year.

But, by statute, to receive money from the Judgment Fund, a claimant must have a valid court order or a "compromise settlement" of a lawsuit. So Trump and Blanche came up with a lawsuit: Trump sued the IRS over the (admittedly) unlawful release of his tax returns and claimed \$10 billion in damages. Then they purported to "settle" this claim for \$1.776 billion, theoretically unlocking the money available in the Judgment Fund.

The problem with this scheme — and why it's illegal — is that the lawsuit and the ensuing "settlement" were entirely bogus.

The lawsuit was a sham from the outset. Under the Constitution, federal courts can only adjudicate actual "cases" or "controversies." This requires a bona fide dispute between two distinct, adversarial parties. Trump's lawsuit against the IRS lacked the necessary adversity of interest, because he controls his opponent. As he has said repeatedly, "I'm sort of su-

ing myself." Since there was no true case or controversy, there was no lawsuit that the court could adjudicate.

Moreover, even if this supposed lawsuit qualified as a case or controversy, it would still be utterly meritless and could not warrant any payout. The Justice Department had compelling defenses to it, including that it was barred by the statute of limitations because Trump brought it too many years past the date his returns were disclosed. But instead of asserting any defense, the Department chose to lay down.

The \$1.776 billion "settlement" of this bogus, collusive lawsuit is necessarily equally bogus and collusive. There cannot be a "compromise settlement" if there is no valid dispute to be compromised.

The bad faith, sham nature of the "settlement" is underscored by the fact that the returns of thousands of other taxpayers were also disclosed simultaneously with Trump's returns, and many of those taxpayers also sued. Rather than settling those cases for any amounts (much less billions), the DOJ has vigorously fought attempts at recovery.

The amount of the "settlement" also highlights the phoniness of the entire undertaking. The notion that Trump should obtain control of almost \$2 billion to disburse as he pleases because his tax returns were unlawfully disclosed is absurd on its face. Trump and Blanche have not even tried to justify this obscene amount.

By cooking up an ersatz lawsuit and "resolving" it

with an equally ersatz "settlement," the Trump/Blanche scheme violates the statute governing the Judgment Fund. Instead of a legitimate claim to taxpayer funds to resolve an actual dispute, this scheme instead defrauds the government and loots the Treasury.

It also constitutes a fraud on the court. Lawyers are under a sworn duty not to file lawsuits for improper or bad faith purposes. The only reason Trump filed his lawsuit was to create a false veneer of legitimacy for his claim to Judgment Fund dollars.

Judges do not like being unwittingly enlisted in fraudulent schemes. That explains why Judge Kathleen Williams, who presides over the lawsuit, has ordered Trump and the Justice Department to explain their conduct, and has ordered briefing on whether it should be considered a fraud on the court.

Regardless of any action Judge Williams takes, the fact remains that Trump and Blanche appear to have organized a criminal conspiracy to defraud the United States Treasury out of nearly \$2 billion. Every lawyer involved in this sordid venture should be investigated for potential disbarment, and all involved should be investigated for potential criminal prosecution. There will be no such prosecutions in this administration. But there very well may be in the next: the statute of limitations won't expire on this crime until 2031.

James Speyer is a lawyer and a volunteer with Lawyers Defending American Democracy. He lives in Sharon.

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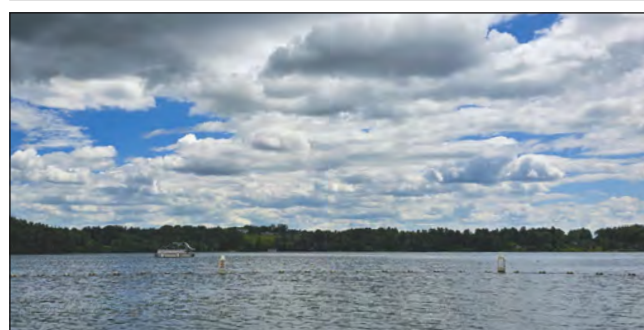


PHOTO BY JAMES H. CLARK

At the lake

Viewpoint

What's happening with Greenland?

At the end of 2025 President Trump told the world that he was interested in acquiring Greenland and would take it by force if necessary, stating that it was a matter of national security.

His Cabinet officials and others began echoing his remarks regarding the national security need to better control the region, especially with climate change opening up the arctic area to shipping and possible submarine warfare for the first time. But in truth, the President's interest in Greenland arose more from his lifelong obsession with size; Greenland was by far the world's largest island. As a child he was in love with the Great Wall of China and it became the inspiration for his proposed wall between the US and Mexico. His giant ballroom for the White House continues his strange obsession.

In addition to his concern for national security and his obsession with

OCCASIONAL OBSERVER
MAC GORDON

bigness, Trump had been studying the history of American imperialism and was favorably impressed by our military capture and control of foreign territory. He was prepared to try his own foreign adventures.

During World War 2 the U.S. had several small military bases on Greenland and the relations with the Greenlanders and Denmark (whose colony it was then) were good. Over the post-war years the U.S. eventually closed all the bases save one but Denmark (who still controls Greenland's foreign affairs) had been accommodating to any new American military proposals.

So what's so different now? Global warming has melted much of the northern ice thus opening the

area to at least limited navigation and both Russia and China have been interested. Without much elaboration, the U.S. Defense and State departments have told us that this poses a formidable security threat requiring U.S. control of Greenland to counter. But most security analysts consider this a shortsighted point of view. An even more vulnerable area to foreign intruders would be from northern Alaska to the Arctic Circle. As former Alaskan governor Sarah Palin was supposed to have said, "I can see Russia from my back porch!" However the U.S. has done little or nothing to fortify this area militarily. On the face of it, it would seem more appropriate for the U.S. to shift its defensive attention to the western side of the continent. At the same time it would make sense for NATO rather than the U.S. to oversee Greenland's only partly frozen, more navigable waterway. The U.S. is still a most prominent member

of NATO thus permitting us to have some say in what happens there but the considerable animosity between Trump and Greenland and Denmark would be largely avoided. And as a bonus, perhaps Canada (a NATO member) might be drawn into being a more active member of the Western military alliance.

During the past four months, closed door trilateral meetings have been held in Washington, at the behest of the US State Department with officials from both Denmark and Greenland to discuss the future of the island.

Over the past year Trump's verbal tirades have scared and angered people and their governments all over the world. A variety of recent polls weighing popular feelings in eight western European countries toward the U.S. government have all shown major disfavor regarding American foreign policy, particularly because of threats against Greenland. Especially in Denmark and in Greenland where several hundred protesters gathered in the capital, Nuuk last week to protest continued US involvement in their affairs and specifically the opening of a much larger new US consulate in Nuuk to "commemorate" its opening. Protesters carried signs with messages such as "Greenland is not for sale" and "Dump Trump". The U.S. sent over an uninvited Special Envoy, Louisiana Governor Jeff Landry, a notoriously impolitic individual who, shortly after arriving told everyone that could hear him "it's time for Washington to put its foot back on this Arctic territory" and other insulting remarks.

Meanwhile back in Washington talks continue. The American demands are so steep; Greenlandic officials fear that they amount to a major imposition on their sovereignty, such as a possible veto over what businesses might be permitted to operate in the territory. Meanwhile, the former Danish Prime minister Mette Frederiksen, a strong supporter of Greenland, is about to be replaced and is no longer in the discussions.

The parties are discussing cooperation on the development of natural resources. The island is loaded with oil, natural gas, uranium, rare earths and other critical minerals. However, much of it is buried deep beneath Greenland's glacial ice. The Trump administration is especially interested in the island's buried wealth and wants to make sure that other nations, particularly China and Russia, are kept away from it. Although he likes to deny the significance of global warming, Trump knows that Greenland's underground riches are becoming more accessible year by year.

