

COMPASS

Your Guide to Tri-State Events

July 14, 2022

plus
Tri-State
Calendar
of Events



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SUMMER FAIRS: CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

Carnival Rides, Fireworks and Cotton Candy: It Must Be Summer Again

Why does July feel so innocent? Perhaps it's because children are out of school and even the most jaded, urbanized adults find themselves being towed along to sweet summer activities behind a child, a grandchild, a nephew or niece, or even a beloved pet, bowled over with the excitement of being outside and maybe getting to snatch a hot dog.

In June the kids are still in school. In August, it's too hot and the beginning of school begins to loom. But in July we go to the beach and drink lemonade and lose ourselves in the garden.

And we go to Railroad Days in North Canaan, Conn., one of the last of the great Litchfield County summer carnivals.

It used to be that nearly all the local towns had summer fairs, with cake walks and games of chance and firefighter parades. Slowly and for various reasons they've all died off, but Railroad Days is back for its 58th year, from July 13 to 17.

Everything you could possibly want in a summer carnival is part of Railroad Days. There is ice cream and cotton candy and carnival rides and carnival games in the evening (giving older children a chance to go off on their own and have safe, independent adventures with their friends).

There are sidewalk sales at all the downtown shops. There are raffles and picnics and church suppers.

Don't miss the parade of firefighters marching together in full dress uniform, followed by their oldest and most charming fire-fighting vehicles. This year's procession is on Saturday, July 16, at 6 p.m. and as always it will be followed at dusk by fireworks.

It will feel like the finale of the five days of summer fun, but more is in store on Sunday, July 17, including open hours at the Canaan Union Station Railroad Museum. The town's historic railroad depot was burned in an arson fire in 2001, just weeks after the terror attacks of that year on Sept. 11. Many area firefighters had already been volunteering their time at the World Trade Center sites, and returned home to help battle the blaze at the beloved former train station, which was home to offices and a restaurant at that time.

It took decades to rebuild the depot, but it's open again and is of course the honored heart of Railroad Days. The railroad museum was assembled by volunteers and includes railway memorabilia donated by train buffs across New England. Find out the full schedule for the 2022 Railroad Days events at <https://canaanrailroaddays.com>.

In June the kids are still in school. In August, it's too hot and the beginning of school begins to loom. But in July we go to the beach and drink lemonade and lose ourselves in the garden.

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STREAMING: SADIE LEITE

‘Stranger Things’ And the Return Of Kate Bush’s ‘Running up that Hill’

Three horrified kids cower in a graveyard, as their redheaded friend is jolted upward in the air, ragged with terror.

This is a scene from the fourth season of the Netflix production “Stranger Things.” The teen horror hit is the number one English-language program on Netflix. Each episode averaged \$30 million to produce. And it’s had a radical impact on the public; for instance, its emphasis on Dungeons & Dragons (D&D) has contributed to the board game’s newly popular presence.

“Stranger Things” started with four best friends fighting otherworldly horrors in their small-town home of Hawkins, Ind., in the 1970s. Now, the group of youngsters has grown to a team of 13, navigating the ’80s and battling the same sci-fi freaks — specifically, the supernatural foes originate from the Upside Down, a twisted parallel world.

In the season three finale, Max (the floating redhead mentioned above) witnessed her half-brother, Billy, die in a fight scene.



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In season four, Max and her pals are freshmen, rattled from their past in the Upside Down and nervous about confronting the banal trials of high school.

It is Max who suffers the most. She plugs herself into headphones, isolates herself from her friends, and settles into headaches and nightmares that keep her from being able to come to grips with Billy's death.

When teens in Hawkins suddenly start having visions of trauma and are then possessed by uncanny forces that hang them in the air, with their limbs at impossible angles, Max knows she's next.

Working to stop the scourge, Max's friends discover a solution. Music, they learn, reaches parts of the brain that words alone can not.

Max's friend Lucas fastens headphones to her ears as she floats in the air, possessed by a monster from the Upside Down. Kate Bush's popular 1985 song, "Running up That Hill (Deal with God)," helps her remember moments with her friends. She runs to freedom as Bush sings, "I'd be running up that road, I'd be running up that hill, I'd be running up that building."

Like D&D, the series has made a new hit of Bush's song. Although a cult favorite in its day, it never topped number 30 on the Billboard Hot 100. After it was featured on "Stranger Things," the song returned to the Billboard charts at number 8, and was number 1 on the iTunes chart, thanks to the show's huge audience.

The song also reflects the show's focus on true loyalty. Bush sings, "If I only could, I'd make a deal with God,

and I'd get him to swap our places." This group of friends risks life and loss for each other.

Perhaps part of the reason for this series' enormous popularity is that the plot builds allusions to other beloved works of science fiction.

As teens battle grotesque creatures that even grownups in lab coats can't destroy, there are references to "The Lord of the Rings" and multiple Stephen King classics, like "Carrie" and "It."

There might even be a nod to the Neal Stephenson novel "Snow Crash." One of the "Stranger Things" friends, Argyle, works at Surfer Boy Pizza, which delivers fresh pies in a strict 30 minutes. Stephenson's hero does the same; it's how the action in the novel starts.

Besides calling to triumphs of science fiction, the season is winning in other places.

There's a new character, Eddie, proving to be popular because of his bad-boy cover. Underneath, he cradles a sensitive love for guitar music.

Steve and Nancy's recent flirtation is also stirring the "Stranger Things" fanbase. It's hinting at a provocative love triangle between the two and another teen, Jonathan.

