

Local
 Postal Customer

The Suffield Observer

Vol XXVIII, No. 4

A Watchful Messenger

May 2026

Suffield's History and Notable People Honored

By Jackie Hemond

Trees have both common and scientific names, such as Eastern White Pine (*Pinus strobus*). On June 6, Trees for Suffield will give a third name, a personal name, to two "notable" trees located in Sunrise Park: the Smith Sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*) and the Loomis White Fir (*Abies concolor*). Naming a tree with a personal name makes it stand out, gives people a closer connection to nature and in this case, celebrates the life of two men who made lasting impacts on Suffield.

Tree Naming Ceremony at Sunrise Park, June 6 at 1:30 p.m.

The Smith Sassafras will commemorate Lester Smith, who died in 2024 after decades of service to the town as Town Historian, *The Suffield Observer* writer and photographer, King House Museum curator, Boy Scout leader and Kent Memorial Library support-



Photo by Marty Aligata

Burbank Sycamore was named in 2024 by the Trees for Suffield Initiative.

er. Smith knew Sunrise Park well from his years marking trails with the Scouts. He loved trees. Writing about the mighty Spencer Oak, a famous Suffield tree, he mourned its demise when it fell several years ago.

The Loomis White Fir will honor Roger Loomis, Sunrise Park's first superintendent (1966-1982). He developed the Park's trail system, planted extensively and maintained the grounds. Loomis was also a Boy Scout leader, an officer of the Historical Society and a Town Forest Commission member for 40 years. His exceptional photographs chronicled Suffield's events

and people. Loomis died in 1999.

The Smith and Loomis trees join the lofty ranks of other historically significant Suffield trees, including the Spencer Oak, Trumble Oak, Granger Maple, Washington Elms and Burbank Sycamore, living (and once-living) symbols of the town's past.

The Spencer Oak, once the largest chestnut oak in New England, was perhaps a seedling around Suffield's founding in 1670. It stood for over 300 years. In the 1930s, Samuel Reid Spencer, a Connecticut lieutenant governor and Suffield resident, bought the old Egan

farm on North Stone Street where the tree had rooted. Spencer cared for the tree and when he sold the property to John Beresford transferred the care of the tree to him. In 1955, Beresford deeded a path to the tree ensuring public access to it. Visitors, including Katharine Hepburn, came to admire the tree. In 1989, its enormous size was recorded: 65 feet tall, with a 8.5-foot girth and a sprawling canopy spanning 117 feet.

The Trumble Oak, a beloved landmark along River Road (now River Boulevard), marked the ancestral home of the Trumble/Trumbull family. One de-

scendant, Jonathan Trumbull would become a colonial governor of Connecticut, and John Trumbull, Jonathan's son, would earn fame as the "Painter of the [American] Revolution." The historic tree was cut down in 1910.

The Granger Maple was planted by Launcelot Granger, a first Suffield settler, who moved to town in 1674. The tree, planted in front of his house on High Street where the Suffield Academy is located, survived until 1922, aged 248.

The Washington Elms, twin trees planted on the southern Green in the early 1700s, shaded George Washington when he greeted Suffield residents in June 1775 on his way to assume command of the Continental Army. One of the elm trees fell down, but the other remained standing for many years — as a real, physical tree and an important symbol in the town's lore.

The Burbank Sycamore towers over the Phelps-Hatheway House. Its origins are unknown, but it has likely stood beside the circa 1761 Shem Burbank house for most of its life.

Continued on Page 4

Suffield Volunteer Ambulance Association Receives Prestigious National Honor

By John Spencer,
Chief, Suffield Volunteer
Ambulance Association

The Suffield Volunteer Ambulance Association (SVAA) has been recognized on the national stage as the 2026 EMS Agency of the Year by the National EMS Management Association.

Chief John Spencer, Captain Jacob Audet, and Administrative Director Jennifer Ferguson traveled to Washington, D.C. to attend the organization's inaugural national conference, joining hundreds of EMS leaders from across the country. During the conference, SVAA was formally recognized for its outstanding contributions to the field of emergency medical services.

This prestigious award highlights agencies that demonstrate excellence in operations, leadership, clinical care, and organizational development. SVAA was selected for its continued efforts to build and sustain a high-performing EMS system rooted in innovation, accountability, and service to the community.

Central to that recognition is the organization's ability to successfully integrate providers into a unified, cohesive culture. By fostering collaboration and shared ownership, SVAA has created an environment where individuals work seamlessly together in support of a common mission.

The agency was also recognized for its commitment



Photo by National EMS Management Association (NEMSMA)

Left to Right: Pat Songer (Executive Director NEMSMA), Captain Jacob Audet (SVAA), Administrative Director Jennifer Ferguson (SVAA), Chief John Spencer (SVAA).

to delivering progressive, evidence-based patient care, while continuously advancing its clinical practices, training,

and operational systems. This approach ensures that the community receives care that is not only compassionate but aligned

with the latest standards and best practices in EMS.

"This recognition reflects the standard our providers set every day," said Chief Spencer. "It is a direct result of the culture they have built—one focused on accountability, continuous improvement, and patient-centered care."

As SVAA celebrates its 50th anniversary, this national recognition underscores both the strength of the organization today and its continued trajectory forward.

The award serves not as a destination, but as a reflection of the foundation built by its providers—and a commitment to continue advancing EMS care, leadership, and service in the years ahead. ☞

The Suffield Observer

Editorial

Body, Mind and Spirit

I like to remind myself that I am a person with a body, mind and spirit. I need to feed all three to be healthy. Taking care of the mind and body is important, but sometimes we neglect the spirit. My mom was a spiritual person. Even when her mind and body were failing, her spirit was strong. There was a Police song where they sang "We are spirits in a material world". The lyrics comment on the nature of man's existence and the failure of his earthly institutions. Some say, "What is happening to our moral fabric today?" Also, people like to talk about their worldview and how they interpret reality based on their knowledge, culture and experience. Many inherit their worldview from their parents but then go off to find themselves. Finding yourself is the process of discovering your true core values, passions and identity, rather than living by others' expectations. What about you?

For me, church has influenced my morality as a baby boomer. I left the church for a while in college trying to "find myself" but eventually was drawn back there. Church was always a safe and encouraging place. However, our culture is changing. Generation Z, sometimes called the cell phone generation, is the least religious generation in American history. The global youth culture is not trusting of institutions and is more influenced by the entertainment industry, social media, video games, sports gambling, etc. Should we lose hope? I don't think so. A common sentiment for Gen. Z is that spirituality is a feeling, like when you hold a newborn baby; there is energy, a force that lives.

In a book I'm reading, the writer visits a coffee shop and the barista had a pin on her shirt that said, "Be human-centered". The writer then asked, "What does that mean?" Her response was, "Well, it means you treat other people like you want to be treated and consider other people's needs above your own". Then he asked, "Where does that come from?" She looked confused and just pointed to the pin.

Wow, if everyone was human-centered, the world would certainly be a more pleasant place, and our energy or life force would be more positive and contagious. So, if this recapture of the Golden Rule resonates with you, let's try to be more human-centered today.

Steve Smith
Editor-of-the Month

Political Party

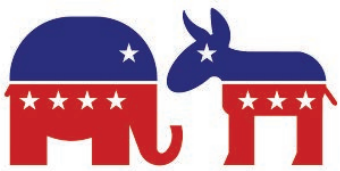
Transfer Deadline: May 11

By Darlene Burrell,
Registrar of Voters

May 11 is the final day for an enrolled elector to transfer from one political party to another and still be eligible to vote in their new party's primary on August 8, if a primary is held.

Voters can verify their current political party enrollment by using the Connecticut Voter Registration Lookup Tool at: <https://portal.dir.ct.gov/sots/lookup.aspx> or by calling the Registrars of Voters at 860-668-3850.

Please note: Connecticut law requires a three-month waiting period when switching from one political party to another before a voter becomes eligible to participate in that party's primary. ☘



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Letter to the Editor

Write to
Inbox@TheSuffieldObserver.com

Skateboard Park

Dear Editor,

I learned to skateboard last spring, and I like to skate a lot. But I have to go to other towns to be able to skate. I tried going to the Suffield skatepark behind the town hall, but it wasn't safe because it was in bad repair and had been badly patched. Just like no one wants to play on a broken playground, no one wants to skate in a broken park. Redoing the Suffield skatepark would provide a place for people of all ages to hang out and skate or scooter. It would be accessible from sidewalks so you could walk down to the park, even from school.

There are so many different kinds of tricks of varying difficulties. Even if you are new to skating you can have a lot of fun learning. And if you have been skating for a while there are still nearly endless tricks you can learn. When you are trying to learn a new trick, you have to keep at it even if you fall off or if it takes a long time to learn. But when you finally get the hang of a trick, it's really satisfying. With an outdoor park you can skate from early spring to late fall, so it's available for use most of the year. As it is, no one will use the park, but if Suffield replaced the old park with a modern skatepark it would be a popular place for the whole town.

Karl Peterson



(L to R) Local builder Elzear Roy, Social Services Commission Chair Robin Zatory, Suffield Rotary President Natalie Donais and Drake Smith, project manager for The Barn Yard in Ellington, at the new bandstand site. Rendering shown at right.

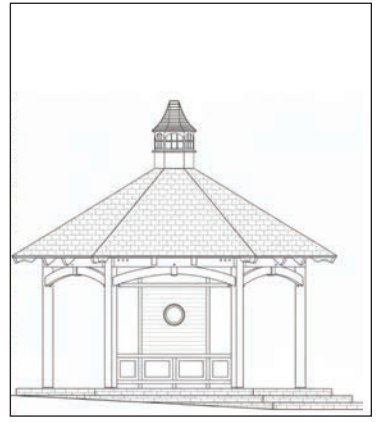


Photo provided by the author

New Town Green Bandstand Could Last Over 100 Years

By Tony Peterson

A new hexagonal bandstand, 80% larger than the old one, is being installed on the town green. Funded by private donations, it will cost about \$200,000 and has approval from the Historic District Commission.

The impetus to replace the original rickety bandstand, which was built in 1976 and condemned in March, came from a conversation last spring between the chair of Suffield's social services commission, Robin Zatory, and Peter Leclerc, the director of community services.

Zatory asked Leclerc how she could help, and he replied that he needed a new, larger bandstand to host events, but didn't have the funds. Zatory said she thought she could make it happen.

Soon, she was spreading the word and soliciting private donors. Some, like local builder Elzear Roy, offered free or discounted services, while others offered monetary donations.

At his expense, Roy razed the old, rotted bandstand, removed the debris and installed the foundation for the new one. The nonprofit Rotary Club of Suffield, led by Natalie Donais, agreed to serve as the fiscal sponsor. They made a major monetary donation, along with the Packard and Casinghino families of Suffield and the Suffield Women's Club.

There is still a funding gap, which Zatory is confident can be filled through the collective goodwill of town residents. You can make a tax-deductible donation to the Suffield Rotary Foundation, P.O. Box 283, Suffield, CT 06078, Memo: Bandstand.

Bandstand construction

The Barn Yard of Ellington, which specializes in constructing post-and-beam and timber-frame homes, sheds and other structures, was chosen as the builder.

Zatory, who owns the Dowd Realty Group in Suffield, was impressed by the firm's high-quality work from previous dealings. However, for electrical and other bandstand systems, the business was awarded to Suffield contractors.

Timber frame construction was chosen for the Suffield bandstand because of its reputation for lasting hundreds of years with proper maintenance.

Beams will be made from premium west coast #1 Grade Douglas fir, according to Drake Smith, a project manager at The Barn Yard. The tongue-and-groove roof, exposed from underneath, will be made from 1-1/2" thick eastern white pine, covered by 30-year life architectural shingles.

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TOWN GOVERNMENT

First Selectman's Update

May Commission Meetings

Please check the Town of Suffield website for time, location or schedule changes.

Conservation Comm.
Tues., May 12 & 26
7 p.m., Town Hall

Perm. Bldg. Comm.
Thurs., May 21
6 p.m., Town Hall

Economic Dev. Comm.
Thurs., May 21
8:30 a.m., Town Hall

P&Z Commission
Mon., May 18
7 p.m., Town Hall

Education, Board of
Mon., May 4 & 18
6:30 p.m., SHS

Police Commission
Wed., May 27
7 p.m., Police Station

Finance, Board of
Mon., May 11
7 p.m., Town Hall

Retirement Commission
Thu., May 14
5:00 p.m., Town Hall

Fire Commission
Tues., May 12
6:30 p.m.
SPD
911 Mountain Road

Selectmen, Board of
Wed., May 6 & 20
7 p.m., Town Hall

Historic District Comm.
Mon., May 4
7:30 p.m., Town Hall

Social Service Comm.
No May meeting
8:30 a.m.
SCA Office

KML Commission
Tue., May 12
7 p.m., Town Hall

WPCA
Tues., May 12
7 p.m.
WPCA, 844 East St. South

Parks & Rec. Comm.
Wed., May 13
7 p.m., Town Hall

Zoning Board of Appeals
Tue., May 26
7 p.m., Town Hall



This year's FY 26/27 budget has been set by the Board of Finance and will be presented at a Town Meeting on Wednesday, May 6 for approval. The overall increase will be 2.96%, a 0.69 increase to the mill rate.

The General Government portion, \$19,509,306, 28% of the overall budget, will see an increase of 3.83% increase, \$720,122.

Services within the General Government portion include:

- First Responder: Police, Fire, Ambulance, Emergency Management
- Department of Public Works
- Town Hall services: Assessor, Tax Collector, Town Clerk, Finance, Election, Planning and Zoning, Fire Marshal, Building Inspector, Conservation, Economic Development, Human Resources, and First Selectman Office
- Community Services: Senior Center, Parks and Recreation, Mini Bus, Youth Services
- Library
- Health and Social Services: contribution to Suffield Community Aid, North Central Health

The increases and changes to the budget are as follows:

- Over 50%, just over \$380,000, of the increase is due to wage and benefit increases, most of which are contractually obligated. Last

year's budget was set with a contingency amount at 2.5% due to the timing of contracts still being negotiated after the budget was set. This year's budget reflects the difference of the agreed upon amount, plus this year's increase. The budgets impacted due to those negotiations were the Police, Town Hall, Dispatch, and Library.

- Public Utilities had an increase of \$94,702. Those line items include Trash collection, Electricity, and Fire Hydrant costs.

- State Aid Road (paving) shows an increase of \$94,404 in the budget, however, it is offset in the revenue side.

- \$30,000 in new software costs for the new radio system

- just under \$30,000 in landfill costs due to State mandated permitting and engineering fees

- increased election costs, \$21,000, due to State mandated requirements

The above items reflect a \$650,106, 91% of the budgeted increase. The remaining requested increase of \$70,016 are operating increases: repair and maintenance line items for buildings and vehicles, subscription costs for required software, programming costs, and higher department energy/utility costs.

Department requests that have added to the budget include:

- increase to the Associate Library salary to better reflect a management salary

- addition of 1 P/T Firefighter. Last year we added 2 P/T Firefighters. Ultimately, the goal was to have 2 Firefighters on duty for every shift. Adding this one will achieve that goal.

Major Department increases/changes are as follows:

- Police: +\$231,271 mostly due to contractual wage increases
- Public Works: +\$83,029 increased landfill testing and fees as well as operating costs
- Fire: -\$2,960 due to new employees starting at starting wage steps
- Community Services: +\$63,853 mostly wage increases
- Library: +\$63,143 mostly due to wage increases
- IT: +\$27,672 shared services with the Board of Education
- Finance: +\$34,062 wage increases
- Employee Benefits: -\$94,638 due to collectively bargained health insurance changes that removed HSA funding, introduction of tiered structured employee cost share, and pharmacy cost saving programs

This year's budget increase is mostly driven by wages and inflationary operational costs. Beyond that, the Town has not requested or added any additional employees or programs that would significantly add to the budget. The Town, "General Government," part of the budget only reflects about one-third of your tax bill. Almost two-thirds is reflected through the Board of Education expenses and about 10% is spent through Capital Expenditures which include major repairs or maintenance to our buildings, infrastructure costs, vehicle costs, and department equipment needs between the Town and Board of Education.

Thanks to all our Department Heads for their efforts in developing a thoughtful budget that provides the Town with great services and programs while maintaining a fiscally responsible approach that allows for one of the lowest mill rates in Hartford County.

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Town Budget Highlights

By Eric Harrington,
Board of Finance Chair

The Board of Finance (BOF) has completed its review of the Town's budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027. A Public Hearing will be held on April 22 to review the proposed budget, which is subject to change based on feedback received at that meeting. The budget will be presented at a Town Meeting for approval on May 6.

The chart at the lower right summarizes the proposed fiscal year 2026-27 budget compared to the current year budget.

The General Government budget increase is due primarily to an increase in wages (\$319,500) and higher 457(b) Plan contributions (\$64,550), both of which are higher than normal due to the impact of recently settled Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) with the Police, Town Hall, Library and Dispatch. Other drivers of the budget increase include higher utility costs (i.e., trash collection, electricity, and hydrant water - \$130,213), higher road paving expenses (\$94,404, offset in revenue), higher landfill permitting and engineering fees resulting from a state mandate (\$29,725), and the first year of an annual software fee related to the new townwide emergency radio system currently being installed (\$30,000). Partially offsetting these higher expenses is a decrease in medical insurance (\$115,571) resulting from the CBA's noted above.

The Board of Education budget increase is driven by contractual salary obligations, a significant rise in health insurance premiums, and the expiration of a very favorable five-year transportation contract. These cost pressures are partially offset by staffing reductions and a proactive effort to reduce outplacement tuition and transportation expenses

where appropriate. Overall, the budget preserves the programs and services necessary to support student success and continue progress in teaching and learning across the district, while remaining mindful of the budgetary impact on the community.

Capital Expenditures includes over forty different items recommended by the Advisory Commission on Capital Expenditures (ACCE) that are necessary to repair, replace and/or improve the Town's capital assets. The largest single item on the list is road repairs and maintenance (\$1,200,000). This amount was determined based on a detailed road study that was recently completed. Other larger items include the replacement of the HVAC system at the police station (\$300,000), pre-referendum expenses related to the Facilities Master Plan (\$265,000), replacement of the auditorium and stage lighting at the high school (\$195,000), and two police cruisers (\$150,000).

Debt service is higher due to the first year of interest payments on capital include the townwide emergency radio system, major school renovations (HVAC, roofing, exterior, and flooring) and bridge and road reconstructions.

On the revenue side of the ledger, the non-property tax revenue is driven by an increase in interest income (\$250,000) on Town deposits driven by anticipated higher cash balances resulting from the bond proceeds. Other drivers of this increase are higher Building Department fees (\$100,000) and higher state funding for road paving expenses (\$94,404, offset in expenses).

Grand list growth was 1.05%, reflecting increases of 0.64%, 3.28%, and 4.37% in the total taxable value of real estate, personal property, and motor vehicles, respectively. Real estate accounts for 86.61%

of the grand list and the low growth this year is the result of increased state-mandated exemptions and fewer new housing developments.

The BOF has also considered long-term trends, our financial position and future projections when determining the appropriate mill rate. The BOF reviews the Town's balance sheet, including the Undesignated fund, the CNRE fund, and the Medical Insurance fund on the asset side and the Pension Fund and OPEB Fund on the liability side. The BOF believes our balance sheet is in excellent condition.

The mill rate increase of 2.96% is in line with the current cost of living increase (CPI-U). As in the last few years, the impact of inflation on significant portions of the budget (e.g., wages, health insurance and other benefits, utilities), as well as the impact of state mandates and flat funding from the state, is resulting in upward pressure on property taxes.

If you would like to learn more about the proposed budget, feel free to

Famous Trees

Continued from page 1

Being recognized as a "notable" tree is a distinction. The Connecticut Notable Tree Project, established in 1985, identifies trees which stand out for their age, historical significance and remarkable size. Some trees gain a higher distinction when designated as a Champion, Biggest, Tallest, Largest-Trunked, Charter Oak descendant or Nationally Notable. Suffield boasts 33 notable trees: three are considered Connecticut Champions, three are in the Biggest category and four have the Largest Trunks.

Naming a tree fosters a personal connection, encouraging better care, ob-

servation, and appreciation for nature. It helps people remember the tree's unique characteristics and the history of a place.

