

Insightful and Informative

HAMPTON *Gazette*



VOLUME XLVII No. 1 / JANUARY 2025



Citizen of the Year

Committed, efficient, diligent, prudent, thorough, courageous, accurate, trust-worthy, fair. These are among the words used to describe our 2025 Citizen of the Year, **Kathy Donahue**, who has been nominated multiple times over the years, and by several residents, for her myriad contributions to town governance and organizations.

The role she is currently associated with is on the Board of Finance, where Kathy has served since 2019, the last five years as Chairman. Statutorily charged with providing oversight of the Town's finances, the board is responsible for the Town's budgets, annual reports and audits, approves appropriations, and sets the tax rate. Kathy exercises due diligence with regard to all of these matters. She is constantly looking for ways to reduce spending and increase

revenue through sound investments, initiating committees to examine policies and procedures when necessary in an effort to protect taxpayers' interests. Under Kathy's keen eye and vigilance, no stone is ever left unturned, no penny is wasted. Taxpayers can rest assured that their dollars are well spent.

"I'm so delighted that Kathy has been selected for this honor. She is one of the hardest working, committed people I know," says colleague Kathi Newcombe. "She has spent countless hours attending meetings of other boards, commissions and committees in Hampton, as well as staying abreast of the governmental activities in surrounding towns, all in order to stay on top of the needs of the town. In her leadership role, she has been almost solely responsible for increasing the percentage of funding for the Fire Department's Length of Service Award Program to assure the rewarding of our hard-working Fire Department volunteers into the future. It is a pleasure to work with someone as diligent and conscientious as she is!"

A stickler for accuracy, Kathy collects and disseminates all data relevant to board discussions, relying solely on documented sources, so that the most informed decisions can be made by members. She reports the pertinent information she learns from her attendance at other meetings in town. A review of the minutes of meetings she conducts reveals: countless contributions of information; transparency in the materials provided to officials and to the public; deliberation among members in the questions raised, answered, and the discussions had.

As Chairman, Kathy presides over meetings in a manner which facilitates a strong working relationship with all members. Though not everyone agrees on every matter, debate is encouraged and opinions are respected. Members are asked to forward

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The Hampton Gazette



VOLUME XLVII, No. 1 JANUARY 2025

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THUMBS UP to the flurry of festive activity that characterized our holiday celebrations: Santa Claus at the Historical Society and with the Firemen, the tree-lighting, the dedication of the pavilion, caroling, and the Christmas service at the Howard Valley Church. The new year has already promised an assortment of activities with winter concerts at the library, karaoke at the Community Center, the Super Bowl Sunday Grinder Sale. It's a good trend.

THUMBS DOWN to the wind! We shouldn't complain with the havoc it's caused in exacerbating the California fires, but it seems as though the windy conditions which were once occasional have become the norm. The winds' effects on oak trees dead from moths and ash trees from borers, despite the road crew's tremendous efforts to remove them, have caused quite a number of power outages in our town, a troubling circumstance in the cold.

Dear Readers,

Thank you to all who supported our Town, our artists and our newspaper through the purchase of the Gazette's 2025 Calendar, and especially to the artists who contributed to "Hampton Farms": India Arriola, Juan Arriola, Diane Christadore, Ethel Engler, Ruth Halbach, Andy Jones, Eleanor Linkkila, Molly Miller, Brian Tracy, Janice Trecker, and Pete Vertefeuille.

Our next year's calendar subject is "The Little River". As one patron pointed out, with its dams, old mills, and fishing holes, this calendar should tell a story. All artists are welcome to submit their photographs and paintings to: hamptongazette@yahoo.com. According to Pete Vertefeuille, who prepares our pictures for the calendar, a photograph must be: an image close to 8" X 10" and set to 300 pixels per inch and a file extension of JPEG in order to use in the calendar. Please email us with any questions.

We are still collecting pictures for a calendar featuring "Hampton Horses", so if you have any of these, please send them along. As with all pictures, these must also illustrate a season and a recognizable place in Hampton. And if you come across a uniquely lovely scene in your travels around town, send it to us and we'll save it for a future calendar.

We'll never be at a loss for subjects in our beautiful little town, and we look forward to featuring them, year after year.

The Gazette

suggestions for the next agenda, and their requests are honored. Citizens are always encouraged to speak, at the start and at the close of every meeting; their questions and concerns are welcomed with a response.

Along a similar vein, the relationship the First Selectman and the Chairman of the Board of Finance have forged could serve as a model of different branches of government working together. Allan Cahill and Kathy Donahue discuss everything that arises in our Town, check in with one another throughout the course of any given week, ensure that everything is covered to present options to the decision makers, whether the Selectmen, the finance board, or the Town Meeting, for all potential purchases, budgetary matters, solutions to problems. They might, perhaps, compromise at times, yet they have what's most important in common: a sense of fiscal responsibility, a love of the town and a commitment to its people.

Says Al, "Kathy Donahue is the consummate public servant, always the most prepared, and has constantly done the due diligence and the background homework as Chair of the Board of Finance. We are fortunate to have her advocating for the Town of Hampton. It's a privilege to collaborate with Kathy, preserving our fiscal integrity."

Some of the stances Kathy has needed to take have not always been easy, or popular. Yet she never forgets that her charge is to protect the financial health of the town, to safeguard its finances, and to remain sympathetic to the plight of taxpayers, especially during difficult times. She listens, and she cares.

Along with serving on the Hampton Elementary School Board of Education for many years, as its Vice-Chairman, and Chairman of the school's Finance and Operations Committee, Kathy served on Ad-Hoc Educational Committees. In 2003, when the Regional District #11 Board of Education Chairman announced at a tri-town meeting that residents needed to approve construction of a \$25 million building to solve issues jeopardizing the school's accreditation, Kathy was among the citizens who explored other options through an "Educational Choice Committee" established by the Selectmen. After a year-long study, tri-town residents overwhelmingly defeated the question of a new school, and as a result, the building was reconfigured and still stands today to educate the district's middle and high school students.

Most recently, Kathy served as a member of a committee which spent a year studying the possibility of a merger with Scotland and Hampton elementary schools in the face of increasing costs and a decreasing student census. Though Scotland supported the proposal, Hampton defeated it, but the committee's thorough work provided us with ample information on current and future costs of operating our local schools as our towns, and towns across the state, meet the challenges of escalating expenses and declining student populations.

Kathy has served the town, not only as a public official, but also as a volunteer. She was a member of the Gazette's Editorial Board and served as our Treasurer. She has helped prepare the Senior Luncheons, salads for the Memorial Day Barbecue, and grinders for the Super Bowl Sunday Sale. Sometimes this assistance is at the last minute; she's always been available to "pitch in in a pinch". That adage – if you need something done, ask a busy person – certainly applies to Kathy, but that's not why she's frequently asked. She's extremely competent. She simply rolls up her sleeves and gets the job at hand, done. During the 2020 Presidential Election, when Covid struck key election officials, it was Kathy who

stepped in to assume multiple responsibilities at the polls.