Trump's war in Iran is going badly with no real end in sight and he is looking to get out. He wants a new, more promising theater for his international adventures and is hoping to capture Cuba next (although he has already nearly done so by an economic siege). Then many think he may indulge his continuing obsession and make another attempt to take Greenland.

Can you believe it?
Architect G. Mackenzie Gordon, A.I.A., lives in Lakeville.

TURNING BACK THE PAGES
NORMA BOSWORTH

Continued
from previous page

all work will be done away with. We will just think a thing should be done and presto it will be done, but what a hard job some are going to have to do the thinking.

A movement is on foot among the merchants of Canaan to inaugurate a half holiday during the summer. An effort is being made to have the merchants close on Thursday afternoon.

50 years ago — June 1976

The Connecticut State Department of Health announced plans this week to make available to everyone by fall a vaccine to protect against the virulent swine flu. According to Dr. Henry Gallup, health officer for Salisbury, the swine flu virus is the same one which caused the bad epidemic of 1918. Administration of the bivalent vaccine for the Northwest District will be planned from Torrington.

Mother's Day this year held special meaning for Virginia Sebbin, because she was reunited with two brothers after a 42-year separation. Robert and Martin Barrett came to her home on Furnace Hill Road in East Canaan and a joyful reunion ensued. The brothers had finally found each other four years before, after a 35-year separation.

SALISBURY — Mr. and Mrs. Hal Borland of Salisbury have given a set of Mr. Borland's books, about 18 written during the past 25 years, to the Scoville Library. All the books were written here, and about half are about this area. "It seemed to us there should be a set of them somewhere," Borland commented. "We'll add to them as others come along." The gift was made through L.S. (Mike) McCabe, a member of the library's board of trustees.

LAKEVILLE — One hundred years ago, for our country's Centennial in 1876, the Holley Manufacturing Company sent a display of 222 pocket knives to the International Exposition in Philadelphia. The knives were housed in a beautifully-carved walnut cabinet approximately seven feet high and four feet wide. This cabinet, with the collection of pocket knives, now stands in the carriage house of the Holley-Williams House.

CANAAN — Wangum Village will be dedicated this Sunday and will be the site of a health screening service

June 29. The 40-unit housing for the elderly project, which opened last November, has been "very successful," according to Arthur Baldwin, Canaan Housing Authority Chairman. Baldwin said that a state grant of \$640,000 financed the facility. Of that amount, some was returned to the town for reimbursement for the property the housing was built on.

CANAAN — The children's 15th annual fishing derby, sponsored by the Northwest Connecticut Rod and Gun Club, was held Sunday afternoon at the Albert Giulian farm on Sand Road. Candida Perotti landed a 17 ½ inch trout to take top honors among the 150 children entering the contest. Michael Cantele placed second, snaring a 16 ½ inch fish. Laura Gandolfo was the first to net the limit of three fish, which she did in 10 minutes. Jeff Ghidossi of Lime Rock was the first boy to reach the division limit of three fish.

A confirmed case of canine heart worm has been found in the center area of Canaan. Veterinarians advise that all dogs within a four-mile radius of a case of the disease be tested, and, if found free of heart worm, be given preventive medication.

FALLS VILLAGE — Two teachers at Lee H. Kellogg elementary school have been commissioned to walk the town boundaries and to report their findings to the selectmen. Howard Reed and David Parmelee were appointed after volunteering. First Selectman David Domeier said Friday. Domeier said that state statutes require that the town boundaries be "perambulated" once every five years to examine boundary markings. He said he did not know when the job was last accomplished here.

25 years ago — June 2001
One aspect of Sharon Hospital's reorganization plan came to fruition Friday with the sale of the Sharon Health Care Center to United Methodist Homes. The building and approximately seven acres were conveyed from Sharon Corp., parent company of the hospital, to the Shelton-based, not-for-profit organization for \$7.36 million. The sale erases a \$6 million Sharon Corp. debt to the Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Administration held on the nursing home.

These items were taken from The Lakeville Journal archives at Salisbury's Scoville Memorial Library, keeping the original wording intact as possible.

Travels with Gary

"Excuse me, Gary!" "No, EX-CUSE me, Geoff!" That sarcastically polite exchange captures a key aspect of my relationship with Gary Hufner, my co-driver at The Lakeville Journal Company. En route to our deliveries, our conversations are typically punctuated by friendly jibes, jousting and...peals of laughter.

If you've seen a solidly-built middle-aged man with a toothy grin and two days of grayish stubble wearing a short-sleeved shirt and a Tractor Supply baseball cap, you may have seen Gary. If you've seen someone matching this description bounding along outside of La Bonne's with a bundle of newspapers, you've definitely seen him.

When I first met Gary about a year and a half ago, we seemed to have little in common. I'm a fan of podcasts; Gary hates them. I like lively roundtable conversations about politics and philosophy; he rolls his eyes at the mere mention. My go-to is singer-songwriter music and jazz; he gets restless if he's not listening to bluegrass, country or Americana. Hmmm. Tricky.

Yet surprisingly, this odd-couple dynamic has worked amazingly well. Despite (or possibly because of) our feisty exchanges, we enjoy each other's company and have become good friends. We've certainly learned a ton from one another: Because of me, Gary is more aware of the importance of the Strait of Hormuz, what Mulligatawny Soup is, and who Wendell Barry is. Because of him, I've learned much more about the history, backroads and personalities of this wonderful area we live in.

One day, driving south on Route 41 from The Hotchkiss School to Sharon, Gary pointed west to two trees in the middle of a large field, Mudge Pond shimmering in the far distance. "Know about Twin Oaks?" he asked. "No, what's to know?" I responded. He then recounted the story of two iconic oak trees, integral to one of the most cherished vistas in Litchfield County, Connecticut, that had been around since before the American Revolution. The two origi-



Gary Hufner, left, and Geoff Olans

ON THE ROAD
GEOFFREY OLANS

nal trees, he explained, were felled in storms and replaced with much younger ones by the Sharon Land Trust in 2013.

Another day, driving south on Route 7 towards Kent, a mile and a half south of Cornwall Bridge, Gary alerted me to a colossal moss-covered boulder that juts out onto the left side of the road. "As a prank, local teenagers put a little stick between the chin of the boulder and the ground to scare drivers into thinking that a megaton weight could easily come crashing down on them!"

I've driven both these roads for years and, until recently, was never aware of these little details, little details that can make a big difference into one's understanding of a place.

Gary gets into some funny situations.

For instance, there is an older woman at a cafe on our route who goes gaga every time she sees Gary. With a very pronounced New York City accent, she holds court like the local mayor and goes out of her way to make sure that everyone within earshot has been introduced. Given their mutual affection, she once joked that maybe she and Gary should date. But Gary, playing along, said he'd need to see her financials first.

As we make our way along our delivery routes every Wednesday and Thursday, Gary and I come into contact with scores of people and we do our best to learn and remember their names. But there will always be that

awkward and embarrassing moment when we come upon someone whose name we desperately want to remember but can't. Gary's gambit for not getting tied up in this knot is sleight of hand. "Oh, hi," he'll say, "good to see you! I always forget how to spell your last name." This approach has backfired, of course, as when the answer he once got was "S-M-I-T-H!"

Parked in front of the Sharon Package Store, one of the more than fifty retail accounts we deliver newspapers to, Gary showed me a video of a farm engine he'd picked up the previous weekend. When not working for the Journal, Gary is buying, selling, repairing and collecting antique machinery and gadgetry, mainly but not exclusively farm related. This would include tractors, hit-and-miss engines, corn grinders, ice tongs, egg scales, mangles, etc. There's a water motor from the 1890s sitting outside the front entrance of the Lakeville Journal Company's office in Falls Village that once powered our printing press. He'd like to try to get it going again.

