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The Lakeville Journal

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Covering The News In Connecticut's Northwest Corner And Its Environs Since 1897

"It can only get better."
Rene Boardman,
Agriculture education teacher

COVID-19 protocols

How HVRHS teachers are adapting

By Patrick L. Sullivan

FALLS VILLAGE — Last March, as the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Region One schools closed abruptly and shifted to remote or distance learning.

For the 2020-21 school year, the six K-8 schools reopened for in-person learning, and Housatonic Valley Regional High School (HVRHS) used a hybrid model, combining in-person and online instruction.

Some of the teachers at the high school are in the building, and some opted to work remotely.

Three HVRHS teachers spoke to The Lakeville Journal

about their experience in the current school year.

Science teacher Letitia Garcia-Tripp said the problem of doing lab assignments for biology and chemistry students was overcome by a grant from the 21st Century Fund for HVRHS. The grant allowed for the purchase of lab kits that were sent home to students.

Garcia-Tripp is working from home, so she has to maneuver between the students who are in the building and those who are at home.

"We find ways to make it work," she said.

"It's very different than last

See ADAPTING, Page A6



PHOTO BY RANDY O'ROURKE

A jumper's eye view

Tate Frantz had a panoramic view as he flew off the 65-meter hill at the Salisbury Winter Sports Association's Jumpfest last weekend. For a story and photos, turn to Page A5. Additional photos are on A6 and B3.

Yes, there will be a winter sports season!

By Hunter O. Lyle

FALLS VILLAGE — When the officials blew their whistles during the second quarter of the Housatonic Mountaineers' matchup against the Nonnewaug Chiefs on Wednesday, Feb. 10, it was not a timeout or a foul that stopped the clock. Instead, it was a soon-to-be-familiar "mask break," allowing players on both basketball teams to social distance themselves and take off their masks, one of the new COVID-19 protocols under effect for school sports.

As of Tuesday, Jan. 19, sports have returned for the winter season, albeit with a handful of health and safety restrictions. Boys and girls basketball, ice hockey, swimming and Alpine skiing will have a 12-match regular season that is scheduled to end by March 28.

"This is a totally different

year," Housatonic Valley Regional High School (HVRHS) Athletic Director Anne MacNeil said. "The bottom line and the way I'm thinking of the whole season is that this is for the kids and we want to give them the best we can."

The most visible change is the requirement that the players wear masks, a decision handed down from the National Federation of High School Sports. Like the Mountaineers boys basketball team (who lost their Wednesday, Feb. 10, home game against the Chiefs, 66-to-27), every athlete in every sport is required to wear a mask for the entirety of the contest, with the exception of swimmers when they are in the pool.

MacNeil said scheduling practices has also been a challenge.

Besides Wednesdays, where the high school is closed for

cleaning, both basketball teams have kept a somewhat regular practice schedule, meeting five days a week on their own hardwood. Alpine skiing travels to Mohawk Ski Area in Cornwall three days a week for practices. When it comes to ice hock-

See SPORTS, Page A6



PHOTO BY CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

Dean Diamond of Deano's in Lakeville has had many years of practice at throwing pies in the sky. Naturally, he agrees that Connecticut makes the best pizzas.

Pie in the sky, a half-baked idea — or is Connecticut pizza really the best?

By Debra A. Aleksinas

Lawmakers have introduced a bill that would designate pizza as Connecticut's official state food, sparking a Tri-state debate over whose pies reign supreme. In response, Northwest Corner residents and pizzeria owners are defending Con-

necticut's savory slices.

"It would be an honor," said Chris Christodoulou at State-line Pizza in North Canaan, where his medium-crust pan pies keep customers coming back for more. While the pizzeria owner gave high marks to New York and neighboring Massachusetts for their tasty pies, he said Connecticut chefs offer greater variety and therefore deserve the bragging

See PIZZA, Page A6



PHOTO BY HUNTER O. LYLE

Housatonic forward Harrison Schopp, a junior, took a free throw during a home game against the Nonnewaug Chiefs on Wednesday, Feb. 10. Schopp finished the Mountaineers' second game of the season with 4 points.

Paying for recycling costs, and Eversource's efforts to do better

By Patrick L. Sullivan

GOSHEN — Katie Dykes, the commissioner of the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), told the Northwest Hills Council of Governments (COG) on Thursday, Feb. 11, that she expects the state Legislature to take action in the current session on requiring manufacturers of gas cylinders and tires to assume the costs of disposal.

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) arrangements already exist for disposal of mattresses, paint and electronics, she said.

Adding tires and gas cylinders to the list is "do-able" in this session, she added.

Dykes laid out a lengthy list of DEEP priorities, with a concentration on waste management.

She also mentioned an updated bottle bill, which would increase the deposit on bottles

and cans, and a statewide law requiring unit-based pricing (aka Pay As You Throw) at transfer stations.

On the latter, Dykes acknowledged that unit-based pricing is controversial and suggested a statewide mandate would provide some political cover for municipal officials. She also said she didn't expect the Legislature to move on the issue in this session.

See COG, Page A6

Fairfield Farm Sustainable agriculture & lively outreach

By Leila Hawken


LAKEVILLE — The future of farming is here and now, thanks to a burgeoning, committed agricultural program found at The Hotchkiss School and its integrated educational program at Fairfield Farm.

The farm is located on 287 acres adjoining the school's campus, and it houses an active agricultural program inviting school-community involvement in hands-on experiences in everything from organic and sustainable soil health to seeds, plants, harvesting, cooking, nutrition and support-

See FARM, Page A6

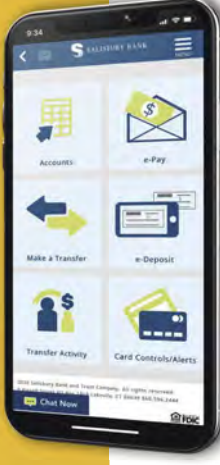


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In The Journal this week

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SWSA A5	LEGALS B5
COMPASS..... B1-2	CLASSIFIEDS..... B5-6

Three-day forecast

Friday..... Snow, high 32°/low 15°
 Saturday..... Cloudy, 25°/9°
 Sunday..... Sun, 30°/17°

OBITUARY

In Appreciation:

Josh Wilkinson

As the song goes, "Only the good die young."

I cannot seem to get Josh out of my head since he left us last week.

Why is this? Josh worked with me since he was a young boy, along with my son, Matt; they were best friends. I always say "work with" and not work for; I never liked the term "work for"— I feel we all worked together, we just had different positions within the company.

Although Josh had health complications, you would not know this. He worked every day to the best of his ability. He was never afraid to "take the bull by

the horns" and do the task at hand. He was devoted not only to his family, but also his friends. His heart was bigger than life, and was there for whatever anybody needed. He helped me personally many times.

