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

Advice and memories of coping with a plague from Millerton doctor

By Debra A. Aleksinas

MILLERTON — As COVID-19 rages on, front-line health care workers face an increased risk of exposure to patients who may be carriers of the disease. Small-town physicians — such as Kristie Schmidt, whose internal medicine practice in Millerton has been inundated with patients over the past two weeks suffering from upper respiratory infections, the flu and possibly COVID-19 — are no exception.

Now the doctor is sick. Out of an abundance of caution and sidelined with a fever, Schmidt reported on Sunday, March 22, that she is in self-quarantine until COVID-19 test results allow her to go back to work — and her patients.

Meanwhile, the doctor — who has been practicing medicine for three decades — will continue to see patients via telemedicine from her kitchen.

“Right now in Millerton I am actually quarantined at home with a fever after seeing many patients with URI [upper respiratory infection], cough and fever, some testing positive for influenza A,” said Schmidt by email on Sunday, March 22.

“I am waiting for COVID test results before returning to work.” To date, said Schmidt, there has been no COVID-19 testing made available in Dutchess County to outpatients. The doctor said she managed to get one from her own physician in Albany, N.Y.

COVID-19 death in Dutchess County

Schmidt said on Sunday that she had heard reports of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Dutchess County, “but I don’t know how they managed to get tested because, as of three days ago, I spoke to the Dutchess County Department of Health, who told me there were no tests available.”

Later on Sunday, the county’s first death relating to COVID-19 was confirmed. In a March 22 news release, the Dutchess County Department of Behavioral & Community Health reported that “while specific information cannot be provided for privacy reasons, it was confirmed the individual was a 69-year old male who developed respiratory distress and was sent directly to Mid-Hudson Regional Hospital where he was treated, but died on Friday, March 20.”

There are currently more than 60 positive cases of COVID-19 and the numbers are expected to increase as more testing becomes available this week, according to the release.

Telemedicine now ‘essential’

As for Schmidt, until her test results are back and despite feeling under the weather, she plans to stay connected to her patients through virtual visits.

Until COVID-19 slows and health care professionals are outfitted with adequate protective gear, Schmidt said virtual doctor visits may become the norm as a way of safely treating patients and steering those most at risk to proper treatment.

“The push toward telemedicine has been abhorrent to me,” said Schmidt, “as I believe seeing a patient physically and emotionally is essential in making a diagnosis. However, this pandemic is going to create a sea change in accelerating our use of remote communication as a society.”

Telemed, said the Millerton internist, “is going to be essential. As a true technophobe I must admit that it has been working and so far all of my patients seem to have been satisfied with the experience and grateful to have access to their doctor while sheltering in place.”

However, Schmidt said, patients who are less tech savvy and those without access to digital devices will need family or community assistance, “and I would welcome ideas on how to get that help into people’s homes.”

No stranger to plagues

Schmidt is no stranger to novel infectious diseases. A New York Medical College med student and resident in the late 1980s and early 1990s during the devastating initial HIV/AIDS epidemic, Schmidt had witnessed first-hand the death and destruction a novel plague can unleash on society.

She recalled her experience at St. Vincent’s Hospital in the West Village, which at the time was at the clinical forefront of the epidemic. It was, she said, “brutal, and in retrospect, bizarre. We treated crazy opportunistic infections and cancers that I’ve never seen since and hope to never see again.”

Even so, she said, work-related risk from COVID-19 is far greater — particularly with the shortage of appropriate personal protective equipment. “However, the consequences of infection are much different, as AIDS was a death sentence in the 1980s and up to the mid 1990s, when protease inhibitors became available.

“As med students and residents, we were all afraid of getting HIV through work-related exposure like needle sticks — of which I had my share. But we were equally afraid of getting it through sex. It was a scary time for all, especially my male friends who were gay.”

Advice to patients

As for advice to her patients, Schmidt had this to offer: “Social

See DOCTOR, Page A7

Confirmed COVID-19 cases on the rise

By Cynthia Hochswender

Three people in the Northwest Corner had tested positive for COVID-19 as of Tuesday morning, March 24. The three cases are in Kent, Sharon and Salisbury.

The first reported case in the Lakeville Journal coverage area was a 57-year-old woman who is a long-term care resident of Sharon Health Care Center, a nursing home that is owned by Athena Health Care Systems. The center is across the street from Sharon Hospital but not affiliated with it.

That positive diagnosis was reported on Sunday, March 22.

The six towns covered by The Lakeville Journal are Canaan (Falls Village), Cornwall, Kent, North Canaan, Salisbury and Sharon.

The woman is healthy enough that she could remain at the health care center. She and her roommate are now in private rooms; she is not on a

ventilator.

State health officials are now investigating how the woman became infected.

For more information on this case, go to The Lakeville Journal website at www.tri-cornernews.com.

On Monday, March 23, Erica Jonczyk, director at the David M. Hunt Library in Falls Village, announced on social media that “a member of our library community has tested positive with COVID-19.”

The library staff will self-quarantine for the recommended 14 days, Jonczyk said.

The library had been offering curbside pickup on Tuesdays and Saturdays, but that will stop for two weeks as well. No details were available on that patient; however, the state list of positive cases shows no cases in Falls Village but one case in Salisbury, so it is believed but not confirmed that the person she means is a Salisbury resident.

No other information is available on who that Salisbury patient is but sources say it is a “younger” person and not a resident of either Noble Horizons or The Hotchkiss School.

On Tuesday morning, March 24, Kent First Selectman Jean Speck announced in an email update that there is now a confirmed case in Kent.

No information is available on the Kent case either. Speck referred questions to the Torrington Area Health District (TAHD), which is the public health authority for all the Northwest Corner towns except Sharon, which has its own health authority.

Rob Rubbo is the TAHD director of health. He said in a phone interview Tuesday morning that no specific information is available on the two new cases.

Lora Rae Anderson, who is acting as a media spokesperson for the state government on COVID-19 questions, said

Tuesday morning that as a general rule, if a COVID-19 patient is in an institution or facility of some type, such as a school or a nursing home or retirement center, then that institution will make a report to the state.

Neither Rubbo nor Anderson could confirm that the Kent and Salisbury cases are in private residences but there are no reports of these two people living in a facility or institution.

Rubbo also said that both people are not hospitalized; neither is on a ventilator.

He stressed that there are many more cases of COVID-19 than the numbers so far indicate.

“Please consider this to be widespread,” he said. “The numbers are coming up now because there is testing.” As more people get tested, he said, the numbers are likely to rise quickly.

See COVID, Page A7

Murphy answers questions, offers encouragement

By Patrick L. Sullivan

U.S. Sen. Chris Murphy (D-Conn.) urged Connecticut residents to “stay home — it’s the only way to stop the spread” of COVID-19. Murphy held a telephone town hall on his Senate website on Friday evening, March 20.

Murphy opened with some general remarks and then took questions by phone. The entire broadcast took about 45 minutes.

Murphy said the Democrats in the Senate are looking at an emergency bill that provides direct cash payments of \$2,000 per individual (including children). He said he does not think similar proposals from

the Trump administration and the Republican majority in the Senate go far enough.

“We have to go big.” He also advocated for emergency grants to small businesses hit hard by widespread shutdowns. “We’ve got to do this fast.”

Murphy warned that criminals are already calling people pretending to be federal officials and asking for personal financial information in order to process relief payments.

“Nobody from the federal government is going to call you,” said Murphy. He asked people to be wary and to report any such calls to his office (call 860-

See MURPHY, Page A7



PHOTO BY ELVIA GIGNOUX

Life goes on, beautifully

In the midst of the fears caused by COVID-19, life continues on. Baby lambs are now cavorting at area farms, such as these two beauties at Weatogue Farm in Salisbury.

Resilience seen in New England’s habitats and skies

NATURE'S NOTEBOOK

This week’s Nature’s Notebook was compiled from contributions from several nature experts. Look for a report on the return of waterfowl, from Sharon Audubon, in our issue of April 2.

Great Mountain Forest

Jody Bronson, forest manager for the Great Mountain Forest in Norfolk and Falls Village says:

I guess it’s my nature not to panic; maybe it’s the way I was brought up or the fact that I’m a forester. Change in the forest can take a long time.

The weather patterns this year have been a little strange but the forests in this part of Connecticut have seen it before. The buzz word in the forestry world now is resilience. We live in an area that has proven resilience. Our

area of the state was completely clear-cut to make charcoal for the iron industry in the 1800s but the forest grew back.