Besides the graveyard with Max's stint in floating possession, there are other creative scenes in the recent season making it an engrossing watch. The characters' adventures take place in the haunted Creel family home, the hideout lake shack, and Russia.

Will's interest in painting is also far from a slight hobby. His rolled-up painting that he carries through episodes is frustratingly mysterious — until the conclusion of the show.

And speaking of the conclusion, there's more in store. Brothers Matt and Ross Duffer, who created "Stranger Things," are expanding the universe. The seven episodes of season four, volume one, clock in at 9 hours and 7 minutes.

And volume two, which was released on July 1, has one episode (number 9) that lasts two hours and 30 minutes.

"Stranger Things" is available on Netflix.

ADAPTATIONS: KAITLIN LYLE

'The Time Traveler's Wife' Offers Different Versions of a Love Story And Its Lovers

Who sets the course when it comes to love? Do we truly have a choice in the people we fall in love with, or do forces beyond our means dictate where our hearts go?

These are the kinds of questions asked of readers through Audrey Niffenegger's 2003 bestselling debut, "The Time Traveler's Wife." The novel offers a love story as sensational as it is untraditional. When art student Clare Abshire has a chance encounter with librarian Henry DeTamble, she's thrilled to reconnect with the man she's known since she was six years old; for Henry, it's his first time meeting her. Diagnosed with a genetic abnormality called Chrono-Displacement Disorder, Henry is prone to slipping in and out of time against his will, frequently revisiting his past and connecting with his future wife throughout her childhood. Cherishing their moments of happiness and enduring the heartache and hardships of their unusual life, Clare and Henry strive to live as a normal married couple, while knowing their life can never be normal.

Niffenegger's novel was adapted into a 2009 film starring Rachel McAdams and Eric Bana as Clare and Henry. Just this past May, the novel received a second adaptation as an HBO series starring Rose Leslie and Theo James. Sadly, the show's viewers will only get to see half the story as "The Time Traveler's Wife" was cancelled after one season.

Having reread sections of the book to prepare myself for watching its adaptations, I found the enchantment the story placed on

me seven years ago was still intact. Today, I'd recommend the book as "an investment read," not only because of the altering shifts in the lovers' timelines but because it's a story of love despite time and deserves the reader's undivided attention.

While both adaptations succeeded in portraying the unpredictable nature of time travel, I couldn't help comparing the distinct versions of Henry and Clare as portrayed in film and on TV. McAdams aced Clare's unshakable devotion to her husband: Through her performance, I was brought to tears watching Clare's heartache in carrying out a relationship that requires more waiting for someone than being with them. Rose Leslie, in the HBO version, channeled a fierce and frustrated Clare that, despite her passion for Henry, wonders whether it's too late to change the future. In the video diaries she creates to document her love story, Leslie's Clare evokes amusement in being married to a time traveler and weariness in loving someone who is frequently sent slipping through time — and leaving her behind.

Even with the multiple versions of Henry offered in the novel, my expectations of his portrayal were high. Bana's Henry sparked my interest within minutes of the film beginning; while Theo James' Henry convinced me only after the third episode. Whereas I envisioned Henry as a gallant gentleman, James' Henry seemed more focused on survival. Where James was pragmatic and often brash, Bana was

Continued on page 6

BOOK SALES: CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

The Best Book Sales of the Summer

We have so many extraordinary libraries in our region and two absolute gems of small, responsive book stores in Oblong Books and Music in Millerton, N.Y., and the Bookloft in Great Barrington, Mass.

But I secretly crave old books. Pre-loved, as Subaru likes to say of their cars.

I like the serendipity of finding a book that it would never have occurred to me to look for. I like finding older books that are no longer in print, and older editions (though they have to be clean and mildew-free). I've found many treasures in unexpected places; I won't bore you with the list. But I will share with you my secret stash of the best summer book sales.

NORFOLK LIBRARY

The stately beauty of the 1899 building by architect George Keller is reason enough to visit the library in the center of Norfolk, Conn.

An added incentive is the extensive and excellent farm market held on Saturdays in the big field behind and around the corner from the library.

And then there is the annual book sale, held this year on Aug. 27 and 28, 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. A limited selection of books of better value is displayed in the great hall of the library, priced to sell. On Sunday all the remaining books in the large main tent are free between 2 and 9 p.m.

Norfolk is a town that prizes intellect and culture and so this book sale has an incredibly wide selection of 16,000 new and old books sorted into 25 categories. Don't miss it.

GOSHEN FAIR

Yes, I know it's weird but the annual agricultural fair at the fairgrounds in Goshen, Conn., over Labor Day weekend always has a really exceptional book sale, one that my daughter and I

particularly look forward to.

Last year, I found lying quietly on the ground, half hidden beneath a table, a selection of paperback novels in French, most of them mysteries starring Georges Simenon's Inspector Maigret. There was also a handful of Maurice Leblanc's Arsene Lupin stories.

My daughter tends toward the obscure and classical, and she always finds books on philosophy and the Ancient Greeks as well as mystery novels (in English).

D.M. HUNT LIBRARY

In the town of Falls Village, Conn., there is an online bookseller called Edward R. Hamilton Bookseller. The company generously donates some of its odd lots and overflow to the library, which holds a sale on the first Saturday of every month.

Like a tag sale, this monthly book rummage offers an unexpected array of old and new titles. But they are all in new and generally excellent condition, making this sale an ideal place to stock up on gifts for the holidays (December rolls around fast ...).

CORNWALL WOMAN'S SOCIETY RUMMAGE SALE

This sale is so big and fabulous that it has to be spread out over four buildings.

