COMPASS

Your Guide to Tri-State Living

August 7, 2025



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Fixing Louie's bridle

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LIFESTYLE: KERRI-LEE MAYLAND

Bridging dreams and deadlines: summer projects on a budget

alking along the stream at our Lakeville cottage, I'm reminded how even the smallest design details can hold a story.

A little footbridge connects our cottage to my in-laws' home next door — a Cape Cod that has been in the Mayland family for decades. It's crooked and a bit meandering, but the bridge is also charming, practical, and meaningful. It was built using the weathered boards of a deck we took down at our old home in Philadelphia before moving full-time to Connecticut.

That repurposed wood, driven up

the Taconic and rebuilt over a babbling brook, is now something our kids have crossed since they could toddle. It stands as a reminder of how DIY projects can connect generations, places, and even budgets.

Summer, for many, is the season of plans both big and small. Maybe you've dreamed of turning the unused corner of your yard into a retreat, or finally fixing the railing on the front porch. Perhaps it's time for a fresh coat of paint in the living room, or maybe you are toying with the idea of an entire renovation. How do you turn your plans into action while staying on time and within

budget?

Start with what I call the wander test. Walk your space like a guest — a judgey one. Bring a notepad or your phone and record what you see and feel. Where do you linger? What looks tired? What catches your eye in all the wrong ways? That's often where your energy and money should go first.

Don't skip the planning stage. Too many people dive into a project midstream, get overwhelmed by costs or delays, and end up walking away. Build in time to dream, but follow it with a dose of spreadsheet reality. Create a rough scope of work. Ask friends and neighbors what similar projects have cost them. And most importantly, prioritize. Not everything needs to happen at once.

I always tell my design clients, "Let's make a big picture plan, then chip away as you choose."

Teamwork makes the dream work, but that doesn't always mean hiring the biggest name in town. Interview a few contractors, designers, or handypeople, and look for chemistry, good communication, and reliability. A smaller, more flexible crew may be just what your project — and your wallet — needs.

If you're hiring a designer, lean into their expertise not just for style, but also for strategy. Designers can rework a space using items you already own, source materials at a discount, and phase the work in a smart, efficient way.

That little footbridge in our yard didn't cost a dime in materials. It just took time, vision, and, in my case, a husband willing to bundle and bungee-cord the wood into the back of his pickup and drive it into the Litchfield Hills.

It's tempting to let another summer slip by with a to-do list left untouched. But think of the spaces around you as more than projects — they're the backdrop to your family's future memories.

So, if your yard or home is calling out for a little love, answer it. This could be the summer you finally get it done, beautifully and within reach.

Kerri-Lee Mayland is an Emmy award-winning news anchor and designer. She lives in Lakeville.

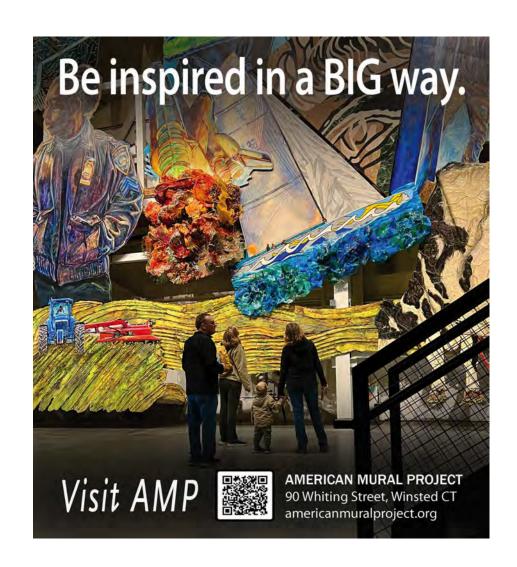




PHOTO BY KERRI-LEE MAYLAND

Footbridge made from repurposed wood

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MUSIC: THEO MANIATIS

Revolution Records: where the past plays on

n the corner of Willow and Franklin Streets in Torrington, Revolution Records doesn't announce itself with fanfare. But inside, you'll find a library of music from a bygone era.