The trees in our backyards have seen wet years, dry years, windstorms, ice storms and freezing cold temperatures. Somehow they just keep plugging along.

True New Englanders never panic. Maybe we learned it from the trees.

The stars and planets

Roger Liddell of Sharon shared An Astronomy News

Flash: The sky, at least, is not falling — and that’s a welcome contrast to everything else!

In fact, the planets have maintained their proper, leisurely paths through the skies, entirely unruffled by our travails. Perhaps we can take a measure of comfort from this.

All five of the naked eye planets — excluding Uranus and Neptune — can be observed right now, a somewhat unusual but not rare situation.

It is, however, a real opportunity to recognize them: Building on this one occasion, you could learn to follow the four major planets through the skies for the rest of your lives. No kidding!

The planets don’t just wander randomly out there, choosing to appear wherever celestial

winds blow them. They follow a narrow path across the sky at all times — and, very importantly, they may spend months or even years moving through the same part of the sky.

Without undue effort, you’ll find it surprisingly easy to recognize which is which. It’s like checking in with old friends. Why not start the process now? The easiest is Venus. As discussed in previous Nature’s Notebook articles, it’s been putting on a spectacular evening show for months.

By far the brightest planet, Venus reached its most easterly distance from the sun on March 24. It will brighten for a month as it slowly descends toward the

See NOTEBOOK, Page A9



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letters from you - in response to our request for feedback!

Cover high school and prep school sports. You do a poor job of that now.



I read the police blotter, entertainment, ad/articles (in that order). I think the L-J is great, + an important asset to the area. I'd pay more for a subscription or individual issue./ Cornwall

It would be great to get more serious coverage of regional and town issues. An online edition would be fabulous. I read all other papers that way./ Wassaic

I appreciate all you do. / Salisbury

Very important for my feeling of belonging to the community - shows vibrancy./ Lakeville



Each town should have its own page, with all news pertinent to that town./ Sharon

arts esp books by locals/ norfolk

Thank you for your service for all these years./ Sharon



In The Journal this week

FALLS VILLAGE.....	A3	OPINION.....	A6
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SHARON.....	A4	COMPASS.....	A8
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NORTH CANAAN.....	A5		

Three-day forecast

Friday..... Rain, high 55°/low 37°
 Saturday..... Cloudy, 53°/40°
 Sunday..... Cloudy, 53°/37°

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.

DUI

On March 12 at approximately 11:30 p.m. Susan Wright, 61, of Sharon was charged with operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol or drugs, failure to renew registration and making an improper turn after her 2010 Ford Fusion collided with approximately 20 feet of guardrail on Sharon Road in Salisbury. She was scheduled to appear in Torrington Superior Court on March 13.

Operating without a license

On March 14 at approximately 10 a.m. on High Street in North Canaan a 2004 Nissan Frontier driven by John Charles McKay, 53, of North Canaan attempted to continue driving with a flat tire. The Nissan lost control and exited the roadway. McKay was found at fault and issued an infraction for operating a motor vehicle without a license.

Evaded vehicular crash

On March 16 at approximately 1:30 p.m. Troop B responded to the report of an evaded vehicular accident that had damaged approximately 120 feet of wire rope guardrail on Salisbury Road in North Canaan. The Connecticut registration plate was found and the case remains under investigation.

Breach of peace

On March 17 at approximately 6 a.m. Troop B responded to a report of an active disturbance at a business on Main Street in North Canaan between an individual and an employee. Shannon Sinco, 45, of Sheffield, Mass., was charged with breach of peace in the second degree. She was scheduled to appear in Torrington Superior Court on April 7.

The Lakeville Journal will published the outcome of police charges. Contact us by mail at P.O. Box 1688, Lakeville, CT 06039, Attn: Police Blotter, or send an email, with "police blotter" in the subject line, to cynthia@lakevillejournal.com.

Free culture during the quarantine

By Cynthia Hochswender

Perhaps you're doing the right thing and trying to stay inside. Perhaps you're bored. Perhaps you've also just lost a bunch of money from the immolation of the stock market and you no longer feel like spending hundreds of dollars each month on subscriptions to streaming services. Here's some free stuff.

Our Tri-corner region libraries are all closed for the duration but most are sending out emails and posting information on their websites about programs that are available "virtually."

If you're new to the area and haven't yet signed up for a library card, some of the libraries will let you sign up online — notably, the Cornwall Library. Go to the website at www.cornwalllibrary.org; they can email your library membership number to you or send it by the postal service. Or you can call the library at 860-672-6874. Don't get frustrated if you don't get through; it's possible your library is closed. At the Scoville Memorial Library in Salisbury, sign up online at www.scovillelibrary.org; or call the library at 860-435-2838 between 2 and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday to get your card number; again, don't be upset if no one answers the phone.

The Hotchkiss Library of Sharon says new patrons should call 860-364-5041 or go online to www.hotchkisslibrary.org. Leave a message or send an email with name, mailing address and preferred phone number. The library will call or email with a barcode that allows access to the digital library.

Correction

A photo in the March 12 Lakeville Journal incorrectly identified the woman speaking to Kevin O'Connell at a show of art work at Geer Village. The woman is Gail O'Connor of Still River Studio and Art Gallery of Winsted.

Don't Miss This Week's Special Inserts! Sales and more!
 Check them out inside.
 • CVS
 • Ocean State Job Lot

You're new around here, aren't you?

So far everyone seems to be getting along pretty well, but the grumbling is already beginning as people who live here full time are coming up against a large and rapid influx of part-time residents seeking refuge at their homes here, as well as renters who might or might not be familiar with the Northwest Corner and its traditions.

This helpful guide can perhaps help us all live together happily for what might turn into several months of quarantine.

Government

In case you're truly new here, we are in Litchfield County in a region known as the Northwest Corner of Connecticut. With nearby New York and Massachusetts we are known as the Tri-state region.

The Lakeville Journal covers the six towns of the shared Region One School District, which has six elementary schools and one high school, all of which are closed for now. To learn about how students here are coping and learning, look for stories on our town pages and on our website at www.tricornernews.com.

The six towns that we cover are the six towns of the school district: Canaan (which is mostly known as Falls Village; we can explain that another time but not now), Cornwall, Kent, North Canaan (which is mostly known as Canaan; we'll explain that another time), Salisbury and Sharon.

Salisbury has five villages: Lakeville, Salisbury, Amesville, Lime Rock and Taconic. Cornwall is made up of Cornwall Village, Cornwall Bridge (which refers to the concrete bridge on Route 4) and West Cornwall (which you enter via the historic and scenic Covered Bridge).

Each town has its own town hall. The town halls are closed to the public for now, but they all have websites so it's very helpful to go online and find out some essentials about your town and what COVID-19 precautions each is taking.

Emergency services

Almost without exception, the emergency services workers in your town are volunteers. They are very happy to help in an emergency and if you think there might be a fire starting in your house or a medical emergency, they would much rather have you call 911 and summon them sooner rather than later, before things get worse.

On the other hand, call responsibly: These people are getting out of bed or leaving their jobs or children to come to your aid.

Don't be shocked when you call or go by the firehouse or ambulance garage and no one is there; they are at home, with their emergency pagers on.

Also, at this moment, there

COVID NOTEBOOK
 CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

are new protocols they have to follow to be sure that everyone stays safe from COVID-19 infection. Things might take a little longer than usual.

Please be patient, kind and respectful and if they've helped you out, please remember to make a donation. They all get some town funding but they mostly pay their own costs through fundraising. You need their help. They need your help.

Police

Thirteen towns in the Northwest Corner of Connecticut are served by the Connecticut State Police at Troop B in North Canaan. Five of the six Lakeville Journal towns are in Troop B; Kent is served by Troop L.

The barracks in North Canaan remains open for now, although in theory the police stations are not supposed to be open to the public during the quarantine; but if you're in danger and need a refuge, at least for now you can still go to the barracks on Route 7, and you can of course call 911.

The individual towns do not have their own police forces, although three towns (Kent, North Canaan and Salisbury) has a resident state trooper who is dedicated to their town on a part-time basis.

Trash

Trash disposal is a big complicated problem in Connecticut. Each town has its own transfer station; trash is brought there and transferred to the state-owned trash-to-energy plant in Hartford. Towns pay to dispose of bulk garbage by the pound; for that reason it's important to recycle as you're instructed to do at your town transfer station; and whenever possible to remove wet, heavy food garbage and put it in your compost.

In most towns, you must buy a transfer station sticker, even if a hauler takes your trash. Check your town's website for details.