Trees for Suffield promotes the preservation and planting of trees and educates the community about their importance. Join them for a Double Tree Naming Ceremony at Sunrise Park at 1:30 pm as part of Picnic in the Park, a program in partnership with Suffield Parks and Recreation. The event is Saturday, June 6 from 1 to 3 pm. Cost for the picnic is \$5 per person. Register on the Suffield Parks and Recreation website to enjoy your own summer picnic under lofty trees supplemented with ice cream, drinks and nature-themed activities. ☘



Suffield post card - Washington Elm is the second tree from the left.

review budget materials Meeting on the budget. on the Town's website and We will be happy to an- plan to attend the Pub- swer any questions that- lic Hearing and the Town you may have. ☘

Proposed Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget

Description	FY 2025-26 Adopted Budget	FY 2026-27 Proposed Budget	\$ Inc / (Dec)	% Inc / (Dec)
Expenses:				
Operating Expenses:				
General Government	\$ 18,789,184	\$ 19,509,306	\$ 720,122	3.83%
Board of Education	42,025,928	43,692,148	1,666,220	3.96%
	60,815,112	63,201,454	2,386,342	3.92%
Capital Expenses:				
Debt Service	2,070,175	2,606,849	536,674	25.92%
Capital Expenditures	3,715,029	3,791,000	75,971	2.04%
Transfers to Capital & Nonrecurring Reserve Fund	2,000,000	-	(2,000,000)	
	7,785,204	6,397,849	(1,387,355)	-17.82%
Contingency	500,000	500,000	-	0.00%
Total Expenses	\$ 69,100,316	\$ 70,099,303	\$ 998,987	1.45%
Non-Property Tax Revenues:				
Other Revenues	\$ 18,505,627	\$ 19,159,459	\$ 653,832	3.53%
Transfers from Unassigned Fund	2,750,000	-	(2,750,000)	
Transfers from Fund Balance - Bond Premium	-	250,000	250,000	
Transfers from Cemetery Fund	40,290	40,290	-	
Transfers from Off-Duty Fund	150,000	200,000	50,000	
Transfers from Capital & Nonrecurring Reserve Fund	-	760,000	760,000	
Transfers from Capital & Nonrecurring Fund	514,009	642,469	128,460	
	21,959,926	21,052,218	(907,708)	-4.13%
Property Taxes Required	47,140,390	49,047,085	1,906,695	4.04%
Total Revenues	\$ 69,100,316	\$ 70,099,303	\$ 998,987	1.45%
Net Collectible Grand List	2,014,088,090	2,085,262,352	21,224,262	1.05%
Mill Rate	23.41	24.10	0.69	2.96%

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SFD Captain's Corner

Outdoor Grilling Safety
By Suffield Fire Department
Captain Ron Carlson

Outdoor grilling is one of the most popular ways to cook food. But a grill placed too close to anything that can burn is a fire hazard. They can be very hot, causing burn injuries. Consider the following tips to help you on your way to safe grilling.

GENERAL SAFETY TIPS:

- Propane and charcoal BBQ grills should only be used **OUTDOORS**.

- Grills should be placed well away from the home, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.

- Keep children and pets **AT LEAST** three feet away from the grill area.

- Keep your grill clean by removing grease or fat buildup from the grill and in trays below the grill.

- **NEVER** leave your grill unattended.

PROPANE GRILLS:

- Check the gas tank hose for leaks before using it for the first time each year.

- Leaks can be located by application of a soapy solution to the hose and fittings.

- A leak can be located by looking for bubbles in the applied solution.

- If you find a leak or smell propane leaking, turn off the gas tank and the grill.

- If the leak stops, have your grill serviced by a professional prior to use.

- If the leak does not stop, call the fire department.

- Always make sure your **GAS GRILL LID IS OPEN** before lighting the grill.

CHARCOAL GRILLS:

- Charcoal chimney starters allow you to start the charcoal using newspaper as fuel.

- If you use starter fluid, use only charcoal starter fluid. **NEVER ADD** starter fluid or any other flammable liquids to burning fire.

- Store charcoal starter

fluid out of reach of children and away from heat sources.

- There are electric charcoal starters that can be used to start a charcoal grill. Be sure to use an extension cord to start your grill outside.

- Always use charcoal grills outside due to the production of **CARBON MONOXIDE** in the smoke.

- When finished grilling, let the coals completely cool before disposing them in a metal container.

ACCORDING TO NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION 2019-2024 STATISTICS: There was an average of 9,287 home gas grill fires per year.

An average of 21,682 patients per year went to emergency rooms due to injuries involving grills.

More than one-quarter of grill structure fires started on an exterior balcony or open porch. ☹

Hilltop Community Garden

By Joan Heffernan,
Community Garden
Coordinator
FOFAH Volunteer

After a cold, snowy winter, and moving through muddy March, we begin to imagine the warmer days of spring and, of course, gardening. Those seed catalogs whether in print or online have once again enticed us to order those favorite tomato and squash seeds and even prompted us to try some new vegetable or flower varieties. And with that excitement, we welcome back all of our 2025 gardeners to garden once again at Hilltop for the 2026 season. The remaining plots that were available were quick-

ly scooped up by gardening enthusiasts, and we are now sold out.

However, we do keep a waitlist in case anyone is unable to use their plot. The link to the garden registration is at: [https://www.hilltopfarmsuff-](https://www.hilltopfarmsuffield.org/community-garden-plots)

[ield.org/community-garden-plots](https://www.hilltopfarmsuffield.org/community-garden-plots). We are thrilled to see the community garden maintain its popularity and provide the opportunity for families to grow vegetables and flowers and bring the land to life once again. ☹



Photo by Joan Heffernan

Gardeners are looking forward to transforming the now brown space into a lush and bountiful garden as pictured in 2025.

SUFFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT

MARCH 2026

REASONS	# OF CALLS
911 Hang-Up	20
Abandoned Vehicle	1
Animal Complaint	69
Arson	0
Assault/Fight	0
Assist Citizen	40
Assist Motorist	14
Background Investigation	3
Body Found	0
Breach of Peace	0
Burglar Alarm	23
Burglary	1
Car Seat	1
Cell Block Check	1
Civil Matter	1
Community Policing - School	24
Community Policing Contact	50
CVS Drop Box	1
Directed Patrol	321
Disorderly	1
Domestic Disturbance	5
Drone Use	1
DUI/Erratic Operation	10
Escort Transport	3
Fingerprints	23
Fire Dept. Box/Hazmat/ Still/Confirmed/Structure	18
Firearms Surrender	0
Follow Up	0
Fraud	6
General Information	19
Harassment	1
Hazardous Condition	21
Identity Theft	1
Indecent Exposure/Sex Offense	0
Intoxicated Person	0
Juvenile Matters	11
Larceny	6
Lost/Found Property	5
M/V Accident No Injury/Injury/ Evading	25
Medical	76
Mentally Disturbed Person	2
Missing Person/Runaway	0
Motor Vehicle Pursuit	0
Motor Vehicle Theft	0
Motor Vehicle Violation	118
Narcotics Violation	0
Noise Complaint	4
Notification	2
Occupational Accident	0
Outside Assist	28
Parking Violation	0
Property Check	559
Robbery	0
School Panic Alarm	1
School Traffic Control	1
Sexual Assault	1
Subpoena Service	0
Sudden Death	3
Suicide Attempt	0
Suspicious Activity	25
Suspicious Person	8
Suspicious Vehicle	21
Threatening	1
Town Ordinance	0
Traffic Control/School Traffic	154
Training	28
Trespassing	1
Use of Force - Admin	0
Vandalism	1
Warrant Service	2
Welfare Check	13
TOTAL:	1,775



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Community Calendar

May 2026

- Fri, May 1 **First Selectman Coffee Hour** - 8:30 to 9:30 a.m., at Cafe Barista, 66 N. Main. 10% discount on your drink order.
- Fri, May 1 **Seasons of Change art exhibit** - 5 - 7 p.m., Phelps-Hatheway visitors center. Nature-inspired works reflecting the evolving landscape throughout the year. (pg 22)
- Fri, May 1 to Sat, May 16 **20th Century Blues** Suffield Players performances - 8 p.m. Fri & Sat, Sun matinees 2 p.m. Subtitles May 2, 8, 10. At Mapleton Hall. Tickets at SuffieldPlayers.org. (pg 28)
- Sat, May 2 **Bird Walk** - 8 a.m. South Grand property, The access road is just before the house at 1466 South Grand as you head south. www.suffieldlandconservancy.org.
- Sat, May 2 **Veterans Breakfast** - 9 to 11 a.m. All Veterans and family members are welcome. At the VFW Hall, 972 Sheldon St., West Suffield.
- Sat, May 2 **Craft Fair at Hilltop Farm** - 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 1606 Mapleton Ave., Rt 159. Email info@hilltopfarmsuffield.org to sign up. Rain date Sunday, May 9.
- Sat, May 2 **Book Collection for the Annual Library Book Sale** - 9:30 to noon. Drive up to the Mary Anne Zak entrance where volunteers will help you.
- Sat, Sun, May 2 & 3 **Town-Wide Tag Sale** - Set up in your own yard! Coordinated by Sustainable Suffield. Registration opens in April. Rain dates May 9 & 10. (pg 8)
- Wed, May 6 **Town Meeting** to vote on the FY 2026/2027 budget - 7 p.m. at Suffield Middle School. Articles by the First Selectman and the Board of Finance chair. (pgs 3 & 4)
- Sat, May 9 **PMC Kids Ride** fundraiser for The Jimmy Fund - 9 a.m. registration at McAlister School. Kids ages 2 thru 17 are welcome. Register at PMC.org/Suffield. (pg 27)
- Sat, May 9 **Mother's Day Tea and Tour** - 2 to 4 p.m. at the Phelps-Hatheway House. Savory and sweet offerings, including gluten-free options, paired freshly brewed teas. (pg 22)
- Tue, May 12 **Intro to Play Club** - 3:30 - 4:30 p.m., Free hour of play at Bruce Park. More info and registration through Parks & Rec. at suffieldct.myrec.com. (pg 35)
- Wed, May 13 **Open House with Pizza** - 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Suffield Senior Center. See what Sustainable Suffield is doing to beautify our town and reduce waste. (pg 8)
- Thur, May 14 **Books & Beyond** with Allison Larkin author of Home of the American Circus - 7 p.m. via Zoom. Register at Suffield-Library.org. (pg 26)
- Fri, May 15 **First Selectman Coffee Hour** - 8:30 to 9:30 a.m., at Cafe Barista, 66 N. Main. 10% discount on your drink order.
- Sat, May 16 **May Market** - 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in front of the Phelps-Hatheway House barn. Rain or Shine! Hosted by the Suffield Garden Club. (pg 33)
- Sat, May 16 **3rd Annual Suffield Art Trail** - 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (five locations, different hours at each location). Art on the walls. Music in the air. Food truck on site. (pg 21)
- Sat, May 16 **Rotary Epic Day of Service** - 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Finish painting the fence around the National Historic Register property Lunch is provided, noon to 1. (pg 25)
- Sat, May 23 **Dustin Doyon Road Race** - 9:30 a.m. at Suffield Middle School. Register at runnersignup.com.
- Sat, May 30 **Cetto Chamber Singers spring concert** - 3 p.m. at Second Baptist Church. Reception to follow. The concert is free and open to the public. (pg 28)
- Sat, May 30 **Concert for a Cause** - 7 p.m., at First Church. An enchanting evening of traditional music of Ireland and Scotland featuring fiddle, harp and songs. (pg 16)
- Sun, May 31 **Peonies!** - 1-3 p.m. in the Phelps-Hatheway barn. Debora Reynolds of Old Hill Gardens will lead the first installment of the new floral arts series. (pg 22)
- Fri, June 5 **English High Tea** - 1 - 3 p.m. at the Suffield Senior Center. Only 60 seats available. Tickets go on sale May 1st. See Terry or Bethany to sign up. (pg 30)
- Sat, Jun 6 **130th Birthday Party** for the Sibbil Dwight Kent Chapter of the DAR! 9:30 a.m. Middle green near the DAR rock, followed by tours of the Old Cemetery.
- Sat, Jun 6 **CT Trails Day "Suffield's Black History" Walking Tour** - 10 a.m. to noon. Meet at the Phelps-Hatheway House & gardens.
- Sat, Jun 6 **Picnic in the Park** - 1 to 3 p.m., Sunrise Park. Bring your lunch, beverages and ice cream to be provided. \$5 per person \$10 per family. (pg 1)
- Sat, Jun 6 **Tree naming ceremony** - 1:30 p.m. at Sunrise Park. Trees for Suffield celebrates the lives of two residents who made lasting impacts on Suffield. (pg 1)
- Sun, Jun 7 **Trail Walk** - 2 p.m. at the Alcorn preserve on Mountain Road, opposite Phelps Rd. Walk the New England Trail toward Mass. www.suffieldlandconservancy.org.
- Wed, Jun 17 **Tories, Spies & Traitors of the American Revolution** - 7 p.m. At Academy Hall, 1499 Mountain Rd, West Suffield. Presented by CT Museum of History.
- Sat, Jun 19 **Concert! Satinwood Band with Rainy Day People** - 7:30 p.m. In the barn at Hilltop. Please visit enfieldsafeharbor.org or 860-830-7142 for more information. (pg 21)
- Sat & Sun, Jun 20 & 21 **Vintage Base Ball Tournament** - New England Festival - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., on Stroh Field at Hilltop Farm, 1616 Mapleton Ave, Route 159.
- Thur Jun 25 to Sat, Jun 27 **Suffield Summer Fair** - Thurs & Fri 5 to 9 p.m., Sat noon to 10 p.m. Live music, rides & games. Fireworks on Saturday! (pg 8)
- Sat, Jun 27 **Patriots & Potters** - 1 p.m. at 880 Burbank St., Suffield. Reservation at rsvphistory@gmail.com. \$5 admission. Make & take home a pinch pot.
- Sat, Jun 27 **Juneteenth Celebration** - 2:30 to 5:00 p.m., Third Baptist Church, 188 Kent Ave. Join us for a potluck celebration as we commemorate Juneteenth. (pg 10)
- Sat, Jun 28 **Firefly Walk** - 9 p.m. South Grand property, The access road is just before the house at 1466 South Grand as you head south. www.suffieldlandconservancy.org.
- Sat, Jul 4 **4th of July Boat Parade** - 5 p.m. Opening Ceremony at Babb's Beach, float up or park. (Rain date Sun, July 7). w/Citizens Restoring Congamond. Free
- Sat, Aug 1 **Vintage Base Ball** - The Westfield Wheelmen vs. Wethersfield Red Onion, 11 a.m., on Stroh Field at Hilltop Farm, 1616 Mapleton Ave, Route 159.

Elderly/Totally Disabled Homeowners Program

From a press release

The Assessor's Office would like to remind homeowners that the State and Local Elderly/Totally Disabled Homeowner's Program filing period will end on Friday, May 15, 2026.

Any current recipient of the benefit who has received a letter from the Assessor's office must reapply no later than Friday, May 15 in order to continue to receive the benefit.

New applicants must also file an application by that date.

This year's maximum income allowed is \$46,300 if single and \$56,500 if married.

Proof of income for 2025 is needed. Please bring all information to the Assessor's Office. Income includes:

- Social Security Benefit Statement (1099 Form for 2025). This must be submitted if you and/or your spouse receive Social Security benefits.

- Federal Income Tax Return (If you file).

- If you do not file an income tax return, bring statements of 2025 taxable income -including Taxable Pensions, IRAs, Interest, Dividends, Wages etc.

Assessor's Office Hours

Monday - Thursday: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Friday: 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call the Assessor's office at 860-668-3866. ☞

Bandstand

Continued from page 2

gles. At the peak will sit a copper-topped cupola.

The Suffield bandstand, like many timber-frame buildings, will be built with mortise-and-tenon joints. Mortises are slots cut into timbers that accept protruding tenons of the same dimensions from joining timbers. It's similar to how fine furniture is made, and it's very strong.

Wooden pegs hold the joints together. The Barn Yard uses oak pegs and goes a step further by strengthening the joints with concealed metal plates and hidden nuts and bolts, galvanized to prevent rusting.

The Barn Yard cuts its timber and joints using computer-programmed machinery that is accurate to within 1/32 of an inch, said Smith. The entire hexagonal bandstand will be cut and painted white at The Barn Yard's manufacturing plant, then assembled on site like a kit.

The bandstand will sit on a 6"- thick concrete slab atop a foundation and underground concrete piers that support the eight uprights of the hexagon. The uprights are 8" x 10" thick and connect to the slab via steel standoff plates that hold

them 2" off the slab to prevent rot. The slab will be stamped to provide a brick-like appearance, as required by the Historic District Commission.

The bandstand will measure 20' across at its longest width, whereas the old one measured 15', according to Zatory. The sheltered area under the roof will be about 260 square feet. Unlike the old hexagonal bandstand, the new one will not have railings, allowing for more flexible use.

The Barn Yard engineered the bandstand to withstand 120 mph winds. It will sit on a slope with all the sides except one having steps. The side without steps will be level with the ground, allowing easy access for wheelchairs and people with disabilities. A back wall will conceal electrical and audio cables and equipment.

The Barn Yard expects to erect the bandstand by June 1, taking at most two days, provided the weather cooperates, said Smith.

Zatory is confident that the town will host our nation's 250th anniversary celebrations on the new bandstand.

Watch for new bandstand photos in the June issue of the *Observer!* ☞



Red, White & Suffield

For information on local America250 activities scan this QR code or go to the town website at:

www.suffieldct.gov/things-to-do/america250



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Food For Thought

Compiled by Beth Chafetz
Space Day – May 1

“There are no passengers on spaceship Earth. We are all crew.”

– Marshall McCuluhan

“Who are we? We find that we live on an insignificant planet of a humdrum star lost in a galaxy tucked away in some forgotten corner of a universe in which there are far more galaxies than people.” – Carl Sagan

“The scientific theory I like best is that the rings of Saturn are composed entirely of lost airline luggage.”

– Mark Russell

“The sky is not the limit. It is our destination.”

– Neil deGrasse Tyson

Teacher Appreciation Week – first week in May

“None of us got where we are solely by pulling ourselves up by our bootstraps. We got here because somebody – a parent, a teacher, an Ivy League crony or a few nuns – bent down and helped us pick up our boots.”

– Thurgood Marshall

“The dream begins with a teacher who believes in you, who tugs and pushes and leads you to the next plateau, sometimes poking you with a sharp stick called ‘truth.’”

– Dan Rather

“One looks back with appreciation to the brilliant teachers, but with gratitude to those who touched our human feelings. The curriculum is so much necessary raw material, but warmth is the vital element for the growing plant and for the soul of the child.”

– Carl Jung

Be Kind to Animals Week – first week in May

“The question is not; can



they reason? Nor, can they talk? But, can they suffer?”

– Jeremy Bentham

“We’re not, after all, separate from the animal kingdom. We’re part of it.”

– Jane Goodall

“He who is cruel to animals becomes hard also in his dealings with men. We can judge the heart of a man by his treatment of animals.”

– Immanuel Kant

First Newspaper Cartoon in U.S. – May 9, 1754

“It seems beyond the comprehension of people that someone can be born to draw comic strips, but I think I was. My ambition from earliest memory was to produce a daily comic strip.”

– Charles M. Schulz

“Comic strips are like a public utility. They’re supposed to be there 365 days a year, and you’re supposed to be able to hit the mark day after day.”

– Garry Trudeau

Mother’s Day – May 10

“There is no way to be a perfect mother, but a million ways to be a good one.”

– Jill Churchill

“If at first you don’t succeed, try doing it the way

mom told you to in the beginning.”

– Unknown

“Being a mom has made me so tired – and so happy.”

– Tina Fey

Clean Up Your Room Day May 10

“Later’ is the best friend of clutter.”

– Peter Walsh

“One of the advantages of being disorderly is that one is constantly making exciting discoveries.”

– A.A. Milne

International Nurses Day May 12

“To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived; that is to have succeeded.”

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

“Nurses dispense comfort, compassion, and caring without even a prescription.”

– Val Saintsbury

Armed Forces Day May 16

“It is fitting and proper that we devote one day each

year to paying special tribute to those whose constancy and courage constitute one of the bulwarks guarding the freedom of this nation.”

– President Dwight D. Eisenhower

“A veteran is someone who, at one point in their life, wrote a blank check made payable to ‘The United States of America,’ for an amount up to and including their life.”

– Unknown

“To those in uniform serving today and to those who have served in the past, we honor you today and every day.”

– Unknown

National Police Week – third week in May

“Understand, our police officers put their lives on the line for us every single day. They’ve got a tough job to do to maintain public safety and hold accountable those who break the law.”

– Barack Obama

“Discretion is the most powerful tool a police officer carries on the beat, because an appropriate level of discretion can short-circuit the use of lethal force. Discretion and de-escalation measures are pro-community, pro-police, and create more trust while making everyone safer.”

– John Fetterman

My heroes are those who risk their lives every day to protect our world and make it a better place - police, firefighters and members of our armed forces.”

– Sidney Sheldon

Memorial Day May 25

“For love of country they accepted death, and thus resolved all doubts, and made immortal their patriotism and their virtue.”