The store bins overflow with records of every genre, while the walls are blanketed with posters from the 1980s —U2, Rush, and other bands that defined a generation. A community board invites local musicians to find bandmates.

"When I opened this store, I wanted it to feel like my bedroom when I was a teenager," said John Dibella, who founded the shop six years ago before handing it over to his lifelong friend, Ted Pirro. Pirro, a music lover with shoulder-length silver hair,

has spent most of his life working in record stores.

More than a retail shop, Revolution Records has become something of a community center. Pirro calls his most devoted customers "hall of famers" — regulars who arrive without fail every week and chat for hours.

"There's one gentleman here who's a huge Beach Boys fan," said Pirro. "He comes in every Saturday at six like clockwork and we'll talk about the Beach Boys, how he discovered Brian Wilson." Another regular, "Magic Phil," comes in Fridays to discuss the Mets.

The store has also become a meeting ground across generations. Parents and grandparents bring in college-age kids getting their first turntables, bonding over their shared love of music.

"A lot of them are basically rebuying their youth," Dibella said. "They want to hear it the way they remember hearing it."

Dibella and Pirro remember when vinyl ruled in the mid-80s, with bustling stores on every block of the West Village. But starting in the 1980s, CDs and cassettes upended the industry. By 2006, album sales had plummeted, and famous record stores shuttered.

"We bought albums from those days marked down to \$2.99 that are now worth \$35, \$40," explained Dibella. "That's how much people had no interest in vinyl."

Now, from the brink of extinction, vinyl has been revived. Album sales

reached 43.6 million last year for the first time since the 1980s.

Part of old-time records' appeal lies in the treasure hunt. Dibella's greatest find came from a box someone rescued from the town dump. Most of it was junk. But, he says, "Second to last record in the box is a King Crimson white label promo of their first album."

Only 300 were ever made, with maybe ten surviving in good condition. Dibella bought it for a dollar. The actual value? Over a thousand dollars.

Vinyl's other appeal is the warm, dynamic sound that can't be captured in digital format. "If you're listening on YouTube or Spotify, the sound is very compressed," Pirro said. "You're



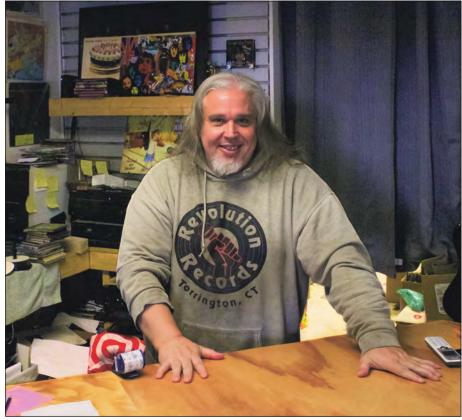


PHOTO BY THEO MANIATIS

Ted Pirro has spent most of his life working in record stores and now runs Revolution Records in Torrington.

not getting the full, rich experience."

Maybe the greatest appeal of records is the tangible, physical experience: admiring the cover, gently placing the stylus, and those few seconds of static before the music plays.

Running an independent record store is not easy, however. Pirro works six days a week, and the worries of the job linger with him on the seventh day too. There are slow periods after holidays when people travel, and the challenge of finding quality collections to buy.

But for Pirro, it is more than worth it. "I put all my energy into this thing because I don't want to work for anyone else again," he said. "The fact that I get to discuss my number one love in life every day is just awesome."



PHOTO BY THEO MANIATIS

Revolution Records in Torrington has the largest selection of vinyl in the area.



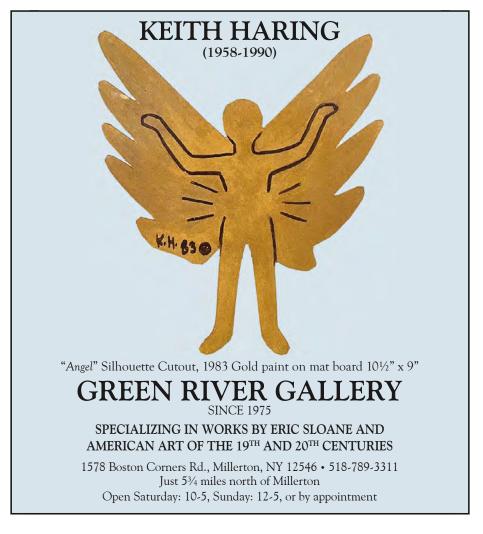




PHOTO BY LEILA HAWKEN

The Silo Bakery offers a warm welcoming entrance, along with a bakery aroma and extraordinarily inviting, freshly baked pastries.



