

# Washington, CT

## Update on Our Busy Highway Department

We see them on the roads every day but do we really understand what they do? We certainly become more aware of their presence during winter storms and severe weather events because without their efforts, we would be stranded in our homes without safe roads to travel. We're talking about the Washington Highway Department or Public Works. A small group (11 employees) take care of and maintain ninety-three miles of roads in our town. Most live here in Washington and serve as volunteers for our emergency services as EMT's, firefighter's or both. All are committed to their work and take great pride in what they do.

Our Highway Department doesn't just maintain our roadways. They also take care of many of our Town properties as well as undertaking many civil engineering projects that are not done in other municipalities. This results in a savings of millions of dollars for taxpayers. Many residents have witnessed the transformation and upgrade of our Transfer Station. This project was designed at a cost of \$1.9 million. Our Highway Department did the work in-house completing the project for less than \$400,000. The reconstruction of the entire length of



Mygatt Road was engineered to cost \$1.3 million and was completed in-house for less than \$700,000. These are just two examples of the innovative work that continues throughout the year.

Our Highway Department Director Kevin

Smith can be reached at 860-868-7986 or [ksmith@washingtonct.org](mailto:ksmith@washingtonct.org). When you're on the roads and you see our crews at work, please keep in mind the traffic laws and their safety. If you see them in front of your home, feel free to say hello and ask any questions. They're always willing to help our residents.

## Message from the Selectmen's Office

As we look forward to autumn, we all look for a breather and perhaps a bit slower pace than summer. Taking more time to enjoy the fall colors, enjoying cider and donuts fresh from Averill's farm or just taking an extended walk through one of the Steep Rock preserves. This is not to say that there is less happening in Town to take part in. There are still many community events to enjoy. You won't need to look far to fill your day with exciting events!

With all the fall events, it's a good opportunity to remind residents about road safety. Since the outset of the pandemic three years ago, we have seen a large increase in new, full and part-time residents. It's critical

that we're all aware of greater congestion on our roads from automobiles, cyclists and pedestrians. When you're driving, please obey our traffic laws and speed limits and be aware of cyclists and pedestrians that are sharing the roads with you. We're also asking drivers to be especially careful in the village centers.

This season shout out goes to our staff at the Transfer Station. Liz, Jerry, Liddy, Leslie and Michael have all done an amazing job in handling and implementing the transition at the station. They are well known and respected by our residents. Feel free to ask them questions on the various new recycling initiatives that are now in operation.

As always, we encourage residents to get involved. If you're new to Washington and want to take part in what makes this such a special community, check out the Town website at [washingtonct.org](http://washingtonct.org) or Explore Washington at [explorewashingtonct.com](http://explorewashingtonct.com) to find out more and learn what might be the best fit for you.

Thanks to all who make this an incredible place to live and work.

Board of Selectmen

Jim Brinton  
Jay Hubelbank  
Dean Sarjeant

## Spotlight on Business: Valley Spirit Wellness

When Jampa Stewart was offered an opportunity to open a wellness center in Washington Depot in 2016, he was living in Austin, Texas, and despite being a native of upstate New York, hadn't been west of the Mississippi River since 1990.

When he arrived, Stewart said he knew immediately that Washington was the perfect place to offer health and wellness.



"I've always liked smaller towns. Here we have mountains, rivers, lakes, forests. It's a beautiful, natural place to live," Stewart said. "The people are educated and successful, and Washington has so much going on. Every weekend there are concerts, talks and community events. It's such an active, friendly town."

Stewart grew up among doctors and has always found the essence of wellness his calling. But rather than practice the traditional Western medicine of his ancestors, Stewart took a more holistic path. As a young man, Stewart became interested in the ancient ways of Eastern life and medicine from Buddhism to acupuncture and Daoism, studying in China and New Mexico.

In 2021, Stewart opened Valley Spirit Wellness on Kirby Road near the Town green. Here Stewart offers acupuncture, Qigong, Tai Chi, Meditation, and even courses about the practice of ancient medicine. Named an honorary Doctor of Oriental Medicine by the state of New Mexico, Stewart said that an open, warm, educated community like Washington is a perfect community for his practice.

He paused for a moment and recalled "The Gilmore Girls," a television series based on small town life in the Depot: "I can see why they chose this town, too."

1 Kirby Rd, Washington, CT 06793  
(860) 619-2788  
[valleyspiritcoop.com](http://valleyspiritcoop.com)

## Delay of Demolition Ordinance

The Town of Washington passed a Delay of Demolition Ordinance in May 2022. The intent of the ordinance is to preserve the architectural, historic and aesthetic legacy of the Town through a reflective and collaborative process between homeowners or prospective owners and the Town that identifies buildings over 75 years of age and evaluates any applications for demolition or significant renovation.



The Ordinance was fashioned in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes and similar ordinances of several other of the state's towns. Although there's no way to ultimately prevent a demolition or extensive renovation, it does provide for the imposition of a 120-day delay. Accordingly, a Commission was formed to act as an evaluating body to review applications for demolition or extensive renovations. The Commission also acts as a consulting body for the applicants to consider and suggest alternatives and to give advice and guidance for any significant changes that'll alter the character of the neighborhood and the community. The Delay-of-Demolition Commission has been seated for several months and has now completed the first task of providing the public with the necessary information to guide potential property purchasers as well as current owners in the process. All this information is now on the Town website at <https://www.washingtonct.org/delay-of-demolition-committee>

The next task of the Commission is to inform the public and future homeowners of this Ordinance and the community of the values it represents. No one living here or considering purchasing property here does so without appreciating the unique qualities of this area, qualities that have been nurtured, preserved and maintained with the determined effort and shared regard of generations of citizens. These qualities do not exist without the participation and support of the Town's current and future residents. The Commission calls upon all to support us and to feel free to contact us and discuss our mandate and your opportunities to further the preservation and health of the unique and lovely place where we live.