Years ago, when their sons Matt and Shane were children, Kathy and her husband Steve were involved in youth activities, including sponsorship of youth sports teams. Children have always held a special place in Kathy's very large heart. Though not a member of the Recreation Commission, this Halloween Kathy decorated the pavilion for the trick-or-treaters, and throughout the Covid pandemic, she decorated the elementary school for every holiday as a way to show the children, isolated from the community at that time, that the community cared. She's always the one to suggestion collections for colleagues, sending condolences in times of loss, or gift cards in recognition of those who retire from boards. And when the Mennonite community was new to Hampton, it was Kathy who organized a baby shower for five young women as a way of welcoming them, and their children, to our community.

Among the long list of superlatives, two other words are frequently used to describe Kathy: supportive. Her empathy is unparalleled. She doesn't have to know a person well to care deeply. How many neighbors have she and Steve volunteered their time, energy, and truck to help move? How many free groceries delivered during the pandemic to those who were quarantined?

On a personal note, this fall when we had our grandson's adoption party, it was Kathy and Steve who showed up early and unannounced to assist, and without a word, set up the tables, replenished them with food, and cleaned them afterwards. Two and a half years earlier, while Kathy was calling to check if I'd heard anything of my daughter, who was missing, the police arrived in our driveway. Kathy was here, by my side, in less than ten minutes, and stayed "by my side" throughout those first difficult days, weeks and months. I'm so fortunate to have her as a friend.

The other word everyone associates Kathy with – fun! She has a great sense of humor and an affinity for laughter. Whether you're slicing grinders or crunching numbers, Kathy is, unfailingly, fun to be around.

Dayna McDermott



Wintering About Town

THE HAMPTON TRIO

The second Winter Music at the Fletch program will be Music for Plucked Strings, Wednesday February 19, at 3PM in the library function room. It features the Hampton Trio, Mark Davis (mandolin) and Beverly Davis (guitar) and Robert Margo (mandola, a tenor mandolin). They will perform a varied program, including a Suite from J. B. Lully, a mandolin concerto by Vivaldi, Variations on an Ancient Irish Theme, 'Danse Arabe' from Angel Barrios of Granada, and 'Trio Albeniz' by English composer Eileen Pakenham.

The Trio plays both original compositions and arrangements for their instrumentation and performs frequently at public libraries in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Hingham, Westford, and Weymouth Massachusetts, as well as for the Boston Classical Guitar Society, the Bread Box Theater, the Packing House and many other New England venues. The Trio performed at the 46 International Plucked String Music Festival in Rioja, Spain, where their interpretation of classical Spanish music was enthusiastically received. They all also play with the Providence Mandolin Orchestra and with the internationally renowned New American Mandolin Ensemble.

All library concerts are free but contributions to the library music program are gratefully accepted.



TOP SHELF GALLERY

The February-March show at Fletcher Memorial Library's Top Shelf Gallery opened with a reception and artist's craft demonstration January 25. "Retrospective" features acrylic and watercolor paintings, many done in a vigorous pointillist style, by Hampton artist Marlies Thomen.

Like many painters, Thomen started early, as soon, she says, "as I could hold a pencil, paintbrush, scissors or clay." She remembers a pre-school visit to the New England Art Center in Brooklyn as well as the Hudson River style paintings of her great-grandmother and the paintings and prints displayed in her grandparents' home. Later she focused on art at Woodstock Academy and attended Yavapai College in Prescott, Arizona. There she "fell in love with painting in pointillism," under the influence of a number of highly skilled retired painters. She subsequently studied both painting and ceramics at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, receiving a BA in fine arts, and later explored jewelry making and received her teaching certificate from Central Connecticut State University.

Thomen has exhibited with Hartford Art Space Open Studio and currently teaches art at Windham Center School, where she helps students connect with academics through art.

"JUST LUNCH"

Our next senior gathering will be February 21st, at noon, at StoneHurst at Hampton Valley. We have been invited for a free Fish & Chips lunch, courtesy of StoneHurst and The Black Dog. Seating is limited; interested seniors must RSVP to lisagrady126@gmail.com.

VETERAN NEWS

If you are in need of advice for Veteran benefits, questions on assistance such as health care, burials, disability compensation, Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines Fund, or Pension, please visit in the Town Hall on the first Thursday of the month, 4:30-6PM. Appointments are preferred, especially if Thursdays are a conflict, but walk-ins are welcome. Please contact me, Garry Brown, at 860.928.2309, or garry.brown71@aim.com. Always free and always confidential.

HAMPTON RECREATION PRESENTS

**80'S
KARAOKE
NIGHT**

**FEATURING
DJ GLEN**

BYOB
WINE & BEER
ONLY

FREE
BABYSITTING

CHILDREN WILL HAVE ACTIVITIES AND SNACKS IN THE LOWER LEVEL OF THE COMMUNITY CENTER

*** POTTY TRAINED NECESSARY**

ADULTS WILL BE UPSTAIRS IN THE COMMUNITY CENTER FOR THE KARAOKE NIGHT WITH SNACKS!



TICKETS \$10 PER PERSON

SCAN QR CODE WITH YOUR CELL PHONE TO BUY YUR TICKETS

OR GET TICKETS AT:

<https://hampton-rec.ticketbud.com/80s-karaoke-night>

**AT: HAMPTON
COMMUNITY CENTER**

**SATURDAY
FEB 8, 2025**

178 MAIN ST HAMPTON CT

7 PM-10 PM

TOWN PAVILION DEDICATED

On December 1, family, friends, and neighbors gathered to dedicate our Town Pavilion to Mike Chapel. First Selectman Allan Cahill read the following tribute, written by Selectmen Bob Grindle, both of whom served with Mike on the Board of Selectmen were several years.

Mike Chapel was that rarest of souls, a man who was completely comfortable in his own skin. His all-embracing diplomatic ability to listen to everyone conveyed a generosity of spirit and tolerance for diversity of opinion that made him a touchstone for the small town values of decency and a communal helping hand that we all sometimes feel is slipping away. Few people loved Hampton more than Mike Chapel. He was a hard worker, a volunteer *'par excellence,'* community ambassador, consensus builder, landscape designer, a businessman, a husband, a father and a community leader in every sense of the word.

In years past, the porch of the old Hampton General Store was a sort of local precursor to the world-wide-web...a forum where opinions and ideas and stories flowed without worry, and neighbors could disagree one moment and be up on your roof helping to shovel off a heavy load of snow the next. Mike Chapel spent many hours sharpening his skills at that old country store parliament and years later his old green GMC pickup became a sort of traveling porch that would bring that same comfortable lack of pretense—Mike was so easy to be around—right to your door.

Mike Chapel's thoughtful, considerate, charming and often irreverent style were the perfect setting for his boundless appetite for and knowledge of politics, economics, philosophy, history, the natural world and, of course storytelling...to say nothing of the predator-evasive flight patterns of butterflies and how they evolved. Mary Oliver, who grew up around the corner from Mike at Clark's Corner on the western edge of Hampton, began her tribute to Mike Chapel in the *Hampton Gazette's* 2018 Citizen of the Year issue, with the words: "He is everywhere, still."

Certainly, that is a fair assessment. As we dedicate this Pavilion to Michael Thomas Chapel, it is worth noting that the idea for it was Mike's as were the butterfly gardens at the library, the decorative walkways around the Town Hall, and it was his constant efforts that helped shepherd the arrival of the Mennonite community into Hampton. Mike is still with us, that is a comforting thought. We miss him still.