He would come to work early and stop in my office to talk over the local gossip while eating a bag of chips, and wash them down with a soft drink. Josh, i would say, you should lay off that stuff. Yeah, yeah, while he was peeling open a Slim Jim. Josh did it his way, and was happy with the way he lived his life.

I miss him already, although recently I have not seen him as much as I used to. That shows the kind of impression he left on people; he was just a great guy.

Josh, I know you deeply cared for your family. I am sure your boys will grow up to be responsible young men, following in their dad's footsteps, protecting their mom and grandma.

I cherish the time we had knowing and working with each other, and wish I could thank you for being you, to your face. Until we meet again.

Don Hosier

Sharon

For Josh Wilkinson's obituary and others, see page A4

POLICE BLOTTER: TROOP B

The following information was provided by the Connecticut State Police at Troop B. All suspects are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Struck a pole

On Feb. 7 at approximately 3:15 p.m. on Housatonic River Road in Salisbury a 2009 Toyota Highlander driven by Kent Hiteshew, 66, of New York, N.Y., lost control on the snow-covered roadway and struck a Frontier utility pole. Hiteshew was found at fault and issued an infraction for traveling too fast for the conditions.

Domestic altercation

On Feb. 7 at approximately 8:30 p.m. Troop B responded to a report of a disturbance at a residence on Interlaken Road in Lakeville, where a verbal and physical altercation was taking place. Shannon Tyree-Brown, 42, of Lakeville was charged with disorderly conduct and assault in the third degree. She was scheduled to appear in Torrington Superior Court on Feb. 8.

Struck a guardrail

On Feb. 9 at approximately 11:15 a.m. on Canaan Road in Salisbury a 2008 Nissan Maxima driven by Jacob Meyer Arcouette, 24, of Wethersfield, Conn., slid on the snow-covered road and struck a metal

beam guardrail. Arcouette was evaluated on the scene by members of Salisbury Ambulance. He was issued a written warning for traveling too fast for the conditions.

Rear-ended

On Feb. 10 at approximately 1:30 p.m. on Route 63 in Falls Village a 2013 Ford Super Duty driven by Oscar Valencia, 63, of Bridgeport, Conn., rear-ended a 2017 Ford Explorer driven by Joseph Lewis, 54, of Riverside, Conn. Valencia was issued an infraction for failing to drive at a reasonable distance apart.

Failure to appear in court

On Feb. 12 William Mcalister, 30, of North Canaan was served a warrant for failing to appear in the second degree. He was scheduled to appear in Torrington Superior Court on March 31.

The Lakeville Journal will publish the outcome of police charges. Contact us by mail at P.O. Box 1688, Lakeville, CT 06039, Attn: Police Blotter, or send an email, with "police blotter" in the subject line, to cynthiah@lakevillejournal.com.

Auction to protect rivers

The Housatonic Valley Association has rescheduled its annual fundraising auction, originally planned for last fall.

Bidding is beginning now online for items that range from a story-reading session with actress and HVA auction Chair Christine Baranski to a tea tasting with Michael Harney of Harney and Sons Tea.

The online live auction will be on Sunday, Feb. 21, at 4 p.m., hosted by Baranski. VIP donors (\$1,000 and more) will enjoy a pre-auction online reception with Baranski and actress Marggo Martindale at 3:30 p.m.

Funds raised in the auction and ticket sales will help protect the Housatonic River watershed. To view auction items, and to purchase auction tickets, visit www.hvatoday.org and click "Auction Info" on the home page.

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Our Towns

Cornwall P&Z holds forum on town's 10-year plan of development

By Leila Hawken

CORNWALL — With the town's voter-approved 2020 Town Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) in hand, the Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z) held the first of several meetings of town boards and commissions to begin work on the 2030 town plan.

The forum drew representatives from town groups to a Zoom forum on Thursday, Feb. 4, for a discussion that attracted about 35 viewers.

P&Z Chairman Anna Timell reviewed Cornwall's POCD structure, which divides conservation and development into four broad categories: economic development, housing,

conservation and, finally, youth and cultural resources.

Janell Mullen, regional planner for the Northwest Hills Council of Governments, attended the forum to hear comments and to discuss goals that the town should progress toward in the coming years.

In particular, Mullen highlighted a need for affordable

housing as a means of attracting young families to town as well as making the town affordable for older families. The former would result in greater school enrollment and the latter would ensure that seniors would opt to remain in town or retire in Cornwall.

First Selectman Gordon Ridgway spoke on behalf of the selectmen. "There are things you can plan for, and things you can't," he said.

"There are now more people living here and telecommuting, a trend that will remain," he said, referring to an influx of new homeowners during the

COVID-19 quarantine.

Margaret Cooley reported on the work of the affordable housing committee, indicating that the current median home price has increased to \$500,000.

She also noted a continuing need for rental properties, with multi-family structures seen as the most efficient route and the best way to make affordable units available.

All at the meeting agreed that the town's volunteers have done an admirable job of supporting new residents and families who are in need.

Representing the Conservation Commission, Pat

Mulberry described two endeavors that are keeping them busy these days. The first is a proposal for the P&Z to protect the town's ridge lines from development, using the town of Kent as a model. The second is to prepare a list of uniquely important sites in town that are worthy of protection.

Speaking for the Conservation Trust, Bart Jones summarized ongoing projects to enhance local recreational hiking trails and spoke of recent land acquisitions protected from development.

To read the town's POCD, go to www.cornwallct.org.

Sustainability, Swift House and speeding discussed in Kent

By Leila Hawken

KENT — The statewide SustainableCT program is gaining another town. The Kent Board of Selectmen voted to take the first step toward participating, at their regular meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 9.

Other area towns are either considering joining the sustainability certification program or have already joined and are marking achievements. For example, Cornwall has earned Bronze status because its ongoing projects meet the goals of the program — thereby qualify for grant funding, Kent First Selectman Jean Speck noted.

Speck said she will assemble the required advisory team of residents who have interests and responsibilities that align with the aims of the program. The program with its local advisory team aims to boost the local economy and add efficien-

cy and promote sustainability, while remaining sensitive to conservation and resource protection.

Although he voted for the resolution, Selectman Chris Garrity wondered what happens if a town cannot keep such a team together in the coming years and he wondered about the advantages of meeting the obligations.

Speck responded that there are many different categories of activities for the town to participate in. She was confident of the likelihood that volunteers will be found who possess ongoing interest in the program's categories.

Saving Swift House

Repairs to the historic Swift House continue to be a priority for discussion. A handicapped access ramp will be added to the front and planners have coordinated with the sidewalk engineers so that the ramp and

the sidewalk will cooperate with each other.