– James A. Garfield

“A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself.”

– Joseph Campbell

“The patriot’s blood is the seed of Freedom’s tree.”

– Thomas Campbell

National Mental Health Month

“Mental health needs a great deal of attention. It’s the final taboo and it needs to be faced and dealt with.”

– Adam Ant

“What mental health needs is more sunlight, more candor, and more unashamed conversation.”

– Glenn Close

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Sustainable Suffield

May 2 & 3 Townwide Tag Sale (Rain Date May 9)

Head to the town's Sustainable Suffield website or our Facebook page for links to Saturday's and Sunday's maps & lists. Browse items on the map geographically or search the lists. Watch for our "Sustainable Suffield" signs pointing you to tag sales.


OPEN HOUSE

Open House with pizza

May 13, 5:30 to 7:30 Senior Center

Drop in at any point to learn what Sustainable Suffield is doing to beautify our town and reduce waste. Come see if you might be interested in helping us achieve some initiatives.

Registration not required, but helps with food planning. Please scan the QR code to register.



Solar Farm on Landfill Property Slated for Summer Completion

By Tony Peterson

As reported previously, the Town has entered into a 20-year agreement with Verogy, a West Hartford renewable energy company, to lease 5.8 acres of Suffield landfill property for a solar farm. The array is located on land adjacent to the existing landfill collection containers and building, down the hill, traveling west on Mountain Road.

Verogy has the option to extend the agreement for three additional five-year terms. They will pay Suffield \$65,000 annually as a lease payment and sell the energy to Eversource, keeping the profits.

Recently, I emailed Verogy for an update. Their head of marketing and public relations, Jenna Dobbins, replied to my questions.

She said the installation of just over 2,500 solar panels should be completed this summer. The panels will gen-



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erate enough electricity to power about 159 homes annually.

Dobbins said Verogy cut down a number of trees to clear the area, grinding most into wood chips and mulch, which they spread over the areas outside the array footprint to stabilize the ground.

She said the closest the array will come to Mountain Road is about 140' away. To hide the solar farm from neighbors living across the

street, Verogy will install a solid wooden stockade fence and plant mountain laurel in front of it. They will also plant a "pollinator-friendly habitat seed mix" around the solar panels. The firm will be responsible for mowing the grass and maintaining the panels.

To guard against potential safety issues, such as high-intensity storms or fire hazards, the firm can turn off the array at the site or remotely.



Photo by Tony Peterson

The Verogy company's 2,500-panel solar array on town landfill property will generate \$1.3 million in revenue for Suffield over 20 years. The town can earn more if it exercises lease extensions with Verogy.

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New Meditation Center Comes to Town

By Nalandabodhi Connecticut (Northern Branch in West Suffield)

Nalandabodhi Connecticut is pleased to join the spiritual community of Suffield with the opening of our Northern Branch at 1380 Mountain Road.

We have had a meditation center in Bloomfield for almost 20 years, and are affiliated with Nalandabodhi International, whose spiritual director is Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche—a reincarnated Tibetan Buddhist master in the Kagyu/Nyingma lineages.

Nalandabodhi is an international community dedicated to bringing the wisdom and compassion of awakening into today's world. Using techniques the Buddha offered, we provide a genuine path to a more open, kind, and full life. Our teachings and meditations are open to those on other spiritual paths and may be complementary.

All are welcome to join us on Sunday mornings in West Suffield or Bloom-

field. Our Sunday schedule for West Suffield is below.

We recite Prayers for World Peace from 9 to 9:45 a.m. Doors open at 8:30 a.m. for coffee, tea and snacks. We offer teaching and commentary by our teacher Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche on a prayer called True Words to Heal the Fears of Strife, as well as contemplation and discussion of The Four Immeasurables (love, compassion, joy, and equanimity).

We meditate from 10 to 10:50 a.m. led by our Bloomfield center via Zoom. From 11 to 11:30 a.m. we read and discuss a short teaching from Pema Chodron's book, Comfortable with Uncertainty: 108 Teachings on Cultivating Fearlessness and Compassion.

Anyone interested can also join us Sundays online. Sign up for our weekly email announcements at ct.nalandabodhi.org to receive the Zoom link.

Please visit ct.nalandabodhi.org for our latest news and schedule updates. ☸



Photo by Beth Chafetz

Many participants came with their signs on No Kings Day.

Suffield Rally Draws a Crowd

By Beth Chafetz

On a very cold, windy Saturday afternoon in late March, the organization Indivisible and its counterpart Suffield Indivisible North Central CT organized a rally on the town green in conjunction with over 50 other Connecticut towns as well as over 3,300 other communities both big and small around the U.S. and the world protesting the current administration's policies in Washington. These rallies were widely cited as the largest single-day protest in U.S history.

Indivisible North Central CT is an independent chap-

ter of the national Indivisible organization. Indivisible is a nonpartisan, grassroots movement to protect our democracy and defend our Constitution.

The Suffield event was hosted by Robin Henrie, founder of Suffield Indivisible North Central CT, and her co-host Kristin Kling. Speakers included both the Rev. Dr. Davida Foy Crabtree, former spiritual leader of UCC's Connecticut Conference and the founder of Connecticut's Third Act, the statewide movement focused on climate and democracy and Adam Richardson, the

political director for Congressman Joe Courtney.

Musicians, some from the Cetto Singers, Martha Sandefer, Suzanne Richardson- White, Kristin Kling and Robin and Jack Henrie, entertained the participating crowd of about 250 people with the "Star Spangled Banner", several folk songs and ending with "God Bless America."

Many of the 250 event attendees lined Main Street with signs and American flags. Indivisible's movement is modeled after the civil rights protests and advocates non-violence. ☸



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WSCC News

By Pastor Denise Peterson

May is a quieter month for us at West Suffield Congregational. Easter has passed, the rummage sale is behind us, the children's choir has sung its heart out—and now, we are resting. This kind of season is a gift. In a world that rarely slows down, we are given the opportunity to breathe deeply, to reflect, and simply to be. These quieter moments are not empty; they are full of grace, renewal, and gentle reminders of what truly matters.

Christians are often “doers.” We pour ourselves into service, into ministry, into caring for others—and that is a beautiful thing. But our worth has never been measured by how much we accomplish. Life changes, and so do we. Our abilities shift over time, and that is not something to resist, but something to receive with grace. We are not called to constant striving, but to faithful living—and sometimes faithfulness looks like rest, trust, and letting go of the need to prove ourselves.

I once knew a parishioner who embodied this struggle. He had always been a worker, always busy, always contributing. Even in retirement, he found new ways to stay active, pouring himself into the life of the church. But when time required him to slow down, he found it deeply frustrating. He would say, “I’m useless... I’m worthless... I’m good for nothing but sitting here.” Yet

nothing could have been further from the truth. His presence, his kindness, his very being brought joy and comfort to those around him. It was a reminder—for him and for all of us—that our value is not in what we do, but in who we are: beloved, created, and cherished. What greater meaning or purpose could we possibly have beyond the sharing of ourselves, our genuine, authentic, created selves?

In a culture that pushes us to keep moving, learning to simply “be” is a quiet act of faith. It is in these moments of stillness that we remember who we are, and whose we are. Rest is not the absence of purpose; it is where purpose is renewed. So, in this quieter season, may we receive the gift of rest with open hearts, trusting that even in stillness, God is at work within us.

So, for this quiet month, come and find rest. 10 a.m. services as usual. There will be plenty of time for “doing” at a later date.

Blessings on your day! ☩



Photo provided by the author
Flowered Cross made for Easter.

First Church of Christ, Congregational, UCC News

By Amber Bigley

First Church welcomes all to join in weekly Sunday worship at 10 a.m., in-person or virtually through the church YouTube livestream, continuing on the journey “Together for Joy!” All are welcome at First Church of Christ, Congregational UCC of Suffield. Pastor Chris Hart continues preaching on Sunday mornings, bringing faithful and fun engagement for all.

Did you play the clarinet in 7th grade? Is your cello gathering dust? Is there a flute somewhere in your closet? Are you wondering what it would be like to play again? Come be a part of The Dusty Orchestra at First Church! The group will gather at a mutually convenient time to learn a level-appropriate familiar tune to share with the congregation. Contact First Church to learn more about this fun and musical opportunity.

Go the Second Mile this month by giving and supporting NAMI Connecticut (National Alliance on Mental Illness), a non-profit, grassroots organization dedicated to improving the lives of people affected by mental illness through support, education, and advocacy. It serves as a state affiliate of the national organization, offering free, peer-

led support groups, educational programs, and mental health resources to individuals and families across Connecticut. Giving to First Church can be done on Sundays in worship, or anytime through our website giving page.

First Church hosts a pancake breakfast on Sunday, May 17. All are invited to join in fellowship with yummy food and great company. Breakfast will be served beginning at 9:15 a.m., followed by worship at 10 a.m.

The Blessing Box, located right in front of First Church, is open to our neighbors and community members to “take what you need; leave what you can.” First Church encourages our community to donate shelf stable food and self-care items any time. Oft-needed items include powdered milk, just-add-water potatoes, microwaveable whole grain rice, whole grain pasta, sauces, peanut butter, cereals, and sweets. Deodorant, 3-in-1 body wash, toothpaste, and other basic hygiene items. Please refrain from donating perishable foods or expired foods.

First Church hosts Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous in our building weekly. Stay connected to meetings, upcoming news,

events and more through the church website www.firstchurchsuffield.org.

General inquiries can be directed to office@fcsuffield.org. For Pastoral needs, contact Pastor Chris Hart PC@pastorchris.faith or at (774) 318-6006. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here at First Church of Christ. ☩



Juneteenth Celebration

By Andi Prusi

Save the date for the 2026 Juneteenth Celebration!

When: Saturday, June 27

Where: Third Baptist Church

Time: 2:30-5 p.m.

Join us for a potluck celebration as we commemorate Juneteenth.

More details to come in the June *Observer*. ☩



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Second Baptist News

From a press release

Pastoral Search Committee Update

After a year of prayer and discernment, as well as analyzing survey results, conducting interviews, and leading discussions with staff, lay leaders, and congregants at Second Baptist Church, the Pastoral Search Committee has officially posted the position of Full-Time Pastor on various professional sites. We are excited about the direction we are being led through the spirit of God and look forward to continuing our transitional journey to our next settled pastor.

During this time of transition, we continue to support a full calendar of scheduled educational/outreach opportunities. May includes:

- **Sunday Mornings – Reflection, Study, and Prayer – 9 a.m. – Parlor.** Lay led study and discussion to start our week.

- **Tuesday, May 5 – Amer-**

ican Red Cross Blood Drive – noon-5 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. For an appointment, please visit redcrossblood.org or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

- **Tuesday, May 5, 19, 26 – Weekday Bible Study – 11:30-12:30-Library.** Pastor-led study on how Biblical scripture pertains in today's world.

- **Friday, May 8, 22– Prayer Shawl Ministry – 10 a.m. to noon – Parlor.** This is an opportunity for individuals to come together for a time of fellowship while creating shawls that are intended to provide love and comfort to their recipients.

- **Saturday, May 9 – Soup Kitchen Ministry – Help** serve a meal on the 2nd Saturday of the month for anyone in need at the Loaves and Fishes Soup Kitchen at South Congregational Church in Springfield, Massachusetts.

- **Monday, May 11 – Fellowship Time – 6:30 p.m. – This**

monthly outreach program is for our friends with cognitive limitations to give them a safe environment for crafts, singing, and fellowship.

- **Saturday, May 30 – Cetto Chamber Singers Spring Concert – 3 p.m.** The Cetto Chamber Singers is a chorus of approximately 60 women from central and western Massachusetts and central Connecticut. Founded by Lorri Cetto and Evelyne Battle, both retired music professionals, the Suffield-based group has been performing for six years.

Worship Services are held at 10 a.m. every Sunday. On May 10 we will honor our mothers and the special women that are held dear in our hearts. On May 17 we will show our appreciation for the Music Ministry which is under of the leadership of Anthony Ferreira, Director of Music and Jean Aldrich-Jones, Organist and Handbell Choir Director.

Sacred Heart News

By Fr. Joe Keough, Pastor

May is the beautiful month centered around the young members of our parish family. Our students in grade three will be receiving their First Holy Communion at the beginning of the month. This is a great milestone in their faith journey as well as a momentous occasion for our entire Parish Family as we welcome these special children to the Table of the Lord. Our children will then gift our parish the honor of their presence at our Sunday Mass with the annual May Crowning, at 8:30 Mass on May 3. Being the first Sunday of the month, we will pray the rosary together

at 8 a.m. The celebrations with Mary, the Mother of God and our young people will continue later in the month with our Holy Hour and Rosary for the Little Ones. Our monthly Holy Hour for young families will begin in the church at 3:30 p.m. on May 15 with the little ones (toddlers on up) and moms and dads for some prayer time and then a visit over to the Mary Garden for an attempt at the rosary (maybe a decade or two). We follow this with some social time/snacks and activities for the children as the parents get to connect with one another as well. All are welcome to join us!

For the "little bit older"

crowd, 18 and above, there is our BINGO Night to raise money for our Parish scholarships. This will be May 8th in Fr. Ted Hall. Tickets should be purchased in advance. For more information, please call the parish office, Monday through Thursdays between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m..

We also will observe the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima with an outdoor rosary on Tuesday, May 12 at 6:30 p.m. in the Mary Garden. This family event is open to all, and it is best to park in the lot closest to Fr. Ted Hall. You can bring your own rosary or one will be provided.

On Memorial Day, we will

Vacation Bible School (VBS) will be June 22-26, 9 a.m.-noon. Our theme is **Road Trip- On the Go with God!** Join us for an exciting adventure on the open road, where kids embark on thrilling journeys to fantastic destinations. Led by the Navigator and their adventurous pup, Scout, children will discover that God is always with them. They'll explore timeless stories from the Old and New Testaments, learning how to face challenges and find strength in God's presence. Each day we will have crafts, singing, games, theater and more.

VBS is for ages 4-12 with community service hours for helpers 12-18. This is a community wide opportunity, and everyone is welcome. For more info call the church at 860-668-1661 or Sue at 860-402-7813. Registration for VBS will be available on our website: www.secondbaptistsuffield.org beginning May 1. ☩

have our annual Mass at St. Joseph Cemetery on Hill Street at 8 a.m. as we remember in our prayers those brave men and women who sacrificed themselves in service to our nation. Please bring a lawn chair. In the event of rain, we will be in church. There will be plenty of time to attend the Mass and participate in the Suffield Memorial Day parade and activities on the green.

You can find out more about the spiritual and social activities at Sacred Heart Parish by following us on Facebook or visiting our website at <http://www.sacredheartct.com>

Have a blessed month! ☩

In Memoriam

Anthony "Tony" Zukowsky
February 28, Age 79

James Paul Machnik
March 3, Age 85

Alesandra Woodhouse
March 5, Age 90

Margaret Lucille "Trudo" Williams
March 13, Age 98

Judith Porter Pascoe
March 15, Age 88

Margaret A. Peggy Soderquist
March 16, Age 81

Irene P. Laskowski
March 16, Age 96

Richard Kurtz
March 20, Age 92

Frances Rumore
March 22, Age 93

Dorothy M. "Kamaros" Capsolas
March 22, Age 98

Gloria A. "DeVito" Ridel
March 24, Age 97

Victor N. Nigro Sr.
March 27, Age 84

Elizabeth Gillen
March 27, Age 76

David St. Martin
March 28, Age 68

Patricia E. Miner
March 28, Age 81

Anne May McDaniel
April 2, Age 81

Frederick L. Churilo
April 4, Age 82

Thomas Cortis, Sr.
April 6, Age 71

Raymond V. Reilly
April 8, Age 98



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Town News You May Not Know

Compiled by Kate Spoto

Too busy to look up what's going on in town? This article covers selected information from the minutes of various Town Boards and Commissions. If you want more detail, it can be found by going to suffieldct.gov, Agendas, Minutes, Recordings.

Board of Education March 16

Suffield High School Family Consumer Sciences Teacher Julie Haefner and Suffield High School Student, Danielle Fanska, showed their appreciation to the Board with treats that were made by students in the Family Consumer Sciences classes. The presentation also highlighted the Intro to Foods and Nutrition class, where students learn about nutrition and recipe development, and participate in hands-on experimentation.

The Board received an update on the beginning teacher support program, which fulfills statutory requirements and pairs new teachers with mentors to guide professional learning. The program focuses on teacher retention and developing reflective practitioners during the first few years in the profession. The program includes five modules: classroom environment, planning, instruction, assessment practices, and professional responsibility. For Modules 1—4, beginning teachers work with mentors for approximately ten hours per module, setting goals and implementing practices in the classroom. Module 5 is facilitated by Assistant Superintendent Laura Norbut. This year, nine beginning teachers are participating.

Board of Selectmen —March 18

Director of Community Services Peter Leclerc provided an update on the Parks and Recreation Department. He highlighted a request submitted to ACCE for a master plan study focused on the Parks and Recreation program. The study, which is not related to buildings, is intended to guide the development of a three, five, and ten-year strategic plan. He explained the scope of the study, who would conduct it, and how it would inform future decision-making for the program. He shared examples of similar initiatives undertaken by other municipalities, including Glastonbury and Simsbury.

Mr. Leclerc also reported on Summer Camp registration, which sold out within 15 minutes of going online. He provided updates on the upcoming summer concert series and movies on the Town Green, as well as the installation of new flooring at the Senior Center. In addition, he highlighted ongoing initiatives including the mini-bus program, the popular senior lunch program, and youth services.

Library Director Amy Vesella addressed the Board of Selectmen and reported strong library usage statistics. She noted that 32% of Suffield residents currently hold library cards and expressed her goal of increasing that number through a planned library card drive.

Ms. Vesella also provided an update on the Atrium project and noted that the Rotary has generously donated furniture for the new

space. She shared that the popular chicken hatching program will be returning, with a live feed allowing residents to follow the chicks' progress.

Economic Development Commission—March 19 Commission Projects Update:

- The electronic touch screen kiosk with Town information to be put in front of the Kent Library will be installed in the coming weeks.

- Chad Kuzontkoski, Economic Development Specialist, reported on the Sunrise Park Entrance project. The plans have been submitted to the Police Chief for his input and the police will present the request to the State Department of Transportation because the entrance is on a state highway. The new entrance will be a safety improvement.

Historic District Commission—March 16

N. Main Street — Bandstand Replacement:

Robin Zatory presented a finalized design for the proposed Town bandstand, which will replace the existing structure on the town's middle green. She submitted detailed plans, including measurements, photographs, and diagrams, for the commission's review.

Ms. Zatory explained that the new bandstand will be painted white with a pitched roof finished in architectural shingles. The steps will face Main Street, and the west side will feature a zero-threshold entrance to meet ADA accessibility requirements. The structure will include electrical ser-

Continued on Page 14



Suffield Observations

By Andy Sauer

Recognition is the First Step in Recovery

"What we are getting from the audience is the world's most valuable commodity: human attention. Everybody is fighting for it." - Zarna Garg

A year ago, I had never heard of the comedian Zarna Garg, though it wasn't for her lack of trying.

In addition to a comedy tour, she has several streaming comedy specials, a YouTube channel, an Instagram feed, a Facebook page, an X profile, a weekly podcast, numerous appearances on major talk shows, a best-selling book and a role in a critically acclaimed movie.

I guess I'm not that into comedy.

I am familiar with concepts in communications, and I have never heard anyone measure human attention higher than any other commodity – gold, petroleum or even Bitcoin.

And I think she's right.

Take the aforementioned crypto currency. It does not exist. It is not even a coin. It is a string of roughly 30 alphanumeric characters with an accompanying passcode whose value is derived by whatever investors will pay for it (\$71,388 as of this writing.) The human attention of maybe a billion has created a significant sector of the global economy out of absolutely nothing.

And, when you ponder the endless non-existential things people hold dear, it's possible that human attention may have always been the most valuable commodity.

So, why are we just giving it away to cute cat clips, epic fail memes and other assorted viral videos?

We all know why. It didn't take three separate court rulings this year to confirm something we've feared for a while: digital media is addictive.

Appeals courts and maybe The Supreme Court will decide where the liability of such an apparent malady falls, but it only takes a casual glance at the number of people staring at their phones in any given moment in any given place (work, restaurants and even highways) to conclude that, yes, human beings have a big problem with digital media.

Unfortunately, as with all addictions, there may not be a universal cure for a runaway digital habit. The burden of recovery lies with the individual.

It all boils down to this: Whatever is tapping into your valuable human attention, is it making you feel more fulfilled or a better person?

