

Très amusant et bien informé

# THE HAMPTON Gazette



VOLUME XLVII No. 3 / APRIL 2025



## HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT: LIVING ON THE LITTLE RIVER

Last year around this time, State officials were hard at work on the Infrastructure Project rebuilding the bridge over Fuller Brook that feeds into the Little River further down in the valley. It tore up much of both sides of the road, testing the patience of Arlene Becker, and exposing the dam below the old Utley Farm. The State did much to beautify the landscaping including many trees and shrubberies that have budded out this Spring.

It was also a time of historic discovery, as we met ethnic Dutch gnomes Ebenezar Button and his delightfully clever wife Eliza. Although they have lived in Hampton for about as long as the Town has been incorporated, they still feel like newcomers, having not sat in the same pew in any church for the last two hundred years.

“The Little River is my church”, says Ebenezar. “I learned that from our friends Nellie and Edwin, as they often sat staring quietly at the beaver pond from his writing cabin.”

Many bodies of water are blessed by the journey of the Little River as it makes it’s way from the Hampton Reservoir on Kenyon Road.

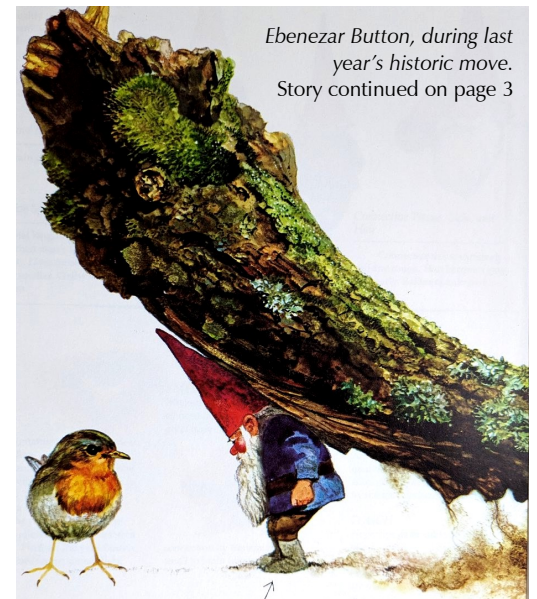
When the Button Family’s home and gristmill was uprooted last year by the construction project, their life was exposed for the first time in over three hundred years. Neighbor Paul Pribble and a bevy of Scouts came to help gently take the property apart piece by piece numbering every

single beam, clapboard, and stone to be moved. Eagle Scout Jonah Mlyniec handled the direction of the project, due to his recent expertise at the Little River Preserve on Hammond Hill. The Scouts were wowed by the seemingly elderly Ebenezar’s strength, as he hefted a large branch over his back without help.

While the move slowed the State’s work on the road, First Selectman Allan Cahill stressed the importance of supporting such a longtime Hampton family. “Clearly, they’ve had an impact on so many here, it’s time we give back where we can”, Cahill stated. “...we wait on the State plenty. It’s their turn, now.”

The Button Family is grateful. With the move came their children home to help as well, daughter Katrina and husband Joost, as well as son Piet and his husband Kaspar—his first visit to Hampton.

Kaspar, a competitive kayaker, will be making his first trip down the Little River from it’s source in a specially built “Pakayak” designed and built by Zinelle Peterson Mackro, who grew up near Hampton Brook



*Ebenezar Button, during last year's historic move.  
Story continued on page 3*

# The Hampton Gazette



VOLUME XLVII, No. 3 APRIL 2025

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## APRIL FOOLS!

Ever since our April 2019 issue, which commemorated our newspaper's 41st anniversary and was solely -- and miraculously as there was absolutely no news to report! -- humorous, we have been enlivening our April issue with articles, photographs, cartoons, and columns celebrating humor. Relying on our regular humorist, the sagacious Auntie Mac, the occasional "Reluctant Gardener", frequent chuckles from Angela Fichter, Kit Crowne, June Pawlikowski Miller, Uncle Grampus, the Firehouse Dog, and local folklore, we also take this opportunity to thank everyone who provides us, especially during these tense times, with a few good laughs!

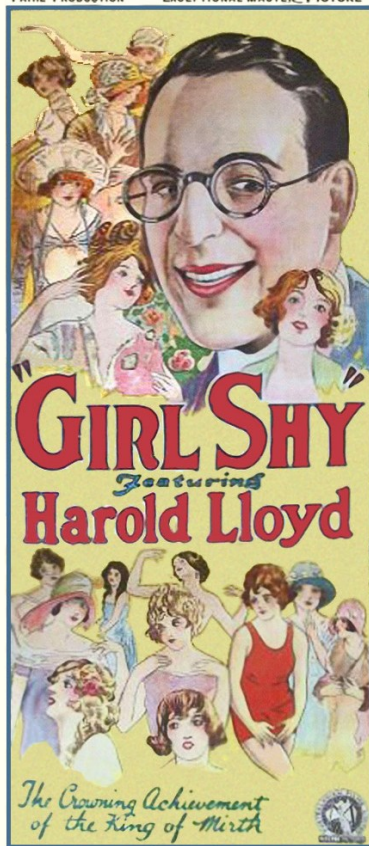
*The Editorial Board*



**THUMBS UP** to spring things! Puddles and snowdrops and daffodils. And community activities -- Bright Acres Farm's Open Sugar House, a Seniors' class on enhancing longevity, the Mennonite Believer's Church 'Soup and Salads', the Congregational Church's 'Soup and Silents', the Recreation Commission's movie night at the elementary school, and an Easter egg hunt at Fletcher Memorial Library. It's good to get back to gathering after a long winter that isolated us with its storms, its ultra-slippery ice, and its endless supply of flu.

**THUMBS DOWN** to the drastic cuts in State funding for Goodwin Conservation Center, resulting in the elimination of staffing, reductions in programs, restrictive regulations imposed on the "Friends of Goodwin Forest", and the threat of shuttering the center itself. Since 1960, when James L. Goodwin donated over two thousand acres for use as a State forest, we have benefited from its environs. Hopefully, negotiations with our State representatives will result in Goodwin serving as the new headquarters for the Last Green Valley.

PATHE PRODUCTION EXCEPTIONAL MASTER PICTURE



## SOUP 'n SILENTS RETURNS

The Hampton Congregational Church has announced this year's gala Silent Film event to be held at the church on Saturday, May 3. This year is pure comedy featuring Harold Lloyd in one of his funniest features: *Girl Shy!* Made in 1924, near the peak of his career, the film includes all the usual Lloyd conniving touches to keep audiences of all ages laughing.

Accompanying the film is Hollywood's own Clark Wilson, considered by many to be the best silent film accompanist in America. He'll use the church's special-designed digital organ that's custom fitted with all the needed musical flavors for silent comedies. As in past years, this event includes pre-show dinners of homemade soups and breads. Servings begin at 5PM and continue to 6:45. Showtime is 7PM.

This is a show for everyone from school kids to grandparents. Meal and movie are \$15 for adults and \$10 for students. Children 5 and under are free. Bring the entire family for \$30. Call: 860.455.9677, or email [soupsilents@gmail.com](mailto:soupsilents@gmail.com) for questions and pre-show ticket purchases.

which feeds into the Little River. "Honestly, I don't know why more of our people have not settled here. It's so beautiful!"

Many springs and brooks proliferate the Town: Little River winds its way south across Route 97, falling dramatically at Hemlock Glen, and then to Old King's Highway, feeding yet more ponds as it meets and merges with the Fuller and Pearl, strengthening the Little River as it meanders toward North Bigelow and East Old Route 6, crossing US Route 6 and along Drain Street, and finally making its way to Scotland past Sand Hill and Windham Roads. It finally joins with the Shetucket, one of the "Three Rivers" (with the Quinebaug and Natchaug) that becomes one in the Thames, finally unifying with Long Island Sound.