The streets and roads

Many people are coping with the quarantine by taking long walks or cycling trips on the area's scenic country roads.

It's important to remember that the roads are only there to carry vehicles, such as trucks and cars and ambulances. While bicycles and pedestrians are all welcome to use the roads, keep in mind that you need to keep the centers of the roads open for vehicles. Don't walk four abreast with a dog and a baby stroller; it's dangerous. Cars and trucks often come very quickly around the curves on these narrow back roads. And please, if a vehicle

comes along a road, you must move to get out of the way.

Conversely, motorists need to be sensitive to the fact that newcomers to the area are out walking and biking on the roads. Travel at the speed limit. And remember it's the law in our state that you must leave 3 feet of space when you pass a cyclist on the road. To learn more about how cyclists, pedestrians and motorists can co-exist on the roads, go to www.portal.ct.gov/DOT/Commissions/Share-the-Road-CT/Share-the-Road-CT.

Grocery stores

The newcomers to the area are being blamed for the grocery hoarding even though full-time residents are probably just as much to blame.

Locals are unhappy that weekend residents seem to be coming to grocery stores on Friday and cleaning out the shelves.

They're also concerned that people are buying in bulk at stores that are not traditionally "large lot" stores.

Everyone will eventually get their pantries stocked and things will calm down.

In the meantime, remember

that many local restaurants have refrigerators full of fresh meat and produce and they would love to cook it for you or make a "cook it yourself" kit; buying from your favorite restaurant will help ensure that it will survive the quarantine.

Keep calm and carry on

The "keep calm" meme that we're all sick of by now does seem to apply to our lives now. Keep calm. Carry on.

Don't hoard groceries. Support local businesses that are trying to stay open to serve you; buy gift certificates.

Be kind. Be respectful. If you're new to the area, remember that the people who live here full time are real humans with real lives, not background players in a sitcom television show.

And as Cornwall First Selectman Gordon Ridgway said in a letter to residents of his town, this is a time when it's best not to go back and forth between two residences, potentially bringing the coronavirus with you.

"If people have two houses, please decide to stay put in one and not commute back and forth."

Domestic abuse support at WSS

SHARON — The annual Trade Secrets Rare Plant and Garden Antiques Sale and Garden Tour has been canceled for this year, because of concerns about the spread of COVID-19.

Trade Secrets, originally scheduled for May 16 and 17, is a fundraiser for Women's Support Services (WSS), a regional domestic abuse resource for the region that is based in Sharon.

Counseling and aid for victims of domestic abuse will continue to be available during the virus quarantine period.

"The mission of Women's Support Services is more needed than ever," said Betsey Mauro, executive director of WSS, "especially as social dis-

tancing increases relationship violence with people spending more time in their homes together. We are here 24/7, regardless of COVID-19. With your help and support, we will continue to be here for those in need."

The organization is turning its focus to planning Trade Secrets 2021 and planning an online silent auction for later this spring. For now, though, Mauro says the focus is on the community and offering support through these unprecedented times.

For support, advocacy, referrals of emergency shelter and more, the 24-hour hotline is open at 860-364-1900. For more information, email Kelly Rybczyk at info@wssdv.org or call 860-364-1080.

Realtor® at Large



The coronavirus has turned the world upside down, for real estate, the effects are as follows; per the Governor of CT, as of Monday evening, all non essential activities are stopping, which includes real estate showings. This will affect people looking to both rent and/or purchase. Recently there has been a large demand for short term rentals and the thought is that a second wave of buyers will follow in order to have a home in the country. With this current uncertainty, many of the weekend homes are at full occupancy, which is unusual for this time of year. The real estate business will have to adjust to this new reality. We are now working from home and are moving toward being virtual and paperless. The key right now is to remain safe with our families and by doing so, hopefully flatten the curve of infections. If you have questions on this rapidly changing environment, happy to discuss.

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SPEAKERS POSTPONED To A Later Date TBD

Jerry Saltz
 Senior Art Critic for New York Magazine
 Originally scheduled for Friday, April 3, 2020

Kurt Andersen
 Host of NPR's Studio 360
 Originally scheduled for Friday, May 15, 2020

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Falls Village/Salisbury Salisbury keeps calm and carries on

Public health emergency declared in Falls Village

By Patrick L. Sullivan

FALLS VILLAGE — First Selectman Henry Todd said on Monday morning, March 23, that he has declared a public health emergency for the town.

Todd said the declaration means that “if we have to spend a whole load of money” the federal government will subsequently reimburse the town for “most of it.”

Many if not most towns in the Northwest Corner have issued such declarations, he added.

Todd praised Gov. Ned Lamont’s actions during the COVID-19 crisis. “I think he’s doing an excellent job, especially in keeping everybody well-informed.”

The governor’s recent executive order relaxing the rules and procedures on town budget

procedures has been a big help, Todd said. “It allows us to have a lot more flexibility in decision-making, and to get them done in time.”

Todd said budget meetings and other critical activities will be hosted on Zoom, an online meeting service.

Working out the logistics of Zoom meetings was on his agenda for Monday afternoon.

Todd said the instructions from Zoom are pretty straightforward, but some people would require assistance getting it set up.

He urged residents to regularly check the town website for information, at www.canaan-fallsvillage.org. For updates on the governor’s executive orders and other COVID-19 information, go to www.portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus.

By Patrick L. Sullivan

SALISBURY — Stephanie Pellegrino at the Petpourri pet supply shop in Lakeville said on Thursday, March 19, that business had been brisk that week, as residents hunkered down for the COVID-19 crisis.

The big question for Petpourri is resupply. Pellegrino said the shipment from one of the store’s two major suppliers was due the next day, but had been postponed until Saturday, March 21.

The store has reduced its hours in the afternoon, closing at 3 p.m. instead of 5:30 p.m. Opening was still at 9 a.m.

To limit exposure, the store is only allowing one customer in at a time.

Customers are encouraged to call ahead. And they are.

“The phone’s been ringing off the hook,” she said.

Pellegrino noted that a lot of weekend residents have opened their houses earlier than normal, arriving at the tail end of winter and beginning of spring rather than at Memorial Day, which has

contributed to the depletion of inventory.

She said if everyone bought their normal supply there would be enough to go around.

On Friday afternoon, after being summoned by a knock at the door, Pellegrino stepped outside, pulling on her sanitary gloves, for a photo.

She was upbeat. “We’ll get through this.”

Note: Pellegrino announced Sunday, March 22, via Facebook that as of Monday, March 23, the store will not allow any customers in the shop and will instead accept telephone orders for curbside pickup only. The phone number is 860-435-8833.

At the Green Cafe, the restaurant side of the Studio Lakeville fitness center, Leslie Allmand-Eckstein was in the kitchen with her son.

With the gym shut down for the time being, and the cafe restricted to takeout orders and deliveries, Allmand-Eckstein has still been busy.

“People have been supporting us,” not just for food orders but in



PHOTO BY PATRICK L. SULLIVAN

Stephanie Pellegrino will deliver pet supplies to customers in their cars at curbside, with safety gloves on (of course).

buying gift certificates for meals or massages, renewing their monthly gym memberships, or buying classes with no clear idea of when they will occur.

“I had three re-ups yesterday,” she said, referring to gym memberships. “People feel it’s the right thing to do to help us stay open.”

Note: On Sunday afternoon, March 22, Allmand-Eckstein announced via Facebook that the Green Cafe was closing for

at least a week “to clean again and sanitize.”

At LaBonne’s market on Friday afternoon, there were bare shelves where the toilet paper used to be, and the selection in the ice cream and frozen foods cases was on the sparse side.

But the rest of the store was well-stocked, and employees were busy in the aisles putting in new inventory.

The prevailing mood was cheerful.

FV: business is slower

By Patrick L. Sullivan

FALLS VILLAGE — Judy Jacobs at Jacobs Garage reported on Friday, March 20, that there has been “a definite drop-off” in business as the state settles into emergency mode in response to COVID-19.

The garage is offering a pick-up service for people who need their cars repaired or serviced — especially elderly people who are reluctant to venture from home.

And the garage is taking precautions. “Every time we get in or out of a car, we wipe it down.”

Jacobs said people are holding off on everything other than essential repairs.

Luckily the garage has the job of getting the buses of The Hotchkiss School in Lakeville ready for state inspection, so for now they are busy.

Jacobs said the garage’s suppliers are still operating, although it might take a little longer for delivery of parts.

“But they may have some real issues coming up.”

For now, business continues.



PHOTO BY ALEXANDER WILBURN

Toymaker’s Cafe

“We’re muddling through it.”