I particularly love this sale because

it has exquisite little works of art, often painted by talented amateurs, the perfect embellishments for my summer porch.

But there's oh so much more, including household goods and jigsaw puzzles and a vast selection of used and often very vintage and very high-quality garments.

The book sale, at this point, is expected to be held in the UCC Church parish house on Bolton Street.

The sale will be held this year July 23 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and July 24 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Monday, July 25, is "fill a bag" and bargain day, from 9 a.m. to noon.

The four sale sites are the UCC Church parish hall, Cornwall Town Hall (fine furniture and art) on Pine Street, Mohawk Mountain Ski Area and St. Peter's Church.

HOTCHKISS LIBRARY OF SHARON

The stately Hotchkiss Library of Sharon, Conn., does the other used book sales one better by also including a highly anticipated annual book signing under a tent.

This year's signing will be on Friday, Aug. 5, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. and it will be held next door to the library, at the Sharon Historical Society (the library itself is undergoing a renovation to

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... The Time Traveler's Wife

Continued from page 5

gentler, both with himself and in his interactions with his wife as a child.

Though I'll admit the film adaptation followed the novel more closely (and chronologically), I can respect the artistic choices made in the series, which brought certain details to light to alert viewers of what's to come.

Watching "The Time Traveler's Wife" in 2022, I've noticed viewers have looked upon the story with unfavorable eyes, claiming that, in visiting

his wife between ages 6 and 18, Henry was grooming her. And while I can't deny the logic in this theory, still I ask what the protocol is for meeting your future spouse.

Another question I've heard is which person shaped the groundwork for the love story. Does it start when Clare reconnects with Henry, or when Henry travels back to Clare's childhood?

If these questions intrigue you, do as I did and visit all three versions.

expand it and make it fully accessible to all users).

The authors are a mix of beloved locals and many nationally known authors who live in Sharon, nearby Litchfield County and the New York City area. Tickets to the signing are \$40 and include note only access to 30 authors and illustrators but also cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. That evening there will be four dinners with authors at private homes in Sharon; tickets are \$175 per person. All proceeds benefit the library. To order tickets and learn more, go to <https://hotchkisslibraryofsharon.org/book-signing-2022/>.

Normally, the book signing is followed by a two-day used book sale under the tent next to the library.

This year, no sale is scheduled. The library's executive director, Gretchen Hochmeister, explained that because

of the renovation at the library building there wasn't room to store the donated books over the past year. The library itself has been borrowing space at the Herbert Klebes American Legion Post building on New Street.

KENT MEMORIAL LIBRARY

The Kent Memorial Library in Kent, Conn., has a massive outdoor book sale every weekend (weather permitting) on tables that sprawl out over what used to be the driveway for the firehouse.

There are new and old and very old books in pretty much every publishing genre, at tag sale prices, and you can browse the selection on Saturdays, Sundays and holiday Mondays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and on Fridays from noon to 5 p.m.

To find out if weather has shut down the sale, call 860-927-3761 or go online to <https://www.kentmemorallibrary.org/2022-annual-book-sale/>.

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ART: KAITLIN LYLE

Wild Nights in Store for Wassaic Project Visitors

From the refurbished historic buildings turned art studios to the colony of artists that enter the hamlet through the seasonal artist residency programs, there's an energy surrounding The Wassaic Project that I've yet to encounter anywhere else in New York's Harlem Valley. While it feels more secluded than other regional destinations, the wonders to be discovered at The Wassaic Project are nonetheless prolific — especially during the summer months.

Nestled in the hamlet of Wassaic, in Amenia, N.Y., on Furnace Bank Road, The Wassaic Project operates as a nonprofit organization that “uses art and arts education to

foster positive social change,” according to its website, www.wassaicproject.org. Executing the nonprofit's values and vision for the surrounding community is a quartet of co-directors (husband-and-wife duo Jeff Barnett-Winsby and Bowie Zunino and Eve Biddle) with help from a dedicated staff, contributors, volunteers and Board of Directors.

Artists seeking a space to harness their creative energies into physical works of art can unravel their ideas in the studios installed within the Luther Barn, where livestock were once sold at the former Luther's Livestock Commission Market in the late 1940s. Their works may later be found among the seasonal art exhibi-

There's an energy surrounding The Wassaic Project that I've yet to encounter anywhere else in the Harlem Valley.

tions arranged within the seven-floor sanctuary for art that is the renowned Maxon Mills building.


Anticipating its biggest summer season to date, The Wassaic Project embraced an early start to summer with the opening of its 2022 exhibition, “A Tournament of Lies,” on Saturday, May 21. Drawing its name from a line in the R.E.M. hit song, “It's the End of the World as We Know It (and I Feel Fine),” “A Tournament of Lies” (according to a recent press

release from The Wassaic Project) features the artwork of 46 artists that have gathered “in hopes of harnessing the infinite energy of the life imitates art imitates life imitates art dynamo.”

Describing just a few of the pieces on display, Wassaic Project Communications Coordinator Joe Brommel said visitors can expect to see a burlap horse being eaten from the inside by a seedling, early American landscape paintings with volcanoes added in, birds hurtling out

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José Guadalupe Posada, *Calavera Catrina* (detail), c. 1890–1913. Relief print, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas, 1978.384.11

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of the canvas, an Italian restaurant where everything (including the guests, utensils and food) is a dog.

“A Tournament of Lies” is open to the public from noon to 5 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays through Saturday, Sept. 17. However, that’s just one of many sights to see around The Wassaic Project this summer.

