

Insightful & Informative

HEHAMPTON *Gazette*



VOLUME XLVI No. 3 MARCH 2024

Soaring into Spring!



The Hampton Gazette



VOLUME XLVI, No. 3 MARCH 2024

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THUMBS UP to the Hampton Highway Department, the members of our road crew who have seen us safely through another winter, this one with plenty of ice and snow, and who have repeatedly repaired the destruction from this seasons' torrential rains. The residents of our town only know the half of your heroic feats, and are still very appreciative.

THUMBS DOWN to whoever absconded one of the Senior Club's storage cabinets, which disappeared right after the Fall Festival. Its whereabouts remain a mystery, in spite of cameras at Town Hall, so if you've seen this rather cumbersome piece of equipment, which seems almost impossible to conceal, please inform the First Selectman. ■

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I was so pleased to see the Scouts recognized as Citizens of the Year-- the very first time a youth organization has been recognized by the Gazette. The Scouts are a true asset to our town, and this is indeed a well-deserved honor. As the new chair of the Hampton Recreation and Community Activities Commission and a former Program Coordinator for Youth & Family Services in Clinton CT, my vision is to have more programming geared to youth and families. We just had the first successful Family Movie night at Hampton Elementary School and will plan a movie this summer, a trip to Polar Park in Worcester to see the WooSox baseball team play on August 4th; concerts, community theater, a yearly Halloween event and December caroling and Arbor Day, to name a few, are in store for our town. We are looking for ideas and welcome new members to the Commission. As a former program coordinator and therapist, I know how important it is for youth to feel valued. Please reach out to the Commission at: hamptontownactivities@gmail.com and/or come to one of our meetings. We meet five times a year, the third Thursday of the month at 7PM. Please check the town calendar for dates and Agendas.

Sincerely,
Andrea Kaye

Hampton Recreation Commission Chairperson

2024 TOWN WIDE YARD SALE STRIVING FOR UNITY IN THE COMMUNITY!

The 2024 Town Wide Yard Sale is tentatively scheduled for June 21st and 22nd. There is no cost to participants; a \$5 donation fee is acceptable, though not obligatory, to help defray advertising expenses, signs, etc., all of which I will provide.

You may participate one or both days, 8AM to 3PM, rain or shine. The deadline for signing on is May 24th. Please contact me with any questions or suggestions at hamptonyardsale2022@gmail.com, or my land line (no texts but you may leave a message) at 860.465.9166.

Terri Warner

FROM THE REGISTRARS OF VOTERS

The polls will be open on March 12 from noon to 8PM in the Community Room at Town Hall to vote on the question: Shall the Town of Hampton appropriate an additional \$1,088,000 for the purchase of a fire truck and apparatus from the General Government for the 2023-2024 fiscal year to be funded, in part, with Capital Nonrecurring Fire Department Reserve fund of \$159,058 and American Rescue Plan funds of \$344,404?

Registered voters and citizens listed in the last completed Grand List as owning at least \$1000 of property are eligible to vote. Absentee ballots can be obtained from the Town Clerk during regular office hours, Tuesdays from 9AM to 4PM and Thursdays from 10AM to 7PM. ■

Sulema Perez-Pagan and Dayna McDermott-Arriola

CONTRIBUTORS: Deb Andstrom, Bright Acres Farm, Linda Long-Burten, Marie Cantino, Pat Cascio, Pat Coleman, John Gorman, Fran Gustavesen, Peggy McKleroy, Judy Noel, Jill Paterson, Rob Rondeau, Janice Trecker, Terri Warner. **PHOTOS:** Cover, Pete Vertefeuille; page 5, courtesy of the artist; pages 6 and 7, courtesy of Hampton Remembers the 2nd half of the 20th Century.

Around Town and Beyond... **VILLAGE VIEW**

TOWN TO VOTE ON PURCHASE OF FIRE TRUCK

Town Officials are calling a Town Meeting on March 6 at 6PM at Town Hall to discuss the purchase of a fire truck and apparatus. Members of the department have been working for over a year researching a new truck to replace the current one, which is thirty years old.

The Department considered seven different trucks from five different companies before selecting a truck that approximates the current one from Firematic Supply Company, Inc. for \$1,088,000 for the vehicle and its equipment. By applying \$159,058.68 from the Fire Department's Capital and Non-Recurring Account, and another \$395,000 in American Recovery Program Act (ARPA) funds, the Town will need to fund approximately a half a million.