Farther up Main Street at Toymaker’s Cafe, business has been slow.

The restaurant was open for take-out from Friday, March 20, through Sunday, March 22. On Friday morning owner Greg Bidou said business was “very slow.”

“If it doesn’t pick up we’ll have to close completely. People aren’t going out, especially for breakfast and lunch.”

Bidou said the cafe had a similar experience on Saturday and Sunday, March 14 and 15. “We covered our costs, basically.”

By Patrick L. Sullivan

SALISBURY — As of Friday, March 20, Salisbury Town Hall is closed to the public, in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

It had been open to the public on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays but First Selectman Curtis Rand decided to close the building completely, except for the foyer in front.

The foyer is open, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Residents will have access in the foyer to fill out most permit forms (follow the instructions carefully). The inner doors to Town Hall will remain closed and residents who need assistance from staff may call into the building using the phone in the foyer.

Rand said Monday morning, March 23, that Town Hall has been very quiet. One person had

submitted a burn permit.

Looking ahead, public meetings concerning the municipal and school budgets will be held remotely on Zoom, starting with the Board of Finance on Tuesday, March 24.

Rand said Gov. Ned Lamont’s executive order relaxing the rules and procedures on public meetings means that there will likely be no public hearing and town budget meeting (although this could change, depending on what the finance board decides to do Tuesday night). For the governor’s executive orders and other COVID-19 updates, go to www.portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus.

The budget proposals will be posted on the town’s website (www.salisburyct.us) and public comment accepted.

Rand is considering declaring a state of emergency, similar to other towns in the Northwest Corner.

He said he’s done so before, but only for weather-related situations such as washed-out gravel roads.

“If I can help out our businesses by declaring a state of emergency then I will.”

Rand is also considering lowering or waiving transfer station fees for businesses.

Rand gave “a big shout-out” to the employees at LaBonne’s market, and to all the emergency and health workers.

“They’re on the front lines,” he said. He added that many of the volunteers on the Salisbury ambulance squad are older people and as such at risk themselves, and praised them for being “selfless.”



PHOTO BY PATRICK L. SULLIVAN

First Selectman Curtis Rand

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LOCAL ORAL HISTORY
Got downtime? Listen to some of 354 interviews with people who have worked for or contributed to our town. This project started in 1981 and continues today. Go to our website and click “The Salisbury Oral History Project” under Helpful Links.

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Restore spirits with a visit to our Children’s Garden. Read a book on one of our sun-warmed cedar benches. Our Wi-Fi requires no password and can be accessed from anywhere near the exterior of the building.

GET THE LATEST INFO
Go to our website www.scovillelibrary.org for links to reliable information sources on COVID19, listed under the Helpful Links menu. We are doing our best to provide services to help you and your family stay safe during this challenging time.

What a great idea.

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Going strong at Gifford market and café

By NF Ambery

KENT and SHARON — J.P. Gifford Market & Catering Company co-owner Mike Moriarty said, "We have actually noticed an increase in sales in the past three to four days."

And that's in spite of the fact that the two Gifford locations — in Sharon and Kent — are currently open for takeout only due to recent rules aimed to curtail the spread of COVID-19.

J.P. Gifford's Sharon Café at 16 West Main St. now uses a take-out window. The tables at the Kent store, at 12 North Main, have been cleared away so the store is set up for take-out only (one of the tables is now covered with stacks of toilet paper that are available to customers).

"We are reviewing possible curbside service," Moriarty said of the Kent store in a telephone interview on March 19. "We are also pondering delivery."

Countering an assumption that the store would experience a loss of business due to the shutdown of the three Kent boarding schools, Moriarty said, "There are actually a number of students still at the schools. And there are faculty and administrators who are customers."

Both the Sharon and Kent stores' hours remain the same and, in addition to selling their signature gourmet sandwiches, all-day breakfasts and soups,

the Kent store is getting back to carrying groceries, such as paper products, frozen soups and cheese.

"We are getting a lot more 'grab-and-go,'" Moriarty said. "Eighty to 85% of our business is already takeout, so there is no change to the menu."

Moriarty runs the business with co-owner and chef James Neunzig. Neunzig mans the Kent store while Moriarty is mostly in Sharon. The business has no plans for layoffs.

"We have a tight staff, so there is no need to take those steps in the foreseeable future," Moriarty said.

He said the Kent store has 10 employees; Sharon has five employees that are split 50/50 full-time and part-time.

"March is usually our slowest month so we already prepare for this with modified hours," he said, adding that, "March has a drop-off [in sales] but it is not unmanageable."

During these days of self-containment, Moriarty noted that J.P. Gifford's Kent store will celebrate its 10th anniversary (which was March 20) sometime in the summer. He said right now the store exhibits a banner to that effect.

"We have a long-term lease," he said. "Everyone is healthy. We're keeping our heads down and doing what we need to do."

J.P. Gifford's two stores' hours remain the following: The hours



PHOTO SUBMITTED

The J.P. Gifford Market & Catering Company will celebrate its 10th anniversary this summer. So far, business is still good at the Kent and Sharon locations for the store.

at the Kent Market (860-592-0200 and market@jpgifford.com) are Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Sunday, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The hours at the Sharon Café (860-238-3080 and sharoncafe@jpgifford.com) are Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Saturday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; and Sunday, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

It's like 'Good Weather Season' at Kent Wine & Spirit

By Cynthia Hochswender

KENT — Shoppers were buying beer and wine by the case at Kent Wine & Spirit last Friday, March 20. It wasn't really the weekend yet but, "it's the weekend," said store owner Ira Smith, adding with his usual twinkly smile, "We've all lost track of what day it is."

And what season it is. He doesn't see panic in his customers, he said, and he wouldn't say there is a rush of people coming in and buying out his entire supply of beer, wine and spirits.

But there is a steady demand, that feels more like late spring/early summer, rather than the end of March.

"This is like Good Weather Season," he said.

Most of his shoppers seem cautiously optimistic, with an emphasis on cautious, he said.

Updates and uplift from Kent on COVID-19

By Cynthia Hochswender

KENT — First Selectman Jean Speck continues to update town residents by email and with announcements on the town's website at www.townofkentct.org.

In addition to the more grim facts associated with town government responses to COVID-19, Speck has also been posting uplifting updates.

In one email, she noted that there are song playlists online that can be used for people who are tired of washing their hands to "Happy Birthday" twice (for a variation on finding music to go with handwashing, see this week's Compass arts and entertainment section on Page A8).

She also announced that town

residents and churches are encouraged to ring all bells of any shape and size between 8 and 8:02 p.m., "as a symbol of the community of our citizens and a reminder to all that although the community may be physically separated our citizens remain united in their support for one another and dedicated to overcoming the present peril."

Essential information is also on the website, of course. The town was one of the first in the region to declare a state of emergency; transfer station protocols have changed (only household garbage and single stream recycling can be brought in until April 5).

To keep up to date, go to the town's website, and also sign up for regular email notifications.

Sharon Pharmacy says, 'It's going to be OK'

By Leila Hawken

SHARON — Although Sharon Pharmacy is seeing COVID-19 as an unprecedented event, owner Joe Heacox is confident that he and his staff are well up to the challenge.

Heacox and his family bought the pharmacy in 1961 and have operated it ever since, so his perspective is long. The pharmacy is owned and run by several members of the family.

"I feel very fortunate to have this group of people to work with," Heacox said in a conversation on Friday, March 20. He paused to thank his employees, who have demonstrated the best attitudes, pulling together with dedication.

He added a note of reassurance to area residents.

"It's going to be OK in the long run," he said. "And maybe we'll learn something from the experience."

The pharmacy is working daily to order and get delivery



PHOTO BY LEILA HAWKEN

Joe Heacox

of supplies. Heacox said that the supply of Purell hand sanitizer ran out three or four weeks ago. He reminds people to wash their hands with soap and water frequently, which is considered to be even more effective than using hand sanitizer.

Sharon Pharmacy is now offering curbside pickups; order in advance by calling 860-364-5272 and pick up purchases at the door.

Keeping Sharon calm via COVID updates

By Leila Hawken

SHARON — First Selectman Brent Colley is posting updates on the town website every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, to keep residents informed of what's being done in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In an interview on Monday morning, March 23, Colley said he is committed to being present and available to people, and to answering questions and concerns.

"It helps to keep people informed and calm," he said.