Robert Grindle

CITIZENS OF THE YEAR, THROUGH THE YEARS

1979 Jeanne Kavanagh	1993 Hampton Fire Co.	2010 Melanie Johnston
1980 The Kennans	1994 Maurice Bisson	2011 Dan Meade
1981 Walt & Phyllis Stone	1995 Al Ameer	2012 Hamptons' Volunteers
1982 Dale & Dave DeMontigny	1996 Diane Meade	2013 Stan Crawford
1983 Dorothy Holt	1997 Eva Loew	2014 Rheo Brouillard
1984 Henry & Eleanor Moon	1998 Claire Winters	2015 Fred Curry
1985 Francis Wade	1999 Catherine Wade	2016 Gordon & Angelica Hansen
1986 Charles & Marion Halbach	2000 Jim Charron	2017 Harold & Margaret Haraghey
1987 Arlene Burr & Leila Ostby	2001 Rick Nichols	2018 Randy Thompson
1988 Helen Pearl	2002 Louise Oliver	2019 Michael Chapel
1989 The Town of Hampton	2003 Jim & Janet Robertson	2020 Susan Hochstetter
1990 American Legion Post 106	2004 Wendell & Alison Davis	2021 Kathi Newcombe
1991 Bert Inman	2005 Norine Barrett	2022 Noel Waite
1992 Dana Kennan	2006 S. Joann Freeman	2023 David Foster
	2007 Warren Stone	2024 The Scouts
	2008 Gay Wagner	2025 Kathy Donahue
	2009 Trudy Brockett & Richard Schenk	

PUBLIC INPUT SURVEY NOW OPEN FOR 2026 PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

The Hampton Planning & Zoning Commission is beginning the process of updating its Plan of Conservation & Development (PoCD). This document is a state-mandated Plan that is required to be updated at least once every ten years, and is intended to guide the Town's decisions on investments, zoning regulations, and policy priorities.

Following the adoption of the current PoCD in 2016, the Town has advanced a number of priorities that were recommended, including expansion of Town open space holdings, improvements to the Air Line Trail, adoption of Accessory Apartment and Multifamily Residential zoning regulations, and the encouragement of home-based businesses. The Commission also considered tools for historic preservation and expanded commercial uses along the Route 6 corridor.

The current PoCD expires in about a year, and the Commission is seeking public input as it begins to develop its priorities for the next decade. Should the Town be more aggressive about encouraging economic development? Should conversion of historic properties be more carefully regulated? Should the Town seek to expand its support of agricultural businesses? There are many issues to be addressed and discussed.

The Commission will be discussing the PoCD update at its regular meetings, on the third Monday of each month at 7PM., and the public is always welcome to participate. In the meantime, we are asking for all residents of Hampton to take the online PoCD survey, which can be accessed via SurveyMonkey, at this address: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HamptonPoCD2026>

A scannable QR code is also included below. For any questions about the PoCD process or the work of the Planning & Zoning Commission, please contact John Guskowski, Town Planner, at planner@hamptonct.org.



Winter Memories, Tradition & Comfort Food:

Warming You Up from the Inside Out!

I'm From Here

It was with no small delight that I watched the progress of the National Weather Service's announcement proceed from 'Winter Storm Watch' to 'Winter Storm Warning'. Waylaid activities for the evening with gladness, I ended up at home in a childhood joyousness, and waited for the snow to begin.

It snowed! We had several inches by midnight, fluffy and white, and coming down smartly at its outset.

And suddenly I was reminded of yet another reason to love the stuff: the sounds it conveys, all the way back to the substantial snows of earlier seasons, earlier years, earlier Christmases and school days; all of that.

Snow carries with it its own sounds, or more specifically the lack thereof. When I awoke just before midnight, the air was filled with – silence. There is a cotton-batting-like insulation against sound that wraps the house after the snow, removing the exterior crunches and clicks, rustles and myriad other noises that are found every day of the year, except during the snow. All I hear, and in concentrated form resounding against this silence, is the click-clack of my wood works clocks inside.

It is contradictory, but the snow also seems to enhance other sounds. The snowplow's steady scrape as it makes first one, then immediately another, pass along my short section of road is condensed and clear, and unmistakable as the fallen snow is quickly cleared.

As well, planes flying overhead take on a hollow clarity, where their jet engines seem particularly defined and trackable. The engine sounds also seem to commence suddenly and then abruptly end, rather than presenting a slow approach and lingering exit.

As I sit writing now, the silence the snow has brought wraps me warmly in an embrace of the remembrance of prior decades, and hopes of new Christmases that will bring not only the joyous strains of carols and the wintery fragrances of the season, but the sounds of snow.

June Pawlikowski Miller

RECIPE OF THE MONTH: Corn Chowder

From UConn's executive production chef Curtis Bangs, this recipe is sure to warm the family on these cold winter nights.

Make a roux with 5 tablespoons of flour and 5 tablespoons of butter. When the roux is ready, thick and smooth, slowly stir in 4 cups of heavy cream and 3 cups of milk. Add ½ pound of bacon, fried and cut into small pieces. Caramelize one small onion, chopped fine, in the bacon grease and add it to the chowder. Cut potatoes into bite-sized pieces to measure 4 cups and boil till tender. Drain and add to chowder.

Add:

2 cups of frozen corn	¼ tsp. paprika	a little bit of adobe
2 tsp. salt	½ tsp. pepper	a dash of hot sauce

Melissa Pawlikowski Bangs

Hot Tip: Using frozen corn from Christadore's corn crib makes a world of difference!

On December 20, the Chokas family, owners of the Howard Valley Church, invited neighbors to a candlelit Christmas service there, reminiscent of years ago when the historic "little church in the dell" hosted a Christmas Eve service. Members of the Mennonite Believers Church organized the music and the readings, candles were distributed and lit, everyone sang carols, the church bells rang, snowflakes fell, and it was the most magical of evenings. Thank you to our hosts and all involved.



CONTRIBUTORS: Mary Albro, Bobbi Harrison Blair, Marie Cantino, Beth DesJardin, Wayne Erskine, Fran Gustavesen, Hampton Fire Company, Andrea Kaye, Rob Rondeau, Janice Trecker, PHOTOS: page 1, Juan Arriola; page 3, courtesy of Hampton Fire Co.; page 4, Pete Vertefeuille; page 8-9, courtesy of Hampton Remembers the 2nd Half of the 20th Century; page 11, Wally Butler; page 13, Mary Oliver.

Fletcher Memorial Library

NEW BOOKS

Lots of books accumulated over the holiday period with favorite authors like David Baldacci and Janet Evanovich, literary work from three Booker Prize winners (Banville, Harvey & Hollinghurst), new juveniles, plus memoirs and topical non-fiction.