Now that the Swift House has been tightened up and secured from damage by rodents, task force chairman Suzanne Charity reported that roof replacement is an important next step. The roof is 32 years old at this point.

She said that a report will be completed soon, detailing work that needs to be done.

"If we are going to use this building," Garrity said, "then the building needs to be maintained."

Speeding traffic along Elizabeth Street continues as a concern for the selectmen, who are planning to step up enforcement. Garrity favored adding signage to the area.

An obvious solution could be speed humps or bumps, according to the selectmen, but they felt that signage could come first.



PHOTO BY PATRICK L. SULLIVAN

Although it is always best to be careful of soft spots, the surface of Lakeville's Lake Wononscopomuc has been declared officially frozen.

Seeking the human element for triangle traffic plan

By Leila Hawken

CORNWALL — Having counted six responses from residents commenting on state plans to reconfigure the traffic triangle in Cornwall Bridge, the selectmen discussed the topic at their regular meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 2, conducted by Zoom.

At issue is a plan submitted by the state Department of Transportation to alter the traffic flow at the active intersection where Routes 7 and 4 meet and negotiate a triangle. Several businesses have driveway entrances around the triangle's perimeter and the plans describe changes to those entrances.

"We'll try to get some coherent response back to the state," First Selectman Gordon

Ridgway said.

Selectman Priscilla Pavel added that several store owners have made helpful comments and that the state seems to have only considered traffic.

"We are Cornwall; we want to be there for the people," Pavel said.

"Whether it's this plan or not, we appreciate everyone's comments," Ridgway said, adding that it is not a set-in-stone plan and that the town will continue to work on it.

Selectman Marina Kotchoubey asked how the town works with the state to be sure that input is respected, suggesting formation of a community committee.

Ridgway responded that the state has always been generally responsive to the town. He

said that he is optimistic that the town will come up with an alternate plan through a public process.

"I have a formal role to play," Ridgway said, noting that "this is not a new topic and it may wind up that things do not change hugely." He said that the state is looking at how pedestrians and bicycles negotiate the area.

The annual budget proposal process for the 2021-22 fiscal year got underway with a review of the budget in advance of the selectmen's Zoom workshop session on Monday, Feb. 8.

The annual budget meeting is expected to happen in May, with June being a target month for the referendum on the West Cornwall Septic proposal.

The ice is 'in' on Connecticut's deepest lake, Wononscopomuc

LAKEVILLE — Don Mayland reported last week that as of Jan. 31, it is "ice in" on Lake Wononscopomuc in Lakeville.

"I was ready to declare 'ice in' back on Jan. 12, but it was so thin for several days that I had

a feeling it would not last, and last it did not. Ice was almost completely off by Jan. 15. But, this time it looks like it will last ... at least for a few weeks."

Mayland cautioned that the ice is still thin. Anyone who goes out on any of the area

lakes should exercise caution and take ice picks in case of an emergency.

Mayland is the official ice watcher for Lake Wononscopomuc, the deepest natural lake in the state of Connecticut.

—Patrick L. Sullivan

Trying to find the right route for food trucks

By Leila Hawken

SHARON — An ordinance regulating food trucks advanced a step as the Sharon selectmen arrived at wording of the proposed regulation that will soon be posted on the Sharon town website, where public can see it and comment on it.

Selectman Dale Jones noted that the health department has included provisions including that food truck operators need to have valid food safety certification, an annual permit from the health department, water source and operational inspections and all requirements for

restaurant service that are sensible to apply to food trucks.

"We want to gather as much feedback as we can get," First

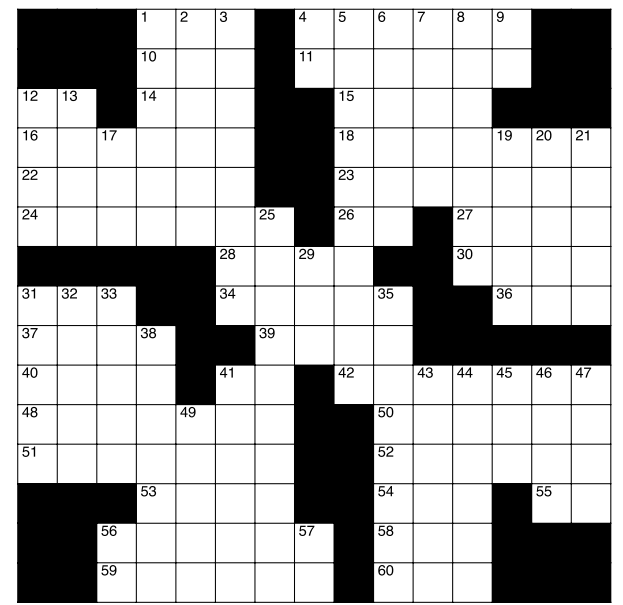
Selectman Brent Colley said, inviting residents to view the ordinance on the town website, www.sharonct.org.

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Brain Teasers

CLUES ACROSS

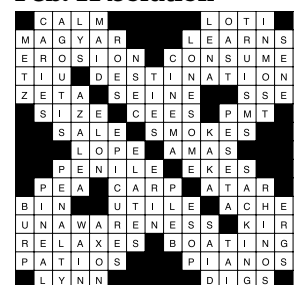
1. Big tech firm
4. Picked
10. Type of whale
11. A woman of refinement
12. New England state
14. Common gibbon
15. Tall coniferous tree
16. State capital
18. Making a liquid muddy
22. Vinegary
23. Peninsula
24. Thee
26. Atomic #55
27. Used in units of measurement
28. Welsh female name
30. Arab ruler title
31. One's mother
34. Trap
36. Soviet Socialist Republic
37. Assn. of oil-producing countries
39. Holy fire
40. Emit coherent radiation
41. Atomic #81
42. Orthodox Jewish college
48. Herbs
50. Ran after
51. Begin again
52. Named
53. Barbary sheep
54. Unwell
55. Postscript
56. Drivers
58. One point east (clockwise) of due north
59. Prim
60. A facility equipped for sports or physical training



21. Surprise Icelandic politician
25. Conclusive acts
29. Inform on
31. Grinding tooth
32. Keep up
33. Tablelands
35. Raising
38. Mythical creature
41. Hums
43. Mountain in Antarctica
44. Neighborhood in Manhattan
45. Distinctive practice
46. Vice president
47. Contributes to
49. Small bones
56. Oil company
57. Empire State

Look for the solution in next week's issue.