The Wassaic Project officially toasted the start of summer at its 14th annual Summer Benefit at Maxon Mills on Saturday, June 18. Along with taking a tour of the seven stories of artwork on display, guests were invited to savor the coming of summers over hors d’oeuvres and cocktails on the Maxon Mills porch.

The Summer Benefit honored Cornwall, Conn., resident and artist Laurie Simmons, known both for her groundbreaking artwork as a member of the Pictures Generation and for advocating for emerging artists.

Later this summer, the hamlet will come alive with the sound of live music — not to mention dance performances, film screenings, artist talks and other festivities — at The Wassaic Project’s first Block Party of the summer on Saturday, July 23, from noon to 10 p.m. The second Block Party is slated for Saturday, Aug. 20, from noon to 10 p.m.

For more information on what’s in store at The Wassaic Project this summer, go to www.wassaicproject.org.

Beyond all the summertime fun

to be found in the hamlet’s center, visitors are encouraged to stop by The Lantern (10 Main St.) to satisfy their appetites with the restaurant’s selection of wood-fired pizzas. Currently open for indoor dining, takeout or eating in the restaurant’s side garden, The Lantern is open on Thursdays and Fridays from 4 to 8:45 p.m and on Saturdays and Sundays from 2 to 8:45 p.m. One look at the restaurant’s online menu is enough to inspire visitors’ mouths to water, whether they’re hungry for the imaginatively named pizzas (such as Rattle Snake, Dazed & Confused, Norma Jean and Heart Throb) or the other tasty options listed under the online menu’s “Not Pizza” section.

For more on The Lantern, go to www.wassaiclanterninn.com.

Looking for something new to read? Head over to the Wassaic Newsstand (located next door to The Lantern) to check out the eclectic arrangement of publications on display. Erika DaSilva of Ten Mile Table said the newsstand is open both by appointment and on specific pop-up dates throughout the season. In addition to the many food, art and hospitality publications on the shelves, she said the newsstand is also printing its very first project: a Community Cookbook featuring recipes from 30 local bakers, chefs, makers, farms and artists. The cookbook is due to arrive in print between late summer and early fall.

Music Mountain Summer Festival

JULY 17

Tabea Debus, Recorder & Adam Cockerham, Lute

Works by MONTEVERDI, J.S. BACH, PURCELL, DOWLAND, and other composers from seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe, plus Diaries of the Early Worm by Gareth MOORCRAFT (b. 1990)

JULY 24

Ulysses Quartet

Tanya Bannister, Piano

(Sun Quartets Concert #2/6)

HAYDN String Quartet in G Minor, Op. 20 #3

TOWER Wild Summer

ELGAR Piano Quintet in A Minor, Op. 84

JULY 31

Harlem Quartet

Fei-Fei, Piano

BEETHOVEN Piano Sonata #18 in E Flat Major, Op. 31 #3

SCHUBERT Piano Trio in E Flat Major, D.897, “Notturmo”

BRAHMS Piano Quartet in G Minor, Op. 25

JULY 16

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JULY 23

SWINGTIME BIG BAND

“Sunrise Serenade”

Inspired by Music Mountain’s season theme, Here Comes The Sun! this beloved 20-piece big band will perform solar lyrics from the Great American Songbook. Swingtime Big Band will keep you ‘on the sunny side of the street’ with music from icons like Count Basie, Glenn Miller, Tommy Dorsey, Les Brown, and Frank Sinatra.

JULY 30

BARBARA FASANO TRIO

Featuring Eric Comstock, piano/voice with Boots Maleson, Bass

“In the Still of the Night”

Award-winning pop/jazz vocalist Barbara Fasano returns to Music Mountain with her signature mashup of pop and jazz standards that unite the generations. A Resident Artist at New York’s legendary Birdland Jazz Club, she’s been praised as “exhilarating... a lyrically sensitive interpreter” by The New York Times.

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www.musicmountain.org

COOL CARS: LANS CHRISTENSEN

Sizzling Rides, Not for The Faint of Heart

The season for exotic vintage cars has begun. Lans Christensen will share some special items throughout the summer.

In this issue, he's sharing a wide range of rides, from a 1911 Ford Model T to a 21st century McLaren 720S Spider.

1911 FORD MODEL T

Model Ts are not as rare as one might think. You can often see them at car shows or just out for a Sunday Drive.

This one is particularly interesting: It sports the "Torpedo Runabout" body style that was — and still is — very desirable. It was unique because it had two doors! No more climbing over the sides.

John Gunder and his brother, Alan, of Torrington, Conn., built this example with parts, "from the ground up."

It is also unusual to see a "T" in color: After 1914, they were only available in black.

This "T" was shown at Lime Rock Park race track's Royals' Garage Car Show on Sunday, May 29, as part of the Trans Am Memorial Day race weekend.

1966 SIMCA 1000 COUPE BERTONE

The name Simca may not be familiar to most readers. These cars were produced in France from 1938 to 1978 and were predominantly small, boxy econo-cars. For years, the best-selling



car in France was the little Simca 1100.

Seeing them anywhere nowadays is very rare, so seeing a cool one, in perfect condition, is a real treat.

The Coupe Bertone started as a normal Simca 1000 sedan, but Italian coach builder Bertone transformed it into a stylish, racy, coupe.

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of Somers, N.Y., found this red one in Wisconsin in 2012.

The 4-cylinder rear engine had also been tweaked by Italian performance wizards at Abarth. No surprise this car won the Hagerty Cars award for “Import Car Any Year” at Lime Rock Park race track’s Royals’ Garage Car Show on May 29.