ADULT FICTION

Jess Armstrong	The Secret of the Three Fates
Tessa Afsar	The Queen's Cook
David Baldacci	To Die For
John Banville	The Drowned
Jade Beer	The Memory Dress
Rhys Bowen	We Three Queens
William Boyd	Gabriel's Moon
Emma Cook	You Can't Hurt Me
Laura Dave	The Night We Lost Him
Janet Evanovich	Now or Never
Alice Feeney	Beautiful Ugly
Nicole Glover	The Improvisers
Linda Grant	The Story of the Forest
Samantha Harvey	Orbital (Booker Prize winner)
Alan Hollinghurst	Our Evenings
Michel Houellebecq	Annihilation
Greg Iles	Southern Man
Judith A. Jance	Den of Iniquity
Kristi Jones	Murder in the Ranks
Julie Klassen	The Seaside Homecoming
Peter Lovesey	Against the Grain
Leila Meacham	April Storm
Rob Osler	The Case of the Missing Maid
James Patterson	The House of Cross
Richard Price	Lasarus Man
Nora Roberts	The Mirror
Katherine Rundell	Impossible Creatures
Danielle Steel	Triangle
Naomi Stephens	The Burning of Rosemont Abbey
Mark Sullivan	All the Glimmering Stars
Lily Tuck	The Rest is Memory
Beatriz Williams	The Author's Guide to Murder

ADULT NON-FICTION

Connie Chung	Connie: A Memoir
Griffin Dunne	The Friday Afternoon Club: A Family Memoir
Sara Dykman	Bicycling with Butterflies (the Monarch Migration)
John Grisham	Framed:Astonishing True Stories of Wrongful Convictions
Stanley Tucci	What I Ate in One Year
Neil deGrasse Tyson	Merlin's Tour of the Universe: A Traveler's Guide...Revised edition

JUVENILES

Jeff Kinney	Hot Mess
Amina Luqman-Dawson	Freewater
Doug Salati	Hot Dog (Caldecott picture book)



LIBRARY EVENTS

The Top Shelf Gallery for February features the art of Marlise Thomen.

PROGRAMS

February 19 **Hampton Trio: Music for Plucked Strings** 3 – 4PM

The music program will feature Mark and Beverly Davis and Robert Margo.

February 19 **Book Discussion Group** 6 – 7PM

The group will be discussing *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck. Copies of the book are available to borrow.

Wednesday Afternoon Knitting Group
NOON

This informal fiber arts group meets most Wednesdays; please call the library first to make sure the group is meeting.

Thursday Mornings Mah Jongg
10AM -- NOON. Mah Jongg is a popular tile game. A terrific brain teaser, it's addictive, it's fun, and it's social. All skill levels are welcome.

Friday Mornings Tai Chi at the Hampton Town Hall 8:30AM Tai Chi takes place in the Pavilion at the Town Hall Campus.

Friday Mornings **Mexican Train** 9AM -- NOON

Join us in the Community Room at Town Hall for free classes on a modern version of Dominoes. All skill levels are welcome.

Friday Mornings **Baby Story Time with Miss Deb** 10:30 – 11:30AM

An interactive program for birth to three-year-olds using a variety of musical instruments, rhymes, songs, finger plays, as well as a story or two. (The program will not run on February 7 or 14).

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, or questions on all listed programs: call 860.455.1086 or email: fletchermemoriallibrary@gmail.com

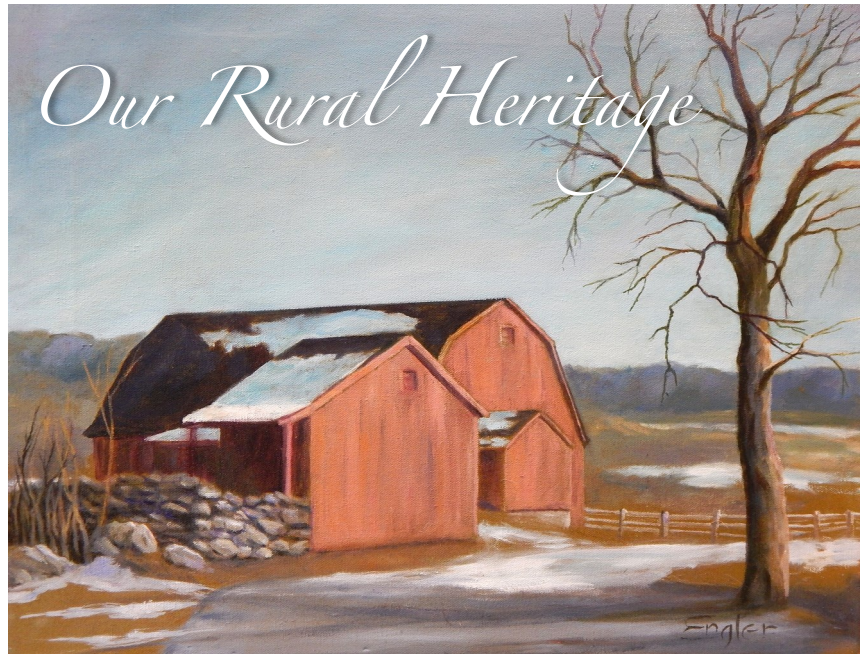
HIDDEN SPRINGS FARM

We suspect there are hidden springs on the property situated on the crest of the hill on Lewis Road, given the pond in its valley, usually visited with at least one heron, a flock of ducks, and several horses. What most of us didn't conclude, what was not notably visible among the beautiful equines frequently seen on this jewel of a farm, is its mission: Hidden Springs Farm is a horse rescue.

The owners of Hidden Springs, the Silk family, have been caring for rescue horses for twenty years, here in Hampton since 2017 after purchasing the property, and formed a non-profit last year. Most of the ten horses they currently shelter are thoroughbreds from the race track, with some standardbred and quarter horses, as well as ponies. Other members of "the family" include a couple of cows, Belted Galloways and Jerseys, a small herd producing raw milk, many cats, including a particularly friendly one who greets every visitor, "Mr. Duck", and a couple of retired chickens.

On this cold, December afternoon, the barn has been transformed into a wreath making station. All natural materials are available, different kinds of pines and red shrub dogwood branches and pinecones found along the Airline Trail. The hosts make the most of our local invasives with bitter-sweet vine bases, and rose hips from the wild multi-floras. Tiny white lights strung, crisscrossed, across the ceiling and a decorated Christmas tree add to the ambience of the old barn with its low ceiling beams, wide, dusty floor boards, white washed walls, wooden stalls. The fresh scent of pines and the sweet scent of hay mingles with the aroma of hot cocoa and gingerbread cookies, a recipe safe to share with the horses, whose names are written on their stalls where the windows provide squares of sunlight, striping the straw-strewn floor. The windows also offer a sweeping view of the farm with its wide, fallow fields, stitched with xxx fences and rimmed with woodlands, the pond beginning to glaze with ice. One of the most picturesque in our town, Hidden Springs is the subject this month in our Hampton calendar, with Ethel Engler's painting titled "February Barn".

Wreath-Making is only one of the events Hidden Springs sponsors. Farm Tours are offered, as well as picnics by the pond, Breakfast on the Farm, which invites visitors to participate in morning farm chores – milking the cow, collecting eggs – followed by a farm fresh breakfast, and Tea Time in the Garden, which includes a tea party, a tour of the flower and herb gardens, learning of the flowers and herbs to use for tea, and choosing



one's own blend to bring home.

