



## LOCAL NEWS BRIEFING

### POLICE AND FIRE

#### Fire Safety Assessments

New Canaan Fire Marshal Paul Payne is offering complimentary, by-appointment fire safety assessments for local residences through the Fire Department's Community Risk Reduction Program. The review covers items such as escape planning, smoke and carbon monoxide alarm placement, extinguisher use, electrical safety, and heating and dryer equipment, and includes a room-by-room inspection of the home and outbuildings. To schedule, call (203) 594-3030 or email donna.hutter@newcanaanct.gov.

### TOWN HALL

#### DPW Winter Operations

As we continue to experience the depth of winter, the Department of Public Works is informing residents about its Winter Operations Procedure. New Canaan DPW plows and treats about 125 miles of roads across 12 routes, adjusting its response to each storm using truck sensors that monitor pavement and air temperatures. Crews pre-treat roads and parking lots with treated salt, prioritize main roads first and secondary roads next, then finish cleanup after the snow stops—typically within 6 to 8 hours. DPW also reminded residents and contractors that town code prohibits pushing snow into streets. For more information, call (203) 594-3054 or email Tiger.Mann@newcanaanct.gov.

### AROUND TOWN

#### New Stop Signs

As of January 20, new stop signs on Weed Street at Elm Street require northbound and southbound Weed Street traffic to stop. The intersection is now a three-way stop.

### LOCAL BUSINESSES AND NONPROFITS

#### Staying Put Celebration

On January 13, Staying Put held its 18th birthday celebration at the First Presbyterian Church of New Canaan. The organization thanked its members and volunteers and reaffirmed its mission of helping older adults in New Canaan remain independent at home. Photo credit: Staying Put in New Canaan.

#### Staying Put Tours Onera

Recently, Staying Put toured the Onera Foundation headquarters, learning about the building's history, the

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**Please note that there will be no Sentinel Community Coffee on January 30. We will return to the Lapham Center for our regular Community Coffee on February 6.**

THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 2026

NewCanaanSentinel.com

**COLUMN**  
**Out of Darkness**



By ICY FRANTZ

We spent Christmas Eve in a no-frills New England church in northern Vermont. One of our kids likened it to a box with a single Christmas tree and a spattering of poinsettias. The choir filed in not in robes but in street clothes, and most of the congregation was dressed casually—snow boots and flannel shirts. No velvet. No fur.

We sang carols and listened to passages about the birth of Jesus, and I smiled at the thought that across the globe, similar services were taking place. Yes, this was Vermont—hearty and simple, in the nicest way.

When the service was over, I felt like we had done much more than check a box. The pastor was friendly and inclusive. She welcomed visitors and let us know it was okay to fidget, to leave for the bathroom, or even to go outside and play in the snow. I had never been given permission to fidget—and may have taken her up on it. She stressed comfort over rigidity.

And yet, when we tried to pinpoint the meaning of the sermon, we were at a loss.

The pastor spoke of community—of supporting community—and somewhere in her words she brought us out of darkness and into the light, a theme that landed neatly alongside the singing of Silent Night while we “lit” mechanical candles (no drips).

Now, with Christmas comfortably behind us, I’ve held onto some of the pastor’s thoughts. 2025 is ending, and I wonder what it would mean to move towards whatever light the new year holds.

Right before my mom passed away last August, she gave the three of us—her daughters—a pearl necklace that had been passed down from my great-grandmother to my mother.

When we had it assessed, we learned that although the pearls are high quality and perfectly graduated, the necklace’s real value lies in the clasp.

The clasp. The part that sits hidden at the back of the neck, beneath the hair. The piece that holds everything together—essential but unseen, trusted, unadmired.

I couldn’t stop thinking about that: how the thing that mattered most was never meant to be noticed. How it bore the weight quietly. How it did its work without asking for attention.

I wondered if my mother knew that. Or if she was telling us something without saying it out loud.

It made me consider how often we hide our own value behind fear or anxiety. How often we mistake visibility for worth. How often we stay safely busy, moving just enough to avoid being fully seen—to avoid the light.

In Vermont, where life for our family slows down considerably, I often find myself writing by a window in the

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 3**

## Rev. King Celebration Lively, Heartfelt



L-R: Roosevelt Credit, singer; Marla Chisholm, MLK Day Celebration coordinator; Rev. Richard Williams, Guest Speaker and Executive Director of Pivot Ministries; First Selectman Dionna Carlson; Rev. Mark Grorud of St. Michael's Lutheran Church; Rev. Martha Epstein of the United Methodist Church; Jennifer Zonis, President of the Interfaith Council; Rev. Gilbert Burgess of Community Baptist Church.

By JOHN KRIZ

The annual celebration in honor of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. held at the United Methodist Church of New Canaan on Monday was a full house, bursting with song and positive energy.

The day's theme was Dr. King's statement that "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." This wisdom ran like a leitmotif through the speakers' comments.

Organized by the Interfaith Council of

New Canaan, and coordinated by Marla Chisholm, the service kicked off with 'Every Praise,' 'I Trust in God' and 'As the Deer'—all sung with rousing heart and voice by the Men's Choir from Pivot Ministries, a faith-based recovery program in Bridgeport. Nerva Altino of the Congregational Church of New Canaan www.godsacre.org provided accompanying music on the piano. Mr. Altino provided piano music for the subsequent songs as well.

Rev. Martha Epstein, pastor of

the United Methodist Church www.umcofnewcanaan.org welcomed attendees, calling upon them to "heed those words that Dr. King said, that our lives begin to end when we stay silent about things that matter." She further cited the Prophet Amos, who in Amos 5:24 teaches us to "Let justice roll on like a river, and righteousness like a never-failing stream."

Rev. Gilbert Burgess of New Canaan's Community Baptist Church www.

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## Board of Selectmen Begin FY2026–27 Budget Review with Health, Human Services, EMS and Police — Then Turn to Fire, Library and AED Expansion

By PETER BARHYDT

The Board of Selectmen opened an early round of fiscal year 2026–27 budget reviews Tuesday morning with a familiar balancing act: departments described steady or growing service demands while trying to restrain costs, lean on outside funding and avoid the kind of "budget shock" that can follow big capital purchases and recurring service contracts.

After First Selectman Dionna Carlson called the meeting to order the board moved into department presentations that ranged from public health inspections and social services to EMS equipment planning, police overtime controls and the rising price of technology. By the end of the session, the discussion had shifted to the Fire Department's capital pressures, the Library's "boring" budget proposal and a unanimous vote to purchase 11 new AEDs for town athletic fields and parks.

Across the morning, selectmen repeatedly returned to a single theme: lifecycle costs—what the town buys today, what it costs to maintain, and how quickly "one-time" purchases become ongoing operating obligations.

#### Health Department: inspections, outreach — and a proposed budget decrease

Health Director Amy Lehaney, presenting to the board for the first time, outlined a department with a wide span of responsibilities: environmental health regulation, community wellness

programming, emergency preparedness and public communication in an era of rapidly circulating misinformation.

Lehaney said the department oversees 106 food service establishments in town, inspected one to four times annually depending on the type of food served. The number drew a quick reaction from Selectman Amy Murphy Carroll: "Did you say 100 and ... OK, wow," she said.

The Health Department also regulates drinking water systems, including five public water systems, and issues roughly 60 well permits each year. Another major workload is subsurface sewage disposal, with about 90 permits issued annually and building permits reviewed for properties on septic systems. Murphy Carroll asked whether that number reflected new construction. Lehaney said it includes repairs and replacements as well as new work—and can involve multiple permits, including soil tests.

Lehaney said the department also licenses and inspects 43 salons and 22 "public" pools, explaining that in public health terms, pools in condo complexes count as public because they serve multiple households. Selectman Stephen Karl questioned how the town reached 22 pools; Lehaney clarified the definition and oversight requirements.

Beyond regulation, Lehaney detailed monthly community health programming—including Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR),

suicide prevention training at the library—plus workshops at Lapham Center and Schoolhouse, panel discussions, and tick testing and education offered at the health office. The department's nurse conducts screenings at Lapham Center and Vine Cottage, and the department participates in the state's child vaccine program to provide free vaccines for children who need them for school.

Lehaney said the proposed FY2026–27 budget is down about 6% overall, largely driven by salaries. She described several line changes, including an increase in part-time salary because a grant supporting public health nurse hours is ending; added funding for a staff training certification; and a vehicle repair line. She cited savings through lower salary and overtime lines, reduced service contracts and cuts to office and medical supplies—including reducing Bluebeam software subscriptions from three to one because the tool is rarely used.

Murphy Carroll praised the department's efficiency and the value of consistent, credible public health messaging. Carlson also highlighted the department's role in employee wellness screenings coordinated through town HR, noting that early screening can identify issues before they become larger health problems.

#### Human Services: rising pantry demand, stable staffing — and using outside funds to relieve taxpayers

Human Services Director Marcy Rand presented a snapshot

of steady caseloads and a department increasingly focused on aligning limited town dollars with outside grants—particularly Youth Services Bureau (YSB) funding and opioid settlement funds.

Rand reported serving 228 adult and senior clients year-to-date. Youth and family work covers 169 families with 178 youth. She highlighted programming at Lapham Center, including "Life Reimagined" for newly retired residents seeking purpose, and a grief support group focused on spousal loss. Planned spring programs include Parkinson's and caregiver support groups.

Food insecurity remained a central point. Rand said New Canaan Food Pantry participation is rising: the pantry served 945 household individuals year-to-date and could approach 2,000 individuals by year's end. Murphy Carroll and Carlson clarified that "household individuals" measures the number of people served, while "shoppers" tracks the number of people physically coming in—a number that can fluctuate because relatives may shop for someone who is sick.

A major focus was outside agency grants and how funding sources are being blended to reduce the direct impact on the town budget. Rand outlined examples including:

- Getabout: requested \$65,000, expected \$50,000 split between town support and a state DOT grant.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 5**

## A Picture Frame for Love

By JILL S. WOOLWORTH, LMFT

Sometimes our concern about how we look or how we are perceived gets in the way of connecting with people. When we draw attention to our "frame" and worry about how we are perceived, we forget about the gift of love that our simple presence can offer.

Pay attention to the people around you. Take

the imaginary camera off yourself at your next social gathering. Ask questions. Find the lonely person. Taking a genuine interest in other people quiets our nervous self-consciousness, enhances our sense of well-being, and benefits others.

Two gifted speakers

talked about faith to large groups. Avery was

In his late 80's, Ivan raised money and

the imagi-

personal, funny and

brilliant. She invited the

audience into her open

picture frame of God's

love. The audience was

encouraged and inspired.

Jess was equally eloquent

and knowledgeable, but

her comments about her

dress, her jewelry, and

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# New Canaan High School Students Earn Statewide Honors in Scholastic Art Awards

Thirteen students from New Canaan High School have been recognized by the Connecticut Art Education Association as recipients of 2026 Connecticut Regional Scholastic Art Awards, placing their work among the top student art submissions statewide.

The awards were announced Wednesday, Jan. 7, by the Connecticut Art Education Association, which oversees the regional Scholastic Art Awards program in Connecticut. The program recognizes student achievement in technical skill, creativity, and personal expression. Thousands of entries from across the state were reviewed, with only a limited number selected for honors in each category.

Students from New Canaan High School

earned distinctions ranging from Honorable Mention to Silver Key and Gold Key awards. Gold Key recipients advance to the national level of the Scholastic Art Awards competition.

Senior Isabelle Kelly received a Silver Key for her art portfolio, *Where Am I Going? Where Have I Been?* In addition to the award, Kelly earned a scholarship to the University of Hartford Art School. Emma McPartland was awarded a Gold Key and received the CAEA Arnini Award for Best in Experimental Photography for her work *Arabesque*.

Awards were earned across multiple disciplines, including drawing, photography, printmaking, and digital media, under the instruction of art teachers Abigail Duncan,

Maggie Penoyer, and Jennifer Sinski.

Students recognized under Duncan include Analiese Bergmans, who received two Gold Keys for *The Cost of Growing Up* and *Raw*, both drawings, and Kelly for her Silver Key portfolio.

Under Penoyer's instruction, Eva Warner earned a Gold Key for *Grand Tetons*, a photograph. Silver Keys were awarded to Devin Boulanger for *Interstellar*, Logan Scherr for *Silent Cast*, and Emily Meng for both *Ocean Embers* and *Relaxation*.

Students taught by Sinski also received multiple honors. Gold Keys were awarded to Emmeline DeMuth for *Old Port*, Gabrielle Savelli for *Twin Bees*, and McPartland for *Arabesque*. Lucy Bench received a Silver Key for *Cuenca Cathedral*, while Lyn Wong earned an Honorable Mention for *Alley in Japan*.

Cathedral

Two additional students earned recognition through outside submissions. Blake Pozatek received a Silver Key for *Grandma on the Moon*, and Joy Zhao earned a Gold Key for *Insanity*.

Selected works will be exhibited at the Connecticut Regional Art Awards Exhibition at the Silpe Gallery at the University of Hartford Art School from Jan. 12 through Jan. 30. An awards celebration will be held Sunday, Jan. 25, at 2 p.m. at the Lincoln Theater on the University of Hartford campus.



Emily Meng, *Relaxation*, drawing – SILVER KEY



Joy Zhao, *Insanity*, drawing – GOLD KEY



Gabrielle Savelli, *Twin Bees*, photography – GOLD KEY

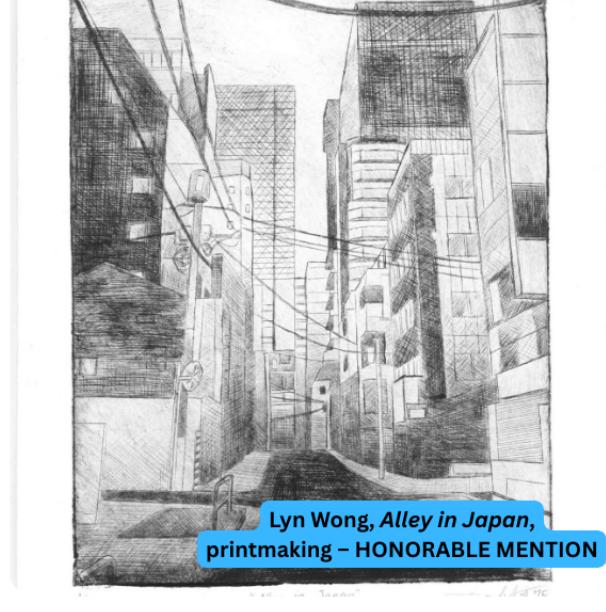


Blake Pozatek, *Grandma on the Moon*, photography – SILVER KEY

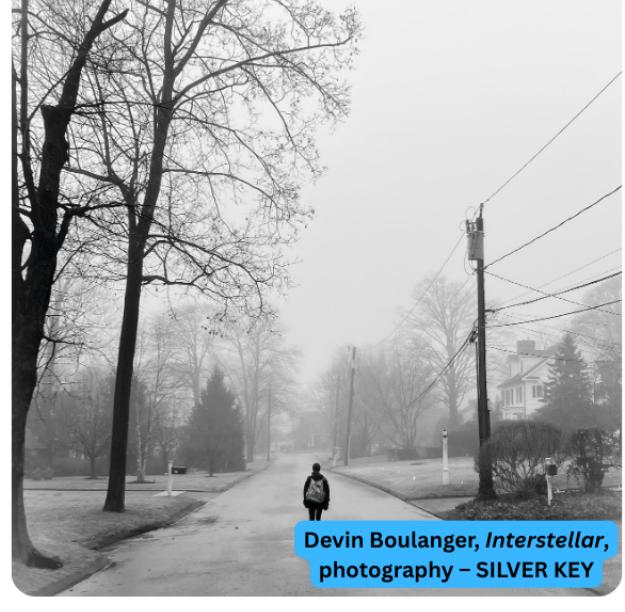


Emma McPartland, *Arabesque*, photography – GOLD KEY, CAEA Arnini Award: Best in Experimental Photography

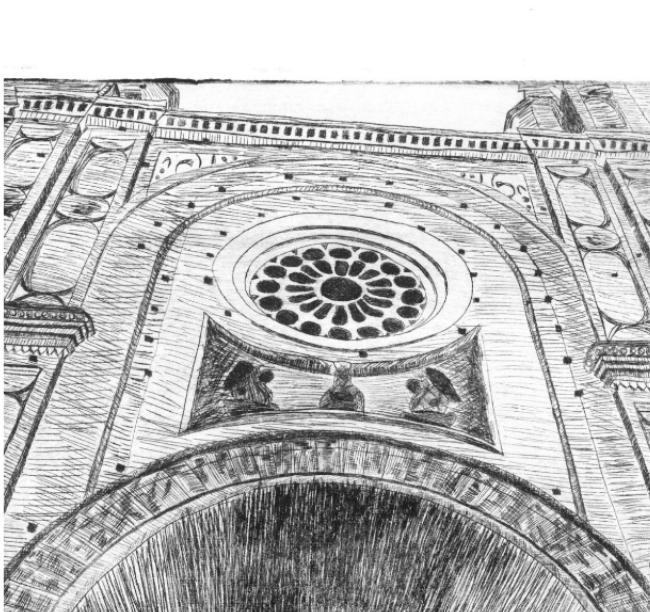
Artwork by Blake Pozatek, Emily Meng, Emma McPartland, Gavin Savelli, Joy Zhao. Contributed.



Lyn Wong, *Alley in Japan*, printmaking – HONORABLE MENTION



Devin Boulanger, *Interstellar*, photography – SILVER KEY



Lucy Bench, *Cuenca Cathedral*, printmaking – SILVER KEY



Emmeline DeMuth, *Old Port*, photography – GOLD KEY

Artwork by Devin Boulanger, Emmeline DeMuth, Lucy Bench, Lyn Wong. Contributed.



Emily Meng, *Ocean Embers*, digital painting, drawing, collage – SILVER KEY



Analiese Bergmans, *Raw*, drawing – GOLD KEY



Analiese Bergmans, *The Cost of Growing Up*, drawing – GOLD KEY



Isabelle Kelly, *Where Am I Going? Where Have I Been?* portfolio – SILVER KEY, University of Hartford Art School Scholarship Award



Eva Warner, *Grand Tetons*, photography – GOLD KEY

Caption: Artwork by Analiese Bergmans, Emily Meng, Eva Warner, Isabelle Kelly. Contributed.



Sharon Prince and Chelsea Thatcher join the musicians onstage in the Sanctuary on Saturday, January 10th (Melani Lust)

## Grace Farms Celebrates Milestone Weekend with Lecture and Concert Series with Sold-Out Yo-Yo Ma Performance



Sharon Prince presents the inaugural Lecture with Concert series (Melani Lust)



Grace Farms celebrated a transformative weekend on January 10-11 with the launch of its innovative Lecture with Concert series. Sharon Prince, CEO and Founder of Grace Farms, delivered the inaugural lecture. The following day, Yo-Yo Ma and pianist Solon Gordon performed to a sold-out crowd of 700 in Grace Farms' Sanctuary, the world's only fully-enclosed glass performing arts space. It is the first time Yo-Yo Ma and Solon Gordon have performed a recital together.