The response to COVID-19 has been "really well coordinated," Colley said of the town's efforts as a whole. He cited the work of Miriam Jones, social services director, saying that she has been great at helping people, and that she is coordinating a group of volunteers. Anyone who would like to help is encouraged to call Town Hall; contact information is on the website at www.sharonct.org.


Town Hall remains closed to visitors, although the offices are open on their regular schedules. There are occasional exceptions to allow for a visit, however.

Colley said that instead of coming to Town Hall, residents may phone, email or text with concerns or suggestions. They may request an appointment using those means of contact.

Town Hall employees continue to clean and sanitize all surfaces.

All town boards and committees are urged to postpone or cancel meetings, schedule conference calls or teleconference until further notice, Colley said.

The transfer station remains open; the Swap Shop remains closed, Colley added.



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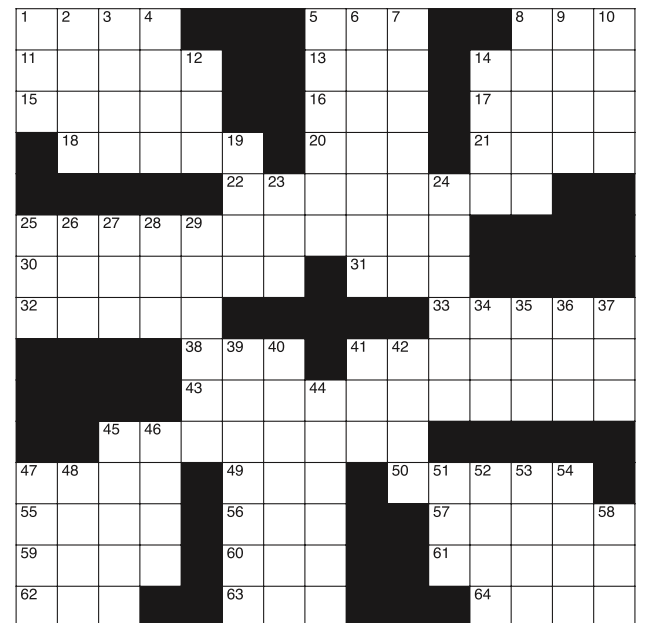
Brain Teasers

CLUES ACROSS

1. As soon as possible
5. Gateway (Arabic)
8. Doctors' group
11. Madder genus of plants
13. A team's best pitcher
14. Ancient Greek sophist
15. Go up
16. Neither
17. Bolivian river
18. Manila hemp
20. Comedienne Gasteyer
21. British School
22. Human reproductive organs
25. Surrenders
30. Dog with long, silky coat and drooping ears
31. Sun up in New York
32. Lead alloy
33. Eastern Asian plant
38. Rapid deployment force (abbr.)
41. Japanese warrior
43. Festivity
45. Interruptions
47. Nonsense (slang)
49. Data mining methodology (abbr.)
50. Calvary sword
55. French river
56. Global business conference (abbr.)
57. Afflicted
59. Con man's game
60. No (Scottish)
61. Jewish spiritual leader
62. Fish
63. Camera term (abbr.)
64. Impudence

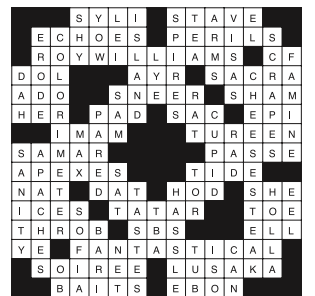
CLUES DOWN

1. A continuous portion of a circle
2. Genus of seabirds
3. Infant's dining accessory
4. Native Americans from Arizona
5. Popular fruit
6. Poisonous plant
7. Scolded
8. Assists
9. Hand (Spanish)
10. Amazon product identifying system (abbr.)
12. Basics
14. Cain and —
19. Malaria
23. Indicates particular shape
24. Respiratory disease
25. Central Standard Time
26. Imitate
27. Golf score
28. A place to lay your head

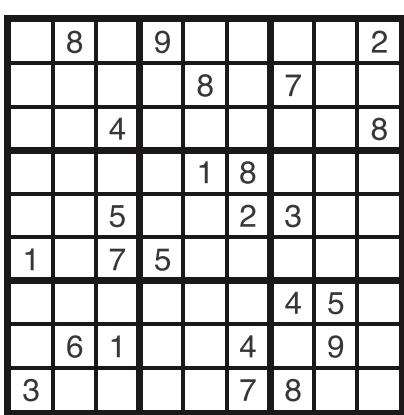


29. Three cards of the same suit
34. Not in
35. Human gene
36. Ancient Chinese philosophic concept
37. French river
39. Thinks up
40. Type of geological deposit
41. Helps little firms
42. Area units
44. A device to remove
45. Secret political clique
46. Polite interruption sound
47. Foundation
48. Clare Boothe __, American writer
51. Swiss river
52. Prejudice
53. Actor Idris
54. Resistance fighters
58. Speak disrespectfully of

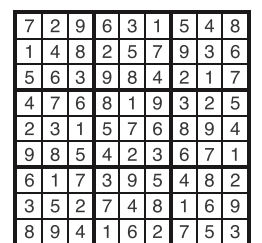
March 19 Solution



Sudoku



March 19 Solution



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Cornwall/North Canaan

New principal for Cornwall Consolidated

By Cynthia Hochswender

CORNWALL — The Board of Education announced on Monday, March 23, that it has hired a new principal to replace Michael Croft, who left the school last summer to take a position at another school.

Filling in as interim this year was Pat Corvello, a retired principal from Southington, Conn.

After several weeks of interviews, the board selected Mary Kay Ravenola. She will come to the school on Aug. 1.

Ravenola has 30 years experience in Massachusetts and Connecticut as an educator and is currently the principal at John F. Kennedy Intermediate School in Windsor, Conn., a school for students in grades three to five. Ravenola was nominated

for Massachusetts Teacher of the Year in 1995; was awarded Windsor Locks Teacher of the Year in 2008; and was instrumental in seeing the John F. Kennedy Intermediate School become a Connecticut School of Distinction in 2017.

Cornwall Board Chair Catherine Tatge said in a statement, “we feel her qualities will fit well with our school and the Cornwall community. She is very creative and has some wonderful ideas as to how to bring the community into our school.”

Region One School District Superintendent Pam Vogel said Ravenola “has demonstrated that she is collaborative, creative and caring. She understands the close-knit community that is Cornwall and wants to become an active part of the school and the town.”

In Cornwall, budget meeting held by phone

By Leila Hawken

CORNWALL — In this new world of town halls closed by COVID-19, the Cornwall Board of Finance held a meeting by teleconference call on Thursday, March 19.

The board discussed the proposed budgets submitted by the selectmen and the Board of Education for the 2020-21 fiscal year. The fiscal year begins July 1 in normal times; Gov. Ned Lamont has decreed that budgets can be submitted a month later than normal this year.

The Cornwall finance board, however, agreed that a change to the calendar would not be necessary. Board Chairman Joseph Pryor said, “It would be good to stay with the schedule.”

The overall intent is to keep the mill rate flat for the coming year. To accomplish that, the town will need to borrow an estimated \$149,150 from the Unassigned Fund Balance.

First Selectman Gordon Ridgway said that some savings are being realized from a mild winter.

The selectmen and the Board of Education agreed to look for any additional savings and make

modifications to their proposals. “The overall increase is pretty small,” Finance Officer Barbara Herbst said of both budgets.

Pryor particularly suggested that the Board of Education examine its budget to identify savings, perhaps advance buying some of the computers slated for purchase for the coming year.

The present proposal shows a 3% increase in spending over the current year’s budget.

Annie Kosciusko, education board clerk, noted that savings are expected in electricity costs and heating oil in the current year, with fuel prices at a lower cost than in recent memory.

“It’s so much in the air, I would want to buy as much this year as we can,” she said.

The Board of Finance agreed to meet again on Thursday, April 16, to approve the proposed budgets, clearing the way for the public hearing on the budget scheduled for Friday, April 24.

Note: The mill rate determines property taxes in Connecticut towns. A mill represents \$1 in tax for every \$1,000 of assessed property value. A 15-mill tax rate would translate into a tax bill of \$1,500 for the owner of a home assessed at \$100,000.

Cornwall ‘apart together’ in COVID-19

By Leila Hawken

CORNWALL — Facing the COVID-19 challenge with confidence in the people who live in Cornwall, the Board of Selectmen heard a report on town resources in place to help residents, during their regular meeting on Tuesday, March 17.

First Selectman Gordon Ridgway communicated to residents, “We’re here. Even though we’re apart [keeping our distance one from another], we’re together as a community: apart together.”