"We weren't sure when the State found us what we would do," Eliza commented; "we were overwhelmed by everyone's generosity and respectful consideration of how quietly we prefer to live. Of course, all that's out the window, now, Ebenezar's fairly as famous as Paulie Tumel now that people know he can lift most things better than Paulie's backhoe. I'm not sure if they hire him out for his strength or his stories!"

"Good thing that Peter Thompson is nearby when I tweak my back—or anything else—you know, at almost 275, I'm not that young anymore!" exclaimed Ebenezar.

Eliza continued: "we really appreciate the simple living here. Everything here provides for us, and we are grateful. We were especially surprised when Pastor Paula came down in her penguin suit to bless the house and mill, and in Dutch, no less! In our new place on the Pribble Dam, we have elderberries and we were able to make immune building syrups for the winter. The best part is the neighbors we barter with, Renée Cuprak makes the best jams, and is so kind to find just the right size jars for us. Molly Miller saves me the best bits and bobs of fleece from her sheep, for my spinning and weaving, and of course, we love trading our flour with Rosetta Fisher for the best sourdough around."

Katrina and Joost (expecting twins this summer) have already decided to settle and raise their children here. With Rich Schenk's help, they are considering a niche at Old King's Highway, not too far from their parents.

As for Kaspar and Piet, they are considering Hampton as well, not realizing how warm and accepting the community is for everyone. "As LGBT (Loving Gnomes Being True)", Piet explained, we're not always welcome everywhere. Here, it matters, here, people care. When our parents were in need, the community showed up, like they always have. And that's a special thing. Like the heart of the Little River, THAT is Hampton. ☺



## and Beyond.... VILLAGE VIEW



### SENIORS CLUB

The Hampton Seniors Club is continuing to gain momentum. We are still enjoying the following weekly activities at the Town Hall:

- Game Day every Wednesday afternoon from 1 – 4PM. Bring a bag lunch if you would like and then participate in whatever game or games the group decides on. If you prefer, bring a craft project.
- Mexican Trains every Friday morning from 9AM -- NOON. Learn how to play if you don't already know and be prepared for lots of fun. The Watercolor Class is on hiatus, but will probably resume within a few weeks.

In addition, we have had two wonderful guest speakers who have provided valuable information on diabetes and longevity. Both of these free workshops were well attended and have received rave reviews. A bracelet-making workshop was held for those who were interested in creating a piece of their own jewelry. We have many more ideas for activities to come, and look forward to seeing you there.

If you would like more information about our upcoming plans or have ideas or suggestions, do not hesitate to contact the Hampton Seniors Club at [hamptonseniors01@gmail.com](mailto:hamptonseniors01@gmail.com).

*Fran Gustavesen, President*

### VETERAN'S NEWS

Please welcome a new face in town: Garry Brown, the new Veterans Advocate for Hampton. If you are in need of Veteran benefits, have questions on possible assistance for such subjects as VA health care, burials, disability

compensation, veteran's survivor benefits, financial assistance through Soldiers, Sailors and Marines Fund, or Pension, he may be able to help. There have been a lot of changes concerning VA benefits in recent years and you may not be aware of some of them. If you have been denied benefits in the past, they might now be available to you. In addition, the surviving spouse of a Veteran may be entitled to a monthly income depending on the individual veteran's circumstances.

Garry is at the Hampton Town Hall on the first Thursday of each month from 4:30-6PM. It is best to call or email for an appointment, but walk-ins are welcome. Of course there is no charge and confidentiality is always adhered to as it should be. He looks forward to meeting his brother and sister Veterans in town.

To make an appointment, or more information: Garry Brown, 860.928.2309 or email: [garry.brown71@aim.com](mailto:garry.brown71@aim.com). Always free and always confidential

## STATE REPRESENTATIVES MEET WITH RESIDENTS AT RECENT TOWN MEETING

Town meetings across the country are drawing large crowds of angry constituents, making national news even in small towns like ours. On March 12, Hampton held its own town meeting with our own representatives; and though there was a crowd of over forty residents and officials from ours and other towns, it was without the hostility we witness elsewhere, which is not to say there weren't troublesome issues raised.

Representative Pat Boyd and Senator Jeff Gordon fielded questions from residents for over an hour and a half, and presented an overview of the budget process at its half-way point, with the delivery of the governor's proposal of 55 billion to span two years, to the Appropriation Committee. The legislative session ends on June 4.

Common concerns raised at the town meeting included State aid to towns, especially to education, reimbursement for early voting, the escalating fees imposed by Eversource on customers, and funding for the local Veterans' Administration and Health Department.

A common theme – uncertainty, particularly with respect to education. There are efforts on state and local levels to hold towns harmless for another year in instituting the governor's

Educational Cost Sharing Grant formula, which would mean an approximate \$83,000 reduction per year over ten years to Hampton if implemented. There are a lot of unknowns regarding the closure of the U. S. Department of Education as to whether funds will be distributed to States, or disappear. There are a few certainties: State legislators are communicating with U. S. Congressional representatives; and there is bi-partisan support for properly funding public education from Kindergarten through grade 12.

Other potential federal cuts, most notably Medicaid and Veterans' Assistance services, are also cause for concern. On the state level, the governor's proposed budget does not include funding for early voting. In its pilot year in 2024, early voting, with Presidential Preference and State Primaries, and a Presidential Election, proved successful, with several voters taking advantage of this method of casting a ballot, particularly for the November Election. The data collected last year is still under review in terms of adjustments of duration and appropriations. Currently, Presidential Primaries require four days of early voting, State and Municipal Primaries, seven, and all November Elections require fourteen. Last year early voting cost the Town of Hampton approximately \$16,000, with the State reimbursing \$12,500 of the amount, however, State reimbursement is not part of the Governor's proposal this year.

Though cognizant of the issues surrounding Solar Parks paying property taxes, particularly impactful for small towns like ours, decisions are in the hands of the State Supreme Court, not the legislators, Boyd and Gordon confirmed. Currently, Hampton is owed \$1,737,906 for the last 4 years.

In terms of Eversource, Boyd and Gordon explained the rise in rates residents are finding in their bills, stating that while there was no change in supply costs, the increases are due to fees for public benefits, which include funding for the nuclear power plant, electric charging stations, and collections from non-payments. "We're advocating for taking these expenses off of people's bills and putting them into the State budget instead," Gordon said.

"The debate is happening now", Boyd added. "Stay tuned."

Both representatives reminded residents that the State is in a better financial position today than it was a decade ago. Boyd stated that when he took office nine years ago, the State had a 200 million dollar surplus. Today that number is 4.5 billion; the State, he explained, invested and collected interest on the funds distributed by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), which were understood as a temporary measure, to counteract the financial repercussions of the Covid pandemic.

"We're in a far better position than we were ten years ago," Boyd said, calling the surplus a "bright light" in the face of worse case scenarios.

"And in case those scenarios come to fruition, Gordon said we're "doing what we already do, and studying federal grants now from a planning point of view so that we won't have to act so reactively to potential cuts".

Also voiced were concerns regarding continued sufficient funding for EASTCONN, considering the challenges our region faces in providing a variety of services to students, particularly with respect to special education. "We need to get EASTCONN on strong footing," Boyd said, recognizing that their services are vital to small towns in northeastern Connecticut. Additionally, it was noted that the State is willing to facilitate, and provide resources, to towns collaborating to provide educational opportunities for their youth.

Also close to home, the drastic cuts to the Goodwin Forest Conservation Center which threaten the vitality of this environmental resource. The State is no longer funding a program manager and plans on closing the Center. However, our representatives are in negotiations with the Last Green Valley to possibly base their center at Goodwin.