BAKERY: LEILA HAWKEN

Artisan pastries with a French flair at The Silo Bakery in Amenia

or those seeking a relaxed respite with exquisite French baked delicacies paired with expertly brewed coffees, tea and more, The Silo Bakery awaits a visit.

Since it opened on Thursday, July 10, The Silo Bakery in Amenia has been discovered by area residents and visitors alike, all drawn to its casual, streetside ambiance. Conversation is unrushed in the company of a generous display of baked goods, including croissants and "cronuts," the latter a cross between a croissant and a doughnut.

"At its core, the bakery is about connection," commented a Silo Ridge representative in a statement describing the mission of the enterprise.

"It's about creating a space that brings people together and gives back to the community in a meaningful way. We are committed to making a difference — one croissant at a time," the statement continued.

According to sales records, the chocolate croissants are a "fan favorite." Surely worth a try.

Renowned pastry chef Thomas Croizé is at the helm of the flour artistry, having imagined a menu that includes a variety of brewed Illy Café coffees, breakfast sandwiches, pastries, and lunch offerings of soup or sandwiches made with in-house breads — incorporating local ingredients with an eye toward seasonality.

Highlighted among the signature pastries are, of course, croissants — including a chocolate variety using single-origin chocolate — and quickbreads such as banana bread

touted to be "like you have never had before."

There are cakes, tortes and fruit tarts, cheesecakes, cookies and brownies. Special occasion cakes can be ordered.

Pies to be tried include Cinnamon and Fresh Cherry Crumble Pie and Fresh Local Blueberry crispy-top pie.

There are also many choices for customers who prefer or require gluten-free selections.

Food has been a lifelong interest for pastry chef Croizé beginning with his childhood in France and leading to his current position as pastry chef at the Silo Ridge Field Club — and by extension, The Silo Bakery. He was born and raised in a small village near Paris where he observed his mother cooking in the family kitchen augmented by frequent visits with his grandparents in Normandy where he watched his grandfather tending the garden and preserving the harvest. From that early experience, he gained an understanding and appreciation seasonality.

Croize's training in culinary arts and hospitality was based in France, with additional experience gained in important kitchens in France, Monaco and New York. He taught at the Culinary Arts Institute in Hyde Park, New York in 2022 before coming to Silo Ridge.

The Silo Bakery is located at 3304 Route 343 in Amenia, partway down the hill from the post office. Bakery hours are Thursday through Sunday, 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. For more information, go to www.silobakery.com.

SPORTS: SALLY HAVER

Saddling up for the future: Lakeville Pony Club hosts open house

hether you're a young rider, a parent, or simply horse-curious, the Lakeville Pony Club is inviting the public to get a behind-the-scenes look at its long-standing equestrian tradition. Founded in 1956, the club will host an Open House on Tuesday, August 12, from 1 to 3 p.m. at Riga Meadow Equestrian Center in Amenia, NY. Guests are welcome to arrive early to watch the club in action, meet the horses, chat with current members, and learn more about the club's pro-

grams and history.

Riga Meadow is run by Linda Bushnell, a Pony Club graduate herself. Originally situated on Route 41 in Salisbury, The Club moved to Amenia in 2018 after the Salisbury property was sold.

The Club's current membership includes children from the towns of the Northwest Corner of Connecticut, as well as New York and Massachusetts, representing a broad range

Continued on next page



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Kissing Echo after a good ride

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PHOTOS BY CAITLIN VON GRAF

Jumping Louie



... Pony Club

Continued from previous page

of ages (7 to 18) and abilities, from beginners to advanced riders. Although some members own or lease their own horse, owning a horse is not required and most members use the stable's horses, or the dedicated Pony Club horse, Quincy.