1993 PORSCHE 968 COUPE

Porsches are always easy on the eyes, and we get to see their classic familiar shapes every day.

But its a bit more unusual to spot one of Porsche’s front-engine models, and especially to see the 968, which is the coolest one of all.

It replaced the 944 and was initi-



PHOTOS BY LANS CHRISTENSEN

ated in 1992. There were only 12,780 of them sold until production ended in 1995, and only 5,000 made it to the U.S. market.

At the Royals’ Garage Car Show at Lime Rock on May 29, a stunning color caught my eye, even before the car model could be identified. Owner

John Rodriguez , of Shelton, Conn., identified the 968, and its factory color as Ruby Redstone. It had been his mother’s car since 1993. A very cool family treasure — which deserved the Hagerty Cars “Classic Car 1976-1995” award that it won at the Royals’ Garage Car Show.



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MOVIES: KAITLIN LYLE

The Lost Art of Innocent Summer Fun

Every August for 19 summers, my family and I would pack up my grandparents' car and embark on our annual family vacation to Rhode Island.

It's been almost seven years since our last trip together, but I can still picture our favorite beaches, summer rentals, traditions and routines as if we'd never left the beach.

We lived for the days spent body-surfing, boogie-boarding and walking barefoot down the jetty. There was enough magic in those family vacations to make even the cloudiest days worth remembering.

On those days when the rain canceled our beach plans, you could find my brother and I trying to best our grandmother in Dogopoly (Monopoly with a dog theme) or defeat our mother in Kings in the Corner (a futile effort).

Before there were streaming services or even Netflix DVDs, our mom would take us to the video rental store down the road and pick out a few classics to keep us entertained.



IMAGE FROM IMDB

Even the most modern families can enjoy watching old-fashioned family classics like “That Darn Cat” from 1965.

From the titles we watched and rewatched over countless summers, here are a few that today's families might enjoy watching together.

“That Darn Cat!”

It's been years since I last saw “That Darn Cat!” and I've been keeping the memory alive by singing the opening theme whenever I catch our cat, Eska, patrolling the house.

Anyone living in a small town might know an animal like DC (short for Darn Cat), the four-pawed protagonist of this 1965 classic — the kind of creature that goes sauntering around town, swiping food and finding adventure in unexpected places.

For DC, adventure strikes when he follows a bank robber home and finds that he and his partner-in-crime are holding a bank employee hostage. Inscribing a message on the back of her wristwatch, the hostage slips the watch around DC's neck in place of his collar and sends him out into the world.

DC returns home to his curious owner, Patti (played to perfection by the iconic Hayley Mills), setting in motion a wily, watch-able investigation.

It's the kind of feel-good family film that's difficult to recreate these days, between the antics of an acclaimed cast (including Dean Jones and Roddy McDowell) and the way DC leads (and frequently derails) the investigation.

Still, as is sung in the film's theme song, the cat's “been paid every accolade / And he's earned all his acclaim.”

“That Darn Cat!” is currently available for viewing on Disney+.

“No Deposit, No Return”

Another Rhode Island favorite that combined comedy and crime was the 1976 film “No Deposit, No Return,” starring Darren McGavin (best known as the “award” winning father in “A Christmas Story”), Don Knotts and David Niven.

Expecting to be picked up from school for Easter vacation by their

It's been years since I last saw “That Darn Cat!” and I've been keeping the memory alive by singing the opening theme whenever I catch our cat, Eska, patrolling the house.


mother, siblings Tracy and Jay are unenthusiastic when they hear they'll be spending their vacation with their billionaire grandfather, who's equally displeased to have to watch them.

At the same airport where the siblings are due to meet their grandfather's butler, safecrackers Duke and Bert are trying to crack the airport safe. In their escape from the airport, they end up in the same taxi as Tracy and Jay, who've escaped with plans to reconnect with their mother.


Thinking they could benefit from

one another, the children hatch a plan to write a ransom note to their grandfather with hopes of receiving enough money to allow them to fly to their mother in Hong Kong and to help the safecrackers pay off a gangster. Add a car chase, some judo and a pet skunk named Duster and you've got a crime comedy that'll leave everyone laughing.

“No Deposit, No Return” is available to rent through Amazon Prime Video and Apple TV.



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STREAMING: SADIE LEITE

Neil Gaiman's 'Sandman' Comes to Netflix

My entry into the Sandman Universe started with *Death*. This seems a little backward in any world where life begins, extends and then ends. But for Neil Gaiman, whose mind is folded with drapes of fantasy, a tilt in the timeline is as commonplace as making tea.

"*Death: The High Cost of Living*" came out in March 1993. It's a spin-off comic series with three issues, featuring the lovely character *Death*. *Death*, obviously, has been done many times in storytelling's history. Gaiman reversed this archetype.

In summer 2021, I was doing a lot of sprawling like a deflated something on my couch. My mom decided comics was the cure.

Though "*Death: The High Cost of Living*" is an extension of Gaiman's comic series "*The Sandman*," started

in 1989, she'd thought I ought to read about *Sandman's* sister first.

First, *Death* is an older sister to *Dream*, who has other names too — as do most Gods. Try *Sandman* or *Morpheus*.

They are two of the seven Endless, siblings who embody the most powerful forces of the known universe — the D.C. universe, that is.

Death, however, is not a grim reaper. She does not wear an ominous cloak, hiding a face assumed to be a skull with void eyes.

She's inked as a teenager, with a coy smile. She wears black, with some swirling eyeliner; sometimes she'll carry a matching dark umbrella. She's also bubbly, optimistic, and loves people. Life gives so much, so live it. That's her shtick, and it's not so contradictory if you think about it.