Other good news – both of our representatives are willing to listen, able to answer questions, and provide bi-partisan support to our small towns. We thank them for spending time with us, and those who took the time to participate.

*Dayna McDermott*

## **BOARD OF EDUCATION RESOLVES COMPLAINTS**

The Board of Education at a special meeting on March 6 voted to resolve two Freedom of Information (FOI) complaints in order to avoid Commission hearings scheduled for March 11 and associated legal costs. The vote was unanimous, with Rose Bisson abstaining.

As previously reported, board member Juan Arriola filed a complaint concerning the September 25, 2024 meeting in which an executive session was held “To discuss an attorney-client privileged communication related to an employee.” His complaint alleged that “board members discussed a communication from the former principal’s attorney” during the session, and therefore the client was not the Board of Education, nor was the attorney theirs. Though Arriola was the subject of the correspondence, which lists as recipients all of the other board members, he did not receive it until Superintendent Skarzynski sent it to him on September 28 in response to an FOI request. At the March 6 meeting, both Skarzynski and Bisson apologized for the omission.

The second complaint concerned an October 23 executive session for “an attorney-client privileged communication regarding a complaint pertaining to the conduct of a Board member.” Arriola, who was informed by Bisson that he was the subject, alleged that he was denied the right to the open session he requested, asserting that “while the attorney client privileged information was appropriately held in a closed session,” the portion of the discussion regarding Arriola “should have been held in an open session”.

At the March 6 meeting, a motion was made to: “acknowledge that the Board of Education should not have stated in the September 25th, 2024 meeting minutes that the Executive Session was for an attorney-client privileged communication and for the October 23rd, 2024 meeting the Board of Education recognizes that, although the agenda item to go into Executive Session for an attorney-client privileged communication was correct, the discussion of public official or employee is required to be in an open session, if requested. The Board of Education will strive to meet FOI guidelines for Executive Sessions and to properly document them in agendas and meeting minutes.”

A special meeting convened on March 10 to approve the minutes containing the motion so that Arriola could withdraw his complaints prior to the scheduled hearing.

During the March 6 meeting, there was some discussion and acknowledgment that the tone of school board meetings had improved since the meetings that triggered the FOI complaints, which also precipitated a complaint filed by Arriola with the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO), citing various instances of retaliation leveled against him due to his advocacy of school employees who had also filed complaints of discrimination with the CHRO against school officials. Con-

necticut General Statutes 46a-60(b) (1) and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits actions “against any person because such person has opposed any discriminatory employment practice or because such person has filed a complaint or testified or assisted in any proceeding under section 46a-82, 46a-83 or 46a-84.”

At the close of the meeting, Arriola urged settlement of this complaint as well, and Skarzynski said, to that end, he would contact the Connecticut Interlocal Risk Management Agency (CIRMA), whose attorneys are assigned to the case.

## **PRE-SCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN SCREENING**

Hampton Elementary will conduct a preschool and kindergarten screening on April 30. The preschool screening is for children who are three, four, or who will turn three in 2025. The kindergarten screening is for children who are new to Hampton and will turn five by September 1, 2025. Please call the main office for an appointment at 860.455.9409.

## **LIBRARY SEEKS DONATIONS & TABLE VENDORS FOR TOWN WIDE YARD SALE**

The annual town-wide Yard Sale will be on June 20 and 21 this year. If you have some sellable items you’d like to donate to the library to sell, please bring them to the library any time now. The library will also have spaces available for a donation of \$20 if you want to sell directly to the throngs of folks.

## **KIDS RUNNING CLUB**

Do your kids have a lot of energy? Love to run? Hampton Recreation is sponsoring a one-mile training run for kids in Grades K-6. The club will start on April 5 and run through May 31, from 8:30 to 9:30AM, checking in at the Town Hall Pavilion, with Marlies Thomen, a school teacher and parent with 40 years of competitive running experience.

Children will keep a running journal, and learn warm up and cool down skills, have timed one-mile runs and running games. They need to wear clothes for running, shirts that cover them appropriately, shorts or running tights. Sneakers are a must. Bring a water bottle.

Parents, please plan to stay the first few times your child participates. There is no fee. Please email: [jmarlies@yahoo.com](mailto:jmarlies@yahoo.com) with your information and any questions.

# I'm From Here

In reply to a dear friend's raucous laughter when mentioning my visits to 'the dump', I will elaborate.

The dump! What sounds like a location for the lowest caste of third-world citizens, I consider one of my happiest Hampton jaunts and destinations.

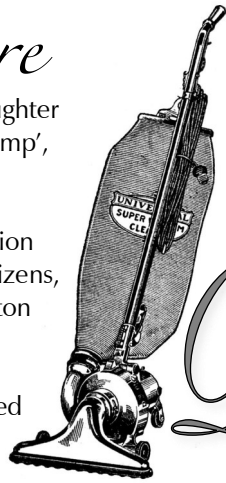
We have had a dump as an established venue in Hampton for decades. Still at the same location as occupied those many years ago, when it became public (citizens used to bury and 'dump' stuff in their back yards in Hampton, you know, where lovely scavenging can result in finding ebay- and collector-worthy items still) our dump took over, yielding items and treasures for the – ahem, not picky (pun intended).

I have found bona fide antiques, among the many a Sheraton corner washstand and a rope bed tightener, as well as necessary household items. I laugh; to delineate items at my house would sound more like shopping from a thrift store, except I found most for FREE – at the dump. Nespresso coffee maker! Breville toaster oven! Clocks, clocks, clocks! Furniture galore! And my newest and happiest find, a Kirby G3 vacuum cleaner. Oh, and all the vacuums I've brought home in the last few years were up and running after only a couple of satisfying hours of cleaning and unclogging. I find this work most enjoyable, and hey, as I'm a Swamp Yankee, you can't beat the dollars saved.

While it is true that the 'swap shed' (I have rebranded it in my own thinking as the 'Stuff Hut') is at present a tangled mess, there are still fine items to be found at its periphery.

What? I see you rolling your eyes and huffing and puffing. Believe me, our society throws away huge volumes of still-useful, still-working things due to many factors. We want to upgrade; we don't have the time, or perhaps believe we lack the skills, to fix an item ourselves, and can't see spending much money to do the same when to do so would cost as much as a new purchase. In this estimation you are woefully correct.

For the thrifty, the crafty, and the retired, however, a pleasant summer afternoon working outside in the sun, or working inside in the



warmth on a chill day, can be therapeutic as we repair an item still retaining many years' worth of usefulness. It teaches patience, and hones our mechanical abilities with the added benefit of yielding us with an item we didn't have to buy. Yeah, a win-win here.

Hey, wait – don't throw that away! I think I can fix it! And if not, why... just bring it to the dump! ☺

*June Pawlikowski Miller*

**Dear AUNTIE MAC** So I'm wondering: What exactly is the proper etiquette when waiting in line to drop off your trash and seeing that the two cars in front of you are minus their drivers, who have wandered off to look in the metal bin or gab with the attendants, and meanwhile you've got a trunkful of garbage and three screaming kids and you begin to wonder which you're going to toss out when it's your turn?