I often ask Gary to be my teacher, especially when it comes to farming and machinery. One day my question to him was pretty basic: "So, how does a 4-stroke engine work?" "All you really need to know is this," he answered, "intake-compression-power-exhaust." I couldn't be sure whether he was describing a 4-stroke engine or the nature of our topsy-turvy relationship!

Geoffrey Olans delivers The Lakeville Journal and The Millerton to retail outlets on Wednesday, Thursday, and the occasional Friday. He lives in Millerton.

Realtor® at Large

Founded in 1895, the Connecticut Forest & Park Association (CFPA) was the first private, nonprofit, conservation organization to be established in Connecticut. Its mission is to help preserve CT's forested lands and promote their enjoyment for the public. An example of their work is the creation of CT's Blue Trail system started in 1929 and now featuring 825 miles of beautiful hiking trails! To find out more, please visit: ctwoodlands.org/trails/ And to see interactive maps for the trails and parking areas please go to: ctwoodlands.org/explore-trails/interactive-map/.



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LABONNE'S

Continued from Page A1

and remain highly preliminary, pending review from both the town and from the Market Place of Salisbury.

As of early June, LaBonne's leadership did not comment directly on the project when asked, stating that the effort remains in early stages.

During the meeting, though, LaBonne Jr. spoke about the advantages of expanding parking options in town.

Referencing other municipalities with vibrant downtowns such as Litchfield and Middletown, he said that ample parking and thoughtful planning can play a big role in vitalizing Main Street activity.

"If you don't provide parking for capacity, you will chase people out of town," he said.



As part of extended discussions with the Economic Development Committee on May 21, Robert LaBonne Jr. advocated for more signage to draw passers by onto Academy Street.

PHOTO BY ALEC LINDEN

HOUSING

Continued from Page A1

Baumann said the project is ready to move forward once the financing agreement closes. The Trust has already hired Boulder Ridge Construction of Bethlehem and expects to begin construction this summer.

The Trust was gifted the property in late 2024 by an anonymous donor. The lot already has a well and septic system, helping reduce development costs.

Baumann said he hopes to keep the home's price low enough that housing costs would not exceed 30% of income for a household earning 80% of the area median income, the state's standard for affordable housing.

According to numbers released by the state on May 1, the area median income of the Northwest Hills Planning Region for a four-person household is \$122,800,

making 80% \$98,240.

Fundraising began last year with a local foundation awarding the Trust with a \$25,000 matching grant, of which \$10,000 has been raised so far.

The Trust is also in the process of renovating the former community center at 99 North Main St. into four two-bedroom rental apartments. The project is adjacent to six existing affordable rental units owned by the Trust.

The organization received \$2 million in state grant money last year for the project, which is currently underway, although repairs to all four buildings are on pause as the state's Historic Preservation Office, commonly called SHPO, reviews plans on the century-old community center and adjacent structures.

A 'step back in time' brings Revolutionary Cornwall to life

By Ruth Epstein

CORNWALL - The town Green was transformed into a Revolutionary War militia encampment June 6 and 7, but don't call it a "re-enactment," said event organizer Warren Stevens.

"It's a step back in time," he clarified.

Stevens, who is leading the town's 250th anniversary celebration, oversaw an encampment of white tents across the grounds where men portraying colonial soldiers and women aiding them went about daily camp life. Four military units from five states participated.

Seasoned participants moved with authenticity, never breaking character. Stevens said the authenticity could be traced "down to the buttons they wear."

Two sisters from Rhode Island, Minka Bernardo and Judy Tereshka, helped feed the troops. "It's good to get a glimpse into how they lived," said Tereshka. "It wasn't easy."

Some of the participants portrayed not only historical figures, but their own distant relatives.

Robert Frasier of Warrensburg, N.Y., portrayed his ancestor Thomas Fleming, who was married in Cornwall in 1762.

"He was part of Col. Charles Burrall's army and fought at the Battle of the Cedars," Frasier said. "He never made it back."

An enthusiast of early American history, Stevens hunts with black powder, builds his own firearms and casts musket balls. "I was



James Thomas portraying Elijah Bronson provides music.



Soldiers at Militia Days in Cornwall practice a drill.

PHOTOS BY RUTH EPSTEIN

born 270 years too late," he said.

Like many other Northwest Corner towns, Cornwall sent a significant portion of its population to fight in the Revolutionary War. More than 200 residents served.

First Selectman Gordon M. Ridgway, Selectmen Rocco Botto and John Brown, Warren First Selectman Greg LaCava, Alice Ridgway of Litchfield, Zach Tanner of Warren and Susan Hellman of Cornwall performed in a ceremonial review of the militia company.

Many current local families still bear the names of soldiers who went off to the war, including the Hurlburts, Swifts, Sedgwicks, Rogers, Scovilles and Tan-

ner King. Standing in front of Town Hall, Ridgway noted that Swift descendant John Calhoun funded the building in 1908, when it was constructed as a library. Ridgway also recounted the story of Cornwall native Heman Swift, who helped bandage the Marquis de Lafayette after he was wounded during the war.

The activities over the two days included drill and tactical demonstrations, a children's drill, music and ongoing displays.

Sisters Judy Tereshka, left, and Minka Bernardo, serve food to the troops during Cornwall's Militia Days.



OBITUARY

Anita L. Gochey

CANAAN — Anita L. (King) Gochey, 85, of 77 South Canaan Rd. died June 5, 2026, at Geer Village. She was the wife of the late Lester Gochey. Anita was born July 16, 1940, in Winsted, daughter of the late Ivan and Irene (Dulude) King.

Anita was well known throughout the Northwest Corner. She worked for many local businesses and organizations. Anita worked at the Rexall Drug Store, C.A. Lindell and Sons, Bob's Clothing, Brooks Pharmacy, and the Housatonic Valley Regional

High School in the cafeteria. She used her skills in calligraphy to complete the record books for the North Canaan Congregational Church. Anita's daughter remembers her as being very creative with cardboard, and a loving mom.

Anita is survived by her son Raymond Gochey and his fiancée Chris Filkins of Hinsdale, Massachusetts; and her daughter Michele O'Brien of Sharon. She is also survived by her sister Denise Warner of Torrington and her brother Arthur King of

Danbury. Her three grandchildren, Kyle Gochey of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, Cody O'Brien of Georgia, and Sabrina O'Brien of Falls Village. Anita was predeceased by her brother, Mar-

tin King.

A Celebration of Anita's life will be held on Saturday June 20, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. in the Newkirk-Palmer Funeral Home 118 Main St. Canaan, CT 06018.

For more obituaries, see page A4

YOUR NEWS

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Our Towns

Little Guild's Great Country Mutt Show draws record crowd

Continued from Page A1

tor of The Little Guild. She said the record attendance "speaks volumes about the love of animals in our community and the tremendous support shown for the Little Guild and its mission."

The giant tent, silhouetted against a wide blue sky, began filling just before the 11 a.m. opening. The "tongue-in-cheek, Westminster-style" dog show was originally conceived by renowned designer and animal advocate Bunny Williams.

WFSB meteorologist Scot Haney returned as host, joined by judges Richard Schlesinger, an Emmy-Award winning journalist with CBS News, and Bill Berloni, the well-known animal trainer who trained the first Sandy for the Broadway show "Annie," proving that rescue animals can become stars.