At a February 15 meeting of the Board of Finance, Chief Richard Schenk distributed the proposed contract and the components list and detailed the process the department employed in considering the purchase, including the formation of a committee charged with exploring options, contacting vendors, test driving vehicles, and ranking the final selections on criteria which included costs, delivery, and service inspections. The full membership approved the committee's recommendation, and at the finance board meeting, members unanimously voted to send the recommendation on the purchase to Town Meeting. The Board of Selectman also voted to send the question to a March 12 referendum, to be held in the Community Room at Town Hall from noon to 8PM. ■

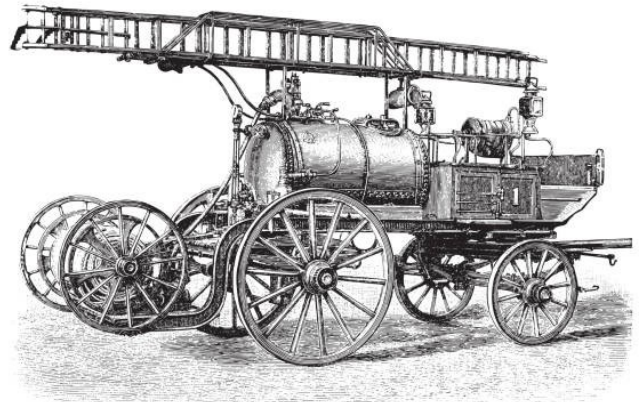
SMOKE MIRRORS AND SPOTLIGHTS

During the month of January members of Hampton Fire Company logged 62 man hours on emergency dispatch:

- 1/4/24 -1pm - Vehicle fire
- 1/8/24 -10pm - Structure fire
- 1/10/24 -3:15 pm - Tree and wires down
- 1/10/24 - 7pm - Sick person
- 1/11/24 - 5pm - Fire alarm
- 1/12/24 - 1am - Fire alarm
- 1/14/24 - 3pm - Tree and wires down
- 1/15/24 - 6:30am- Syncope/fainting
- 1/16/24 - 9am - Fire Alarm
- 1/17/24 - 6:30am - Fire alarm
- 1/21/24 - 10:30am - Stroke/CVA
- 1/23/24 - 11am - Cardiac distress
- 1/28/24 - 12:30pm - Fire Alarm
- 1/28/24 - 1:30pm - Bleeding
- 1/30/24 - 6pm - Sick Person
- 1/31/24 - 3pm - Fall Injury
- 1/31/24 -10:30pm - Cardiac Distress

Additionally, 100(plus) man hours were logged on drills, equipment maintenance, meetings and other individual unrecorded services. Adieu resolve...

On January 31st a midnight candlelight vigil was held at the Fire House. A crowd of about 300 citizens of Hampton, as well as several renegades from



Chaplin and Scotland, were in attendance. Black bunting was draped across a Recliner and placed at the base of the flagpole. Friends and family shared tearful memories of lives so full of promise, yet cut so short. At midnight the crowd, hands clasped, soulfully hummed Kumbaya as 150 luminaria balloons were released into the star spangled sky. Grief counselors were on hand for those in need. Fire House Dog howled mournfully. Chief Ricardo Schenk offered the closing benediction, bidding a final farewell to the short-lived...New Year's Resolutions.

May they Rest in Peace.

It is anticipated that this will become an annual event.

Woof. ■

HAMPTON RECEIVES GRANT

The Town of Hampton is the happy recipient of a grant from the Department of Transportation. The \$2,204,094 grant was distributed to three towns in the 35th District, Coventry, Hampton and Stafford. "The local grants are part of the statewide Transportation Rural Improvement Program," said Senator Jeff Gordon, "a newly created state grant program designed to support rural municipalities, which are often ineligible for many federal transportation programs." Hampton's share is \$822,250 for resurfacing of the Airline Trail.

Gordon praised the Governor, the Commissioner, and our local leaders for submitting the applications for the funding. "These projects will further our efforts to make northeast Connecticut safe for pedestrians, and to improve access to the natural resources that we all enjoy," Gordon said. ■



IT'S SUGARING SEASON!

The Annual Open House at Bright Acres Farm on Old King's Highway will be March 16 from noon to 4, rain or shine. Along with the processing of maple syrup in the sugar house, there will be demonstrations on flint knapping and a blacksmith at work; and along with maple products, there will be other items from local vendors in the barn. Make sure you wear your boots, this event is held rain or shine!

Other local farms that produce maple products are Buell's Dragonfly Farm on Griffin Road. They make a variety of maple products and also raise poultry and Belted Galloway cattle.

Pebble Brook Maple Farm is just around the corner on Kenyon Road. They've ramped up since the cold snap broke and are boiling as well. They also boast the cutest Highland cattle anywhere!

Make this a sweet weekend to visit your favorite sugarhouses with friends. For more info: buyctgrown.com ■

RECIPES OF THE MONTH: MAPLE SYRUP

For those who love the flavor of maple, there are several ways to enjoy it beyond pancakes. These recipes are compliments of Bright Acres Sugar House.