Most of what Hidden Springs Farm offers centers on horses. In all of their endeavors, the Silk Family understands the special relationship people and horses share, and programs range from "Bond with Rescue Horses in Need of TLC", which has participants grooming horses, and hearing the story of a rescue horse who can no longer be ridden, to leasing horses, sponsoring horses, and riding horses.

"Own Your Own Horse!" is a two-tiered program for leasing certain rescue horses. The first tier, "Beginner Horse Owner", enables participants to visit, groom, and spend time with the horse and to ride in the indoor arena, where riders can perfect their skills, or on the airline trail, which runs parallel to Hidden Springs Farm. The second tier, "A True Horse Owner", provides an "immersive, all-in horse owning experience". Benefits include unlimited visits during operating hours to groom, ride, and spend time with your horse, while the farm handles all the "hard parts" of horse ownership. In either program, the Silk family helps participants select a horse to match their personality and expertise – which could include no experience at all.

There are also opportunities to sponsor a rescue horse with three different kinds of membership. All three types include monthly news of your horse. "Love From Afar" also offers an annual visit, "Somebody to Love" includes three visits yearly to groom and spend time with your horse, and "Love Is Kind" allows six visits per year as sponsors learn to take care of their horses.

Along with Trail Rides in the neighboring Airline Trail State Park, Beginner Riding Lessons on a Rescue Horse are offered in the indoor arena. Participants learn everything they need to know; the family believes in immersing participants in the "whole experience", with people learning about being around horses rather than just about riding them. Lessons start in the barn where participants familiarize themselves with the horses, learning how to approach horses, brush them, tack them up, eventually moving to the indoor arena, a quiet, spacious and relaxed environment for rider and horse, where participants will learn how to steer, stop and navigate while riding.

Therapy Sessions are also available in the barn, "a peaceful, calm, and

healing place ... for anyone who needs a little moment of serenity in their lives...The horses will listen." The owners of Hidden Springs concede they are neither licensed nor professional therapists, "but the horses might as well be." Horses are therapeutic, empathetic animals, "and there's nothing else quite like resting your head on the neck of these massive, gentle creatures." Therapy sessions start with a tour of the barn and with meeting a few of the rescue horses "who know what it means to heal." Participants will learn of what their horse has been through, what their life is now like, and the special care they receive. Depending on the confidence level of the participant, and the weather, they might take the horse for a walk on the trail, where all will immerse themselves in the sights and scents and sounds of nature. There is also a Horse Immersion Retreat Program, an experience which allows participants the opportunity to stay on our farm, working with the rescue horses, and staying in a cozy camper by the pond, "a perfect way to completely immerse yourself in life on a horse rescue farm."

Additionally, people may Rent The Arena. When the weather is too rainy or cold, the farm's large sand arena, adjacent to the garden, provides an opportunity to ride your horse.

Hidden Springs also sponsors special events, such as birthday parties, with a tour of the farm, an opportunity to meet the animals, a farm fresh picnic at the pond, and a homemade cake. The farm also avails itself for private photo shoots and for field trips for groups of children.

The property has been used for several agricultural purposes. In recent memory, it was known as Hampton Croft, where a prizewinning flock of sheep resided and the owner taught felting and other needle arts. It also served as the veterinary office of Dr. Jack Meister, who tended to our pets for several years. Years ago, the property was primarily a dairy farm, and in Alison Davis' "Hampton Remembers" the family from whom the



road was named shared their remembrances. When I was first married I made butter, put the cream in an old-fashioned churn, with a crank you turned 'round, then you had to mold it in pound molds. Then I hitched up the horse, took the wagon and went up to the store on Hampton Hill.

Lucy Lewis

All the farmers here sold their milk to the Whiting Milk Company in Boston. They had platforms by the railroad tracks that were even with the doors of the cars and they'd bring the cans there and then the empties would be thrown out onto the platform – and they were never washed. You had to

wash the cans yourself. They held eight or eight –and-a-half quarts and had a handle and a wooden stopper. And those stopper were always sour, most of the year, they had to be boiled. The last that I remember their being used Josie Smith washed the cans for the Lincolns and the Hammonds and I don't know how many more. That was her job and they paid her. We took them to her house where she washed them. Usually one person collected the milk from all the farms in the neighborhood and took it to the station.

John Lewis

Earlier still, we have the remembrances of Helen Matthews:

We had our own meat on the farm. We had a flock of sheep and of course the dairy cattle, and of course we had pigs – or how would we get our hams and our sausage and all that sort of thing? They cured their own hams those days, and their own dried beef and salt pork. We had creamed salt pork. It sounds awful but it was so good. They sliced it, cooked it a little and threw out the water to get out the salt and halfway fried it and then added a nice cream sauce. They would always kill an old hen and we had eggs as long as they kept layng. We had our own milk and cream and butter. And cheese! Not many made cheese, but my mother made cheese.

Hampton is always appreciative when new owners maintain our town's rural roots.

Thank you to the Silk family for preserving this property for agricultural purposes, and for such a worthy cause.

REMEMBERING...

This evening we walked down into the valley to the Lewises' pond. We saw two Canada geese with five little goslings in a long line, with a parent at each end, walk down through the marsh grass to the water, swim smoothly and silently across the pond and climb onto a rock. A privilege to see such a sight! As we came home the sky turned brilliant pink and we stood looking down over the valley – the winding road, the old stone walls, the pond reflecting the pink sky, the green pastures with cows, a thrush singing. How many generations have known this peace!

Diary Entry from "Hampton Remembers"

GROWING & LEARNING

CONGRATULATIONS SCHOLARS!

Congratulations to Sulema Perez-Pagan, a student at Quinebaug Valley Community College majoring in English, for her essay titled "Gender Inequality and the Low Birth Rate in South Korea", which has been published in the ninth edition of *FAB: A Collection of Works*.

And to the following students who earned distinction on their respective school's Dean's Lists

Eastern Connecticut State University:

Kara Benito, Genevieve Rondeau, Mackenzie Silk, and Jason Salois, who was also inducted into the Tri Alpha National Honor Society.

Husson University: Sam Murd.

Southern New Hampshire University:

Kaylin Thomley

Parish Hill Middle/High School Releases First Quarter Honor Rolls

Congratulations to the following students who were named to Parish Hill's Honor Rolls:

Grade 12 High Honors: Hannah Becker, Natasha Belt, David Fernandes, Sydney Lovegreen, Kaya Morell, Xander Ouimette, Evelyn Rondeau, Ella Sholes, Brady Silva, Anthony Tatulli

Grade 11 High Honors: Layla Melendez, Thalan Thongchanh

Grade 10 High Honors: Keaghan Crawford

Grade 9 High Honors: Madeline Becker, Hurley Cinami, Jack Morell, Aedyn Trigo

Grade 8 High Honors: Emerie Dozert, Isabella Fullerton, Caleb Lassen

Grade 7 High Honors: Racheal McGuire

Grade 12 Honors: Harmony Freed

Grade 11 Honors: Aspen Houser, Andrew Landolphi

Grade 9 Honors: Arthur Sprague

Grade 8 Honors: Scarlett Blanchard, Olivia Sabo, Tanis Trigo

Grade 7 Honors: Zachery Bertrand, Brogan Gore, Olivia Lavoie, Oliver Trigo

BOARD TO CONSIDER CHANGES FOR STAFF

The Hampton Elementary School Board of Education at its January 22 meeting discussed changes which could significantly affect non-certified staff next year.