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Undeniably, her job is to take all souls at their ends, and for that reason she might be the single individual who sees life with the greatest shine.

I enjoyed her story, so I started "*The Sandman*." I also plastered her face to my college dorm wall. It's a great conversation starter.

"How's your room decorated, Sadie?"

"Oh, *Death's* in there," I say. Once it really scared a boy who used to like me. Shame.

In volume one, "*Preludes and Nocturns*," *Dream* — lord of dreams, stories and the dreamworld — is captured.

Roderick Burgess, the Lord Magus of the Order of the Ancient Mysteries, is the fool that imprisons *Dream*. It's foolish because Burgess wants to summon *Death*; and because he confuses his clumsy title as meaning he is actually greater than an eternal being.

The volume unfolds with a type of hero's journey. *Dream* cleverly plays with *Lucifer*. There's an Arkham Asylum feature. And *Death* berates *Dream* for moping once his quest finishes. Just find a new story; life's so great, she basically says.

In the fall, I wrote a column for my college newspaper about the series I had fallen into in those late months of summer.

I spent most of the semester strug-

gling with a 500-word count and accepting that no one would really read a niche column on a horror comic.

Although I did receive one piece of mail about it: "Just wanted to say I appreciate your *Sandman* articles. It's nice to see a spotlight on a classic before its Netflix adaptation."

Netflix is adapting *Sandman* for a summer 2022 release, with a season covering the first two and half volumes of the original 10-volume series.

Gaiman has tackled the screen before. Think "*Coroline*" (or don't if it gave you nightmares). "*Good Omens*" brought joy, but I'd love David Tennant through all of time and space. Speaking of which, Gaiman has also written for "*Doctor Who*."

Perhaps I just lost some people in that list of subtle sci-fi references. The point is that Gaiman can write; but always there's worry when a beloved piece of storytelling moves to television.

Still, there's much to look forward to. Gaiman can write, and he did write Netflix's "*The Sandman*" with Allan Heinberg and David S. Goyer. It's an all-star-team.

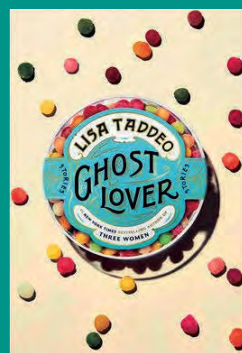
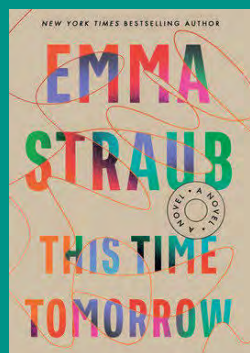
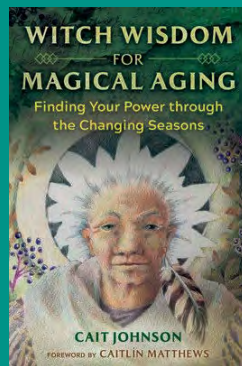
I came back from college excited. I'd finished a semester free of my stressful, stubborn *Sandman* column, and it was summer. So, my mother took me to see Gaiman in the flesh. It made sense. At the Bushnell Theater in Hartford, Conn., we listened to him talk for two hours.

What stuck — with his immaculate BBC radio voice — was his fantastic storytelling. Gaiman told a story about his late friend, and the co-writer of "*Good Omens*," Terry Pratchett. I laughed, teared up a bit, and suddenly wished for a peculiar friend to write a book with.

I dream like anyone, so I can say I'd dream of an adequate television representation of *Sandman*. But Gaiman's taught me that dreams are never that simple. That's OK though. I can happily live and die with that.

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TRI-CORNER CALENDAR

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ART

Argazzi Art, 22 Millerton Road, Lakeville, Conn. www.argazziart.com
Richard Segalman's In Memoriam: Paintings, July 2 through Aug. 14.

Berkshire Botanical Garden, 5 West Stockbridge Road, Stockbridge, Mass. www.berkshirebotanical.org
Plein Air Painting: The Garden in Watercolor, Wednesdays July 6 to 27, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The Clark Art Museum, 225 South St., Williamstown, Mass. www.clarkart.edu
José Guadalupe Posada: Symbols, Skeletons, And Satire, July 16 to Oct. 10.

Tauba Auerbach And Yuji Agematsu: Meander, July 16 to Oct. 16.

The Cornwall Library, 30 Pine St., Cornwall, Conn. www.cornwalllibrary.org
Pentimento Paintings – Greg Goldberg, July 16 to Aug. 28, reception July 16, 5 to 7 p.m.

Salisbury Artisan Group, Salisbury, Conn. www.artisansale.org
2022 Artisans Market, July 23, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

BOOKS

The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, 258 Main St., Ridgefield, Conn. www.thealdrich.org
All of the Sky: Five Poets, Five Saturdays, Saturdays July 23 through August 27, 4 to 5 p.m.

The Mount, 2 Plunkett St., Lenox, Mass. www.edithwharton.org
Julia Morgan: An Intimate Biography Of The Trailblazing Architect with Victoria Kastner, July 18, 4 to 5 p.m., July 19, 11 a.m. to noon.

The World's (Possibly) Largest Poem with WordXWord, July 23, 5 to 7:30 p.m.

Learning America: One Woman's Fight For Educational Justice For Refugee Children with Luma Mufleh, July 25, 4 to 5 p.m., July 26, 11 a.m. to noon.