People of all ages lined up with their dogs, which were leashed and eager to strut their stuff in contests throughout the day. Children held pets in their arms, some owners sported matching outfits with their canine companions, and despite the crowd, there was not a growl or skirmish amongst the dogs. Dogs of every size and breed filled the grounds, including towering Bernese Mountain dogs, tiny chihuahuas tucked into shoulder carriers, whiskery terriers, long-haired dachshunds, happy retrievers, bulldogs, one Bassett hound and countless mixed breeds.

Co-Chairs Robin Chandler and Chet Krayewski said they were pleased with the event's success. Members of the board filled different roles, along with many volunteers, plus the staff of the Little Guild.

Langendoerfer also expressed special thanks to Tracy Tucker and Joel Howard for their support of a

gala held the night before at Norfolk Country Club.

New this year was a hospitality tent, suggested by Bunny Williams, where dogs could cool off at their own water station while visitors enjoyed food trucks, a mobile pizza oven and live music by The Joint Chiefs. Vendors offered dog-themed merchandise.

Awards were presented to the Most Unidentifiable Mix, Sweetest Pair of Dogs, Best Ears, Best Trick, Best Companion/Family Member, Best Lap Dog Over 40 Pounds, Best Kisser, Waggiest Tail, and Best in Show. While the winners received blue ribbons, each registered dog received a commemorative ribbon.



PHOTO BY JENNIFER ALMQUIST

The 2026 Great Country Mutt Show sees record attendance on a sunny June day.



PHOTO BY JENNIFER ALMQUIST

Founder of the Great Country Mutt Show, designer Bunny Williams, and a young contestant with her winning dog.



PHOTO BY JENNIFER ALMQUIST



PHOTO BY JENNIFER ALMQUIST

Otis won the Best Trick competition.



PHOTO BY JENNIFER ALMQUIST

Best in Show winner Archy with Adam and Charlotte Van Doren.

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Our Towns

Canaan-Falls Village town pool passes now on sale

By Staff Report

FALLS VILLAGE – As summer approaches, the Canaan-Falls Village Town Pool is offering season and day passes for both residents and non-residents.

Non-resident day passes cost \$15 per person, while children ages five and under are admitted free. Non-resident season passes are \$160 per person, and family season passes for two or more people are \$320. Non-residents in-

terested in purchasing a season pass may do so in person at the pool.

In addition to a large L-shaped swimming pool, the Recreation Center features a playground, pool house with restrooms and changing facilities, picnic tables and charcoal grills.

Additional information is available on the Canaan-Falls Village Recreation Commission website. The pool's official opening date is expected to be announced on social media soon.

Hammond Beach opens for the season

By Staff Report

CORNWALL – Hammond Beach in West Cornwall will open for the summer season on Saturday, June 20. Beach passes are now available through the Cornwall Selectman's Office.

Resident passes cost \$20 per family or \$10 per individual. Non-resident passes are \$150 per family or \$75 per individual, while short-term rental

passes are \$60.

Located at 37 Lake Road, Hammond Beach is open to residents and pass holders throughout the summer. Town officials have also launched an official Hammond Beach Facebook page to provide updates on beach news, events and seasonal information.

For more information, contact the beach director at HBeach@cornwallct.gov or call 860.672.6082.

Sharon's forgotten animal pounds draw new attention

By Alec Linden

SHARON – While many think of the “pound” as a place for stray dogs, a century and a half ago town pounds were a fixture of life in rural Connecticut, used to temporarily contain wandering livestock. Today, a Sharon resident is working to restore one of those long-forgotten stone enclosures.

Lynn Kearcher, a town selectman pursuing the project independently, has spent months restoring an old-fashioned pound on Sharon Mountain Road in an effort to preserve a little-known piece of the town's agrarian history.

“It's a structure that links us to our past in what was a very important period,” she said June 4, while pulling brush from the pound's low stone walls. The site, near the intersection of Sharon Mountain and Jackson Hill roads, is owned by three private landowners, all of whom have given permission for the effort.

The now-tidy plot looked very different just several months ago, Kearcher said. Since then, she, her husband, Carl Chalet, and other volunteers have spent many hours clearing weeds and brush, while several community members donated money to hire Applewood Tree Care to remove several dead trees from the site.



PHOTO BY ALEC LINDEN

Lynn Kearcher and her husband, Carl Chalet, pull brush from within the pound's walls just off Sharon Mountain Road. Kearcher said the boulder embedded in the slope at the back of the pound is a unique architectural feature.

Kearcher is continuing to raise money to restore the pound to an appearance she believes reflects the dignity such a vestige of town history deserves.

In pre-barbed wire days, when farms were more numerous and often smaller with limited means of monitoring livestock, New England towns built special corrals for animals on the loose. A resident known as the pound keeper rounded up rogue animals in a common pen. Farmers could either pay a fee to collect them or surrender them to the town, which could then auction the animals and keep the earnings.

Town pounds emerged in New England from the earliest days of livestock husbandry up until the late 19th century, and their importance in that era is hard to overstate, said history writer Matthew E. Thomas, author of a 2023 book on New England's remaining animal pounds.

“You had to have a

pound to be able to prevent all of these different livestock animals from escaping from their farms and wreaking havoc in neighbors' property, which did not make for good neighborly dealing sometimes,” Thomas said.

“These are wonderful monuments to the past,” he added, noting that a runaway cow could wreck someone's food stores for the hard winter ahead.

Thomas's research identified approximately 170 known pounds intact today in New England, but he said he's grateful to residents like Kearcher who show that there are likely many more lost to time in yards and woods across the region.

“It just makes it so much more meaningful to know that there are people out there that genuinely care about preserving our early American history,” he said.

Kearcher has identified two more suspected pounds nearby, with one hidden in the woods far-

ther south on Sharon Road and the other sitting in a thicket next to Fairchild Road. Both are located on land owned by the Sharon Land Trust, which has given permission for future restoration.

The goal, Kearcher said, is to protect these sites with an ordinance that would herald them as artifacts of Sharon's history, potentially dating back to the early 18th century. Kearcher has been communicating with the state archeologist to organize a visit that may shed some light on the specific stories of the structures.

For his part, Thomas said the pounds, while forgotten by many, are a strong reminder of a different way of living in the countryside: “A time,” he wrote, “when nearly all social, economic, religious and political issues were handled primarily at the local level.” In that bygone era, sometimes locking up a cow or pig for a few days was another means to keep the peace.

Sharon Housing Trust, BOE discuss shared water infrastructure options

By Aly Morrissey

SHARON – Representatives from the Sharon Housing Trust appeared before the Board of Education June 8, seeking assistance with a water supply issue that could affect plans to convert the former Sharon Community Center into four affordable apartments.

Architect and Housing Trust board member Andrew Ferentinos said engineers determined the building's planned fire sprinkler system will require a dedicated water line. The Housing Trust had intended to connect the building to water service from neighboring properties it owns, but discovered the existing infrastructure lacks sufficient capacity.

Ferentinos outlined three possible solutions, including trenching across Route 44 to connect directly to the water main, replacing the existing line between Sharon Center School and the community center, or tapping into the school's water service

before the school's meter. A decision may be needed by the end of June because the state is expected to pave Route 44 in August.

During the discussion, contractor Will Case said the school's water service appears to be supplied by an aging two-inch pipe that may eventually need replacement. He suggested any future upgrade could provide additional capacity for both properties.

Board members raised questions about liability, insurance and costs. Housing Trust representatives said the organization

would pay for any work needed to support the project. No decision was made, and further engineering analysis and discussion are expected later this month.