Ridgway also issued a letter to residents on Friday, March 20, updating them on measures to combat the virus and providing information on services available.

Although Town Hall remains closed to visitors, the staff is there on the regular schedule. Residents can contact town officials by email or phone.

The town’s email notification system has jumped from around 100 pre-virus subscribers to a new total exceeding 143. Selectman Marina Kotchoubey urged

residents to sign up at www.cornwallct.org or call Town Hall to be added to the list.

Kotchoubey also suggested that businesses or organizations who have cancellation news or other updates for their activities email cwlnews@optonline.net.

“People are working hard trying to get through this together,” Ridgway said. He cautioned that COVID-19 is coming.

“Contagious people are probably nearby,” he added. “Assume that it’s here. We have to act like it’s here. Encourage people to stay put.”

The town has activated its Community Emergency Response Team. The team consists of town officials, fire and ambulance officers, emergency managers and health professionals.

In response to a request, 12 to 15 volunteers have come forward to help with making home deliveries of groceries, medications and other supplies.

“It’s never too late to volunteer,” Ridgway said. Although the food pantry is closed, volunteers will deliver supplies to

households in need. Deliveries are arranged by phoning Social Services at 860-672-2603.

“We are deepening our bench of people,” Ridgway said.

The selectmen urged residents to donate to the Food and Fuel Fund, which is being impacted by a growing need.

“The town is full,” Ridgway said, noting the full-time presence of people who are normally here part-time. With a word of welcome to all, he said that while some have generously volunteered their variety of professional talents, others can be thinking of things they could do to help.

“People we didn’t even know were here are volunteering,” Ridgway observed.

Newly implemented counseling services are in the works, Ridgway said. Counseling professionals who are sequestered in their homes are offering their help to residents. To arrange for counseling services, people can phone the Social Services department.

Jonathan Berry, the Town Hall administrative assistant, is calling residents regularly to see how they are doing or if they need anything. He reports that

the usual reply is that they are doing just fine and don’t need a thing.

The highway department is working and so is the transfer station.

“Move it” is the new motto of the transfer station, however. The intent is to move people through efficiently while maintaining distance. Ridgway said that people visiting the transfer station must curtail their usual inclination to socialize with the two-man crew.

“Residents’ actions today will determine the quality of life in Cornwall in the coming days and weeks,” Ridgway said, urging that residents not travel to COVID-19 hot spots, such as the New York City metropolitan area.

Note: The trivia night at the Cornwall Library that had been scheduled for April 11 will now be held online, tonight, March 26, from 6 to 8:15 p.m.

To be included, send an email to organizers Gary Steinkohl and Casey Cook at info@cornwallassoc.org.

Details of the competition will be sent to anyone who has emailed a request or who was signed up for the April 11 event.

For now, State Line Pizza will deliver

By Cynthia Hochswender

NORTH CANAAN — The lights are off in the dining area and bar at State Line Pizza Restaurant on Route 7, but the front entry is lit by lights and by the effervescent smiles of the wait staff, who really want you to come in and order some food.

Standing nearby is owner Chris Christodoulou, who also really wants you to come in and order some food, although he looks a bit less effervescent and a bit more deeply anxious.

It’s never easy to own a restaurant but this is a particularly uneasy time. And so the gang at State Line are keen to have you come by or call. One way that Christodoulou is able to keep the waitresses on the payroll is by having them do deliveries, to homes now instead of to tables.

“We don’t usually do delivery,” Christodoulou said, but this is a special situation. And someday when the quarantine is over, perhaps he’ll continue with delivery. He isn’t sure. So much is unknown these days.

Including his inventory. The restaurant’s suppliers are struggling to fill orders. And it’s hard

for Christodoulou to put in orders that will allow him to feed customers but not leave him with a lot of unused food in the coolers.

So far, he said, “people are mostly ordering pizzas but we are trying to still offer the full menu,” which has salads, soups, sandwiches, gyros, grinders (hot and cold) and classic Italian dishes, from pastas to chicken dishes, and a few seafood choices.

The menu is online at www.statelinepizzeria.com/Menus or call 860-824-1554.

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NC copes with COVID-19

By Leila Hawken

NORTH CANAAN — Town Hall remains closed as officials continue to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, but information is posted periodically on the town’s website at www.northcanaan.org.

Commenting on Monday, March 23, First Selectman Charlie Perotti said, “We’re doing OK. There are no major issues.” He said that many non-essential businesses including the town’s many antique and vintage shops are shut down, but services such as plumbers, electricians, landscapers whose work is outdoors, and others remain available.

Perotti said that he relies on regular state government updates as a guide to managing the coronavirus; updates from Gov. Ned Lamont can be found at www.portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus.

Town offices remain open on their regular schedule. Residents may contact the offices with questions, concerns or suggestions by phone or email. Forms and applications can be accessed on the town website at www.northcanaan.org. All contact information can be found on the website or by calling 860-824-7313.

For the safety of Town Hall staff, procedures are in place to sanitize all surfaces throughout the building.

The transfer station remains open for regular hours but the Swap Table is not operating, Perotti said.

The Douglas Library is staffed to receive phone calls and emails on Monday, Wednesday and Friday between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. The email is douglaslibrary@comcast.net or the phone is 860-824-7863. Curbside service

is available. Patrons can access the library catalog at www.douglaslibrarycanaan.org.



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EDITORIAL

An abnormally challenging time of a public health crisis

When we Americans make it through the COVID-19 pandemic as a viable group, how do we want to remember the time it overtook our nation and our planet, and the way we responded to it? Will we think about how we had to pull back from those around us and bond with our families? Or maybe we will remember the leadership that steered our towns, states and the country in one direction or another.

It would be welcome to be able to consider our actions as a nation and a region to be thoughtful, humane and supportive of each other. As the federal government continues to act as if virus testing and protective gear for medical workers is widely available, those medical professionals who are working to protect their neighbors day by day see a different world to this point. Maybe this will change in the next couple of weeks, but the spread of the virus while the federal government decides what it will do to help its constituents has proven debilitating to those at the front lines, both as patients and health care workers.

The actions of state and local governments have been more direct and helpful. That should not be surprising, as these representatives actually live with and see their constituents on a regular basis. They live among us, and they and their families will be directly affected by the actions they take or do not take. It all becomes so personal, rather than theoretical.

But to their credit, it must be said that Connecticut's senators and U.S. House representatives are responding with reason. Sen. Chris Murphy made it clear he believes that leaders in Washington are concentrating too much on the economic stimulus approach and too little on containing the spread of the virus. That should indeed be the government's priority if it is to serve its people responsibly.

Could this rapidly spreading virus be a way for nature to curb the contempt humans have shown for the health of the planet? Does that seem too far-fetched, too based in sci fi or Stephen King plots (see his novel, "The Stand")? The result of the forced economic halt has been an immediate improvement in the environment worldwide. While it doesn't seem it can or should last, it does seem that we as humans can learn something very meaningful from this crisis.

In the meantime, let's all be aware of our neighbors and their health and challenges. If you remain healthy and mobile and see a way to help older people in your sphere who are not either, find a way to do that. Keep track of what your community leaders are asking of you and those around you, and be considerate and mindful of how you can be part of the solution to this public health crisis. Thank a medical worker, a supermarket cashier and yes, even a public servant who is doing what should be done to help others through this extremely difficult time. Support your local businesses as much as possible. They are trying to make it through some impossible challenges.

And try to be well. If we all behave as if we believe we all already have the coronavirus, and keep distance, stay away from crowds, sanitize and be very careful with every action we take, we just may make it through this diminished but unified in facing it as a nation, because, as our leaders say, we are all in this together.