## Stay in the Loop on Washington News and Events!

Go to [ExploreWashingtonCT.com](http://ExploreWashingtonCT.com), or scan the QR code at the right to visit the official community website for events, things to do, shopping, dining and happenings around town.

Visit [washingtonct.org](http://washingtonct.org), the town's website for municipal and departmental information.





## Assessor's Office

October 1, 2023 is universal assessment date in Connecticut. It's the effective date for some tax benefit applications or statutorily required filings with the Assessor's office.

The 2023 town-wide, state-mandated revaluation will be coming to a close. Residents will be notified via mail of any changes to their assessment in late November to early December.

Military veterans seeking exemptions for Honorable service on the 2023 Grand List and in future years, must file their Form DD-214 service record with the Town Clerk on or before September 29, 2023 – if they haven't previously done so.

Additional Veteran's and Renter's Rebate Tax Relief (income-based programs) applications are due by October 1, 2023 with all supporting income documentation.

Owners of businesses, unregistered or out of state motor vehicles, as of October 1, 2023 are required to file Personal Property Declarations with the Assessor's office by U.S. post-marked no later than November 1, 2023. All forms are available on the Assessor's page at [washingtonct.org](http://washingtonct.org).

Questions for the Assessor? Please contact us at 860-868-0398 or by email at [assessor@washingtonct.org](mailto:assessor@washingtonct.org).

## Washington Environmental Council

The Washington Environmental Council (WEC) is thrilled to spread the word about the new food scrap drop off program at the transfer station! Residents are now able to drop off food scraps for compost at 57 Clark Rd. in Washington, CT. This is an exciting step on our mission toward sustainability. For more information, visit [info@curbcompost.org](mailto:info@curbcompost.org).



WEC is a local nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the environmental quality of the Town of Washington and beyond through advocacy, leadership, education and collaboration. Please check out our website at [Wec-ct.org](http://Wec-ct.org) to learn more or email [Lauren@wec-ct.org](mailto:Lauren@wec-ct.org) to find out how you can get involved!

## Washington Refugee Resettlement Program

Alibaba Awrang, our talented Afghan calligraphic painter whose family the Washington Refugee Resettlement Program welcomed to Litchfield County in March 2021, has launched his website. Check it out at <https://www.alibabaawrang.com>, where you can also sign up to receive emails about his workshops, art shows, etc.

Alibaba will be offering Saturday workshops, *Introduction to Persian Calligraphy*, at the Brookfield Craft Center, beginning on Saturday, October 21 (from 9:30 am to 12:30pm). The classes will be geared to absolute beginners, but all levels are welcome! You can find more details and



register for Classes (under Drawing and Painting) at <https://www.brookfieldcraft.org>.

In addition, you can admire Alibaba's artwork, along with the works of fellow Afghan potter Matin Malikzada, at the Mattatuck Museum in Waterbury, at an exhibition called *Uprooted: From Afghanistan to Connecticut*, from September 17 to January 7, 2024. Join us at the Opening Reception of the show on Sunday, October 1. For details: <https://www.mattmuseum.org>.

A call for help: Alibaba received his CT driver's license last month. He's now in need of a vehicle to travel and transport his art to exhibitions, workshops, etc. If you have a used six-passenger car or van that you would like to donate or offer to him at a reasonable price,



he and WRRP would be most grateful. Just go to his website (see above), click on Contact and send him a message.

The Awrang family is feeling increasingly at home in Connecticut. The four children enjoyed very busy summers. The three older kids gave back to the communities that welcomed them so generously. Arman, 17, worked as an intern at Sullivan Farm, a nonprofit educational/vocational farm in New Milford. Arezo, 16, volunteered in the pottery studio at the Village Art Center in New Milford. Ali, 14, was a helper at Robotics and Beyond's summer programs, an educational nonprofit focused on STEM and design. Taha, 11, attended summer school after a week of basketball camp and before a week of sleep-away camp as a scholarship camper.



## Common Ground with Jane Whitney

*Common Ground with Jane Whitney*, the nationally syndicated news show is celebrating its return to our home of Washington by inviting area environmental groups to participate in a climate change forum focusing on what we can do as individuals to slow global warming.

The forum, "Climate Change: Minutes to Midnight," is the third episode of the show's season and features some of the country's most dynamic environmental voices, including Ian Bremmer and Ben Jealous. It's designed to bring together the area's leading environmental activists as part of an effort to turbo charge local awareness.

If your organization would like to participate, please contact [lauren.hoskins@cgjw.org](mailto:lauren.hoskins@cgjw.org).



We're also thrilled to announce a partnership with the Frederick Gunn School, which has made it possible for us to move back to town. Our new venue, the Tisch Family Auditorium in the Thomas S. Perakos Arts and Community Center, is a state-of-the-art facility and provides local audiences with command performances.

To learn more about *Common Ground*, explore [www.cgjw.org](http://www.cgjw.org) or sign up for our newsletter, The Guide, by adding your name at the bottom of our home page. Please contact [julia.rosenberg@cgjw.org](mailto:julia.rosenberg@cgjw.org) with any questions.