*Signed,*

*It's Not a Social Club, You Know*

My Dear Neighbor:

The Hampton transfer station is, as you may have surmised, not merely a dropping off point for old cottage cheese containers and last year's bird feeder. It is, if I may be so bold, quite nearly a shrine – a mecca if you will, for those hardy pilgrims who want not only to rid themselves of the week's detritus, but who long to see their friends from faraway lands...like Sunset Hill and 11<sup>th</sup> Section. And who among us has not lingered in the swap shed at a post-tag sale hour, hoping for treasures? (Indeed, there are some of us who have elicited the assistance of the attendants to hold our ankles while we dangled headfirst in the bulk waste bin, but I digress.) Still, you are correct; there is an unwritten but magically universally understood etiquette to be followed at the transfer station, regarding everything from waiting in line to generously placing returnables in the Boy Scout bin. When approaching the transfer station, if there is a line of cars, notice where the first car is. If there is ample space in front of the offending vehicle, proceed with caution to your right around it and park as far away as possible, even though you'd like to hog the spot right by the paper and cardboard bin. This will give your fellow citizens room to do the same. And remember, the eagle eyes of transfer station staff are always upon you and unmanned vehicles, and if they sense a clog, they will find the scrounging scofflaw soon enough and direct him or her to unblock the path. I always advise those who can walk even a few steps to move to the back as far as possible and distribute your trash in a leisurely fashion, allowing time for chitchat with both staff and Scotland residents – we must, after all, be sociable with our neighbors to the south. And do not dart. Your Auntie Mac loathes darters; she wishes she had the gumption to squash the next person who peers out from behind the back of a Volvo, looks you straight in the eye, then practically lunges at your car like a suicidal squirrel to get to the glass and can bin before you can run her over. Above all, do not honk your horn, do not raise your voice to those in front of you, do not make a mess of the swap shed, and do not throw your trash in the bulky waste container. You will be marked for a boor and a lout, as well you should be, and your name will be mud across town faster than you can say "single stream". For the transfer station, my impatient friend, knows all and sees all, and it is there that our best – and our worst – selves are placed on display for all the world to see. Candidacies are made there. Rumors begin there. It is the font of all town knowledge, and your reverence for it will mean the difference between being a well-respected citizen and a heartless toad. Tread lightly, dear. ☺

*Your Auntie Mac*

*(Reprinted, with permission, and by popular demand, as a fitting companion piece for this month's 'I'm From Here')*

# Fletcher Memorial Library

## NEW BOOKS

New adult fiction this month, mysteries and contemporary novels, plus non-fiction, including Pope Francis' autobiography, a WW2 escape by bicycle, and the Islamic craftsmen of medieval Europe.

## ADULT FICTION

Catherine Airey	Confessions
Jean-Luc Bannalec	An Island of Suspects
S.J. Bennett	A Death in Diamonds
Mischa Berlinski	Mona Acts Out
Karrissa Chen	Homeseeking
Joseph Finder	The Oligarch's Daughter
Pam Jenoff	The Last Twilight in Paris
Michael Lawson	Untouchable
Joyno Moyes	We All Live Here
John Sayles	To Save the Man
Kevin Wade	Johnny Careless

## NON-FICTION

Diana Darke	Islamesque: The Forgotten Craftsmen Who Built Europe's Medieval Monuments
Pope Frances	Hope: The Autobiography
Arthur J. Magida	Two Wheels to Freedom: The Story of a Young Jew, Wartime Resistance...

## TOP SHELF GALLERY: GAIL MILLER, NATURE'S BOUNTY

"Nature's Bounty", the April-May show at the Top Shelf Gallery, opens officially April 12 with an artist's reception at 1PM. The show features photographs, paintings, collage, and embroidery by Franklin artist, Gail Miller. Although Miller works in a variety of media, all her work focuses on the natural world, landscapes, flora, and fauna.

She describes herself as "always interested in nature" and enjoys skiing, kayaking and cycling in her leisure time. Twenty-five years ago, she began capturing the outdoors she loves in photographs and oils. "I feel that I have a natural eye for photography," she says, "and do not use AI." Her photos have appeared in The Last Green Valley and the Franklin Agricultural Commission calendars.



A self-taught artist, Miller has recently become more experimental; a blend of the practical and the decorative runs through all her productions as does her love for the natural world. "I collect beach stones and shells to make jewelry and art on canvas or whatever is suitable."

She has exhibited her works at the Norwich Arts Center as well as several craft fairs. Nature's Bounty will be her first solo show.



## LIBRARY EVENTS

April 9 **Book Discussion Group** 6 – 7PM  
The group will be discussing *Lady Tan's Circle of Women* by Lisa See. We have copies of the book available to borrow at the library.  
April 12 **Artist Reception** 1PM April's Top Shelf Gallery features Gail Miller's *Nature's Bounty*, consisting of natural images in paint, embroidery, collage and photographs.  
April 19 **Easter Egg Hunt** 10AM Children 12 and under are invited to the library for an Easter Egg Hunt (inside and outside, weather permitting).

## WEEKLY PROGRAMS

**Wednesday Knitting Group** NOON  
Informal fiber arts group meets most Wednesdays. Please contact the library to make sure they are meeting.  
**Thursday Mah Jongg 101** 10AM – NOON  
Join us in the Community Room for free classes on Mah Jongg, an ancient Asian game played with tiles. All skill levels are welcome!  
**Thursday or Friday Tai Chi** 9 – 10AM  
(at the Hampton Community Center): Tai Chi takes place in back of the Community Center or in the Pavilion at the Town Hall, depending on the weather. Call the library for updated information and current day.  
**Friday Baby Story Time with Miss Deb** 10:30 – 11:30AM  
Join us for 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. 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, audiobooks, and DVDs). Please call or email the library: 860.455.1086 or [fletchermemorial-library@gmail.com](mailto:fletchermemorial-library@gmail.com).

## Volunteers Needed

The library is in need of a couple of dedicated volunteers. If you are interested and available to commit to a 2-3 hour shift weekly, please contact Beth at 860.455.1086 or by email at [fletchermemoriallibrary@gmail.com](mailto:fletchermemoriallibrary@gmail.com)

Anyone who owns animals shouldn't be surprised that humor abounds on a farm. There's actually a children's book called *Down on the Funny Farm* - a naïve farmer thinks he's struck a great deal when an old man sells his farm for one dollar only to discover a horse on the roof who thinks he's a rooster and a barnyard full of animals with an identity crisis. Remember "Babe"? It's not only farm animals, though. Peggy Fox shared the story of feeding her many cats one morning, where they all sat readied in front of their individual bowls lining the walkway to her house, only to discover at the end of the row - a raccoon, patiently pretending to be one of them.

There are also some animals who mistake themselves for humans, which is usually how "Bossie" earned her name. Virginia Welch wrote humorous articles on the clandestine methods of departing from home due to a goose who considered her family "the flock", and on her Great Dane, who "sat upright in the car like a chauffeured dowager". Peggy Fox, no stranger to animal companions, recalled a frazzled chicken that boldly flew into her kitchen during a storm. She promptly made herself at home in front of the imposing fireplace and settled in. When the evening news came on, she hopped onto husband Charlie's shoulder and watched the news with him nightly. They named her Mrs. Biddle.

Many townsfolk own chickens, mostly for eggs, a few for roasting, and some for the purpose of entertainment. We can't tell whether or not chickens have a sense of humor, but they sure know how to fuel one. For a number of years, Cindy Bezanson delighted us with wonderful tales on the antics of her chickens, with the imagined conversations of the members of the flock, all of whom had names that matched their personalities, and with poems like "Little Chicken Fancy Pants".

In Alison Davis' *Hampton Remembers*, Vera Hoffman and Evelyn Estabrooks spoke of the free-range chickens that would hide their nests all over the farm, and of finding clutches of little chicks hatched in secret nests. The solution - placing a china egg into the nest in the barn to encourage them to lay their eggs there instead of where the farmers couldn't find them.

And then there were Andrew Rindge's chickens. Harold Stone relayed that when neighbors came once to check on Rindge, "he threw off the bed covers to get out - 'course he was fully dressed - and there was a settin' hen in the bed there on the other side from where he was, settin' on some eggs."