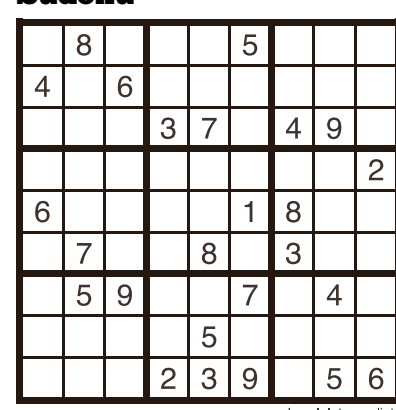
Feb. 11 Solution



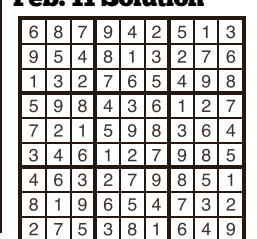
CLUES DOWN

1. Small islands
2. Skullcap
3. Unexplained events
4. One hundredth of a meter
5. Beloved baseball announcer
6. Repulsive
7. Northern European languages
8. Match or surpass
9. Northeast
12. Chew the fat
13. Innovative industry
17. Land to put down to grass
19. Products
20. Nostril

Sudoku



Feb. 11 Solution



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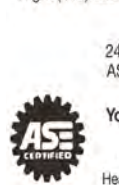
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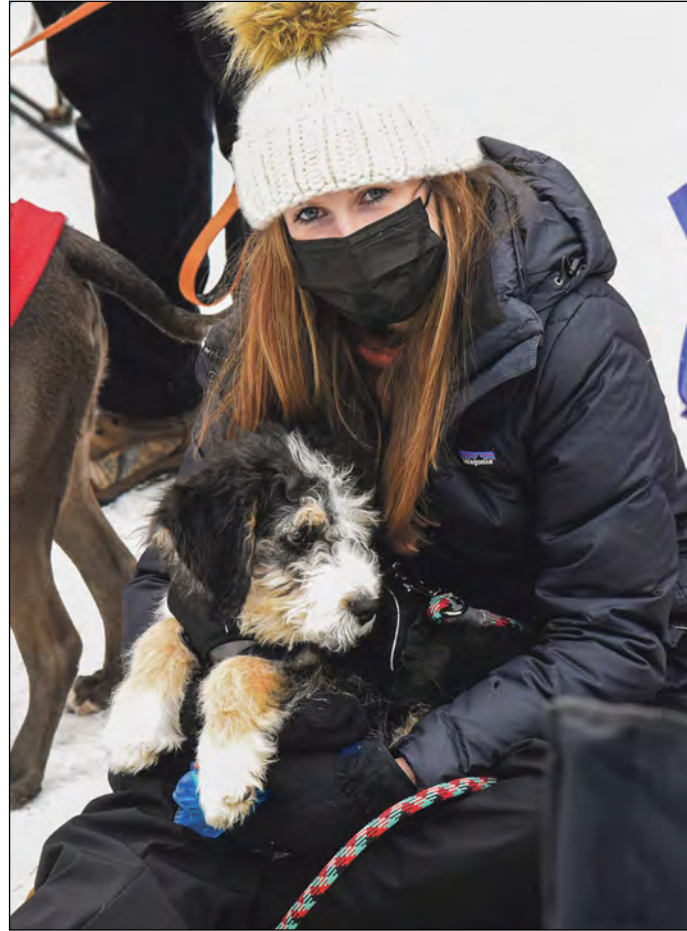


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All in all, 2021 a very good year for Jumpfest in Salisbury

By Patrick L. Sullivan

SALISBURY — The Salisbury Winter Sports Association (SWSA) ski jump weekend saw good weather and good crowds, even with a 400-person cap on spectators in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

SWSA's Willie Hallihan re-capped on Monday morning, Feb. 15, saying that the SWSA event was the only ski jumping event in the East that was not canceled because of pandemic concerns.

Hallihan said the weather, which has caused cancellation of events in recent years, was not a factor.

"Friday night was in the mid-20s — we've had much colder nights. Saturday was about perfect, and Sunday was almost temperate."

The biggest logistical problem was maintaining the 400-person limit.

On Saturday, Feb. 13, the 400-person limit was achieved at noon, one hour before the competition was scheduled to begin (practice jumping begins at 11 a.m. on both Saturday and Sunday).

Roger Crain of SWSA was working the gate a little before noon. He said there were 375 people inside, 25 short of the 400 maximum.

Asked how SWSA kept track, Crain said he had a clicker, and when people exited for good, they were asked to turn in their tickets, so SWSA could then allow more people in.

At 1:20 p.m., there were about 50 people standing in line and waiting to get in, and SWSA members were out on Indian Cave Road advising people in cars that there would

be a delay in getting in.

On Sunday, Feb. 14, the SWSA volunteers were out in force, advising not only on where to park and how long the wait might be, but going over COVID-19 symptoms and reminding people about masks and social distance.

At about 1:30 p.m. Sunday, the parking area was jammed and about 100 people were waiting to get in.

On both days, the waiting people eventually got in, as spectators left and turned in their tickets.

Inside the ski jump area, near the bonfire on the south side of the jump hill, a dozen or so small children swarmed over piles of cleared snow.

Two food trucks — one offering pulled pork and macaroni and cheese, the other *poutine* (a Canadian dish defined as french fries topped with cheese curds and gravy) — did steady business. Revelers were restricted to a smaller area than usual on the north side of the jump hill, which didn't discourage the die hards with their folding tables and chairs, and provisions tending toward the liquid.

Hallihan said there were some positive aspects to the pandemic precautions.

"People behaved themselves," heeding the guidance about masks and distance.

And the ski jumps were livestreamed, thanks to Ian Johnson and the Salisbury School Media Lab.

Hallihan said the livestream attracted viewers from around the country.

"We'll do that from now on." Hallihan said that, all things considered, the 2021 Jumpfest was a success.

There are three separate competitions at Jumpfest. On Friday nights there is target jumping under the lights, an unofficial contest.

On Saturdays, the jumpers compete for the Salisbury Winter Sports Association cup, which goes home with the jumper who has won three times.

And on Sunday is the Olympic qualifier, the Eastern National championships.

Points are awarded based on distance and style. Tate Frantz, number 60 in the Under 20 category and jumping on the 65 meter hill, earned the most points on both days, with 228.4 on Saturday and 234.7 on Sunday.

Cooper Dodds, number 64 and jumping in the Master Class, got the farthest distance

on Friday night's target jumping, at 67.5.

Full results can be found online at The Lakeville Journal website, www.tricornernews.com, including results for the youngest jumpers on the 30 meter hill.

The names of the clubs the athletes jump for are included. Ford Sayre and Lebanon Outing Club are both in New Hampshire; NYSEF trains at the Olympic Jumping Complex in Lake Placid, N.Y.; SWSA is in Salisbury.