For me, given the intense time drain and sleep deprivation inflicted by an endless series of short videos, the answer is decidedly no. After hours of doomscrolling, I feel like I just ate a giant bag of off-brand cool ranch tortilla chips — sick to my stomach but oddly hungry for more.

So, when it comes to digital media, I cut myself off – sort of.

Monday through Friday, I delete all social media apps from my phone. On Saturday, I reinstall them. Mostly, I try to catch up on the things I missed — posts on the Suffield forum — especially Don DeRos' heartfelt reflections, Red Sox clips and assorted posts from friends.

I still fall prey to the insidious time warp of viral videos, as I did just a few hours ago, but at least it doesn't interfere with my job and other responsibilities.

Besides, I just started following that comedian Zarna Garg, and she's kind of funny.

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The Way We Were

HISTORIC SUFFIELD



100 Years Ago in Suffield

Selected from the pages of the Windsor Locks Journal and lightly annotated by Wendy Taylor of Kent Memorial Library.

May 7

The Mapleton Hall Association will give a May festival and strawberry supper in Mapleton hall... Strawberry shortcake, strawberries and cream, salads, col meats, etc., will be served. This supper will take the place of the May breakfast which has been omitted for the past two or three years.

Franklin Brockett, 11 years' old son of Mr. and Mrs. Franklin N. Brockett of Mapleton, was struck and run over by a Hartford and Springfield bus... The boy had just stopped off a bus and was going around the bus to go to his home when he was struck by another bus. He suffered a compound fracture of the leg below the knee. Medical assistance was summoned and the fracture reduced. The boy is said to be improving.

The barn of Philip Doughney of Boston Neck was struck by lightning during the shower of Sunday night. The building did not catch fire and the only damage was the ripping off of a few boards and the smashing of a fork handle that was standing on the barn floor.

Mrs. Ray Bugbee is quite ill at her home with an attack of gravel. [kidney stones]

May 14

Notwithstanding the cool nights and days, many of the tobacco growers report that the plants in the beds are making good progress and are not much behind last year. The general opinion among the farmers is that when the warm weather arrives it will continue and that growing crops will make rapid strides toward maturity. Vegetation is at least two weeks behind normal seasons. May years at this date the apple blossoms have nearly gone by while this year the tops of the buds are just beginning to show. Even the grass in the files is no further advanced than it is sometimes before the first of May. The farmers are preparing their land for the crops,

hoping that the warm weather is not far off.

Mrs. Ray Bugbee, who has been confined to her home with an attack of gravel, is somewhat improved. [spoiler alert: Mary (King) Bugbee is 44 at the time and lives to 88.]

May 21

A.W. Elcock has opened a filling station at Dunn's corner and has also erected a rest room for the use of tourists.

Mrs. Arthur Sikes has returned to her home in Mapleton after spending the winter in Orlando, Fla.

May 28

A large barn at the rear of the Barnett property on Main street was totally destroyed by fire with its contents... The barn was owned by John F. Barnett, Jr., and the loss is estimated at \$3,500. When the fire was discovered, the interior of the building was a mass of flames and all that the fire company could [do] was to keep the blaze from spreading to adjoining property. The barn contained a large quantity of lumber, which was a total loss. The origin of the fire is unknown. The loss is partially covered by insurance.

Mrs. Leroy H Sikes of Mapleton was painfully injured last Friday night by the explosion of a fulminate cap used to explode dynamite. Mrs. Sikes found the cap about the house and it is said was picking out the explosive element with a pin, when it exploded mangling her hand so that it was found necessary to amputate one finger. Mrs. Sikes was prostrated for at time by the pain and shock, but is reported to be improving.

Some of the growers have started the work of transplanting tobacco plants in order to save the plants in the beds. In spite of the cold weather the beds have done very well this year and the work of transplanting is not more than a week behind.

During the Barnett fire, Tuesday, the pumper again burned out its bearing and is now laid up for repairs.

A Moment in Time

Old Photos Invited from Our Readers

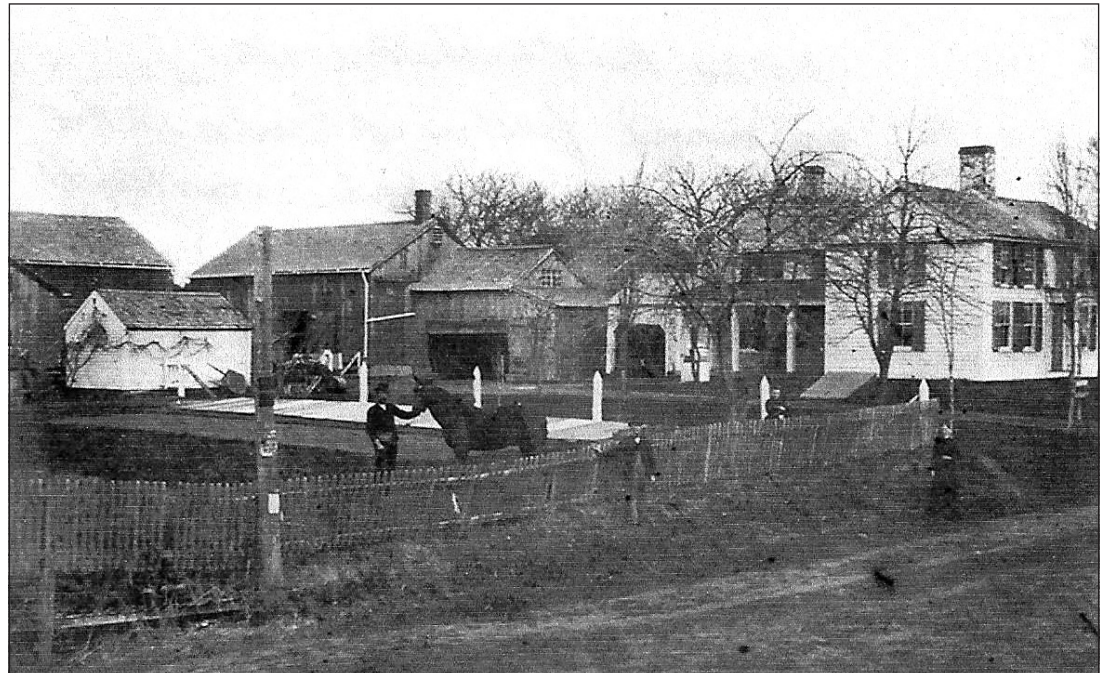


Photo submitted by ArtSikes

In the process of researching old homes, sometimes they are not where you expect them to be. The home/farm in this picture is shown at the intersection of Thompsonville Road, River Blvd. and Burbank Ave., NW corner. It was built by Asa Manchester in 1835. It was listed as J. Sperry on the 1855 map and D. Cowen on the 1869 Suffield map. It's now at 890 Burbank Ave. It's a three family, but all the farm buildings are gone.

The Revolutionary War and Suffield

By Jackie Hemond

The Suffield Historical Society recently led a bus tour of some of the town's surviving Revolutionary-era homes. The following overview of Suffield during that historic period was given.

Most families in Suffield operated farms, growing common crops such as corn, wheat, tobacco, and flaxseed. Money, however, was scarce. Britian supplied little currency to the colonies and prohibited them from minting their own, so trade relied heavily on bartering and foreign coins. Spanish doubloons were especially valued. Counterfeiting was widespread. British restrictions on colonial imports,

exports and manufacturing ensured the balance of trade favored Britian before the war.

Despite the limitations, Suffield was becoming increasingly prosperous before the war. The town supported a wide range of industries including mills, feltmakers, blacksmiths, distilleries, tanneries, brickmakers, ironworks, carpenters and saddlemakers. During the Revolutionary War when the British blockade caused severe gunpowder shortages, residents likely produced saltpeter, an essential ingredient in gunpowder, made by fermenting urine with manure and straw.

Religious life centered around three churches. The First Congregational Church, rebuilt in 1747 with a steeple, no longer resembled a plain meeting house. The Second Congregational Church in the western district was constructed in 1743, and the First Baptist Church was built on Hastings Hill in 1777. Although residents were still taxed to support the Congregational Church, Baptists were exempt.

Education also expanded. In 1733, Josiah Sheldon built a second schoolhouse for 40 pounds, paid partly in coin and likely partly

Continued on Page 15

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Suffield Trivia

Trivia questions were formed from Suffield Notes by Samuel Lathrop, 1945

- Charles F. Loomis expressed his wealth in many ways in his lovely house built in 1862 which is still standing on North Main Street just south of Mar-bern Drive. What was one of the features of the house in Loomis' lifetime?
 - A sunken pool.
 - Steam pipes that vented cooking smells outside.
 - A machine which provided lighting to the house and yard by piping gasoline vapor to jets.
- Is there a time capsule in the cornerstone of the old Kent Memorial Library (now the Suffield Academy's S. Kent Legare Library)? Yes or no.
- Suffield had two racetracks. One racetrack was behind McAlister Intermediate School. Where was the other one?
 - On South Main Street, near Limric Lane.
 - Across from Hilltop Farm.
 - On South Street.
- Factory Lane was located at the southern-most end of High Street (now called South Main Street). The lane was named for the fulling mill located there which processed woolen cloth into felt. What else can be said about Factory Lane? Select all answers that are correct.

- It was the only paved road in town.
 - It was the only way to get to South Street from High Street.
 - It was also called Horseway.
- In the 1890s, the neighborhood of the southern part of High Street had a colloquial name. What was it?
 - Eelsville.
 - The South.
 - Milltown.
 - Around 1895, in the Loomis Block of the old town center was the fraternal organization Lyman Council 35, Order of United American Mechanics.

The Chapter was named after the Suffield hero Phineas Lyman. The secret society organization, begun in 1845, was very popular throughout the country. What did it promote?

- It promoted American labor and opposed immigration.
- It promoted American labor, moral values and brotherhood.
- It promoted American labor and charity.

7. Another secret society shared the same hall with the United American Mechanics. It was called the Gideon Granger (another favorite

- Suffield son) Lodge, Knights of Pythias. What did it promote?
 - The acquisition of money.
 - Catholicism.
 - Loyalty, honor and friendship.
- The Old Town Hall, demolished in the redevelopment of the town center, replaced an earlier Town Hall which was built in 1797 but burned down in 1860. The Old (but "newer") Town Hall was built with local native material. What was it built with?
 - Clapboards made from chestnut trees felled in Suffield's Wolf Pit Plain.
 - Sandstone for its foundation from the Copperhill Quarry.
 - Bricks made on North Street.
 - The office for recruiting Union soldiers during the Civil War was located where?
 - The post office in the Old Town Hall.
 - The Austin Tavern on South Main Street.
 - The lobby of the 2nd Baptist Church.
 - Bridge Street School, built in 1924 and demolished in 2021, was built on the site of what building?
 - Calvary Episcopal Church.
 - The Masonic Temple.
 - The Old Town Hall.



Charles Loomis House

Photo provided by the author

in use until the Suffield Agricultural Society set up fair-grounds with a racetrack behind McAlister School. Martin Sheldon lived in the fabulous house on the turn from South Main Street to South Street. For a time, there was no connection to South Street (which was also called Country Road). I do not know when an official town road connected the two streets. Horseway was also the name for the lane because horses could travel on a causeway to the mills located on the brook. 5. a. Eelsville. There must have been good fishing in the brook, particularly for eels. 6. a. Members were restricted to white native-born Protestants. b. The lobby of the 2nd Baptist Church. c. The lobby of the 2nd Baptist Church. c. Bricks made in the William King brickyard on North Street. 8. c. Bricks made in the William King brickyard on North Street. 9. c. The lobby of the 2nd Baptist Church. c. Bricks made in the William King brickyard on North Street. 10. a. Calvary Episcopal Church. c. The lobby of the 2nd Baptist Church.

1. c. A Gilbert & Barker machine provided lighting to the house and yard by piping gasoline vapor to jets. YIKES! Gilbert & Barker later made gasoline pumps for automobiles. 2. Yes. On a rainy afternoon in 1898 a copper box was placed in the northeast cornerstone of the building. 3. On South Street. Martin Sheldon donated his property known as Sheldon Park for a racetrack which was west of the old South Street (fire station and north of Spencer Brook. This racetrack was

Now Hiring: Senior Center Kitchen Assistant

By Shannon Foley

The Town of Suffield is seeking a dependable and friendly Kitchen Assistant to support the Senior Center's congregate meal program. This position is ideal for individuals who enjoy working in a kitchen environment and providing customer-focused service to the community.

Position Details:

Part-time, 15-20 hours per week (schedule varies)
\$18.00/hour (casual position, no benefits)

Responsibilities include:

Assisting with meal preparation and service; supporting kitchen cleanup and daily operations; maintaining a clean and organized kitchen environment.

To view full job details and apply, visit:

suffieldct.gov/departments/hr

Position open until filled. ☼



Town News

Continued from page 12

vice housed in a panel on the rear, a stamped concrete base, and stamped concrete stairs with a matching pattern. An unlit copper cupola with glass panels will be installed at the top.

During discussion, commission members raised concerns that the originally proposed black shingles might appear too stark against the design. Ms. Zatory provided alternative op-

tions for consideration, and the commission expressed a preference for a color identified as "Virginia Slate" in place of black.

Commissioner Moore-Manwaring moved, and Commissioner Tracey seconded, to approve the application for the Bandstand Replacement as submitted, with the modification that the roofing material be changed to the color "Virginia Slate" in lieu of black. Vote: 5-0 in favor. Motion passed unanimously. ☼

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Revolutionary War

Continued from page 13

in grain as well as the old schoolhouse as compensation. This building served the town until 1797, when it was moved from the Green to the corner of Mapleton Avenue and Thompsonville Road, where it still stands.

Several taverns operated in town, including the Austin Tavern, the Ferry Tavern and Riverman's Hotel and the Gad Lane Tavern, Oliver Hanchett kept a tavern in his home on Mountain Road, and Daniel Norton and Elihu Kent, Jr. were also tavernkeepers.

With no bridges or canals crossing the Connecticut River, residents relied on skiffs or ferries to reach the opposite shore. The river was dangerous, especially near the Enfield Rapids. During the Revolutionary War, British and Hessian prisoners were transported through Suffield, and two

drowned while being ferried across the river.

Social services were minimal. The Town Farm, which later supported the poor, was not established until 1887. Strangers were escorted out of town if they could not support themselves. Those suffering from deadly diseases such as smallpox were confined to pest houses.

Suffield's population grew from 1,438 in 1756 to 2,017 in 1774. There was a growing sense that the town was becoming overcrowded with little room for expansion. Many residents moved to New Hampshire, New York, Ohio and Vermont. By 1777, Vermont was known as "New Connecticut". Israel Smith, born in Suffield, later became Vermont's fourth governor (1807-1808).

By the late 1760s, tensions with Britain were rising. In 1774, Alexander King, Gideon Granger and Joseph Pease were ap-

pointed at a Town Meeting to draft Suffield's response to British encroachments. Their work, the Suffield Resolves, published nearly two years before the Declaration of Independence, protested British taxation, lack of representation and pledged support to Boston.

When Isaac Bissel, Suffield's own postrider, brought news of the Battle of Lexington, 119 Minutemen marched from Suffield to aid Massachusetts within two days. According to Robert Alcorn's Biography of a Town, Suffield contributed more men to the "Lexington Alarm" than any other Connecticut town. The names of 258 Suffield soldiers who served in the Revolutionary War are listed on the Veterans Memorial.

The war brought soaring prices and inflation. Before the revolution, town expenses totaled \$500 - \$700 annually. In 1775, taxes rose to \$5,000 and by 1776 they reached \$15,000. The United States began issuing its own banknotes in 1776, but without backing, the currency quickly depreciated and was almost worthless.

Economic hardship continued after the war. The federal government could not pay its debts, unrest spread and many soldiers went unpaid; some lost their

Food Support for the Suffield Community

Submitted by Mary Curtin

Suffield Community Aid

- 450 South St – Monday-Friday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- Meals on Wheels / Food Pantry
- Outdoor 24hr/7day Food Cabinet
- suffieldcommunityaid.org 860-668-1986
- MaryC@suffieldcommunityaid.org
- Requirements: Suffield Resident, Income documentation
- Food Pantry by Appointment
- No financial requirements for Meals on Wheels
- No requirements for Outdoor Food Cabinet

Foodshare Mobile Food Truck (Suffield Site)

- 1408 Mountain Rd (W. Suffield Congregational Church)
- 860-668-2271 - Every other Tuesday 1:15 – 1:45 p.m.
- CTFoodshare.org for schedule
- Requirements: Connecticut Residents Only

Suffield Senior Center

- 145 Bridge St.
- \$5 Lunch Tuesday / Wednesday / Thursday 12 p.m.
- Suffieldct.gov / 860-668-3862
- Pleclerc@suffieldct.gov
- Requirements: Reservations – (860) 668-8830

First Church of Christ

- 81 High St. Outdoor 24 hr/7 day Food Cabinet
- 860-668-7223
- No Requirements

farms, some were thrown in debtors' prison. Shays' Rebellion erupted in nearby Springfield where armed protesters attacked the armory seeking debt relief. In Suffield, Oliver Hanchett repeatedly petitioned the gov-

ernment for money owed to him, without success. Many residents continued to leave town in search of better opportunities.

Still, despite instability and change, Suffield survived. ☘



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Suffield Community Aid

By Mary Curtin, MSW
Director
860-668-1986

Help “Stamp Out Hunger”

Mail Carriers “Stamp Out Hunger” Food Drive

On Saturday, May 9th, your mail carrier will pick up donations left by your mailbox, during their regular route. All donations will benefit SCA's Food Pantry. We are most in need of paper goods, hygiene products, and snack items. Please consider donating and contact SCA if you would like to volunteer!

Featured Programs:

Renter's Rebate Program for Elderly & Disabled Residents:

The State provides a reimbursement program for renters who are elderly or disabled, and whose incomes do not exceed certain limits. SCA is now taking applications!

Does Your Child Want to Attend Camp but Costs are TOO High? Summer is right around the corner! SCA has funding available to subsidize camp costs for eligible Suffield youth who wish to attend Suffield Parks & Rec. and other camp programs.

Senior Farmers Market-Program enrollment for free Farmer's Market cards began May 1, 2026. Participants must be age 60+ and meet income requirements.

SCA Food Pantry is Well Stocked to Help with Your Food, Pet Food & Personal Care Needs: If you are struggling to afford food, pet food or personal care items, SCA can help. Thanks to the generosity of the Suffield community, our shelves are well stocked. Call for confidential and discreet help.

Medical Equipment Loans- Free for Suffield Residents:

SCA maintains an inventory of durable medical items for free loan to Suffield residents. Items available for loan include: Canes, Walkers, Bath seats, Commodes, Crutches, Wheelchairs, and Transport chairs. The wheelchairs and transport chairs are loaned on a limited time basis. Other items are available for long-term use. To borrow, residents are welcome to stop in during normal SCA business hours: Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Ask the Social Worker at the Library- Social Services Consultations at KML with Lauren Marino, LMSW on May 21 from 11-12:30. Register on KML's website through the library calendar. If that day is not possible feel free to call SCA to

schedule an alternate time.

Meals on Wheels

SCA is actively enrolling new participants in Meals on Wheels. Recipients must be at least 60 years of age and be considered homebound to qualify. SCA volunteers deliver meals that are prepared off-site by the Community Renewal Team (CRT) in Hartford. Participation is free although donations for the meals can be made to CRT.

Important May Dates:

- May 13 & May 27: SCA sponsors blood pressure screenings at the Senior Center from 11am - 12pm.
- May 12: Parkinsons Peer Support Group from 11-12 at SCA. Call SCA to register.
- May 26: Alzheimers Caregiver Support Group and Memory Café from 11-12 at SCA. Call SCA to register.



Photo provided by SCA

Thank you to Stephanie Salerno Team for going door to door and again gathering four full cars of groceries, personal care items and cleaning supplies for our Spring Basket distribution. This was their fourth year doing this for the Spring Basket program! From left to right: Stephanie Salerno, Mary Curtin from SCA, Alyssa Salerno, Emma MacDougall and Kevin Hull from Stephanie Salerno Team

Concert for a Cause

By Anita Wardell

First Church is sponsoring an enchanting evening of traditional music of Ireland and Scotland featuring fiddle, harp and songs. The concert will be held Saturday, May 30 at 7 p.m. in the church sanctuary with monetary donations for Suffield Community Aid.

The traditional Irish fiddle will be played by Jeanne Freeman. Jeanne is the founder and Director of the Connecticut Academy of Irish Music, where she has taught Irish fiddle to students of all ages. Classically trained early on, Jeanne studied Irish fiddling with friend and mentor, the late Donegal O'Donnell with

whom she played and performed regularly. Jeanne has performed as the featured Irish fiddle with the Hartford Symphony Orchestra's St. Patrick's Day Celebration at the Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts and was the guest artist for Simsbury Public School's town-wide String Festival, teaching traditional Irish music to over 200 string students. Jeanne has appeared on a number of recordings, including her solo CD, *The Fiddler You Are*.