## Our Rural Heritage

# THE FUNNY FARM

Stories of Andrew Rindge and his farm are legendary. Margaret Marcus recalled: "The chickens roosted on the bottom of his bed and the pig lived in the little room off the hall there. He would cook potatoes in one of those iron pots - he would fill that with potatoes and cook them over the fire on the hearthstone and then when they were done and cooled off he'd open the door and call the pigs. They'd come in and eat out of the pot and he'd reach down and get a potato and eat right along with the pigs."

Rindge's farm is also one of the most famous in Hampton. Known today as "Trailwood", the nature preserve was once the home of Pulitzer Prize winning naturalist Edwin Way Teale, who also wrote stories of the infamous Rindge in his *A Naturalist Buys and Old Farm*. "His buckboard, drawn by an ancient sorrel horse, rolled along on wheels of different makes and sizes. It announced its coming by the squeal of ungreased axles...the sheep he brought indoors at lambing time, quarrels with his neighbors over livestock running wild...provided a pre-soap-opera excitement for the village." Teale wrote of others who dwelled at Trailwood as well. "Monument Pasture", topped to this day with "Hughes' Monument", is named for a hired man who once announced "nobody is ever going to build a monument to me so I will build a monument to myself," a man who always "drove high-stepping horses", and a couple, "inclined to nudism."

This was not the only farm in town notable for this particular attribute. The tall stone walls still seen along the Edwards Preserve suggest that sheep were raised on what was once the Edwards Farm, however, there's less speculation regarding their son's enterprise, a nudist colony on the Old Town Pound portion of the property. During the "Random Recollections" that interviewed residents who grew up here, Jo Freeman confirmed that she was the "look out" for neighborhood boys who knew where there was a knot hole in the fence. Her brother Al Freeman recalled the time that the Plymouth coup they were using for surveillance purposes backed into a stonewall when Mr. Edwards heard them and let his dogs out. The most compelling proof was provided by John Berard, whose father Leon built the Rec Hall at the camp, which included a sauna for the colony's use. Reportedly, there was "activity" while construction was completed, and the mother of one young apprentice expressed concern that her son wasn't eating the lunches she packed him. Obviously, he had better things to do during his break.

We haven't encountered any entertaining stories surviving the test of time for sheep, goats or pigs, though we're sure they exist, and there were probably plenty of laughs at the greased pig contests which were annual events on Memorial Day. Maybe the farmers refrained from cultivating close relationships with pigs since they were meant to be eaten. As Ethel Jaworski relayed in *Hampton Remembers*, some pigs would be sold, some were reserved for the family, and "all but the squeal" was used.



There are a few for cows. Peggy Fox remembered the infamous Bossy, though not with affection. "Bossy was some kind of cow – couldn't stand women or a man in a city suit!" Peggy relayed. "It was funny, milking Bossie was no problem – just don't get in front of her face." At least not when wearing a suit or a dress.

Phyllis Stone shared her experience at the first cattle auction she went to with 'The Stone Brothers', Walt and Clarence. "Elmer always said – look at the back end. It should look like it was hit with a board, and check out its teeth," Phyllis recalled. "The auctioneer brought out this cow and I thought – look at those teeth! Look at that stature! This must be a good cow!" She raised her hand at the last minute, and the cow was "Sold! For \$900!"

"What did you do that for?" Walt asked, aghast at the price. And Clarence christened the cow "Fort Knox". Needless to say, Phyllis was never invited to another cattle auction. And Fort Knox 'earned her weight in gold' again when she broke the dairy farm's milking machine.

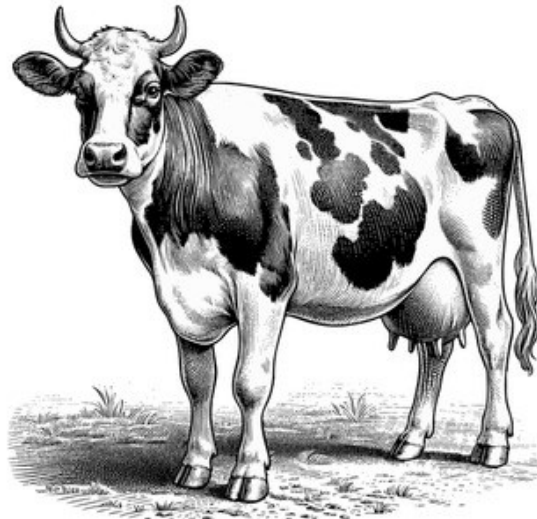
Phyllis' bidding abilities are not the only example of humorous stories originating from the foibles of the farmers rather than the animals. In a *Gazette* series called "Boyhood Recollections", Wendell Davis wrote that in the early fifties, he and Charley Peeples, the minister, raised sheep and cattle together in the barn north of to the Congregational Church. For several months they built a manure pile on top of the Chapel's well, which they removed before there were any serious problems. Perhaps Charley Peeples should have stuck to preaching.

No wonder there weren't more mistakes made, as one element of farming is undisputed: farmers worked hard. In *Hampton Remembers*, Arthur Kimball relayed: "My mother was a busy woman. Besides bringing up her twelve children and doing all the cooking, she washed all the milk pails and she took in washing, too. Laundry, that is. And she helped when babies were born. She'd pack her bag and go stay a week with a new mother. That was her vacation."

Of course, farm work comes with a great deal of dirt, and we ponder today at how farmers ever kept themselves clean in the absence of plumbing, and shudder at the thought of some of their methods revealed in *Hampton Remembers*.

From Ethel Jaworski:

When it came to be bath time we'd heat more water on the stove in teakettles and put it in the bathtub and open the oven door for heat. Right in the kitchen there, one after the other, or two at a time if we were small, we'd get in and we'd all use the same bath water – every Saturday night or if there was a special occasion maybe during the week.



Harold Stone didn't bother with the weekly bath: "I use to go swimming every day," he relayed. "And I went in all winter one year. But I didn't go when the wind was blowing. Well I certainly enjoyed it! And if I felt a cold comin' on it would kill it every time. I had to cut through a lot of ice sometimes. But there was only one time I felt a little cool. 'Course you'd get in, get wet, lather up, get in and soak off -- and it wasn't as bad as taking sponge baths in a cold room in cold water – 'cause of course you kept moving."

Harold certainly took cleanliness seriously, and shared some of the odorous consequences of the minimalists' weekly cleanse: "If your feet sweat that was ah....like the little fella said when the teacher asked him what he was crying about – he was studying his physiology lesson and he says 'I was put together wrong,' he says, 'Here it says you smell with your nose and you run with your feet, but', he says, 'my nose runs and my feet smell!'" ☺

### REMEMBERING...Aunt Josie

Aunt Josie was very superstitious in a funny way and a rather nice way. The thing I always remembered was – she knew how to plant things out-of-doors. When she worked out there in her garden she wore an old-fashioned, dark-colored sunbonnet. She knew how to have a garden but she knew that you could only plant certain things at certain times of the moon. And it was quite a care to her to do it right, you know, and she told when I was there – I'm sure I heard her tell it – that she wanted to put some one of her garden seeds in and it wasn't the right time of the moon, and it was going to be too late if she waited and she didn't know what to do. So she put an old coat that had a hole in the pocket and put the seeds in the pocket and went out and jumped around on the ground. And that's the way she planted her seeds at the wrong time of the moon! ☺

Helen Hammond Mathews

## RIDING IN CARS... AROUND HAMPTON



The arrival of the Crowne family in Hampton was heralded by the then object of my father's driving pleasure – an early 60's Jaguar Mark IX Saloon. It was a regal looking carriage and most people – those who weren't car nuts like my dad -- thought it was a Rolls Royce or a Bentley. That wasn't a good thing, really, because it made us seem a bit out of touch with Hampton's practical persona.

