

Insightful and informative

# THE HAMPTON Gazette



VOLUME XLVII No. 6 / JULY 2025

## Memorial Day, 2025

*This year marks more than 50 years since the Vietnam War ended and the 18-, 19- and 20-year-old, fresh out of school—filled with “other” plans, young men and women, whose lives were forever changed when they were drawn into that conflict are now in their 70’s and 80’s. It is worth reflecting that more than 60% of all Americans who are alive today were born after the Vietnam War ended and have no memory of that era...only the stories of a time long past and a place far away.*

*Today you are going to hear some of those stories. The committee has gathered some of the words, remembrances, and interviews...a deceased veteran’s letter to a rescued soldier’s son, and more. Memories retold by your friends and neighbors, some of whom served in the jungles of a faraway war. Others served far from the jungles, but often their service was connected to the war in ways we haven’t heard before. One of our neighbors here in Hampton, serving far from South Vietnam, overseas in a military transport and supply capacity, had, as a final assignment before shipping back to the states, the task of loading empty caskets onto a C-130 military transport plane headed for South Vietnam. Stories we may not have heard:*

*Our story begins with the words of today’s Grand Marshall, **Jamie Boss**:*

I am honored that the committee invited me to discuss Vietnam this morning. Today we remember all those who gave their life in the service of our country. This year marks half a century since the last American troops left Vietnam. 58,220 American men and women died in that conflict. 33,103 of them were 18 years old or younger.

Imagine you have just graduated from high school. You are 18 years old. It is unlikely you can grow a beard. Perhaps you were lucky enough to have received your driver’s license. You are still three years away from being able to vote and drink alcohol legally. You are drafted into the Army and spend 8 weeks learning how to kill with a rifle and a pistol, a machine gun, a grenade, and a bayonet. For bayonet practice, we used a dummy stuffed with straw with the face of Ho Chi Minh. According to the Army, he was the ultimate bad guy. We believed what the army told us. He was the communist mastermind behind the backwards, tiny country of North Vietnam. In basic training, the bywords of the day were “Kill VC. Kill Viet Cong.” We hated Ho Chi Minh and his Viet Cong without knowing anything about them.

Over ten years, 2,700,000 American men and women were embroiled in that conflict. The war was made up of thousands of unique personal experiences. I went to Vietnam in 1968. 57 years ago. I spent 365 days repairing tanks, armored personnel carriers, and self-propelled artillery for the First Infantry Division. We did not win that war. We all knew we would be in Vietnam for precisely 365 days—no more, no less. As a

result, our thoughts and motivations were always about getting on that civilian Boeing 707 and flying home on day number 365. Over time, the reasons we ended up in Vietnam have been muddled by politics and lies, but make no mistake. Every young man and woman who went to Vietnam performed brilliantly. They did their job and did it well. They did what their country asked them to do. Many died living up to that request. Unfortunately, they didn’t fully understand why we were there fighting. In truth, from the soldier’s point of view, we were fighting for 365 days of staying alive and then returning home to our families. I never heard anyone talk about winning, just doing their job and getting the hell out of there. Winning was an obvious bridge too far.

No one was safe in Vietnam. We lived in large base camps surrounded by barbed wire. There were over 90 large base camps in Vietnam. At any moment, the Viet Cong could hurl large 122 mm rockets at us from the jungle. As they set the rockets off, they would melt into the jungle and disappear. The roads were dirt, making it easy to bury mines big enough to disable a tank. Trucks carrying personnel never had a chance.

The news generally described Vietnam as a tiny, backward Southeast Asian country. In 1968, Vietnam’s coastline was 40 miles longer than our coastline from Maine to the Florida Keys. Vietnam’s population today is 100 million. Vietnam has existed for thousands of years. It is the third oldest country and was organized in 2879 BC. Vietnam is 809 years older than China.

By the 1850s, the French had begun to colonize Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. By 1887, all three countries were under French control and were now known as French Indochina. Using the population as

MEMORIAL DAY, CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

# The Hampton Gazette



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## Thumbs Up:

- to the Memorial Day Committee for organizing the parade, ceremony, and activities into a seamless stream of community events,
- to Hampton Elementary School and its float, Parish Hill High School's marching band, our local scouts, and all of the parade participants, individuals and vehicles alike,
- to the Congregational Church for providing a delicious (and free!) pancake breakfast, and the Hampton Gazette for providing the best chicken barbecue east of the Mississippi for lunch,
- to all who participated in the ceremony – those who provided music, and those who provided words, and to all who participated in the naval ceremony along the Little River,
- to the horses and riders entertaining us in the field after the ceremony, and to the Recreation Commission for sponsoring the Bar Stool Diplomats to entertain us in the pavilion,
- to the Historical Society and their display of military uniforms from the Civil War to the present, and to Grand Marshall, Jamie Boss, who produced a masterful video for us chronicling his "Year in Vietnam".

Year after year, our premier community event, and the dedication of all involved, bestows us with the very best of Americana, making Hampton a place "worth coming home to".

Dear Readers,

We would like to thank all who helped us this year with the Memorial Day Barbecue: Leon Chaine, Thayne Hutchins and Brian Tracy for assisting Juan Arriola with grilling the chicken; Pat Boss, Kathy Donahue, and June Pawlikowski Miller for helping Peter Witkowski in the kitchen; Roger Burten for cashiering and Linda Long-Burten, Kathy Donahue, and Wayne Erskine for assisting with the delivery of the meals; and those who baked homemade cookies – Linda Long-Burten, Julia Copp, Rosetta Fisher, Sue Hochstetter, Kaye Johnson, Leah Lapp, Kathi Newcombe, Charity Stoltzfus, Beth Weaver, and Melanie Yoder.

We also take this opportunity to thank all who donated to the Gazette last year, and have included an envelope for those who wish to contribute this year. The generous donations of our readers, and those who advertise their businesses with us, as well as all who patronize our barbecue, and those who purchase our town calendar -- all make the publication of our newspaper possible.

For those new to town, the Gazette is delivered free to all households who request a paper copy, and is also available online at [hamptongazette.com](http://hamptongazette.com). This issue contains our Annual Report, which provides an overview of all we offer over the course of a year.

Thank you for your support of the Gazette,

*The Editorial Board of the Hampton Gazette*

**Thanks to the Hampton Gazette for all of the announcements promoting the 2025 Hampton CT Town Wide Yard Sale! Thank you to all of the participants and customers who showed such great support! God answered prayers with wonderful weather! After 16 weeks of rainy Saturdays, we had a winner! Even with the inconvenience of paving, people were very patient and supportive! I hope everyone had great success! The 2026 Hampton CT Town Wide Yard Sale is tentatively scheduled for June 19th and 20th!**  
**Sincerely, Terri Warner**



slaves, the French enriched themselves with rice, rubber, minerals, and opium. Their treatment of the Vietnamese was brutal. Villagers were slaves on French plantations. Ho Chi Minh had been fighting for Vietnam's independence since 1919. He spent 30 years traveling around the world on ships and freighters, as the French exiled him for speaking out about French colonialism. He worked as a cook, cook's helper, pastry chef, dishwasher, and artist in New York City, Paris, France, London, England, Russia, and China. He spoke seven languages fluently. During those 30 years, he searched for ideas to free his country from French rule. His primary goal was complete independence from France.

For every soldier in combat in Vietnam, eight soldiers were behind the lines supporting the men in the field. There were at least 90 base camps in Vietnam. The largest, Long Binh, had over 60,000 personnel, 3,500 buildings, and covered an area larger than the city of Cleveland. It had night clubs, massage parlors, golf courses, leather crafts, college courses, photo labs, swimming pools, shopping areas, a wood shop, tennis courts, basketball courts, post offices, and a branch of the Chase Manhattan bank. It incorporated 180 miles of roads. The result was great enmity between those behind the lines and those in the field. That enmity exists to this day. For many, the war never ended. PTSD, effects of Agent Orange, broken marriages, and disabilities from combat still haunt veterans. It is estimated that 271,000 Vietnam veterans continue to experience significant PTSD symptoms. Estimates of Vietnam veterans having committed suicide range from 50,000 to 150,000. No one knows for sure.

It took me over 50 years to thoroughly understand the Vietnam conflict. I now realize how important it is for any government to be transparent in its actions, honorable in its intentions, and consider all possibilities before committing young men and women to combat. Character, integrity, wisdom, humility, and sound judgment are critical requirements for any of our leaders who would put young American men and women in harm's way.

**Ev Hyde:** I was not a combat veteran. After HS I worked in Norwich as a lab technician and phlebotomist. I was very good at taking blood, from newborns to seniors at end of life. Good because I didn't want to hurt my patients. I spent my service drawing, testing and shipping donor blood to those who were in combat.

Of a dozen disabled Vietnam vets I know personally I want to discuss two, who have not been at Memorial Day events. One is someone I worked for on a Home Builder charity remodeling project, needed because his physical disabilities were getting worse with age. I'm not revealing his name. That's the way he and his wife want it. He still had shrapnel next to his spine too risky to remove and was years in VA pain management. But his greater disability was PTSD. He said, "they took all my guns away, but it was probably just as well." His wife, of over 40 years, privately said to me, "oh, you should have known him before Vietnam... so much fun." Once she thought going to DC and the memorial wall might help. He stayed on the bus weeping. He said, "there are names of guys on that wall. I wouldn't be still alive if it weren't for them."