### Upcoming episodes this season:

**September 10**

Climate Change: Minutes to Midnight

**September 24**

Power Remix: Women on Fire

**October 15**

Culture War: America's Blood Sport

**October 29**

American Dream: Wake Up Call

**\*November 12**

Our Better Angels: Thought Royalty

**\*December 3** – Democracy in Color

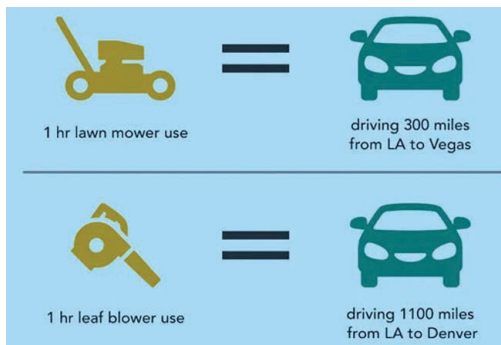
**\*December 17** – Adversity: Anxiety's Rx

*\*Programs taped on these dates will not have live audiences but will be made available for streaming roughly three weeks after the dates listed above.*

## Don't Wait Until The First Leaf Falls.

Examine alternatives to a gas-powered leaf blower, or just let your "Leaves Be."

Hundreds of cities/towns across the country are getting onboard with restricting the use of gas-powered leaf blowers.



**Comparison of bestselling gasoline-powered lawn equipment to the pollution produced by driving the best-selling car in 2017 (Toyota Camry).** / image: California Air Resources Board

Here are a few reasons why:

- Using a gas-powered leaf blower for just one hour is the equivalent in emissions to driving a car 1,100 miles or 18 hours of driving! (Per USA today)
- High noise decibels disturb the neighborhood and can cause tinnitus/hearing loss.

- High velocity leaf blowing erodes topsoil and displaces natural habitats for insects.
- Using gas-powered leaf and lawn equipment negatively impacts the climate.

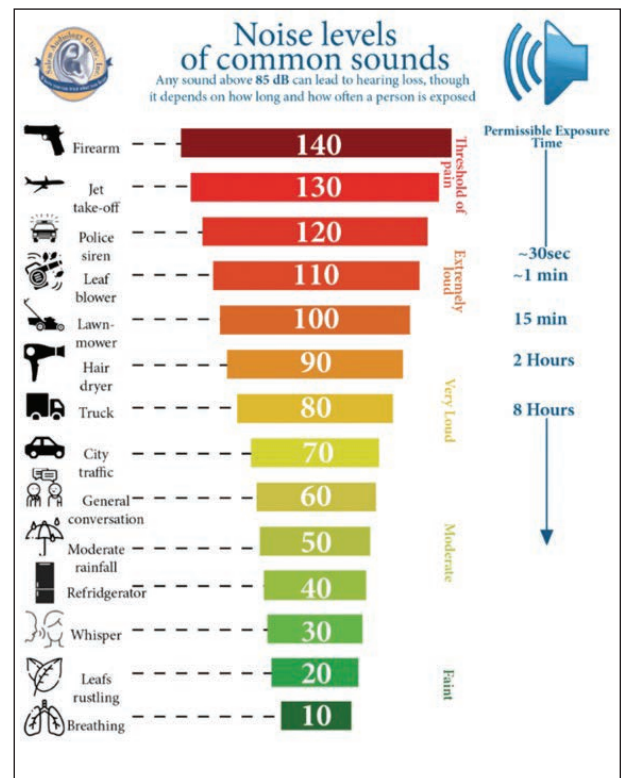
Tip: When thinking about purchasing

a battery-operated leaf blower, consider a brand that accommodates the same battery size. For example: same brand weed wackers, chainsaws and leaf blowers can all use the same reusable battery packs.

Consider "Leaving Your Leaves": You already have the leaves, let them assist you in reducing weeds in your gardens. Leaves make great mulch and create nutrient dense soil, especially when mulched first. Swap your mower blades to mulching blades which will alleviate the need to blow your leaves altogether. They will naturally decompose in place by allowing microbes and worms to do their job.

As we move toward late summer, plan ahead now by formulating ways that you can change your leaf management strategy this fall.

–The Washington Sustainability Committee





# Gunn Memorial Library & Museum

www.gunnlibrary.org

## News & Updates

### Update on Gunn Library Renovation Project

On February 5, the Gunn Library experienced a frozen pipe break that caused extensive water damage in the Adult and Children's Libraries.

Since that time, the Adult and Children's Libraries have been opened with modified services in the upstairs Wykeham Room (the original part of the library). We have enjoyed seeing so many of you!

We have now substantially repaired and painted the interior of the library, installed lighting and carpets. Beginning in September, we look forward to installation of the bookcases, furniture and other enhancements such as digital information screens and improved Wi-Fi throughout the library.

To facilitate the return and re-shelving of our collection, we'll be operating on a significantly modified schedule during mid-September to mid-October.

We're on track with our projected completion in the fall. We anticipate announcing a celebratory Open House for November. We're eager to welcome the community back into our newly renovated spaces and we'll share more specific details in the next few weeks.

Please check our website or subscribe to our e-newsletter for our updates.

In the meantime, we invite you to visit the Gunn Museum during normal visiting hours to view our permanent exhibit, *An American Story* as well as our new exhibit, *Homespun Virtue*.

Please feel free to reach out to any of our staff members or trustees with your comments or questions.

### September is Library Card Sign Up Month!

Every September, libraries across the country unite in an effort to make sure every person in their community has a library card.