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— The Lakeville Journal Company, LLC

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COMPASS

Your Guide to Tri-State Events

February 18-24, 2021

MUSIC: FRED BAUMGARTEN

Climbing Music's Mount Parnassus, Again (and Again)

Yehuda Hanani, cellist, educator and artistic director of Close Encounters With Music (CEWM), has returned countless times to the Bach Suites for Unaccompanied Cello — what he calls a musical “Mount Parnassus” (home of mythology’s Muses).

“I’ve been living with this music for over 50 years,” Hanani told me recently. “It’s forever new, forever fresh. You always discover something new” every time you play it. “This is the Bible for cellists,” he continued. “Every composer who writes for unaccompanied cello cannot escape its influence.”

We discussed how Bach, in his time, could not have been thinking that his works would live on in posterity. “In the 18th century, composers were like the bakers, barbers and candle-makers. If you think of his cantatas, he wrote a new one every Sunday. That was his job. It was expected. Last week’s cantata was old news.”

Yet here we are, with these six timeless cello suites, each one exploring a vast range and depth of feeling — of human experience.

“It’s an incredible body of work,” Hanani said.

And starting on Feb. 28, Hanani will return to the cello suites in a live performance recorded on stage at the Mahaiwe theater in Great Barrington, Mass., to be shown online. It’s the first in CEWM’s winter/spring series, “From the Mahaiwe Stage to Your Screen.” The program will be free and available at the websites www.cewm.org and www.mahaiwe.org, as well as on YouTube.

As a performer and teacher, Hanani is making the best adjustment he



PHOTO COURTESY YEHUDA HANANI

Yehuda Hanani will perform the Bach Suites for Unaccompanied Cello in an online performance for Close Encounters With Music on Feb. 28.

can to the pandemic. He misses the live interaction of playing before people. “It’s an eerie feeling. You sit on the stage, but instead of 750 people breathing and sharing with you, you have to assume they’re online in their homes, that you’re actually playing for someone.”

Ever erudite, Hanani quoted from the Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges: “The taste of the apple lies in the contact of the fruit with the palate. Between us playing and someone out there reacting to it — this is what consummates the cycle. The audience is part of the act; it’s an active, not passive, experience.

Giving lessons remote-

ly has come somewhat easier. “We usually have 50 students from around the world at our High Peaks Summer Festival. This year we did it virtually for the first time. We had 50 students, and we managed to create a sense of community and togetherness.” To a real extent, it has made it easier for the many students he teaches in places like Japan and China. Still, he said, “I’d rather be in the same room with them.”

Returning to the subject of Bach, Hanani dropped a tasty morsel: “My last teacher was [Pablo] Casals,” the legendary Spanish cellist who made the suites famous and was the

first to record them. “He approached them with reverence, and called them ‘miraculous.’”

Hanani is hoping for another miracle this summer — as are we all: a return to live, in-person music. CEWM has plans underway for two programs at The Mount, Edith Wharton’s historic home in Lenox, Mass., as well as two more “From the Mahaiwe Stage” online concerts this spring.

“Forever Bach—The Celestial Suites for Unaccompanied Cello,” with Yehuda Hanani on cello, will be available online on Sunday, Feb. 28, at 7:30 p.m. For more information, go to www.cewm.org or www.mahaiwe.org.

FOUR NOVELS AND A TRIP THROUGH THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD

The Kent Memorial Library in Kent, Conn., will offer a book discussion group hosted by Betty Krasne. Recent historical novels will be studied to see how successful they are at rendering the past.

The four featured novels have been arranged in pairs, with two that start out in the West Indies and two that involve Europe and Japan.

Kei Miller’s “Augustown” will be discussed Feb. 25; on March 25 the title will be “Washinton Black” by Esi Edugyan. On April 22 it is Sarah Moss’ “Signs for Lost Children” and on May 20 it will be Asha Lemmie’s



PHOTO BY JAMES STARKMAN

AN ARTIST AND HISTORIAN DECODES PUBLIC MONUMENTS

David Anthonie is perhaps best known in the Tri-state region as half of the duo that creates artwork under the name DARN studio, whose “CIPHER: Works from Another Country Quilt Cycle” was recently exhibited at Five Points Gallery in Torrington, Conn.

Anthonie, who lives and works in Roxbury, Conn., is also a historic preservation officer for the state and will give a talk hosted by The League of Women Voters of Litchfield County on Sunday, Feb. 21, at 3 p.m. on Zoom called “Hidden in Plain Sight: Decoding Public Monuments.”

One of Anthonie’s recent projects was “Stonewall Jackson: REMIX” (2020) DARN studio.

A great deal of attention has been placed recently on public monuments, which Anthonie believes “not only command atten-

tion to themselves; they also hold court within the public spaces that they occupy.”

The historic confederate monuments that comprise monument row in Richmond, Va., became the lightning rods for discussions, debate and protests, regarding systemic racism, historical narrative, and the role of commemorative markers in public spaces.

Anthonie will address the debate this past year about public monuments and how they stimulate our feelings about our historical narrative.

He will explore what story is being told through monuments, who is telling the story, and the original intent of the monument and their impact to current communities.

Sign up for this free online talk at registration@LitchfieldHistoricalSociety.org to get the link.

HISTORY, CULTURE AND ADVENTURE IN NORFOLK

Norfolk is more than just the Icebox of Connecticut. It’s also a quirky and fascinating town, off the beaten path, with glorious architecture, world-class music, an exquisite library and of course the Yale Forestry School, the Great Mountain Forest and the many opportunities they offer for outdoor education

and adventure.

When you drive through town, perhaps on your way to a larger urban center such as Torrington, Conn., it’s not always obvious how to access the treasures of this town of 1,700 people, established in 1758.

It’s not that residents of Norfolk are trying to be exclusive. In fact, the opposite is largely true, which is why the town has begun to host weekend-long festivals of wonders, in winter and summer.

The Winter Weekend in Norfolk will be held online this year, because of COVID-19. It begins on Saturday, Feb. 20, when art and activity videos will be posted at www.weekendinnorfolk.org.

But there is no need to wait; the website already has history talks, art studio tours, concerts and activities for children that were part of last summer’s Weekend in Norfolk celebration.

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HOW TO BECOME A BEEKEEPER

You're probably already making your own bread and butter in COVID quarantine, so why not learn to make honey as well?

Two upcoming Zoom workshops will offer an introduction to beekeeping.

In three weekly classes beginning Thursday, Feb. 18, at 6 p.m. and ending Thursday, March 4, at 7:30 p.m., Berkshire Botanical Garden will offer online classes with Chris Wellens, the former head beekeeper for Berkshire Botanical. Suggested reading: "The

Beekeeper's Handbook" by Diana Sammataro and Alphonse Avitabile (an award-winning bee specialist from Bethlehem, Conn.) and "The Backyard Beekeeper" by Kim Flottum.