For me, the new kid in town, it made it even harder to bridge the divide that coming from the big cities in the mid-West – Chicago and Columbus -- already imposed so I did my best to downplay our circumstances by emphasizing that it was “just a Jaguar.”

The Jaguar was the first in a long parade of odd vehicles that we'd impose on Hampton's gentle environs. The Mark IX was soon followed by another Jaguar, a Mark 10, that was a very modern and distinctive model that threw-off the formal post-war mantle of its predecessors. Then came a companion, the Jaguar XK-120, which was a remarkable 2-seat sports car that my brother David earnestly employed to terrorize the back roads of Hampton and beyond. There was David's Peugeot that he used to run away to California in, with Don Inman in tow for a time. There's my first car – a Morris Minor convertible that was a hand-me-down from my favorite teacher at PHHS, Mr. Ducharme -- though I never got it to run because it had a fist-sized hole in the block. Our last vehicle was an Oldsmobile Toronado, a 2-door fashion statement of a car that my father thought was a plausible conveyance for a family of six kids. We made a cross-country trip in that car – five of us kids, the dog, my parents, and as many of our belongings as we could cram into the spaces not already consigned to flesh or function – in '69 when my dad took a year-long position at Stanford University in Palo Alto, CA.

Billy Pearl was my main ride once we started high school, the only one of my friends who had his own car – a Ford Fairlane with a 289

V8 -- and we had many exciting (spelled “harrowing”) adventures together as we bombed around town. We once razzed Ray Gustofsen in his lust-worthy '69, 427 Corvette and he chased us down a dirt road until he realized he was destroying his precious car. Billy and I raced my brother David in the Jaguar XK-120, passing him on Twin Hills at 130, with my brother eventually surrendering because he thought we were going to crash – and no doubt we likely were. And there was the night that Billy skidded off the road and into some trees in a dreadful snowstorm that we had no business being out in; amazingly, none of us were injured but the car was beyond salvage, though I'm quite certain that Billy's dad wouldn't have let him drive it again regardless.

Freedom for me arrived in the guise of my Honda 50 scooter, the first of a brace of motorcycles that I would own over the years. I can't imagine that anyone who was there at the time can erase the image of me, ponytail streaming behind as I scrunched down low on the handlebars, trying desperately to keep up with the big kids – Scott Johnson with his Honda 350 or John Sornberger with his Yamaha 500 2-stroke. Still, it spelled liberation for me and I gleefully raced about town on whatever fool's errand occupied my attention in the moment.

Whenever I ride through Hampton, and I do it as often as I can find the opportunity, the memories of the cars and motorcycles -- those moments that were both exhilarating and terrifying -- streak past my eyes and fill me with wonder at the fact that I survived. And if you look close enough, you'll see the wisp of a smile blossoming, the sights and scents of those halcyon Hampton days filling me with wonder still. ☺

*Kit Crowne*

### RECIPE OF THE MONTH: Bologna Cake

*Kit Crowne, who entertains us in the Gazette with his humor, and on social media with the gourmet meals he frequently serves, such as Seared Scallops on Sprouts and Avocado with Lime-infused Whipped Cream, and Korean BBQ Chicken on Cole Slaw with Candied Ginger. Combining the two bring us this gem, with the note that he was substituting it for the braised short ribs previously planned.*

#### Ingredients:

- Sliced Bologna – you can use any bologna brand. The only important thing is that you like the taste. If you can't find bologna, substitute it for any cold-cut deli meat. Although I haven't tried it yet, I imagine sweet ham and salami will work well here.
- Grated Onion – You'll mix this with the cream cheese to give your frosting a strong punch of flavor. Don't want to peel and chop onions? Use Ranch onion mix instead. Just keep in mind that you need grated onion – as in, very small pieces. Not only will that help the flavors blend with the cream cheese, but it also means you won't have big chunks of onion in every bite.
- Cream Cheese – soften it to room temperature before use, so it's easy to mix.
- Worcestershire Sauce – it gives the frosting an extra layer of flavor.
- Ritz Crackers – there's nothing like buttery and crunchy Ritz crackers to eat this appetizer with!

#### How to Make Bologna Cake:

1. Make the cake frosting.

Combine softened cream cheese, grated onion, and Worcestershire sauce in a bowl. I prefer using a hand mixer here as cream cheese is a little thick to mix by hand. However, if you don't mind the arm workout, feel free to use a rubber spatula. Mix until everything is well blended.

2. Assemble the cake.

Start by spreading a bit of cream cheese frosting on the bottom of your serving plate. This will keep the first layer from slipping off as you apply the

frosting. Add the first layer of bologna, and spread a thin layer of cream cheese frosting on top. Repeat the process until all bologna slices are used up.

Tip: use a piping bag to get the cream cheese on clean. Make a small barrier around the edges, pipe a spiral into the middle, then spread it flat.

3. Frost the cake. Cover the entire cake with the remaining cream cheese frosting. Decorate as desired.

4. Serve with crackers and enjoy!



### Pro Tips

Allow the cream cheese to soften to room temperature before use. Otherwise, it'll be too hard to mix. If you forget to take it out of the fridge on time, just pop it in the microwave for a few seconds.

Spread a bit of cream cheese mixture on the bottom of the serving plate before adding the bologna. This will keep it from sliding off.

Blot the bologna with a paper towel before layering the cake. It'll keep sliding off if it's wet or moist.

Use an offset spatula to frost the cake to make smooth edges. A knife will work, too, if you use the flat side.

If you have Cheese Whiz or canned cheese, use it to decorate the cake. It'll add flavor and color.

### How to Serve Bologna Cake

Bologna cake is already pretty impressive, so serving it as is will do the trick.

But if you want to jazz it up, try the following:

Make it extra pretty by decorating the cake with canned American cheese!

Serve it on a cake platter and surround it with buttery crackers.

Slice the cake thinly, just like a regular cake, and top it on crackers or toast.

Add savory decorations like roasted red peppers, olives, or capers.

### How to Store Leftovers

Wrap leftover bologna cake in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 3 to 4 days. ☺

## THE CURSE OF NEW-FANGLED GADGETS

*(and the curse of the global economy)*

I had a major operation a few years ago (reverse shoulder replacement), and since my husband is dead, I thought I better get one of those alert buttons you wear around your neck and press if you collapse and can't get up, or have some other medical emergency and can't get to a phone to dial 911. So I got one and wore it. The company said to test it. I was afraid to for fear an ambulance would come that wasn't needed, so I phoned the company and was told to test it while standing right next to the plastic box on the counter, which was next to the land-line phone. It took me forever to connect this thing because I, being of sound mind and memory, prefer to make calls in my home from a land-line phone. I tested this alert button just once, and the alarm box went off on the counter, and someone asked me if I had an emergency, and I said no, I was just testing it, the voice then told me how to undo the alert call. I was supposed to test this alert button once a month, but I was so concerned about an unneeded ambulance coming that I did not test it again till July, when I collapsed in the garden while weeding (sciatic nerve thing) and could not stand up from the ground myself. Yelled for help, and a neighbor came over, picked me up under the armpits, and I walked confidently into the house myself. This previously happened in 2014, while weeding, and I stood up by myself and walked into the house to tell my husband. My joints must have been younger then.