Throughout the year, your Gunn Library card offers free access to a variety of life-long learning activities, educational and recreational resources, in-person and virtual technology workshops. Our librarians offer personalized and friendly services such as individualized reader's advisory and technology assistance. A library card is (free/open access) to every resident of Washington. Sign up today!

Scan this QR code to register for a library card if you don't have one or fill out a library card application on our website at <https://gunn.biblio.org/eg/opac/register>



Call or email us if you lost your library card number.

With your Gunn Library card, you have 24/7 access to free digital resources such as:

- **Mango Languages**- learn a new language with your library card! Over 70 languages are available in mini lessons that go beyond basic vocabulary and memorization for long lasting learning.
- **Kanopy**- thousands of movies, documentaries, TV shows and more are available on Kanopy. Stream videos on your phone, TV, computer or tablet! Content for children is also available.
- **Libby**- audiobooks, e-books, digital magazines and more are available from your phone, tablet or computer.
- **Northstar Digital Literacy**- learn basic computer skills with these online, self-guided lessons.

Please visit <https://www.gunnlibrary.org/online-resources/> for more information.

**Story Walk:** Have you been to the Story Walk trail in Steep Rock's Macricostas Preserve? Enjoy the beautiful scenery while making your way through the story *Fletcher and the Summer Show* by Julia Rawlinson, a story about friendship, the joys of summer and the little critters of the woods. The trail, which begins at the Judea Garden entrance, is just the right length for little legs, with lovely vistas and interesting terrain. The Story Walk is a joint project between Steep Rock Association, Washington Supply and the Gunn Memorial Library. The featured book changes with the seasons.

## Museum

Online Lecture: "Founding Flier: Benjamin Foulois and the Air Force's 'Can-Do' Spirit with Dr. Doug Lantry." September 18, 2023 at 6:30pm on Zoom



Born and raised in Washington, CT, Major General Benjamin Delahauf Foulois was instrumental in making American aviation what it is today. The Gunn Museum is pleased to present a Zoom lecture on Major General Benjamin Foulois. This lecture will trace Foulois' remarkable sixty-year career and recognition as one of the famed founders of American military aviation. Guest lecturer, Dr. Doug Lantry, has been a curator at the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force since 2000, and serves as the museum's historian.

Please visit our website to register for this program. <https://www.gunnlibrary.org/gunn-museum>, 860-868-7756.

Photo Credit: Foulois standing in front of a Burgess Aircraft. Photo Credit: National Museum U.S. Air Force.

### New Exhibit:

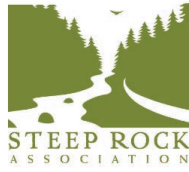
On August 19, the Gunn Museum opened a new exhibit called *Homespun Virtue*, featuring selected Washington textiles from fine needlework to the beautiful gowns of our past residents. Stop by to check it out! Museum hours are: Thursdays and Fridays, 10:00am-4:00pm and Saturdays, 10:00am-3:00pm.

# Steep Rock Upcoming Programs, Events and Volunteer Opportunities

To register, please visit [steeprockassoc.org/events-programs](http://steeprockassoc.org/events-programs)

## Annual Steep Rock Association Community Picnic

**Sept. 9, 12:00pm-2:00pm,**  
Riverwalk Pavilion, 11A School St.,  
Washington Depot



All community members are welcome to join us for food, fun and games! Due to Tunnel Road Bridge closure, the picnic will be at the Pavilion behind the Primary School. All ages.

## Common Ground with Jane Whitney – Climate Change: Minutes to Midnight

**Sept. 10, 4:00-5:00pm,** Tisch Family  
Auditorium/Thomas S. Perakos Arts and  
Community Center  
22 Kirby Rd., Washington, CT

Panelists: Katharine Hayhoe, Dr. Britt  
Wray, Michael Mann, Ben Jealous and Ian  
Bremmer

## Summer Saunters with SRA

**Sept. 13, 5:30pm,**  
Hillside Farm, 397  
Nettleton Hollow  
Rd, Washington,  
CT

Explore Steep  
Rock's newest  
preserve: Hillside  
Farm. Ages 12+.



## Monthly Trail Work Party

**Sept. 16, 10:00am – 12:30pm**

Join our monthly trail work party! The work party meets at 10:00am the third Saturday of every month from April through November. No experience necessary, just a willingness to get your hands dirty and have fun. Ages 16+.

## Mindfulness Hike

**Sept. 17, 8:30am**

Macricostas Preserve, 124 Christian St, New  
Preston

Join special hosts Roxanne Kraft and Alan  
Arellano on this unique mindfulness hike at  
Macricostas Preserve, where we'll explore the  
Boulders Trail.

## Fall Equinox Firepit Event

**Sept. 23, 5:00pm**

Steep Rock House, 116 Christian  
St, New Preston

Join us as we welcome the Fall  
Equinox at our firepit. Light  
refreshments. All ages.

## Heritage Walks 2023

Boulders Trail and Waramaug Rock at  
Macricostas Preserve, 124 Christian St, New  
Preston

**Sept. 24, 10:00am – 1:00pm**

Enjoy a moderate to hilly hike with  
Executive Director, Brian Hagenbuch.  
Explore Steep Rock Association's Boulders  
Trail and the scenic vistas of Macricostas  
Preserve.