Meaghan McKinnon, a paraprofessional at the school, spoke during the Audience for Staff regarding a recent meeting with the Superintendent and Business Coordinator called to discuss potential changes to the benefits for non-certified staff including co-payments of 16% toward health insurance premiums and 50% of the deductible, and the elimination of ten paid holidays. The elimination of paid holidays, McKinnon said, would equal two weeks, or an entire paycheck, of compensation. McKinnon was accompanied by colleague Cheryl Penrod, who has served as a paraprofessional at the school for over 30 years. Both McKinnon, who has four children attending the school, and Penrod, are Hampton residents.

Though McKinnon estimated that these changes would save approximately \$13,500, Superintendent Skarzynski said that the number was closer to \$32,000 because the changes would also affect other non-certified staff including the school nurse, the administrative assistant, the business coordinator, and the custodian, most of whom work a full year, as opposed to the paraprofessionals who only work during the academic year.

Skarzynski explained that the potential measures are meant to save money in the upcoming budget, which will be impacted by escalating costs in health insurance and other line items, the State's plan to reduce the Education Cost Savings Grant by \$83,000, and the need to hire a Scientifically Based Research Intervention teacher and another primary teacher to provide additional assistance in the early grades in order to reduce the amount of students in need of special education services. With the exception of pre-school, with twelve children, and kindergarten with seven, classes are combined, with 22 students in grades one and two, 13 students in grades three and four, and 16 students in grades five and six.

Board members expressed support for the paraprofessionals and their concerns. Member Dennis Timberman spoke at length regarding their importance to the school, the teachers and especially the children. Other board members echoed his remarks, noting that paraprofessionals are often assigned to students with special needs.

The board also voted to form an Ad-Hoc Committee for Non-Certified Staff Representation. Currently there is no policy, only past practice which dictates that non-certified staff facing disciplinary meetings with administrators may only bring another non-certified staff member with them, rather than a union member, an advocate, or an attorney. Board member Juan Arriola has been asking for a discussion on representation for non-certified staff for over a year, and his requests have been ignored by Chairman Rose Bisson, but the issue was finally included on the January 21 agenda, and after discussion, members unanimously voted in favor of establishing the ad-hoc committee.

Arriola's concern stemmed from his attempt to attend a meeting with former custodian, Armin Harris, who requested Arriola's presence at a disciplinary meeting with the former principal and the superintendent. Disputes with non-certified staff have embroiled the school in six complaints filed with the Freedom of Information Commission, four pending and one, which the school ultimately lost, that cost over \$8,000 in legal fees, three complaints filed with the Commission on Human Rights, one resolved with a \$20,000 settlement, the other two pending, and two investigations conducted by attorneys, one costing \$18,000, the results of which the board has yet to be apprised, and another beginning in the near future regarding a complaint filed last September by the former principal regarding Arriola's support of Harris.

Arriola expressed his hope that providing proper representation for non-certified staff will eliminate these costly legal bills. He suggested during the meeting that the board should look to unnecessary legal expenses as a cost savings measure. Skarzynski assured members, "I'm working on it."

COMING OF AGE IN VIETNAM

Many words have been written about this country's military involvement in Vietnam, thousands of miles from the United States. Jamie Boss's new book is a personal memoir of war during the years 1968 and 1969, twelve months of life taken away from him by the Army. Jamie was 19 when he was drafted and reported for duty. His future assignment out of boot camp would be to report to Vietnam as a wheeled/track mechanic. He was married, and he would become a father while in Vietnam, coming home to meet a son he had not yet held. *Coming of Age in Vietnam* begins in April, 1968 when Jamie lands in Tonsonnhat Airport. He admits, "Vietnam was a mystery to me," and questioned his reason for being there: "Why would our country ask us to risk death for reasons so casually explained to us?"

Hard questions to deal with at the age of 19, especially since there were no answers. "I never had a discussion with my peers about winning," he writes. One thing he did know -- he didn't want to be the new guy in camp. That title came with a guaranteed bad work detail. Everyone there prior to your arrival had suffered though the new guy detail.

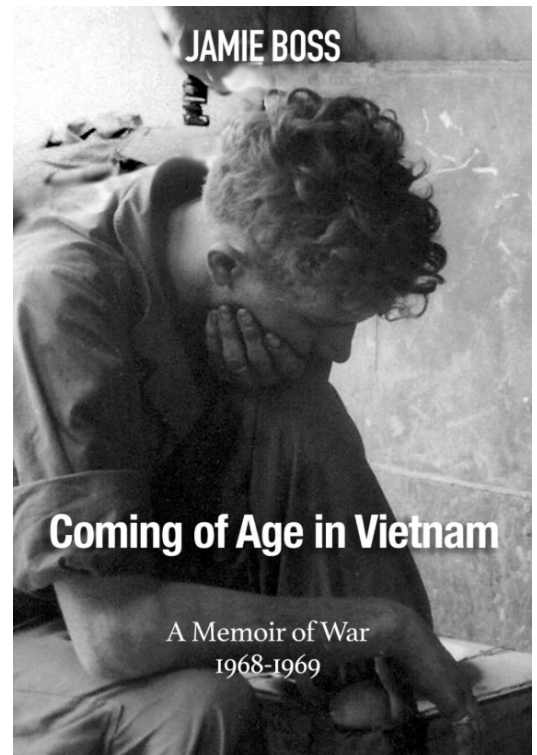
Jamie's initial reaction to the jungle as he had flown over it was noting the vibrant and different shades of green. "The people were small...their homes squalid." On his ride to camp he saw small huts with no running water or electricity and rice fields everywhere.

At camp, he heard his orders: "specialist Boss First Division, The Big Red One." That division was headquartered in Laikhe, near Ben Cat, "a place one should avoid if at all humanly possible." Laikhe was known as "danger forward", meaning very close to "the action".

Jamie felt lucky not to be one of the soldiers "slugging through the jungle daily." No matter the assignment, army life is adapting to any and all conditions. The routine can be boring but being a mechanic kept Jamie busy. His preference was taking apart and fixing track vehicles that had broken down, damaged by enemy fire, or waiting for the supply department to provide an engine or other necessary items to repair it. Life, at times, was hectic. "Whenever a tank, personnel carrier, self-propelled gun, or howitzer broke down in the field, we would have to grab a toolbox, hop in a jeep or helicopter and make our way into the field for the repair." Obstacles varied -- there were land mines, mortar rounds, booby traps, rocket fire, and the ever present enemy sniper. Jamie's personal mission every day was to live to see another one, and complete his twelve months in one piece, and alive. Dying was something you thought about every day, Jamie wrote. Though the war had no real boundaries, one learned to be vigilant and aware of surroundings at all times. Soldiers on duty with you became your friends, companions and brothers in arms.