In the meantime, BOE decided to allow Case to dig two test pits this weekend to check for ledge – or solid bedrock – and to more closely examine the existing pipes. Further discussion is expected to be held during a special BOE meeting later this month as plans would need to be finalized and in motion by early July, according to Ferentinos.

LEGAL NOTICES

Legal Notice

The Planning & Zoning Commission of the Town of Salisbury will hold a Public Hearing on Special Permit Application # 2026-0321 by owners Michael S Shuster & Deborah A Morel for a detached apartment on a single-family residential lot at 94 Salmon Kill Road, Salisbury, Map 11, Lot 31 per Section 208 of the Salisbury Zoning Regulations. The hearing will be held on Monday, June 15, 2026 at 6:45 PM. There is no physical location for this meeting. This meeting will be held virtually via Zoom where interested persons can listen to & speak on the matter. The application, agenda and meeting instructions will be listed at www.salisburyct.us/agendas/. The application materials will be listed at www.salisburyct.us/planning-zoning-meeting-documents/. Written comments may be submitted to the Land Use Office, Salisbury Town Hall, 27 Main Street, P.O. Box 548, Salisbury, CT or via email to landuse@salisburyct.us. Paper copies of the agenda, meeting instructions,

and application materials may be reviewed Monday through Thursday between the hours of 8:00 AM and 3:30 PM at the Land Use Office, Salisbury Town Hall, 27 Main Street, Salisbury CT. Salisbury Planning & Zoning Commission Robert Riva, Secretary 06-04-26 06-11-26

Notice of Decision Town of Salisbury Planning & Zoning Commission

Notice is hereby given that the following actions were taken by the Planning & Zoning Commission of the Town of Salisbury, Connecticut on June 1, 2026: Approved - Site Plan Application #2026-0322 by George Johannesen (Allied Engineering Associates, Inc.), for development activities including a new driveway and septic systems in the Lake Protection Overlay District in accordance with section 404 of the regulations. The property is shown on Salisbury Assessor's Map 24 as Lot 02 and is located at 231 Twin Lakes Road, Salisbury. The owner of

the property is American School for the Deaf. Approved with condition that impervious surface be reduced further by 0.4% and the conditions recommended by the Town consulting engineer - Special Permit Application #2026-0319 by Todd Parsons (Haley Ward), for vertical expansion of a non-conforming structure in accordance with Section 503.2 of the regulations and Site Plan application for development activities in the Lake Protection Overlay District in accordance with Section 404 of the regulations. The property is shown on Salisbury Assessor's Map 64 as Lot 06 and is located at 25 Morgan Lane, Salisbury. The owners of the property are Brian McDevitt & Meghna Danton. Any aggrieved person may appeal these decisions to the Connecticut Superior Court in accordance with the provisions of Connecticut General Statutes §8-8. Town of Salisbury Planning & Zoning Commission Robert Riva, Secretary 06-11-26

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Our Towns

North Canaan mourns loss of three community leaders

By Christian Murray

NORTH CANAAN – Town officials paid tribute last week to three longtime residents who have died recently, remembering their decades of civic engagement that left a mark on the community.

Over the course of the last month, North Canaan has lost Peter Brown, Bill Hower and Nick Gandolfo, all of whom dedicated years of service to local boards, organizations and community efforts.

“We all in the Town of North Canaan are grieving the loss of many people,” First Selectman Jesse Bunce wrote on the town Facebook page, referring to the three men.

Brown, who died at age 70, served on the Planning and Zoning Commission for nearly 25 years, including more than two decades as vice chairman. Bunce said Brown also operated Lone Oak Campsites with his brother, Barry, and was known for supporting charitable causes, including motorcycle fundraising rides and other community events.



PHOTO BY MADI LONG

Brown, as a child, grew up on a farm in East Canaan that his parents converted into what became Lone Oak Campsites. In the 1990s, he and Barry purchased the campground from their parents. The campground was sold in 2024.

“Very seldom do you find a person that pretty much everybody in town loved,” Bunce said in an interview. “Peter’s one of those guys.”

Meanwhile, Hower, who was 66-years-old at the time of his death, was involved in North Canaan’s economic development efforts for roughly 25 years.

He was a longtime local business person, who worked in the automotive industry, primarily through his family business, Jim’s Garage.

According to Bunce, Hower had recently approached town officials about helping boost the local economy.

“He was a great asset to the town,” Bunce said.

Also remembered was Gandolfo, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran of the Korean War, who was a familiar presence at Memorial Day ceremonies and veterans events. He served in Korea from 1952 to 1953 and participated in several battles

and combat operations.

Bunce said Gandolfo, who died at the age of 94, served on multiple town boards and committees, participated in Boy Scout activities and remained active in community affairs throughout his life.

In announcing Gandolfo’s death, Bunce noted that he was among the town’s last remaining veterans from before the Vietnam War era and had become a fixture of North Canaan’s Memorial Day parade.

“There are few, if any, in North Canaan who don’t have a memory of him,” Bunce wrote. “His dedication, kindness and unwavering commitment to this town will not be forgotten.”

Bunce said each of the men contributed to North Canaan in different ways, but all shared a commitment to bettering the town.

“As our community continues to face a number of recent losses, now is a time for us to come together — to support one another, to share our memories and to honor the remarkable lives of those who paved the path before us,” he said.



PHOTO BY ALY MORRISSEY

June is turtle breeding season

Early June is the heart of the breeding season for turtles in New England, causing many mother turtles, like the painted turtle below, to cross roads in search of places to lay their eggs.

Wildlife experts advise vigilance and slow driving during this critical period, which lasts into July.



PHOTO BY ALEC LINDEN



PHOTO BY RUTH EPSTEIN

Drivers urged to use caution as Kent road work begins

By Aly Morrissey

KENT – Drivers in Kent should use caution Monday, June 8, as routine road maintenance is scheduled to begin on several roads. Highway crews are preparing for annual chip-sealing projects, a process used to repair or extend the lifespan of paved roads.

The following roads are

scheduled for treatment: Geer Mountain Road (from Ore Hill Road to Jennings Road); Ore Hill Road; South Road; Kentmont Road; Bulls Bridge Road (from Route 7 to No. 160); Macedonia Brook Road.

Town officials said the work is weather dependent and delays or rescheduling are possible. Temporary speed limit

reductions will be in effect because of loose stone on the roadway.

Drivers are urged to follow traffic directions, use caution in work zones and reduce their speed to avoid throwing loose stones into the windshields of passing vehicles.

Residents with questions may contact the Kent Selectman’s Office at 860-927-4628.

Hazardous household waste day set for June 20 in Falls Village

By Alec Linden

FALLS VILLAGE – A household hazardous waste collection day will take place rain or shine from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, June 20 at the Falls Village Public Works Garage at 100 Railroad Street.

Residents of 12 towns are permitted to participate in the event, which is meant to provide a safe and clean way to dispose of harmful household materials that may pollute the environment and risk public safety if handled

improperly.

Registration is free but required to participate, and is restricted to residents of Falls Village, Colebrook, Cornwall, Goshen, Harwinton, Kent, Litchfield, Norfolk, North Canaan, Salisbury, Sharon and Torrington. Registration can be made by contacting one’s town hall or by navigating to the associated Eventbrite page by searching “NHCOC” on Eventbrite.com.

Accepted items include paints, cleaners, gasoline, pool chemicals, furniture polishes,

household batteries and other toxic, corrosive and flammable materials. A full list of acceptable and unacceptable materials can be found on the Eventbrite page, alongside more information and an FAQ.