The Club is led by parent volunteers, with support from both the national and regional offices. There are certifications, much like scout badges, as the kids are tested for their knowledge of horses, stable management, and riding skills. Since the knowledge testing involves oral presentations, the kids learn how to stand up and present to their peers. They also learn marketable skills—horse care and stable management—that they can parlay into earning extra money by working at Riga Meadow and other area barns in need of help. Some go on to become professionals in the equine industry, while others pursue careers in medicine or veterinary school. The Club produces some real high achievers!

Pony Club offers opportunities for members to participate in local and regional competitions. A highlight is the annual Halloween party, where Pony Clubbers and their horses are in full costume, competing for prizes. There's also summer camp — a concentrated week where younger riders are mentored by older ones, and everyone learns and competes in a supportive environment.

Here are some of the things the Club's kids have said about their belonging to Pony Club:

"I love to meet all the different people and learn new things with people who share my passion."

"It's like a family – everyone is there for each other."

"I love riding with a group of friends."

"I love the ability to try new things and learn through experience."

"I love the team competition and being able to help each other."

Finally, mark your calendars. The Club's annual horse show, the Lakeville Open, will be on the Riga Meadow property on Sunday, September 7. The show runs all day and admission is free.

For further information and updates on this event, visit facebook. com/LakevillePonyClub/.



Pony clubbers learn how to groom a horse



PHOTO PROVIDED Waiting to enter the show ring



PHOTO BY CAITLIN VON GRAF

Getting ready for the Halloween mounted parade



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FILM: PATRICK L. SULLIVAN

Schlock and awful August 2025

s you seek relief from the relentless summer heat by exploring the bottoms of various barrels, consider 1980's "Night of the Demon," a variation on the "Stupid People in the Jungle" genre that began with "King Kong."

In this example, Professor Nugent wakes up in the hospital with half his face chewed off. The flick reconstructs the tragedy, very slowly.

Seems a Bigfoot has been terrorizing a remote mountain area for years. The prof decides to investigate with his anthropology students, three of whom just happen to be young attractive women.

The gang piles into a boat and heads down the river with a couple of tents, a coffee pot, and no backpacks.

What could go wrong?

Along the way we meet Mr. Carlson, the gun-totin' mountain hermit, and Crazy Wanda. And a backwoods demon cult. And flashbacks within the flashback of Bigfoot attacking nekkid people in vans.

We've got gratuitous jazz flute music. Gratuitous plaid shirts. Gratuitous Bigfoot attack flashbacks. Gratuitous science facts.

Plus a mutant Bigfoot baby that looks like a jumbo order of General Tso's chicken.

Grocery and dollar stores often carry DVDs and Blu Rays and can be good sources of schlock. One particularly good score was a two-fer disc with "The Howling", installments V and VI. Oddly enough, V's release



PHOTO PROVIDED

date is two years after VI.

VI has got most of what you want in this type of film, except gratuitous nekkidity.

Now I don't expect great writing, but can't we do a little better than this roster of stereotypes? Sheriff who is automatically suspicious of foreigners; peckerwood pol in polyester; preacher/weirdo; preacher's daughter, anxious to get a little sinning in while she can; evil villain who might or might not be Satan and dresses like a member of the Hellfire Club.

We're talking cat swinging. Supernaturally evil villain in charge of a circus. Tight pants and checked frock coats on same, which for some is the true horror. Alligator boy. Lycanthropic transformation scenes shot on a very tight budget. Werewolf who looks like the late Michael Jackson after a long night in the Magic Kingdom. Yokels. Guns. Some blood but not as much as you'd think for a werewolf flick.

The immortal Weng Weng, all two feet nine inches of him, had a brief but memorable career, starting with "For Your Height Only," the flick that, in 1981, took the first ever Manila At long last, a good look at Bigfoot. That he looks like your basic rock band bass player matters not one whit.

International Film Festival by storm (which annoyed festival organizer Imelda Marcos).

Weng Weng is Agent 00 and/or Agent $3\frac{1}{2}$, depending on the dubbing and subtitles.

Either way, "For Your Height Only" is the greatest film ever made.