The other was a childhood friend I've known since I was six. Russ was a Navy corpsman, combat medic to the Marines. He had his buttocks blown off by a grenade. He spent about six hours wounded and hidden

partly under the body of a dead marine, shooting up morphine, with full knowledge he was dying. Knowing the Marines don't leave comrades behind, he called out rather than be bait for an ambush of soldiers who would try to rescue him. Russ was one of the most positive people I've ever met. He was told he would never walk again. After over 100 surgeries he did walk with two canes. He married the nurse who treated him for a year in Boston. Because of the location and severity of his injuries, he wasn't sure if he could be a father. They had three boys. He taught anatomy to medical students for 30 years. But when he got back to Norwich, he rejected riding in parades, a life time membership in the VFW, anything making him a hero. He once asked me if I knew of any Quaker meetings he could join. Russ said, when they grow up they can make their own decisions, but with a Quaker family history, they'll have choices. Russ died 8 or 9 years ago. In his obituary there was no mention of his service in Vietnam.

**Dave Fowler:** In the summer of 1965, when our government just started involvement in the Vietnam War, I was drafted. At that time most draftees were inducted into the Army and the probability of going to Vietnam and being a ground soldier was good. As a Christian and following the principles of the Bible I did not want to put myself in a position where I would have to fight and probably kill my fellow citizen of the world. I did not agree with the U.S. policy of fighting Communism. On the other hand, I felt fortunate to have been born in the United States, and was a proud citizen.

So I had a decision to make; I enlisted in the Air Force. The recruiter told me it was more like a job after basic training but still fulfilled the commitment to serve the country. The difference was four years versus two years in the Army, but I came away from the war the same way I entered it, health wise, unlike many of my fellow military companions.

The recruiter talked me into electronics and training at Keesler Air Force Base. I was then stationed at Westover Air Force Base. Lucky me. This was a base of B-52 bombers, in direct support of the war, deployed on six month rotations to places like Guam, bombing Vietnam 24/7. From there I was deployed temporarily in support of the war, to Guam, Japan and Okinawa.

My experience was very educational. I enlisted



as a kid and came out a man. I was glad to serve my country despite not agreeing with some of the politics of why we were there.

**Juan Arriola:** I come from a long line of warriors, who fought against government forces and who fought with government forces. World War II saw my father, Francisco, in the U. S Navy shooting down Kamikazes. His two brothers were in the Army in the European Theater, Benito and Severiano, a prisoner of war in Germany liberated while he was digging his own grave.

My brother Francisco was a "river rat" in Vietnam, slowly patrolling the Mekong, until shots fired would accelerate the cruise to maximum speed circumventing logs and bodies floating in the water that could catapult the PT boat. He finished his tour of duty in Da Nang, surviving the Tet Offensive.

My brother Lasaro, a Marine, served in the jungles of Southeast Asia. Later he became an Embassy Guard. During the fall of Saigon, he was shooting South Vietnamese civilians off the helicopters during the chaos of the evacuation.

I was the lucky one. My draft number was high enough to prevent me from going to Viet Nam. Why, then, did I decide to volunteer? I signed on with the U. S. Navy after the deaths of two of my close friends in Viet Nam. One, a farmer, was one of the gentlest persons I ever knew, sacrificed himself by jumping on a grenade on his third day in country, saving the lives of comrades he hadn't even gotten to know. The other, also 18-years-old, was shot up so badly that his closed casket could not be opened. I remember his mother's despair; she was never assured that her son's body was in that casket.

I enlisted because after their deaths, I felt guilty. And to carry on the legacy of my family's service.

I was lucky again when I was home-ported on the East Coast instead of the west coast during the final stage of the war.

Today, I recognize my good fortune, I recognize the service of my friends and of my family, and I recognize the sacrifice that all soldiers made in this, and every war.

**Stan Crawford:** During my teen years, I thought I'd made it: a construction job in high school and part time employment at a popular restaurant in my hometown, Willimantic. I had a car and I had money – everything a young man needs. My world crashed when my draft number was low. I saw the writing on the wall and started taking matters into my own hands by talking to the Air Force recruiter, and the U. S. Air Force became my life for the next four years, reporting for boot camp at Lackland Air Force Base and then to Amarillo, learning the craft of airplane and sheet metal repair.

After Texas, I was reassigned to Otis Air Force Base where I maintained and repaired 16 Interceptor Fighter jets. There I became good friends with Normand Bernard. Normand received news that he was being sent to Viet Nam. He had just become a father; he and his wife had just had a son. I spoke with our Commanding Officer



and convinced him to send me instead. Since the rate was billeted, I was that billet. The Air Force agreed to the request, a family was kept together, and after saying goodbye to my own family, I landed in the Republic of South Viet Nam.

I was assigned to Cam Ran Bay, a small island off the Vietnamese coast, where I was in charge of maintaining the flight worthiness of 100 F4 Phantom jets used in all sorts of missions at all times of the day and night and in all types of weather. Aside from two occasions when my comrade and I repaired aircraft that was downed and damaged in the jungle, I was not in danger. But I did my part for the guys in harm's way. I did what I could to support the men on the line.

And I would do it again.

**Randy Thompson** (read by his niece, Lisa Vargas): Seven months after graduating from high school, my uncle, Randy Thompson, received an "Order to Report for Armed Forces Physical Examination." He passed with, perhaps, too many flying colors, because he was selected to receive some of the most intensive combat training given. For 16 months, he and his comrades climbed mountains, performed beach landings, practiced jungle warfare and experienced live-fire trainings. When given a little book of Vietnamese phrases to learn, there remained no doubt where he was headed.

Sergeant Thompson arrived at Base Camp in Chu Lai in 1967. From then until he left Vietnam in 1968, his Unit experienced some of the most intensive fighting in Vietnam, including the Tet Offensive. During that twelve month period, his infantry experienced 102 soldier deaths. Some

of them were Randy's friends.

Before he died, Randy spoke to the son of a man whose life he saved in Vietnam. This is the letter he first wrote:

*On May 9, 1968, we made a 2<sup>nd</sup> attempt to take out the enemy bunkers on Hill 352, (first try was on May 7). The volume of enemy fire was too much, so we withdrew back down the hill, maybe a distance of 300 meters. Another GI and I had just brought down the body of a dead platoon leader, Lt. Verrett. I don't know who mentioned it, but someone said there was still a wounded GI up the path who had not come down. My recollection is that two of us went back up to look for him. When we got up there, maybe two thirds of the way up, I saw him (Louis R Voelk) sitting on the left side of the narrow path with his back up against a tree, rifle in his lap, pointed up hill. He seemed quite calm. He might have told me his name at this time (which I guess I never forgot) and said he was waiting to see who was going to reach him first – the NVA from above or his own guys from below. I think I remember your father getting up onto my back in a piggy back carrying position. I had his legs and he reached over and held onto my equipment belt. He didn't seem to be in much pain. The other guy carried our M-16's and kept watch up the hill as we came down. Later that afternoon a medevac chopper came and took the three wounded and one dead away. I really didn't know your dad, as we were in different platoons, except for that day when we were all thrown together getting off that hill. I would like to hear how he described the events to you and see if they are close in description.*

*Signed, Bruce Randolph Thompson*

**Bob Grindle:** I grew up in a tiny town, not unlike Hampton, in Northeastern Indiana. It was a time and a place where to disagree with your parents, or any elder, for that matter, was considered an unacceptable level of disrespect, and I was eager to get away. Instead of paying for college, the military would pay me—not much—but, in the Fall of 1961 I signed on with the United States Air Force, and I moved from Texas to Mississippi to Washington state, Florida, North Dakota, California, Nevada, Japan, Alaska to the Philippines to Viet Nam and back to Tacoma, Washington. In that time I came to realize that I cared more about the men and women that I was now serving and working with than I cared about myself. I was no longer the snobby, self-absorbed, skinny, back woods 17-year-old-know-it-all, but rather a committed member of a group of equals who rarely all agreed on anything...we simply slept together, ate together, worked together and occasionally risked our lives together. We were, in the most basic sense, a tribe.

Although I flew several times into South Vietnam on transport and supply missions, I was never assigned to Vietnam and was discharged from the US Air Force in 1966 into a world that seemed to have changed. Perhaps it was me. I returned briefly to my hometown in Indiana, and although there were places in the United States where returning service women and men were celebrated, the larger conversation in 1966 was one of challenge and ridicule, and even though I had never been assigned to duty in Vietnam, I was filled with resentment—I knew a lot of those guys, and I took it personally. But a year later, as a university student on the West Coast I was one of the demonstrators. By 1968 more than a thousand men and women a month were dying in a war that seemed increasingly pointless. Friends that I loved were dying, and I wondered...for what? Students on campuses across the country, including mine, were dying,

and I questioned if my country really cared. Was this war really nothing more than a reality show on the 6 o'clock news?

I dropped out of college, bicycled across the United States and began working. I met my wife, settled in Hampton and realized that in the quiet give and take of life off the heavily travelled main routes of our great land is, and always will be, the real strength that underpins our success as a nation.