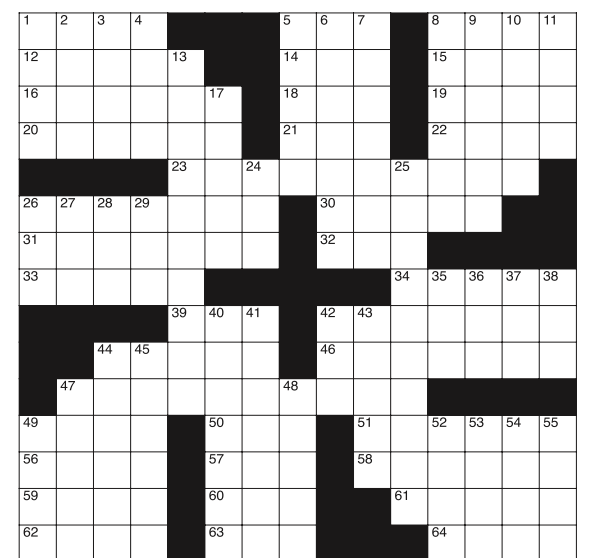
Residents will be required to sign up for a one hour time slot to manage visitor volume. Registration closes the Friday evening before the event at 8 p.m.

The event is being co-sponsored by the Northwest Hills Council of Governments and participating towns.

Brain Teasers

CLUES ACROSS

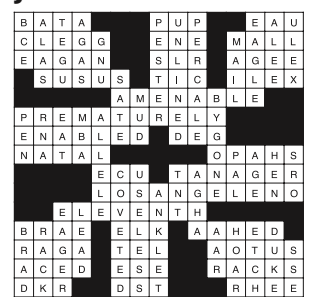
1. Sealed with a kiss
5. Large sandwich
8. Swiss city
12. Japanese persimmons
14. When you hope to get somewhere
15. Wings
16. A name of God
18. Elected official (informal)
19. Abnormal breathing
20. “Seinfeld” character
21. Yearly tonnage (abbr.)
22. Something for sale
23. Gets rid of
26. One who touts
30. Blemished
31. Less than exciting
32. Born of
33. N. German town
34. Notes
39. Move away from land
42. Vulcanite
44. More ignoble
46. Child actor Kirk
47. Written works
49. Sea vessel
50. Residue
51. Engraved
56. Having sufficient skill
57. One and only
58. Erase
59. Broad inlets
60. Nightmarish street
61. Play again
62. Formerly (archaic)
63. Add a color to change the color
64. Move swiftly and lightly



17. Greek mythological beauty
24. Wrath
25. Instrument to measure wind speed
26. Luxury carmaker
27. Bitterly regret
28. Not or
29. Google certification
35. Midway between northeast and east
36. Space station
37. Relating to the ears
38. Congressman
40. Yelled at
41. Rudely assertive
42. Defunct European money
43. Shared one’s soul
44. Onion rolls
45. A way to state clearly

47. Relating to a lobe
48. Underlying message
49. Hollywood pig
52. Indicates pitch
53. Filament of a feather
54. Small ornamental ladies’ bag for small articles
55. Diminish

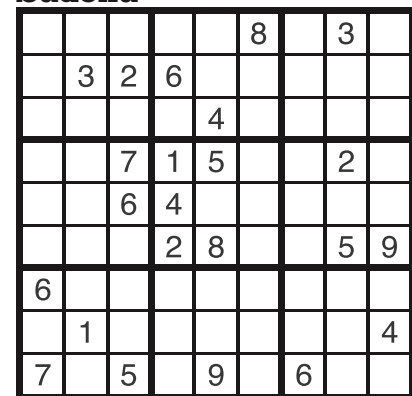
June 4 Solution



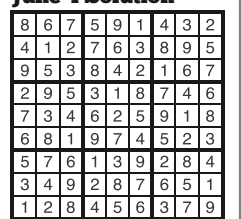
CLUES DOWN

1. Scottish island
2. River in the Netherlands
3. Asian people
4. Fuzzy fruit
5. Ninth month (abbr.)
6. An idealistic social reformer
7. What you owe
8. Colorless mineral
9. Overjoyed
10. Rattling breaths
11. Tropical Old World tree
13. A citizen of Senegal

Sudoku



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Our Towns

North Canaan to raise liberty pole for first time in 252 years

By Ruth Epstein

NORTH CANAAN – For the first time in 252 years, a liberty pole bearing a flag emblazoned with the words “Liberty and Property” will rise over Canaan as part of a community celebration June 13. The event, which will take place in Bunny McGuire Park at 11 a.m., will also include fun, games and food for families and residents.

The pole will be erected on the corner lot at the intersection of Routes 7 and 44, across from St. Martin of Tours Church, where it will remain in place for the rest of the year.

Town historian Kathryn Boughton said the event commemorates the patriotic fervor that swept through Canaan in the years leading up to the American Revolution.

Canaan was an early hotbed of dissent, she said, writing its Canaan Resolves before any of the other towns in the Northwest Corner and actively participating in shutting down the King’s courts in Great Barrington in August 1774 in response to the burdensome Coercive Acts.

Many Canaan men later fought in the Revolutionary War, taking part in some of its most historic battles.

Liberty poles were a common symbol of resistance to British rule and were often predominantly placed in public spaces to intimidate those with opposing views.

Historian Tim Abbott said Canaan’s original liberty pole was raised June 21, 1774. The Connecticut Courant described it as “a Standard for Liberty, 78 Feet high,” and topped by a scarlet flag 15-feet long bearing the words, “Liberty” and “Property” in large Capitals.

The event was peaceful, and the participants later gathered at the Lawrence Tavern, which still stands, for celebration. It is reported a more violent demonstration took place at the same site just a few weeks later.

The words were reportedly chosen to highlight the value of property ownership, which was often considered as a way to secure liberty.

Following this Saturday’s flag raising ceremony, residents are invited to Bunny McGuire Park for a free community picnic titled,



PHOTO PROVIDED
Canaan First Selectman Jesse Bunce, left, and Geoff Drury conduct a test-run of raising the liberty pole and flag that will be officially raised in a ceremony on Saturday, June 13.

“Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Appleness,” featuring American items like hot dogs and apple pie, provided by Freund’s Farm Market and Bakery.

Kathy Keane, chairman of the town’s USA 250th Committee, said there will be colonial re-enactors, musket demonstrations, cartridge rolling, quill and ink drawing and games for children.

“It should be a lot of fun,” said Keane. “We’re keeping in the spirit of that time.”

The event is being sponsored by the 250th Anniversary Committee, the Canaan History Center, the Canaan Exchange Club and the town of Canaan. Freund’s Farm Market and Bakery will provide hot dogs and apple pie.

Canaan residents among earliest to challenge British rule

By Ruth Epstein

FALLS VILLAGE – Residents of Canaan were among the earliest in the nation to publicly challenge British rule, according to local historian and author Peter Vermilyea.

Vermilyea shared that perspective during the Falls Village-Canaan Historical Society’s first “First Tuesday at 7” lecture of the season June 2 at the South Canaan Meetinghouse. His presentation, “Liberty and Property: Canaan in the Revolutionary War,” explored the town’s surprisingly vocal role in the fight for American independence.

Displaying a Connecticut map from 1776, Vermilyea – who is also the social studies department chairman at Housatonic Valley Regional High School – noted that Litchfield County was once considered an undesirable place to settle because of its rugged terrain and poor roads.

“But that was seen as positive because it made the county inaccessible to the British,” he said. “So Litchfield County became a hotbed of the patriotic movement.”

He also pointed to the region’s large Congregationalist population as a factor in its strong support for the Patriot cause, noting that Loyalists were more commonly affiliated with the Anglican Church.

“Few towns embraced the war more than Canaan,” he said.

He then turned to the subject of the Boston Tea Party and Britain’s response, which included threats to close Boston Harbor.