The Grace Farms Lecture with Concert series introduces a new concept in which music and ideas converge in dialogue with one another. Grace Farms' Artist-in-Residence and renowned cellist Arlen Hlusko curates each concert as a direct response to the lecturer's life's work.

On January 10, Prince opened the series by sharing her remarkable journey and determination to create a boundary-defying space that is free and open to the public, nurtures grace and peace, and connects people to achieve new outcomes. Since opening ten years ago, Grace Farms has welcomed one million visitors to encounter nature, arts, justice, community, and faith.

"We all build – our homes, our families, our work and our future. Consider grace and peace as you build," said Prince in her lecture. "We have tremendous agency to participate in creating a more just, equitable world through how we build and which values we prioritize."

Prince's lecture was followed by a specially curated chamber music performance featuring an ensemble of 13 extraordinary

musicians, including MacArthur Fellows, GRAMMY nominees, Avery Fisher career grant recipients, and Sphinx Medal of Excellence recipients: Jennifer Frautschi, Vijay Gupta, Blake Pouliot & Michelle Ross, violins; Ayane Kozasa & Melissa Reardon, violas; Gabriel Cabezas & Arlen Hlusko, cellos; Anthony Manzo, bass; Pallavi Mahidhara, piano; Emi Ferguson, flute; Yoonah Kim, clarinet; and Gina Cuffari, bassoon. The artists were selected by Hlusko to express the theme of ingenuity that has defined Prince's remarkable career and life's work.

The weekend culminated on Sunday, January 11 with a sold-out recital by Yo-Yo Ma and Solon Gordon, accompanied by the backdrop of nature and Grace Farms' 80 acres of landscape visible behind the performance.

The recital program included Five Pieces in Folk Style, Op. 102 (Robert Schumann), Cello Sonata, L. 135 (Claude Debussy), 4 Romantic Pieces (Antonín Dvořák), The Hanging Garden (Branford Marsalis), and Sonata in A Major for Violin & Piano (César Franck).

"These programs were uniquely designed for Grace Farms in response to this landscape, architecture, and season. The Music at Grace Farms concert series, including this past weekend's performance by Yo-Yo Ma, creates shared gatherings that reveal humanity's potential to inspire one another. Through the connection to the land and to each other, we can find deeper

meaning and a shared commitment to create a more just, sustainable, and peaceful world," said Founding Creative Director Chelsea Thatcher. Thatcher developed the Lecture with Concert and Music at Grace Farms series as part of Grace Farms' 10-year anniversary celebration, centered on the theme "We all build."

The Grace Farms Lecture with Concert series will continue throughout 2026, bringing together world-renowned thinkers and musicians in this innovative format that recognizes the intersection of transformative ideas and art. Dr. Miroslav Wolf, leading religious thinker and Founding Director of the Yale Center for Faith & Culture and Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer, botanist and New York Times bestselling author, will give the remaining two lectures on February 7 and March 7, respectively.

The string quartet performing February 7 are Adrian Anantawan, violin, who has performed at the Athens and Vancouver Olympic Games, Lun Li, violin, Arlen Hlusko, cello, and Celia Hatton, viola. They will perform works including Arvo Pärt: Fratres. The flute quartet performing March 7 features Alex Sopp, flute, Simone Porter & Owen Dalby, violins; Milena Pajaro-van de Stadt, viola; and Arlen Hlusko, cello. In response to Kimmerer's work, this musical program features composers who often derive musical inspiration from their relationships with nature, including Mozart, Paul Wiancko, Gabriella Smith, Leilehua Anne Lanzilotti, Reena Esmail, Valerie Coleman, and Joan Tower.

## OUT OF DARKNESS BY ICY FRANTZ CONTINUED From Page 1

early morning. We have no shades, so when the sun rises, the light enters slowly and quietly, giving me time to adjust.

I am in good company. Toni Morrison rose at five, made her coffee, and waited for the sun to appear – or, as she put it, she watched the light come.

And maybe that is how we should approach the light in 2026 – slowly, quietly.

Personally, I like the light. I've grown accustomed to doing a small mental dance when December 21st passes and the days begin to lengthen. It makes me happy. Even though it's still dark at five, we are moving in the right direction.

I am no green thumb, but on occasion I've watched my plants grow toward the light. Somehow, even a plant knows the light is nourishing.

So, what might it look like to step into the light?

Not all at once. Not dramatically. Not with resolutions that demand transformation by February.

Maybe it looks like turning a chair slightly or choosing not to close the shade. Or shifting the

clasp from the back to the side. Letting one honest thing be seen. Staying a moment longer instead of rushing to the next task.

Maybe it means allowing ourselves the same permission that Vermont pastor offered – to fidget, to be imperfect, to go outside when we need air. To believe that comfort and holiness can occupy the same space.

Stepping into the light might mean noticing what already holds us together – the unseen clasp, the quiet strength, the work done without applause – and honoring that as real value, not something to be hidden or apologized for.

It could mean slowing down enough to let morning arrive, trusting that the light will come whether or not we chase it. Watching instead of forcing. Adjusting gradually.

For me, stepping into the light of 2026 doesn't look like brightness without shadows. It looks like standing still long enough to let the shadows fall behind me.

And I think back to that church in Vermont – the plain room, the single tree, the people in boots and flannel. No velvet. No fur. Just voices rising together, holding small electric candles, singing Silent Night into the darkness. Each light modest on its own, but connected in community, held in place, doing its quiet work. Something small and essential keeping everything from coming undone. A simple light passed hand to hand.

Enough.



COLUMN

By CARL FRANCO

*Eat This. Drink That.**Recipes, Wines, and some thoughts in between*

Now that the holidays are over, it's nice to return to simple meals. After weeks of rich food, everyone needs a bit of a reset, yet this is often when the daily question of "what's for dinner?" feels hardest. Maybe you have a couple of hungry teenagers at home, or a college student still lingering on break, or maybe it's just you and the dog. Whoever you are cooking for, don't overthink it. Dinner doesn't have to be complicated, and coming up with something satisfying isn't as difficult as it may seem. When in doubt, you can always fall back on one of my favorite "go to's," a roasted chicken. Not only is it a crowd pleaser, it's delicious, reliable and makes for leftovers.

There is no shortage of Roast Chicken recipes out there, but what I like most is that you can roast almost any bird using pantry staples, omitting most any need for a special trek to the

**Eat This. Drink That.**

supermarket. The same goes for the vegetables: whatever's lingering in the kitchen or crisper will do. Today it was potatoes, onion, and a few Brussels sprouts, but I've also used mushrooms, carrots, and parsnips. Once again, whatever's on hand works just fine.

For this recipe, I opened the pantry and made a simple glaze with hoisin sauce, Chinese five-spice powder, a bit of brown sugar, salt, and a neutral oil. I mixed it all together and slathered it over the chicken. I roasted the chicken at 375 degrees until it reached an internal temperature of 175, which took a little over an hour.

Easy enough for a weeknight, there's still nothing better than a lazy Sunday afternoon—watching a movie or a football game while the house fills with the enticing smell of a roasting chicken.

For a wine pairing, I went with a terrific white Burgundy as there is something about the fat from poultry that meshes so well with the flavor of a carefully crafted Burgundy. Domaine Frantz Chagnoleau is a small, highly-regarded estate in

the southern Burgundy region of the Mâconnais, run by the husband-and-wife team of Frantz Chagnoleau and Caroline Gon. Both trained in oenology, Frantz honed his craft working with Olivier Merlin in the Mâconnais, while Caroline, with dual degrees in agricultural engineering and winemaking, spent time at Newton Vineyard in Napa before both returned to France going out on their own. Since 2013 their vineyards have been certified organic, and they emphasize hand harvesting, indigenous yeast fermentations, and aging in older oak to let the true character of the land shine through.

I enjoyed this with their 2024 Domaine Frantz Chagnoleau Mâcon-Villages Clos Saint Pancras which is a lovely expression of this philosophy. Made from 100% Chardonnay grown on a historic walled vineyard of limestone soils and farmed organically, this single-site wine combines elegance with vibrant energy. In the glass it reveals bright aromas and a mineral-tinged precision that speaks clearly of its terroir, with juicy stone fruit, citrus zest, and a saline finish

that makes it as enjoyable with food as it is on its own. The 2024 vintage captures both purity and balance, reflecting the careful, low-intervention approach that defines the estate's style.

In addition to Clos Saint Pancras, you can step it up a notch with one of their other wines. Frantz and Caroline also craft an excellent 2024 Saint-Véran "De Prisse à Chasselas," which I also have in inventory. Like their other wines, it showcases the couple's commitment to organic farming and terroir-driven winemaking, offering drinkers another compelling taste of southern Burgundy from one of its most thoughtful producer-teams.

However you choose to spend your quiet January weekends, always feel free to stop in for wine and recipe suggestions, all simple, comforting ways to enjoy winter Sundays while we wait for spring to eventually reward us. Wine and food are meant to be enjoyed together, and while it may be a few extra calories, the great gift of winter is that beach-body season is still safely in the distance.

# Snowy Sunday, Solid Freeze: New Weather Pattern Emerging

## WINTER STORM WARNING

### MAJOR SNOWFALL EXPECTED



**HEAVY SNOW • 6-17 INCHES • STRONG WINDS • BITTER COLD**

By EMMA BARYHTD

New Canaan entered the second half of January without obvious signs of trouble. The day was cold but unremarkable. Roads were clear. The harbor was calm. For most residents, winter remained background noise.

According to meteorologist Ryan Hall, however, the broader atmospheric setup now in place suggests that this winter—and the days immediately ahead—may not remain subdued.

New Canaan is forecast to experience a major winter storm beginning before dawn Sunday, January 25, with snow continuing through the day and into early Monday. Temperatures are expected to hold near 18 degrees, cold enough to support steady accumulation with little to no melting. Northeast winds near 15 miles

per hour, with gusts approaching 30 miles per hour, are expected to reduce visibility and contribute to drifting snow.

Snowfall totals in New Canaan are currently projected to range from 6 to 17 inches, reflecting uncertainty in snowfall intensity and duration while indicating the potential for a high-impact event. Roads and sidewalks are expected to become snow-covered quickly once precipitation begins, particularly as temperatures remain well below freezing throughout the storm.

The heaviest snowfall is expected during the late morning and afternoon hours Sunday, with lighter snow continuing into early Monday. With cold air remaining firmly in place, untreated roads and sidewalks are likely to remain snow-packed and slippery through the end of the weekend and into the start of the

workweek.

Wind will be an additional factor. Despite air temperatures near 18 degrees, sustained winds are expected to push wind chills toward zero Sunday night, increasing the difficulty of prolonged outdoor activity and slowing cleanup efforts.

Cold conditions are expected to persist after snowfall ends, limiting melting and extending the presence of snow and ice across much of Fairfield County. In similar past events, such conditions have prolonged travel disruptions and required extended snow removal operations.

Hall, who has been tracking both short-range forecasts and long-range climate signals, explains that the current season as one shaped less by a single dominant driver than by the interaction of several weaker ones. Together, he says,

those forces are producing an elevated risk of high-impact weather events across the Northeast including Fairfield County.

At the center of that pattern, Hall explains, is a weak La Niña in the Pacific Ocean. Sea surface temperatures are only marginally below normal, just enough to meet the technical threshold typically used to define La Niña conditions. On its own, Hall notes, such a weak signal would usually have limited influence on winter weather in the eastern United States.

This year, however, the La Niña is being reinforced by a strongly negative phase of the Pacific Decadal Oscillation, a longer-term ocean pattern that affects the entire North Pacific basin. When the two patterns align—even imperfectly—they tend to push the jet stream farther north than average, according to Hall. That shift favors colder air across northern states while allowing warmer conditions to persist farther south.

The result is not a clean divide but a broad transition zone where cold and warm air repeatedly meet. That zone, Hall says, becomes a frequent area of storm development.

**New Canaan sits close to that boundary.**

Hall characterizes southern New England as a transition region—an area that recently has had cold air but not snow. The pattern this year is different.

To understand how this pattern typically behaves, Hall analyzed seven analog winters dating back to 1989 that featured similar combinations of a weak La Niña, a negative Pacific Decadal Oscillation, and warm Atlantic waters. Among them were the winters of 2013–2014, 1995–1996, 2017–2018, and 1989–1990.

When those winters are compared, Hall says, a consistent signal emerges. Northern regions averaged well above normal snowfall, while southern regions saw substantially less. More important

than totals, however, was what each of those winters shared: at least one significant winter storm or Arctic cold outbreak that left a lasting impression.

"That's not coincidence," Hall has said. "That's a pattern."

One factor increasing the likelihood of such events this season, according to Hall, is the state of the polar vortex. The polar vortex is a large circulation of Arctic air high in the atmosphere that, when stable, keeps the cold confined to high latitudes. When disrupted, Arctic air can spill southward into the United States, sometimes persisting for days or weeks.

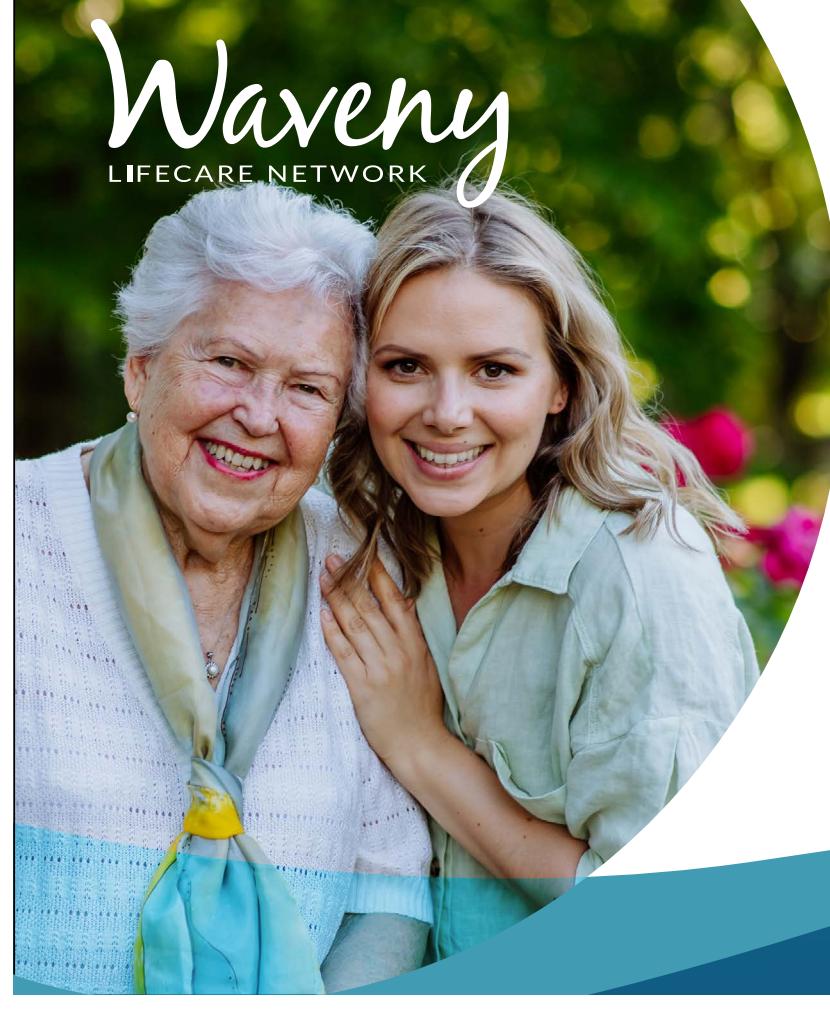
Hall notes that the current atmospheric configuration historically corresponds to a 60 to 75 percent chance of polar vortex disruptions. He cautions, however, that such disruptions do not always result in snow. In some cases, Arctic air arrives dry, producing severe cold without significant precipitation.

That uncertainty is part of what has kept forecasters focused on the days immediately ahead, bringing us back to our current forecast.

Expect to be hunkered down beginning before dawn Sunday, with snow continuing through the day and into early Monday.

For New Canaan, the forecast reflects the broader theme Hall has emphasized throughout the season: a winter defined less by constant storms than by periodic moments of consequence. Outcomes, he notes, often become clear only shortly before an event begins, as small shifts in temperature or storm structure can produce outsized effects in southern New England.

For now, New Canaan remains in its familiar January rhythm. But according to Hall's analysis, the larger atmospheric pattern suggests that winter's more consequential moments are still ahead—with conditions that leave little room for error so be careful and plan accordingly.



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## BOARD OF SELECTMEN CONTINUED From Page 1

- New Canaan Cares: a multi-source structure using a small-town contribution plus YSB and opioid settlement funds.
- Urgent Assessment Behavioral Health program: requested \$40,000, with Rand proposing \$15,000 from the town and \$25,000 from opioid settlement funds.

Murphy Carroll pressed on the durability of those outside funding streams, cautioning against creating a future cliff. Rand said YSB funding is expected to continue unless the state changes it, and opioid settlement funding is projected to last many years. Carlson noted the town has roughly \$90,000 in opioid settlement funds currently available and emphasized that restricted grants require careful planning: "If you don't [use it] you lose it."

Rand said the overall result is that while outside agencies would receive \$123,000 in total support, the direct town portion would be about \$57,000 – a reduction achieved by shifting eligible costs to outside sources.

Operationally, Rand said the department is moving from Virtual Case Manager to CharityTracker, describing the current system as outdated and difficult for reporting. The move, she said, will improve data visibility on service demand while also lowering cost. Rand said the department's budget request is down roughly 8.9%. Karl asked whether the department remains adequately staffed after reducing a part-time line; Rand said staffing is stable and workflows are strong.

### EMS: the hidden cost of "free" transport – and preventing capital surprises

New Canaan EMS Treasurer John Knight reminded selectmen that the town is unusual: the ambulance service is volunteer-run and provides free emergency transport – something Carlson and others emphasized is rare in many communities where residents routinely receive ambulance bills.

Knight also stressed that the town budget does not reflect the full cost of EMS operations, which are supported heavily through fundraising and EMS revenue.

He said the paramedic contract is a five-year agreement entering year four, fixed at \$465,000 annually with no cost-of-living adjustment. A newer issue is reimbursement for paramedic supplies, averaging about \$712 per month from October 2024 through December 2025. While the contract cost is stable, EMS leaders said the clarity around supply reimbursement will matter when negotiations resume in about two years.

Vehicle maintenance is another pressure point. Knight said EMS spent about \$54,000 on maintenance in FY2024-25, budgeting \$40,000 for the current year. He noted the town's line item is \$10,000 because EMS covers the remainder.

Dispatching and tracking costs through the Southwest Regional Communications Center were also updated. Knight said the FY2026-27 cost came in at \$64,875 – a 0.6% increase, notably less than the 3% assumption in preliminary budgeting. He broke it into a CMED charge and dispatching charge and said a formal letter would confirm the figures.

EMS proposed a 5% increase in medical supplies – 3% inflation and 2% to help offset paramedic supply reimbursements. Knight cited the reality of large equipment replacement costs, such as cardiac monitors and power loaders.