North Country Basting Sauce

- 1 cup ketchup
- 2/3 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1/2 cup pure maple syrup
- 1 tbs. Worcestershire Sauce
- 1 tbs. Dijon mustard
- 1/2 tsp. chili powder
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. cayenne pepper

Bring ingredients to a boil in small saucepan over medium heat, stir occasionally. Reduce heat and cook gently for 10 minutes; stir occasionally. Cool, then store in covered jar in refrigerator. Will keep for at least four weeks. ■

Maple Vinagrette

- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 tbs. maple syrup
- Grey Poupon mustard to taste (1-2 tsp.)

Whisk all ingredients together and let sit for a couple of hours before using. ■

Comedy FUNdraiser

Please join us on March 9 at the Elks Club in Willimantic for Koty's Comedy Night to benefit PHACT PTSA and the *Dakota Noel Bartlett Scholarship Fund*. Cash Bar and Raffles are at 6PM and the Comedy Show, featuring Zach Valencia, Derrick Fonseca, and Linda Belt, starts at 7. Tickets are \$20 online at comedyforcash.com., or \$25 at the door. ■

FROM THE HAMPTON SENIORS CLUB

Small townships are vibrant communities where change is constant and exciting. Each new development brings fresh energy and opportunities for growth. And, grow we have over the past few months. Under the guidance of several dedicated leaders our club membership has grown from nine to 55. In the meantime, our Activities Committee has been working hard to develop a program with your ideas in mind. Here's a progress report:

In February, the first Game Day proved to be a success. On that day, Mexican Train and Hearts were big hits. Everyone had so much fun they asked for a weekly Game Day. We obliged and game mornings are almost every Thursday in the Community Room at Town Hall. Cribbage was another big hit. Four people were taught by our very own Cribbage champion, Jeanne Kavanagh. We invite you to drop by to enjoy the fun. There are about a dozen or more games from which to choose. We are looking for more Bridge players.

On March 7th a four-week line dancing program will begin at the Chaplin Senior Center. Working in conjunction with Chaplin, we arranged for the very popular and well known Sarah Britto to provide lessons. Currently 23 people have paid to participate. Please contact the Chaplin Center for more information at 860.455.1327. This is a fine example of a coordinated effort to bring seniors together from Hampton, Ashford, Mansfield and other nearby towns.

On April 18th, a twice monthly, four month painting session will begin. We have engaged an artist who is known to other senior organizations. This too will be held in the Hampton Community Room. For details, email hamptonseniorsclub@yahoo.com. Subject line: painting classes.

Currently, we are lining up speakers. We would like to hear your ideas. Please send your suggestions to: hamptonseniorsclub@yahoo.com. Subject line: Activities

In the near future, we will start having regular potlucks, most likely around holidays. Vendor prepared luncheons will be considered as well. The former lunch program has been disbanded. Kindly extend thanks to Diane Gagnon and Peter Witkowski for their years of selfless service for our community.

It has been a privilege and a joy to help shape a vibrant and active seniors' community here in Hampton and beyond.

Be Kind, Be Safe, and Remember you Matter!

Respectfully,
Pat Cascio, Fran Gustavesen,
Linda Long-Burten, Peggy Mckleroy,
Hampton Seniors Club

Fletcher Memorial Library



NEW BOOKS

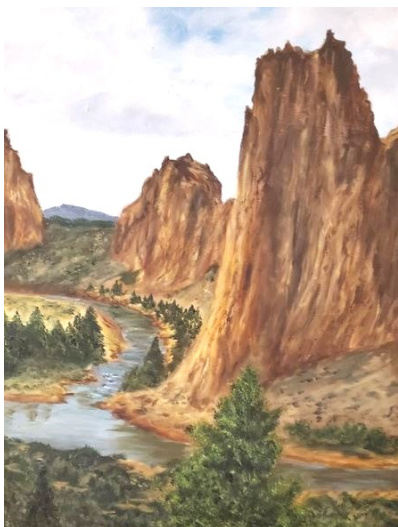
Lots of variety this month with new adult fiction from favorites like Janet Dailey, Jonathan Kellerman, Margot Livesey and Paul Theroux, plus a wide selection of adult non-fiction, juveniles from popular Tui Sutherland and R. L. Stine, and an array of new DVDs.