“There were rallies held in Litchfield County, with citizens believing if they can do it in Boston, they can do it here,” Vermilyea said.

One of Canaan’s most significant acts came on June 21, 1774, when residents raised a 78-foot liberty pole to symbolize the resistance to British authority and support for colonial rights. While such poles existed in other towns, one that tall was uncommon, Vermilyea said.

Following the raising, residents gathered at the Lawrence Tavern, which still stands, and imbibed and offered a series of toasts. “They called it an act of defiance in honor of liberty,” he said.



PHOTO BY RUTH EPSTEIN
Historian Peter Vermilyea says Canaan residents were ‘radicalized, principled and constitutional’ in earliest days during a talk on June 2.

The pole was called “Liberty and Property,” reflecting the belief that the protection of property rights was essential to preserving freedom. The townspeople also adopted a resolution when it protested stating that the illegal and cruel proceedings by the British parliament would lead to the colonists having no liberty or property.

Such a resolution was incredible, said Vermilyea, in that very few towns – only Fairfax, Va., and Farmington, Conn. – adopted statements earlier than Canaan.

“That showed a remarkable show of support from the people of Canaan,” he said. “They were radicalized, principled and constitutional in their efforts. And they were early.”

As the news of Lexington and Concord reached the Northwest Corner, muskets from Hartford were sent to local towns. Canaan received seven.

The war came to Canaan in 1778 when thousands of British and Hessian soldiers were being marched 880 miles from Boston to Charlottesville, Va., coming through Litchfield County. “They came right along there outside those windows,” Vermilyea said excitedly. Lt. Ashel Beebe, for whom Beebe Hill Road is named, opened his home to the soldiers, showing hospitality and humanity between enemies.

“Litchfield County’s isolation shaped its revolutionary experience,” Vermilyea said. “It was the bastion of the American cause. Canaan exemplified this steadfast resolve.”

Cemetery Tours

The Falls Village-Canaan Historical Society and the North Canaan History Center will host guided tours of Revolutionary War veterans’ graves Sunday, June 14.

In Falls Village, guides in period dress will lead tours at Grassy Hill Cemetery, 68 Point of Rocks Road, sharing the stories of veterans buried there. Self-guided tours will also be available at Haskins Cemetery on Undermountain Road and the Root-Gillette Cemetery on Steap Road.

In Canaan, tours will be offered at Mountain View Cemetery on Sand Road, Forbes Cemetery on Lower Road and Hillside Cemetery on Route 44 in East Canaan.

The free event is part of America’s 250th anniversary commemoration and is funded through a grant from the Canaan Foundation.

For more information, call the Falls Village-Canaan Historical Society at 860-824-8226 or the Canaan History Center at 860-453-4435.

Send news tips to editor@lakevillejournal.com

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Our Towns

Kent set to receive another beaver deceiver

By Alec Linden

KENT – Northwest Corner land managers are once again turning to a device known as a “beaver deceiver” to prevent flooding around North Spectacle Pond while allowing the area’s beavers to remain in place.

The Inland Wetlands Commission approved the project on an emergency basis after hearing concerns that persistent beaver dam-building could cause water to back up and flood nearby homes and a private driveway.

During a meeting with the IWC on May 18, Maria Grace, director of stewardship at the Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy, said that flooding damage had impacted properties around the pond before, and recent beaver activity had put the driveway particularly at risk.

The “beaver deceiver” – also known as a pond leveler or beaver baffler – al-

lows water to flow through a beaver dam so that the beavers can remain in their habitat without impacting nearby properties. It’s a method of addressing conflicts between beavers and property owners that doesn’t involve trapping the animals, which in Connecticut often results in their deaths.

“This is truly the most humane and ecological way to coexist with beavers,” Grace said.

Grace presented the application on behalf of a partnership between the NCLC, Kent Land Trust and the North Spectacle Pond Association, as the land where the device will be placed is owned by both the NCLC and the KLT with the North Spectacle Pond Association representing the residents’ interests. She explained that a complex wetland system downstream of the pond, bisected by a driveway off of Segar Mountain Road, has long been a hotspot for beaver activity.



PHOTO PROVIDED

A beaver deceiver device is planned to be installed to the east of a driveway at 463 Segar Mountain Road to avoid future flooding. A similar system has been operational on the opposite side since 2014.

In 2014, a pond leveler was installed by Massachusetts-based Beaver Solutions on the west side of the driveway to address the flooding concerns. The system has been successful, Grace said, but beavers have since realized that if they dam the channels on the other side of the driveway, which are connected by a series of culverts, the

water will back up anyway.

“They’ve essentially learned that the systems are connected and that they can build dams on the east side of the driveway and create a better habitat for themselves,” Grace said. “They’re really smart creatures.”

She explained that beavers have repeatedly dammed the outlet stream from North Spectacle Pond, causing water levels to rise. The resulting flooding has threatened a vulnerable driveway leading to a private residence and has already damaged properties around the pond.

“It’s fascinating to watch

and to see it out there but we have to do something about it because the pond can’t get above a certain level, or people’s houses will flood,” she said.

The proposal calls for Beaver Solutions to install a similar system on the east side. The pond leveler essentially pushes a low-profile pipe through the dam with fencing that prevents the beavers from plugging it back up, as they are instinctually motivated to do. The pipe regulates flow through the dam while keeping it largely intact, and ensuring that water level remains suitable for beavers and humans alike.

Beaver Solutions’ John

Egan said that pond levelers are more effective than trapping in the long term. While they don’t work for every location, such as fast flowing rivers, Egan said they work well in wetland systems like North Spectacle Pond.

“Just because you remove the animals from that habitat one year, it doesn’t mean new animals won’t move in the next,” he said.

Commissioners ultimately approved the project on an emergency basis, allowing them to act without waiting a full meeting cycle.

“It’s been shown to us that it has worked since 2014,” said IWC member Paul Yagid of the pond leveler solution. “By acting on it sooner we may prevent what could be an emergency.”

Other commissioners agreed that heavy spring rains combined with continued dam-building could quickly create flooding problems.

“If the water gets elevated,” Grace said, “people on North Spectacle Pond will have a real mess to deal with.”

Commissioner Marge Smith agreed. “We know how fast beavers work when they put their canny little minds to it,” she said.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Drama teacher and playwright Kimberly Compton (center) poses with students following an original middle school production at Kent Center School.

Kent Center School theater program shines

By Aly Morrissey

KENT – What began as a parent volunteer role has grown into one of Kent Center School’s most anticipated traditions.

Kimberly Compton, who oversees the school’s theater program, has transformed middle school productions into original, large-scale performances that students eagerly await years before they are eligible to audition.

“I wanted to elevate the theater experience,” Compton said.

Rather than spending money on licensing pre-written productions, Compton proposed writing original scripts herself and redirecting those funds toward costumes, lighting, sets and other production elements. The approach has allowed the school to stage unique shows tailored specifically to its students and cast sizes.

“A lot of these junior shows are made for really large ensemble casts,” she said. “It doesn’t always fit the mold of a smaller school.”

The result has been productions that students can truly call their own. Cast members become the first to bring characters to life, with no previous performances to imitate.

Maeve Dietrich, a fifth grader at KCS, said it’s



PHOTO PROVIDED

Original cast members perform Headspace in April at Kent Center School.

exciting to perform in an original play.

“You have to give it your all because you’re setting the example for anyone who does the play in the future,” Dietrich said. “Miss KC also inspires everybody to think that maybe they could write a play one day, too.”

“My goal is to help them learn to make choices as actors and as people,” Compton said.