After that, on Sunday, March 7, at 2 p.m. Dan Carr of Beavertides Farm in Falls Village, Conn., will talk about bee basics in a talk sponsored by the David M. Hunt Library in Falls Village. Register at www.HuntLibrary.org, on the library's Facebook page, or by calling the library at 860-824-7424.



PHOTO COURTESY DAN CARR

Two upcoming online workshops will offer basics on how to begin a bee colony in your yard. One will feature Dan Carr, in photo above, from Beavertides Farm in Falls Village, Conn.

MUSIC: CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

Finding Time in a Bottle with the Music of A.J. Croce

Sometimes it's hard to find the "click" with a new singer, one whose work isn't presented to you on a platter by the radio, or a streaming channel or your kids or a friend or... And without someone to help you make a link to a song or a performer, sometimes you never find your way in.

So I don't feel guilty about first being attracted to the singer-songwriter A.J. Croce because he is the son of Jim Croce because who of a certain age didn't love Jim Croce? The answer is no one. Jim Croce was the greatest. And while most people of my generation don't agree on much, all of us at some time in our lives have thought, "Gee, I wish Jim Croce hadn't died in that plane crash in 1973 in Louisiana."

There were so many songs by him to love. But really you can only play them over and over again so many times.

And so it was a happy revelation to learn that his son, A.J. Croce, is coming out with an album this month that's called "By Request."

By a fluke, which I'll explain in a minute, it is all covers of songs from the second half of the 20th century. They're songs, he said in an interview, that his friends always ask him to play when he sits down at the piano or picks up a guitar.

It's interesting to note that none of the songs was written by his father.

He does cover a song by his father's good friend Randy Newman. He does "Nothing from Nothing," made popular by Billy Preston; he's got Neil Young's "Only Love Can Break Your Heart;" he's got "Ooh Child" by the Stair-steps, ubiquitous on the radio for so many years.

They're all good. He's a great guitar player and has a flexible voice that can be folk-y, ballad-y or have a deep bluesy growl.

I'll confess though that

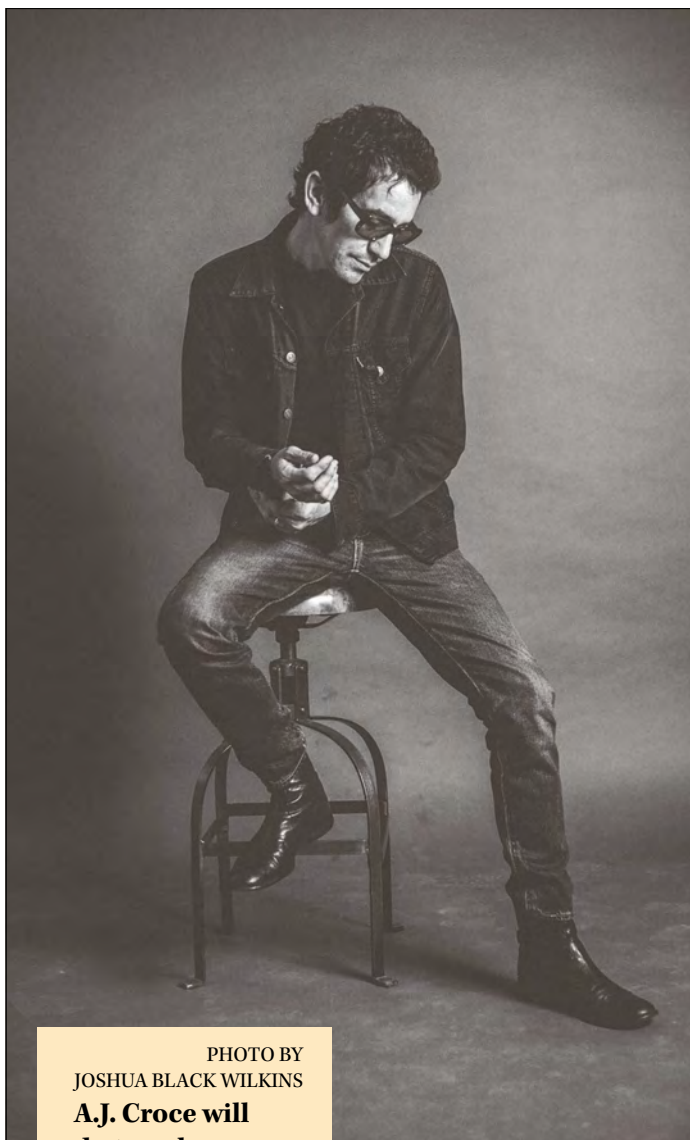


PHOTO BY JOSHUA BLACK WILKINS
A.J. Croce will do two shows in March (one celebrates his new album, "By Request") online for The Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center in Great Barrington, Mass.

even though I enjoyed every song by him on Spotify the first time I heard it, what will send me back to his music is the way he sings his father's songs.

You have to search around a little to find a Croce cover of Croce. Mostly you can see them on YouTube. A.J. has had a long career in the music business, and for most of it he has not played his father's music.

But when he does, it lights up a special nostalgia pleasure center of your brain. His voice sounds much like his father's voice. But curiously, A.J. Croce's life has been so full of tragedy that his renditions of his father's very moving songs is grittier, bluesier and more soulful.

Croce has had a hard life. It's not just that his

father died when he was about 2. He also lost his sight when he was 4, either because of physical abuse by his mother's boyfriend or because of brain tumors, depending on whose version of the story you hear (he did regain vision in his left eye many years later).

When he was a teen, the home he'd lived in with his mother for a decade and a half burned down.

Two years ago, his wife of 24 years died from a heart virus. That happened at a time when he was preparing this new album; he found he just couldn't get himself to sit and write new songs, and so he decided to do an album of all cover songs, all performed live with a band of his friends (all experienced blues musicians).

This is a man who has a right to sing the blues, and he does it beautifully. Go to YouTube and find the unplugged version of Croce and a friend singing his father's "Time in a Bottle," out in the backyard (a song that his father wrote

when he learned his wife was pregnant with A.J.). You might never go back to the original version.

Or find the YouTube video of him performing his father's "I've Got a Name." It's about living the dream that his daddy kept hid, as he moves on down the highway, past all the tragedy that time has tossed at him.

These performances stand alone, but they touch me more profoundly because they're songs I've heard a thousand times, and now they sound new again to me. The voice is almost the same, but has more patina.

If the videos move and intrigue you, or if you want a different access point to A.J. Croce, watch two live performances hosted by The Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center in Great Barrington, Mass., on March 18 and 25.