Jamie's book includes lighter moments. He had told his Dad that if he wanted to send him something, he'd love his twelve string guitar shipped to him. Months passed and two Military Police "showed up and asked if I was specialist Boss." After confirming his identity, he was taken to Battalion headquarters where a Sergeant Major asked him about a large box in the room addressed to him. "What the hell is this, Boss? Plywood, in the unmistakable shape of a coffin. The Sergeant Major handed him a hammer and a crowbar, the MPs had their hands on their pistols, with the directive, "Open it," and it revealed "a nicely packed guitar case."

Jamie writes of the time a member of his team "grabbed a small, bright green snake by the head." He asked a Vietnamese woman what kind of snake it was, and she calmly replied, "They bite, you die." It was a bamboo viper, a very venomous snake native to Vietnam. He writes of encounters with mosquitoes, which swarmed while one just had to endure them without giving away your location, knowing "You could contract Malaria, Dengue Fever, and Japanese Encephalitis from a single mosquito bite." He writes of the tokay gecko. "It was as large as lizards go and it's mating call sounded, from a distance, like two distinct words: F*** Yooooouuuu." Soldiers refer to them as the "F*** You lizards." A fire fight at



night once woke him, "the night sky was lit up like a Christmas tree. Our tracers were red and their tracers green."

One word to cover many experiences: craziness, which took the edge off the stress of combat and loneliness. "Crazy is a tonic that soothes the wrenched nerves and justifies the unjustifiable," he writes. "Being crazy allowed all of us to go about our daily routine and ignore the meaningless, brutal war." The end of the book finds Jamie waiting for his flight home, with the airport under attack. Eventually the attacks subsided and he was allowed to board the plane taking him home—to his wife, new son, family and friends. His return to the states would have him based in California as an army instructor. His future was now out of jeopardy and harm's way, but he dealt with all the memories of the time he had spent in South Vietnam, and the indifference encountered here. "Indifference would become a way of life when I returned to my hometown. No one would ask about my year. Everyone wanted to ignore my reality. It was as if my time there meant nothing."

Coming of Age in Vietnam is a compelling memoir, with powerful words and personal photographs, each of which tell a story on their own. The book is available on Amazon, from the author, and at Fletcher Memorial Library. The author of the book's Forward is correct when he states: "You won't be able to put it down." I couldn't.

Juan Arriola

GARDEN

In the with Dayna McDermott

THE ANXIOUS GENERATION

When those of us of a certain age, which is to say, senior citizens, reminisce on our childhoods, we usually recall entire mornings, afternoons and evenings of playing outside with our friends, riding our bicycles around town, or exploring forests, climbing trees, scaling rocks, dropping from roped tires into local swimming holes, sledding down the town's steepest hills, building rafts to embark on our own on the Little River, playing hide-and-go-seek in the dark. We were outside all day, called inside only for lunch, dinner, and bedtime. "Go play," was the instruction we received from our parents. Turns out, they weren't negligent. Our parents really did know what they were doing.

Such is the subject of the New York Times best-seller published last year, *The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness*. Author Jonathan Haidt, a social psychologist who has written several books, discusses the adverse consequences of the shift from "play-based childhood" to "phone-based childhood", which includes all internet-connected electronic devices – computers, laptops, tablets, consoles and smartphones. Haidt's studies further the findings of Richard Louv in *Last Child in the Wood*, which defined "nature deprivation" and its negative impact physically, intellectually, and emotionally on children and informed the No Child Left Inside Act of 2023. Louv identified out-door play as the most important element in reversing the trend, specifically unstructured, unregulated play. Haidt echoes and extends these assertions, focusing less on interactions with nature, with fresh air and sunshine, and more on the importance of free play.

Haidt relies on developmental psychologist Peter Gray's definition of play as "activity that is freely chosen and directed by the participants and undertaken for its own sake, not

consciously pursued to achieve ends that are distinct from the activity itself." He asserts that outdoor play, with children of mixed ages, is the "healthiest, most natural, most beneficial sort". Haidt stipulates that to enhance physical skills, through self-imposed risks and challenges, social skills, through learning to take turns and resolve conflicts, and emotional skills, through self-regulation of one's own feelings and awareness of the feelings of others, play must be unstructured and unsupervised. "When parents, teachers and coaches get involved," he asserts, "it becomes less free, less playful, and less beneficial".

Decisions on strict supervision of children, arising around the same time as computer use, were counterintuitive, Haidt claims. The fear of "outside" escalated at the same time crime and violence against children dropped precipitously, while predators became prevalent on the internet, resulting in the "overprotection in the real world and under-protection in the virtual world," Haidt writes. While a normal degree of parental protectiveness is innate, somehow this instinct has spilled into what's commonly called "helicopter parenting", the "hyper-involvement in all aspects of a child's life", interfering with children's homework, teams, and friends, selecting and scheduling activities to consume their free time, and eliminating challenges children select for themselves to tackle and solve. The "discover mode" in children, Haidt explains, the behavioral activation system which provides opportunities, and the "defense mode", the behavioral inhibition system which detects threats, need to work in consort. An overabundance of vigilance correlates with later anxiety disorders because the defense mode becomes a child's default, rather than the discover mode, which fosters learning and growth.



Unsupervised play instructs children on taking risks. "By building physical, psychological and social competence, it gives kids confidence that they can face new situations, which is an inoculation against anxiety." Children innately include risk in their play, and increasingly add to it. They need to swing way into the air, and jump off. They need to slide down slippery hills. They need to ride rollercoasters. There are six types of risky play: heights, as in climbing trees and playground equipment; speed, on bicycles and sleds; tools, as in bows and arrows and hammers; elements, like water; rough-and-tumble play; and disappearing, as in hide-and-go-seek. Play with

a degree of physical risk teaches children to look after themselves and each other, to learn to judge risk for themselves and to take appropriate action. And parents need to remember: children are "anti-fragile". Just as early exposure to dirt is essential for children's immune system, thrilling experiences produce anti-phobic effects.

Public playgrounds have also become over-protective, though one could argue that this is the result of over-protection against potential law suits. Think of the difference between the playgrounds of today and yesterday. Haidt compares photographs of "overly safe playgrounds", equipment insulated from all possible risk leaving children with no way "to learn how to not get hurt", with what he labels "the greatest piece of playground equipment ever invented" – the spinner. Remember those? Fondly, I'll bet. This wheel allowed for at least eight children to hold on to side rails, standing or sitting, while the spinner went round and round. The more kids, the merrier, or rather, the faster. The equipment provided thrills, required cooperation, taught lessons on centrifugal force, and offered opportunities for risk with minimal risk to injuries. Haidt writes: "Researchers who study children at play have concluded that the risk of minor injuries should be a feature...in playground design."

In our yard, though upon request we play Hide-and-Go-Seek, Mother May I?, Red Light! Green Light!, badminton, catch and tag, most of the summertime is spent with the directive – “Go play”, and our grandson has never complained, from dawn to dusk, of boredom, or that he couldn’t find something to do. We find him in a tree, challenging himself to higher limbs, on the stone wall, wielding fallen branches like a swash-buckler, in the sand box, mixing concoctions or building roads for his trucks, or aloft in the tree house. As I write this, he’s dreaming of snow to build with, slide on, and throw, happy for now with the opportunity to crash through the thin ice of puddles in the lawn, and skate on the solid ice of ponds. New England is so fortunate in its seasons.