**Al Ameer** (read by his son, Joey Ameer):

My father enlisted in the Army in 1967 as a 68B20 Aircraft Turbine Engine Repairman stationed at Fort Eustis. After that, he served in Vietnam. For seven months and three days. Like so many of our Vets, he spoke little of his time there. But during his service, he was awarded medals for the National Defense Service, the Valatory Service, the Vietnam Campaign, the Army Commendation and was a Qualified expert with M-16. He was promoted to E-5 Tech Sergeant in 1969 and was honorably discharged in 1973.

What we remember my father for is his service when he returned home here to Hampton, where he was a first responder for sixty years, with the Ambulance Corps and with the Fire Department, and was a mentor to many new recruits. He was recognized as Hampton's Citizen of the Year in 1995, and last year, he received a proclamation from the Town of Hampton and a citation from the State Assembly for his volunteer service to our town.

My father passed away twelve weeks ago. The legacy he leaves us is one of courage, commitment and volunteerism, which he taught us through daily example. So many Memorial Day speakers have expressed the importance to all of us of building and maintaining, through volunteerism, a strong community, for the sake of those who live here, for the legacy left us by those who came before, for future generations, and for our veterans, making Hampton a place worth returning home to.



## MY YEAR IN VIETNAM

1968 – 1969

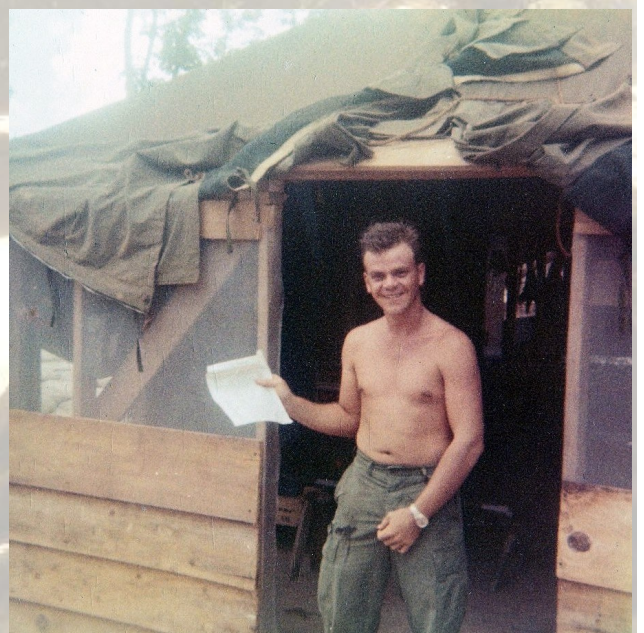
*Jamie Boss*

My assignment was to be on a 12 contact team support units in the field and on base. We were stationed on Lai Khe, an old French Rubber Plantation owned by Michelin. We constructed our work area and living quarters with three weeks. I was a Tracked Vehicle, tank mechanic.

Lai Khe, also known as “Rocket City” for the number of rockets and mortars we received weekly, had a typical military airfield. All types of planes and helicopters landed here.

When tanks ventured into the field, everything they owned was strapped to the turret. Here there are cots, ammo boxes, clothing, tarps, water containers, extra boots, cases of beer, C-rations, and much more dangling from the turret.

We spent only 365 days in Vietnam. This fellow is holding his orders to return home to the United States. Tomorrow, he will be on a civilian Boeing 707, with a pretty stewardess handing him a blanket and pillow for the 13-hour ride home.







Kids always lined the road as convoys moved from base camp to base camp. Often, they would hold their younger sibling to evoke sympathy and hopefully a kind GI would toss them food or candy as they passed.

One of the Vietnamese girls did our laundry and cleaned our tent every week. They would shake the dust out of our blankets, shine our boots, and sweep the floor. In turn, everyone in the tent would contribute to their pay.



We were near Cambodia, repairing broken tanks on an isolated Fire Support Base. The tank repair vehicles have their booms raised to pull the engines out of the tanks. The new engines were flown in by a Sikorsky Sky Crane.



Aluminum-armored personnel carriers fared poorly when they ran over a mine in the road. Here, one had the entire floor blown out, and the commander's cupola was destroyed. The entire crew was killed.

*The entire video Jamie Boss produced for Memorial Day can be viewed on YouTube.*



# *and Beyond...* **VILLAGE VIEW**

## **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING DRAWS SMALL CROWD**

Approximately two dozen residents and officials unanimously approved the items on the call of the Annual Town Meeting on June 20<sup>th</sup>, forecasting the approval of all questions at the June 27 referendum.

After electing First Selectman Allan Cahill moderator, participants approved standard items such as: authorization of the Board of Selectmen to borrow, if necessary, money to defray expenses until funds are available, to enter into an agreement with the Commissioner of the Department of Transportation for the expenditure of funds for improvement and maintenance of Town roads, and to accept Local Capital Improvement Funds for road improvement. Residents also approved the 5-Year Plan as presented, which included improvements to roads, the Little River Preserve, the Town Hall, Community Center, and Transfer Station, the completion of the Tennis/Pickle Ball court, and the purchase of a Tractor and Road Mower for the Department of Public Works.

Stephanie Bayne was elected by acclamation to serve a three year term on the Regional District #11 Board of Education. She is replacing Kathy Freed.

First Selectman Cahill reviewed the Town Government's \$1,949,439 budget, a 3.17% increase over the current year, to be voted on at the referendum, listing the reason for increases in computers, programs and support in the Offices of the Town Clerk and the Assessor, the costs of early voting, mandated, and previously reimbursed by the State, hikes in heating oil and electricity, legal costs due to the Solar Park litigation, and a 2.5% cost-of-living-adjustment for all Town employees. He also explained the most significant increase, the rise in the contract with KB Ambulance, noting that funds from the American Rescue Plan Act were used in the past to offset these costs.

The Hampton Elementary School's budget was also slated for a referendum vote. Board of Education Vice-Chairman Mark Becker explained that the proposal of \$2,262,603,

which represents a 3.81% increase over the current year, has added a full time Scientific Research Based Interventionist to the staff for students needing additional assistance. He explained that the majority of increases are fixed costs, such as transportation and tuition.

Other matters voted on, and ultimately approved, at the referendum were the transfer of funds for a building and mechanical evaluation study at the elementary school, for the purchase of a Tractor and Road Mower for the Department of Public Works, and to fund the Volunteer Firefighter Length of Service Program.

## **REFERENDUM RESULTS**

*The following questions were approved at the June 27 referendum with the following votes:*

- Shall the Town of Hampton appropriate \$1,949,439 for the General Government for the 2025-2026 fiscal year? 154-41
- Shall the Town of Hampton appropriate \$2,262,603 for the Hampton Elementary School for the 2025-2026 fiscal year? 125 – 69
- Shall the Town of Hampton transfer Account 2450 in the Capital Nonrecurring Fund of unallocated funds to Account 2430 Trucks and Equipment? 154-41
- Shall the Town of Hampton approve the transfer of \$150,000 from the Unassigned General Fund to the Capital Nonrecurring 2430 Trucks and Equipment for the purchase of a Department of Public Works Tractor & Road Mower? 146- 47
- Shall the Town of Hampton approve the expense of \$27,400 from the Unassigned General Fund for a Building and Mechanical Evaluation Study of Hampton Elementary School, as required by CGS 10- 220? 149-45
- Shall the Town of Hampton approve the transfer of \$50,000 from the Unassigned General Fund Balance for the Volunteer Firefighter Length of Service Program? 170-23

## **BOARD OF SELECTMEN VOTE TO APPEAL ADVERSE COURT DECISION**

The Board of Selectmen at their June 2 meeting unanimously voted to appeal the recent decision of the State Superior Court regarding taxation of the Solar Park's personal property, which ruled against the Town of Hampton' claim on taxes owed. The litigation is the result of the AFL-HBAB Solar Trust's refusal to pay personal property taxes on the equipment used for their enterprise at 37 West Fisk Road, a significant parcel in Hampton's limited commercial zone. While taxes on the 33 acres have been collected, taxes on the personal property, have been billed, but not collected since first assessed in 2020.

The plaintiff based their claim on Connecticut General Statute 12-81(57) (D), asserting that the solar panels and related equipment, installed for "commercial or industrial purposes" and located at the property, are exempt from taxation as it qualifies as a "Class I renewable energy source" as defined in CGS 16-1. In the summary ruling, rendered on May 23, the judge ruled in favor of plaintiff Solar Trust c/o Huntington National Bank against the defendant, the Town of Hampton, citing the relevant statutes and decisions regarding other municipalities, all favoring the plaintiff Solar Trust. Several similarity situated towns have settled for minimal amounts.



# Fletcher Memorial Library



## NEW BOOKS

Summer reading from the likes of Anthony Horowitz, Carl Hiaasen and Rachel Ekstrom-Courage, plus new mysteries and historical fiction. A biography of Mark Twain, some new juveniles and DVDs round out the offerings.