Anyway, this garden incident convinced me I should test my alert button. Guess what. It didn't work. So, I phoned the company who sells this particular alert button. They asked what the name of my land-line service company was. I told them the big S. Aha, they said. Well, your old company that was bought out by the big S had no issues with our alert button, but we find that sometimes our alert button works if the big S is your service provider, and sometimes it doesn't. Well, I need an alert button I answered. The alert company said that they have not had problems with alert buttons that activate a cell phone in the plastic box on the counter. Fine, I said, I bought one, and they shipped it to me. When it arrived, the big installment issue arose. Firstly, I unpacked it and found that the plug for the counter plastic box was itself in a box. In other words, look at your toaster. It has wires covered in plastic attached to a regular looking rubber plug with metal prongs that fit into your electric outlet in the wall. This new gadget had metal prongs inside a small plastic box that was empty on one side, so you could see the prongs. I couldn't figure how to use it. I called the rescue phone number that came on a slip with the gadgets and asked for help with the plug. Someone with a thick accent answered me that she didn't know what I was talking about. I hung up and called again and again got a voice with a thick accent that couldn't help me. I looked at this stupid plastic box with 2 metal prongs inside and figured, Angela, do not look at this like you are a male mechanical engineer. Look at it like a woman. What would a woman do in this situation. Fingernails! That was the answer. I used my fingernails and was finally able to maneuver the prongs out of the plastic box. The plastic box itself substitutes for the rubber plug around my toaster plug prongs. Huh.

So now I could plug the plastic box on the counter with an inside cell phone into an electrical outlet. But how to disassemble the old plastic box from my landline phone outlet? This needed an electrical engineer, at least, because my land-line phone cord ran through the old counter box, and I wanted to keep and use my old land-line phone. After a lot of finagling around I finally got the land-line phone cord away from the old counter box (which was very possessive, so it took a bit of work). The company told me

I had to mail them back my old counter box, therefore there was a second incentive for freeing it from my land-line phone. All that was left was plugging my land-line phone cord into the wall plug for that line. But it would not go. I tried turning the tiny plastic plug every which way to get it into the outlet. Wouldn't go. This called for a cup of tea (for me, not the outlet). The tea worked, and at last the phone plug went into the phone outlet in the wall. This success called for a second cup of tea and a scone to celebrate the success. Wait! I must try to make a phone call, and yes, the land-line phone worked.

I then called the rescue number to ask if I could wear this alert necklace in the shower. The thickly accented voice said she would have to call the company, then call me back. I asked where she was. The Philippines, she answered. She called the company that made the alert button and called me back. As long as you do not submerge the alert button, it should be fine. I only take showers, not baths. OK then, the voice said.

So much for the global economy. Used to be you could call the company that made something because it was made here in the US, and ask them to explain how to install something. My alert button counter unit was made in Asia. The rescue number was answered by someone in the Philippines. If she had a phone number to call the company that sells this unit, why couldn't the seller give that phone number to buyers as a rescue installation number to call? Because the sellers don't want to do any work, they refer installation rescue work to people in a foreign country. If you are in your 90's, 80's, 70's, and 60's, then you are old enough to remember when this wasn't an issue with new gadgets, you just called a number answered by an American, plus the gadget was made in the US. So much for the global economy. As for new-fangled gadgets, I'll let you know if the new counter box with cell phone in it works when I test it for the second time. After all, it's only been a week, more or less, since I finally installed it and tested it for the first time, and I prefer to delay the agony of contact with the alert button company for just a little longer. ☺

Angela Hawkins Fichter

# GARDEN

*In the* with Dayna McDermott



## YOU KNOW YOU'RE A GARDENER IF...

The list "You Know You're a Gardener If..." is not original. I found it a few years ago, though I don't remember where. I never needed a description of any sort to discover if I was really a gardener, yet it could prove helpful to others who are pondering whether or not they've thoroughly succumbed to this condition. So I decided to save it for our April Fools issue, and embellish it a little with my own two cents.

### 1. You consider well-aged feces a thoughtful gift.

And you're particular about it, knowing way more facts about the value of one manure over the other than anyone should. And can answer questions like – how can I determine the kinds of weed seeds in my horse manure? And -- will my nose alone be able to detect if my rabbit's fecal pellets contain too much urine? Articles readily available like "The Scoop on Poop" provide plenty of TMI.

### 2. When you see someone trimming trees, you wonder if you could use a cutting of that.

This no longer applies to me, though I remember those times well, and fondly, as I have no more room for more trees. Instead, I have heart palpitations when my shrubs and trees are being trimmed, or should I say, scalped, in the spring. It takes me half a season to get used to the new look.

### 3. You have taken bags of leaves (i.e. other people's trash) off the street to use as mulch.

There are few sights as disturbing to gardeners as composting leaves stuffed into plastic, but I've no need to confiscate them as we have the unenviable circumstance of leaves from everyone else's lawns landing in ours. Confused visitors, observing mountains of leaves, ask – but where are they from? We've been prudent in growing trees that produce massive leaf litter, planting only one for dense shade – for the picnic table, the hammock, the swing -- we even park the car under it.

### 4. You have saved pits or seeds from fruits you liked, in your purse, or pocket, to sprout at home. If they sprouted, you were momentarily intoxicated with your Godlike ability to create life.

Sprouting seeds always seems like a miracle, especially when we've collected them from fruits, vegetables, or the side of the road. I confess, when we visited Robert Frost's home and museum, I absconded with milk weed pods. I don't usually have sticky fingers, but who would miss them in this sea of fluff? Plus, they lined the path where "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" was penned, and I think that's what they call "poetic justice".

### 5. You hoard yogurt containers, plastic bottles, and egg cartons. Why? They're useful in the garden.

The results of my hoarding days are evident, but they're officially over. That we spend the first half of our life collecting things and the last half giving things away is never more evident than in the garden, where it applies to containers and plants. Though there are other indicators (the knees, the back) that signal more forcefully that some of us are well into that last half.

6. *You sometimes forget your to-do list because plants need staring at.*  
This is the most true. It's a well-known fact that flowers respond wholeheartedly to being spoken, or sung, to, but they also benefit from basking in the hours-long glow of the gardener's gaze. I often think this might be, at least on a sub-conscience level, one of the major reasons for growing them – to have an excuse to just sit and stare.

7. *You think store bought tomatoes are disgusting.*  
At least during the summer months. I treat myself to a BLT every day for lunch while they're producing, because I won't eat my favorite sandwich for the rest of the year. But why stop there? It's the same with dill pickles, fresh from the brine, string beans, and corn-on-the-cob.

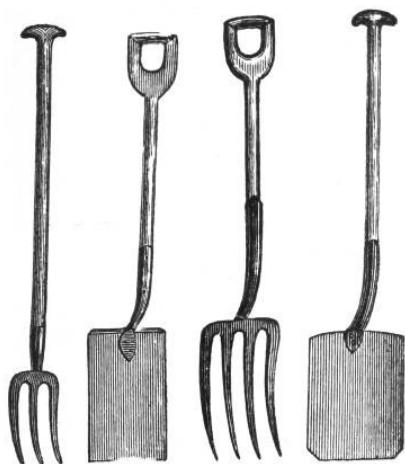
8. *A sale at a nursery is always more exciting than a sale at a department store.*  
Always! And since these sales coincide with the end of the growing season, this is the reason I never start winter, which I realize on the first cold, rainy day of the season, with new boots that have no holes in their soles. Oops. I forgot to go buy them. Again.

9. *When you meet someone who likes to garden, you feel an immediate and unbreakable bond with them.*  
Absolutely! At least when it comes to the subject of flowers. Gardens are one of the few arenas where politics, even at these times, takes a back seat. I've never known political conflict to infiltrate a conversation on flowers, though admittedly I didn't put it to the test last fall, and it might not remain true this year. "Tip-toe through the tulips" might be the best advice for the coming season.

10. *You would not be reading this if it were not about gardening.*  
If you've finished this, and answered at least some of the questions in the affirmative, then you probably didn't need to read the list anyway. Yet here you are.