The first concert is a debut outing for the new album, "By Request," which is scheduled for release by Compass Records on Feb. 27.

The second Mahaiwe show, on March 25, will be Croce and his band playing songs from the 10 albums he's released in the past 30 years. He does blues, jazz, soul and rock 'n' roll, but in his hands really everything has a bluesy quality.

Tickets for the two Mahaiwe online shows are \$15 for a single performance or \$25 for both. To order, go to www.mahaiwe.org.



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Online bidding is now open for the chance to name the two rare Siberian Cranes at Ripley Waterfowl Conservancy in Litchfield, Conn.

Seeking Names for Siberian Cranes

Ripley Waterfowl Conservancy in Litchfield, Conn., is offering naming rights for the two rare Siberian cranes that are now in residence in the center's Crane Habitat. The cranes are a critically endangered species. Organizations such as Ripley are not only protecting the birds but also helping to continue their bloodlines by creating safe conditions for them to breed. The 4-year-old female and 7-year-old male are two of only 19 Siberian Cranes in captivity in the U.S.

Both birds are about 5 feet tall and have thoughtful eyes, long slender legs and beaks, and graceful wings that open up to reveal black feathers at the tips.

Each donation directly supports the care of the many birds at Ripley, in-

cluding the cranes.

Online bidding for the right to choose a name for one of the cranes will continue until Feb. 28. The names will be displayed alongside the name of the donor on an acknowledgment sign outside the Crane Habitat.

In addition, the high bidders will win a behind-the-scenes "Feed the Cranes" experience with Ripley's Director of Aviculture, Andrew Ocampo, a noted specialist in helping birds in captivity to breed.

For inspiration on choosing a name, visit Ripley's website to see a short video of the cranes, performing what sounds like a jazz concert with their distinctive honking. www.ripleyconservancy.org/siberian-crane-silent-auction.html.

— Cynthia Hochswender

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Results of a political trial

Many people are angry over the trial held in the Senate. The problem is in the word "trial." This was not a legal trial, no current laws of jurisprudence hold.

There is no application of the simple reading of law upheld in every superior court in the land that if you remove the one accused from a crime scene and the crime never takes place, hey presto, the crime needed that person's involvement. Guilty. But in this case there is no legal

A VIEW FROM THE EDGE

PETER RIVA

accusation of a crime, just a determination of the guilt of being impeached for solid reason.

Now, what everyone is forgetting is that a trial following a president being impeached, held in the body of the Senate, is an evaluation of the sitting senators' political evaluation of whether the president should be found guilty and, as a consequence, lose their job — and the next step is to vote to see if they should ever be able to have a public job again.

Now, many people are accusing reluctant GOP senators of simply turning a blind eye to the acts and willful deeds of the-then president. Simply put, they are accused of being cowards and being afraid of the followers of Trump wanting retribution — at the ballot box or worse — should they decide yes, he is guilty and the impeachment was warranted. But that's not what they are voting on. They are voting on a simple

proposition:

If 40% of the whole GOP electorate is a die-in-the-wool Trump follower, and every single one of those fervent fans will vote in the next primary election cycle when almost none of the regular, more reasonable GOP electors will bother to vote, what are the chances each of these senators would have of being the chosen candidate? Remember, if you fail in the primary, you are out. Replaced by what? A more Trumpian follower. Bad for the country.

Now, on the other hand, it could be said that these senators are courageous because they will have to face a Democratic opponent in the next election who points out they supported Trump's innocence in the Senate trial... this is likely to be bad for their candidacy.

So either way, they are damned if they do and damned if they don't. In fact, they can be likened to the band on the Titanic valiantly playing on as the ship sinks — only in their case they are also hoping their fiddle playing will save the ship. That's unlikely, either way. Watch the next few years as many of them will jump ship. They have little chance of escaping an electorate's ire — on both sides — otherwise.

Writer Peter Riva, a former resident of Armenia Union, now resides in New Mexico.



The real domestic terrorism threat is not antifa

Over the last four years, President Trump and his administration actively promoted the idea that domestic left-wing organizations have become a growing menace to national security. At the same time, they have downplayed the threat posed by right-wing groups, despite the continuing assertion by the FBI that paramilitary, anti-government, white supremacist groups constituted a much greater menace to the country.

The bogeyman, according to the Trump administration and its ideological allies, is something called antifa. Yet antifa (short for anti-fascist) is little more than an euphoric rallying cry, a slogan, or as FBI Director Christopher Wray stated before Congress in October, "more of an ideology or a movement than an organization." There are no officers, no members, no documents, nothing tangible.

While dangerous right-wing hate groups go back well more than a century, their surprising growth in recent years became evident to most people with the 2017 riot in Charlottesville where overt racism came out of the woodwork leading to violence and death. President Trump seemed to validate the rioters and his administration failed to do much of anything subsequently to thwart what many were now calling domestic terrorism.

During the summer of 2020, after the murders of black individuals by policemen in Minnesota, Michigan, Ohio, and elsewhere, Trump campaigned for re-election blaming the rioting and violence on Democratic mayors and governors, Black Lives Matter protestors and antifa. This opinion was also frequently advanced by then-Attorney General Barr and other Trump administration officials; this was coupled with Trump's minimizing of the dangers posed by right-wing extremists, most of whom were his fervent supporters. But in fact, like Trump's re-election "victory", there was no evidence to support these ideas.

The massive demonstrations that occurred across the country after these murders were accompanied by bad behavior from many individuals and groups. The vandalism and looting of expensive stores in midtown Manhattan and elsewhere was mostly the work of opportunistic thieves assisted by politically motivated anarchists, possibly egged on by right-wing provocateurs. The largely peaceful demonstrations by Black Lives Matter protestors and others always seemed to be accompanied by disguised, well-organized extreme right-wing groups looking to foment violence.

Some may point, and with justification, to the continuing violence in Seattle as evidence of left-wing misbehavior. True,

Some may point, and with justification, to the continuing violence in Seattle as evidence of left-wing misbehavior.

but it generally seemed to be against activist right-wing gangs, not against civil society.

The mob that attacked the Capitol on Jan. 6 was an assortment of right-wing extremists. Most considered themselves part of a "militia movement", paramilitary types who believe they have the right to carry guns and other weapons anywhere and everywhere, and to use them at their own discretion. The majority were white supremacists. Some styling themselves as "Neo-Nazis" hate Jews. A majority also despise LGBTQs. All seem to dislike most foreigners, especially darker skinned ones. Others like QAnon have bizarre conspiracy theories in addition. Something all these sects seem to have in common is hatred of government at every level.