### ADULT FICTION

Jeanine Cummins	Speak to Me of Home
Jeffery Deaver	South of Nowhere
Rachel Ekstrom-Courage	Murder by Cheesecake
Alison Espach	The Wedding People
Allegra Goodman	Isola
Jennifer Haigh	Rabbit Moon
Jo Harkin	The Pretender
Sarah Harman	All the Other Mothers Hate Me
Katy Hays	Saltwater
Carl Hiaasen	Fever Beach
Anthony Horowitz	Marble Hall Murders
Sarah Penner	The Amalfi Curse

### ADULT NON-FICTION

Ron Chernow	Mark Twain
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### JUVENILE & YOUNG ADULT

Katherine Applegate	Odder: An Otter's Story (picture book)
Atinuke	100 Goats and Granny! (picture book)
Ellen Crenshaw	The Baby-Sitters Club Graphix # 16
Hope Larson	A Wrinkle in Time (graphic novel)
Tuli Sutherland	Wings of Fire Book 8
Raina Telgemeier	The Cartoonists Club (graphic novel)

## MUSIC AT THE FLETCH

The July concert in the library's summer music series will feature Claudia Schmidt, a folk, blues and jazz singer/songwriter and instrumentalist who will perform Wednesday, July 16, at 6PM at Fletcher Memorial Library.

Originally from Michigan, Schmidt knew early that she wanted to be a singer. After youthful experience in numerous choirs, she began her professional career in Chicago, Wisconsin and Minnesota. During this time she was a frequent guest on "A Prairie Home Companion". Despite a mid-career detour when she and her husband operated a bed and breakfast on an island in Lake Michigan, Schmidt has produced more than 16 albums of mostly original songs, accompanying herself on twelve string guitar and dulcimer, and she has racked up countless miles during forty-six years as a touring musician. Although she began as a folk singer, Schmidt is a versatile performer who has explored jazz and blues and composed pieces for musical theater and plays. She currently records on Red House Records.

Schmidt will play on the porch of the library, and concert attendees should bring chairs or blankets as well as their own refreshments. All Music at the Fletch events are free, but contributions to the music fund are gratefully accepted.



## LIBRARY EVENTS

### WEEKLY PROGRAMS

**Top Shelf Gallery:** The July show features Xiaohong Song's *An Eye for Beauty*, consisting of a variety of landscapes and floral pieces in oil and a series of still life and figurative pieces in charcoal and pencil. Date for closing reception and demonstration TBD.

### Special Programs:

**July 1 Book Discussion Group 6-7PM** The group will be discussing *The Caine Mutiny* by Herman Wouk. We have copies of the book available to borrow at the library.

**July 16 Summer Concert at the Fletch 6-7PM** The second in our outdoor Music at the Fletch series features the versatile performer Claudia Schmidt along with her twelve-string guitar and dulcimer. Bring a lawn chair or blanket. In the event of inclement weather the concert will be held in the Community Room.

### 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 Tai Chi 8:30—9:30AM

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).



# Our Rural Heritage Quiet Corner Winery

## OPEN DOOR FARM

The property at 217 North Bigelow Road has served several functions throughout its history. The 18th century beginnings were agricultural; it was a dairy farm, and through many years, and still, there have been horses. The barn once served as a stage for the Consolidated School's production of "Rumpelstiltskin", as the setting for a wedding reception, and the yard, with its view at the time of the Little River valley and Hampton Hill, as one of the scenes for a film on our town. While embracing the property's history, agricultural roots, and value as a venue, its new enterprise is unique to the property and to Hampton.

Owner David Paine has recently opened a winery. With wines which have already put Hampton "on the map". In its first appearance at the Big E, "Quiet Corner Winery" earned silver medals for Woodhill Sauvignon Blanc, 2024 and Tekton Malbec American, 2023.

"We make awesome wine," Dave says, and if the silver medal doesn't speak for itself, the wine I sampled surely does.

"I love to cook," he explains, "I love the creation." Having worked in kitchens in German restaurants and Irish pubs, his own was jokingly referred to as "Dave's Bistro" when he lived in Indianapolis and fed so many people at his place. It is not unusual for the Paines to invite several guests for plated, seven course, gourmet meals. For years, he's been making wines with friends for fun, and after spending hours and hours, reading and reading, and purchasing equipment, last spring he decided he wanted to build a winery here.

Along with culinary delights, Dave is also familiar with the area, having grown up in neighboring

Andover. He spent eight years in the military and lived in Germany for a time prior to arriving in Hampton with his wife, Meagen, an Advanced Placement teacher of Science and Forensics at Ellington High School, and their daughter, Berlin, (named for the band -- as in "Take My Breath Away" -- not the capital). Two dogs and five horses complete the family.

What separates this winery from most others is that there are no vineyards on the 30 acre property. Instead, the grapes are grown and imported from vineyards in California, Chili, Italy and South Africa with the wine produced here. Dave has been to the California vineyards, and is planning a trip next year to Italy's. "Every wine maker creates their unique flair," he says, and every region's grapes are unique. Quiet Corner Winery affords customers an opportunity to sample wines from the different regions. Dave's goal is to have three to five wines from each of them. Next spring he hopes to expand his offerings and add six to nine more wines to his portfolio. He is also working on different sized wine bottles, noting that sometimes people want a smaller bottle to bring to the beach or on a picnic.

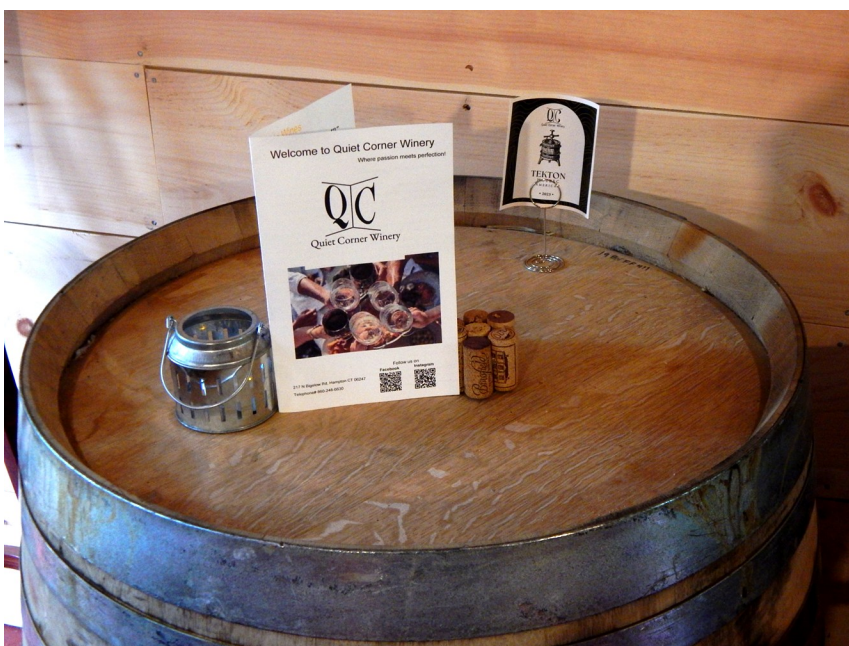
Quiet Corner Winery is open Sundays, from noon to five. Here you are treated to wine tastings, or a five, or seven, ounce glass of wine. There is also soda available and snack boxes. Customers can enjoy the ambience of the old building, part of the old farm house, complete with the original rafters, walls, and counter. Stools surround oak barrels serving as tables, and white lights along the ceiling supply a mellow glow. It's a comfortable space. The Planning and Zoning Commission recently approved entertainment here in the form of music provided by a guitar player. Customers can also relax outdoors where a patio hosts Adirondack chairs and picnic tables and a view of the beautiful horses this summer,





and what must be a magnificent blaze of foliage from the maples descending to the valley this fall. There is also a play scape for children; it's a child-friendly place. A poster Berlin created for the winery greets visitors at the entrance.

In another building, which replaced a garage and sets on its footprint, the wine is produced. The various spaces are temperature controlled depending on their function. One room contains stainless steel tanks for the fermentation process. Laboratory equipment fills another area designated for testing. Another room houses French oak barrels in which the wine is stored for a minimum of 12 months. Every one of the several barrels contains 59 gallons, or 280 bottles, of wine. Bottling is another process. Wine suffers "bottle shock" if this stage is not completed properly. Red wine needs to spend three months in the bottle; white wine only one.



What I sense as I sit in its realm, is that the history of this place is respected, acknowledges what came before. The old barn still stands, a landmark on North Bigelow, horses still graze in the fields, a new barn built on the footprint of another produces the wine, and a portion of the old farm house is where it's poured for customers. While the name of the property was changed to "Open Door Farm", from the original "Ha' Penny" and the more recent, Windrush", Dave recognizes a time-honored Hampton tradition and understands, as the Johnsons who lived here for several years prior to selling the property to the Paines, that we who have lived here even longer still refer to it as "the Milners".

"We're temporary stewards of this place," says Dave.

And I sense a respect for Hampton, for the rural roots of the town they've settled in.

After I leave, I notice that the picture on the wine bottle I brought home is of a cow, and the label on the back reads: "Why a cow on a wine bottle? Quiet Corner Winery is nestled in a part of Connecticut rich in farming history. We chose to feature a cow on our Sauvignon Blanc label as a tribute to the hardworking farming community, particularly honoring the dairy farmers of Hampton. Our goal is to craft a wine that not only stands the test of time but also celebrates the heritage and dedication of this agri-

cultural region." The essence of the place captures exactly that.