ADULT FICTION

Janet Dailey	One in a Million
Robert Dugoni	Her Deadly Game
Daisy Goodwin	Diva
Kristin Hannah	The Women
Rachel Hawkins	The Heiress
Anthony Horowitz	The Twist of a Knife
Asuma Khan	Blackwater Falls
Ausma Khan	Blood Betrayal
Margot Livesey	The Road From Belhaven
Daniel Mason	North Woods
Alex Michaelides	The Fury
Derek Miller	The Curse of Pietro Houdini
J.D. Robb	Random in Death
Paul Theroux	Burma Sahib
C.J. Wray	The Excitements

ADULT NON-FICTION

Bret Baier	To Rescue the Constitution: George Washington & the Fragile American Experiment
Jennet Conant	Fierce Ambition: Life & Legend of War Correspondent Maggie Higgins
Peter Englund	November 1942: An Intimate History of the Turning Point of WW2
Erin French	Big Heart Little Stove: Bringing Home Meals & Moments from the Lost Kitchen
Diane B. Henriques	Taming the Street...FDR's Fight to Regulate American Capitalism
Rosanne M. Leipzig	Honest Aging: An Insider's Guide to the Second Half of Life
Raymond Moody	Proof of Life After Life: 7 Reasons to Believe There is an Afterlife
Clive Oppenheimer	Mountains of Fire: Menace, Meaning & Magic of Volcanoes
Cari Safina	Alfie & Me: What Owls Know, What Humans Believe



TOP SHELF GALLERY

The Fletcher Memorial Library's The Top Shelf Gallery will feature work by Janice Leitch during March and April. Her show, *Awakenings*, opens with a reception March 9 at 11 AM.

Leitch, who paints out of her "Little River Studio" in Hampton, attended the Massachusetts School of Art in Boston, but she put her art career on hold to raise a family. She resumed serious painting in 2010 at the urging of her daughter. She paints exclusively in oils, mostly New England landscapes and water birds. Her husband makes many of her painting frames in his home workshop.

Leitch's work has appeared in regional galleries and in shows. She has contributed to the *Hampton Gazette's* annual calendar for the past four years and she exhibits each fall as part of the Artists Open Studios event. ■

MONTHLY EVENTS

March 2 **Dr. Seuss's Birthday Party!**

10 – 11AM Dr. Seuss stories, a craft, birthday cupcakes, and a visit from The Cat in the Hat in person, available for pictures and an autograph. All ages are welcome!

March 9 **Artist's Reception** 11AM

The March/April show at the Top Shelf Gallery will be *Awakenings*, featuring Hampton resident Janice Leitch.

March 30 **Easter Egg Hunt with a Visit from the Easter Bunny!** 10 – 11AM

Come to the library for an Easter Egg Hunt (inside, and outside, weather permitting). Have your photo taken with the Easter Bunny! All ages are welcome!

March 13 **FML Book Discussion Group**

6PM We will be discussing two plays by Arthur Miller, *The Crucible* and *Death of a Salesman*. Stop by the library to pick up a copy of the books. New members are always welcome.

WEEKLY

Wednesday Afternoons **After School Story & Craft** 4-5PM. Join us for a story and a related craft every Wednesday during the school year.

Thursday Mornings **Tai Chi at the Hampton Town Hall** 8:30AM. Tai Chi takes place in the Town Hall Pavilion, weather permitting.

Mah-Jongg 101 10 – NOON. Mah Jongg is a popular tile game currently taking a foothold with older people. It's a terrific brain teaser, it's addictive, it's fun, and it's social. Try it out, all skill levels are welcome.

Friday Mornings **Mexican Train** 9AM -- NOON. Join us for free classes on a modern version of Dominoes on Friday mornings.

Baby Story Time Song & Play

10:30 – 11:30AM. An interactive program for birth to three-year-olds using a variety of musical instruments, rhymes, songs, finger plays, puppets, as well as a story or two. Our goal is to encourage a lifelong love of reading and learning.

Senior Delivery Service

The library is happy to provide a delivery service for library items (books, audio CDs, and DVDs). Please call or email the library with your requests and/or questions on this and all listed programs at 860.455.1086 or fletchermemoriallibrary@gmail.com



Histories like those in Alison Davis's "Hampton Remembers", which recorded the words of residents born at the turn of the century, remind us of the inventions their generation witnessed – automobiles, airplanes, telephones, electricity, refrigeration, indoor plumbing. Later generations haven't seen as much significant progress in our lifetimes, though with the common place use of computers, we certainly have witnessed monumental changes in communications – remember the advent of email? Facebook? Instagram? Cell phones? We can now instantly connect with anyone, anywhere, with our fingertips; our country has come a long way since smoke signals. The bridge between these two realms: mail delivery, which evolved throughout the centuries "from foot, to horseback, stagecoach, steamboat, railroad, automobile, and plane."