Haley Hewitt is a Connecticut-based performer, composer, arranger, educator and harpist. Steeped in music from North America, Scotland and Ireland, her music

has a distinctly traditional flavor. Haley has a Bachelor's Degree from the Hartt School of Music in pedal harp performance and a Master's Degree from the Conservatoire of Scotland in Scottish Traditional Music. Her harp playing has taken her to Carnegie Hall, Benaroya Hall, Glasgow Royal Concert Hall and won her the New England Open Scottish Harp competition in 2006 and the U.S. National Scottish Championship in 2013.

First Church is excited to welcome and host these distinguished artists and invite our Suffield community to join us in this special Concert for a Cause. ☘

Repair Café Expands Services

By Tony Peterson, co-chair of Sustainable Suffield

At Sustainable Suffield's March 28 Repair Café, we introduced several new services that appealed to residents.

For those with older Windows 10 computers no longer supported by Microsoft, we migrated them to Linux at no cost. We also helped residents navigate their smartphones and troubleshoot computer problems.

We began accepting used sneakers in any condition for recycling. We collected 3 ½ bags, measuring 22" wide by 32" tall, of sneakers and sent them to GotSneakers, a repu-

table Florida recycler.

We will offer both computer and sneaker recycling services at future Repair Cafés.

At our March Repair Café, we held 53 repair sessions for knife and garden-tool sharpening, sewing, bicycle, electrical, woodworking, jewelry and computer repairs, some involving multiple items. We successfully repaired 87%.

Our next Repair Café is scheduled for June 27 at the Senior Center from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Please mark your calendar. If you have items that require gluing, please try to arrive early so the glue can set before the end of the Café. ☘

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Schools and Library

Suffield Reads Kwame! A Community Reading Program

By Kristin Johnson,
Spaulding Elementary
School Librarian

Calling all readers! Suffield Public Schools and Kent Memorial Library are excited to announce the launch of Suffield Reads Kwame! This collaboration between the public and school librarians in Suffield will begin connecting readers across generations, as we read the

works of a single author – Kwame Alexander!

Kwame is a notable New York Times best-selling writer of 45 books for all ages, including many award winners such as *The Cross-over*, *The Undeclared*, *The Door of No Return*, and his newest *The Mighty Macy*, which was just released in February.

The goal of this program

is to bring town residents together through storytelling, and Kwame Alexander’s work fits perfectly into this initiative. His poetry, picture books, non-fiction texts, and novels are powerful, emotional and enlightening. The beauty and style of his words are captivating, entertaining, and unforgettable!

We hope you will join us! The school and public libraries are offering programs and displays for all readers. There will be book discussions and activities that promote a culture of reading throughout our community. Starting May 1, look for opportunities in our public schools and at Kent Memorial Library to connect with others over Kwame’s works.

Our project will culminate with a visit from Kwame Alexander. Mark your calendars for October 1. He will be appearing at Suffield High School for a

free event! Let’s celebrate the first Suffield Reads Project with Kwame himself! Registration for tickets will open in September. Seats are limited, so stay tuned for details at the end of the summer.

For more information about Kwame, please visit kwamealexander.com.

Special thanks to the Suffield Foundation for Excellent Schools, The Suffield Library Foundation, The Friends of the Library, and the Meghan Voisine Kindness Matters Foundation for making this event possible through their generosity and financial support. ☘



Photo provided by the author

Kwame Alexander

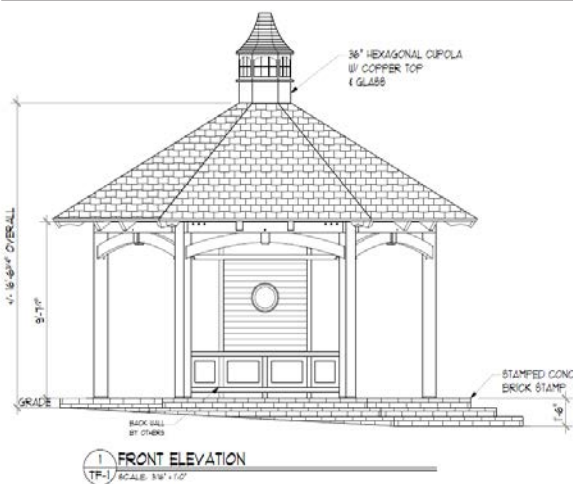


Photo provided by the author

Check out the bookshelf at Kent Memorial Library highlighting Kwame Alexander’s book collection for readers of all ages.

Dowd Realty Spotlight on Suffield

BAND STAND UPDATE



There’s something happening on the Green! It’s a community project to honor and replace the 50 year old band stand with one that better meets our needs today.

If you'd like to donate to be a part of it, we can make it *even better!* Won't we have fun this summer and in the many years ahead? (Even Santa made a special trip to check it out while promising to be back for Suffield Aight.)

What a great place to live - in Suffield!

To contribute by check:

Make out to: Suffield Rotary Fund
with memo: bandstand
Mail to: Suffield Rotary PO Box 283
Suffield CT 06078

To donate online: Use the QR Code



Santa is shown here checking in with Elzear Roy who is donating the base.

Rotary Club of Suffield
@RotaryClubofSuffield

venmo

Schools of Thought

Suffield High • Suffield Middle • McAlister Intermediate • Spaulding • Suffield Academy



Photo provided by the author

ACES High Robotics Drive Team: (left to right) Nick Tseka, Drive Team Coach and Design Coach, Jack Andrew Anish, Katie and Natlaie.

ACES High Has a Successful Season

By Melissa Pascarelli, ACES Robotics Assistant Coach

In April, Aces High Robotics competed at the New England Championship event at the Big E. At the event, the students were recognized for developing innovative control components on their robot. Throughout the competition the robot and drive team fiercely fought to put "fuel" into a hopper. They were met with stiff competition and unfortunately eliminated during semi-finals.

At a previous event the team earned the prestigious Autonomous Award sponsored

by google.org. Aces was celebrated for demonstrating consistent, reliable, high performing robot operation during autonomous actions during a match. The evaluative process is based on the robot's ability to sense its surroundings, position itself or onboard mechanisms appropriately, and successfully execute tasks. The variety and quality of our automation helped us to reach a First Place standing in auto points.

In the game, the red alliance and blue alliance compete on opposite sides of the field to score as much "fuel"

as possible in the central hub. Teams program and operate their industrial-sized robots to collect fuel and deliver it efficiently while preventing their opponents from doing the same. This year's game is won by strategy and split decision making; it's fast paced and exciting.

The challenge reflects real-world problems that require global cooperation and strategic thinking. As robots gather fuel from around the field, including resources on the opposing side, they can store it or transport it back to their own area to score in their hub. The alliance

SHS 60th High School Class Reunion

From a press release Suffield High Class of 1966 is planning its 60th reunion. Save the date. October 17 from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Three Figs Restaurant (formerly the Suffield Inn) on Mountain Road in Suffield. Please spread the word.

We are currently seeking contact information for Den-

nis Gilbert, Joyce Lillian Hallas and Peter Linne Waterman. Invitations with additional details will be mailed shortly so please watch your mail.

If you have any questions, please contact Elaine Reed at escott05@hotmail.com (cell 215-593-4535) or Judy Perry at judithhperry@gmail.com (cell 207-249-0082). ☞

SHS Academic Quiz Team Success



From the SHS Newsletter

The Academic Quiz Team surged into the semifinals on *As Schools Match Wits* on March 27 and 28. Watch their championship matches on NEPM or your local PBS station on June 6 and June 13. Congratulations to the team - Senior MK Mormino, Juniors Arnav and Shaunak Ukidwe and Jane Kelly, and alternate freshman Finn Kappen, for beating out over 30 teams this year to make it into the Top 4!

that successfully delivers the most fuel by the end of the match earns the victory.

As alliance captain for the finals at Western New England, Aces students want to thank the alliance partners from team 195, Cyberknights from Southington, Connecticut, and team 9710 Polybots from Springfield, Massachusetts. With their cooperation the alliance took each round of the semi-finals and finals, also achieving a weekend high score of 573 points.

At their competition in Waterbury in late March the

team's performance ensured a spot at the world championship in Houston, Texas. With a weekend record of 11-1-0, Aces partnered with Team Spartan Polybots from New Hampshire, and team Mechanical Advantage from Massachusetts to take home the event win along with the Innovation in Control Award.

Follow us on Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook. If you are interested in joining the team or provide a sponsorship, contact Melissa Pascarelli at mpascarelli@wpls.org. ☞

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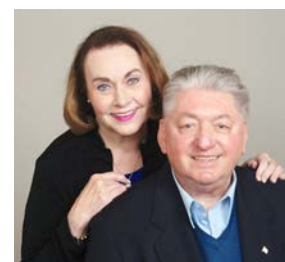
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Schools of Thought

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Photo submitted by author

The cast poses during the song "At the End of the Day."

Les Misérables: SHS's 2026 Musical Masterpiece

By MaryKate Mormino

In a stunningly passionate production, Suffield High School's Drama Club put on the acclaimed musical *Les Misérables* on March 6, 7 and 8. In this iconic story known by millions, the convict Jean Valjean breaks parole to become a new man after being freed by prison guard Javert, played by Nayandeep Tummalappally, who vows to bring him to justice. "It was definitely an insane physical and emotional rollercoaster," said Jack Tautic, who portrayed the main character, Jean Valjean, "The work that we've done, the heart and emotion that we've put into this production, and the end product of it all is absolutely magnetic."

Few cast members have been more prepared to put on a production of this difficulty at the high school level. Even after missing a day of rehearsal during the week of the show due to a snow day, the cast rehearsed at home and worked hard to bring this show to life.

This production would never have been what it was without the skills of the ensemble. From playing factory workers, to lovely ladies, to students of the revolution, this versatile ensemble has put in hours upon hours of work to inhabit their roles. "I would say it was

very entertaining," says brand new Drama Club member Jeremy Ivanov, "Some days were long, but most days were very fun." His roles of the Foreman of the Factory and revolutionary Courfeyrac add essential elements to the plot as each ensemble member does in their own unique way.

On opening night, in an alarming turn of events for the cast, senior Devon Root-Blanchfield who portrays the character Fantine was afflicted with a chest cold and was worried that she couldn't perform. However, she gave a new meaning to the age-old adage "The show must go on" as she proceeded to give a fantastic performance every night, especially in the iconic song "I Dreamed a Dream."

An interesting new aspect of this production was behind the stage in the costume department. Sophomore Olivia Nicora and senior Amelia Hosack worked hard curating amazing outfits for over 30 actors, each having at least two different costumes. "It was definitely really fun, and it was really engaging, which I enjoyed. I like a good problem to solve," explains costume assistant and senior Amelia Hosack, "It was really satisfying seeing everything come together and seeing how our

By Suffield Board of Education

Budget update

The Board of Education recently presented its adopted budget to the Board of Finance. Following discussion, the Board of Finance accepted the BOE budget as presented at a subsequent meeting.

This milestone reflects a well-run and highly coordinated process. The Board would like to recognize Superintendent Matt Dunbar and Business Manager Eric Remington for their leadership throughout the budget development. From early presentations through final adjustments, the process was thoughtful, transparent and well-aligned across all stakeholders.

The next step is the presentation of the Town's full budget to the community on April 22, followed by the Town Meeting

hard work had paid off." This sentiment was also shared by the costume manager, sophomore Olivia Nicora, "I think that costuming such a big cast was actually a really fun experience because I got to meet a ton of new people and there was never a boring moment."

Selling over 600 tickets over the three performances, this incredibly successful show is but a precursor of incredible things to come with the 2026-2027 Drama Club season. With upgraded tech and stellar actors, the next productions are bound to be the best ones yet. While the seniors, such as myself, won't be able to participate, they will still come out and support the current thespians by seeing the performances, which are bound to get even better by the year. ☘

News from the Suffield Board of Education

on May 6, where residents will have the opportunity to vote on the final budget. We encourage all residents to stay informed and participate in this important step.

Public participation: more ways to get involved

While the budget process is one of the most visible ways for the community to engage, it is far from the only one. The Board of Education values community input across a wide range of topics throughout the year.

Residents are always welcome to attend Board of Education meetings and participate in public comment, where they can share perspectives directly with Board members. For those who prefer, written comments can also be submitted and are reviewed as part of the Board's decision-making process.

Beyond meetings, there are

also opportunities to get more directly involved. One example is the district's Wellness Committee, which brings together staff, families, and community members to support the overall well-being of our students. This group has helped advance initiatives such as place-based learning and school-based food programs, connecting student health with learning in practical ways.

We encourage anyone interested to explore these opportunities. Ongoing community engagement helps ensure that our schools reflect the priorities, values, and ideas of the community they serve.

Suffield Board of Education members include Maureen Sattan, Debra Dudack, Gianna Rossi, Melissa Finigan, Brian Fry, James Mol, Dustin Rose, Greg Sparzo and Sam Toskin. ☘

Suffield Athletics

By Amy Muska,
Director of Athletics and Students Activities

Our winter season wrapped up with the girls' basketball team playing in the state semifinals for Class M on Tuesday, 3/17. It was a hard-fought game before succumbing to Coventry Patriots. All winter teams participate in post season play. Each sport had athletes recognized for NCCC All Conference with two athletes making All State recognition.

NCCC All Conference
Boys' Basketball: Logan

Baril

Girls' Basketball: Hazel Qua and River Seagrave

Boys' Indoor Track: Jacob Gagnon, Rogen Harrolle

Wrestling: Peter Annis, Yasin Afrailov, Landon Tuttle

All Nutmeg

Boys Ice Hockey: Nathan Kim, Brendan Morden, Blake Denno

State Champions Class S
Wrestling: Peter Annis, Yasin Afrailov

All State Awards

Girls' Basketball: Hazel Qua

Continued on Page 20

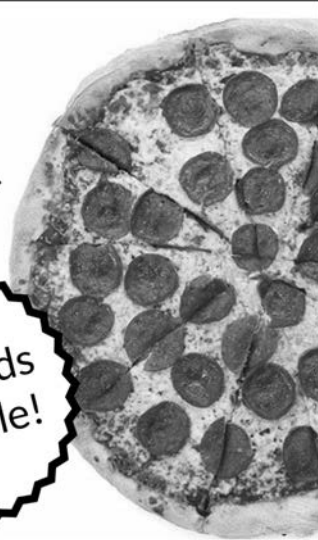
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OUR PROGRAMS

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- ▲ BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL
- ▲ SUMMER CAMP

Troop 66 Winter Adventures

By Dean Prusi, age 13.

December was a crazy month for Troop 66. We did a lot of fun things. First, let's start with the lock in. Every year Troop 66 does a video game lock-in where we stay overnight in the church and play video games and eat snacks. This year we also had short screen breaks every now and then, so scouts brought board games to play during said screen breaks, and it was really fun. We also invited the Cub Scout pack to come and join us for a little bit. We also did our yearly Cabela's trip where Scouts could go and look and at stuff they might want for winter campouts and ideas for holiday gifts. On top of all that we had a white elephant party where every scout would bring a gift around \$10 or less and we put them all in a group. One scout would

pick a gift then the next scout could pick or steal a gift from someone else.

In February we also participated in the Klondike Derby where scouts would orienteer where they needed to go and do stations at a camp. At the station, we would practice skills like making fire to heat up water for hot cocoa, practice rescue carries or answer scout-related questions. There was also a sled we had built that we used to carry all our gear.

Troop 66 also will now be able a Hybrid Troop which will allow girls to join and experience the fun and adventure scouting.

For more information on Troop 66 go to Troop 66 Facebook page, <https://westsuffield66.mytroop.us/>, or come to West Suffield Congregational Church Mondays at 7 p.m. ☞

Suffield Athletics

Continued from page 19

Boys' Ice Hockey: Brendan Morden

Girls' Basketball Shooting Record: Hazel Qua

The spring season is in full swing for the Suffield Wildcats. There are plenty of opportunities to watch your favorite team during the week or weekends.

May Highlights

5/2: Suffield Wildcats: Come watch our high school teams in action. May is Mental Health Awareness, we will be highlighting Morgan's Message, www.morgansmessage.org and the importance of student-athlete mental

health. Food trucks and the hut will be open.

Schedule of events for May 2

1 p.m. Boys' Tennis vs Morgan

2 p.m. Boys' Baseball vs Stafford

2 p.m. Girls' Softball vs Stafford

3 p.m. Girls' Tennis vs Lakeview

4 p.m. Girls' Lacrosse vs Granby Memorial

6 p.m. Boys' Lacrosse vs Simsbury

Additional information regarding senior nights, conference and tournament play will be posted on the Athletic website as information is available. ☞

By Steve Smith

Last year I published an article entitled "Take a Kid Fishing." My son-in-law, Henry read it and he remembered the fun he had fishing as a kid.

For Christmas last year he bought two rods and reels for us to use in Florida, hoping to get our four-year-old granddaughter excited about fishing. Well, she wasn't too interested, so I decided to try it under Henry's tutelage. Henry taught me several key priorities focusing on 1) Equipment, 2) Technique and 3) Patience.

This passed-down knowledge eventually paid off in March when my wife and I returned to Florida for a 10-day vacation. I was the excited kid this time. I caught two whiting (kingfish) and one pompano in three days on Siesta Key beach. But that's

not important. A family arrived next door with a six-year-old kid, Derek, who had been studying and practicing fishing for about a year but hadn't caught a fish yet. We spent some time together discussing equipment and technique and became good buddies. Fishing can be a little lonely, so Derek and I bonding was significant.

On our last day at the beach, we went out fishing together. He stayed near the shoreline, and I waded out as far as I could. An hour went by. Then something amazing happened. I snagged a big one. I tried immediately to reel it in but to no avail. The fight went on for 10 minutes or so and a crowd was forming along the beach. Finally, I got the fish to within 10 feet of shore where we could see the size and shape in the shallow water and I was

hoping to get some help from the bystanders. Derek yelled, "it's a shark!" and then nobody was willing to hold my rod while I could try to grab it. Turns out it was a bonnethead shark, common to Florida beaches, and it eventually broke the line. Hook, line and sinker gone! Another lesson in fishing, failure to bring a net. Nonetheless, Derek was very pleased to have witnessed the one that got away!

I hope Derek continues to pursue his love for fishing and eventually gets the big one! Just a second! His dad sent an email to me, and it said that Derek did catch his first fish on a boating trip in Sarasota harbor, after we left. Now, he is back in Indiana catching more fish in a pond nearby! Success breeds success. Take a kid fishing, wherever you can. ☞

Historical Society Art

By Sara Zak

The Suffield Historical Society welcomes visitors to two stops on the Annual Art Trail on Saturday, May 16, from 1 to 4 p.m. The first location is the familiar Alexander King House Museum & Barn. The other is our recently acquired expansion site, Academy Hall (1499 Mountain Road), also known as the West Suffield Grange. Last year, the Society exhibited art recognized as traditional, mostly in the form of painting, across all modalities. This year, we will highlight Historic Art, i.e., decorative and functional creations that express the culture and society of times past.

A collection of early 19th-century samplers stitched by Suffield girls will be set up at the King House. The Society owns nearly 20

samplers that illustrate the cultural and societal aspects of the town and era. For example, some are stitched on plain, unbleached linen with cotton thread, while others are stitched on silk with shiny, expensive threads. This display will capitalize on the enlightening presentation given by Alexandra Peters in March called "Girls Just Want to Have Fun." Ms. Peters has been collecting, researching, and curating samplers for over 40 years. In her presentation, she interpreted many samplers, including several from the Suffield Historical Society collection. Alexandra has been invited to attend this exhibit.

Academy Hall will have a display of 19th-century quilts, many stitched by or for Suffield women. From a distance, an observer will focus on the creativity of the colors and patterns. Upon closer examination, the choice of materials draws one's attention; however, it is the hand-stitching that is absolutely astonishing. In addition to the descriptions that came with the donated

quilts, the Society was fortunate to benefit from the expertise of Lois Palmer, a local certified quilt appraiser. For example, she explained the difference between a quilt sewn during the mourning period of a loved one's death and one sewn during the half-mourning period. She also pointed out that quilt pieces are sometimes embroidered with family or personal symbols. We hope Lois will be able to visit during this event. However, Dorian Taylor, a King House docent and quilter, will definitely be on site to explain some of the characteristics of quilts, including patterns, colors, and materials.