## Tunnel Road Connector Hike

**Sept. 30, 11:00am – 2:00pm**

Steep Rock Preserve, 2 Tunnel Road,  
Washington Depot

Join Steep Rock Association and  
Roxbury Land Trust for a 4.5-  
mile intertown hike on Tunnel  
Road, traversing nature preserves  
protected by both organizations.  
Experience the fall foliage, marvel  
at the Shepaug River and learn  
about land stewardship along the  
way. Ages: all, but please note the  
hike length.

## 3 Peaks in 3 Weeks

**Oct. 1-Oct. 22**

Our annual challenge returns!

Hike all three Steep Rock Preserve  
Peaks (Macricostas, Hidden Valley and  
Steep Rock) in three weeks and register  
to win prizes. All age and fitness levels  
are encouraged to join in this friendly  
adventure!

## Washington's Annual Harvest Festival - Carve for Conservation

**Oct. 8, 12:00pm-5:00pm**

River Walk Pavilion, 11A School St,  
Washington

Bring your kids and join Steep Rock  
Association as well as the rest of the town  
of Washington for some fall themed fun at  
the Harvest Festival. We invite you to visit  
our booth and carve the animals that call  
Steep Rock home. The festival will be at the  
Pavilion behind the Primary School. All ages.



## Fall Saunters with SRA

**Oct. 11, 5:00pm,** Johnson Farm at West  
Mountain Preserve

West Mountain Road, Washington

Join Executive Director Brian Hagenbuch  
on a series of casual walks through Steep  
Rock's Preserves.. Ages 12+.

## Judea Garden Fall Clean Up

**Oct. 21, 9:00am-12:00pm & Oct. 22,  
12:00pm-3:00pm**

Clean away plant debris, prep beds and plant  
seeds to greet us early next spring. All ages.

## Monthly Trail Work Party

**Oct. 21, 10:00am – 12:30pm**

Join our monthly trail work party! The work  
party meets at 10:00am the third Saturday of  
every month from April through November.  
No experience necessary, just a willingness to  
get your hands dirty and have fun. Ages 16+.

## Nature Preserve Monitoring Blitz

**Nov. 4 & Nov. 5, 8:30am**

Steep Rock Association 116 Christian St,  
New Preston

Help us monitor Steep Rock Association  
nature preserves for signs of trespass,  
ecosystem health and presence of wildlife  
during the annual Nature Preserve  
Monitoring Blitz. Ages 16+.

## Monthly Trail Work Party

**Nov. 18, 10:00am – 12:30pm**

Join our monthly trail work party! The work  
party meets at 10:00am the third Saturday of  
every month from April through November.  
No experience necessary, just a willingness to  
get your hands dirty and have fun. Ages 16+.



# Town of Washington Tax Collector's Office

Municipal property taxes are based on ownership as of October 1 each year and become payable at the beginning of the following fiscal year July 1. Personal property is assessed at 70% of fair market value.

## Update Addresses

It is so important to update mailing addresses with the Tax department. Do not wait until payment season when tax bills are returned in the mail and interest penalties are applied.

The Tax department cannot change addresses on motor vehicle bills. The DMV requires notification of your new domicile and mailing address within 48 hours of moving. Be sure to change your driver's license and all vehicle registrations. Visit the DMV website for more information: [ct.gov/dmv](http://ct.gov/dmv).

## Delinquent Property Taxes

Unpaid property taxes that were due August 1 and prior are delinquent, incurring interest penalties of 1.5% per month from the due date. Interest increases on the first day of each month. A tax collector has no authority to waive interest. Past due taxes, interest and fees must be paid in full before paying current bills. Failure to receive a tax bill does not relieve a taxpayer of the responsibility to pay taxes or delinquent charges. Unpaid taxes remain due and payable for 15 years. Collection tools will be enforced.

State law requires DMV to deny vehicle registrations in the name of a person reported as tax delinquent. All taxes must be paid on all vehicles prior to a DMV release. Please call the tax office at 860-868-7796 if you need a DMV release.

## Motor Vehicle Taxes

If a vehicle is sold and the plates are transferred to a new vehicle, you must pay the entire amount of the "old" vehicle taxes. A credit will show on the pro-rated supplemental tax bill due in January for the "new" vehicle. However, if you cancelled the registration (plates) on the old vehicle and obtained a new plate for the new vehicle, you must contact the Assessor to apply for a credit.

Contact the Assessor at 860-868-0389 prior to paying motor vehicle taxes if:

- You did not receive a MV tax bill.
- You sold or got rid of a vehicle on which you cancelled the registration.
- You moved out of town/state.
- Your vehicle was stolen or destroyed.

## Payment Options

**Online** – [www.washingtonct.org](http://www.washingtonct.org). Credit/debit card payments cannot be processed in the office.

**Drop Box** – Black, metal box beside the Town Hall central doors. Place check with phone number in a sealed envelope. **NO CASH.**

**U.S.P.S.** – Postmark is accepted as date of payment.

# Region 12 News

Region 12 students enjoyed a joyful June with trips, plays and end-of-the-year celebrations. It was so heartening to see the smiles and hear the laughter of our students as they made memories that will last a lifetime. Thank you to First Selectman, Jim Brinton, town leaders and the Board of Education for their dedication to ensuring an excellent educational experience for our children.



The Shepaug commencement ceremony was the crown jewel of spring, with a dazzling ceremony by the idyllic pond on the school's campus. An impressive audience of

family and friends gathered to celebrate the Class of 2023. The Saturday ceremony was a fitting tribute to this stellar class of intelligent and creative young men and women. Several attendees remarked on the event and shared how they were impressed by the graduates, inspired by the speeches and struck by the beauty of the grounds.