At the turn of this century, Norine Barrett wrote a series on the postal service in the *Gazette*, chronicling many of these changes. For those who haven't lived here very long, Norine, who worked for the Hampton Post Office for 20 years, is the mother of Renee Cuprak, who delivered our mail to us for 30 years. The first in the series "Changes in the Postal Operations" explained the new system of Delivery Point Sequence, wherein mail is sorted in large cities with machines that, if unable to recognize the address, will return it to the sender, which, Norine admitted, "doesn't seem like a big deal to most municipalities", but in Hampton, "instead of the local postal employees figuring out who 'Aunt Maisie, Hampton' is, the piece of mail will never make it here for us to ponder over". The second in the series, "Post Office Jargon", helped explain the phrases stamped on envelopes that were the consequences of Delivery Point Sequence when "Aunt Maisie, Hampton", had previously been sufficient.

Subsequent articles detailed significant dates in postal history, starting in 1673 with the establishment of the first mail delivery routes which ran from New York to Boston. Boston Post Road is the oldest postal route in America, eventually evolving into the first highways, in our town, Route 6. Stage coaches transported the mail on the post roads, defined as "any road on which the mail traveled", thus in 1823, Congress designated navigable waters as post roads, and in 1838, railroads were officially postal routes. Though viewed by some as "devices of Satan to lead immortal souls to Hell....traveling at the unconscionable speed of 15MPH", mail service increased rapidly using trains for transport. Migration to the west, especially with the 1848 Gold Rush, accelerated the need for cross-continental delivery, Norine explained. Ships transported the mail from New York to Panama, where it crossed on trains, and was then transported on another ship to San Francisco. In 1858, a contract was issued to Overland Stage which took several months to travel 2800 miles from Missouri to San Francisco, using the Overland Trail, an alternate to the Oregon Trail.

Our Rural Heritage **THE POST OFFICE**

One of the briefest, though most memorable of mail delivery's eras, was the Pony Express which started in 1860. Newspapers advertisements declared: "Wanted – Young, skinny, wiry fellows, not over 18. Must be experienced riders, willing to risk death daily. Orphans preferred." Along with these requirements, riders needed to swear on a Bible not to cuss, fight, or abuse the animals. Respondents became part of the Pony Express, "a 2000 mile route from St. Joseph Missouri to California, through a vast unknown land". Horses also needed to be hardy, withstanding thirst in summer and cold in winter. Typically, a rider covered 100 miles every day, changing horses at relay stations every 15 miles, "transferring himself and his pocketed saddle cover to the new mount in one leap." When the transcontinental telegraph system was completed in 1861 "the pony express became a legend".

The last method of delivery, Air Mail, wasn't until 1918.

Different measures led to rural America experiencing progress. In 1862, Railway Mail Service, which partnered railway companies with postal clerks, provided mail delivery to small towns where trains didn't even stop, its final run in 1977. And while 1863 marked the start of Free City Delivery, Rural Free Delivery, the "RFD" familiar to some of us, wasn't until 1902. Perhaps more than any other factor, RFD led to the development and improvement of roads. Until 1950, mail was delivered twice a day.

Other notable dates: the first postage stamps weren't used until 1847. Prior to that, envelopes weren't used. Letters were folded and addressed and picked up at the post office, where recipients could pay the postage. The first penny post card was introduced in 1873, Special Delivery in 1885, Parcel Post in 1913, and Express Mail in 1977. Zip codes weren't established until 1963.

Since the appointment of the first Postmaster General, Benjamin Franklin, in 1775, methods of delivering mail have continuously progressed. "The postal system," Norine wrote, "helped to bind the new nation together", and was instrumental in building the highways, rail lines, and airways that spanned the continent.

Norine also wrote of the history of Hampton's post offices. The first documented record is in 1795, a sub-station in Howard Valley. Mail was delivered there from Pomfret once a week by a carrier riding a donkey. In 1828,

this post office was moved to a mill company store at the junction of Reilly and Windham roads, north of the bridge. This store burned in 1893, but remnants of the foundation and the mill can still be seen.

There was also a post office in the village. Daniel Buckley is recorded as its first postmaster in 1820. Mail was delivered once a week from a service carrier from Lebanon to this post office housed in a corner of the General Store. With the development of the railroads through Hampton in 1872, there were two other post offices. In "Hampton Remembers", John Hammond recalled the one on Station Road: "When the railroad station became Hampton Station the post office up there remained Rawson until about 1909 or something like that, when they started the RFD and did away with it. It was in my house. My mother was the postmistress and she was a Rawson, it was the Rawson House. I was pretty near born in the post office. The post office was in one room – then you go through a doorway into a bedroom and that was where I was born!"

There was another Post Office at Clark's Corners. Mr. Hammond relayed, "In the first place it was down in the old store, where Ambrose Fitzgerald lives now, then in Amos Stone's where Mains is, then Olivers had it in the old Jonathan Clark house. Then they did away with the post office entirely and everything had to go through North Windham."