Murphy Carroll urged EMS to continue communicating how much the service is supported by volunteers and donations, noting many residents would be surprised at the degree to which EMS self-funds.

Capital planning remained central. A new ambulance is expected in late February or early March. Knight said the purchase ran about \$14,000 above the town's budgeted amount, which EMS covered, hoping to recoup funds when an older ambulance is sold. EMS also flagged replacement of a paramedic SUV budgeted at \$85,000 and said updated quotes will be necessary to avoid unexpected increases.

Knight reported improving membership after pandemic lows: EMS now has about 54 members, up from roughly 26 at the low point. A new EMT training class has about 20 prospective members, including

firefighters and high school students. Karl praised EMS culture and asked about recruiting; EMS said word-of-mouth remains key but outreach is increasing through community presentations.

### Police: overtime controls – and the rising cost of technology

Police Chief John DiFederico's presentation included overtime management and a deep dive into technology costs that selectmen described as emblematic of a "new world" of public safety budgeting.

### Overtime trends downward – with software helping isolate drivers

DiFederico said FY25 overtime hours fell 2.9%, aided by full staffing and scheduling software that tracks overtime drivers. A prior spike in "second supervisor" overtime is trending downward this year because more officers are now eligible to fill acting supervisor roles on duty – seven this year versus one in FY24 – reducing the need to hire back personnel on overtime.

He also said the department plans to refine overtime categories so "administrative" overtime is not a catch-all, including carving out training instructor time and workers' compensation medical appointments, which may be eligible for reimbursement.

Karl asked whether school resource officers (SROs) help reduce overtime during summer vacation coverage. DiFederico said yes: SROs return to patrol shifts during summer months and school vacations, though the department cannot prohibit them from taking time off during the school year. He said expectations are made clear in interviews, and the unit is closely supervised. When an SRO is out, coverage is typically handled within the unit by "floating" another SRO, rather than backfilling from patrol.

### Service contracts and cameras: a recurring operating cost

DiFederico said utilities are uncertain as the new police building's operational patterns become clear, but he anticipates some energy efficiencies.

The larger discussion centered on service contracts, jumping from a revised \$129,850 to a proposed \$250,000. DiFederico said about \$75,000 reflects licensing and cybersecurity costs moving from Town Hall IT into the police budget – including Microsoft licensing, email accounts, antivirus protection and data storage used for body and in-car camera footage.

Beyond that, police technology contracts include fingerprint systems, body-worn and in-car camera vendors, vehicle modems supporting mobile data terminals, and the department's records management system.

Murphy Carroll pressed on the year-over-year change and asked what drives additional increases beyond the re-bundled costs. DiFederico pointed to Flock, the license-plate reader and downtown camera network. Initial costs were packaged in capital, but because the service operates as an annual subscription, the ongoing expense now appears as operating. He said the town does not own the cameras outright; the vendor provides maintenance and replacement under the contract.

The selectmen also revisited privacy safeguards and data retention, with DiFederico saying images are retained for 30 days unless flagged for investigation, and that the system does not store personal owner information – only plate images. He argued Flock's value increases because so many jurisdictions use it, enabling fast inter-town information sharing.

DiFederico also described capital drivers – three new vehicles, routine equipment replacement, and the need to upgrade tasers because Axon is sunsetting support for older models. He said the department prefers a one-time purchase of about \$150,000 over a lease plan that would total roughly \$250,000 over five years. Carlson also flagged an emerging "first responder drone" concept in the five-year plan, listed as a placeholder, which DiFederico said would be an automated dispatch-integrated system potentially shared by police, fire and EMS.

### Fire Department: aging apparatus, capital pressure – and a sobering topic

Fire officials followed with FY27 budget details and a candid description of capital risk. They reported training gains – including volunteer recruitment, instructor certifications and specialty rescue training – and said calls for service totaled 1,239 for the calendar year, with 55% classified as fire alarms. Cooking was cited as a major driver, along with construction dust and some malfunctions. Officials estimated about 30% of alarms may be system failures requiring servicing.

Fire officials reported just under \$400,000 in property and contents loss for the year using a standardized fire marshal schedule, noting the number was down from the previous year, which included a significant Oak Street loss. They also cited 95 simultaneous incidents and mutual aid activity in and out of town.

The operating budget request was about \$4.852 million, a 1.3% increase. A major operating increase is fleet maintenance, proposed at \$145,000, as unscheduled repairs rise with an aging apparatus fleet.

Carlson pressed for fleet age detail. Fire officials said the department has seven heavy apparatus: the newest is a 2021 rescue truck, followed by a 2017 pumper and 2013 engine, plus a 2008 tanker, a 2003 ladder truck, and two pumper from 1999 and 1997. They said industry standards suggest 20-25 years service life, and New Canaan's average age is about 17 years.

The most sobering topic: the ladder truck. Fire officials said there is currently no ladder on the market that fits the existing firehouse due to height and weight constraints, meaning the town may have to refurbish the current 2003 ladder for roughly a decade of additional service while planning for a future station capable of housing a replacement. Officials said mutual aid would cover ladder needs during refurbishment.

### Library: "boring" budget, heavy use – and the next big question: the 1913 building

The New Canaan Library presented what leadership called a "boring" budget – intentionally restrained after last year's significant increases. Officials said prior town support allowed them to hire a full-time custodian and stabilize staffing, improving operations amid heavy room turnover.

The library reported more than one million visitors since reopening in 2023, with traffic up roughly 5% year over year and an average of 1,500 visitors daily. Officials highlighted high-profile programming, Maker Lab activity, and major community events, while emphasizing that meeting and study rooms turn over seven to eight times per day and are used predominantly by nonprofits and community groups.

### The town grant request is \$3.119 million, a 3.5% increase. Selectmen urged clearer presentation of "fully loaded" costs – including health insurance and pension obligations carried in the town budget – so year-over-year comparisons reflect the true cost of library operations.

Library officials said planning is underway for the future use of the 1913 building, with committees formed and an expectation of bringing options forward soon to stay within the budget cycle.

### AEDs: Parks & Rec wins unanimous approval for 11 new units – and a push for a public map

The meeting closed with a unanimous vote to purchase 11 new automated external defibrillators through Parks & Recreation. Director John Howe said the devices will replace grant-funded units from Norwalk Hospital that are reaching end-of-life, and noted at least one of the older units was used successfully.

The contract, with Chris Gardner and Associates, LLC, totals \$25,121 plus a \$1,250 contingency for cabinets for a total cost of \$26,300. Howe outlined placements across Dunning Stadium, school and park locations, and turf fields. The units will be housed in marked exterior cabinets and deployed seasonally because cold temperatures affect performance.

Carlson urged the town to create a public-facing map of AED locations, noting that even if 911 can direct callers, emergencies change how people process information. Murphy Carroll agreed, emphasizing that coaches and field users should know locations in advance. Howe said a map could be created easily.

The Board of Selectmen's budget meetings continued this week after the Sentinel went to press and will continue next week. We will report on those meetings next week.

## REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. CELEBRATION CONTINUED From Page 1



Rev. Richard Williams, Executive Director of Pivot Ministries, at the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration, speaking on When 'Silence Is Golden' Fails.

cbcnewcanaan.org delivered the invocation, saying "that we collectively come to celebrate unity, love, grace, mercy, passion, commitment. Help us, Oh God, as we go forward with a fresh anointing for these trying times. We need you. Speak to each of our hearts."

Jennifer Zonis, president of the Interfaith Council of New Canaan, thanked everyone for "joining us and having faith in our deeply held belief that there is so much more that unites us than divides us." She then sang a prayer in Hebrew.

Three scholars at A Better Chance in New Canaan – Yanfer Martinez, Chris Feliz and Kian Ragaza – gave their own testimonies on speaking up and speaking out. Mr. Martinez noted that "honoring [Dr. King's] legacy means choosing voice over fear, truth over comfort, because our voices matter. Not when they are perfect or polished, but when they are used." Mr. Feliz stressed that "Silence is the partner of compliance," with Mr. Ragaza citing Dr. King's words that "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter" then saying "Think about that. Silence isn't just quiet. It's a choice."

Everyone joined in singing with vigor 'Lift Every Voice and Sing'.

Rev. Richard Williams, executive director of Pivot Ministries www.pivotministries.org was the guest speaker. His message from the pulpit was that the question confronting us today is "What happens to a people who choose quiet over conscience? What happens to a soul that keeps saying, 'It's not my problem. It's not my business. It's not my fight.' What happens when we keep choosing fear and comfort and convenience over conviction? And if fear and comfort and convenience keep having the last word, how do we become a people to break a hush? How do we become a people to break that hush in truth and love? Friends, when we keep choosing silence over conscience, something inside us began to die. Silence does not spare us."

What to do? Rev. Williams advised us "to name clearly what matters in our world and to speak courage, soaked in love, even when the words are hard to say. Today we not only honor Dr. King with our memories, but we honor the justice and the love he lived for with how we live, with what we say, with what we stand up for."

A collection was taken, the proceeds supporting the New Canaan Food Pantry.

Rev. Mark Grorud of St. Michael's Lutheran Church on God's Acre www.stmichaelslutheran.org delivered the benediction, calling on everyone to "be who you are called to be. In any and in all the ways you can, seek justice, resist evil. Stand strong against death, and all death's works and wiles. Add your voice. Move your feet. Extend your hands. Do not be silent."

The celebration concluded with everybody leaving the pews, joining hands and singing 'We Shall Overcome,' enthusiastically led by Roosevelt Credit, a professional singer.



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# New Canaan Sentinel

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## Charter Revision

New Canaan is engaged in a consequential exercise: examining the document that orders its civic life. Charter revision lacks glamour, which is precisely why it deserves attention. The charter is the town's operating manual, not a slogan sheet. It allocates authority, defines accountability, and determines how power is restrained, delegated, and renewed. Communities neglect such documents at their peril.

The Charter Revision Commission's recent work, including its Jan. 14 subcommittee meeting with Superintendent of Schools Dr. Bryan Luizzi, illustrates how institutional design shapes outcomes. Luizzi's testimony was notable for its sobriety. He described a Board of Education structure that functions effectively because responsibilities are distinct and respected. Education policy, fiscal review, legislative judgment, and capital planning each reside where they belong. That separation is charter architecture at work.

Charters are often invisible when they function well. Their success is measured in the absence of friction rather than the presence of drama. New Canaan's current Board of Education model—nine members, four-year terms, elected by voters—has produced continuity, institutional knowledge, and predictable governance. Luizzi's caution against blurring roles during budget review was not bureaucratic defensiveness. It was a defense of clarity.

The commission's attention to technical inconsistencies, such as aligning vacancy provisions with state statute, further demonstrates why revision cannot be casual. A charter that conflicts with state law invites confusion and legal challenge. Cleaning such seams is not glamorous work. It is necessary work.

The larger question animating the commission's deliberations—the balance between elected and appointed boards—requires similar restraint. Elections confer direct accountability. Appointments emphasize expertise and insulation from transient pressures. Neither model is inherently virtuous. Each must be judged in context, board by board, function by function. The commission's insistence on neutral language and qualitative description reflects an understanding that charters should illuminate choices rather than predetermine them.

This deliberation benefits from public participation not as a courtesy, but as a requirement. A charter is a community's extended conversation with itself. Residents need not master parliamentary law to contribute meaningfully. They need only attend meetings, read materials, listen carefully, and speak plainly. The commission's interviews, surveys, and public comment periods exist for that purpose.

Public engagement is especially important when institutions appear to function smoothly. Stability can breed complacency. New Canaan's governance has avoided scandal and paralysis, which makes revision easier to dismiss as optional. It is not. Structures that work today may fail tomorrow if demographics shift, technology advances, or legal standards evolve. Anticipation is a civic virtue.

James Madison warned that "if men were angels, no government would be necessary." The corollary is that governments must be designed with human limitations in mind. Charters encode that realism. They assume ambition, error, and disagreement. They channel those forces rather than pretending they do not exist.

The commission's discussion of artificial intelligence offers a useful example of disciplined governance. Luizzi declined to recommend charter language on AI, noting that operational issues belong in policy and administration rather than foundational law. That distinction reflects constitutional judgment. Not every emerging issue belongs in a charter. Revision requires restraint as much as initiative.

What the commission is doing now—drafting frameworks, weighing words, resisting advocacy—is the slow work of self-government. It deserves attention precisely because it resists urgency theater. Residents who wait until a charter appears on a referendum ballot have waited too long to shape it.

New Canaan has long benefited from institutions that prize competence over spectacle. Charter revision is the mechanism by which that preference is renewed.

# Editorial Page



**"Frankly, I don't remember why I called this meeting."**

## LEGAL AD

### Legal Notice

Pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. §9-395, a certified list of 30 Democratic party-endorsed candidates for the Town of New Canaan for election as Members of the Democratic Town Committee At-Large is on file in my office at Town Hall, 77 Main Street, New Canaan, Connecticut and copies are available for public distribution.

The number of Town Committee Members to be elected, under party rules, is thirty (30). A Primary will be held on March 3, 2026, if candidacies (which (number) is at least 25% of the number of town committee members to be elected by such party in the municipality) are filed in accordance with §§9-382 to 9-450, inclusive, of the General Statutes, by persons other than party-endorsed candidates, not later than 4:00 p.m. of January 28, 2026, provided the number of such candidacies plus the number of endorsed candidates, exceeds the number of town committee members to be elected. (If the number of opposing candidacies filed is reduced to less than such 25%, no primary will be held.)

Petition forms, instructions, and information concerning the procedure for filing opposing candidacies may be obtained from the Democratic Registrar of Voters, Liz Orteig, Town Hall, 77 Main Street, New Canaan, Connecticut.

**CLAUDIA A. WEBER, CMC**

**New Canaan Town Clerk**

## LEGAL AD

### Legal Notice

Pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. §9-395, a certified list of 23 Republican party-endorsed candidates for the Town of New Canaan for election as Members of the Republican Town Committee At-Large is on file in my office at Town Hall, 77 Main Street, New Canaan, Connecticut and copies are available for public distribution.

The number of Town Committee Members to be elected, under party rules, is twenty-three (23). A Primary will be held on March 3, 2026, if candidacies (which (number) is at least 25% of the number of town committee members to be elected by such party in the municipality) are filed in accordance with §§9-382 to 9-450, inclusive, of the General Statutes, by persons other than party-endorsed candidates, not later than 4:00 p.m. of January 28, 2026, provided the number of such candidacies plus the number of endorsed candidates, exceeds the number of town committee members to be elected. (If the number of opposing candidacies filed is reduced to less than such 25%, no primary will be held.)

Petition forms, instructions, and information concerning the procedure for filing opposing candidacies may be obtained from the Republican Registrar of Voters, Joan McLaughlin, Town Hall, 77 Main Street, New Canaan, Connecticut.

**CLAUDIA A. WEBER, CMC**

**New Canaan Town Clerk**

## LEGAL AD

### TOWN OF NEW CANAAN INLAND WETLANDS COMMISSION

Notice is hereby given that the Inland Wetlands Agent has approved the following application:

Permit Number (IW-26-1) issued to Anne E. and George H. Brown, 955 West Road, Map 28 Block 31 Lot 17. Prepare site for construction activities and install all soil and erosion controls. Install slab for new 10'x20' pool house. Install septic tank and system as designed. Re-locate underground propane tank and make connections. Connect all other underground utilities as designed. Install patio. Fine grade, landscape and stabilize all disturbed areas upon completion.

## LEGAL AD

### TOWN OF NEW CANAAN NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the Town Council of New Canaan will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, February 9th, 2026 in the Town Hall Meeting Room at New Canaan Town Hall, 77 Main Street, New Canaan, CT., and via Zoom.

For the following purposes:

To consider, hear public comment upon and take action on a proposal to lease a portion of the Town-owned parcel of land at 28 Grove Street for outdoor employee parking. The public hearing is intended to meet the public hearing requirement of Connecticut General Statutes Section 7-163e.

AND

To consider, hear public comment upon and take action on a proposal to lease the building known as The Playhouse, located at 93 Elm Street, New Canaan for a theater operator. The public hearing is intended to meet the public hearing requirement of Connecticut General Statutes Section 7-163e.

# Legal Ads

# Charter Revision is Here and in Full Swing

By PETER BARHYDT

The New Canaan Charter Revision Commission spent most of its recent meeting on Tuesday examining fundamental questions about local governance, accountability and public trust, with an extended and at times pointed discussion over whether members of the Planning and Zoning Commission should continue to be appointed or be elected.

The Charter Revision Commission (CRC) was established by the Town Council on Oct. 15, 2025, and charged with reviewing the Town Charter in its entirety. The CRC is empowered to recommend revisions that add, delete, update, clarify or retain charter provisions, with a first draft report due to the Town Council by May 4, 2026.

Chair Kathleen Corbet led the CRC in hearing public comments and updates on the CRC's subcommittees but then focused the meeting on testimony from Planning and Zoning officials, and land use professionals.

## Public Comment Raises Accountability Concerns

During public comment, longtime New Canaan resident Roy Abramowitz criticized the town's current governance structure, arguing that appointed boards concentrate power and reduce accountability to residents.

Abramowitz described the system as "autocratic" and said that appointing boards through the Board of Selectmen allows decisions to be made without sufficient responsiveness to the electorate.

"When a town commission ignores extensive records and the safety of neighborhood children, there is no reportable responsibility to the populace," he said, arguing that elected boards would be more representative of and responsive to community concerns.

Abramowitz suggested that zoning and planning decisions in particular would benefit from being subject to electoral accountability, especially as New Canaan continues to grow.

## Public Survey Gaining Responses

The CRC also received an update on its public input survey, which is intended to gather resident perspectives on the town charter and municipal governance.

Commissioner Jennifer Holme reported that as of the meeting, 37 residents had completed the survey, nearly doubling the total from just days earlier. The survey has been promoted through town staff communications, the First Selectman's newsletter, local media outlets, community organizations and political party mailing lists.

Holme said responses will be compiled every two weeks and shared with commissioners, including verbatim comments as well as aggregated data. Raw data, including names and addresses, will be available to commissioners for review, while summarized results will be included in public packets.

Chair Corbet emphasized that the survey remains open, and encouraged continued participation, noting that it is posted on the Charter Revision Commission's page on the town website.

## Working Groups Report Progress

CRC members also heard updates from its three working groups, which are reviewing different sections of the charter, and interviewing town boards and officials.

Group One, chaired by Angela Jameson, is examining the issue of elections versus appointments, and reviewing Article I of the charter. Jameson said the group is preparing a neutral report outlining the pros and cons of each governance model, along with broader considerations commissioners should weigh when evaluating specific boards.

Commissioner Joseph Palo said Article I currently contains a wide range of provisions added over decades and would benefit from clarification.

"We've identified about six areas that are actionable and broadly agreed upon," Palo said, including potential recommendations regarding the town seal and the terminology used for boards and commissions.

CRC commissioners are also interviewing town officials,

**Residents may continue to submit feedback through the commission's online public input form at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8QXBNNK>.**

including the superintendent of schools, Board of Education members, Inland Wetlands commissioners, and the town clerk.