You can have your "Citizen Kane" and "Battleship Potemkin." Spare me your "Rear Window" and "The Third Man."

Why? Because none of these socalled great films has a tiny secret agent who escapes the bad guys by parachuting from a high balcony with a parasol.

Agent 00 (or 3 ½) is a big fan of the groin punch, the groin being the handiest area on the personal bodies of his assailants for a man of his stature.

And he's proficient with the mini machine gun and the mini samurai sword.

The flick also features atrocious



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John Heck • Cindy Heck



If the fellow at right isn't Satan he should be, judging by his attire.

"For Your Height Only" has many memorable scenes, but this one might be the best.

PHOTOS PROVIDED

dubbing in a variety of dialects — Long Island Lockjaw, British dowager, Brooklyn hood.

And the main villain clearly studied at the Moammar Qaddafi Institute of Fashion.

We'll wrap this up with 1991's "Karate Cop." Armed with his sawed-off shotgun and "Special Police" ballcap, John Travis is a post-apocalyptic knight errant, righting what wrongs he can in a hopelessly compromised

world, which in this case is Stockton, California.

No nekkidity, for an automatic onestar deduction if Schlock and Awful gave out stars.

Mutant cat man with a speech impediment. Gratuitous police car destruction. Magic motorcycle that never needs refueling. Chain swinging. And the Crown Prince of Schlock, the late David Carradine, and his famous "jacky rabbit stew."



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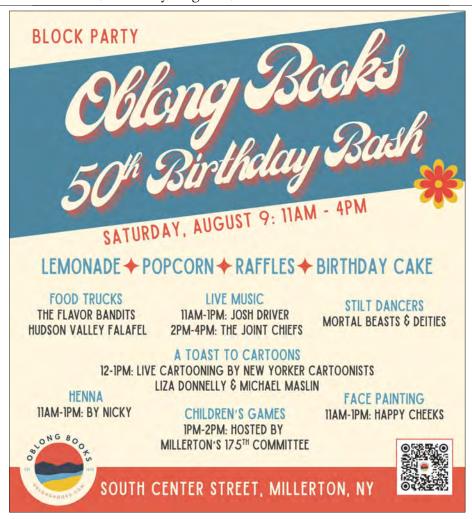
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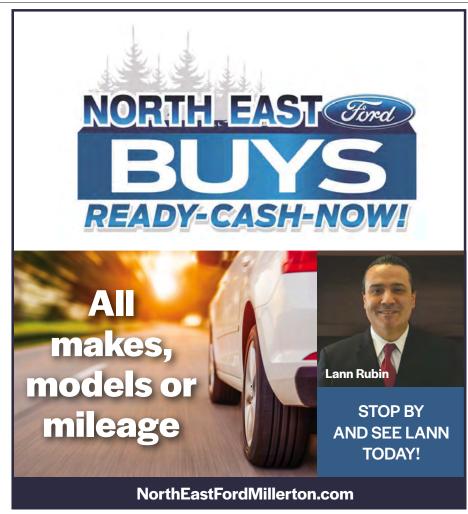


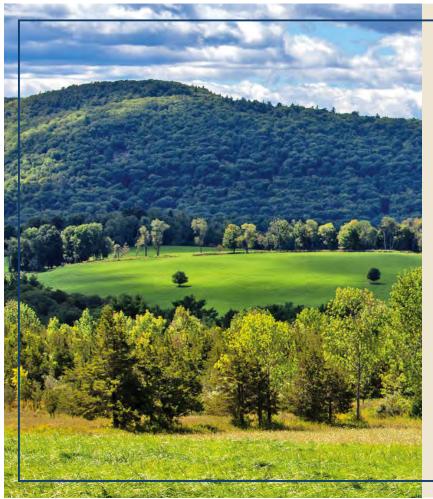
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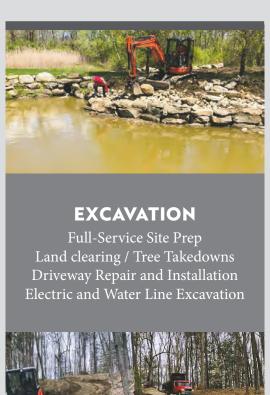
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