As we say goodbye to the Class of 2023, we excitedly look forward to the 2023-2024 school year. Region 12 is ready to surge with renewed vigor as we ready our students for all that lies



ahead. We're committed to ensuring all students are prepared for life after Region 12, whether that means college, a career, travel or military service. Our goal is to provide opportunities for growth and self-discovery coupled with exemplary academic preparation to pave the path for whatever dreams lie in the hearts of our learners.

A solid foundation is paramount, and Washington Primary School and our other two elementary schools continue to garner state and national accolades as exceptional environments to learn and grow. A consistent effort to improve teaching and learning, offer a rigorous curriculum and understand each student as individuals has remained the secret of our success. Shepaug Valley School continually strives to offer courses that capture students' imagination and provide multiple pathways to success. The agriscience program begins a new chapter with the addition of Tyler Cremeans as Assistant Principal for Agriscience and the addition of some of the most talented teachers in the state. We're eager to cheer on the program as it soars to new heights.

The energy and excitement are palpable as we head into 2023-2024! We invite you to come along and join the Region 12 adventure.

# Hollister House Garden 2023 Fall Events



Join us as we welcome fall at Hollister House Garden with a season of educational programs open to the community. Advance registration

is required for lectures and workshops. A full listing of events can be found at [www.hollisterhousegarden.org/events/](http://www.hollisterhousegarden.org/events/)

## General Information

The garden is open Wednesday & Friday 1:00 – 4:00pm, Saturday 10:00am – 4:00pm. Admission is \$10.



## SEPTEMBER

**September 9, 4:00-6:30pm**

### Cocktails and Preview Buying at the Sale of Rare and Unusual Plants

Enjoy cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and a special opportunity to purchase plants suitable for fall planting from many of New England's premier nurseries before the sale is open to the public on Sunday.

**September 10, 9:00am-3:30pm**

### Sale of Rare and Unusual Plants

Take this special opportunity to shop from some of New England's premier nurseries. Vendors include Broken Arrow Nursery, Cricket Hill Garden, Meadowbrook Gardens and more.

**September 21, 10:00am-3:30pm**

### Art Workshop: Autumn Garden Journaling

Our early autumn garden provides endless examples of richly hued foliage and flowers to draw and record in a garden journal. Class demonstrations will provide plenty of drawing and watercolor tips to expand your garden record keeping.

**September 30, 10:00-11:30am**

### Barn Talk: Shaping the Spirit of Your Garden

Learn how to create a richer experience by building on what already exists in your garden by pushing the five senses in unexpected ways. James McGrath will share the lessons he has learned from visiting and working in a number of different gardens around the world and how we can interpret those learnings into our gardens.

## OCTOBER

**October 7, 10:00am-12:30pm**

### Barn Talk: Seed Saving Practicum

In this class, instructed by Lee Buttala, you'll learn how to identify, collect, clean and store the seeds of a number of perennials and annuals in the garden and will leave the



class with a variety of seeds to introduce into your own garden.

**October 14, 10:00-11:30am**

### Barn Talk: Pruning Tips and Techniques

You'll learn when and where to prune, the proper use of tools and how the correct way of pruning can enhance the growth and blooming of your plants. Lee Reich, PhD, will discuss and demonstrate how plants respond to different types of pruning cuts.

**October 28, 10:00am-1:00pm**

### Art Workshop: Collages

Using the gardens and surrounding landscape as inspiration, we'll be exploring the art of collage during this three-hour workshop with Joanne Wasti. You'll learn how to create a composition by putting different elements and textures together to create an original piece of artwork; realistic or abstract.

## NOVEMBER

**November 17, 10:00am-3:30pm**

### Art Workshop: Amaryllis Watercolor

Join watercolor artist Betsy Rogers-Knox for our last art workshop of the 2023 season and paint a special gift for someone in your life. In celebration of the season, create a watercolor painting of the stunning and much-loved Amaryllis with its large, colorful trumpet-shaped flowers.



# Judy Black Park News

## Judy Black Memorial Park & Gardens News

It's hard to believe, but fall is here. We at the Judy Black Memorial Park & Gardens are reflecting on the fun-filled summer that's now behind us, and looking forward to the festivities of autumn.

### FUNraiser

The highlight of our summer was the sixth annual FUNraiser. This year we welcomed a local band, Frank Sellman & Love Rockit, for a live concert and they put on a stellar performance! Thank you to all those who came out to this event in support of the park.

### Movies @the Park



We had a fantastic outdoor movie night season highlighted by a live, in-person interview with Academy Award winning screenwriter Alfred Uhry led by actor Jack Gilpin before the screening of Uhry's

1989 Oscar winning film, "Driving Miss Daisy." These two men made this once-in-a-lifetime event special, and one we'll always remember. They made us laugh and we even learned a few interesting tidbits about Uhry's real-life inspiration for the characters in the movie.

We extend a huge and heartfelt thank you to all of our sponsors for making these movie nights possible—National Iron Bank (sponsored all four First Friday movies), the Glass Family and Depot Dog Boutique. And a shoutout also goes to the Gunn Memorial Library for their contribution in bringing these movies to the public.

We look forward to one more family movie night on the calendar for the Friday after Thanksgiving on November 24. Stay tuned for more details to come. We hope you'll join us!