Group Two and Group Three reported that interviews with the Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance, Zoning Board of Appeals, and other commissions are underway, with the goal of completing most interviews by the end of February.

## Planning and Zoning Officials Push Back on Election Proposal, Cite Risks

The latter portion of the meeting was devoted almost entirely to Planning and Zoning, which has emerged as one of the most debated areas of the charter review.

Planning and Zoning Chairman Dan Radman addressed the CRC at length, arguing strongly in favor of retaining the current appointment system.

Radman, an architect who has served on the commission since 2011 and as chair since 2022, said New Canaan's Planning and Zoning Commission benefits from a deep bench of experienced members selected for their professional expertise rather than their ability to campaign.

"Appointing commissioners allows the town to select individuals with specific knowledge and experience," Radman said. "It also helps insulate long-term planning decisions from short-term political pressures."

Radman outlined what he described as a rigorous vetting process involving political parties, the First Selectman's office, and interviews conducted by Planning and Zoning leadership. He argued that elected commissions could discourage qualified professionals—such as architects, engineers, and attorneys—from serving due to employer restrictions on political activity.

Former Planning and Zoning Chairman Laszlo Papp, who could not attend, submitted a letter that was read into the record. Papp

wrote that, based on his direct experience with neighboring towns, elected planning and zoning commissions often face greater political pressure and internal conflicts.

Papp noted that he had regular meetings with peer Planning and Zoning chairs in neighboring towns. "I learned that the towns whose P&Z members were elected had many more problems and difficulties, in contrast to New Canaan where members of the P&Z enjoyed friendly discussions and usually made unanimous decisions. The P&Z chairmen of the towns represented by elected members often complained that they made decisions often based on political considerations, and not on the merits of the issue. They complained that they had many disagreements."

"The current appointment system assures that New Canaan selects its Planning and Zoning members based on merit and not politics," Papp wrote.

## Legal Framework and Quasi-Judicial Role Explained

Town Planner and Zoning Enforcement Officer Sarah Carey provided a detailed overview of the legal framework governing land-use boards, emphasizing that many Planning and Zoning decisions are quasi-judicial in nature, and must be based solely on evidence in the public record and state law.

Carey explained that commissioners are prohibited from private communications with applicants, neighbors or elected officials regarding pending or likely applications, a restriction intended to prevent claims of bias or predetermination.

"These rules are intentional, and essential to maintaining the integrity of the decision-making process," Carey said, noting that they apply whether commissioners are elected or appointed.

Town Attorney Nicholas Bamanite echoed those concerns, warning that informal communications or campaign

statements could increase the town's exposure to legal challenges.

"One of the most common grounds for appeals is alleged bias or predetermination," Bamanite said. "Those claims can be fueled by statements made outside the formal process."

Several speakers questioned how elected Planning and Zoning commissioners could campaign without compromising those legal standards.

## Broader Perspectives from Commissioners and Professionals

Planning and Zoning Commissioner John Kriz said New Canaan's current system has helped produce a walkable downtown, diverse housing options, and strong environmental and historic preservation.

"Our town has been blessed for decades with an independent, objective, and energetic team," Kriz said, adding that an elected Planning and Zoning Commission risks introducing single-issue agendas and special-interest influence.

Kriz went on to cite not only the comments from former Planning and Zoning chairman Papp (unaffiliated), and current chairman Radman (Republican), but also prior testimony to the CRC from former Planning and Zoning chairman John Goodwin (Democrat), all of whom argued against elected planning and zoning commissioners. "I think this is what's called a broad consensus," he concluded.

Krista Nielson, Planning and Zoning Commission secretary and a professional planner who has worked in multiple states, said Connecticut's system is among the strongest she has encountered.

"Elected planning and zoning commissioners would introduce a structural tension between popularity and legal defensibility," Nielson said. "That tension already exists at times and would only be exacerbated by elections."

Civil engineer Rob Frangione,

who regularly appears before land-use boards across Fairfield County, also urged the CRC not to change the current system of appointed Planning and Zoning commissioners.

"Nowhere in the history of mankind did someone say, 'Let's add more politicians' to solve a problem," Frangione said, drawing laughter from the audience.

## CRC Stresses Its Independent Role

Charter Revision Commission members emphasized that hearing opposition does not predetermine their recommendations.

Commissioner William Parrett said the CRC's responsibility is to examine all perspectives, noting that not all residents are satisfied with current governance.

"Even if things work well most of the time, we can always improve communication and transparency," Parrett said.

Several commissioners raised potential alternatives to elections, including longer terms for Planning and Zoning members, improved public education about land-use processes, and clearer guidance on how residents can access agendas, records and hearings.

Chair Corbet said communication has emerged as a recurring theme throughout the charter review.

"If there are ways to clarify processes or make them more accessible, that's something we should look at closely," she said.

## Next Meeting

The Charter Revision Commission will meet next on Tuesday, Feb. 3, and will continue reviewing interview findings and public input. Additional special meetings are scheduled, all of which are posted on the town website and available for in-person attendance or viewing via recorded video.

Residents may continue to submit feedback through the commission's online public input form.

# Superintendent Weighs in on Charter Revision

By PETER BARHYDT

## Charter Revision Commission subcommittee hears from superintendent, begins drafting framework on elected vs. appointed boards

The Charter Revision Commission's Group 1 subcommittee met Jan. 14 at Town Hall for a special meeting that combined an interview with New Canaan Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Bryan Luizzi and with a detailed discussion on how the commission should frame the question of elected versus appointed boards and commissions.

## Superintendent: current BOE structure "works very well"

The main portion of the meeting was hearing from with Dr. Luizzi focused on how the town charter intersects with the Board of Education (BOE) and school operations. Luizzi told commissioners that charter language relating to the BOE is intentionally limited because the BOE operates under its own bylaws, but the charter still plays a central role in setting terms, elections, and parts of the budget process.

Luizzi said New Canaan's four-year BOE terms are appropriate because it takes time for members to understand the work. He also said the current nine-member BOE is the right size, noting that the board's committee structure generally uses three committees with three members each, a configuration that fits a nine-member board.

On the budget process, Luizzi described what he called a well-functioning division of responsibilities among boards. He said New Canaan benefits

when each body stays within its role: the BOE focuses on what is educationally responsible, the Board of Finance evaluates affordability, the Town Council acts as the legislative body, and the Board of Selectmen has a key role on capital planning.

He also addressed how capital and operating budgets move through town review. In practice, he said, the BOE develops both budgets and presents them together, while the Board of Selectmen's first major entry point is the capital budget. He pointed to cases where capital items may shift during review—for example, paving projects that can move into the Department of Public Works budget if it results in savings or better coordination.

Luizzi said the town's ability to act as purchasing agent for the BOE can also reduce costs, and he cautioned against changes that could blur responsibilities among boards and create conflict during budget review.

## Vacancy rule: charter language not aligned with state statute

One of Luizzi's specific suggestions was to align the charter's BOE vacancy provision with state law. Commissioners discussed the fact that the charter references a 90-day period for filling a BOE vacancy, while state statute provides a 30-day rule for municipalities.

Luizzi said the discrepancy could create confusion and potential challenges if a vacancy is not filled promptly. He cited prior guidance from counsel that the town should follow the 30-day statute to avoid conflict between local language and state law. Commissioners discussed that, under the statute, if the BOE does not fill a vacancy within 30 days, the First Selectman may fill the seat. They also reviewed how

the 30-day clock begins once a written resignation is received by the Town Clerk.

Several commissioners supported cleaning up the inconsistency in order for the charter, BOE bylaws, and state statute match.

## Term limits and elections

Dr. Luizzi was asked about term limits and whether the town's current elected BOE model presents governance issues.

Luizzi said he is generally not in favor of term limits for BOE members, arguing that forced turnover can drain institutional knowledge and make it harder to recruit qualified candidates willing to do the work. He noted that New Canaan's BOE chair has a two-year leadership term limit but said the board has waived that limit at times when continuity made sense. In general, commissioners noted that two BOE terms—roughly eight years—appears to be a common length of service.

Luizzi said he sees value in the election process for the BOE and said New Canaan's structure has supported stable relationships and effective oversight. He contrasted New Canaan's four-year terms with districts that use shorter terms, which he said can make it harder to build working relationships and develop expertise.

## AI and donations: governance questions raised

Commissioners also asked whether artificial intelligence (AI) should be addressed in the charter. Luizzi said AI is a major operational and instructional topic in education, but he did not identify an obvious entry point for AI-specific charter language. He suggested the issue is more naturally handled through administrative responsibilities and BOE bylaws, including expectations that district leadership stay current

on new technology and its impacts.

Another topic was governance and audit trails for donations and scholarships. Luizzi described the New Canaan Scholarship Association as an independent 501(c)(3) organization with separate governance and annual audits shared with the school district for review. He also said the district receives roughly \$500,000 to \$600,000 in donations annually, including about \$200,000 from the All Sports Booster Club, and that donations above set thresholds are subject to BOE approval under policy. He said donation funds are tracked, reported, and audited as part of district financial controls.

"Appointed vs. elected" framework: debate over tone and specificity

After the interview, members returned to the ongoing "theme-based" document it is drafting to help the full Charter Revision Commission consider appointed versus elected boards and commissions.

The discussion was a long, paragraph-by-paragraph review focused on word choice and neutrality. Commissioners debated whether the framework should be general or tied closely to New Canaan's current structure. Several participants emphasized that the intended audience is other CRC members—particularly groups 2 and 3—and that the document should be balanced, avoiding language that implicitly argues for one model.

A central concern was how to describe accountability. Commissioners discussed whether appointed officials should be described as "indirectly accountable" to voters and whether that phrasing implies reduced accountability. They ultimately leaned toward language stating that elected officials are directly

accountable to the electorate, while appointed officials are accountable through the elected officials who appoint them.

Commissioners also discussed whether to include statistics about how many boards are elected versus appointed, with concerns raised that quantitative comparisons could skew interpretation.

The group generally agreed to keep descriptions qualitative and avoid statements that could invite fact-checking or

appear directional.

They also debated examples and references to other towns, ultimately favoring a narrower approach that avoids broad claims about regional governance models.

Group 1 ended the meeting with agreement to continue working through the framework at its next session, including discussion of elected boards and commissions, and to continue developing suggested edits to Article 1 of the charter.



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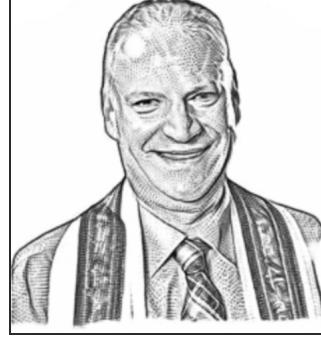
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# A Prescription for Faith



By RABBI MITCHELL M. HURVITZ

We live in a world where too many people suffer from spiritual cataracts; their vision becomes clouded, and they are unable to perceive the divine spark that equally resides in all.

Especially problematic are the religious extremists who claim to possess the sole cure to that which spiritually ails us, and they falsely assert a faith-based monopoly on how God is present in our lives.

As if God can only listen to one language.

But God is everywhere.

As I lead our nursery school children in song: "God is here, there, and everywhere. God is up, down, right, left, and all around!"

*It is a prescription that will let us see the path by which we walk away from anger, aggression, or a sense of superiority, and toward love, kindness, and the understanding that all of us are created equally in God's image.*

God is not limited to one group's faith tradition, and faith is not intended to be a fortress to keep others out.

Rather, faith is a prescription to help us clearly see God's light in our lives.

For Jews, our faith tradition emphasizes sanctification, and our Torah is the lens by which we can focus on how our world can continually be improved upon when we live a life fulfilling all of God's commandments.

Each mitzvah is as vital as the next.

Our neighbors possess their own sacred traditions, which enable them to see clearly how God guides them in leading their sacred and moral lives.

If we try to force our faith

"glasses" onto another, the world becomes a blur. But when we wear our own particularistic lenses with integrity, we discover a miraculous unity.

We realize that while we may look through different windows, we are all sharing and staring at the same sacred space.

No one needs to see "eye-to-eye." All must see "heart-to-heart."

On Monday, we honor the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

He was a religious man who understood that faith without sacred action is like a body without breath.

My favorite image is of Dr. King marching in Selma with his friend, Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, arm in arm.

Together, they put their shared faith, even though they practiced

different particularistic traditions, into concrete, prayerful action.

As Rabbi Heschel said of the occasion of their march, "I am praying with my feet."

Prayer is essential, but only because it leads to sacred living.

Two different religious leaders with varying prescriptions of faith, yet their visions of God and the world were identical.

They each perceived that you cannot say you love God if you stand idly by while God's children suffer.

God doesn't require what we believe, but how we morally practice our beliefs.

Dr. King's "Dream" was not a tranquil sleep; instead, it was a spiritual alarm to wake up.

He proclaimed that the foundation of human conflict-

resolution must be love. And, the blessings we experience in our lives are not intended to be hoarded, but to be shared with others.

No one can become holy if they are not also helpful.

It is time for all of us to ensure that we have in place the correct faith prescriptions appropriate to us.

It is a prescription that will let us see the path by which we walk away from anger, aggression, or a sense of superiority, and toward love, kindness, and the understanding that all of us are created equally in God's image.

Let us see our faith's 20/20 vision forward, and talk and walk our prayers into action.

Together, arm-in-arm let us pray with our feet until the dream

of the prophets and the dream of Dr. King becomes the reality of our world.

Shabbat Shalom,  
Rabbi Mitch

Temple Sholom's Senior Rabbi

*Mitchell M. Hurvitz is a scholar, teacher, community activist and preacher, and is recognized as one of the prominent religious leaders in the Greenwich area and beyond. A frequent guest speaker at synagogues and churches, study groups, community institutions and universities, he is a charismatic personality who engages individuals and stimulates hearts and minds. His teachings can be found in Greenwich Sentinel and in other local and national publications.*

## Worship Directory and Services

UPDATE SERVICES AND ADD SPECIAL EVENTS TO THIS CALENDAR AT

[www.NewCanaanSentinel.com/worship-calendar-updates](http://www.NewCanaanSentinel.com/worship-calendar-updates)

### Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

682 South Avenue 203.966.5849

[www.ComeUntoChrist.org](http://www.ComeUntoChrist.org)

Sunday Service: 9:00 AM

### Congregational Church

23 Park Street 203.966.2651

[office@godsacre.org](mailto:office@godsacre.org)

[www.godsacre.org](http://www.godsacre.org)

**Sunday Services: 8:00 AM and 10:00 AM.**

The 10:00 am service is also live streamed and recorded, the video replay will be available throughout the week. Church School is available on Sundays for children ages 3 through 7th grade each Sunday from September through mid-June.

### Recurring Events:

**Tuesdays at 9:30 AM:** Women's Bible Study

**Wednesdays at 9:30 AM:** Bible Study

**Fourth Thursday from 12-2:30 PM:** Meet at the Open Door Shelter in Norwalk to serve a meal.

### First Church of Christ, Scientist

49 Park Street 203.966.0293

[christiansciencect.org/newcanaan](http://christiansciencect.org/newcanaan)

**Sunday 10:30 AM**, in person only. Sunday School is available during Sunday Service and is open to children and young people up to the age of 20. There is also childcare available for children too young for Sunday School.

### Wednesday Testimony Meeting: 1st

Wednesday of each month, join by zoom or by phone 646 558 8656. Reading Room Hours: Open Mondays 11-2, Call to confirm hours 203-966-0293. All are welcome to the Sunday and Wednesday services, Sunday School, and the reading room.

### First Presbyterian Church

178 Oenoke Ridge Road 203.966.0002

[fpcnc.org](http://fpcnc.org)

**Sunday Service: 10am** in person or via LocalLive. All are welcome. Coffee Hour after the service is also available in person or via Zoom. Dedicated childcare is available for all children via Wee Care Nanny Agency from 8:45-11:30am in the Nursery School. Transcripts of previous sermons are also available via the First Presbyterian Church of New Canaan's website. Recurring Events: Every Saturday 9:15am (closed) and 10:30am (open): Alcoholics Anonymous. Every Tuesday 8pm: Men's A.A.

**Third Wednesday from 6-7:30 PM:** Wednesdays at the Well are intergenerational opportunities to learn and grow in faith together. Dinner will be served and all ages are invited.

### Upcoming Events:

**January 29 from 7-9 PM:** Open Mic Night. You are invited to an evening to share music and/or poetry. Walk-ins Welcome.

To sign up, email

[nickdepysite@gmail.com](mailto:nickdepysite@gmail.com).

**February 1 at 11:30 AM:** Join speaker Dr. Georgette Bennett for an Adult Forum. All Are Welcome. Childcare will be provided and a light lunch will be served.

**February 5 & 6:** New Canaan Chamber Music Concert. Tickets available at <https://newcanaanchambermusic.org/tickets/>.

### Saint Aloysius Roman Catholic Church

21 Cherry Street 203.966.0020

[www.starcc.com](http://www.starcc.com)

**Service Schedule:**

**Saturday:** Vigil for Sunday 5:00 p.m.

**Sunday:** 7:00 a.m., 8:30 a.m. 10:00 a.m.,

11:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. The Sunday 8:30 a.m. mass is live-streamed and recorded.

**Monday-Friday:** 7:00 am and 5:30 pm

**Saturday:** 7:00 am

### Recurring Events:

**Last Monday of every month 7pm:** Women's Praise & Worship Holy Hour

**Fridays 7:30am-6pm:** Eucharistic Adoration (September-June)

**Saturday 8:30am:** St. A's Healing Rosary Prayer Group

### St. Mark's Episcopal Church

111 Oenoke Ridge 203.966.4515

[churchoffice@stmarksnewcanaan.org](mailto:churchoffice@stmarksnewcanaan.org)

[www.stmarksnewcanaan.org](http://www.stmarksnewcanaan.org)

**Sunday Services:** 8:00am: Indoor Holy

Eucharist Rite I; 9:00am: Outdoor Holy

Eucharist Rite II; 10am: Indoor Holy

Eucharist Rite II (Live Stream also available on the St. Mark's website). Coffee Hour follows the 10am service.

Church School during the 10am service:

Godly Play for children in kindergarten

through second grade; Holy Moly for third

and fourth grades; Meet in the Middle for

fifth, sixth and seventh grades. Professional

childcare is offered for children ages four

and under. Families with children who are

not yet ready to separate for childcare are

invited to use the rocking chairs at the rear

of the chapel.

**Weekday Services: Monday-Friday,**

8:30am: Morning PrayerRite II by Zoom.

**Wednesday at 12:05pm:** Noonday Eucharist in the chapel.

### Recurring Events:

**First Wednesday at 1pm:** Laundry Love volunteering opportunity to come alongside people who are struggling financially by assisting them with their laundry.

**First & Third Wednesdays from**

**6-7:30pm:** Youth Group

### Upcoming Events:

**February 28 at 6 PM:** The professional members of the St. Mark's Choir will delight everyone with their talents in a

program of solos from operas, oratorios,

and musicals, as well as entertaining

works for vocal ensemble. A festive

reception will follow.