In 1913 postmaster Austin Pearl purchased a small building, originally the office of Governor Chauncey Cleveland, and moved it from where it was located at the Governor's house on the corner of Main Street and East Old Route 6 to a site north of the intersection of Main Street and Hammond Hill. In 1921, a small addition was built on to the General Store by store owner and post master Charles Burnham .

As with Norine and her daughter Renee, here in Hampton, postal service seems to run in the family.

I started working for my father, Austin Pearl, who was the postmaster, in 1915 when I was sixteen years old, and I worked in the post office most of the time till I retired in 1964. I was postmistress for 28 years, from 1936 on. My sister Mary was assistant postmaster and my brothers Will and Reuben were rural carriers. And to get the mail from the station there were what were called mail messengers and there were several of them down through the years. After my father was postmaster, Charles Burnham took over and then Jerome Keech and then I was appointed. Way back, the post office was in a corner of the store that Arthur Roberts had, and his father Thomas Roberts was postmaster. Then my father had what was Governor Cleveland's law office. Postmasters had to furnish their own in those days so he bought it and moved it to not quite across from Reuben's road and that was his post office. Later when I was postmistress it was in that little addition to the store...The mail messengers drove with a horse and wagon up to meet the train three times a day. The train only stopped one time, the morning mail, all the parcel post and stuff had to go then. And the other two times were catcher pouches which meant that the pouch was strapped in the middle and then hung from a crane where the mail clerk on the train would reach out with a long hook and pull the pouch in and throw off our pouch.

Evelyn Estabrooks from "Hampton Remembers"

Reuben delivered the mail for forty-five years. He drove most everything you can think of. He had to have his own vehicle – it wasn't supplied by the post office. When he first started he used to go thirty-five miles. And he kept a

horse – we had three horses—and he drove on down -- you know where the old Fred Burnham place is. There used to be a barn across the road and he stopped there and took a fresh horse – we boarded a horse there all the time – and he'd take that horse and come all the way back up there to our barn – after he got through the mail it was put up here. Then the next day the third horse that hadn't been driven was put on and the horse that went the day before stayed to home – and we swapped those three horses so no horse got too tired because travelling wasn't very good.

Gertrude Pearl from "Hampton Remembers"

In 1960, William Pearl and his grandson Austin began construction on a new, modern building, what would become our current Post Office. Charlie Fox became the postmaster, bringing the neighborly ambience into the new building. The Post Office continued as a social place, a place where folks coincidentally met, and caught up with one another's news.

From "Hampton Remembers":
Will Jewett used to get the mail in the evening and I'd follow him up to the store and get my mail, especially the witch hazel check! Everybody'd stand around and maybe the stor'd be open and we'd wait for Mr. Jewett to sort the mail. A sociable time – everything is rushed now, y'know, no time for nothing! ■

Stanley Gula



REMEMBERING...

THE POST OFFICE & A FORMIDABLE POSTMISTRESS

During Evelyn Estabrooks' term as postmistress, she submitted the proper forms to the government multiple times with complaints of old equipment and a space that was too small. Hearing no reply, she penned a poem in 1955 to the Post Office Procurement Chief in Hartford and received an answer within a month. Reprinted here is her poem, and its response.

*Here I sit in this ramshackle seat
And look around my office with a sense of defeat.
The boxes are small and all broken down,
No wonder the Patrons look at them with a frown.
They have been in use for more than sixty years,
Their shabby condition reduces me to tears.
The little stamp window is so much too small
We can't see who's there if it's someone who's tall.
The slot for the letters makes the Patrons cuss,
When they try to mail things and not have
 them muss.
We try to give service that's really worth while
And greet all our patrons with a bright
 cheery smile,
But pride in our work really does lack a spark
With equipment that looks like it came from
 the Ark.
So we say, "Pretty Please" to the "Powers
 That Be"
Won't you send some new boxes and a
stamp window to me!*

Evelyn Estabrooks

*After reading them both, we have this to say
"This Postmaster needs help with all possible speed,
We will ship her the equipment of which
 she had need."
Attached is a letter, please read it with care,
The sketch will not be too difficult to prepare.
Send your reply to this office with haste,
Be sure to state if you will need a new safe.
Furniture, partitions, lock boxes you'll get,
When the items are installed, you will be all set.
Thank you for letting us know of your plight,
Soon working conditions will be cheery
 and bright.*

W. Kallis, Chief of Procurement,
Bureau of Facilities, Post Office Department

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to the following scholars for earning academic distinction at their respective schools.