I'm far from a connoisseur, but I've learned a lot about the process, and the owners, and the intent. I'm treated to a glass of white wine, delicious, neither too dry nor too sweet, a perfect balance even for this untrained palate, and I know I'll return for more of the wine, and the ambience, and the company. Treat yourself to Quiet Corner Winery this summer.

*Next month's issue will feature the property's history.*

## REMEMBERING...

*Oh, take me back to Hampton now that  
spring is here.  
Oh to walk along the village streets and see  
what I hold dear.  
To see again the churches, the library  
and schools.  
Old places that are cherished homes built strong  
with pioneer tools.  
The village store where I once went to purchase  
this and that,  
And a central spot where people come to buy,  
visit and chat.  
I miss the dear old house we had built in  
seventeen twenty three.  
It was a home so cherished by my husband,  
children and me.  
Oh what a busy, cheerful, joyful place on old  
North Bigelow Road  
And what a sad day came for us when the dear  
place was sold.  
Oh take me back to Hampton, -- let me be  
there in the spring.  
I will sit in the old orchard where the spring  
birds came to sing.  
And I'll walk by Little River where the grass  
would grow so high.  
I'll visit the old cemeteries, read the names  
and maybe cry.  
Oh take me back to Hampton,  
the village I hold dear.  
I think about it almost every day  
and wipe away a tear.*

Elizabeth Hearn Milner

In arriving at their decision to appeal, First Selectman Allan Cahill noted the difference between the amount our town lost in uncollected taxes compared to other municipalities. The personal property of the Solar Park represents a larger percentage of our Grand List compared to those of other filers. The Selectmen hope to recoup some of the approximate 1.5 million dollars lost to unpaid taxes and interest. Since 2020, \$29,059 has been spent on legal counsel to resolve the matter. The cost of the appeal, Cahill said when asked at a meeting of the Board of Finance, will probably be comparable.

## REPUBLICAN CAUCUS

The Republican Town Committee will Caucus to endorse municipal candidates on July 15, 2025, at 6PM in the Community Room at Town Hall. All registered Republicans are encouraged to attend. A list of the municipal offices to fill at the November Election is available at the Town Clerk's Office.

## SENIORS CLUB

On June 13th we had our second Senior Luncheon prepared by Kara at the Hampton General Store. It was a terrific meal of barbecued boneless chicken, macaroni and cheese, cole slaw, and cornbread with individual strawberry shortcakes for dessert. On JULY 11 we will be having our next luncheon. As always, it will be held in the downstairs community room at the Town Hall at 12:30. The menu will be advertised closer to the date.

On JULY 25 we are going to have a presentation by the owner of the new Quiet Corner Winery to describe for us the process of getting from grapes on the vine to a glass of wine on your table. We will be able to sample some of the wines and enjoy light snacks. Put these dates on your calendar! A flyer with all the details will be posted around town and sent to the general membership.

We continue to enjoy our weekly activities: Sit and Stretch on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays via ZOOM, Game Day on Wednesdays and Mexican Trains on Fridays. If you are interested in joining any of these activities, do not hesitate to contact us for more information at hamptonseniors01@gmail.com.

Our membership drive is in full swing. You can renew your membership or become a new member at any of the events or by mail to HSC, P.O. Box 184, Hampton, CT 06247. The membership fee is \$12.00 per year.

I look forward to seeing you at our events and appreciate all the support we've received from so many people.

*Fran Gustavesen, President*

## VETERANS' NEWS

A veteran and/or spouse of a veteran may be eligible for rent or mortgage assistance, assistance with electric or gas, food, clothing, etc. if their total annual income is less than \$60,000. Contact me for more information at 860.928.2309.

# I'm From Here

## SUDDENLY LEGENDARY

I was up to my forearms in coleslaw veggies when Mary came in. While we volunteers were preparing the Hampton Memorial Day Chicken Barbecue sides, other volunteers had taken care to create a Historical Society float for the Memorial Day parade.



This year's float showcased a selection of the uniforms that have been donated to the Society. Our president, Matt, provided the trailer and know-how to secure each mannequin displaying a uniform, from Civil War to wars of more recent generations. Mary had pictures of their successful efforts, and I was glad to take a break from cabbage and carrots to view them.

She mentioned, with a quiet smile, that my father's own uniform had been displayed on a chair, instead of a mannequin. His dress jacket was hung over the back of the chair, his dress slacks on the seat, his cap 'on the lap of the pants'.

I am still touched. I don't know if any who decided on this method of display realized just how pertinent it was to my dad. Until his death over four decades ago, Barney (my dad) was a simple man, but talented and honest in his actions. His talents took him into cobwebbed cellars and modest kitchens, attics and cow barns, fields and the homes of the wealthy. He was a man comfortable in the kitchens, the homes' hearts, of each of his customers.

A simple chair did honor to my father's uniform in a way that none of the mannequins would have. Long after his death his uniqueness still stands out. Whether by intent or necessity, a simple chair to hold his uniform would have been how he would have wanted it. He would have approved. I, too, approve.

This simple display of his uniform will make my father stand out long after departing these borders, just as he stood out as an Army Air force mechanic, and just as he stood out while working here after, faithfully, steadily. He was a man of steady habits, a true Connecticut Yankee.

Perhaps many will observe and wonder at the distinctly different treatment of his uniform, and in so doing, will suddenly ascribe to him legendary status. Thank you for that, Mary, Matt, Susan, Jo, even if it was unintentional on your parts. I knew it was there all along.

*June Pawlikowski Miller*

## Publick House Blueberry Pie

*For those of us who were treated to the Public House in Sturbridge growing up, there were several memorable desserts. My mother's favorite was Grasshopper Pie, but I remember this Blueberry Pie, too.*

Make a paste of:

¼ cup cold water

5 tbs. flour

pinch of salt

Bring to a boil:

1 cup berries

1 cup sugar

½ cup water

When mixture is boiling, add paste. Stir until thick. Cool. Put in the rest of a quart of blueberries. Pour all into a prepared shell (either pastry or graham cracker). Garnish with sweetened whipped cream.

*Debbie Fuller*



## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE HAMPTON GAZETTE

### JULY 2024 – JULY 2025

Our publishing year began and ended with the town's commemoration of Memorial Day, with photographs of the parade and ceremony, and recognition of all the participating organizations, and above all, our veterans. The Memorial Day addresses were featured on the front pages. In 2024, our Korean War veterans, one, George Miller, in person, and fourteen through representatives, shared their experiences, stationed in such far flung places as Japan, Puerto Rico, France, Germany, Casa Blanca, the North Pole and the Sahara Desert, and one, Gordon Hansen, who served for two years on the front lines. We started this tradition two years ago, commemorating the World War II veterans when the last of them, Tom Gaines and Clarence Thornton, passed away. The Gazette gathered and organized their words, through speeches, letters, and interviews, which were delivered on Memorial Day by friends and family members. This year, as we commemorated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War, we honored those who served during that era, hearing from eight veterans whose stories are recorded in this issue, from Jamie Boss, who also produced the video, "My Year in Vietnam, 1968-1969", comprised of photographs he captured and narrated, to Al Ameer, who returned to Hampton to serve as a first responder here for 60 years. As the pastor of our Congregational Church, who gave the benediction, later wrote, "the power in the truth of what they spoke was profound."

In July of 2024, "Our Rural Heritage", the series we started in 2018 "to tell the stories of our old barns while they're still standing" which expanded to other aspects of Hampton's history, featured "Our Parades" to include the memories of former residents, and in the May 2025 issue, "Our Veterans" chronicled our patriotic history, from the French and Indian War to the present, and shared an excerpt from a letter of a resident veteran of the Civil War. Every subject is accompanied by a related remembrance.

The series also covered "Music!", recording personal memories from the last century, "Hidden Springs Farm", a horse rescue, Quiet Corner Winery at "Open Door Farm", and "Living off the Land", Helen Matthew's turn-of-the-century account of harvesting wild plants from early spring to late fall.

We started a series on "Our Roads", and ended our two year exploration of the town center, which covered all of those village institutions, from its beginnings with the Congregational Church on its 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and culminating with the old town pound, the village blacksmith, and the library, compliments of Janice Trecker, on its 100th anniversary, an article enhanced with Jean Wierzbinski's "A Tale of Two Sisters", the history of Harriet and Eliza Durkee's role in the Fletcher Memorial Library. We also wrote an article on Morris Burr's (not nearly as famous yet far more infamous) relative – Aaron.

We also reported on current events, our Annual Town Meeting and one with our State representatives, Pat Boyd and Jeff Gordon. Town officials kept us apprised with a new feature, Veterans News, from advocate, Garry Brown, and information from the Town Clerk on important matters such as dog licensing and transfer station stickers, and from the Registrars of Voters on voting events. Those responsible for the budgets reported on them, and we published the referendum results. The Planning and Zoning Commission reported on conservation subdivisions and residential development, and noticed us on the importance of filling out the survey for the Plan of Conservation and Development. The elementary school consumed a lot more ink, with headlines ranging from "Grievance Points to Need for NAACP Invitation" to "School Officials Review Test Scores, Note Progress". We reported on the controversy surrounding the resignations of Principal Merendina and Custodian Harris, the resultant turmoil with articles such as "Rancor and Hostility Distract from Board Focus", and the consequential complaints filed with the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, and the Freedom of Information Commission, the latter resolved amicably one month later in the complainant's favor. We published four letters of opinion this year, on these and other topics.