### St. Michael's Lutheran Church

5 Oenoke Ridge 203.966.3913

[office@stmichaelslutheran.org](mailto:office@stmichaelslutheran.org)

[www.stmichaelslutheran.org](http://www.stmichaelslutheran.org)

**Sunday Service at 10:00 am.** Following

the service there is coffee, cookies and

conversation' in the Fellowship Hall.

### Recurring Events:

**Thursday 12 PM:** Alcoholics Anonymous

### Trinity Church

New Canaan | Darien

1800 E. Putnam Ave, Old Greenwich

**203.618.0808**

[info@trinitychurch.life](mailto:info@trinitychurch.life)

[www.trinitychurch.life](http://www.trinitychurch.life)

**Join us Sundays at 10 a.m.** at Greenwich

Hyatt Regency for lively worship,

thoughtful and applicable teaching, weekly Communion, and an opportunity to make friends and grow in community. Trinity

Kids (infants through fifth grade) and

Trinity Youth (middle and high schoolers)

take place during the service, and coffee

and refreshments are served following

worship. The service is also available on

livestream via YouTube, Sundays at 10:00

a.m.; learn more at [www.trinitychurch.life](http://www.trinitychurch.life).

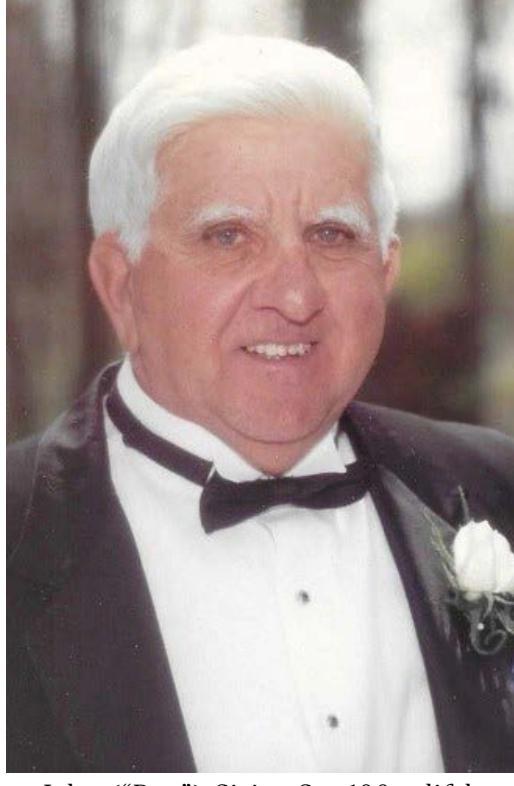
### United Methodist Church

165 South Avenue 203.



## Obituaries

### JOHN SIRICO



John ("Doc") Sirico Sr., 100 a lifelong resident of New Canaan, CT died peacefully at his home with his family by his side on Monday, January 19, 2026. He was the son of the late Gaetano (Thomas) and Lizette (Elizabeth) Sirico.

He was a beloved husband, father, grandfather and friend who will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

John was born November 25, 1925, in New Canaan where he spent his lifelong years. John was the owner/operator of Sirico Builders constructing and remodeling homes in Fairfield County. He was known for his hard work, generosity and willingness to help others. But more than anything he was a devoted husband, father and family man. He loved spending time with his family, sharing stories of his life. He was always there to offer guidance, support and encouragement no matter what challenges one faced.

John enjoyed hunting and golfing and was a standout basketball player for the Stamford Maroons and was honored several times by the New Canaan Old Timers. He also enjoyed socializing at the New Canaan Dunkin Donuts with many of the locals from town. John served his country in World War II in the Navy (entering active duty on March 6, 1944) and was commissioned on the USS Franklin (nicknamed "Big Ben") CV-13 aircraft carrier.

He is survived by his children, John Sirico, Jr. and wife Nancy, Karen Wenning and husband James, and his grandchildren Alison Sirico, Kylie Sirico, James Wenning, Jr. and Kyle Wenning. He was predeceased by his beautiful wife Irene (Mullen) Sirico, and siblings Domenic ("Coot"), Rose, Margaret, Angelina ("Ann"), Thomas ("Tommy"), Frank, Joseph ("Joey"), Rocco ("Rocky"), and James ("Jimmy").

John will be cremated and a memorial service is expected to be scheduled within a couple of months at St. Aloysius Parish, 21 Cherry Street, New Canaan and, immediately followed by a burial at Lakeview Cemetery on Main Street in New Canaan. The family is being compassionately cared for by the staff at Hoyt Funeral Home, 199 Main Street, New Canaan, CT 06840.

### MILAN TURK



Milan Joseph Turk, November 25, 1938 – January 18, 2026

Milan J. Turk, age 87, of New Canaan, CT, died on January 18, 2026, in Danbury, CT, surrounded by his loving family after a brief hospital stay.

Milan was born in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, attended Baton Rouge High School and graduated from Louisiana State University – BS Chemical Engineering (1960); MBA (1962) and Harvard's Advanced Management Program. While at LSU he was President of the College of Engineering. In 1961, he married the love of his life, Margot Genre, in Port Allen, LA and together they raised four children: Lori, Milan Jr. Margot, and Richard.

He began his career in Baton Rouge at Exxon followed by many successful years

with Stauffer Chemical Company. He worked for Mobay Corporation in Pittsburgh for two years before returning to Connecticut, retiring from International Paper in Purchase, NY in 2000. Over the years, the family moved from Baton Rouge, to Houston, to Westfield, NJ, to Fairfield CT, to Geneva, Switzerland, back to Fairfield, to Sewickley, PA. and then to New Canaan, CT.

Milan was a man of faith and a lifelong Catholic, his illegible handwriting a testament to his early Catholic school years. He was a member of St. Pius X in Fairfield and since 1990, St. Aloysius in New Canaan. He loved model airplanes, tennis, shooting sports, hunting dogs, fishing, lemon meringue pie, oatmeal cookies with lots of raisins, photography, Sunday newspaper comics, gin rummy, fine wine, and ice cream. He truly enjoyed building and fixing things and appreciated beautiful wood. He collected and shared many things which brought him joy. Most of all, he loved his family and invested significant personal time and energy in family time. He shared all his passions with his children and grandchildren and supported their endeavors in many ways. A regular feature of every family gathering was an attempt at a full family photograph with Milan setting the timer and running into his spot in the picture combing his hair as he ran. Pictures of family gatherings fill tables and albums in Milan and Margot's home.

Milan is survived by his wife of 64 years Margot G. Turk, New Canaan, CT; his children - Lori Brown Murphy (Mark) of Laurinburg, NC, Milan J. Turk, Jr. (Beth) of Hendersonville, NC, Margot Turk Newkirchen (Lance) of Fairfield CT, and Richard P. Turk (Becky) of Santa Monica, CA; grandchildren

- Mary Kate Murphy (Ken), Matthew Turk (Kenzie), Madeleine Turk Zylberman (Justin), Kathryn Turk, Brandon Turk, and Avery Newkirchen, and one great-grandson Noah Joseph Zylberman; siblings - Susan Orr (Don), Carol Tisdale, Mary Frances Faul, sisters-in-law Jeanne Genre Lorio and Marilyn Turk; brother-in-law Lawrence Mercier; and many nieces and nephews.

Milan was predeceased by his parents Frank Paul and Zdenka Cop Turk, his in-laws Richard and Marguerite Crozat Genre, siblings Frank Turk Jr. and Margaret Turk Mercier, and brothers-in-law Dr. Phil Lorio and Michael Tisdale.

Visitation will be held at Hoyt Funeral Home, 199 Main Street, New Canaan on Friday, January 23, from 4 to 6 p.m. and there will be a Catholic Funeral Mass celebrated at St. Aloysius, 21 Cherry St., New Canaan, CT 06840 in New Canaan, on Saturday, January 24 at 10 a.m. Interment will be a later date at Roselawn Cemetery in Baton Rouge. In lieu of flowers, please consider a gift to things Milan supported: Parkinson's Body & Mind (<https://www.parkinsonsbodyandmind.org>) and St. Aloysius Parish (<https://starcc.com>)

### KATHLEEN JOHNSTON



Kathleen "Kathy" Isom Johnston was born May 29, 1943 in New York City and passed away peacefully on January 15 surrounded by her 4 children. She leaves behind a legacy of love, accomplishment, and grace.

Kathy was the daughter of Edward Whitten Isom and Mary McNulty Isom. She is survived by her sisters, Lynn Isom and Mary Catherine "Kit" Isom, and was deeply devoted to her sister Joan Isom Alger, who preceded her in death in 2016. Kathy grew up in Scarsdale, NY, attended Marymount Secondary School in Tarrytown, NY and later graduated from Manhattanville College.

Shortly after college, Kathy entered into her first marriage and raised her four children: Whit Wyant (Michele), Megan Harris, Carter Wyant (Megan), and Kathleen Turnbull. During the Wyant family years, her family moved frequently, living in Richmond, VA; Baltimore, MD; Rye, NY; Peoria, IL; and ultimately New Canaan, CT, where The Wyant's came to call home. These years were formative and full, shaping Kathy's lifelong devotion to family, adaptability, and strength.

As her life entered a new chapter, Kathy met Douglas Johnston, the love of her life. Dating Doug while her four children were still in high school led to more than a few

lively moments, and marked the beginning of a dynamic, joyful partnership. Kathy and Doug married in August 1989 and shared 32 adventurous years together until Doug's death in 2021.

Together, Kathy and Doug built a rich life, full of love, family, and shared passions. They balanced their time between New Canaan and Vero Beach for many years before settling full-time in Vero Beach approximately 15 years ago. An avid golfer, Kathy's competitive spirit found great joy on the course with friends, often alongside Doug, and later sharing the game with family – especially her grandchildren. Kathy and Doug also traveled extensively with friends, experiences that brought them immense happiness and fulfillment.

Throughout her life, Kathy balanced family with an impressive professional career. She pursued entrepreneurial work in photography and interior design, founding Kathy Wyant Interiors, which served clients throughout Westchester and Fairfield Counties for over a decade. In 1984, she entered the financial services industry full-time with Target Investors, starting as a receptionist and steadily advancing to manage her own book of business as a fully licensed investment banker. This achievement reflected her discipline, intelligence, and determination. When she stepped back from wealth management, she wasn't quite ready to retire, so she began yet another chapter, becoming a Realtor and continuing her lifelong engagement with her community in both New Canaan and Vero Beach. She worked with Dale Sorensen Real Estate in Vero Beach, keeping her status active right up until the end!

To her ten grandchildren, Kathy was "Nana" – a steady, loving presence and a powerful role model. Through her marriage to Doug, she also embraced his four children and nine bonus grandchildren, expanding her family and her heart even further. Her grandchildren remember holiday travels, golf outings, dancing, and playing piano. Through her example, she taught discipline, manners, confidence, patience, and grace. She will also be remembered in the small, enduring details that defined her presence: the warmth and order of a home that always felt just right with the perfect flower arrangement, her beloved golden retrievers, the sound of her grand piano, shared meals, and cherished traditions.

Above all, Kathy will be remembered as a devoted mother, grandmother, wife and friend. Grounded in her Catholic faith, she lived a life of love, service, and quiet strength. She leaves behind a family deeply grateful for her guidance and example, and a legacy that will endure.

A Funeral Mass celebrating Kathy's life will be held on Monday, January 26 at 10:00 a.m. at Holy Cross Catholic Church in Vero Beach, Florida.

A reception will follow at Quail Valley River Club.

### MARGARET ULRICH



Margaret "Peg" Bartlett Ulrich, age 93, of New Canaan, CT, passed away peacefully on January 12, 2026.

Peg was born in Binghamton, NY in 1932, the daughter of Bruce and Mary (Everett) Bartlett. She always wanted to be a nurse but also wished to attend college, so she found a unique 5-year program offered jointly by Bates College in Maine and New England Baptist Hospital in Boston. She graduated from Bates College in 1955 with a B.A. degree. While at Bates, she met the love of her life, Arthur ("Art") Ulrich, whom she married the December after graduation. Together they shared 70 joyful years of marriage, celebrating their anniversary in 2025.

Peg began her nursing career in Johnson City, NY before joining Mercer Hospital in Trenton, New Jersey, while Art was stationed at Fort Dix. She later worked at the Fort Meade Army Hospital in Maryland after Art's transfer there. After a fifteen-year pause to raise her family, she returned to nursing at Glens Falls Hospital in New York and as a volunteer nurse at Planned Parenthood. After

moving to New Canaan, Peg continued her career at Norwalk Hospital for three years and then at Waveny Care Center in New Canaan for seventeen years, before retiring at age 65. Even in retirement, she remained deeply involved in her community, volunteer work in the New Canaan Library and the Charitable New Canaan Thrift Shop.

Peg was a high energy person who cherished fitness. She jogged and skied for twenty years before switching to daily walks—long before "10,000 steps" became a trend. She was a regular at the Norwalk Fitness Center—and wasn't shy about how much she missed the gym during COVID closures.

Music was one of Peg's great passions. A talented pianist, she later found joy singing in three choirs and ringing handbells at both the Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Westport and Music on the Hill in Weston. It gave her particular joy to share ringing and singing for many of those years with her daughter. She continued to ring handbells until the last week before her death.

An avid sports fan, Peg followed both the Yankees and Mets, eventually becoming particularly attached to the UConn women's basketball team. She often lamented the limited athletic opportunities available to girls in the 40's, a passion she channeled into cheering on her children and grandchildren in their many sports.

Peg is survived by her beloved husband, Art, and their four children: Kim Whelan (Franklin) of Brookline, MA; Curtis Ulrich (April) of Albany, NY; Peter Ulrich (Siobhan) of Simsbury, CT; and Marty Dayton (Dave) of Boise, ID. She is also survived by ten grandchildren—Mark, Benson, Derek, Annie, Vincent, Marshall, Nick, Scott, Natalie, and Carina—and six great-grandchildren: Eli, Jordan, Acadia, Bodevyn, Walter and Poppy. She was predeceased by her brother Jack and granddaughter Clare.

A memorial service to celebrate Peg's remarkable life will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to Planned Parenthood or the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Westport.

### BARBARA WAINHAUSE



Barbara Michele Wainhouse, 86, of New Canaan, CT, passed away peacefully on January 12, 2026, at Waveny Care Center. She was the beloved wife of Irwin "Buddy" Wainhouse, with whom she shared 68 years of marriage.

Born on February 7, 1939, in New York City, Barbara was the daughter of the late Lilian Block and Ted Unger. Bright and driven from an early age, she graduated from George Washington High School at just 16 years old in 1955.

Barbara enjoyed a long and accomplished career, beginning in advertising at Grey Advertising in New York City and later transitioning into direct marketing at Garden Way. In a second chapter of her professional life, she found great satisfaction working as a trusted legal assistant at Goldman, Gruber & Woods, where her intelligence, reliability, and warmth were deeply valued. An active member of Temple Beth El in Norwalk and B'nai B'rith for much of her adult life, Barbara was known for her creativity, generosity, and vibrant social spirit. She loved to cook, craft, and crochet, and was an accomplished seamstress who proudly made many of her children's clothes while they were growing up. She also had a deep love of travel, especially trips to France with her husband, where they returned year after year during and after one of Buddy's work assignments abroad, exploring the country she so dearly loved.

Above all, Barbara will be remembered as warm, generous, and a true social butterfly who brought people together with ease and kindness.

In addition to her dear husband, she is survived by her daughter, Stacy and her husband, Rob of Norwalk; her son, Jeffrey and his wife, Jane Yoon; her cherished granddaughters, Samantha and Rebecca, all of Montvale, New Jersey; her brother, Dan of New York City; and her sisters, Lynne Rednik of Cherry Hill, New Jersey, and

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 10**



## Obituaries

CONTINUED From Page 9

and Susan Lukaske of Valley Stream, New York. She was predeceased by her beloved grandchildren, Bryan and Isabella.

Funeral services were held on Sunday, January 18 at Collins Funeral Home, Norwalk, CT. Interment followed at Temple Beth El Memorial Park, Norwalk.

The family would like to take this opportunity to thank the warm and wonderful staff at Waveny Care Center, where Barbara and Buddy were lovingly cared for over the past four years. In lieu of flowers, donations in Barbara's memory may be made to Waveny LifeCare Network, 3 Farm Road, New Canaan, CT 06840.

### KATHRYN DAVIS



Kathryn Anne Bonner Davis died on January 11, 2026 at the age of 96, just shy of her 97th birthday. Kathryn was born on February 16, 1929 in Aurora, NC to Ella Peel Bonner and Roy Tuthill Bonner. Kathryn enjoyed reminiscing about her childhood in Aurora, where she grew up looking after a range of barnyard animals and playing with three successive Collies named "Football." She loved spending summers at Camp Leach and her family's cottage across the river at Pamlico Beach. Kathryn graduated from Aurora High School in 1947, where she was editor of the school newspaper. She attended East Carolina Teachers College (ECTC, now East Carolina University) for one year before transferring to the Rex Hospital Nursing School in Raleigh, NC, where she received her RN degree in 1951.

While enrolled at ECTC, Kathryn met Thomas W. ("Bill") Davis, who was attending on the GI Bill. Kathryn and Bill were married on June 21, 1952, at the Episcopal Church in Aurora on a sweltering day that caused her paternal uncle, Dodd Bonner, to have a heart attack during the wedding ceremony. After their honeymoon, Kathryn and Bill moved to Durham, NC, where Bill worked as an agent

for Allstate Insurance and Kathryn worked as a nurse at Durham Regional Hospital.

Kathryn gave birth to her daughter, Clarissa Anne ("Chris"), on May 14, 1954 and became a full-time mother. Kathryn thought that she might move back "Down East" after Chris was born, because she loved that area so much. Instead, the family moved to Charlotte, NC, the first of a dozen moves back and forth across the country as Bill climbed the corporate ladder at Allstate (which was part of the larger Sears conglomerate). After a brief stop in Kansas City, Kathryn's family moved to Denver, Colorado, where she gave birth to her son, Thomas William, Jr. (also known as "Bill"), on March 14, 1958.

Between 1960 and 1994, Kathryn and her family moved roughly every three years or so: from Denver to Farmers Branch, TX; Northbrook, IL; Sandy Springs, GA; Lincolnshire, IL; Santa Ana, CA; Bannockburn, IL; New Canaan, CT; Lake Forest, IL; and Laguna Niguel, CA. In each of these locations, Kathryn took on the tasks of orienting the family to their new environs while Bill was often away on business travel. Inevitably, this included serving on the Altar Guild at Episcopalian parishes in these communities. In 1970, with her son, Bill, in middle school and daughter, Chris, in high school, Kathryn returned to nursing. She worked as a Registered Nurse in the Emergency Rooms at Lake Forest Hospital (on two different occasions) and also at Children's Hospital of Orange County. Kathryn also worked as a volunteer for community blood drives in multiple locations.

At home, Kathryn was known for her Southern-style home cooking and hospitality. Her children frequently brought home unannounced friends for dinner, and those guests always went home well-fed. Kathryn's fried chicken was particularly prized by family and friends alike—but folks also loved her pork chops, cornbread (both patties and hush-puppies), pimento cheese, green beans, okra, and salads. Kathryn had the sweetest of sweet tooths, so homemade cakes, cookies, pies, and fudge were almost always available in her kitchen.