Groups such as The Proud Boys, Boogaloo Boys, Wolverine Watchmen, Oath Keepers, Three Percenters, Atomwaffen Division and so on are typically organized into small chapters that are autonomous but keep in touch through the internet and other electronic means. Since 1981, The Southern Poverty Law Center has tracked hate groups and extremist organizations in the U.S., in 2018 listing 1,020 such organizations, nearly all right wing. The FBI may have a reliable estimate of their numbers but no such figures have been made public. Certainly we are talking about many thousands of individuals, much more if like-minded, unaffiliated "lone wolf" individuals were added to the totals.

While there are some women active with right-wing hate groups, the overwhelming proportion of these individuals are young or middle-aged men, a significant portion of whom have had military or law enforcement experience.

How large was the mob that stormed the Capitol? Strangely, the various authorities who normally count numbers at public events have not been willing to say. Unofficial estimates suggest that over a thousand rioters got inside the Capitol building and thousands more broke through the barricades but remained outdoors.

A frightening aspect of the attack on the Capitol has been the claim that people within the Federal government, possibly even members of Congress or their staffs, may have been involved. Congresswoman Mikie Sherrill (NJ), a former Navy helicopter pilot and credible sleuth, noticed on the day before the attack that several guided tours, which had been officially discontinued since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March, seemed to be taking place. And she reported to the Capitol police and other authorities what she considered very suspicious activity that looked to her like "reconnaissance missions." Thus far, the FBI and others investigating the situation have kept their findings to themselves.

Together with his several month long attempt to persuade his followers that his election was "stolen," President Trump's fiery speech inciting them to attack the Capitol makes what transpired seem almost inevitable.

Now finally installed, the new administration is taking the threat of domestic terrorism very seriously. But reversing the frightening growth of violent hate groups will be a formidable task.

Architect and landscape designer Mac Gordon lives in Lakeville.

OCCASIONAL OBSERVER

MAC GORDON

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Details on easement from The Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is aware that property owned by Jeffrey Keenan and subject to a conservation easement (a perpetual restriction on land protecting its important conservation interests) held by The Nature Conservancy is the subject of discussion and debate, but to date TNC has not received any specific request or proposal regarding the property. We are in communication with all interested parties, including Mr. Keenan and Kate and Chris Kimball, the children of the original donor, Mary Alice White. We must clarify facts before taking any position.

We have spoken with Mr. Keenan and his representative broadly regarding a variety of projects he may be considering. If The Nature Conservancy receives a specific proposal from Mr. Keenan we will review its consistency with the purpose, intent, and terms of the conservation easement. This is how The Nature Conservancy considers any proposal received by a landowner over whose property we hold a conservation easement.

We believe it is important to work with landowners on whose property The Nature Conservancy holds a conservation easement to ensure that the conservation values (the things the conservation easement is intended to protect) are respected and upheld. As the landowner Mr. Keenan has the legal right to present a specific and detailed proposal for any project he may propose. Without a proposal from Mr. Keenan or his representatives, however, it is too early for The Nature Conservancy to evaluate any potential project or decide what information may be required.

We deeply value all our many relationships with land preservation organizations, volunteers, and professionals in northwest Connecticut, all of whom are committed to acting in the best interests of our environment. The Nature Conservancy owns, manages, and supports protected lands throughout Connecticut. Furthermore, Northwest Connecticut is an important area for conservation and we look forward to continuing to protect and restore critical lands within the region, in collaboration with partners.

The first conservation easement in the country was developed by The Nature Conservancy in Connecticut and it's our belief that this critical land protection tool has only grown more important to conservation and for mitigating the effects of climate change. The Nature Conservancy is accredited through the Land Trust Accreditation Commission — a distinction that comes with specific criteria governing certain activities to ensure the permanence of conservation lands, ethical conduct, quality standards, and public trust.

We look forward to continuing our dialogue with Mr. Keenan, the children of Mary Alice White, and the community of Salisbury. At the appropriate time when we do have an update to share, we will do so. Please note that the evaluation process for any request is rigorous and often takes some time. In many cases, including this one, The Nature Conservancy may engage outside counsel to provide advice.

Andrew Benson
The Nature Conservancy

New Haven

Salisbury residents deserve transparency

One of the defining traditions of Connecticut politics is the high degree of local autonomy afforded to our towns. The county governments, having widely been viewed as 'weak' and 'inefficient', were formally abolished in 1960 by Public Act 152, with their roles and authority subsequently subsumed by the state and town governments.

Starting in the 1980s, regional governments have returned to Connecticut with the establishment of 'Regional Councils of Governments' ("COGs"). Today, Connecticut has nine COGs, whose purpose is to "provide a geographic framework within which municipalities can jointly address common interests, and coordinate such interests with state plans and programs." This past year, the Connecticut Association of Councils of Governments, applied for federal recognition of the COGs as "county equivalents," making the COGs eligible to apply for certain federal grants.

Our COG, the Northwest Hills Council of Governments, with approximately 115,000 residents under its jurisdiction, is the second smallest in Connecticut. For the 12 months prior to June 30, 2020, the Northwest Hills COG took in \$1.65 million in revenue, of which almost half went to salary and consulting fees (\$208k and \$588k, respectively.)

Residents of Salisbury who believe that investments in housing and communications infrastructure are critical to the vitality of our community should welcome the efforts of the Northwest Hills COG to procure funding for these projects from the state and federal government. At the same time, if we value our ability to manage our own vital resources — our funds, land, streetscape, and watersheds — independently of state and regional authorities, we must also be wary of allowing the Council to set the agenda of which projects to build, decide when and how to build them and choose who gets the contracts.

For this reason, it has been concerning to see that one of the leaders of the Salisbury Affordable Housing Commission ("SAHC"), who are advocating for and planning a proposed 12-unit development at Holley Block, is an employee of the Northwest Hills COG. Granted, during the informational hearing given by the Commission on Feb. 4, the Commission's representatives maintained that they were working on a volunteer basis. Further, they responded "No" when asked whether the Northwest Hills COG had, or would have, any role in the project. (Separately, the Commission stated that the funding for the project is being coordinated, at least in part, through the Northwest Hills COG.)

Whatever role the COG has in this project, Salisbury residents need transparency into the processes the SAHC has and will follow when making decisions regarding the use of our resources if we are to have confidence they are used in the best interests of our community.

Eric Mason

Lakeville

More letters previous page.

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Amending an existing conservation easement is, as it should be, very difficult. There are many parties with standing that must be considered; the IRS, as the grantor took deductions, the grantor or their heirs wishes and public opinion to mention a few. Land trusts are stewards and depend on the goodwill and trust of the communities in which they serve. The Land Trust Alliance has written an excellent brief on Amending Conservation Easements, Evolving Practices and Legal Principles. This can either be found on their website at www.landtrustalliance.org or happy to email a copy to you.

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