There was plenty of good news to report for the schools, with the announcements of graduations, honor rolls, and Dean's Lists, and the publication of elementary school students' essays, poems, and biographies.

Regular features included the "Recipe of the Month", with fifteen contributors, "Auntie Mac", a favorite among readers at large as well as those needing advice, and the garden column, with subjects ranging from "The Scented Garden" to "Overgrown!", including one of "Our Neighbor's Gardens", this year, Linda Wenner's splendid wildflowers. We also started a new series, "I'm From Here", beautifully written by June Pawlikowski Miller, born and raised here and, gratefully, still living among us and sharing such lovely and loving commentaries on our "Small Town, Big Heart". This and other forms of art – Pete Vertefeuille's photographs of birds, ten poems from adults and children alike – elevate our publication, and we are always pleased to receive them.

The 2025 annual calendar's theme was "Hampton Farms", illustrating all the various ways we continue our agriculture roots. Twelve of our local artists contributed photographs and paintings capturing barns, pastures, cornfields, farmer's markets, cows, chickens, sheep, maple syrup pails, horses plowing fields, and a Christmas tree farm.

Sadly, we bid farewell to 19 residents, including front page tributes to Phyllis Stensland, the elementary school's first, longest serving, and most loved paraprofessional, Jean Romano, who was the Gazette's "gold standard" for years and Chairman for a few, Maurice Bisson, who became nationally recognized when he was elected First Selectman as a write-in candidate, due in large part to his extraordinary neighborliness, and Al Ameer, who we honored months earlier when he was acclaimed locally and on the State level for his 60 years of service as a first responder.

We also paid tribute to other deserving residents. Kathy Donahue was our Citizen of the Year, for her service on town boards and committees, and for her volunteer efforts for the school, on holidays, and in community kitchens. We also covered the dedication of the Town Pavilion to Michael Chapel, life-long resident, long-time Selectman, forever friend and neighbor.

Community organizations kept us apprised of their happenings, Fletcher Memorial Library's monthly and weekly events, the exhibits at Top Shelf Gallery, summer's Music at the Fletch,

and new books. We also reviewed resident Jamie Boss' memoir, "Coming of Age in Vietnam", and former resident Janet Robertson's memoir, "It Looked That Way to Me", both of which can be found on Fletcher's shelves. The Recreation Commission, the Seniors and the Scouts reported their news, and the Fire Department's "Smoke, Mirrors and Spotlights" listing the emergency dispatches of our first responders. Joshua's Trust, the Friends of Goodwin Forest, and the Connecticut Audubon Society listed their monthly events, and we published several excerpts from Edwin Way Teale's "A Walk through the Year" which he penned at Trail Wood. The Congregational Church published their annual events, among them the Trekker Organ Recital and Soup n' Silents, and Pastor Paula Mehmel was introduced to the community with the article, "New Pastor in Sync with Church Vision". The Howard Valley Church opened its doors at Christmas time for a special candlelit service, hosted by the owners, the Chokas family, and officiated by members of the Mennonite community.

Other annual events we announced were Walking Weekend in the fall, Arbor Day in the spring, Holiday Happenings at Christmastime, and the Harvest Festival at summer's end, where the Gazette provides for a Community Poem – this year's theme, I Hope... with stanzas ranging from "It Stops Raining! It Keeps Raining!" to "An end to prejudice, and ignorance, and hunger" -- and a community poll. This year's Hampton Poll had 77% of participants favoring the development of senior housing, with 23% opposed, the State Poll for favorite fall fair was, overwhelmingly, Brooklyn, and in the National Poll on the Presidential Election, 22 of the 38 participants selected "I always vote" on the likelihood of casting a ballot.

One of our favorite holidays, and our readers', is April Fools, which we celebrate with a special issue generously sprinkled with humor. This year we continued the tales of the Ebenezar and Eliza Bakker Button Family, discovered, along with their gristmill, last year living under the bridge by Utley Road, though they've resided here for over two hundred years. This April they were interviewed for a front page article on life along the Little River and we were introduced to new family members Katrina, Joost, Kaspar and Piet. Along with columns from regular humorists Angela Fichter and Kit Crowne, we published a recipe for bologna cake, Our Rural Heritage featured Hampton tales of "The Funny Farm", and the garden column offered a survey titled "You Know You're a Gardener If..." which included such criteria as -- You consider well-aged feces a thoughtful gift.

This last year, over a hundred people, from here and afar, contributed articles, announcements, recipes, poems, opinions, photographs, and advertisements, and we thank you all. It is your presence on our pages which make *The Hampton Gazette* a community newspaper.

*The Hampton Gazette*

## CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to the following students who recently graduated from Hampton Elementary School: Lyela Blanchette, Thalia Danh, Owen Heon, Keegan Jones, Austin Marinoccio, Liam McKinnon, Madison Murphy, Benjamin Sayles. The Gazette joins the community in wishing you all the best at middle school and beyond!

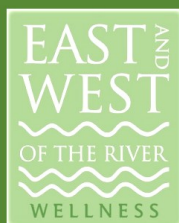
*The following letter was written and delivered to the Board of Education by Madison Murphy, this year's Marsh Chesters Award recipient. The letter illustrates Madison's concern for the environment and her passion for protecting it, her scientific knowledge regarding the effects of plastic on the environment, her considerable writing, mathematical, and problem solving skills, and, perhaps above all, her determination. Congratulations, Madison, on your many laurels.*

I have been interested in the topic of plastic and the impact on the environment since I noticed how many bags Hampton Elementary was using for the breakfast program. When I found out about them I wrote a letter stating my opinion about these plastic bags. I asked the principal, Ms. Sam, if she could switch the school's breakfast to paper bags instead. She accepted my idea and I was very excited because I was making a difference in my school.

I came back for my last year at Hampton Elementary School and noticed the breakfast bags were once again plastic bags, even though I had gotten them to switch to biodegradable paper two years before. So then I decided to write another letter to my new principal. So I wrote the letter and the next day my principal was in the office and she told me that she couldn't do anything about it because the program was through a different program. So I contacted the school chef. She said that she had no option but to use the plastic bags. But I still felt passionate about reducing our plastic and really wanted paper bags so I wrote a new letter. This time, when Mrs. Smith spoke to Ms. Robin, they were able to make the change and a week later it was paper bags once again.

But this project is not just about plastic problems in my school, it is also about plastic problems all around the world. I will explain the problems of plastic products, plastic pollution and things to replace plastic with. Hampton Elementary is a small school, we have 70 students in our school. My research shows that we use approximately 38 bags in one day. In Hampton, we have 183 school days so that means we would use about 7,000 plastic bags each year. I do not like the idea of my school contributing in large amounts to the trash island in our oceans. Also if

MARSH-CHESTERS WINNER, CONTINUED NEXT PAGE



## LIVING YOUR BEST LIFE

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more people get breakfast, then that is even more bags just being put into the landfill or our oceans.

I am so passionate about this topic that I decided to enter the National Civics Bee. The Civics Bee is a contest for middle school students in grade 6 to grade 8 to state a problem in their community. It is also a way to show off your knowledge about the government and civics. The first step is to write an essay about a problem in your community. Then the judges pick ten students from each county. The second step, if you were one of the students that got chosen then you go to the local round. During the local round there are two quiz rounds to test your civics knowledge. The top five scoring students get to speak about their problems in their community at a regional competition. Three students received money for this part of the competition. Then all ten people from regionals got an invention to the state round. I am proud to represent Hampton at the state round on June 7<sup>th</sup> and I hope the Board of Education will consider ways that Hampton Elementary School can support protecting the Environment.

*Madison Murphy*

## CONGRATULATIONS, SCHOLARS!

Congratulations to the following students who recently graduated from Parish Hill High School: Alexander Aceto, Hannah Becker (Victor Postemski Memorial Award recipient), Natasha Belt, David Fernandes, Harmony Freed (Howard Valley Scholarship and Regional District Eleven Education Association Scholarship recipient), Sydney Lovegreen (Dalton-Towers Memorial Scholarship recipient), Kaya Morell (Jon Wetherell Memorial Scholarship recipient), Xander Ouimette, Evelyn Rondeau (Marsh-Chesters Award recipient), Ella Sholes, Brady Silva (Little River Grange Scholarship recipient), and Anthony Tatulli (James V. Spignesi Jr. Memorial Scholarship recipient).

The *Gazette* wishes you all the best in all your future endeavors!