In 1994, Kathryn's husband, Bill, retired and they moved back to her beloved North Carolina, settling in Chapel Hill for their retirement. In addition to serving on the Altar Guild at the Holy Family Episcopal Church, Kathryn completed her Education for Ministry (EFM) through Sewanee College. In this capacity, Kathryn supported the clergy at Holy Family by administering sacraments to parishioners and patients at the Veteran's Hospital in Durham, NC.

Kathryn was deeply spiritual, with a profound faith anchored in the Episcopalian Church. She read from the Bible nearly every day of her adult life; and devotional readings and quiet contemplation were essential parts

of her morning ritual. Kathryn also enjoyed reading contemporary theologians such as Thomas Merton, Rowan Williams, Barbara Brown Taylor, and others.

Kathryn and Bill enjoyed their retirement in Chapel Hill until Bill's death in 2012. In 2015, Kathryn moved from Chapel Hill to Cedarfield in Henrico County, VA, to be closer to Chris and Chris's family. At Cedarfield, Kathryn was particularly close with her "Golden Girls" crew—Salome Coleman, Neta Atkins, and Peggy Marquis—but she was especially happy to have close relationships with her grandchildren and great grandchildren who lived nearby.

Kathryn is predeceased by her brothers, Loma Bonner and Roy Bonner, and her husband, Bill. She is survived by her daughter, Chris Riely (Henry) of White Stone, VA; son, Bill Davis (Elaine) of Rancho Santa Fe, CA; granddaughter Julia Rowe Ratliff (Graham) of Henrico, VA; grandson Evan Rowe (Nikki Leonard) of San Diego, CA; granddaughter Anna Rowe Mock (Christian) of Goochland, VA; granddaughter Samantha Davis of Brooklyn, NY; granddaughter Stephanie Davis of Amsterdam, Netherlands; great granddaughter Aurora Ratliff of Henrico, VA; great grandson Odin Ratliff of Henrico, VA; and great grandson Evan Mock of Goochland, VA.

Kathryn's family is grateful for the supportive care she received over the years from the physicians and staff at Cedarfield, and the hospice care provided by Bon Secours.

A memorial service will be held for Kathryn later this year at the Holy Family Episcopal Church in Chapel Hill, NC, where her ashes will be interred next to her husband's in the church's columbarium.

### AZIZI AMUNDSEN



Azizi Carole (Dracobly) Amundsen passed away peacefully on December 1, 2025, at her home on Mercer Island, Washington. Born on May 1, 1941, she was the daughter of the late Josephine and Elias (Fred) Dracobly.

Growing up in Raymond, Washington, Azizi's childhood was filled with music and the aromas of Lebanese cuisine. She also developed a love for fashion and an eye

for detail on many buying trips with her parents for the family department store. As an accomplished cook, Azizi loved not only bringing people together and sharing her culinary talents, but also passing on that knowledge and expertise to her sons and later her grandchildren.

Azizi pursued her love of music first at Colorado Women's College and then completed her studies at the University of Washington. She was a devoted teacher for many years both in the Bellevue School District and Mercer Island, where she touched the lives of many students with her patience, kindness, and love of learning. She found great purpose in her volunteer work with the Boys and Girls Clubs, finding joy in helping others and promoting youth development outside of the classroom.

Azizi's love of music and the performing arts remained a constant, as did her love of tennis. Not only did she love playing the game, but she was also a dedicated fan and traveled to many tournaments supporting both of her sons. As an avid bridge player, Azizi's keen knowledge of the game made her a formidable opponent at the card table, a pastime she shared with her many friends. Her kindness radiated to everyone she met.

Azizi's heart met its match in her beloved husband, David Amundsen. They were married July 27, 1969, at Epiphany Parish in Seattle. One of her most cherished roles was that of grandmother to James, Claire, Grace, and Luke, and she instilled in them the values of love, family, and education.

Azizi is survived not only by her husband of over 56 years, David, but also by her sons Jonathan of New York City, and Christian and his wife Kathryn and their children James, Claire, Grace, and Luke of New Canaan, CT. She also leaves behind her brothers Ferris Dracobly of Seattle and Elias (Junior) Dracobly of Raymond, WA, and several nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, January 24 at 12pm at Emmanuel Episcopal Church on Mercer Island.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made in her memory to the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center (<https://www.fredhutch.org/en.html>)

*The New Canaan Sentinel does not charge for obituaries. Every member of the community deserves to be remembered and honored without families facing added financial burdens. Obituaries may be sent to [Caroll@GreenwichSentinel.com](mailto:Caroll@GreenwichSentinel.com).*

*The cost of publishing obituaries is covered by The Sentinel Foundation, a nonprofit that supports the local [Top 5 Things to Do Today](#) daily email, obituaries, education and entertainment pages, worship pages, and sponsorship of charitable organizations and events.*

## The Playhouse Offers Award Contenders and British Classics

*"Given our community's deep appreciation for British film and storytelling, this series felt like a natural fit," said General Manager*

*Jessica Flores.*

The Playhouse Cinema remains fully operational and committed to delivering the exceptional cinematic experience the New Canaan community has come to expect. While the Town continues its search for a future operator, any transition will be seamless, and audiences can be assured that The Playhouse is very much open for business.

January is traditionally a quieter month for new film releases, but The Playhouse is embracing the opportunity to present exciting alternative programming with two special series launching this week.

First is a new chapter in the RE-PLAYHOUSE series, offering audiences a chance to catch—or revisit—some of the year's most celebrated films on the big screen, where they belong. The limited-run lineup includes Hamnet (directed by Chloé

Zhao), Sinners (directed by Ryan

Coogler), Sentimental Value (directed by Joachim Trier), and One Battle After Another, written and directed by Paul Thomas Anderson and starring Leonardo DiCaprio alongside an acclaimed ensemble, including local favorite Tony Goldwyn.

"Nothing replaces the big screen, particularly for films made with that experience in mind," said Playhouse operator Luke Parker Bowles. "Our job is simple: to give people the space to step away from the noise of everyday life and lose themselves, even briefly, in something transporting, challenging,

or restorative."

Also returning this month is the sophomore season of BRIT PICKS, a celebration of standout British cinema featuring Dunkirk, Pride & Prejudice, In Bruges, and Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy.

"Given our community's deep appreciation for British film and storytelling, this series felt like a natural fit," said General Manager Jessica Flores.

Showtimes are available through The Playhouse website and physical box office at 93 Elm Street.

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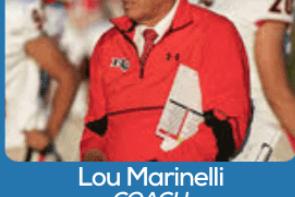
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Dr. Suzanne Allen  
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Dr. Becky Nardi  
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# The “Sweet Spot” of Teen Sleep: Why a Little Weekend Catch-Up Can Go a Long Way

By ANNIE HARRINGTON

As a parent, you've likely seen the classic teen routine: a whirlwind of early school starts, demanding extracurriculars, and late-night study sessions/phone scrolling during the week, followed by a weekend of hibernation.

For years, we've been told to keep teens on a consistent sleep schedule to avoid disrupting their circadian rhythm.

But what if a little extra sleep-in time could actually be beneficial? A new study suggests there's a “sweet spot” for weekend catch-up sleep that can help ease teen anxiety.

Chronic sleep deprivation is a prevalent issue in today's youth, with many teenagers getting far less than the recommended 8 to 10 hours of sleep per night. Additionally, teens' internal sleep clocks undergo a normal biological change during puberty with a shift towards later nights and later mornings, and this lasts until their early 20s.

Unfortunately, this normal pattern change does not align with the schedules demanded of them, leading to a lack of rest that is linked to a range of health issues, including an increased risk of depression and anxiety.

## The Solution: Weekend Catch-Up Sleep

This is where weekend catch-up sleep (WCS) comes in: the practice of sleeping in on weekends to compensate for lost sleep during the week.

While the long-term effects of this practice have been debated, a recent abstract presented at the SLEEP 2025 annual meeting offers some compelling new insights.

The research, which involved nearly 1,900 adolescents, used Fitbit devices to objectively track sleep patterns and found a significant connection between weekend sleep and mental health. The findings show that teens who got up to two additional hours (but not more than) of sleep on weekends had fewer symptoms of anxiety compared to those who did not sleep longer.

This moderate amount of recovery sleep appears to be a protective factor, offering a healthy way for the body to recover without completely throwing off its internal clock. However, the study also provided a crucial word of caution. The benefits were not endless. Teens who slept in for more than two hours on weekends actually saw a slight increase in anxiety and depression.

Teens and people of all

changes frequently shift sleep schedules between weekdays and weekends, an act sometimes termed “social jet lag” or “weekend sleep jet lag.” But just like the jet lag experienced when traveling across time zones, repeatedly changing your sleep and wake times can disrupt your body's internal clock, or circadian rhythm.

When your body is constantly trying to adjust, it can lead to a host of negative health consequences, including a higher risk of metabolic issues like insulin resistance and weight gain, as well as a greater likelihood of experiencing mood disorders.

This is why the study's finding about the two-hour “sweet spot” is so important; it shows that while some recovery sleep can be helpful, excessive shifts can do more harm than good by exacerbating the effects of social jet lag.

**Balance is Key**  
The takeaway here highlights a key principle in integrative health: balance.

The goal isn't to live in a perpetual state of sleep deficit with a massive weekend recovery, but rather to use a small, intentional amount of

catch-up sleep to alleviate some of the pressure of a busy week, while trying to minimize big swings in sleep schedules.

and empower them to not only get the rest they need but also to nurture their emotional and mental well-being.

## Applying the Science to Your Family

So, as a parent, what does this mean for your family?

Instead of viewing a weekend sleep-in as a sign of laziness, consider it a natural, protective mechanism—within reason. Encourage your teen to prioritize sleep during the week, but don't fret if they sleep a little later on Saturday morning.

The real challenge is to help them find the right balance, where sleep becomes a consistent priority rather than a weekend chore. This includes giving them the autonomy to help establish a healthy sleep routine that aligns with their goals, limiting screens, especially for 1-2 hours before bed, and encouraging them to get to know and feel the impacts of quality sleep vs irregular sleep in their lives.

Check out the teen-specific resources below to help engage them in healthy habit formation

resources for parents, educators, and students, including a downloadable sleep diary to help track patterns and identify areas for improvement.

**Doze: Goodnight Mind for Teens:** This app is specifically designed for adolescents and young adults. It uses principles of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I) to help users understand and improve their sleep habits. It's a science-backed, interactive tool for self-coaching and building a better relationship with sleep.

**Calm & Headspace:** These popular apps offer a wide variety of guided meditations, sleep stories, and soundscapes specifically designed to help calm a racing mind and prepare the body for sleep. They both include content tailored to teens and can be a great way to introduce mindfulness as part of a bedtime routine.

**Annie Harrington, MSN PNP is an Integrative Pediatric Nurse Practitioner.** Annie is a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner who believes that raising healthy children starts with empowering families.



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[www.newcanaanymca.org](http://www.newcanaanymca.org)

### YOUR NEWS BRIEF CONTINUED From Page 1

foundation's mission, and current exhibitions. Photo credit: Staying Put in New Canaan.

#### DVCC at Rotary Club



Recently, Domestic Violence Crisis Center (DVCC) leaders Suzanne Adam and Stella Clarke spoke to the New Canaan Rotary Club about the center's work across the region. They said DVCC assists people affected by domestic violence through safety planning and court-based legal advocacy, and that demand has grown as more survivors seek help. In New Canaan, DVCC handled 65 calls over the past year, including 24 cases that involved a police lethality assessment. Pictured: Suzanne Adam, Stella Clarke, and Tom Ferguson. Photo credit: New Canaan Rotary Club.

#### Wavenny Visitors



Last week, Wavenny LifeCare Network welcomed two resident-focused visits. The National Charity League – Canaan Parish delivered gift bags to residents at the Inn and residents at the Village attended an afternoon performance by an Elvis impersonator. Photo credit: Wavenny LifeCare Network.

#### NCNC Hiking Group



This week, the New Canaan Nature Center hiking group took part

in the New Canaan Land Trust's Winter Hiking Challenge. Photo credit: New Canaan Nature Center.

#### SCHOOLS

##### South School Read-A-Thon Preview



Ahead of South School's Read-A-Thon, Dr. Luizzi read picture books to Ms. Charkales' kindergarten students. Photo credit: New Canaan Public Schools.

##### SLS Alum DiTeodoro



St. Luke's alum Andrea DiTeodoro '22 returned this week to speak with the school's Winter Season Captains Council. DiTeodoro, a Bowdoin College senior who plays field hockey, was recently named to the 2025 NESAC Fall All-Academic Team. Captains Council is a weekly program for SLS varsity captains that uses discussion and guest speakers to build communication and team leadership skills year-round. Photo credit: St. Luke's School.

## AG Tong speaks to Men's Club on office's key activities



Attorney General William Tong, now serving in his second term, will report on his office's various activities, including its winning

a case to restart construction of a windfarm aimed at providing Connecticut residents with lower cost electric power, when he meets Friday, Jan. 23, with the New Canaan Men's Club, at Morrill Hall in St. Mark's Episcopal Church.

Tong was recently recognized by his counterparts in other states when they elected him to be president of the National Association of Attorneys General, a nonpartisan forum for attorneys general that enables them to work collaboratively on common issues.

The meeting will begin at 10 a.m. with Attorney General Tong expected to begin his

remarks at 10:40 a.m., following the business portion of the meeting. While attendance is generally limited to its 355 members, members' spouses and significant others are invited to attend this meeting to hear Attorney General Tong's presentation.

In a recent legal win, AG Tong's office successfully challenged a federally ordered halt to construction of the Revolution Wind project. As of this past December, the windfarm was already 87 percent completed. When operating later this year, the windfarm is expected to provide 300,000 households in Connecticut and Rhode Island with lower cost kilowatt

hours.

Following the ruling, Tong said: "We're prepared to keep fighting—and winning—for as long as it takes to protect Connecticut ratepayers, workers and our environment."

In another recent action, Tong, joined by 21 other attorneys general, is seeking to block the federal government's guidance that would make some immigrants ineligible for food assistance even after they become permanent residents. Tong and the other attorneys general argue that the guidance violates federal law and would impose substantial financial penalties on states.

Tong grew up in the Hartford area, and attended West Hartford Schools, before graduating from Brown University and the University of Chicago Law School. Before serving as attorney general in 2019, he served for 12 years in the General Assembly representing Stamford and Darien. In the House, he was chairman of the Judiciary Committee as well as the Banking Committee.

The Men's Club has openings for new members, men 55-years old and above. For information about joining, email [ncmens.info](mailto:ncmens@ncmens.info).

# REAL ESTATE DASHBOARD

## REAL ESTATE DASHBOARD EDITOR

John Engel | John Engel@Elliman.com

## REAL ESTATE DASHBOARD CONTRIBUTOR

Robyn Bonder | Robyn.Bonder@Elliman.com

## NEW SALES

Address	Original List	List Price	Sold Price	DOM	BR	FB	Acres
650 Laurel Road	\$2,850,000	\$2,850,000	\$2,750,000	55	5	4	4.13
121 Douglas Road	\$3,195,000	\$3,195,000	\$3,195,000	0	5	5	0.32
184 Marvin Ridge Road	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000	\$3,345,000	52	5	4	2.14
474 Ponos Ridge Road	\$6,495,000	\$6,495,000	\$6,255,000	96	6	6	4.83

## FEATURED OPEN HOUSES

Get Your Open Houses Into the MLS by Wednesday at Noon for a Listing Here

Address	Price	Day	Time	Broker
1421 Oenoke Ridge	\$4,995,000	SAT	11:00 AM - 2:00 PM	Compass
135 Comstock Hill Road	\$2,698,000	SAT	1:00-3:00 PM	Compass
1038 West Road	\$2,595,000	SAT	2:00-4:00 PM	William Raveis
26 Pequot Lane	\$5,495,000	SUN	1:00-3:00 PM	Coldwell Banker

## NEW LISTINGS

Address	List Price	SqFt	Price/SqFt	AC	BR	FB
125 Heritage Hill Unit B	\$398,000	836	\$476		1	1
289 New Norwalk Road Unit #22	\$1,295,000	2,220	\$583		3	2
160 Park Street Unit #102	\$3,100,000	2,402	\$1291		3	3
91 Sunset Hill Road	\$4,895,000	8,720	\$561	2.24	6	5

# What Changed in Real Estate Transactions in 2025? Part 2: Buying and Selling



By  
JOHN ENGEL

In this two-part series, John Engel examines national residential real estate trends from 2025 and compares them to the New Canaan market.

Last week, John revealed what buyers and sellers are thinking. In this week's second part, he delves into what's changing in the way houses are bought and sold.

### How hard is it to sell a home – and how often do deals fall apart?

Zillow reports that nationally, today's typical seller holds two open houses, leaves the home multiple times for private showings, and that 50% of sellers experienced an offer falling through before closing. Zillow presents this as evidence that listing agents need to set clearer expectations around the selling process.

Here in New Canaan, we are still in a seller's market where sales are decided in the first 30 days, often driven by a strong opening weekend. That usually requires the owner to leave the house for every private showing. We rely more heavily than most markets on multiple private showings followed by a series of detailed inspections. During that process, around half of accepted offers fall apart.

There are several reasons for this. Inventory scarcity creates panic among buyers trying to win. Many experience regret after winning a multiple-bid situation. Inspections reveal real deficiencies. And on the seller side, there is a growing willingness to move immediately to a backup offer at the first sign of wavering commitment or an attempt to renegotiate. Sellers do not like the current loss of leverage, and that tension is causing a record number of deals to collapse. Yes, probably 50%.

### Are inspection waivers declining?

Zillow reports that the share of sellers who received an offer waiving the inspection declined year over year, marking one of the more notable shifts in buyer behavior.

Locally, we saw a decline in inspection waivers in the Fall market, but I don't view this as a permanent change. As competition intensifies in the Spring market, inspection waivers are likely to return. Realtors, aware of current inventory levels and demand, will again be advising buyers to waive inspections to win in multiple-offer situations.

### Are first-time buyers declining?

Zillow reports that the share of first-time buyers declined year over year, reflecting affordability pressures and increased competition.

Here in Fairfield County, we are starting to price ourselves out of the first-time-homebuyer market. Setting aside the most expensive Fairfield County communities, many of which now have median prices above \$2 million, we are seeing increased pressure in the surrounding, less expensive towns. First-time buyers who require financing are increasingly competing with downsizing seniors who do not. In the small-home and condo market throughout Fairfield County, that financing contingency is often the deciding factor. In multiple-bid situations on below-the-median homes, first-time buyers usually lose. So much for affordability as public policy.

### Are fewer sellers taking their homes off the market?

Zillow reports that the share of sellers who temporarily took their home off the market declined year over year, suggesting that fewer sellers are pausing listings once they come on.

In Fairfield County, inventory levels have

declined steadily across the county for five years in a row, while prices have continued to rise. That dynamic has changed seller behavior. Many sellers are choosing to leave their homes on the market in a rising environment, aware that buyers are active year-round and that tightening inventory may eventually work in their favor.