The West Suffield Congregational Church will also welcome visitors to see a quilt completed in 1885. This quilt features a beautiful sunburst pattern and something special—the names of over 600 community members from that time are stitched into it. You might even find your ancestors' names! The Suffield Historical Society looks forward to seeing you on the Art Trail, May 16 from 1 to 4 p.m. ☞

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Satinwood Concert to Benefit Safe Harbor Warming Center

From a press release

Satinwood Productions is sponsoring a Benefit Concert for Enfield Safe Harbor Warming Center Date: Friday June 19 to begin at 7:30 p.m.

Presented jointly with the Friends of the Farm at Hilltop, the concert will be staged inside the Great White Barn; 1616 Mapleton Avenue, Suffield. Free Parking - ADA accessible.

Refreshments will be available, plus Food Trucks. For ticket ordering and information please visit: satinwood.net

Satinwood Productions features a cast of gifted musicians performing stunning musical tributes. This show opens with Rainy Day People: The Jim Croce and Gordon Lightfoot Tribute featuring Paul Motter, guitar and vocals, Rudi Weeks on bass and Jeff Trsdel on guitar.

The enduring legacy of these legendary artists is rendered with impeccable musicianship and heartfelt performance.

A second set by the Satinwood Trio follows, featuring Paul and Melanie Motter joined by cellist Eric Roth, sharing a wish list of acoustic favorites from artists James Taylor, Boz Scaggs, Don Henley, Crowded House, Train, plus many more! Along with Satinwood selling out shows throughout the Northeast, their continuing philanthropy from special engagements like this is especially notable.

Enfield Safe Harbor Warming Center, since 2016, has offered overnight accommodation as well as outreach and engagement to the homeless. During this past winter, an unprecedented 52 days of Severe

Cold Weather Emergencies occurred — the longest period of dangerous cold since 2015. This resulted in increased need for staffing, meals, cots, blankets, plus personal items and clothing.

Rising utility costs also impacts Safe Harbor's operating budget. The Safe Harbor Warming Center depends on donations and fundraisers for continued assistance to families and individuals coping with social and economic hardship. Please visit enfieldsafeharbor.org or 860-830-7142 for more information on how you can help.

The Friends of the Farm at Hilltop is a 501c3 not-for-profit corporation formed in 2002 to purchase and restore the Historic Hilltop Farmstead, originally built in 1914 by Indian Motorcycle found-



Photo provided by FOFAH

Melanie Motter (on keyboard), Paul Motter (on guitar) and Eric Roth (on cello) perform.

er George M. Hendee. The magnificent Georgian revival style barn and surroundings function as a Community Resource, providing educational and cultural programs, events and recreation

opportunities.

We're thrilled to welcome Satinwood Productions for this first ever fundraiser event inside the newly renovated Great Barn and look forward to seeing you there. ☘

Discover Local Art and Community on the Art Trail

By Chad Kuzontkoski

Suffield's vibrant arts scene will once again take center stage with the return of the Suffield Art Trail on Saturday, May 16. This beloved annual event invites residents and visitors to explore local creativity by touring artist spaces, cultural institutions, and unique exhibits throughout town, most of the art will be offered for sale as well.

The Art Trail continues its mission of connecting the community with local artists, offering a behind-the-scenes look at where art is created, displayed, and celebrated. Whether you're a longtime art enthusiast or simply looking for a fun and inspiring way to spend the day, the Art Trail provides something for everyone.

This year's event features a diverse lineup of locations and experiences:

- Suffield Senior Center (145 Bridge St.)

10 a.m.– 4 p.m.

Watch creativity in action with a live painting demonstration by the Tobacco Valley Artists Association.

- The King House Museum (232 South Main St.)

1 p.m.– 4 p.m.

Explore a curated selection of artwork in one of Suffield's most historic settings.

- Academy Hall (1499 Mountain Road)

1 p.m.– 4 p.m.

Featuring a unique exhibit of handcrafted quilts, blending artistry and tradition.

- The Phelps-Hatheway House (55 South Main St.)

9 a.m.– 2 p.m.

Enjoy the 47th Annual May Market, showcasing plants, arts, and crafts in a lively, seasonal marketplace.

- 880 Burbank Studios (880 Burbank Ave)

1 p.m.– 5 p.m.

A creative hub featuring resident artists, open studios, Suffield High School student artwork, guest artists, live music with an open mic. —and a food truck to round out the experience.

The Suffield Art Trail is more than an event—it's a celebration of community, creativity, and local talent. By opening doors to studios and cultural spaces, the Art Trail helps support artists, encourages residents to shop locally and strengthens Suffield's identity as a welcoming

and culturally rich town.

Make a day of it—explore multiple stops, meet the artists, enjoy great food, and even take home a piece of original art.

Mark your calendar for May 16 and experience the creativity that makes Suffield special. ☘

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Phelps-Hatheway House Events

By Lynn Mervosh

May holds a special place in the hearts of the Phelps-Hatheway staff. As lilacs bloom and the perennial gardens come to life, we begin to prepare the Visitor Center and historic spaces to welcome our first guests of the season. With their arrival, our work in preservation and education begins anew.

As the nation commemorates the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the Phelps-Hatheway House, constructed between 1761 and 1795, takes on even deeper meaning. Within its walls, the Burbank and Phelps families lived through the Revolutionary War era, experiencing not only its political upheaval but also the financial and social consequences that followed. In every room, history reveals itself, continually enriched by those who walk through our doors each week.

We invite you to join us on Friday, May 1, from 5-7 p.m.

for the opening reception of our 2026 Visitor Center exhibition. This year, artist and photographer Laurie Tavino and Ray Pioggia present Seasons of Change, a collection of nature-inspired works reflecting the evolving landscape throughout the year. Meet the artists, connect with friends and neighbors, and enjoy hearing the stories behind their art created in their Suffield studios.

Continuing a cherished tradition, our Mother's Day Tea returns on Saturday, May 9, from 2-4 p.m. in the historic Pine Room. Chef Renee Scharoff will once again delight guests with an array of savory and sweet offerings, including gluten-free options by popular request. Paired with her menu, the ladies of Phelps-Hatheway will serve freshly brewed teas, including a new variety for 2026, while sharing the rich global history of this beloved beverage. Following tea, guests are invited to tour the museum



Photo provided by Connecticut Landmarks

interiors and learn about the women who lived and worked here, with special attention to Anna Fitch Burbank, a resident during the Revolutionary War period.

After a long winter, the return of the Suffield Garden Club's May Market on May 16, from 9 a.m.-2 p.m., is a welcome highlight of spring. Featuring vendors offering plants, trees, shrubs, gardening tools, and supplies, as well

as the popular Collectibles and Member Plant booths, the market is a must-visit for garden enthusiasts. Early arrival is recommended for the best selection. Visitors can also enjoy a special garden-themed tour of the Phelps-Hatheway House, offered hourly from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. with regular admission.

To close out this vibrant month, we are pleased to introduce a new program celebrating one of spring's most beloved flowers, the peony. On Sunday, May 31, from 1-3 p.m. in the Hatheway Barn, Debora Reynolds of Old Hill Gardens will lead the first in-

stallment of our Floral Arts Series. She will share expert advice on growing, harvesting, and arranging peonies, along with guidance on selecting varieties and complementary plants. A longtime Suffield flower farmer, Debora brings years of knowledge and experience to this engaging program.

We hope you will join us this May at our treasured landmark on South Main Street. For more information or to register for programs, please visit our website at <https://ctlandmarks.org/properties/phelps-hatheway-house-garden/> or call 860-668-0055. ☞



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The Pink Blossoms of Spring



Photo by Joan Heffernan

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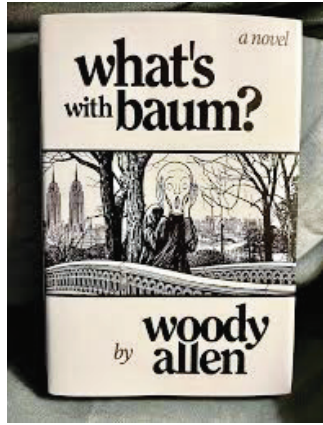
Book Review



By Jane Shipp

What's with Baum?

By Woody Allen
2025 192 pgs
Post Hill Press



To say that this book is entertaining is the understatement of the year. It is vintage Woody Allen humor, a bit dark, sometimes biting, but with a resonance that no one else can master. It is Allen's first novel. The main character is Asher Baum, a Jewish intellectual and playwright who lives in New York, not as successful or famous or rich as he would like to be. His confidence is at a low level, particularly because his stepson Thane, a self-centered and spoiled "golden boy," has just published a novel that is instantly a best seller. Baum is insanely jealous.

Baum's third wife Connie is Thane's doting mother. She is beautiful and wealthy, also sharp-tongued and combative; not surprisingly, a distance has grown between them, and Asher is forever eyeing attractive young women. Connie insists on living a sophisticated but semi-rural life in Connecticut, while Asher longs for the busy streets and frantic activity of the city--another source of conflict.

When a magazine plans to do a spread on young Thane and his literary success, suffocating angst, bitter envy and barely hidden anger come to the surface in the family. However, Thane brings home a glamorous new girlfriend, whose interests parallel Baum's, and they strike up an immediate understanding. They are soul mates! When the director of the documentary about the promising young novelist ar-

rives on the scene, the atmosphere gets even more strained.

At some point in the drama Baum invites the young woman to drive with him into the city; each one has business to attend to there, after which they meet for lunch. While waiting for her in a bookstore, Baum strikes up a conversation with a stranger who gives him a piece of information that will change everything. Lunch is a pleasure, and the outing expands as Baum and Thane's fiancée visit favorite haunts and enjoy one another's company, while privately Baum is tormented by what he has learned.

The plot holds the reader's attention and is skillfully unfolded; the characters are absolutely believable. But the real joy of this book is Allen's prose. It is both perceptive and hilarious. Regret, disappointment and verbal cruelty are in the mix as well. You can't help feeling sympathy and understanding for Asher Baum, while laughing out loud at his reactions and descriptions. The book's cover, a sketch of Munch's painting *The Scream*, adds to the overall effect. The book is both poignant and moving, another and totally unexpected success for Woody Allen. ☞

Cuckoo for Cocoa

By Lynette Roy

If you'd like to serve something gooey, very chocolatey and easy to make, then this recipe should do the trick. A few tips for making this tart: For the best chocolate flavor, using a high-quality chocolate like Ghirardelli, is recommended, and although the addition of instant coffee granules might sound odd, the coffee actually enhances the flavor of the chocolate.

Usually, I provide some historical information about a food or ingredient, but there is so much information about the history of chocolate, it would have filled an entire page. But, if you'd like to learn more about chocolate, here is a great link: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of-chocolate.

Brownie Tart

6 teaspoons unsalted butter
3-1/4 cups (20 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
3 extra-large eggs
1 cup sugar

1 tablespoon instant coffee granules (decaffeinated granules can also be used)

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1/2 cup all-purpose flour

1/4 teaspoon baking powder

1/4 teaspoon salt

1 cup (4 ounces) chopped walnuts

2 to 3 tablespoons heavy cream

Directions

Grease and flour a 9-inch tart pan with removable sides. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

1. Melt the butter in a bowl set over simmering water. Add 2 cups of the chocolate chips, remove from the heat, and stir until the chocolate melts. Set aside to cool completely.

2. In the bowl of an electric mixer using the paddle attachment, beat the eggs, sugar, coffee and vanilla on medium-high speed until light and fluffy, about three minutes. Stir in the melted chocolate.



In a medium bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, salt, 1 cup of the chocolate chips, and the walnuts. Fold the flour mixture into the batter until it's just combined. Pour into the pan and bake for 35 to 40 minutes, until the center is puffed (the top may crack). The inside will still be very soft. Cool to room temperature before removing the sides of the tart pan.

3. Melt the remaining 1/4 cup of chocolate chips with the heavy cream and drizzle on the tart.

4. If desired, serve with a scoop of vanilla ice cream. ☞

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Chisellers and Rustlers and Noises, Oh My!

By Abby Wolcott

It all started a few months ago when we heard the pitter patter of feet above our heads. Before long that was accompanied by a chiseling sound, and we figured a squirrel had gotten in the house and was setting up shop in the attic. Hubby was put on attic patrol, and sure enough, he noticed some black walnuts brought in as a peace offering from our squirrel friends. He pocketed these as evidence, and emboldened, followed up with another trip to the attic where a red squirrel ran between his legs. Red squirrels are small and quick, making abrupt movements and then freezing. This one was no exception and not soothing to watch. So, our plan was to haul out our Have-a-Heart trap and bait it with peanut butter. Once we caught the squirrel, we would drop him off at one of our unsuspecting friend's houses under the cover of darkness where there were plenty of big trees and caches of nuts.

We waited and waited. The red squirrel still made his noises but showed no interest in the trap. And, after listening to the incessant chiseling of our insulation above our heads we were at the end of our rope.

Around this time, Buffalo Springfield's *For What It's Worth*, one of my favorite protest songs, was doing double duty in my head. It was getting louder and louder, until I could no longer contain myself. Being not the best roommate ever, I took to singing the chorus out loud around the clock. "It's time to stop, hey what's that sound? Everybody look what's going down?" It seemed like such a fitting soundtrack to so much that is happening, and the red squirrels were just a small part of that.

Desperation set in, and ensuing research revealed that squirrels do not like strobe lights (actually, who does?) So, we purchased and installed a strobe light in the attic. That turned the space into a flickering light dance floor which spoiled

the ambience for the squirrel. We accompanied the strobe with some loud music played on repeat, and voila!, our encounter with the chiseler was over.

Then it was time to embrace the great outdoors after having been cooped up being vigilant about our attic lodger. Before we knew it, the chiseling was replaced by rustling in the leaf litter on our property. It was loud and sounded like a big animal was rooting around in the underbrush. But closer examination revealed that we were lucky enough to have a towhee in our yard. He is a solitary black, white and rust patchwork-colored bird around the size of a big sparrow. His species is known for its dethatching feeding style by jumping back and forth in the leaf litter to reveal insects and other edibles. The towhees are quite successful at this one step forward two steps back type of foraging, and their sharp eyes are on the lookout for anything they unearth. If you



Photo by Joan Heffernan

Often secretive, the towhee may be noticed first by the sound of industrious scratching in the leaf litter under dense thickets. You may sometimes be pleasantly surprised to see one in your yard.

have not seen a towhee, try the Wildlife Management Area and the New England Trail. There they rustle and when they are not rustling, they post up in the top of trees and make that "drink your tea" call. They nest on or near the ground and will migrate to a warmer climate when the weather gets cold.

So, in hindsight it was a spring of mysterious sounds which revealed unusual visitors in and outside of our house. It is all good, but the inside visi-

tors can really get under one's skin. Those left outdoors in the wilds of Suffield may be studied and admired from the comfort of our hammock. So, if you pass by and see us stretched out, eyes shut, no weeding basket in sight, you might be prone to label us lazy. And that may be true, but it could be that we are listening for more rustling in the shrubs and wondering what we will see next. Or just maybe, we are dreaming of dancing in the attic. ☘

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Where's Mom?



Photo by Joan Heffernan

Robin Eggs



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Make Your House Smart

By Bill Rogers

If you are away from your home at times and you want to stay connected to your home, then you may want to add WiFi smart devices.

The smart house requires that you have home internet service (\$50/mo (100 Mbps minimum)). The smart house also requires that you have a smart phone.

The following WiFi devices are recommended for the smart house:

- WiFi Security Cameras and Motion Sensor Outdoor Lights
- WiFi Doorbell
- WiFi Thermostat
- WiFi Smoke Alarm
- WiFi Oil Tank Fuel Level Sensor

Security Cameras: Buy indoor and/or outdoor cameras. These cameras need to cover home entry doors and windows. I prefer indoor cameras because indoor cameras may be able to use a 5G WiFi connection (outdoor cameras use a 2G WiFi signal). Also, indoor cameras can be easily relocated. Be aware, the WiFi camera's infrared source which is used for night vision is reflected off the window glass. Indoor cameras aimed through a window will require that the infrared sensor be disabled and that motion sensitive lights are mounted outside to highlight the night activity.

Alternatively, weatherproof outdoor cameras can be used with their infrared night vision. Cameras require a subscription cloud service (\$50/yr) or an SD micro memory card (\$17 for 64 GB) for archiving the video recordings. Most homes require two cameras. One camera is located at the front of the

house while the other camera monitors the back of the house. Set up the phone camera app to provide notifications when motion is detected. There are many home cameras available at Amazon or Home Depot ranging from \$19 to hundreds of dollars. My favorite cameras are made by Topo (TP-Link), Wyze and Blink. To connect the camera to your home WiFi follow the camera instructions.

Doorbell: A WiFi doorbell is required to communicate with visitors while you're away from home via your cell phone. In most cases you will replace your existing doorbell with the WiFi doorbell (except for new home construction). Follow the doorbell instructions to connect to your home WiFi. Set up the doorbell phone app to provide notifications when someone rings the doorbell. The doorbell has a camera so you can see the person at your door. It also has a microphone and speaker so you can communicate with the person at the door. Doorbells require a subscription cloud service (\$50/yr) or a SD micro memory card (\$17 for 64 GB) for archiving the video recordings. There are many doorbells available at Amazon or Home Depot ranging from \$29 to hundreds of dollars. My favorite WiFi doorbell is made by Ring.

Thermostat: A WiFi thermostat is required to adjust the home temperature while you're away. In most cases you will replace your existing thermostat with the WiFi thermostat. Follow the thermostat instructions to connect to your home WiFi. Setup the thermostat phone app to provide notifications

when something changes with your heating/cooling system. There are many WiFi thermostats available at Amazon or Home Depot ranging from \$29 to hundreds of dollars. My favorite WiFi thermostat is made by Honeywell.

Smoke Alarm: A WiFi smoke alarm is required to provide smoke notification while you're away. In most cases you will replace your existing smoke alarm with the WiFi smoke alarm. Follow the smoke alarm instructions to connect to your home WiFi. Set up the smoke alarm app to provide notifications when smoke is detected in your home while you're away, there are many WiFi smoke alarms available at Amazon or Home Depot ranging from \$39 to hundreds of dollars. My favorite WiFi smoke alarm is made by Google Nest.

Oil Tank Fuel Level Sensor: An oil tank fuel level sensor is required to monitor your heating oil supply while you're away. In most cases the oil level sensor can be added to the oil tank without modifications. Follow the oil tank sensor instructions to connect to your home WiFi. Setup the oil tank sensor app to provide notifications when the oil level is low while you're away. WiFi oil level sensors are available at Amazon or Home Depot ranging from \$99 to hundreds of dollars. My favorite oil tank level sensor is made by Smart Oil Gauge (\$149).

Be aware, if you lose power or WiFi service, then you won't be able to monitor your smart devices.

Good luck! ☘

EPIC DAY OF SERVICE

MAY 16, 2026
HILLTOP FARM
9 AM - 1 PM

Lunch is provided: NOON-1 PM

Join Rotary in Making A Difference in Suffield

When Rotarians and communities unite for a global day of service, the impact is profound.

Together, we address real needs, strengthen bonds, inspire hope, create a meaningful change and a shared sense of purpose & pride in Suffield.

This year Rotary will assist Hilltop Farm in the painting of their iconic white fencing in this rewarding community service project. Rotary looks forward to working with Suffield's Organizations to make this project a community success!

Hilltop Farm is on the National Register of Historic Places. Suffield is fortunate to host this beautiful property!



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More info and registration is found on our website:

<https://www.epicdayofservice.org/clubs/unit-ed-states-7890-suffield/projects/hilltop-farm-improvements-b858cb282>

Rotary Club of Suffield CT

ROTARY CONTACTS
Gayle Demko-gayledemko@gmail.com
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New Landfill Entrance



By Beth Chafetz

The Town has put in a new entrance to the town landfill making it easier and safer to get in.



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Kent Memorial Library

Director's Corner



By Amy Vessella,
Library Director

Happy May, everyone!

As many of you may have noticed, the library is currently conducting a Community Needs Assessment. This is a normal process that libraries periodically undertake to ensure their services meet the needs of the community. It is often part of a strategic or long-range planning process, though it can also be conducted independently. Since it has been a while since the library last completed this research, now is the ideal time to revisit it!

We kicked off the assessment with a survey that ran from April 1 to April 30, and we are now moving into the next phase: a series of hour-long focus groups throughout May.

We invite community members to help shape the future of our library services by participating

in one of these upcoming focus groups. These relaxed, informal sessions are designed to gather feedback from residents on our current offerings, community needs, areas for improvement, and ideas for the future.

We are especially interested in learning how you use library resources today, what programs or services you would like to see added or expanded, and how the library can better serve as a hub for learning, connection, and innovation. Whether you're a frequent visitor or haven't stopped by in years (or ever!), your input is valuable.

The focus groups will be held at various times

and locations and participation is free. Feedback collected will play a key role in guiding future programming, acquisitions, and outreach efforts.