Bryant University: Tyler Fullerton, Dean's List

Curry College: Alexandra Smardon, Dean's List

University of Saint Joseph: Amelia Chokas, Dean's List

Western New England University: Owen Beaulieu, President's List

SCOUTING NEWS

Troops 1093 and 93 attended the Klondike Campout on February 10th and 11th. We had two patrols attend, one was an overnight patrol and the other just stayed for the day on February 10th. This year's Klondike was based on the Gold Rush and the struggles encountered crossing the Klondike in search of gold nuggets. The scouts were provided a map of camp, and using only a compass bearing and a distance, had to route themselves to various Alaskan "towns" scattered around camp. At each town, they were tested on various scout skills such as knot tying, fire building and first aid. Based on how well they did, they were awarded gold nuggets. The patrols were also judged on their ability to cook their lunch, based on how well they worked as a team, complexity, and clean up. Our day patrol won first place, and the overnight patrol performed very well! Day patrol participants were Lila Aldrich, William Telford, Zoey Mains, Sealy Nunn, and Tessa Sanchez. The overnight patrol consisted of Vinney Gadbois Y Manning, Aaron Mesick, Camilla Gadbois Y Manning, Helen Telford, Emily Nunn and Jonah Mlyniec. Most impressive to me was to watch them learn how to navigate around camp using only a compass, and a map that they plotted to reach each town. Scouts meet at the Hampton Congregational Church on Tuesdays, at 7PM. ■

Rob Rondeau

GROWING & LEARNING

A Letter to the Members of the Hampton Senior Club,
We'd like to thank the members of the Hampton Senior Club for attending our spaghetti dinner fundraiser. Because of you, our annual sixth grade week away to Nature's Classroom in April will be affordable for our families. Between dinner tickets, raffle tickets, and donations, we earned \$2,898!

Not only will this enable our students to benefit from a very special educational experience, but we were all able to benefit from the sense of community and connection between generations that our modern world doesn't always provide. Thank you so much for coming out to support the students of Hampton Elementary School. We hope to see you again next year!

With Much Gratitude,
Jill Paterson

Team C Teacher, Hampton Elementary School



CONNECTICUT AUDUBON SOCIETY

218 Day Road, Pomfret Center

March 4 **Inflation Reduction Act & Energy Savings** 6:30PM

Steve Lewis will explain the Inflation Reduction Act and how it can help decrease money spent on energy.

March 9 **Wildlife in Connecticut's Changing Landscape** 2PM

Paul Colburn will discuss mountain lions, gray wolves, coyotes, elk, turkeys, fishers, deer, black bears, cottontails, and more.

March 16 **Nature Sketchbook Journaling** 1 – 4PM

Roxanne Steed will teach the 10-minute-sketch-walk on the Bafflin Sanctuary and then you'll finish your pages with paint.

March 14 & 21 (6:45PM), 23 & 27(7PM) **Woodcock Watches**

Come watch the American Woodcocks' courtship flights.

March 18 **'Kiss the Ground'** 6:30PM

This film focuses on soil regeneration as the path towards climate stabilization, ecosystems restoration, and abundant food supplies.

March 26 **Volunteer Naturalist Training Program** 8AM - NOON

First in a weekly series, Tuesdays till June, to include 40 hours of training.

Trail Wood, 93 Kenyon Road, Hampton

March 6 **Trail Wood Troubadours** 6 – 9PM

Join our casual group to play music written during the period the Teales lived at Trail Wood, 1959-1993. Songs can be viewed in advance. Chords and words will be projected on screen.

March 10 **Second Sunday Walks** 2PM

Caretakers Laura & Paul Tedeschi lead an afternoon walk on the trails, beginning with an Edwin Way Teale reading.

March 15 **Frog and Toad Calls** 6:30PM

Take an evening walk around the pond and learn to identify the calls of frogs and toads. Hopefully, we'll hear Spring Peepers and Wood Frogs.

For more information on listed programs, or to register, call 860.928.4948, email trailwood@ctaudubon.org, or visit ctaudubon.org

JOSHUA'S TRUST

March 6 **Wednesday Walk at Tower Hill Preserve** 9 – 10:30AM

A 1.4 mile hike on abandoned farm roads through an oak forest; between 96 & 154 Tower Hill Road, Chaplin.

March 20 **Wednesday Walk at Utley Hill Preserve** 9 – 10:30AM

A multi-habitat adventure and a little history on this 2.5 mile loop; Utley Hill Preserve, 60 Hennequin Road, Columbia.

March 23 **Long Distance Hike at Bradley-Buchanan Woods** 10AM - NOON

A 4.7 mile hike into Mansfield Hollow State Park, and back. Park at the Library at 54 Warrenville Road, Mansfield Center.

Visit <https://joshuastrust.org/events/> for details, changes and cancellations.