My husband, "the reluctant gardener", would add garden terms, which we refer to as "parlance" to the list: "temperature" from the plants' point of view, not the people's, "perfect weather" not to relax and enjoy it, but to plant, rake and weed things, and "color" – for example, where everyone sees purple flowers, gardeners see blue, as well as all sorts of shades in what everyone else would simply call "white". He would also claim we have different definitions for certain words such as "entertainment", as in flower shows and classes on herbal teas, and "fun", as in "Let's dig up a water garden!"

Whether you're a gardener or not -- happy spring, Hampton!  
We've certainly earned it this year. ☺



## 2025 ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION

The Town of Hampton is excited to announce its 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Arbor Day Celebration, to take place on April 25 starting at 9:30AM at the Little River Preserve on Hammond Hill.

During the celebration, two native species of trees will be dedicated and celebrated, symbolizing the town's commitment to environmental conservation and sustainability. The audience will include Hampton Elementary School students and staff, members of the Conservation and Recreation Commissions, and interested residents. Students will take part in the festivities by singing songs, presenting poems, and sharing essays about the benefits and importance of trees. The event will also feature presentations from local elected officials, representatives from our electrical service provider Eversource, and a Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection forester.

We invite all community members to join us at the Little River Preserve to celebrate Arbor Day and the beauty of nature. Let's come together to plant trees, educate our youth, and promote environmental stewardship. *For more information please contact: Bruce Spaman, Hampton Recreation and Conservation Commission Member, 203.803.8202 or via email: forestryct@outlook.com*

## Windy Hill

*The smudged canvas remnants that  
sought your name  
Torn from some tired waiting hands  
Believers in something difficult to imagine  
Withstanding the windy road rage ahead*

*The wind a constant screaming reminder  
Nothing seen nor anything unbroken  
Tattered and crushed by invisible intruders  
taking cover on make believe farms*

*A stillness is found in the middle of the storm  
Though not a place for nor'easter forgiveness  
Rattling and rambling till mornings dawn  
Called before the other conditions matter*

*Find the debris that senses the patterns  
Small and large pieces of twisted memories  
There is a familiarity in wind blown things  
Will they find a place to call home again?*

# FOREST & FIELD

## JOSHUA'S TRUST

April 5 **Cellphone Photography at**

**Allanach-Wolf Woodlands** 10 -- 11AM

Join amateur nature photographer Michelle Poudrette in a collaborative cellphone photography workshop. No skill or expertise required.

April 12 **Nature Walk at Rankin Preserve**

9 -11AM Registration required for this 1.5 mile hike through forest, wetlands, and swamps with Naturalist Deb Field. Sturdy shoes and hiking poles recommended.

April 16 **Light Pollution 101 with TLGV and the Mansfield Library** This third installment of the series on the adverse effects of nighttime light pollution, and how you can help, will include a discussion by a panel of experts.

April 22 **Finding Deep Time on Earth Day**

4 – 6PM UConn's Professor Thorson will guide us up to a viewpoint ledge and back for a moderate round-trip hike of 2 miles at Church Farm Preserve in Ashford.

April 26 **Joshua's Trust Annual Meeting**

4 – 6PM Join us for the Joshua's Trust 59<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting at the First Congregational Church in Willimantic.

Be sure to visit <https://joshustrust.org/events/> for details, updates and cancellations.

## CONNECTICUT AUDUBON SOCIETY CENTER AT POMFRET

218 Day Road

Tuesdays in April & May **Early Morning Bird Walks** 8AM

April 8 **The Effects of Light Pollution** 6:30PM

April 26 **Virginia Rail Bird Walk** 6PM

## AT TRAIL WOOD

93 Kenyon Road

Fridays **Trail Wood Walking Club** 1 – 3PM

Meet in the parking lot to walk the trails, weather and conditions permitting. If you would like to be on the reminder list, contact [trailwood@ctaudubon.org](mailto:trailwood@ctaudubon.org).

April 2 **Trail Wood Troubadours** 6 – 9PM

Join a group of acoustic music lovers to play popular songs written when the Teales lived at Trail Wood, 1959-1993. Chords and lyrics will be projected on a screen so everyone can follow along! Space is limited to 10 participants.

April 6 **Creative Writing Workshop** 1 – 3PM

Trail Wood writing residency alums Debbie

Slack and Katherine Hauswirth will reflect on ideas and themes in Teale's writings and in Andrew Krivak's *The Bear*. Participants will then be invited to sit outdoors or walk the trails, making note of their observations and thoughts. The session concludes with an opportunity to share the afternoon's writings. Rain date: Sunday, April 13, 1 – 3PM.

April 11 **Pink Moon Walk and Campfire** 7:30PM

Come join us, cloud cover and weather permitting.

April 25 **Frog and Toad Calls** 6PM

Learn frog and toad calls. Follow up with an evening walk around the pond to practice your new identification skills.

For information or to register for programs, call 860.928.4948.

## JUST LOOK UP

My binoculars are trained on the top of the tower as I watch Momma Osprey tearing bites from a fish and tenderly offering her little chicks the pieces of food. The tiny helpless chicks, looking like baby dinosaurs, take the offered morsel from Momma's powerful beak. Then she tears another piece and another and another for her ever hungry babies.

Cars race by occasionally on this quiet country road. Zooming so fast they rock my truck and wobble my binoculars.

Why don't they just look up and see the sweet family drama occurring overhead? They rush on, oblivious to this incredible story of recovery from the brink of extinction.

Finally Momma has sated the chicks, and she eats what little of the fish remains. The babies, with bellies full, settle deeper into the nest. Momma rearranges herself, carefully placing her talons as to not hurt her nestlings, and settles atop them to keep them warm. As the gloaming falls, Papa arrives, ever faithful, with yet another fish for the family. He circles the tower, each lap higher, until he reaches the top and lands. He too settles in with his family for the night. A stick or two of the nest is re-arranged until all is perfect. And then, they sleep.



Linda Wenner

## SCOUTING NEWS

With the weather warming up, and the days getting longer, both Troops are busy preparing for upcoming campouts and activities planned for the spring. On March 11, we had a visit from several Arrow of Light Scouts from Pack 43 in Canterbury. This is the last rank in Cub Scouting, and this group had a great time, getting a taste of what a troop meeting is like. They really enjoyed a game of "Scoutmaster says", similar to Simon Says, led by Scoutmaster Sam Gailey at the end of the meeting. A lot of work happens at our meetings, but time is set aside for a game each week, to just have some fun, and have a few laughs.

Rob Rondeau

**CONTRIBUTORS:** Mary Albro, Garry Brown, Roger Burten, Marie Cantino, Kit Crowne, Renée Cuprak, Beth Desjardin, Wayne Erskine, Fran Gustavesen, Andrea Kaye, Mary Oliver, Rob Rondeau, Bruce Spaman, Chrissy Stone, Janice Trecker, Linda Wenner. PHOTOS: Cover, Hampton Reservoir, courtesy of artist, Jan Leitch, illustration by Rien Poortvliet; page 3, Juan Arriola.

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### ADVANCE NOTICE!

It's that time of year again to encourage  
"Unity in the Community " with our annual  
Hampton CT Town Wide Yard Sale!  
Friday, June 20th and Saturday June 21st  
For further information please call:

Terri Warner  
Deadline is May 23, 2025.

Land line/ no text messages  
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Thank you!

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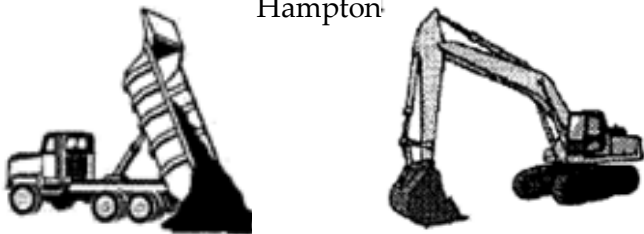
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