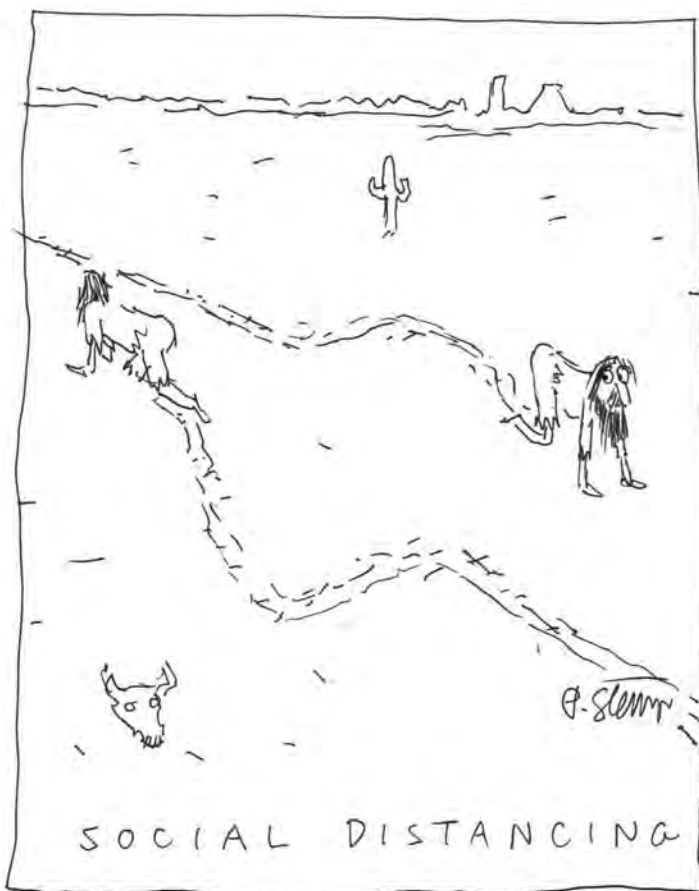


PHOTO BY LANS CHRISTENSEN

Loving the best of nature at Kent Falls

TURNING BACK

THE PAGES

NORMA GALAISE

100 years ago — March 1920

A meeting was held in Robert's Banquet Hall Monday evening for a discussion of the advisability of adopting the Day-light Saving Plan in Lakeville and vicinity.

Dr. D.D. Reidy, assisted by his brother, Dr. Maurice Reidy, and Dr. E.R. Kelsey, successfully performed another Caesarean operation Saturday night, this time at the Litchfield County Hospital, when a daughter was born to Mrs. Fred Shields of Norfolk. Both mother and infant are reported as doing well.

The blue birds and robins have arrived, and they are mighty welcome visitors.

Counterfeit federal reserve notes of the denomination of \$5 have made their appearance. The notes are of the series of 1912 and bear the number B64198087A, 2B, and are not successful prints either in color or impression.

50 years ago — March 1970

The U.S. Mail strike has caused the cancellation of the Spring Fashion Show scheduled for April 8 by Lorraine Spence, Clothes of Distinction on the Green in Litchfield. The show, which was to benefit the Little Guild of St. Francis, was to be held at the Sharon Congregational Church meeting rooms.

A ripple of humor stirred Salisbury's 18th Circuit Court last Thursday when Kenneth Rosseter of Lakeville blamed his predicament on a capricious snow storm and six pesky pigs. In court to answer a charge of feeding raw garbage to swine, Mr. Rosseter said he has sold all but six of his herd of pigs and did not intentionally feed garbage to the remaining six. Instead, he said that they had escaped from their pen this winter when heavy snows broke down their fence and got "into where they weren't supposed to be."

The Lakeville Hose Co. was called to Esther's Package Store Saturday evening just at dusk to extinguish a chimney fire. Mrs. Rebillard had an open fire burning in the shop fireplace and was in her living room next door when she smelled smoke. The firemen were able to prevent the fire from spreading.

25 years ago — March 1995

Guests had to be evacuated from the White Hart Inn early last Sunday morning after a valve was inadvertently left open, causing an explosion in the kitchen. Approximately 75 firemen from Lakeville, Sharon and Millerton hurried to the scene, getting it under control in about 15 minutes, according to Lakeville Hose Co. Chief Donald Reid.

All items are taken from Lakeville Journals from that time period, and are reproduced here as they were published then.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Bells of St. Mary's Church are ringing!

The Church Bell at St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church, part of St. Martin of Tours Parish, will ring daily for the Angelus at noon and 6 p.m.

We invite our local churches to join in whatever manner possible to express this spirit of solidarity for the whole community. It is important to know

that this has always been an area that cares about its neighbors; those in Salisbury and those nearby.

Stay healthy; know you are not alone and God Bless!

Elyse Harney

Salisbury

Littering: think about Mother Earth first

I feel grateful to live in such a beautiful area. I work hard for what I have and try to keep my house and yard looking nice — I enjoy that.

What I don't enjoy is picking up trash that people have discarded out of their car window — mostly beer bottles and cans and potato chip bags. I implore those people to think about their neighbors next time they get the urge, but if you don't care about me, you should at least care about

your Mother Earth.

I'm not usually this diplomatic when it comes to people who arbitrarily just do the wrong thing, but I knew the paper wouldn't print it otherwise and thought it important to get the message out.

Peace.

Dawn Sherban

West Cornwall

New England's first Socialist mayor was Jasper, not Bernie

Nearly 50 years before a Brooklyn boy named Bernie Sanders became the Socialist mayor of Burlington, Vt., the larger city of Bridgeport, Conn., elected native son Jasper McLevy as New England's first Socialist mayor. It was a remarkable achievement in a very conservative state at a time when Socialists were considered just slightly to the right of bomb-throwing anarchists.

And that wasn't all. New England's first Socialist mayor got himself reelected every two years for the next 24 years from 1933 to 1957. Sanders, who ran as an independent, but called himself a Socialist, was mayor for four, two-year terms in the 1980s.

Connecticut had been firmly Republican since 1856 when it voted for James Fremont, the new party's first presidential candidate. From then on, through the Civil War, Reconstruction, the Gilded Age and beyond, Connecticut voted for the Republican in every presidential election but two. The state went for Grover Cleveland once because his Republican opponent was the aptly labeled "James G. Blaine, continental liar from the state of Maine," and once for Woodrow Wilson, because he "kept us out of war" in 1916, the election year.

The Republican dominance continued through the Roaring '20s and despite the Depression, Connecticut even voted to give Herbert Hoover a second term in 1932.

Vermont's Republican record was even stronger. When Sanders was elected mayor in 1980, the Granite State had elected Republican presidents every time since 1856 — with only one exception. In 1964, the state chose Lyndon Johnson over the very conservative Barry Goldwater, who carried only his state of Arizona and five deep Southern states.

Bernie moved to Vermont four years later and quickly became a political activist, running unsuccessfully as a third party candidate for governor and senator before lowering his ambitions and getting elected mayor in 1980.

Jasper had a longer apprenticeship. The son of Scottish

IF YOU ASK ME
DICK AHLES

immigrants, he was self educated and became a Socialist after reading Edward Bellamy's utopian novel, "Looking Backward." (The author's cousin, Ralph Bellamy, a Baptist minister and Socialist, wrote the Pledge of Allegiance in 1892 to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Columbus' voyage.)

In 1902, the 24-year-old roofer McLevy received 215 votes for state representative in his first of 21 unsuccessful tries for offices high and low.

He finally got elected mayor in 1933 with a lot of help from the Democratic and Republican parties. After a corrupt Republican was succeeded by a so-called reform Democrat, whose principal reform involved the transfer of city funds to his bank account, the voters had had enough of the two great political parties.

McLevy won by a landslide, carrying a Socialist majority on the council with him and proceeded to run the city honestly and efficiently for the next two decades. He balanced budgets, cut taxes and even sold the mayor's limousine and told his driver to go back to his police beat.

Like Mayor Sanders, the Socialist mayor of Bridgeport retained higher aspirations, becoming a perennial, losing candidate for governor. But in 1938, with the Depression hanging tough, he attracted enough Democratic votes to give the election to liberal Republican Ray Baldwin, who would become a fine wartime governor, U.S. senator and state Supreme Court chief justice.

Years later, Baldwin remembered Jasper fondly, telling me, "Jasper called himself a Socialist but he governed more like a conservative Republican."

Today, Jasper is best remembered for a comment he didn't make when he was trying to keep his snow removal budget in the black during an especially bad winter. "God put the snow there," the mayor allegedly intoned, "let God take it away."

But, according to Bridge-

port political historian Lennie Grimaldi, the actual speaker was McLevy's public works director, Pete Brewster, dubbed "Sunshine" Brewster by the tabloid Bridgeport Herald for habitually waiting for the sun to remove the snow.

"One day," writes Grimaldi, "Brewster was sitting in Billy Prince's, a favorite downtown gin mill," with reporters who were needling him about his failure to call out the plows. Finally, "Brewster snapped, 'Let the guy who put the snow there take it away.'"

Today, McLevy isn't remembered for being Bridgeport's longest serving mayor, but for the words he never uttered about God and snow removal. But then, another former Bridgeport mayor, Phineas T. Barnum, didn't say, "There's a sucker born every minute" either.

As Casey Stengel often said, but James Thurber said first, "You could look it up."