FLAKES

Snow...you have found me waiting for you and wondering about how you
will feel on my breath

I close my eyes for just a few moments, and you cover the brown with a
crisp coating of unblemished fineness

The tall ash and pine that peek into my window, welcome you with opened
arms hour after silent hour

You dance slowly on the rhythm of the wind and will rest quietly,
after your long journey from the heavens, on monuments of your
own creation

You...in the midst of long winter's night, brings a warmth to my being
beyond illusion

and calls for me to honor your presence. ■

PASSAGES

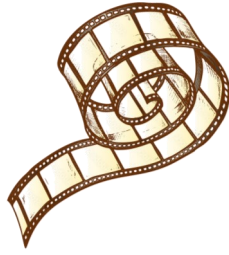
ERNEST LONG, 86, passed away on December 26, 2023. Born June 1, 1937, Ernest was a U.S. Army veteran, serving in Stuttgart, Germany. During the military, he was on the Army boxing team, winning the light heavyweight championship, and skydiving team, with over 400 jumps in his career. Because of his experience playing the saxophone, he was asked to train his fellow soldiers in how to march, and because of his experience as a lineman for Southwestern Bell, he was asked to train soldiers in how to climb and repel down telephone poles. Our condolences to his wife of 61 years, Marquita, his children Brian and Anita and their families. ■

DELL ROWNTREE passed away on January 10, 2024 in the 74th year of his life. Born on January 6, 1951, First Lt. Dell Rowntree, USMC-USARNG, was a veteran of the Vietnam War. He graduated from the University of Texas with a degree in Russian Language. An avid fisherman, he enjoyed fishing with his family and riding go carts with his kids. Predeceased by his parents and his sister, he is survived by his loving wife of 35 years, Beth Nagy-Rowntree, his brother, his children Byron, Carl, Lily, Thomas and Vivian, and his granddaughters. Our condolences to all. Donations in his honor may be made to Hartford Healthcare at Home Hospice Care. ■

VAUGHN HOWARD RUSSELL passed away on January 23 at the age of 58 in Lakeland, Florida. Vaughn formerly lived in Hampton, the son of Louise Russell and the late Philip Russell. A 1984 graduate of Parish Hill High School, Vaughn served in the military before starting his own trucking business. In recent years he became an over the road driver. Along with his mother, he leaves his wife, Billie Jean, a brother John and wife Deborah, of Hampton and a sister, Gayle LaFlamme and her husband Carl, as well as a niece, nephews, aunts and cousins. Our condolences to Vaughn's family; he will be missed. ■

AUNTIE MAC Dear

A group of us
goes to the
movies together



some evenings after work, and we recently invited a new colleague to join us. He was SO loud, talking throughout the film. We don't want to un-invite him, but some of the others just stopped joining us. We were seven, now we're four. Should we tell him the problem? Or just not invite him in the future?

Remaining Movie-Goers

My Dear Neighbor:

Auntie Mac is hard-pressed to remember the last time she went to the cinema; her tastes, which perplex even herself, run to the cheesily arcane. It was probably a special showing at the Castro of that Bette Davis classic "In the Forest," whose famous line Auntie Mac wishes, upon viewing her sister-in-law's summer cottage, she could express out loud. At these special and frankly social occasions, a bit of good-hearted cinephile camaraderie is expected; the collective "ooohs," "aaahs," and "Don't go into the basement!" add a collective enjoyment to the event. But to have in one's party a boorish nabob who detracts from the experience is something that needs to be addressed as soon as possible. Auntie Mac wonders why you and your friends are uncomfortable broaching your concerns with your new colleague. After all, we are all trying to re-adjust to interactions in the public sphere, and two years' worth of watching television with family and friends in the privacy of one's home naturally has dulled our sense of courtesy to those around us. Surely, the hurt that your colleague would feel if he were no longer invited would be greater than the temporary chagrin he will experience if, during post-movie coffee chitchat, you discuss his behavior with him. Auntie Mac would not beat around the bush, but neither would she be unkind. A simple, "You know, Carmine, you talked pretty much nonstop during that movie" would suffice. To which he could reply in a number of different ways: 1) I had no idea; thanks for pointing that out; 2) I do get caught up in the drama and I just feel like sharing my thoughts; 3) I had a lot of questions and I wondered if any of you knew what was going on . . . etc. Whatever his response, you can follow up with "It'd be really nice if when we go out next time you maybe tried to not do that, since, you know, it can get pretty distracting, and the woman right behind us was about to pour popcorn on your head." People who talk during movies usually believe that their contributions provide added enjoyment to those around them; once they are disabused of this notion they tend to limit their comments to the acceptable "What a beautiful castle." "Isn't that Lana Del Ray?" "Don't go into the basement!" If you prefer an even more direct approach, during your next excursion and at his first outburst, the person in the seat next to him can touch his arm lightly and say quietly "Shhhh, we need to concentrate." That, dear, really ought to do the trick. ■

Your Auntie Mac

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