Norman Rockwell Museum, 9 Glendale Road, Stockbridge, Mass. www.nrm.org
Book Signing with Kadir Nelson, July 23, 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

DANCE

Jacob's Pillow, 358 George Carter Road, Becket, Mass. www.jacobspillow.org
Passion Fruit Dance Company With Baye & Asa, July 15, 6 p.m.

Music From The Sole, July 20 to 24.

Limón Dance Company, July 20 to 24.

Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center, 14 Castle St., Great Barrington, Mass. www.mahaiwe.org
Parsons Dance, July 16, 7 p.m., July 17, 1 p.m.

PS21 Chatham, 2980 Route 66, Chatham, N.Y. www.ps21chatham.org
Anopas by Compagnie Art Move Concept (France), July 15, 8 p.m.

One. One & One by Vertigo Dance Company (Israel), July 28 and 29, 8 p.m.

KIDS

The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, 258 Main St., Ridgefield, Conn. www.thealdrich.org
Story Time for Little Ones: Eyes that Kiss in the Corners, July 16, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

QUEER POWER – Family Tour of 52 Artists, July 16, 1 to 2 p.m.

“Holes in Your Story” Family Art-Making Workshop, July 23, 10:30 a.m. to noon.

Berkshire Museum, 39 South St. (Route 7), Pittsfield, Mass. www.berkshireremuseum.org
Berkshire Children's Theater presents “Charlotte's Web”, July 29 and 30, 11 to 11:45 a.m.

MISCELLANY

Innisfree Garden, 362 Tyrrel Road, Millbrook, N.Y. www.innisfreegarden.org
Curator's Tour, July 16, 10:30 a.m. to noon. Awakening the Senses: A Meditative Guided Experience At The Gardens Of Innisfree, July 17, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Mt. Washington Church of Christ, East Street and Cross Road, Mt. Washington, Mass. www.mtwashingtonchurch.com
Mt. Washington Church Fair 2022, Aug. 6, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

MOVIES

Berkshire Jewish Film Festival, Pittsfield, Mass. www.berkshirejewishfilmfestival.org
BJFF 2022, July 11 to Aug. 15.

Berkshire Museum, 39 South St. (Route 7), Pittsfield, Mass. www.berkshireremuseum.org
Raphael: The Young Prodigy – Great Art on Screen, July 21, 7 to 8:20 p.m., July 23 and 24, 2 to 3:20 p.m.

Hudson Hall, 327 Warren St, Hudson, N.Y. www.hudsonhall.org
A Night Of Neo-Benshi: Flow Chart Cabaret Cinema, July 30, 7 p.m.

MUSIC

Hudson Hall, 327 Warren St, Hudson, N.Y. www.hudsonhall.org
A Night Of Neo-Benshi: Flow Chart Cabaret Cinema, July 30, 7 p.m.

Berkshire Lyric Chorus, Pittsfield, Mass. www.berkshirelyric.org
2022 Ubi Caritas Concert, Aug. 7, 3 and 5 p.m.

Litchfield Jazz Fest, Litchfield, Conn. www.litchfieldjazzfest.com
2022 Litchfield Jazz Festival, July 29 to 31.

THEATER

Great Barrington Public Theater, Great Barrington, Mass. www.greatbarringtonpublictheater.org
Public Speaking 101, July 14 to 24.

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PHOTOS BY LEILA HAWKEN

Sharon Playouse Associate Artistic Director Michael Baldwin gets young imaginations growling and growing.



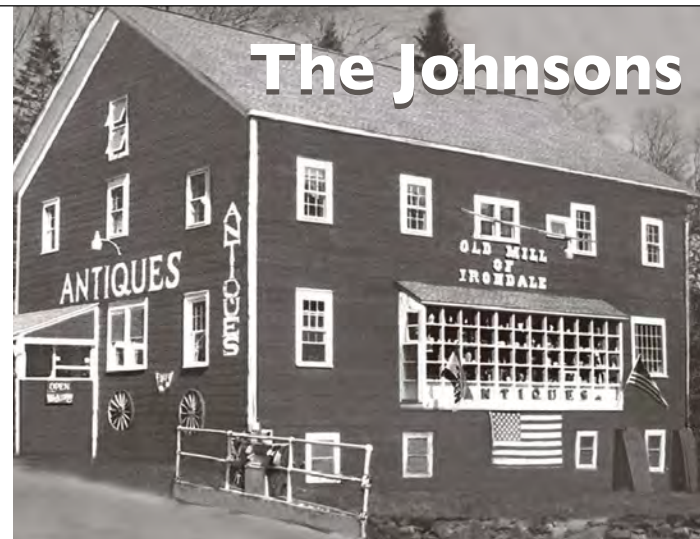
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CHILDREN'S THEATER: LEILA HAWKEN

Sharon Playhouse Education Program Discovers and Grows Young Talent of all Ages

Professional summer theater productions at the Sharon Playhouse in Sharon, Conn., lure audiences to the area and have been doing so for years. The advantages to Northwest Corner towns are many.

Now sharing space with that professional theater is an upgraded and enhanced educational program that includes intensive training in the theater arts. For teens, it may be the Youth Theater program. The program's classes and activities can also accommodate the very young whose artistic leanings are exuberantly unfettered, and the older kids refining their performing skills in acting, voice or movement. Teens continue their

progression. There are additional offerings for adults who just plain enjoy a common interest in theater.

Regardless of level — beginning or advanced — each student of any age is discovering theater arts in the playhouse's education program, buoyed by the instruction of Associate Artistic Director Michael Baldwin, teamed with the dance and acting classes of Education Associate and Company Manager Sarah Cuoco. Additional teachers from Broadway and beyond offer their credentials and talents in voice and acting.