Simsbury resident Dick Ahles is a retired journalist. Email him at rahles1@outlook.com.

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COMPASS

Your Guide to Tri-State Events

March 26-April 1, 2020

BOOKS: ROB BUCCINO

Exploring Demons and Daemons in New Pullman Novel

Sir Philip Pullman, a master of the fantasy genre, has come into his own this year with the trifecta of a new novel, the debut of an HBO series based on his earlier trilogy, and a knighthood in Britain's New Years Honours.

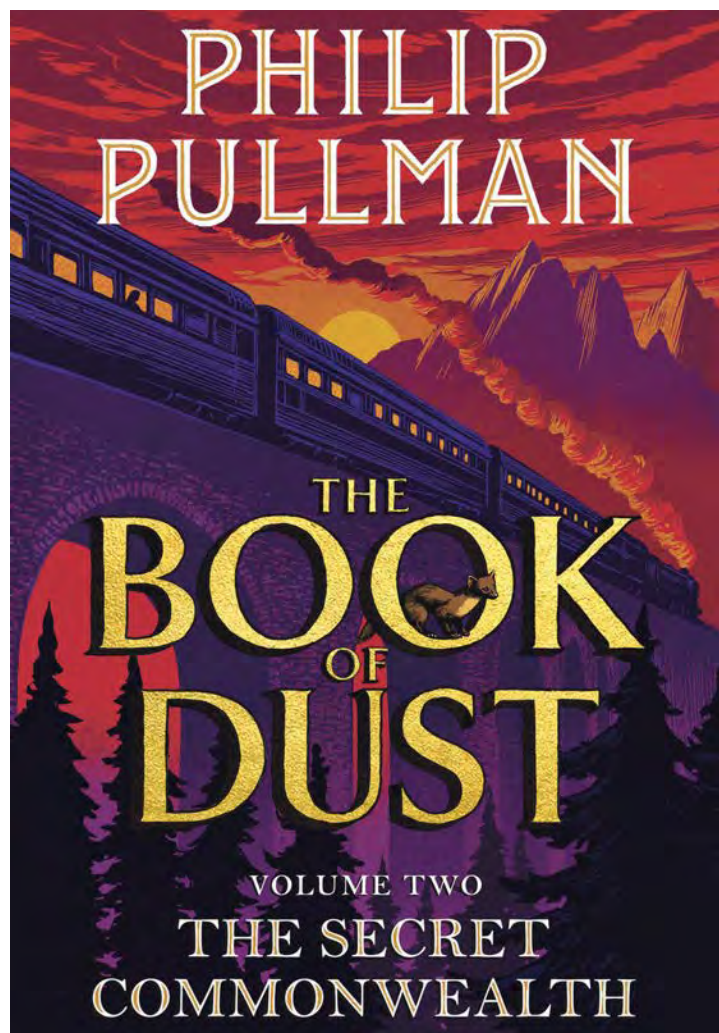
The new book, "The Secret Commonwealth," is the second installment of a trilogy, "The Book of Dust," that expands on the characters first established in "His Dark Materials" (which the HBO series adapts).

In the imagined world Pullman creates, every human has a physically embodied spirit animal, called a daemon, as a constant companion akin to a soul.

Daemons express other sides of complex personalities, and often play a good-angel/bad-angel role in dialogue with their humans.

While the novels are adventure stories of epic scope, they also explore concepts of multiple parallel worlds (some with and some without apparent daemons), metaphysics of life and death, and the powerful energy that couples conscience and consciousness.

"The Secret Commonwealth" focuses on a single world in which a few



daemons have rebelled against and abandoned their humans. Lyra Silvertongue, an independent-minded, courageous and resourceful character introduced as an adolescent in the earlier trilogy, has become a 20-something student in Oxbridge. Her daemon has gone walkabout, and duplicitous

quasi-government agents are searching, using magical devices, to find and arrest Lyra for heresy.

Working with a secret society of anti-authoritarian allies, one member of which has fallen in love with her,

Lyra spends much of the book tracking down her daemon. Much as people stigmatized by disfigurement or prejudice in our own world must do, she copes with the profound stigma of being seen by others as daemon-less, all the while eluding capture and confinement.

Pullman's prose is terse, action-filled and often witty. The settings he evokes are both familiar and otherworldly. Part of the fun for readers is puzzling out unfamiliar words ("anbaric" means electrical) and imagining travel by zeppelin.

Those who have read earlier works by Pullman will have an easier time following the story than first-timers, but it's hard to put down the book once started, even when you begin in the middle.

"The Secret Commonwealth" is published by Penguin Random House and available at local bookstores.

Rob Buccino is a semi-retired marketing consultant, author, and fiction fan who writes occasionally for The Lakeville Journal.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Concerns about COVID-19 have canceled or postponed most cultural events in the region. Some organizations are finding ways to hold events online; to find out what has been planned, go online or call the host organization.

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Hand-washing technique with soap and water

1. At first I was afraid, I was petrified
2. Kept thinkin' I could never live without you by my side
3. But then I spent so many nights thinkin' how you did me wrong
4. And I grew strong, and I learned how to get along
5. And so you're back, from outer space
6. I just walked in to find you here with that sad look upon your face
7. I should have changed that stupid lock
8. I should have made you leave your key
9. If I'd have known for just one second you'd be back to bother me
10. Go on now, go, walk out the door
11. Just turn around now, cause you're not welcome anymore
12. Weren't you the one who tried to hurt me with goodbye?
13. Did you think I'd crumble? Did you think I'd lay down and die?

Create your own <https://washyourlyrics.com>

I Will Survive
Gloria Gaynor

Adapted from National Health Service, who adapted from the World Health Organization Guidelines on Hand Hygiene in Health Care. Created under the Open Government License. See <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/> for details.

PHOTO FROM WASHYOURLYRICS.COM

Choose a song you like and plug it into a website that will then add 20 seconds of lyrics under drawings of good hand-washing technique.

HYGIENE:
CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

Wash Your Hands with Washyourlyrics

If you're already sick of singing "Happy Birthday" twice while you wash your hands, there's a new and better way.

At a website called www.washyourlyrics.com, you choose a song that matches your mood. Type in the name of the song and the singer or composer/songwriter.

You don't have to use a song that refers specifically to washing, of course. I chose the song "Sway," sung by either Dean Martin or Rosemary Clooney, because it has a nice dance-y rhythm.

You can choose

different songs for your everchanging moods; it's a free site and I think websites like it when you visit them often.

Once you find a song you like, you can download the poster in PDF form. The poster we used for this article, above, is for the disco classic "I Will Survive," originally performed by Gloria Gaynor and then covered by the band Cake.

The poster is different if you type in Cake as the artist; their version is slower. The same is true for "Sway," as sung by either Dean Martin or Rosemary Clooney.

ART: CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

A Salute to the Italians in New Show

James Barron said the response to his "Evite" invitation to a show at his Kent, Conn., gallery featuring work by Italian artists has been unprecedented.

"I cannot remember getting such a big response

to an Evite as this," he said, adding that, "Italy touches so many. It's really a moving experience."

Barron and his family lived for many years in Rome, and have continued to travel there (although they are home for now in Kent, of course). Everyone across the world feels a similar sense of love for the Italians, who have been hit so hard by COVID-19 and who have responded in part with many wonderful online videos of singing, making music and generally doing their best to struggle through with style and a smile.

Barron says of the new show at his Kent gallery, "As an homage to Italy and the gallery's longstanding commitment to Italian art and life, we are presenting an exhibition of Italian artists. We are proud to show our support for a country that is very dear to the gallery. We send our love to our friends and artists in Italy."

The works in the show include sculpture, photography, painting; the show is up until April 29. To see photos and learn more, email Barron at info@jamesbarronarts.com.

ARTIST HARPER BLANCHET

is looking to move his studio and living space from its present location at 107 Main Street in Falls Village to a new location in the Sharon, Salisbury, Millerton, Ancram area.

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No matter what level you choose for your donation, what you will get is continued coverage of town government and other events in the Tri-state region. And of course, our gratitude – but no other tangible benefits. Contributions are not tax deductible, as the company is not a nonprofit 501(c)3 at this time.

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~ Special Notice Regarding Spring 2020 Arts Events at The Hotchkiss School ~

In response to COVID-19 guidelines set forth by the State of Connecticut as well as the CDC:

The Hotchkiss School's schedule of arts events for spring 2020 has been canceled until further notice.

This includes all concerts, recitals, plays, and exhibits in the Tremaine Art Gallery.

If the policy should change, an update will be posted on our website.

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