## PASSAGES

**GLEN NEWCOMBE** passed away unexpectedly on May 31, surrounded by his family. Born on November 21, 1948, he was 76 years old. Graduating from the Sterling School in Vermont, and later earning a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Connecticut, Glen co-founded a business, Water & Air Waterbeds, with his lifelong friend, John Sornberger, which eventually developed into a chain of six stores and several partnerships. After retiring, Glen worked for his long-time friend, Scott Johnson, at Scott's Cyclery. A member of the Thread City Cyclers and New England Mountain Bike Association, Glen was an avid cyclist, which is how most Hamptonites recognized him and knew him as a genuine, generous and gentle man. He was a member of the Friends of Goodwin Forest, volunteering for Connecticut Trails Day for many years, served on the Inlands Wetlands and Watercourses Agency, and as a Cub Scout Den Leader and Boy Scouts Assistant Scoutmaster in the 1990s and early 2000s. Glen took great pride in his property, the gardens and pond where children are still learning to swim. Our deepest condolences to his wife, Kathi, son Geoffrey (and Nicole), daughter, Marjorie Cogan (and Saoirse), step-son, Edward Mackay, grandchildren, Eve, Theresa, Aubree and Natalie, brother Vaughan and sisters, Beverly and Carolyn. Donations in Glen's memory can be made to: Friends of Goodwin Forest, Hampton Fire Department, or Alzheimer's Association of CT.

**ANN HAMLIN** passed away on February 7, 2025. She was born on April 16, 1960, and lived in Hampton for nearly 40 years, a familiar face on Main Street, where she resided, and around town. She worked at the University of Connecticut as a lab technician, and in true Hampton tradition, when she

retired, she visited the Office of the First Selectman and offered to volunteer wherever there was a need. She was subsequently appointed to the Inland, Wetlands and Watercourses Agency. Though many of us remember her companions – beautiful horses in the fields behind her house, and the dogs she often walked with -- Ann was not married, had no children, or siblings, and her parents, John and Marion Hamlin, predeceased her, and so we offer condolences to her friends here. An avid gardener, her gardens were featured in "Our Neighbors Garden" in the 2018 *Gazette*. While some of us had the pleasure of visiting her gardens, others were treated to lovely, seasonal displays of daffodils, irises, rhododendrons, peonies and roses across the front of her house as we walked or drove on Main Street. She also loved to visit gardens and exchange plants. I am so grateful for her rare white silenes and the rarer lavender-pink Siberian iris which flowered in my garden this year, and for her friendship.

**ROSE BISSON** passed away peacefully at her home on June 29 in the 70th year of her life after a courageous battle with cancer. Born on June 14, 1955, she was a graduate of UCONN, earning a Masters degree in special education. A life-long learner, she also earned degrees from Fordham University, Lesley University and QVCC. Her life-long dedication to education began at the Dempsey Center. She went on to teach special education in Eastford and Greenwich, then served as Assistant Principal in Ledyard, Principal of Borough School in Stafford, and retired after serving as Principal at Natchaug School in Windham. A continual advocate for education, Rose served on both the Regional District #11 and Hampton Elementary School Boards of Education, serving as Chairman these last few years. Rose also served on several educational committees. A loving wife, mother, daughter and sister, Rose cared for her parents and husband during their final time on earth. Predeceased by her husband, Maurice, and her parents, she leaves behind her daughter, Elizabeth Bisson, her grandchildren, her brother Gilbert Robichaud, sisters Jeanne Robichaud and Ann Tidwell, several nieces and nephews. The family thanks all who assisted in granting Rose's final wishes to be home and comfortable surrounded by love at the end of her life.

*Donations in her honor may be made to the Hampton Elementary School Rose Bisson Reading Fund.*

# Garden

IN THE

with Dayna McDermott

## COMPLEMENTARY COLOR CONTRASTS

There are surprising color combinations to discover in summer's garden, where magenta petals circle the bright orange cones of echinacea, and rudbeckia sprouts bushels of golden rays, and scarlet branches of crocosmia arch over all of the various tropical and sunset hues of lilies. We sometimes struggle to find complements for bold colors, relying on our surroundings for guidance, our home décor and our apparel, as these are most familiar to us. Though far from ill-advised, that standard shouldn't inhibit us, as color combinations make different statements in the garden where contrasts frequently companion, rather than clash, with one another.

One prime example of the difference between indoor and outdoor decoration illustrates not so much what works together, as what definitely does not. Various shades of white work wonderfully in a room, providing a restful aura that instantly lowers the temperature and creates a cool, breezy space. In the garden, a variety of whites is restless, because all but the pristine, as in the sparkling blossoms of azaleas and the crisp flowers frosting candytuft, will look soiled. Most whites are infused with gray, or pale violet, a tinge of green, a hint of pink, and the yellows which color cream and ivory blossoms. This is why white gardens are so aesthetically difficult and depend entirely on the inclusion of green, variegated and silver foliage to separate the myriad whites.

The color wheel is instructive in selecting complementary colors for the garden. Many gardeners avoid the color orange, as it's not as easy to place in the garden as yellow, or pink, with their multiple tones and partners. The aesthetically strongest color for orange is its opposite on the color wheel -- blue. The lily, 'Stella de Oro', one of the most ubiquitous of lilies because of its long and prolific season of bloom and its unfussy requirements, is commonly seen lining city parks and neighborhood gardens, yet mostly in isolation as its hue -- a deep golden orange -- is difficult to pair. Yet it's magical with the cobalt wands of veronica 'Sunny Border Blue', the spiky spheres of echinops, or tufts of the steely blue fescue.

Another example is found when yellow flowers are paired with their opposite on the spectrum, the visibly "purple", which is "blue" in garden parlance. There are few garden vignettes as stunning as the violet spikes of salvia rising through clouds of catmint and the chartreuse froth of lady's mantle, the deep purple blossoms of Siberian iris providing horizontal reprieve along a fountain of primrose broom, and the large, dark purple rays of 'Jackmanni' clematis clamoring over a river of evening primrose's sunny cups.



The color wheel also instructs on what combinations we must absolutely avoid. Crimson, which is red infused with blue, as in the buttons of scabiosa, wine-colored spheres flecked with silver, and scarlet, which is red infused with yellow, such as the brilliant racemes of crocosmia, cannot aesthetically unite. Similarly, yellows infused with green, as in chartreuse, cannot companion with yellows infused with red, as in orange, nor can blues infused with green, like turquoise, with blues infused with red, like violet. These are really the only partners that hopelessly clash.

There are other unusual combinations that could seemingly scream at one another, but work beautifully together. Such is the case with chartreuse and magenta. The magenta stalks of liatris are most stunning when punctuating a carpet of the chartreuse golden oregano. Among lady's mantle's many partners, attributed to its pleasing color and ethereal form, are the magenta saucers of geranium 'Sanguine' which entwine themselves charmingly with the chartreuse sprays. The silene we commonly refer to as "rose campion" or "mullein pink" makes such a strong statement in the garden that gardeners tend to avoid its use. Yet depending on the picture one wishes to create, the velvety magenta petals, cresting the silvery basal foliage and stems, are softened with paler pinks, such as the cotton candy fluff of filipendula, and electrified when rising over a floor of the chartreuse lysimachia called "Creeping Jenny".

One of the most striking garden scenes occurs when red flowers -- the pure, unsaturated reds of bee balm, lobelia, annual geraniums, certain roses, lilies, dahlias, and tulips -- are paired with purple foliage, which includes the burgundy of sand cherry, the bronze leaves of nine bark, and the maroon of smoke tree. These shrubs partner with paler reds -- nine bark hosts pink blossoms in early summer, sand cherry, petals of palest pink in early spring, and smoke tree, tufts of feathery pink clouds, which explains the colloquial "smoke". Yet nothing invigorates a garden like the bright reds of lobelia's stalks, clumps of 'Cambridge Scarlet' bee balm, or a basket of pure red geranium smoldering against purple foliage.

The garden also supplies plenty of unexpected surprises. Two willows, one with lime green foliage, the other silvery, planted for the pragmatic purpose of drinking the water in a quagmire, became a striking scene when a purple-leaved plum was planted between and uphill of them. The chocolate skirts of heuchera were electrified with the inclusion of a cushion of euphorbia's chartreuse bracts, and a red geranium suspended from a tree branch brought into focus a sea of the lemon-and-lime striped blades of bamboo. Hostas, which usually create tranquil pictures, became dramatic when chartreuse varieties were coupled with the crimson spears of astilbes, and when those with aqua foliage were partnered with chartreuse clouds of lady's mantle. In one garden, a ribbon of Japanese blood grass was invigorated by a single clump of golden molinia, and in another, echinacea and rudbeckia, because of their similar forms, proved



colorful complements despite their clashing colors.

Look to lilies for enlightenment, even within themselves in their stripes and fringes and throats. There's the variety 'Rose F. Kennedy', a pale lime with a deep purple fringe, 'Ruby Spider', a pure red cultivar with a golden throat, and 'Bright Sunset', with coppery petals striped yellow, to name a few. Dahlias as well provide complements among their cultivars, their natural drama furthered with contrasting colors. Annuals are also a source of inspiration. Coleus alone offers such vibrant foliage, along with the flowers of marigolds, geraniums, impatiens. There are plenty of opportunities for experimentation, and planting them in containers allows for bolder arrangements.

When planning your garden, remember -- while spring, with its soft skies and misty rains, belongs to pastels, summer belongs to the bright colors. The vibrant reds and oranges and golds look better under the season's intense sun than the paler hues, especially when partnered with the contrasts of complementary colors that call attention to themselves, serving as the exclamation points that provide the vitality that makes our favorite gardens memorable.