### Art @the Park

Beautiful artwork continues to grace the interior space at the park. This summer's art exhibits by Liz Dexheimer, the late Margaret Grimes and Michael Chelminski were a joy to behold. We have several upcoming shows this fall: the NY Collage Ensemble (September 9-24), KMR Arts (September 30-October 8) and Karen LeSage (October 14-November 5). These artists are sure to delight with their unique pieces.

### Farmers Market @the Park

Our farmers market continues every Saturday from 9:30am to 12:30pm. Shop from the best of Litchfield County's growers, makers and artisans—you'll find fresh fruits and veggies, bread and baked goods, pet food, pasture-raised meats, prepared food items, cheese, seafood, locally roasted coffee and more. We continue to host rotating musicians for live music at the market, too. Stock up on ingredients for Thanksgiving dinner during our last market of the year on November 18.

### Jack-o-lanterns @the Park

Our third annual Jack-o-lantern Carving Contest is coming up soon and you're invited to participate! Grab a pumpkin from one of our many local farms, carve or paint it with your most creative design at home, and bring it to the park on Saturday, October 28. All pumpkins must be registered by 9:00am. Voting begins when the farmers market opens at 9:30am. The public is invited to stop by and vote for their favorite jack-o-lantern. Not into pumpkin carving? You can still get in on the action by stopping by the park to vote!

These are only a few of the many events and activities we offer throughout the year. For more information about the park and our events, visit us at [judyblackpark.org](http://judyblackpark.org).

## ASAP!® Upcoming Programs

For more information about these programs, please visit [asapct.org](http://asapct.org) or call 845-518-5859.

### ASAP! Celebrates 25 Years of Arts-Infused Learning

ASAP!'s mission is to foster creative, hands-on learning through the arts. Founded in 1999, ASAP!'s original goal was to engage local Region 12 middle school children in arts programs otherwise unavailable to them. The first set of ASAP! workshops in music, dance and art had 72 participants. With success and increased demand for programs, ASAP! expanded its offerings and geographic reach and extended the range of children served. The organization was reconstructed as a nonprofit in 2004. Today, ASAP! is an arts-infused educational organization with in-school, after school and summer programs that open the door to self-discovery, meaningful connection and joyful learning for over 10,000 youth and adults throughout our state.

ASAP! provides equitable access to its programs by partnering with schools to build curriculum-aligned programs during the school day,



and offers extensive financial aid and scholarships for after school and summer programs. A special celebration is planned for June 1 in its hometown of Washington to highlight ASAP!'s accomplishments. Stay tuned for more information. To learn more about ASAP!, visit [asapct.org](http://asapct.org).

### Celebration of Young Photographers

**Submissions Due October 2  
Grades 6-12**

Submissions are now open! Students in grades 6-12 are invited to submit 1-2 photos inspired by this year's theme: Curiosity. Submissions may be placed through ASAP!'s website by Sunday, October 2, 2023. The 60 top selected photographs will be honored at a gallery exhibition on Sunday, November 13 in Washington, CT. Visit [asapct.org](http://asapct.org) for more information.

To learn more about ASAP! programs and events in Washington for this year, visit [asapct.org](http://asapct.org).



# Announcing NORMAN SUNSHINE CENTER of the Washington Art Association

"We must all greet our inner anima, our creativity, with passion, hard work and resilience. It is all in us, for better, not for worse." Norman Sunshine

Longtime Washington resident, artist Norman Sunshine has announced the donation of his studio, the former Trinity Lutheran Church, to the Washington Art Association. The Norman Sunshine Center will help fulfill the nonprofit organization's mission to present exhibitions and educational opportunities to Litchfield County residents by providing a community forum for audience-based programs. With the Norman Sunshine Center, the Washington Art Association will now have a dedicated space for lectures, performances and special events.

This generous gift is a measure of Sunshine's love of Washington and his devotion to the Washington Art Association, and it celebrates his long career as a painter and sculptor. A versatile and inventive artist, Sunshine's work spans many mediums and styles. His early paintings are abstract, his landscapes are observational, his portraits photography-based, and his monumental still life's break with tradition. Sunshine's bronze sculpture combines his appreciation for found materials. Always inquisitive, and clearly a maverick, Sunshine follows his instincts rather than the art market, and thus he is a true Modernist.

Born in Los Angeles, Sunshine's impressive career began shortly after graduating from the Art Center School of Design, when he got a job designing album covers for Capitol Records and drew award-winning advertising illustrations for CBS. After moving to New York City, Sunshine became a successful magazine illustrator for clients like Esquire, Seventeen, and the New York Times Magazine. Eventually Sunshine became a famed fashion illustrator whose full-page drawings appeared weekly in the New York Times. Eventually he left illustration and became a VP creative director of an advertising agency, where he coined, among many famed lines "What Becomes a Legend Most" for Blackgama Minks. After thirty years, the line itself has become legendary.

The brilliant designer of Tiffany windows, Gene Moore, persuaded Sunshine to put

his bucolic paintings of Bucks County and Connecticut countryside in all the windows, both 5th Avenue and 57th Street. The reaction was extremely enthusiastic, leading to a call from a New York art gallery asking to exhibit them in a one man show. Soon Sunshine left the advertising world, totally committed to making fine art.

After winning an Emmy Award for creating paper collages for a group of highly praised CBS TV specials produced by his partner, Alan Shayne, Sunshine returned to Los Angeles, where famed gallerist Margo Levin gave him a one man show, thereby launching the second, storied chapter of his career.