The alternative is to take a home off the market, invest in improvements, and reintroduce it in a different season. But many sellers don't have the cash, or the willingness, or the patience to do that. Instead, they are waiting for the market to come to them.

### Are fewer sellers also buying another home?

Zillow reports that the share of sellers who also purchased another home declined by 16 percentage points year over year, one of the largest shifts in behavior measured in the report.

There are several forces behind this, and they play out differently depending on the market. In Fairfield County, many sellers have found it difficult to downsize within the same market. Rising interest rates created real hesitation around giving up 2% mortgages. Some sellers already owned second homes and didn't need to replace their Fairfield County residence. Others moved during the pandemic and later found that their circumstances changed, eliminating the need for a second home tied to New York City.

Work-from-home uncertainty also disrupted plans that were built around a daily commute. And while southern Fairfield County is expensive and often described as luxury, it does not behave like ultra-luxury markets such as Palm Beach, the Hamptons, Aspen, Jackson Hole, New York City, or Los Angeles, where dramatic price appreciation has been accompanied by significant new construction. Here, without new inventory, sellers are often forced to pause on the next purchase, moving out of market, renting, and in some cases delaying the buying process indefinitely.

There are several reasons for this. Inventory scarcity creates panic among buyers trying to win. Many experience regret after winning a multiple-bid situation. Inspections reveal real deficiencies. And on the seller side, there is a growing willingness to move immediately to a backup offer at the first sign of wavering commitment or an attempt to renegotiate. Sellers do not like the current loss of leverage, and that tension is causing a record number of deals to collapse. Yes, probably 50%.

### What 2025 actually told us

Zillow's national data is useful because it shows how buyers and sellers feel. But feelings don't close transactions. Mechanics do. And in southwest Fairfield County, the mechanics are being driven by scarcity, leverage, and risk in ways that national averages can't fully capture.

Inventory has been declining for years. Below-the-median homes are often the most competitive segment of the market. First-time buyers are losing ground not because they lack interest, but because financing has become a liability in multiple-bid situations. Sellers are staying on the market longer, not because they are confident, but because they have limited alternatives. And while agents remain central to nearly every transaction, the pressure inside those transactions has shifted – particularly around inspections, fall-throughs, and commissions.

None of this feels transitional anymore. It feels structural. The market hasn't frozen, but it has tightened. Risk has moved around, leverage has become more situational, and outcomes increasingly depend on how well buyers and sellers understand what they are actually competing against.

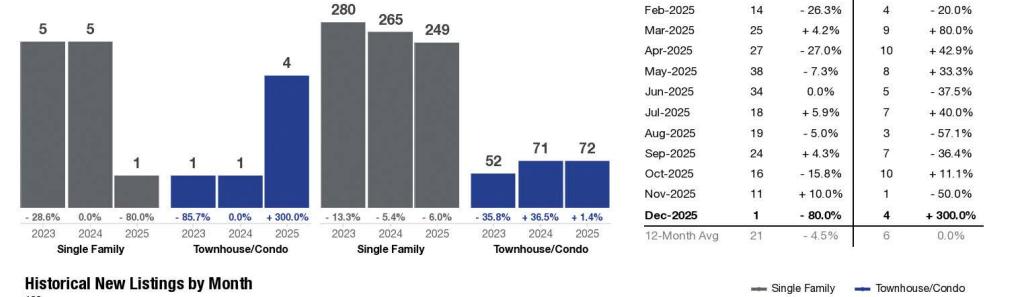
That may not be the neatest story. But it is the one 2025 made clear.

*John Engel is a New Canaan-based real estate advisor with Douglas Elliman. He writes about housing the way people experience it in real time: inventory at a twenty-year low, expectations for the spring season already running high, and more than a foot of snow forecast for this weekend – an extraordinary January event that will likely disrupt photography, showings, and February launch plans before the spring market even gets started. His weekly column looks past national headlines to focus on what's actually happening on the ground in Fairfield County, where timing, weather, and psychology often matter as much as price.*

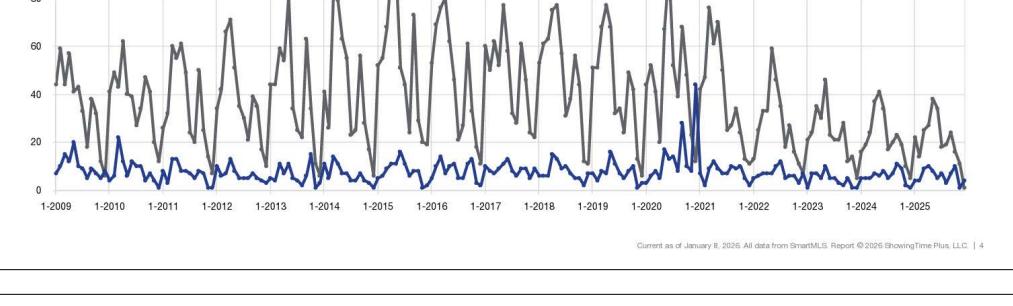
**"None of this feels transitional anymore. It feels structural."**

### New Listings

A count of the properties that have been newly listed on the market in a given month.

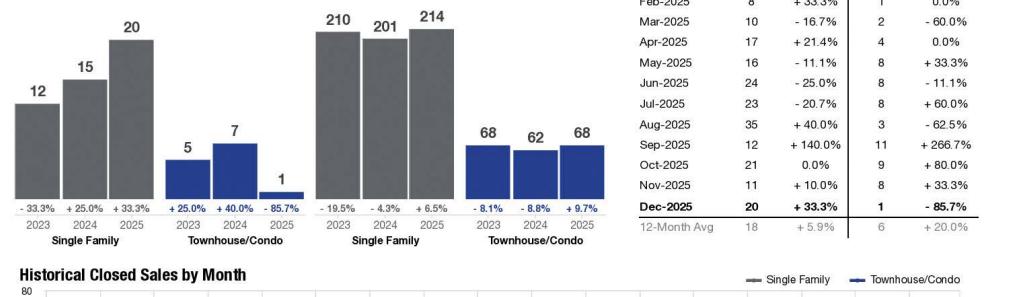


### Historical New Listings by Month

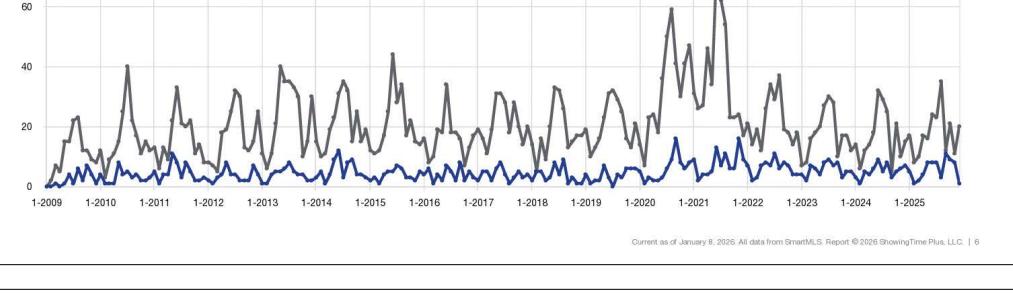


### Closed Sales

A count of the actual sales that closed in a given month.

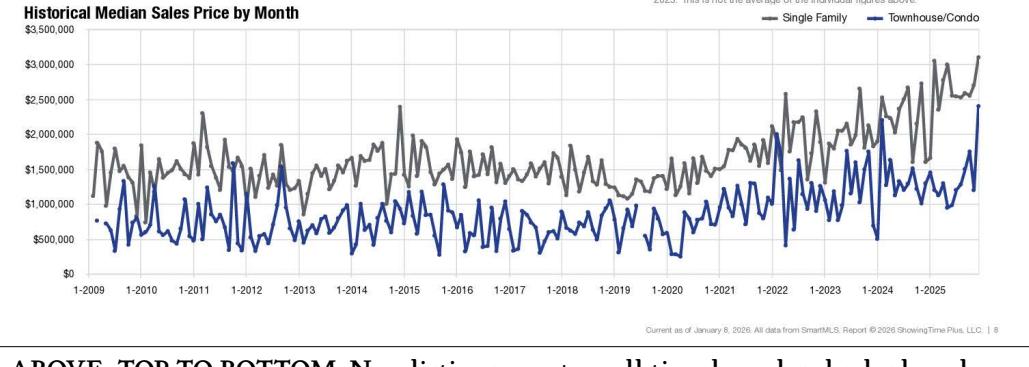
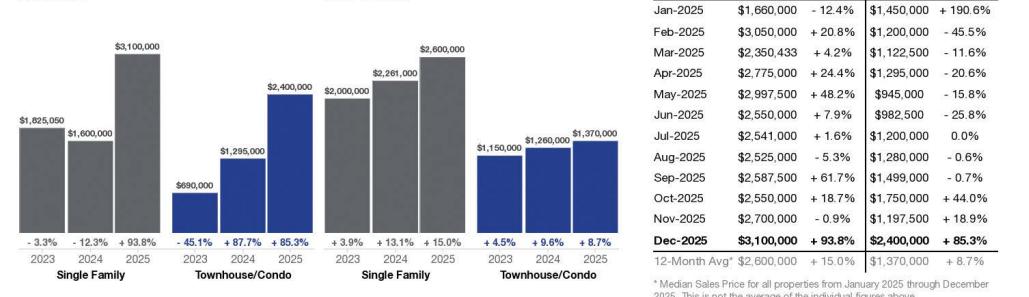


### Historical Closed Sales by Month



### Median Sales Price

Point at which half of the sales sold for more and half sold for less, not accounting for seller concessions, in a given month.



ABOVE, TOP TO BOTTOM: New listings are at an all-time low; closed sales have been flat for three years; and median price is rising steadily.

Submit questions and comments to John.Engel@Elliman.com



Keith E. Simpson  
Associates

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  
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### New Canaan Chamber Music

Andrew Armstrong, Artistic Director

#### Schubert's Trout Quintet



Kevin Zhu, violin



Emma Wernig, viola



Sterling Elliott, cello



Marguerite Cox, double-bass



Andrew Armstrong, piano

Thursday, February 5, 3:00 PM  
Friday, February 6, 7:00 PM

First Presbyterian Church of New Canaan



Tickets at  
[newcanaanchambermusic.org](http://newcanaanchambermusic.org)



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
NEW CANAAN

## GEORGETTE BENNETT

AUTHOR OF HALF-JEW – FULL LIFE

**FEBRUARY 1, 2026**

178 OENOKE RIDGE, NEW CANAAN CT

**10 AM WORSHIP SERVICE**

**11:30 AM ADULT FORUM**

**DISCUSSING:**

**MORAL COURAGE**

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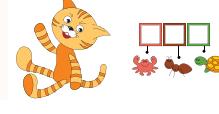
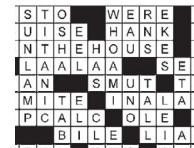
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Thursday, January 22, 2025

# SPOTLIGHT on FAMILIES

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SENTINEL  
FOUNDATIONGAMES AND  
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PUZZLESYOUR  
HOROSCOPEWHAT TO DO:  
COMPREHENSIVE  
COMMUNITY  
CALENDAR

## Calendar of Events for Your Fridge

**Submit your events at:**  
[newcanaansentinel.com/submit-an-event/](http://newcanaansentinel.com/submit-an-event/)

### TOWN MEETINGS

**Monday, January 26****Inland Wetlands Commission**  
7-8 p.m., Location not posted at time of publication.**Charter Revision Commission Group 1 Special Meeting**  
7-9 p.m., Town Hall Meeting Room**Tuesday, January 27****Board of Selectmen**  
8:30-9:30 a.m., Town Hall Meeting Room**Planning & Zoning Commission**  
7-8 p.m., Town Hall Meeting Room**Thursday, January 29****Board of Selectmen**  
8:30-9:30 a.m., Town Hall Meeting Room**Friday, January 23****New Canaan Sports Trivia Night Hosted by Terry Dinan**  
6 PM at the New Canaan Museum & Historical SocietyJoin for New Canaan Sports Trivia Night. There will be a Mexican Buffet dinner and drinks (including beer & wine). This event is open to all ages. Register at <https://nchistory.org>.**Saturday, January 24****Adopt-a-Tree Kickoff Event**  
9:30 AM- 2 PM at the New Canaan Nature CenterThis season-long program begins with the Adopt a Tree Kickoff Event where syrup families/groups learn the process and take part in choosing and tapping a tree for the season (about 30 minutes). After the Kickoff Event, participants will then collect sap 1-3 times a week for the entire syrup season and take part in boil downs where real maple syrup is made at NCNC. You'll even get your very own bottle of NCNC-made maple syrup at our end of season celebration in March. Register at <https://newcanaannature.org/adopt-a-tree/>.**Sunday, January 25****Author Amity Gaige Presents "Heartwood"**  
12:30 PM at the New Canaan Library, Jim & Dede Bartlett AuditoriumYou're invited to hear bestselling author Amity Gaige discuss her new novel, Heartwood, in conversation with Daisy Alpert Florin. Heartwood was selected by Jenna Bush Hager as a Read with Jenna pick for April 2025 and became an instant national bestseller. Register at <https://www.newcanaanlibrary.org/event/hold-amity-gaige-196207>.**Monday, January 26****Chair Yoga**  
11:30 AM at the New Canaan Library, Jim & Dede Bartlett AuditoriumWith the support of a chair, this gentle Chair Yoga class will help you improve postural alignment, maintain pelvic mobility, reduce muscle tension and gain strength through flowing movements and focused breathing. Register at <https://www.newcanaanlibrary.org/event/chair-yoga-180320>.**NC Focus: Paths to Affordable Housing**  
6:30 PM at the New Canaan Library, Jim & Dede Bartlett AuditoriumThis presentation by Town officials will explore the paths New Canaan has taken to meet its Affordable housing needs and State requirements by focusing on three specific projects. More information and registration is available at <https://shorturl.at/Wgn2N>.**Tuesday, January 27****Open Tech**  
2-4 PM at the New Canaan Library, McLaughlin Meeting Room

If you need help with email, smartphones/tablets, social media, or accessing our digital library, stop by for one-on-one support from a tech librarian. Tech assistance is limited to 20 minutes per session and is provided on a first-come, first-served basis.

**"Scents for the Senses" Three Week Workshop**

4 PM at the New Canaan Nature Center  
Join this three-week workshop with master candle maker and perfume creator Karry Wilson. Karry will guide you in this fun filled series creating your perfect scent, designing a one-of-a-kind double wick candle, and more. The three week workshop is \$180 and will continue on Feb. 3 & 10. Tickets are available at <https://shorturl.at/OdOj2>.

**Belle Burden Presents "Strangers" In Conversation with Holly Parmelee**  
7 PM at the New Canaan Library, Jim & Dede Bartlett Auditorium  
Join for an evening with author Belle Burden in conversation with Holly Parmelee, to discuss her memoir Strangers. The memoir is about the sudden end to a seemingly happy marriage—an aching, love-filled, and transcendent account of surviving betrayal and discovering joy. Register at <https://shorturl.at/ztQS6>.

**Wednesday, January 28**

**Parents Under Pressure**  
11 AM at New Canaan Country School  
Join New Canaan Cares for a conversation with Georgette Harrison, LPC, CCMHC, to learn what causes parental stress and how to ease the demands of parenting. Register at <https://shorturl.at/HYE06>.

**Mahjongg Strategy Class | How to Pick a Hand**

12 PM at the Lapham Center  
Join Aggie in learning how to choose a hand and make the Charleston work for you. Free. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

**Blood Sugar & Blood Pressure Clinics**

12:30 PM at the Lapham Center  
Ellen Samai from New Canaan's Department of Health provides in-person blood sugar and blood pressure testing. If you plan to have your blood sugar level tested, it is recommend you fast for four hours prior to testing. To register, call (203) 594-3620. Walk-ins welcome.

**Journey into the World of Tea | Tea 101**

3 PM at Grace Farms  
Tea aficionados are invited into the Pavilion to sample teas while learning about the basics of tea varietals. Led by Tea Expert Frank Kwei, this tranquil and in-depth exploration of tea offers guests a taste of notable varietals from cultures around the world, with demonstrations and more. Tickets are \$20/members, \$25/non-members, and available at <https://gracefarms.org/event/journey-into-the-world-of-tea-tea-101-2>.

**Introduction to Excel: Session 1 Excel Fundamentals**

6 PM at the New Canaan Library, Craig B. Tate Conference Room  
Learn the basics of Microsoft Excel in this beginner-friendly workshop. Learn to navigate the Excel interface, enter data effectively, format cells, and more. No prior Excel experience required. Please bring your laptop to this class. Register at <https://shorturl.at/Ok4ci>.

**Moneco Advisors Present: Financial Planning Basics**

6:30 PM at the New Canaan Library, Jim and Dede Bartlett Auditorium  
Join Moneco Advisors for a financial planning workshop where you'll discuss the 6 main areas of planning that you and your loved ones should discuss. Register at <https://www.newcanaanlibrary.org/event/hold-moneco-171956>.

**Thursday, January 29**

**Cooking Demo: Après-Ski**  
12 PM at the New Canaan Library, Kend Kitchen & Community Room

Just in time for the winter ski season, Chef Catherine Macdonald prepares creative and inspiring dishes for après skiing. Registration opens January 22 at <https://www.newcanaanlibrary.org/event/cooking%20demo-182904>.

**Tech Workshop with Cooper Young and George Geist of Good Kid Tech**  
2 PM at the Lapham Center  
The program will begin with a fifteen-minute presentation on a tech-related topic, followed by time to answer your personal tech questions. Free. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

**Opening Reception: Our Friend Ben -****CALENDAR CONTINUES ON PAGE 7**



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**The Art and Objects of Ben Guerrero**

5:30-7 PM at the New Canaan Museum &amp; Historical Society

Attend the opening reception for "Our Friend Ben" which is on view from Jan 29 to March 16, 2026.

**Business Workshop: Target Marketing, 'Fishing with a Spear, Not a Net'**

6 PM at the New Canaan Library, Craig B. Tate Conference Room

Historically the 'sales lead generation' process has been characterized by the classic 'sales funnel'. Today's digital world and related resources provide the seller with the means to implement more effective 'targeted' marketing with a specific benefit message to a better-defined audience. During the workshop you will present an alternative 'targeted' approach to lead generation and its benefits, discuss how to use your competitive advantage(s) to identify your best target customers, and much more. Register at <https://shorturl.at/rv6V4>.**Mocktails**

6:30 PM at Grace Farms

Enjoy an evening of crafting and sipping delicious mocktails. Create three seasonal beverages while discovering connections between food, culture, and community. Tickets are \$28/non-members, \$22/members, and available at <https://gracefarms.org/event/mocktails-2/2026-01-29>.**Friday, January 30****Humanity in Architecture Film Festival | Day One**

6:30-8 PM at Grace Farms

Opening night of the film festival will feature an evening film and conversation with inspiring themes that will echo throughout the next day. Register at <https://shorturl.at/HHeEi>.**Saturday, January 31****Last Saturdays on the Trail - Winter Hiking Challenge**

10 AM at the Livingston Higley Preserve on Apple Tree Lane

Join the New Canaan Land Trust for a guided winter hike. Enjoy donuts, coffee, and hot chocolate while exploring this hidden gem and learning about the preserve and its ecological importance. Please dress warmly and wear appropriate footwear, as winter trail conditions may include snow or ice. Register at <https://www.newcanaanlandtrust.org/events/>.**Humanity in Architecture Film Festival | Day Two**

10 AM- 5 PM at Grace Farms

Spend the day with films and Q&As spread among three spaces. Throughout the day there will be additional opportunities to join a guided winter walk, yoga and movement with Pilin Anice, and a design session with Slade Architecture. Register at <https://shorturl.at/PhOr0>.**Opening Reception for Annual Juried Photography Show**

4-6 PM at the Carriage Barn Arts Center

All are welcome to attend the opening

reception for the 46th annual juried photography show. Meet the exhibiting photographers and be among the first to see works selected by this year's exhibition juror Peter Kunhardt Jr.