## INVASIONS OF CREATURES YOU DON'T WANT

I lived 32 years in Scotland, Connecticut. Moved to Hampton in 2016. Both places suffered from invasions. In Scotland it was mice. The house was built in 1872 on fieldstone foundation. In the fall, when it got cold, mice would enter the basement by climbing between the fieldstones, then crawling up to the kitchen along the pipes. One winter I was startled when I opened a kitchen drawer and pulled out a towel to find a whole litter of baby mice had been born between the towels. They looked dead for some time. Apparently I had killed mom with a trap and babies starved. I threw out all the towels in the drawer and washed the drawer with Lysol.

In winter when there was snow, my husband would plow it and leave a mound of snow at the end of the driveway. I would empty the mouse traps on that snow mound. The corpses would be eaten by crows. They would call to each other when I came out in the morning to empty the traps. "Breakfast is coming." I could look up and see them circling over my offering.

In Hampton the invasions so far have been ants. One species comes in with my newspaper. One newspaper is placed in the mailbox. In May it gets covered with tiny black ants. The other paper is in the newspaper box and doesn't have ants. Why the Willimantic paper attracts the tiny ants and the Hartford paper doesn't, I don't know. I don't want to use Raid in the box because I put my paper on the table, so I wipe the box out with Lysol. Doesn't kill them but they hate the smell, so I am ant free for a week.

The second ant invasion is carpenter ants. I checked on Google. I thought carpenter ants ate wood, not sweets. No, they tunnel through wood to create nests in wood, but eat sweets. I found them in my cookies and threw all the cookies out. Stomp on them when I see them. Next time I get cookies, after I open them I will put them in a plastic box that shuts tight. In all the 32 years we lived in Scotland, we never had invasions of ants. Do you think the mice ate them?

Angela H. Fichter

**Dear** AUNTIE MAC

We recently moved to town and Memorial Day was the first event we attended. Were we ever impressed! What upcoming events might we look forward to? And how might we become directly involved with any of them?

Loving this Place!

My Dear Neighbor:

Auntie Mac joins her fellow Hamptonites in welcoming you to our beautiful town. The yearly Memorial Day celebration is indeed something to be proud of. She has noticed of late, however, a diminished number of fanciful floats and hopes that this trend reverses itself, though she understands the time and effort it takes to not only commandeer a trailer and a festive vehicle to pull it, but the choice of theme,

costumes, and all manner of festooning requires no small commitment. Your participation on any number of committees or groups in town could assure you a membership, nay, a chairmanship, in the respective group's Float Committee. (Capturing a prize is indeed held in highest regard.)

If Memorial Day participation *without* float construction calls to your heart, the Memorial Day Committee offers all types of additional opportunity, and the Gazette welcomes assistance before and during its barbecue.

The next town-wide event is the Fall Festival in September. (Auntie Mac would be remiss, however, if she did not also mention the recently --held Town-Wide Tag Sale, which according to Lars yielded treasures second only to the gold discovered at the Varna Necropolis.) But let us return, shall we, to the Fall Festival, in which every organization in town is involved in some way; all one needs to do is attend a meeting and ask to be put to work.

Volunteers are always needed at the Fletcher Memorial Library, which also holds book and bake sales throughout the year and as part of some of these town-wide events.

Auntie Mac has long ago hung up her pointed hat and broomstick (though some in town may dispute this); still, all of Main Street participates in Hallowe'en, passing out candy and enjoying themed events at the Library. Treats and games are also hosted by the Recreation Commission at the Town Pavilion. Both are always in need of assistance.

We then approach Christmas and the Antiquarian Society's open house; Santa makes an appearance, children create Christmas crafts at the Community Center (another target-rich environment for the eager volunteer), and the Town Hall Christmas tree is lit, among caroling. Members of the Mennonite church carol to the elderly throughout the town and welcome anyone to join in their caravan.

During the winter the Recreation Commission sponsors a dance (although residents have been campaigning for another karaoke night), and in late winter/early spring the Library, ever the social doyenne, hosts an Easter egg hunt.

Let us not forget the fire department's April ham and bean dinner. And what fire department is not looking for new members, or event volunteers?

So you see, dear, there is a virtual smorgasbord of volunteer opportunity for the bright-eyed newcomer. Rest assured: as soon as you say to any organization in town, "May I?" the answer will be a near-deafening "Yes!" You must take care, however, that your shoulder is not dislocated as you are pulled immediately and gleefully to assist with the next event.

# FOREST & FIELD

## JOSHUA'S TRUST

Sundays July -- October **Gurleyville Grist Mill**

**Guided Tours** 1-5PM Nestled in the historic village of Gurleyville, on the banks of the Fenton River, the Grist Mill stands much as it was in 1830. The 15-acre campus of field and forest also includes the Miller's Cottage, birthplace of Gov. Wilbur Cross, whose grandfather and father were millers here. Guides will be available to give tours of the mill and the extant machinery used in the 19th century mills.

July 12 **Contemplative Walk at Joshua's Trust's**

**Whetten Woods** 10-11:30AM Join board member, Debra Pallatto for a guided walk, stopping for contemplative reflections along the way. Meet at the Nash-Zimmer Transportation Center in Storrs Center. Appropriate hiking gear and tick repellent are recommended. Visit <https://joshuustrust.org/events/> for details, updates and cancellations.

## CONNECTICUT AUDUBON AT TRAIL WOOD

93 Kenyon Road

Fridays **Trail Wood Walking Club** 1PM Walks are 1 1/2 to 2 hours, all summer, weather permitting. Walks are free and no registration is required. Just say hello in the parking area!

July 24 **Trail Wood Bird Walk** 8AM Walk the paths of Trail Wood searching for various bird species.

Possibilities include Blue-winged Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, and many more. Registration required at [arzeznikiewicz@ctaudubon.org](mailto:arzeznikiewicz@ctaudubon.org) or call 860.928.4948.

## GOODWIN CONSERVATION CENTER

June 29 -- July 5 **Wild and Free** Celebrate the great outdoors at Goodwin Forest with hikes, field games, birds of prey, and eco-crafts.

July 6 -- 12 **Forest Flora** Explore the incredible world of plants at Goodwin Forest. Learn about identification, ecology, invasives, and more.

July 12 **Vital Signs of the Forest** 10AM -- NOON Special guest speaker Beth Bernard will lead an easy walk through the trails to share her knowledge of forest health.

July 13 -- 19 **Aquatic Adventures** Make a splash at Goodwin Forest this week! Dive deeper into pond life, pollution, and healthy watersheds.

July 20 -- 26 **Nurturing Nature**

Relax and recharge at Goodwin Forest this week. Enjoy forest bathing and other mindfulness activities.

July 20 **Native Turtles** 11AM Special guest speaker Ranger Russ will exhibit and discuss native turtles.

July 23 **Nature's Health Benefits** 7PM Special guest speaker Dr. Cindi Jones will discuss nature's health benefits. 7/23 at 7pm.

July 27 -- August 2 **Forest Fauna**

To register for listed programs, visit the DEEP website.

## EAGLE SCOUT AWARD TO BE PRESENTED

BSA Troop 93 for Boys, sponsored by the Hampton Congregational Church, will hold an Eagle Court of Honor Ceremony on July 20<sup>th</sup> at the Congregational Church. The ceremony will be held at 2 PM in Holt Hall.

We will be recognizing our newest Eagle Scout, Jonah Mlyniec, of Hampton.

Approximately 4 percent of all Scouts will attain the rank of Eagle. Each Eagle Scout must earn a minimum of 21 merit badges, show leadership, and successfully complete a community or church related service project to complete their Eagle Scout requirements. Jonah Mlyniec worked with the Hampton Conservation Commission and led the design and construction of a river-viewing platform and trail pathway at the Little River Preserve on Hammond Hill Road. A recent graduate of the Norwich Free Academy, he has served as a Quartermaster and Senior Patrol Leader for Troop 93. During his high school tenure, he was a member of the Swimming and Fencing teams as well as the Debate Team, the Dungeons and Dragon Club, the National Honor Society, and the Playshop Drama Program. Jonah works as a lifeguard for Plainfield Parks & Recreation. In addition to the Rank of Eagle, Jonah has earned a Bronze Palm and a Gold Palm for 13 Merit Badges completed above and beyond the Eagle requirements.

Jonah is the son of Michelle and Martin Mlyniec and plans to study Forensic Chemistry at Roger Williams University this fall.



## SCOUTING NEWS

Summer is here, and the Troops are still enjoying some great activities. On May 17th we went to Crabapple White water rafting on the Deerfield River in Massachusetts. A hike was planned for Mt. Greylock as well, but was canceled due to bad weather. We held a Court of Honor on June 10th to celebrate the achievements of our Scouts with a pot luck dinner. Summer camp is fast approaching, and will be the last week of July. Stay tuned for summer activity updates.

**A special THANK YOU to the runners, local businesses, volunteers, and Towns of Hampton, Chaplin and Eastford for the support extended to the 11th Anniversary of the Goodwin Forest Trail Run! We are excited to begin planning for 2026!**





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