Norman and his partner Alan Shayne purchased their Washington property in late 1989. The bucolic acreage inspired many of Sunshine's most admired landscapes and still life's. From the moment the couple arrived at their country home, they have been deeply involved in the cultural life of the community. The donation of the Norman



Sunshine Center is the culmination of a life immersed in beauty, conviviality and lasting friendships. It promises to bestow all those gifts of well-lived lives on Washington Art Association members, volunteers, neighbors and visitors.

The Open House for the opening of the Norman Sunshine Center will be on September 2 from 2:00 – 4:00pm.



## Upcoming Events at The Frederick Gunn School

The Frederick Gunn School Arts Program hosts events throughout the year in the Thomas S. Perakos Arts and Community Center that are open to the community. Please visit [www.frederickgunn.org/calendar-news](http://www.frederickgunn.org/calendar-news) for the latest information.

### Fall Play — Save the Dates

Presented by The Frederick Gunn School Theatre Program

November 9, 10 and 11 at 7 p.m. in the Tisch Family Auditorium

Admission is free.

Please check [frederickgunn.org](http://frederickgunn.org) for details!



## Shakespeare in the Litchfield Hills

Shakespeare in the Litchfield Hills is pleased to sponsor a House Tour on September 23 - *Everything Old is New Again*.

The tour highlights the amazing transformation of five Washington homes from old to new! The residences you visit will intrigue and engage your interest in home design. Each home will have a written description of the house's history, and informed hosts will be available to answer your questions. For an additional \$50 per person, you can attend an after-party at a private home where you'll be able to meet the homeowners and some of the designers. This will be an afternoon to relish and remember!

All proceeds from this event will go to the 2024 professional production "Romeo and Juliet," produced and directed by Shakesperience Productions and offered for FREE to all attendees. This nonprofit organization has brought FREE outdoor

performances of "Comedy of Errors" (2019), "Twelfth Night" (2021) and "Midsummer Night's Dream" (2022) to Washington's Pavilion in summers past.

### TICKETS

**House Tour 2:00-5:00pm**

**\$75 per person; \$125 includes after-party at 5:30pm.**

Tickets are limited.

\*\*\*\$500 donation entitles you to recognition at the event as a Special Friend of Shakespeare in the Litchfield Hills and two tickets to the House Tour and After-party.

Ad space is available in the beautiful four-color program, call 203-754-2531 for more information.

Please reserve your tickets at [www.shakesperience.org](http://www.shakesperience.org).

**Saturday, September 23, 2023**  
**2-5 PM**

## Washington House Tour *Everything Old is New Again*

# Shakespeare

*in the Litchfield Hills*

*Five Amazing Transformations*  
Proceeds support the production of *Romeo & Juliet*

**\$75 pp**  
**\$125 pp includes 5:30PM After-Party**

**Tickets for the House Tour and After Party are limited.**

**[www.shakesperience.org](http://www.shakesperience.org) 203.754.2531**

## Connecticut Theatre Exchange

Connecticut Theatre Exchange, a new nonprofit organization that supports new work and new skills for theatre-makers, was successfully launched in June 2023. Co-founded by Tracy Liz Miller and Kent Burnham, the organization happily makes its home on the campus of the Frederick Gunn School alongside other locally-based arts organizations. Please visit the website: [www.cttheatrex.org](http://www.cttheatrex.org).

Co-founders Tracy Liz Miller and Kent Burnham, Director of Theatre Arts at the school, have each brought decades of experience in the larger markets of their

field as actors, directors and producers. Burnham added, "Hosting over 35 professionals - playwrights, actors, directors, screenwriters, lyricists and stage combatants - on campus and in the Thomas S. Perakos Arts and Community Center (TPACC) was incredibly energizing and inspiring. TPACC was a hub of artistic activity, and the visiting artists were impressed with the facilities, the campus and the Washington community."

The Miller-Burnham producing team aim to build out a more robust programming schedule that'll increase the public-facing events for the two-week residency.

Fundraising will be key in bringing more opportunities for more artists at next year's Exchange slated for June 10-23, 2024. Miller and Burnham are busy finding granting institutions that are interested in seed-funding newer organizations, connecting with potential community supporters and building the administrative infrastructure to make it all possible. A friend-and fund-raising event with a holiday and solstice vibe is planned for Saturday, December 16 at TPAAC and will feature performances by local talent. Stay tuned for ticket information!



Connecticut-based playwright Susan Cinoman sums it up best: "What does an artist crave most? Inspiration? Collaboration? Understanding? Yes, all that—but most of all—home. The Connecticut Theatre Exchange defines home for the emerging, veteran or at any stage of your-development, person of the theatre arts. In an idyllic setting, at CTX, I was given the highest level of critique, support, collaboration and love by extraordinary theatre-makers."

# WASHINGTON HARVEST FESTIVAL

FREE ADMISSION

Sunday, October 8th – Noon to 5:00

River Walk Pavilion, School Street, Washington Depot

Food, music, games, scarecrow contest, and more.



## Washington Trivia by Shelia Anson, Town Clerk

What building in the Depot occupies the site of the old Catholic Church and Town Hall?

**See if your answer is correct in the next issue, out in December.**

**Question from the last issue:** Ted Alex and Dave Werkhoven were the coaches for the 1973 and 1983 State Champs. Captains of the 1973 team were Bob Alex, Tim Cook, Joe Fredlund and Mike Temple, 1983 had no captains.

*What's Happening in Washington, CT* is organized and printed through the Washington Economic Development Committee. [mgorra@washingtonct.org](mailto:mgorra@washingtonct.org)  
Look for our next issue, coming out in December.

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