The schedule for the focus groups is as follows: Residents interested in participating must sign up in advance by calling 860-668-3896 or emailing LBologna@SuffieldCT.gov. Please indicate which group you would like to join. Participation is first-come, first-served, and individuals may register for one group.

Don't miss this opportunity to have your voice heard and help support a vibrant and welcoming library for everyone!

Group	Date/Time	Location
Parents of School-Age Children	May 4 th at 6:30 PM	Kent Memorial Library
LGBTQ+ (ages 16+)	May 7 th at 6:45 PM	Kent Memorial Library
Library Non-Users	May 13 th at 6:30 PM	Suffield Town Hall
Middle/High School Students	May 14 th at 2:45 PM	Kent Memorial Library
Individuals Who Identify as Neurodiverse or Have a Physical, Invisible, or Access-Related Need	May 18 th at 6:30 PM	Suffield Town Hall
Adults	May 27 th at 5:30 or 6:45 PM	Kent Memorial Library

Library Activities

For more information or to register for a program, please stop by or call the library at 860-668-3896 or go online to suffield-library.org. Follow us on Facebook. All programs are free.

General Programs

Movies at the Library
KML is showing movies again! Visit our website at www.suffield-library.org/ for more information, including this month's movie showtimes.

Rise to the Challenge Book Group
Monday, May 11 at 6:30 p.m.

Join us in reading and discussing books that have been challenged and/or banned. April's book meeting was cancelled so May's book will be *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi. Copies of both books will be available at the library. Please

be aware that this group discusses books which may include sensitive topics. Registration is not required.

Thursday Readers Book Discussion Group

Thursday, May 28 at 1 p.m.
Get together on the last Thursday of the month with other readers to discuss a book. Books are available at the library. Registration is not required. The May title is *The Lies They Told* by Ellen Marie Wiseman.

Rabble Readers
Tuesday May 19 at 7 p.m.
Rabble Readers is an Es-

capist Lit book club at KML for adults. We'll read fantasy, sci-fi, and horror, anything that takes us away! We will meet on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. Copies of the books will be available at the library, no registration required. The May title is *A Fate Inked in Blood* by Danielle L. Jensen.

Quiet Time Book Club
Monday May 18 from 6 – 8 p.m.

Looking to tackle your TBR (To Be Read)? Need some accountability finishing those last couple chapters? Come to the

KML Quiet Time Book Club! Take some time for yourself to read whatever strikes your fancy in the company of other book lovers. Bring your own book to read or find one at the library, and we'll provide the tea and cocoa and ambiance. Stay for two minutes or stay for two hours - no social interaction required (but if you'd like to introduce yourself, we're happy to know you!).

Books & Beyond with author Allison Larkin
Thursday May 14 at 7 p.m. via Zoom
Join us for a live discus-

sion with the author of the book *Home of the American Circus*. Copies of the book will be available for pick up at the library. Registration is required. The acclaimed author of *The People We Keep* returns with a luminous new story of redemption, breaking generational curses, and the power of family in its truest form. Set in the birthplace of the American circus, this deeply moving novel is an exploration of broken families, the weight of the past, and the complicated journey of finding home.

Continued on Page 27

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KML Programs

Continued from page 26

Mahjong

Thursday mornings from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Join us for a morning of American Mahjong!

Make new friends as you play one of the world's oldest tile-based games. For adults -Basic knowledge of the game required. Please bring your 2025 NMJL (National Mahjong Junior League) card. Registration required.

A Conversation with author Ron Farina

Tuesday May 19 from 6:30 – 8 p.m.

Kent Memorial Library is

pleased to host Connecticut Author and recent CT Veteran Hall of Fame inductee, Ron Farina on Tuesday, May 19 at 6:30 p.m. Ron will read from his novel, *Sacrifice the Final Chapter* and discuss the book, taking audience questions. Ron Farina is the author of four books and personal essays about the human cost of war. In 2021, he was awarded the Association of Writers and Programs (AWP) Intro Award for fiction and the American Society of Professional Journalists, Connecticut Chapter first-place award for general column magazine feature, for the essay "War Torn." In January of 2025, cited for using his passion for writing to ad-

vocate for and bring attention to the needs of veterans and their families, Ron was inducted into the Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame. Ron was selected as an INDIE Publishers 2025 book award finalist for military nonfiction for the book *Sacrifice: The Final Chapter*.

Kids and Teens Programs

Chick Hatching

Our chicks are due to hatch May 1 and will live in the library for a few weeks. Come visit them!

Rhyme Time

Fridays May 1, 8, 15 and 29 at 10:30 a.m.

Bring your singing voice on Fridays! We sing, dance, blow bubbles -- and have fun!

Drop in; no registration required. Recommended ages 0-5.

Visiting Spaulding

May 18 - 22

Miss Wendy will be visiting Spaulding School in May to tell students all about the Summer Reading Program! She'll be bringing a bunch of new books to share as well!

Outside the Box: Neurodivergent & Friends Club

Next Meeting: Thursday, May 14 at 3:30 p.m.

Open to Kids 10+ (under 12, adult must remain in the building)

Welcome to our club, where neurodivergence is celebrated! If you are neurodivergent, or you have a friend that is, come

hang out with us! All kids 10+ are welcome, regardless of diagnosis. This is a special meeting, where the club will take on KML's Revolutionary War Escape Room! (This is a social group and will not provide diagnosis or therapy.)

The Kids Who Read Books Book Club

Thursday, May 21 at 3:30 p.m.

Join us for the next meeting of The Kids Who Read Books Book Club! We'll be discussing *Wings of Fire: The Dark Secret* by Tui T. Sutherland (Book 4). Books will be available to check out at the library. Open to all people in grades 5-12. Registration is not required. ☘



2026 Suffield PMC KIDS RIDE

Saturday, May 9, 2026 (rain or shine)

Registration: 9 AM • Ride: 10 – 11 AM
Food & Fun: 11 AM – 1 PM
 McAlister School • Suffield, CT

Kids Ages 3-16 Welcome To Ride

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- Enclosed parking lot ride for younger children
- Raffle & auction with dozens of great items
- Food-Refreshments-Live Music-Playground

Suffield PMC Kids Ride Returns for 15th Year

From a press release

The 2026 Suffield Pan Mass Challenge Kids Ride, presented by Artioli Dodge, will be held on May 9 at the McAlister School. In its 15th year, the Kids Ride has raised over \$660,000 for The Jimmy Fund/Dana Farber Cancer Institute through the Pan Mass Challenge.

"We are thrilled to be back and look forward to gathering again with friends, volunteers, supporters and especially our riders and their families. We are very proud of what this day has become in Suffield and are extremely grateful for the support we have received. None of this would be possible without the hundreds of people that have taken the time to help

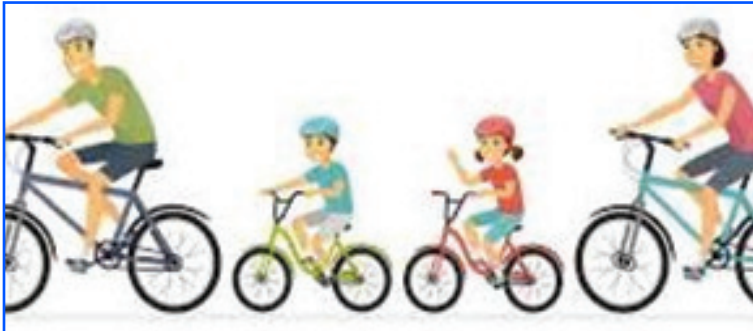
in so many ways," said Chris Nikolis, co-coordinator of the event, along with his wife Denise. "This is a great town, and we look forward to our best Kids Ride yet. And we are proud to welcome Artioli Dodge as our title partner."

Kids ages 2-17 are welcome to ride either of two safe, supervised courses. Younger children can ride the closed off middle school parking lot circle and older kids can ride a five-mile loop up Hill Street to Russell Street and back. The day includes a raffle/silent auction, with all guests invited to stay for lunch, live music and a fun celebration. Terrific sponsorship opportunities are also available.

In 14 years, the event has hosted over 1,700 kids and

raised over \$660,000 for The Jimmy Fund and fight against cancer. One hundred percent of all proceeds and donations from the event go directly to The Jimmy Fund, both of which are among the highest rated charities in the country. In 46 years, PMC has raised \$1.1 billion for Dana Farber and The Jimmy Fund, including a record \$78 million in 2025.

To register to ride or volunteer and to donate, visit kids.pmc.org/Suffield. Supporters can also stay updated by following on Facebook at "Suffield PMC Kids Ride." With any questions, or to become involved in any way, please contact Chris Nikolis at 860-796-3644 or cnikolis@cox.net. ☘



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The Suffield Players

From a press release

The Suffield Players present *20th Century Blues* by Susan Miller, a funny and heartfelt dramatic comedy directed by Konrad Rogowski. Performances run May 1-16 at Mapleton Hall in Suffield.

The play follows four women whose friendship has spanned more than forty years, preserved through a tradition of annual photo sessions. At their latest gathering, an unexpected challenge tests the strength of their bond, asking whether friendship

can endure as life changes.

The cast includes Lisa Parker, Mary Fernandez-Sierra, Barbara Gallow, Elizabeth Reynolds, Kelly Siep, and Christian Tarr.

Performances are May 1, 2, *3, 8, 9, *10, 15, and 16 at 8 p.m. (*2 p.m. matinees). Subtitled performances are May 2, 8, and 10. Recommended for ages 13 and up.

Tickets are \$22 (\$15 opening night), with discounts for students, seniors and groups. Call 800-289-6148 or visit www.suffield-players.org. ☚



Photo by Kathryn Roberts

Cetto Chambers Singers.

Cetto Chamber Singers Host Concert!

By Kathryn Roberts

Everyone is invited to attend the Cetto Chamber Singers' Spring Concert at 3 p.m., Saturday, May 30, at the Second Baptist Church, 100 N Main St., Suffield.

The program will include "Bridge Over Troubled Water" by Paul Simon, "Kuimba", a Swahili celebration of song, "Da Pacem Domine", from the 15th century, "Praise His Holy Name", by Keith Hampton, and a fun Supremes medley, as well as

other selections. A light reception in Fellowship Hall will follow the performance.

Cetto Chamber Singers is a chorus of approximately 60 women drawn from central and western Massachusetts and central Connecticut. Founded by Lorri Cetto and Evelyne Battle, both retired music professionals, the Suffield-based group is celebrating its sixth year of joyful song.

"This concert is our opportunity to share our tal-

ents and love of music with the community. We are singers with heart," says Lorri Cetto, Co-Director.

The Cetto Chamber Singers perform at several area venues annually. This is their final concert of the season before embarking upon a performance tour of France in June.

The concert is free and open to the public. For more information, please contact: Lorri Cetto at lcetto@crocker.com or Evelyne Battle at etbattle@icloud.com ☚



(Photo by Press Release)

Cast members (left to right) Elizabeth Reynolds, Lisa Parker, Kelly Siep, Barbara Gallow work on their next production.

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The Final Hoot

Organizations

An Inspirational Trip to the Paralympics in Italy

By Johanne Presser

What began as a search for tickets to the 2026 Winter Olympics evolved into a trip Brian Casinghino will never forget. A past visitor to Italy and a sports enthusiast, Casinghino thought it would be great to merge those interests and try to get Olympic tickets. As he searched for them online in the fall of 2024, he came across an application for the Olympic volunteer team. Thinking he had nothing to lose, he filled it out and submitted it. "It did take some time to complete as it was similar to a resume, wanting to know your professional background, the extent of your volunteer activities, your sports background etc." reported Casinghino, "and a lot of the questions centered around what I could contribute to the spirit of the Olympics."

Back here in Suffield, Casinghino's family is well known for its sports affiliation and volunteerism. His father, Lou, served on the Parks and Rec Commission for 35 years, and Brian is currently its chair having been on it since 2010. In that capacity he oversees a host of recreational and sports offerings for a variety of the population.

Indeed, the tennis complex between the intermediate school and the middle school was named for Brian's grandfather, Carlo, due to a significant donation by Lou in memory of his father. Additionally, wife Heather is a physical education teacher at the middle school and has coached field hockey for years. The kids are no slouches either, with Anna playing varsity field hockey at UConn and Daniel running Iron Man triathlons.

When the kids were younger, Casinghino coached baseball, softball, basketball, soccer (assistant) and gymnastics. He has also volunteered at the many road races held in Suffield, so it was no surprise that he passed the first application hurdle.

Months after the application submission, he had an hour long Zoom interview which further delved into his background, interests, professional activities, and volunteer and athletic involvement. Subsequently, he was notified that he had attained "reserve" status. It was not until December 2025 that he was officially assigned to closing ceremonies at the Paralympics in Cortina.

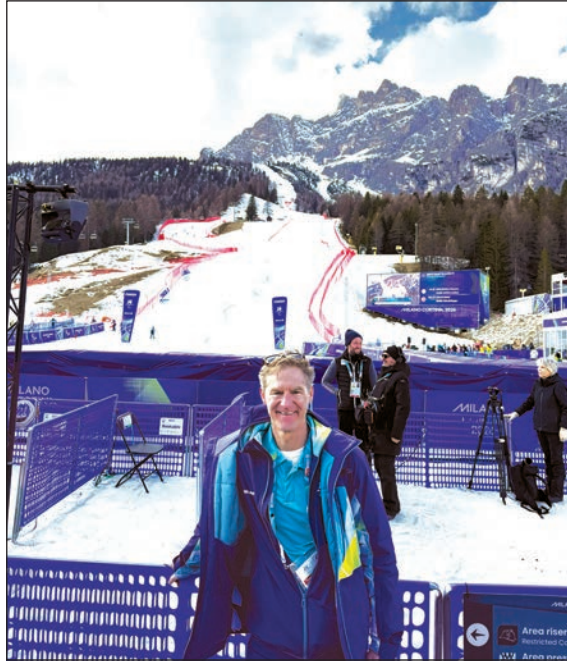


Photo provided by Brian Casinghino
Brian at the ski slope at the Paralympics in Cortina, Italy.

With that came 15 different modules of training ranging from first aid to Olympic rules, cultural etiquette to sensitivity awareness with an emphasis on values. Each module was accompanied by a 15-minute quiz.

The Paralympics were held from March 6-15 with athletes from 54 countries participating. Casinghino was given a time to report to receive his credentials which admitted him to the various competitions (and cafeteria!) and volunteer swag which included Olympic/Paralympic

emblazoned jackets (2), polo shirts, pants, and boots.

Obtaining transportation and lodging was totally up to him and he found a small hotel about 40 miles from the main venue run by a couple. "The husband owner, Giuseppe, was also a volunteer and very helpful to me. Although I had rented a car, the bus transportation was great and Giuseppe and I would ride into the activities together," said Casinghino. "He also helped me get assigned two more shifts- one at the downhill races and one

at the curling rink."

It was difficult for Casinghino to choose his best memory because there were so many wonderful things about his experience. Certainly, the bars at night where he met up with athletes, volunteers and attendees to share stories and get to know a little about them. All of the athletes' stories were inspirational and it gave him pause to think of what they had overcome to get there. One young woman from Australia had been an Iron Man competitor before a tragic accident left her a paraplegic, but there she was competing. He felt a sense of wonderment at the indomitable spirit of the athletes and that so many strangers could come together in such harmony to celebrate them and their common humanity. When push came to shove however, Casinghino concluded that it was walking with an Argentinian who needed assistance in waving his country's flag in the closing ceremony.

Leaving the event with a number of new friends who promised to keep in touch, Casinghino was already thinking about volunteering at the next winter Olympics in France. ☘



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Senior Center & Mini Bus News

By Peter Leclerc, Director of Community Services 860-668-8830

Senior Center Lunches

Lunches are \$6 and include tea, a cold beverage, and dessert.

Please make reservations by noon the day prior.

Please bring your own container for leftovers.

Menu is subject to change.

Tues, May 5 - Spinach and ham crustless quiche, sausage patty, tater tots

Wed, May 6 - Pork tenderloin, stuffing, green bean casserole

Thurs, May 7 - Pasta with roasted tomato and asparagus, salad, garlic bread

Tues, May 12 - Sloppy Joe on a roll, carrot and celery sticks with dip, chips

Wed, May 13 - Honey mustard chicken, mashed potatoes, vegetable

Thurs, May 14 - Kielbasa, pierogis, heirloom apple salad

Tues, May 19 - Ham and cheese Hawaiian sliders, coleslaw, fruit

Wed, May 20 - Sweet and sour chicken, broccoli, and carrots on top of rice

Thurs, May 21 - Beef and barley soup, cheesy breadstick, cucumber salad

Tues, May 26 - Barbecue chicken, potato salad, corn bread

Wed, May 27 - American chop suey, salad, roll and butter

Thurs, May 28 - Sweet sausage on a roll with onions and peppers, baked beans.

Mini Bus Trips

Mini Bus trips require five passengers and are weather permitting. Reservations for May trips will open on April 20. Call 860-668-3844 to make a reservation.

Shopping at Westfarms

Tuesday, May 5 - Pickups begin at 9 a.m.

Lunch at Zanto in Suffield

Friday, May 8 - Pickups begin at 11:30 a.m.

MGM Casino in Springfield Tuesday, May 12 - Pickups begin at 9 a.m.

Shopping at Walmart

Thursday, May 14 - Pickups begin at 8:30 a.m.

Lunch at Cracker Barrel

Tuesday, May 19 - Pickups begin at 11:30 a.m.

Lunch at Lulu's

Friday, May 25 - Pickups begin at 11:30 a.m.

Elizabeth Park & Cheesecake Factory

Tuesday, May 26 - Pickups begin at 9 a.m.

ups begin at 9 a.m.

May Activities

Cinco de Mayo Lunch and Trivia - Tuesday, May 5 - 12 - 2 p.m. Included with lunch sign-up!

Price Is Right - Tuesday, May 19 - 1 - 2 p.m. Free

Lunch at Sunrise Park - Friday, May 15 - 12 - 1 p.m. Free. Come have a packed lunch and enjoy beautiful scenery. Must sign up with Bethany. Limited minibus spots.

Art Hour

Thursdays 10—11:30 a.m. FREE!

May 7 — Coloring Coasters

May 14 — Painting Pot Holders

May 21 — Beaded Keychains

Card Making Class

Tuesday, May 12 9:30 - 10:30 a.m.

Hosted by Karenoughcrafts. \$15 per person. Call 860-836-1326 by the Sunday before.

Suffield Academy Visits

Tuesdays 2-3 p.m.

High school students from Suffield Academy will be coming to assist seniors with technology and more!



SUFFIELD SIDEKICKS

TEENS HELPING SENIORS PROGRAM

The Suffield Sidekicks - Teens Helping Seniors Program *is seeking teens, ages 14-18, to join our team.* Participants are paid to do light housework, yardwork, help with electronics and small projects around the house. It's a great opportunity to make connections with those in your community who need an extra hand. **The program is FREE for Suffield Seniors.*

- ✓ Earn money while having fun and helping senior citizens in your community.
- ✓ Accept jobs when you can. Very flexible weekend schedule.
- ✓ Complete community service hours and receive letters of recommendation.

For more information and an application, please contact:
Joann Moriarty
Director of Suffield Youth Services
jmoriarty@suffieldct.gov or 860-668-3329

Program made possible by a generous grant from the Suffield Greater Together Fund & The Hartford Foundation for Living

Armchair Travel to Finland Monday, May 11

11 a.m.—12 p.m.

FREE! We will be virtually traveling to Finland while trying Finnish food.

Floral Design Classes Tuesday, May 19 & June 23

Morning class 9-10 a.m. Evening class 7-8 p.m. \$45/class. Registration required.

Join the fantastic Bob Whitney to make the most gorgeous designs!

AARP Safe Driver Courses Upcoming Classes: May 20, July 22, Sept 9, Nov 8

9 a.m. - 1 p.m. \$20 AARP Member; \$25 Non-Member Payment by cash or check to

the Instructor. \$5 per person Facility Fee is paid directly to the Senior Center. By cash or check on the day of the class.

English High Tea

Friday, June 5 1-3 p.m.

Terry's High Tea Fundraiser to benefit the kitchen is back! Join us for tea, delicious munchies, prizes, & the famous raffle. \$12 per ticket. Tickets go on sale May 1st. See Terry or Bethany.

Ask the Social Worker

Last Wednesday of each month, 10-11:30 a.m.

SCA's Lauren Marino will be here each month!

For more information visit suffieldseniorcenter.com or call 860-668-8830. ☞

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PARKS & RECREATION NEWS

By Peter Leclerc/Donna Carney-Bastrzycki/Pam Cocca/Dan Leonard 860-668-3862

Parks & Recreation Celebrates!