She encourages students to develop their own interpretations of characters rather than simply reciting lines. One instance that makes Compton particularly proud is when a student cast as a villain transformed what could have been a stock character into someone “sassy and memorable” through her own creative choices.

Students say the productions have helped build confidence while teaching them to work together. Compton intentionally runs rehearsals like a professional theater company,

introducing students to industry terminology and expectations while creating a nurturing environment.

“They rise to the occasion and surprise themselves with what they can do,” she said.

Kent Center School Principal Michelle Mott said that authenticity has had a big impact.

“I think the students are more engaged because she’s making it real for them,” Mott said. “It’s a real theater experience.”

The sense of belonging is at the heart of the program, Compton said.

“Theater was always a safe space for me,” she said. “It was always, ‘Come as you are, and we will love you and accept you no matter what.’”

She works to create that same atmosphere for students today.

The productions have steadily grown in popularity.

“I eventually want this to be a can’t-miss event,” she said.

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Our Towns

America 250: How Northwest Connecticut plans to celebrate the Fourth of July

Cornwall parade set for the Fourth of July

CORNWALL – Cornwall will mark America’s 250th anniversary with a community-wide Fourth of July celebration highlighting the town’s Revolutionary War heritage and small-town traditions.

The main celebration will be a patriotic parade through Cornwall Village beginning at 3 p.m. on July 4, followed by a reading of the Declaration of Independence on the Town Green and awards for parade participants. Residents are encouraged to join the festivities by entering decorated vehicles, floats or other creative displays showcasing their red, white and blue spirit.

Additional America

250 programming planned throughout the year includes the recently held Revolutionary War militia reenactment, a colonial-themed agricultural fair, exhibits, lectures and historical readings, house tours, screenings of an Ethan Allen film, and events celebrating the 200th anniversary of the North Cornwall Meeting House.

Organizers say the celebration is intended to honor both the nation’s founding and Cornwall’s place in American history.

Parade registration and information area available through parade marshalls Jane Hall and Kim Jackson at 860-689-6992.

Falls Village to celebrate with cannon fire and bells

FALLS VILLAGE – Falls Village is planning a full day of patriotic activities July 4 as part of its America 250 celebration, highlighted by a parade, historical reenactors and community bell ringing.

Festivities begin at 10 a.m. on Main Street and the Town Green with a parade featuring veterans riding in vintage vehicles, fire trucks, marching groups, live music and other attractions.

Following the parade, First Selectman Dave Barger, portraying George Washington, will read the Declaration of Independence. He will be

joined by Carmela Barger as Martha Washington and Selectman Judy Jacobs as Betsy Ross. Local historian Dusty Blass is scheduled to fire a ceremonial cannon.

At 2 p.m., church bells throughout the community will ring 13 times in honor of the original colonies.

Falls Village’s America 250 programming also includes a July 4 evening performance at Music Mountain by the Paul Winter Consort, presenting Our American Journey, in Celebration. The concert will feature seven-time Grammy Award winner Paul Winter and guest musicians.

Kent to celebrate with lights, bonfire and fireworks

KENT – Kent’s USA 250 Committee is planning a community-wide celebration July 3-4 to mark the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

Festivities begin Friday, July 3, with a community bell ringing at 2 p.m. at the Eric Sloane Museum. A “Lights and Liberty” parade will follow at 7 p.m., traveling from Town Hall to the Kent Volunteer Fire Department. Residents, businesses and community organizations are invited to participate with illuminated floats, decorated vehicles and other displays celebrating local history.

The evening will conclude with a community bonfire at the firehouse, where attendees will have an opportunity to

sign a commemorative town Declaration of Independence that will later be displayed at Town Hall.

Activities continue Saturday, July 4, on the Town Hall lawn beginning at noon with a flag raising, community declaration signing, family activities and a community picnic. A public reading of the Declaration of Independence is scheduled for 1 p.m., followed by a townwide “Bell Ringing Across America” at 2 p.m. Residents are encouraged to bring their own bells.

The Kent Lions Club will serve food, and SoDelicious Bakery plans to provide a “Birthday Cake for America.”

The celebration will conclude with fireworks over Lake Waramaug at dusk.



PHOTO BY PATRICK L. SULLIVAN

The Salisbury Band will return to the Grove in Lakeville on July 4 for a live performance.

North Canaan to extend celebration after the Fourth with parade, fireworks

NORTH CANAAN – North Canaan’s annual Fire Company Parade will take on an America 250 theme this summer, with organizers encouraging residents, businesses and community groups to help celebrate the nation’s 250th anniversary.

The parade is scheduled for July 18, with lineup beginning at 5:15 p.m. and step-off at 6 p.m. Organizers are inviting participants to create floats and displays inspired by the 250th anni-

versary, though themed entries are encouraged rather than required.

The longstanding community tradition, organized by the Canaan Fire Company, will feature local groups, businesses, emergency responders and residents. Trophies will be awarded following the parade.

The evening will conclude with a fireworks display at dusk.

Those interested in participating can contact Maribeth at 860-601-3130.

Salisbury to celebrate America’s 250 at Town Grove

SALISBURY – The Salisbury Association Historical Society, Scoville Memorial Library and the Town of Salisbury are coordinating a series of events throughout 2026 to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the nation’s founding.

Among the planned observances is Salisbury’s annual Independence Day celebration on July 4 at noon at the Grove in Lakeville. The event will feature a public

reading of the Declaration of Independence and a performance by the Salisbury Band. The program is sponsored by the Salisbury Association Historical Society.

Additional America 250 events, lectures, exhibits and commemorations have been – and are – planned throughout the year. Updated schedules and information will be posted as details become available through the town’s America 250 initiative.

Sharon to celebrate on Main Street with bells, cannon fire and an evening show

SHARON – Sharon will mark America’s 250th anniversary with a daylong celebration on Main Street July 4, bringing together local organizations for a series of patriotic and historical events.

Festivities begin at noon with a cannon firing by History Without Walls at the Sharon Historical Society and Museum. At 12:30 p.m., the Declaration of Independence will be read at the Hotchkiss Library of Sharon.

From noon to 2 p.m., visi-

tors can enjoy hot dogs, fresh lemonade, ice cream and live music by Bog Hollow at the Sharon Congregational Church and surrounding venues.

At 2 p.m., Sharon will participate in the national “Bells Across America” observance, with church bells ringing throughout town.

The celebration concludes at 4 p.m. with a performance of Swingtime Canteen at the Sharon Playhouse. Tickets are required for the performance.

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Sports

Housy Juniors top Avon 13-4

By Riley Klein

NORTH CANAAN – Sam Eddy Field was home to Sunday baseball on June 7 when the Housy Juniors hosted Avon.

Housy won 13-4 with Brayden Foley pitching nine strikeouts in the complete game.

It was the eighth win in a row for the team of players from Cornwall, Falls Village, Kent, Norfolk, North Canaan, Salisbury and Sharon.

On offense, Housy scored early and often. Jaxxon Rogers, Brody Ohler and Landan M. each rounded the bases three times. J.T. Farr scored two runs. Sam Hahn and Ronin Hinman each had one run.

Kieran Bryant and Milo Ellison got on base twice.



PHOTOS BY RILEY KLEIN

Ronin Hinman slides into third base.

Greyson Brooks and Colin B. each hit a single. Liam Downey and Joey V. contributed a strong defensive effort.

The game was well attended with spectators dotting

the foul lines. It was about 75 degrees, mostly cloudy and breezy.

The Northwest Connecticut Junior Division Little League is for players aged

13 and 14 in the region. The spring league is reaching its end, but the Housy Juniors will continue into summer league with home games played in Sharon.



Brody Ohler at bat.

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