I’ve written of the role the garden plays in children’s lives several times. *The Flowers of Childhood* urged gardeners to permit wildflowers like milkweed and daisies into the garden. *Children in the Garden* reminded readers of their inherent wonderment in nature. *No Child Left Inside* provided ideas on fostering their natural curiosity. Most recently, I wrote of the role the garden played in my daughter’s life, and in her son’s. Haidt encourages parents to “become better gardeners – those who create a space in which their children can learn and grow – in contrast to carpenters who try to mold and shape their children directly.” He asserts that the most important thing we can do to become ‘better gardeners’ is to facilitate more unsupervised free play. Calling the “rewiring of childhood” a “catastrophic failure,” he writes: “It’s time to end the experiment. Let’s bring our children home”.



We’re retiring this year and looking forward to traveling. We’ve only ever vacationed in New England. You seem so worldly. Do you have any advice on places older folks like us should travel to in the U. S. and abroad?

A Fan

My Dear Neighbor:

Your letter has reminded Auntie Mac to solidify her own travel plans for the upcoming season, as certain amenities, reservations, and luxuries do not avail themselves readily to the tardy explorer. Still, while she would dearly love to recommend places, landmarks, antiquities and events that delight *her*, she realizes that people’s ideas of what constitute an enjoyable vacation vary as greatly as pebbles on the *Plage de Matira*. My dear late husband, who acted as, let us say, a governmental attaché for many of our foreign friends, was called to a number of exotic locations and, as was expected of someone in his position, his dutiful wife accompanied him, often to her great delight but sometimes to her abject horror (the tomato-throwing festival of Buñol, Spain, for example, still lives on in tormented memory).

Selfishly offered advice, however, based on personal preferences and paying little heed to cost, would include urging you to by all means visit the new Egyptology museum in Cairo as part of a trip to the pyramids and Luxor; or spend a week in Firenze, concentrating on the Uffizi Gallery. And no lifetime is complete without a visit to Paris and the Tuileries gardens. As you see, dear, any recommendation is tainted by the recommender, and really, the choice must be yours. (For example, I solicited Lars’ opinion on favorite travel destinations, and with a look that implied that it was incomprehensible that I need ask, replied, “Fly-fishing the Anvik River in Alaska, of course.”) Depending on your budget, your fitness level, your desire for non-stop exertion or languid lolling (Auntie Mac’s current preferred travel activity), the choices are endless.

She will go out on a bit of a limb, however, and make this actual and heartfelt recommendation: since you have never travelled outside New England, why not see some more of this country first, just to get your voyaging feet wet, as it were. And we do live in a beautiful and fascinating country. For this, she recommends, as a first toe-in-the-vacation-pool excursion...a visit to Gettysburg. It is a highly emotional, sobering, and meaningful experience and she has not encountered anyone who has returned from it unchanged. The guides are wonderful, the nearby accommodations charming, and the history is palpable. If there are ghosts, they walk on this ground. By all means, pencil in Luxor on the Nile for the future, but take advantage of our common history, and humanity, first. Bon voyage!

Your Auntie Mac

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FOREST & FIELD

SCOUTING NEWS

Cold weather has settled in, but that hasn't stopped the Scouts from staying active this winter. On December 28th, Jonah Mlyniec led the troops in construction of an observation deck at the Little River preserve on Hammond Hill Road. As his Eagle project, Jonah oversaw the entire task, meeting with town officials including members of the Inland Wetlands and Conservation Commissions, obtaining materials, receiving grants to cover their costs, and recruiting other scouts to help with building the walkway. The structure allows visitors to avoid mud and roots and view the Little River and remains of the dam that had created the large pond that drew vacationers to Hampton at the turn of the century; we encourage everyone to check it out. On January 7th, the Troops did trail maintenance at Rock Spring in Scotland, followed by a pizza lunch, and an afternoon of learning Scout skill in preparation of the upcoming Klondike campout. The Troops have also been focusing on advancement, and many Scouts have progressed. Scouts meet at the Hampton Congregational Church on Tuesdays, at 7PM.

JOSHUA'S TRUST

February 22 **Nature Magnified!** 10AM
Join Michelle Poudrette on a loop de loupe through Madeline Regan Preserve in Tolland. Participants will explore the micro world of lichens, mosses, and more through a small handheld magnifier known as a loupe, as we traverse the two loops within the preserve. Registration is required to ensure that we have enough loupes for everyone and is limited to 20 people. Visit <https://joshuastrust.org/events/> for registration, details, updates and cancellations.

CONNECTICUT AUDUBON SOCIETY Grassland Bird Conservation Center

218 Day Road, Pomfret

February 9 – March 8 **Artists and Writers**

In-Residence Exhibition Opening 2-4PM

February 9 **Buds, Bark, Branches: Identifying Trees in Winter** 12:30PM

February 11 **Pomfret Green Team Film:**

Common Ground 6:30PM

February 15 **Nature Sketchbook Journaling**
1-3PM



Jonah Mlyniec stands on the walkway he designed for Hampton's Little River Preserve as part of his Eagle Scout requirements. Future signage will allow visitors unfamiliar with the preserve to find it easily and take advantage of Jonah's excellent skills and determination.

February 20 **Plainfield Fish Hatchery Bird Walks** 9AM

February 22 **Owl Walk** 7PM

February 25 **Lights Out Connecticut Lecture: Light Pollution and Its Impacts on Our Green Spaces** 6:30PM

At Trail Wood

93 Kenyon Road

Artist in Residence. Artist in Residence applications are being accepted through March 1 for summer 2025 residences, offered for six weeks in July and August to three writers and three visual artists. Finalists are chosen through a juried process. All applicants are notified by mid-April. There is a \$25 application fee. Accepted applicants are asked to make a \$100 donation to defray the costs of operating the Teale's historic 1806 farmhouse at Trail Wood. Read more at <https://www.ctaudubon.org/trail-wood-artist-in-residence/>

Fridays in February **Trail Wood Walking Club** 1-3PM. Meet in the parking lot. If you would like to be on the walk reminder email list, please contact trailwood@ctaudubon.org.

February 2 **Ground Hog Day Walk** 10:30AM -- NOON. Let's see if the groundhog sees his shadow! Get outside, take a walk, learn facts about groundhogs (a.k.a. woodchucks), and hear some of Teale's stories about groundhogs.

February 5 **Trail Wood Troubadours** 6—9PM Join a group of acoustic music players and lovers who meet to play popular music written during the period the Teales lived at Trail Wood, 1959-1993. Simple chords and lyrics will be projected on screen so all levels can follow along!

For more information, or to register: ctaudubon.org

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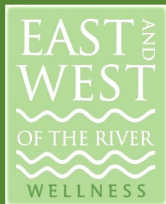
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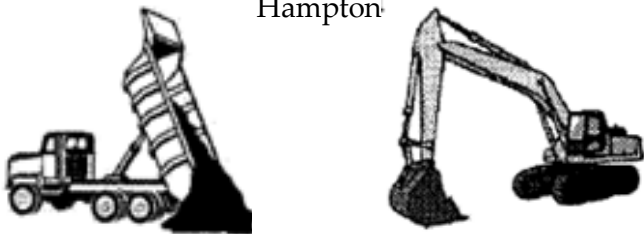
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