By Donna Carney-Bastrzycki, Director of Special Programs, Suffield Parks and Recreation Department

It was a bright and beautiful Saturday for our St. Patrick's Weekend and 250th Celebration Spring Hiking & Workshop on March 21. We had great weather and a wonderful turnout of participants of all ages and abilities at scenic Sunrise Park's Upper Pavilion.

In partnership with Mat Jobin, Owner of Reach Your Summit, our hiking event welcomed residents of all ages and abilities for an afternoon focused on outdoor recreation, local history, and community connection. The program began indoors with a work-

shop designed to prepare participants for time on the trail. Topics included spring layering techniques, trail safety, the history of hiking in Connecticut, and proper hydration methods—providing practical knowledge for both new and experienced hikers.

Following the workshop, participants joined guided hikes along a portion of the historic New England Trail while enjoying the natural beauty of Sunrise Park. Hikers had the opportunity to choose between a beginner-friendly walk or a more moderate hike to take in all the beauty of Sunrise Park and to learn more about hiking history in Suffield.

Throughout the program,

participants were supported by hike leaders Mat Jobin of Reach Your Summit, Donna Carney-Bastrzycki, Director of Special Programs, and volunteer Stephan Bastrzycki, who helped guide and encourage attendees along the route.

We were especially glad that the event coincided with National Down Syndrome Day, offering a meaningful opportunity to celebrate inclusion, awareness and community togetherness.

Light snacks were provided, and we extend our sincere thanks to the Marotta Family for generously contributing a selection of delicious homemade goodies that were enjoyed by all in attendance.



Photo by Donna Carney-Bastrzycki

St. Patrick's Weekend Hiking Workshop fun on Sunrise Parks' Upper Pavilion

As Suffield Parks & Recreation, we are grateful to everyone who joined us and helped make the program such a positive and fun experience. Events like this reflect our ongoing commitment to providing opportunities that encourage fit and active lifestyles, appreciation for the outdoors, and meaningful community con-

nections in Suffield. We are now looking ahead with excitement to our spring and summer offerings—including events, camps, and programs—and to continuing the celebration of America's 250th anniversary throughout the season with themed activities, games, and special events for the community to enjoy. ☘

Dancing Stars of Suffield

By Peter Leclerc, CCMO Director of Community Services

The 3rd Annual Dancing Stars of Suffield had a special America theme to fit in with our celebration of America's 250th Anniversary. The event brought energy, elegance and community spirit together for an unforgettable evening, in support of a meaningful cause. This quickly has become one of the most popular happenings, but it is about more than the dedicated dancers, it supports our Bowling Buddies Group and Special Olympic team.

Modeled after the Dancing with the Stars television show, the event featured local celebrity dancers paired with

professionals from the Suffield Fred Astaire Dance Studio. Amazing performances included Joe Artioli and Anastasiia Alekseienco (Paso Doble and Hustle), Allise Markowski and Serghei Cusnir (Cha Cha and Rumba), Chris Kellogg and Anastasia Barhatova (Foxtrot and Swing), Karen Rolocut and Serghei Cusnir (Mambo), and Peter Leclerc with Anastasia Barhatova (Quick Step). At the end of the night, Karen Rolocut took home the coveted Mirrorball Trophy! Congratulations to all of the dancers and thank you for all of your hard work and dedication.

Guest performances from Fred Astaire students and former participants Amanda Tini and Melissa Mack showed off



Photo by Rob Faber Photography.

(L-R): Amanda Tini, Anthony Newondowski, Melissa Mack, Jordan Adison, Chris Kellogg, Peter Leclerc, Andrew Kerski, Anastasia Barhatova, Tony Dovolani, Anastasia Abrashin, Joe Artioli, Anastasiia Alekseienco, Allise Markowski, Karen Rolocut and Serghei Cusnir.

their tremendous talent! The crowd was also treated to a dramatic Rumba by student and Marine Jordan Adison with Anastasiia Alekseienco. Following the student dances, the crowd was treated by professional showcases by Anastasia Alekseienco, Serghei Cusnir and Anastasia Barha-

toiva! Internationally known Fred Astaire Dance judges Anastasia Abrashin and Dancing with the Stars champion Tony Dovolani brought expertise and charm to the evening for their third year also.

This event would not have become the success it has without the support and

partnership with the Fred Astaire Dance Studio, including co-owners Anastasia Barhatova and Andrew Kerski, as well as the sponsors and dedicated staff and volunteers. I cannot thank all of them enough for all of their hard work and generosity.

You can check out all of the dances on our Instagram or Facebook, both found under, @suffieldrec. We are already looking forward to next year!

If you, or someone you know, would like more information on how to participate as a dancer or sponsor for next year's event, please email: recreation@suffieldct.gov or call (860) 668-3862 and speak with Donna Carney-Bastrzycki in Parks & Recreation. ☘

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Deadlines for June 2026 Issue

Submissions for articles should include the author's name, address, telephone number and email. If applicable, include photographer's name. Please send by email to: inbox@thesuffieldobserver.com

Submissions for ads should include the contact person, business name, billing address, telephone number and email. All ads must be submitted as high-resolution images in .pdf (preferred), or .tif format. Please send by email to: ads@thesuffieldobserver.com

For either articles or ads, if unable to use email, submit a flashdrive or hardcopy (articles only) to the office on the lower level of the Suffield Village or mail it to our post office box. For articles, please use MS Word. All submissions will be considered to be property of *The Suffield Observer*.

Op-Eds	Email	Deadline:	May 12
Articles	Hard-copy only	Deadline:	May 10
Articles	Email	Deadline:	May 12
Ads	All Ads	Deadline:	May 10
Photos	All Photos	Deadline:	May 12

Publish Date: June 1, 2026

The Suffield Observer

P.O. Box 424
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 and Ads@TheSuffieldObserver.com

Our Mission: To build a sense of community throughout the town of Suffield and to provide a forum where all sides of issues may be addressed.

Our Organization: The *Observer* is written by, for and about the people of Suffield. We are an independent, non-profit, non-partisan organization seeking to provide information and news about the town of Suffield.

Donations: There is no charge for the *Observer*, but we welcome donations to help pay for our rent, printing and mailing costs.

Advertisers: To advertise in *The Suffield Observer*, contact our advertising manager, at 860-668-7442, and we will be glad to help. We thank our advertisers for their support. We feel strongly that one way to build a sense of community is to support our local businesses.

Volunteers: If you would like to be a part of publishing *The Suffield Observer*, you would be most welcome. No previous experience necessary. Call Ray Dalrymple, 860-668-7711.

Guidance for all submitted articles: All *Observer* submissions must conform to the following criteria: They must be reasonable and civil, free of libelous or slanderous content, timely and of community interest. Any criticism must be directed at ideas, actions or decisions, not people. When writers don't adhere to the criteria, the *Observer* will attempt to contact them. If writers do not agree to make necessary changes, the *Observer* reserves the right to reject the article. Articles attacking the actions of an individual or organization must be submitted by the 9th of the month to allow for the affected parties rebuttal, or that party is allowed a rebuttal in the following issue. The choice is up to the affected party. Responses must be in kind.

Letters to the Editor/OpEds: The *Observer* accepts letters/OpEds that are factual and of interest to the community. We strive to print a balance of all sides of an issue. Letters should not exceed 250 words, OpEds should not exceed 500 words. Only one letter /OpEd per writer is allowed every three months. We do not accept Letters to the Editor endorsing political candidates.

Business Articles: *The Suffield Observer* does not accept articles written by owners of a business that could be considered self-serving. Advertising space is available for such purposes.

Political Ads: In the interest of maintaining a level playing field, we accept no political ads but do print at election time a Suffield Voters' Guide with input from the local candidates.

Articles: We look forward to content on community issues or topics which would contribute to the benefit of residents of the community. Contributions include poetry, community interest articles, short stories, personal profiles, etc. Article length typically ranges from 100 to 600 words depending on the subject.

Photos: Photos enhance articles, and sometimes a stand-alone photo with a good caption beats a short article. Please send photographs as attachments (not embedded in a document). For quality printing send good resolution of 300 pixels per inch or higher.

Suggestions: We are a volunteer organization and we truly welcome suggestions that would improve the newspaper.

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<https://www.facebook.com/SuffieldGardenClub/>

Celebrating 70 Years Together!

By Kathy Banak

Ron and Mary Banak recently celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary at Suffield by the River.

They have been residents there for the past four years and love living in Suffield.

They have four children

who joined the festivities.

Their son Brian and grandson Matthew are local realtors at Coldwell Banker Suffield office.

Many family members belong to Sacred Heart parish and are active in the local community.

Congratulations! ☘



Photo provided by Kathy Banak

Ron and Mary Banak, then and now.

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Suffield Garden Club

www.SuffieldGardenClub.org



May Market is Coming!

By Lisa Parker, Suffield Garden Club

When you see the merry, yellow and white striped tents next to the Phelps-Hatheway House barn, you know it's time for May Market!

Now in its 48th year, the Suffield Garden Club's May Market always delights. Thirty-five vendors will be offering everything from plants, garden art, pottery, house signs, metal work, wooden ware, unique wreaths, and second-hand treasures to power equipment, jewelry and food. Shoppers can patronize returning favorites as well as new additions like the Dirty Sip, an on-trend drink that mixes soda with flavored

syrups and creamer. Also new this year is live entertainment for children and adults in the Summer House just south of the main house.

Gardening enthusiasts can enjoy extra benefits such as the availability of Spear Head Spades, roses and shrubs, and Suffield High's own Agriscience students with a selection of student-grown plants and herbs. The Garden Club also offers "Member Plants" – locally grown perennials and annuals at amazingly low prices – and free gardening advice at the Club's booth.

Admission is free, but don't forget to bring cash or your checkbook since not all vendors take credit cards. Visitors are encouraged to

bring their own reusable shopping bags, as well as a wagon or cart for transporting their treasures back to their cars.

The Suffield Garden Club, organized in 1934, is a non-profit organization dedicated to the beautification of Suffield. Proceeds from this event support civic beautification, high school scholarships, town conservation, horticulture education, and garden therapy programs.

May Market
Saturday, May 16, rain or shine.

9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Phelps-Hatheway House
Barn and Grounds
55 S. Main Street
Suffield, Conn. ☘



Photo provided by Kathleen Horrigan

Visitors to the annual May Market enjoy a fun, beautiful outdoor shopping experience.

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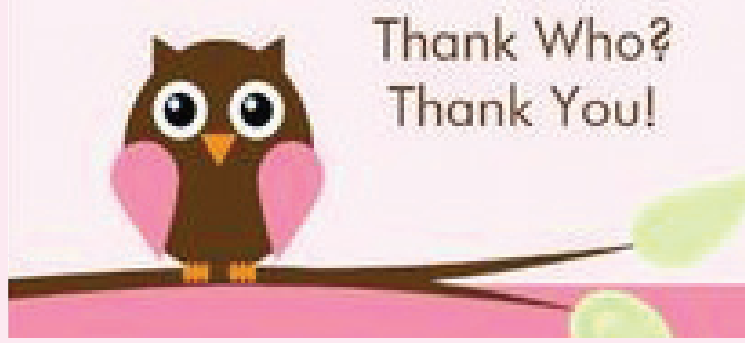
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Online Advertising

By Kathy Werth

The Observer offers online advertising. Unlike the print edition, where ads appear beneath articles on specific pages, ads in the digital edition appear beneath articles that our readers are actively viewing.

For advertisers with an online presence, we can include a link to it so readers can access more information by simply clicking on an ad.

To upgrade to online advertising, contact Ann Kannen by email at ads@thesuffieldobserver.com or by phone at 860-668-7442.

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Let's Save Gorillas!

By Gayle Demko

Suffield Rotary has collected 160 lbs. of recycled electronics and through Eco-Cell Recycling has supported GRACE-Gorillas.org, an organization working in the Congo to rescue gorillas and provide a habitat for their sanctuary.

Why Recycle Your Electronics? Electronics linked to gorilla habitat destruction include Coltan-mined devices. Recycling reduces mining, prevents landfill toxins, and recovers valuable materials. Items that can be recycled: Cell Phones/Smartphones, iPads/Tablets, iPods/mp3 Players, GPS, Smartwatches, AirPods/Earbuds, VR Headsets and Digital Cameras and cables.

The Problem. With more than six billion cell phones worldwide and less than 20% recycled, electronics contribute to habitat loss for gorillas through Coltan mining. Americans typically replace phones every two years.



Who Benefits from your donation? GRACE, operating in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, works with communities to protect over 500,000 acres of habitat for people and gorillas. GRACE provides the only sanctuary for rescued Grauer's gorillas, focusing on rewilding and supporting this endangered species within a biodiversity hotspot. The results of recycling will: Fund gorilla conservation, reduce resource mining in gorilla habitats, prevent toxic waste and reclaim precious metals.

Electronic drop off boxes are located at: M&T Bank, Suffield Town Hall, Suffield Senior Center, Kent Memorial Library, and Suffield High School Office. Thank you for supporting this worthwhile project. ☘



Photo provided by the author

Kids Enjoy the Great Outdoors!

Suffield Balance

By Anna-Kristin Daub-Murphy,

Suffield Balance Project

Beyond the Sidelines: How Free Play Builds Resilient Kids

We all want the best for our kids, often filling their schedules with sports, tutors and enrichment to ensure they succeed. But research suggests the most vital "skill" for a child's future isn't learned in a classroom or on a coached field—it's developed through unstructured independence.

When we step back, we aren't doing less; we are giving our children the space to build resilience, social savvy and mental clarity.

The Triple Threat of Independent Play

- **Mental Health:** According to the Let Grow movement, independent activity is the primary way children develop an "internal locus of control"—the belief that they can handle life's challenges. This is a proven buffer against the rising rates of childhood anxiety (Gray et al., 2023).

- **Social Intelligence:** Without an adult "referee," kids must negotiate their own rules, resolve conflicts and practice empathy. These "soft skills" are

the foundation of leadership and healthy relationships.

- **Physical Vitality:** Natural, child-led movement—climbing, biking or tag—builds spatial awareness and gross motor skills in a way that rigid, organized sports often cannot.

Reclaiming Balance with "Play Club"

We know modern life is busy. That's why we advocate for Play Clubs: designated times (often before or after school) for unstructured, multi-age free play. In a Play Club, there are no screens and no coaches—just kids being kids. It serves as a vital "pressure valve" for children living in an achievement-heavy culture. Younger kids learn from the older ones, and older kids gain responsibility, all while building resilience, confidence, and social skills.



In partnership with Suffield Parks & Recreation, we invite your child (grades K - 5) to join us for a FREE "Intro to Play Club" hour of play on May 12, from 3:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Hilltop Farm Store & Creamery Celebrates Sweet Return

By Jason Simienskowski

A local favorite has reopened for the season with new flavors, live music, and community events.

Spring is about to get a whole lot sweeter. Hilltop Farm Store & Creamery has opened its doors for its highly anticipated fifth season, welcoming back loyal customers and inviting new visitors to experience one of the area's most charming seasonal destinations.

Beginning opening day, the creamery will operate Tuesday through Sunday from 12 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., offering the perfect afternoon treat or evening dessert stop as warmer weather settles in.

This season promises a fresh lineup of indulgent creations alongside beloved classics. Guests can look forward to imaginative new staff-crafted sundaes and floats, as well as exciting ice cream flavors like Espresso Caramel Brownie and Caramel Cookie Swirl. True to tradition, Hilltop will continue rotating flavors frequently, ensuring there's always something new to discover—whether you're a first-time visitor or a seasoned regular.

Fan-favorite events are also making a return. The popular "Sundaes, Sunsets and



Hilltop Farm

Live Music" series will kick off in June, offering the perfect pairing of local talent, scenic views, and frozen desserts. Guests are encouraged to follow the creamery on Facebook for upcoming performance dates and featured musicians.

Car enthusiasts will want to mark their calendars for the annual Hilltop Farm Car Show, scheduled for June 28 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Registration opens at 9 a.m., and all makes and models are welcome. While participation is free, donations to support Hilltop Farm are warmly appreciated, reinforcing the shop's deep commitment to preserving the farm for community to enjoy.

Hilltop Farm Store and

Creamery also continues its valued partnerships with Hastings Farm, Cupola Hollow and Vincent Farms, bringing a curated selection of fresh, locally sourced farm products directly to customers.

Perhaps most exciting for returning guests, the friendly team that has become a hallmark of the Hilltop experience will be back in full force—ready to serve up smiles along with every scoop.

As the countdown to opening day begins, one thing is certain: whether you're coming for the ice cream, the atmosphere, or the community spirit, Hilltop Farm Store & Creamery is ready to make its fifth season the sweetest one yet.

We hope to see you there! ☘

at Bruce Park. More info and registration through Parks & Rec.: suffieldct.myrec.com. Registered Spaulding students can be dismissed directly to Play Club. When you join the Suffield Balance Project, you will also see more details on our informal Sunday Play Club opportunities.

Our Mission at The Balance Project

At The Balance Project, we aren't here to judge the "over-scheduled" family—we are here to support each other. Our mission in Suffield is to help each other find a healthier equilibrium between high-quality opportunities

and the high-quality "nothing" time kids need to thrive.

By embracing "Let Grow" principles, we're helping our community raise children who aren't just accomplished, but confident, capable, and truly independent.

Interested in joining the Suffield Balance Project? ☘

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A Fond Farewell

By Jay Presser, former Chair of The Suffield Observer

If all goes as planned, which sometimes happens, by the time you read this The Suffield Observer will have a new chairperson. After nearly a decade in the position, and approaching my 75th birthday, I decided it is time for me to leave the post, and at a scheduled meeting in early May the Board will have elected a new chair. I did not want to disappear without reviewing some of the best and worst times of my tenure and thanking those who really do the work.

Like all chairs, my primary duty was to honor our mission statement, which in my opinion, was always like walking a tightrope to fulfill two distinct, and at least somewhat contradictory, goals. The original official mission, which reflected the reasons why Sam Fuller and friends created the paper during what was a somewhat contentious period for the town, was "to build a sense of community throughout the town of Suffield." A second goal, added subsequently, was "to provide a forum where all sides of issues may be addressed." I have always believed that these dual goals are somewhat contradictory, since presenting specific and different views on controversial issues, appropriate as that goal is, risks weakening rather than strengthening a sense of community. So, the chair, like the wonderful editorial staff, constantly must try to balance the two. That is the reason, for example, that submissions must be civil, and focused on issues rather than attacking individuals. That balancing act is also the basis for some policy changes, such as changing submission deadlines so, when appropriate, the "other side" has an opportunity to respond in the same issue.

Due to forces beyond our control, I also had to address some unique challenges. Very soon after I started my tenure we learned only a few weeks before publication date and without notice, that our long-time printing company was immediately ceasing work on newspapers like ours. With the help of our business manager, we were able to find a replacement printer and the issue appeared in mailboxes as scheduled.

Another unique challenge was the one no one wants to remember, the Covid shutdown. Barred from our office, thanks to the extraordinary efforts of our Editor in Chief and webmasters, we continued to publish online, providing important information for our community and often free advertisements to our struggling local companies. Throughout my

tenure we have continued to expand our internet presence. Thanks to the abilities and efforts of our webmasters the paper is available free online for students at college, relocated retirees and others no longer in town.

The happiest unique moment occurred in April 2025, when Observer volunteers, and some long-term advertisers, past and present and guests gathered to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the paper. It is hard to articulate just how rare it is for a free community newspaper to have survived for a quarter of a century, and many present, including this writer, were proud of the accomplishment. But more importantly, it was a reminder of the truly wonderful volunteers that made it all possible. These include reporters and columnists, the advertising staff, word processors, the InDesign Team, the production team, photographers and proofreaders. Working with so many wonderful volunteers, whose contributions to getting the paper out ten times a year is humbling and far outweigh any aggravation arising from the challenges.

Lastly, I note that we are living in changing times, where disagreements easily fall into verbal crusades, reflecting an unwillingness to see and respect the other viewpoint. We at the paper are aware that in some circles there is a perception that a particular viewpoint is determinative of what gets published. That has never been the case, and there have been many times when our Editor-in-Chief has solicited (sometimes successfully and sometimes not) viewpoints that differ from that already submitted, even if the "contrary" article would favor a position different than her own viewpoint.

We have strived to combat the perception, and any valid criticism, with policy changes and recruiting a new Board of Directors with more viewpoint diversity. And during our last election cycle we received criticism of "bias" from both political parties. When I saw that I smiled, telling myself that my job here at the paper is done.

In closing, I encourage all of you to get involved, either volunteering at the paper (you do not need to be a good writer), submitting material for consideration and, at a minimum, being civil and open to views that may be different than your own.

Thank you all.





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