"We're incredibly proud," both Baldwin and Cuoco agreed during an interview on Wednesday, June 22, as this summer's program was getting

underway.

The last week of June would bring teens to rehearse the Youth Theater stage production of Jane Austen's enduring 1813 novel "Pride and Prejudice," arranged for a modern stage production by Kate Hamill. With just two weeks of rehearsal, the show would open in July. The rehearsal atmosphere during a second visit on Wednesday, June 29, was appropriately intense and positive.

Shows are selected a year in advance.

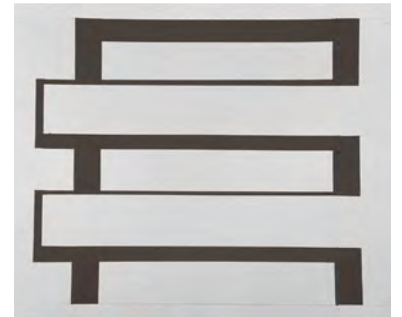
"The key is to discover what the

Continued on page 18



Young dancers don't need to stand on ceremony with Education Associate and Company Manager Sarah Cuoco.

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... Sharon Playhouse

Continued from page 17

kids are talking about,” Baldwin said, as an aid to choosing shows. “Pride and Prejudice” promised a good fit.

The play’s message being conveyed by this cast to their 21st-century theater audience is one of timeless social commentary in which the characters deal with rigid personal and societal bias wrapped in a period-costumed story of romance. It’s about discovery and finding humanity waiting beyond the confines of ingrained bias.

“Having a director of education has made a huge difference,” Baldwin said, noting the rapid growth of the program. In light of the success, the theater’s Board of Directors is committed to investing in the program’s expansion. Included is the prospect of the educational program going year-round, adding fall and spring, Baldwin said.

The program has already expanded into offering theater arts education in local schools. Baldwin said that the arts education program is in its second year at Indian Mountain School in Salisbury, Conn., and as an arts residency at Housatonic Valley Regional High School in Falls Village, Conn. In the coming year, the youth arts program will be introduced at Sharon Center School.

“He’s a really good director,” cast member Rory Marquis of Millbrook, N.Y., said of Baldwin. “He’s good at giving instruction and he makes it fun.” Members of the cast who were not needed in a rehearsal scene were learning their lines outdoors in the sunshine, eager to speak of their experience in the program.

“It feels more like a camp in the summer,” said Olivia Brooks of Lakeville, Conn. “It also brings us close to the company.” Coming from throughout the region and from New York City, the teens spoke of the value of socializing and getting to know each other. And, that the audition experience had not been pressured.



Young performers get to share their razzle dazzle thanks to Sharon Playhouse education programs.

“We are both of the community,” Baldwin said of himself and Cuoco. “We grew up in Lakeville.

“We have a vested interest in sustaining the opportunities we had as youth,” he added. “Growing up with the Sharon Playhouse was incredible.” At age 10 Baldwin first appeared on the Sharon Playhouse stage.

In his teens he began helping at the box office. From that vantage point, he foresaw expanding the education program to bring young people a deeper connection with the playhouse.

“We see change at every level,” Baldwin said of the instruction and its effectiveness as students display growing confidence. “It’s the most rewarding thing that we do,” he added.

Across all age groups taking the classes, Baldwin said, whether young people or adults, they leave the Sharon Playhouse a fuller version of

themselves.

“They discover themselves,” Cuoco agreed.

“When I was 17,” Baldwin recalled, “I played Humpty Dumpty for a Sharon Youth Theater production. I was on the wall, then I was off the wall. The Sharon Playhouse was the safest, most inclusive place to discover and then to express my true self.”

Cuoco picked up the conversation. “Just being in this environment at the Sharon Playhouse,” she said, “I have met some of my favorite people.”

“Dancers are actors,” she explained, “just as much as actors are actors. You can teach someone a step, but they bring themselves to create a dance.”

Speaking of steps, admitting to stepping onto his imaginary soap box, Baldwin said, “There is no better way to teach collaboration or empathy.

People have to work together as an ensemble, to step into someone else’s shoes and life experiences.”

What’s next?

This summer’s production schedule is packed with opportunities for young talent. Upcoming youth productions include “Winnie the Pooh Kids,” “Sharon Playhouse Stars” and “Shrek Jr.”

Future planning includes possible field trips, where groups could be bused to Sharon Playhouse to attend youth performances.

Baldwin also looks ahead to writing original shows for young people and having actors go on tour to area schools.

For more information about the education program and upcoming productions, and to acquire tickets that are going fast, go to: www.sharonplayhouse.org.

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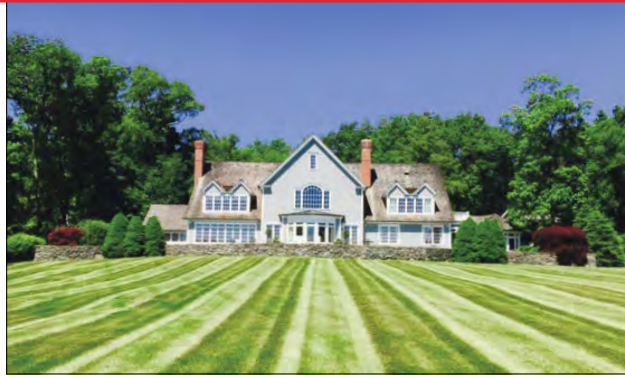


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