**Owl Moon Night Hike**

6:30-8 PM at the New Canaan Nature Center

Join to discover how owls use their senses to navigate the night. Tickets are \$15/person. Registration will be available at <https://newcanaannature.org/night-hikes/>.**SAVE THE DATE****Tuesday, Feb. 3****Paper Flower Workshop with the Green Vase**

11 AM at the Carriage Barn Arts Center

Join Livia Cetti of The Green Vase and learn how to create stunning paper roses. These beautiful blooms are crafted to last forever and showcase the art of handmade paper flower making. This two-hour class is a wonderful opportunity to learn this unique art form. Tickets are \$150/members, \$165/non-members, and available at <https://carriagelbarn.org/event/rose/>.**Open Tech**

2-4 PM at the New Canaan Library, McLaughlin Meeting Room

If you need help with email, smartphones/tablets, social media, or accessing our digital library, stop by for one-on-one support from a tech librarian. Tech assistance is limited to 20 minutes per session and is provided on a first-come, first-served basis.

**Movie Screening: The Princess Bride**

6 PM at the New Canaan Library, Craig B. Tate Conference Room

Directed by Rob Reiner, this classic tale of love and adventure is one of a kind. As a grandfather reads to his sick grandson the story of Buttercup and her true love Wesley, the audience is transported into a world of sword fighting, monsters, miracles, and (of course) true love. Register at <https://tinyurl.com/59sx6vje>.**Legislative Priorities in CT: Session Kickoff with our Legislators**

6:30 PM at the New Canaan Library, Jim &amp; Dede Bartlett Auditorium

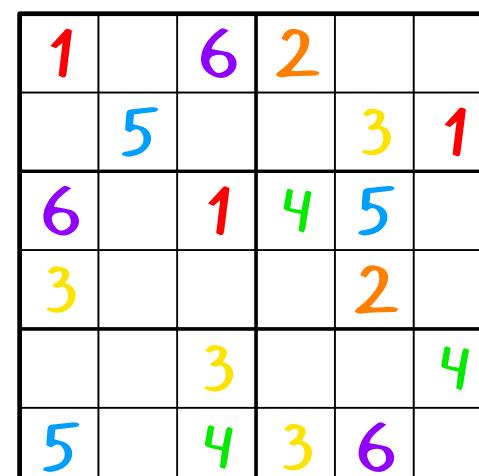
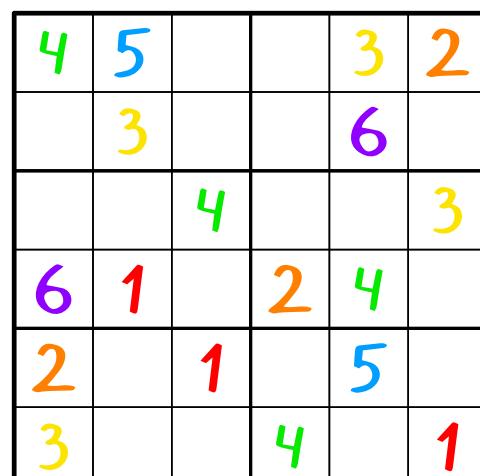
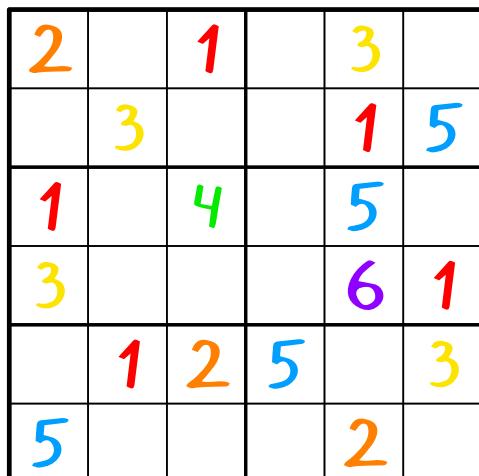
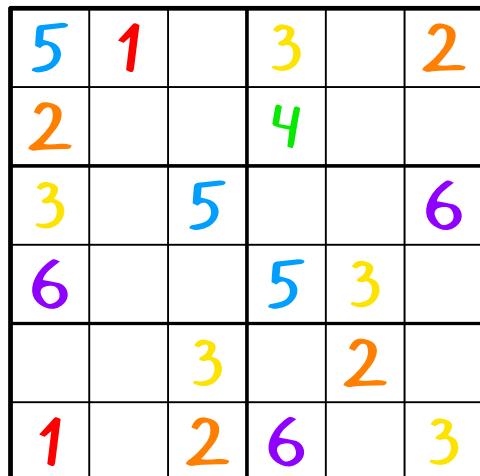
Connecticut's Legislative Session begins on Wednesday, Feb. 4th. Our local legislators will share their priorities for the current legislative session in Hartford, hear your concerns, and answer questions regarding the issues facing our state. Register at <https://shorturl.at/YmkHp>.**Wednesday, Feb. 4****Demystifying AI**

12 PM at the Lapham Center

This AI presentation will demystify artificial intelligence by defining AI in plain language, exploring its main forms—from classic machine learning to cutting-edge large language and agentic models—and tracing its evolution and practical uses both in enterprise and daily life. Free. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

**Submit new items to <https://www.greenwichsentinel.com/events/community/add/>****CALENDAR CONTINUES ON PAGE 7**

# Sudoku for Kids



## SUDOKU

Each row, column, nonet can contain each number only once. Answers below.

### Easy

2	3		7	6
9		4		1
	7	1		8
2	9	7		
	6		2	
			6	3 5
	9		2 3	
3			8	7
4	2		1	6

### Hard

			6		9
		2		6	
3			4 2		
1			5 8		7
7	6			5 2	
5		2 9			6
			7 4		3
	1			9	
4		5			

### Very Hard

8	1		4		2
		8			7
			5		
6			8		5
	4	5 7	6	9	
8		2			4
		6			
2			5		
5		2		1	9

### Easy

2		6		9	
	6		7 2		3
8		1		7	6
4			3	6	
3	4				5
1	5		3		2
8	3	9		6	
4		7			9

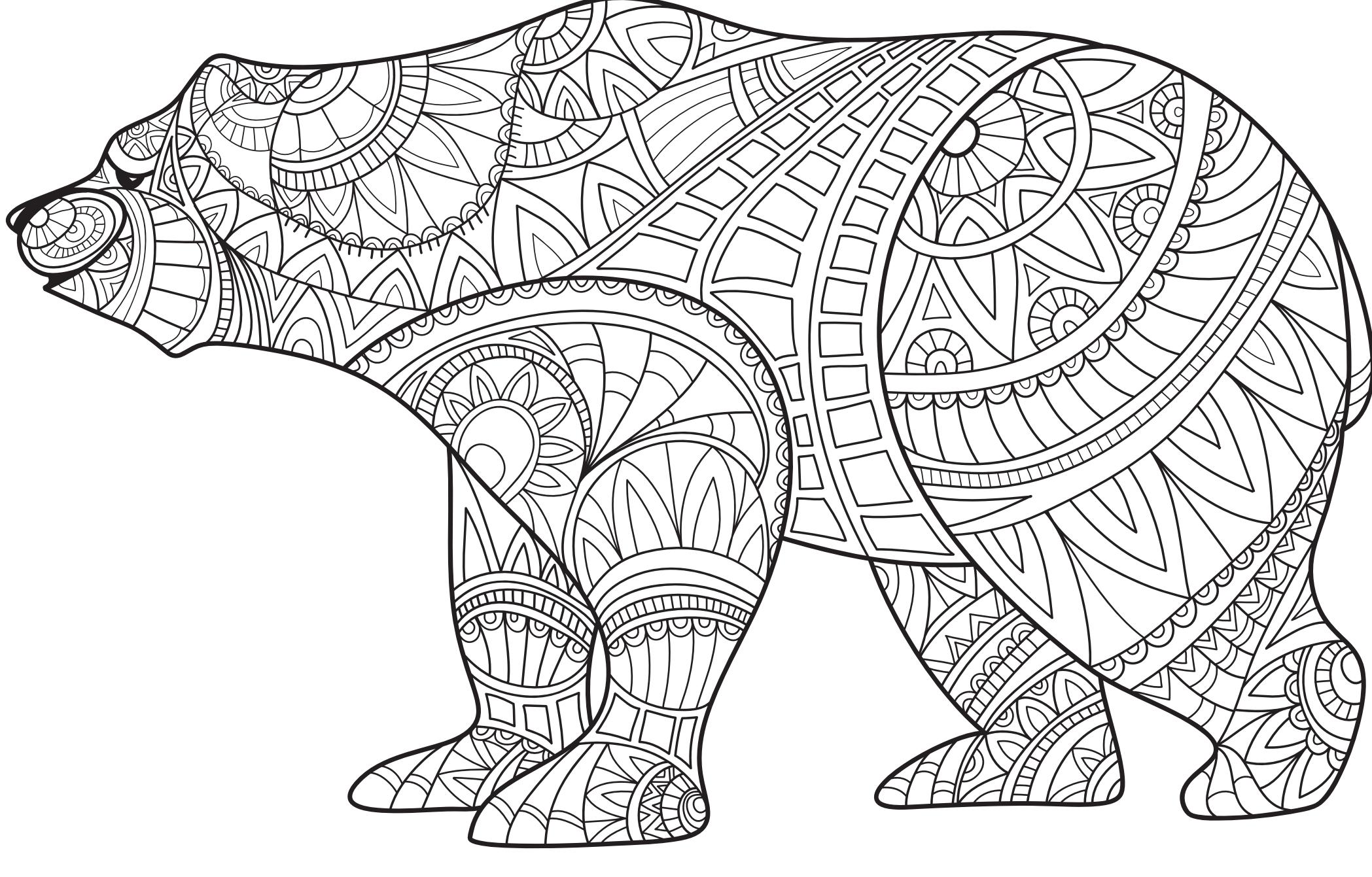
### Hard

	7	9			
2	4		6 5		
		2			4
6		1 4		3	
4		6	2		8
1			9 3	4	
5		3			
		5 7		8 1	
		9 6			

### Very Hard

	1	6	5		
7				9	
6		5	2		1
7			1		3
1		3	4		9
8				6	
		6	9	8	

## Coloring Challenge



Sudoku  
answers

5	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
6	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2
7	4	5	6	7	8	9	3	2	1
8	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4
9	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2
4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3
5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4

8	4	3	2	1	0	9	5	6	7
9	1	2	7	8	5	6	3	4	0
3	5	6	4	2	9	7	8	1	0
4	2	6	9	5	7	8	3	0	1
5	3	8	2	9	1	6	7	0	2
7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	0	3
2	9	3	4	5	6	7	8	0	0
3	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	0
4	2	3	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	4	3	2	1	0	9	8	7	6

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2
4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3
5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4
6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5
7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

5	6	3	2	1	0	9	8	7	6
6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5
7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0
2	3	4	5						

**Universal Crossword**

Edited by Adrian Johnson

**ACROSS**

1 Pole worker?  
4 Marsupial's pocket  
9 Geological period  
14 Lingus (Irish carrier)  
15 "Bald" bird  
16 Debate  
17 Watch a kids' show on PBS? (hint: think "Bea")  
19 "Yes and no"  
20 Does some booty-shaking  
21 Word before "shower" or "shampoo"  
23 Shaky fish  
24 Makes less difficult  
25 Dalai \_\_\_  
27 Meg of movies  
28 One who handles a crested bird clumsily?  
34 SoCal surfing site  
36 Horse sound  
37 Mind reader's "gift," briefly  
39 Not widely known  
42 "Many years \_\_\_"  
43 Colossal corn containers  
45 Waxy stick  
47 Maker of ropes and fences for lines?  
50 Sale involving two items, informally  
53 Mallorca o Menorca, por ejemplo

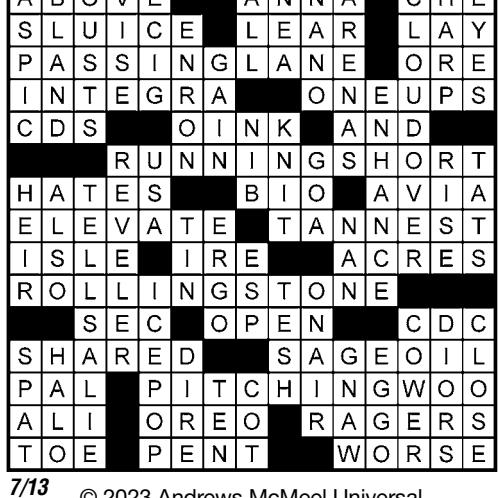
54 Llama's cousin  
55 Restful destination  
58 Key \_\_\_ (electronic lock openers)  
60 Marzipan nut  
61 Two-tone bear  
63 Female sheep exits?  
65 Home storage space  
66 "Ciao!"  
67 Actress Longoria  
68 \_\_\_ song (TV show tune)  
69 Carrot sticks or potato chips, say  
70 Like carrot sticks but not potato chips

46 Appointer of Sotomayor  
28 "I like the cut of your \_\_\_"  
29 Situp muscles  
30 Desert shrub  
31 Professional with a grand plan?  
32 Object painted to record a clown's unique makeup  
33 Greek P  
35 Suffers embarrassment  
37 Lawyer's title: Abbr.  
38 Char \_\_\_ (Cantonese food)  
40 Coffee vessel with a spigot  
41 Chinese zodiac rodent  
44 French affirmative

**DOWN**

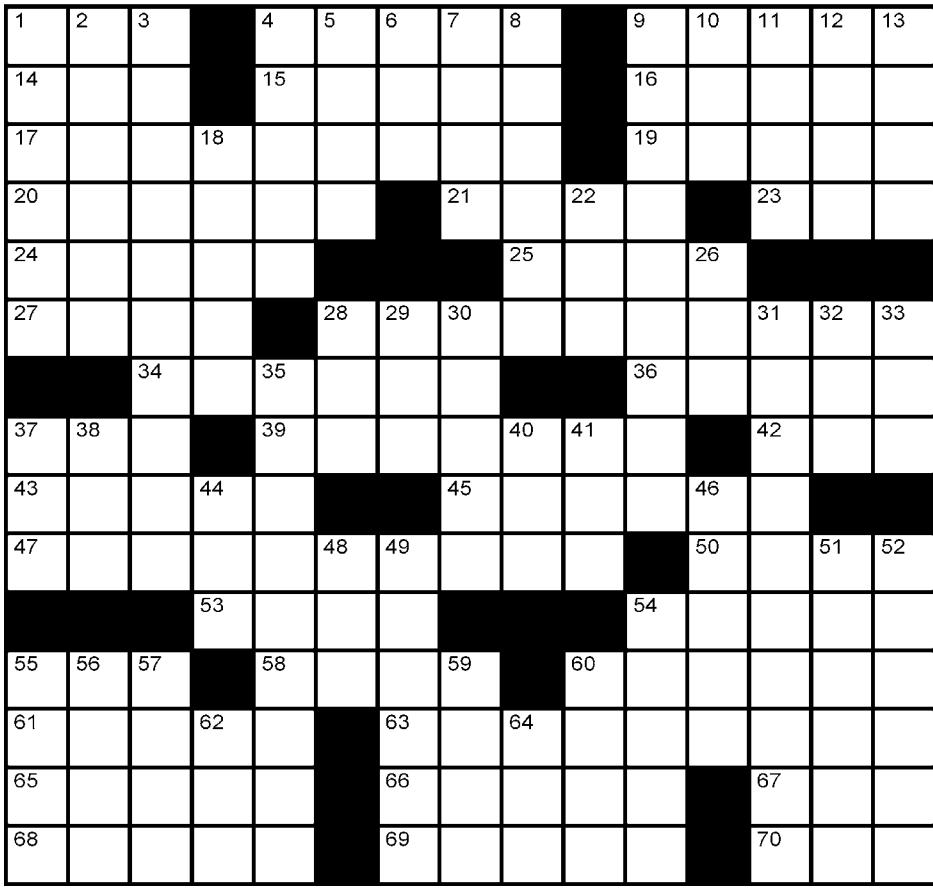
1 Spring holiday  
2 Wiggle room  
3 Nosh for a Costco shopper  
4 Execs' benefits  
5 Granola ingredients  
6 "What a drag!"  
7 Certain black playing card  
8 Harbinger  
9 Quick buck  
10 \_\_\_ bono  
11 Big brute  
12 Totes adorbs  
13 Recover from injury  
18 Huge concert venue  
22 Intimate concert venue

46 Appointer of Sotomayor  
48 Oslo Accords party, briefly  
49 Tags in tees  
51 Swiss city where the World Health Organization is headquartered  
52 "Time is money" or "haste makes waste"  
54 Judge's assistant  
55 Squabble  
56 Maze solution  
57 Poker pot starter  
59 Graceful bird  
60 Actor Baldwin  
62 \_\_\_ sum (Cantonese food)  
64 Greek H

**PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER**

7/13 © 2023 Andrews McMeel Universal www.upuzzles.com

7/14

**Next, Please! by Alex Eaton-Salners****Horoscopes****Horoscope: January 22-29, 2026**

This week continues the Aquarius season energy that began on January 20, encouraging fresh thinking, innovation, and unconventional approaches across life areas. Mercury forms a powerful conjunction with Pluto on January 22, deepening conversations and illuminating truths beneath the surface. Mars then meets Pluto on January 27, intensifying drive and focus, especially in matters you're passionate about. These dynamics urge you to push past old limitations and articulate your ambitions with precision and courage.

**Weekly Forecast by Sign****Aries (March 21 - April 19)**

Your voice sharpens and your purpose feels clearer. Mercury's alignment helps you dig into conversations that matter most; seek truth rather than comfort. Practical advice: focus on planning before acting, especially in collaboration. Use bold ideas to inspire rather than overwhelm.

**Taurus (April 20 - May 20)**

Shared resources and deep emotional bonds are highlighted. Mars-Pluto aspects stir ambition around financial clarity. Practical advice: assess joint plans carefully; long-term stability benefits from honest dialogue and realistic goals.

**Gemini (May 21 - June 20)**

Your communication zone is activated. Mercury conjunct Pluto helps you uncover what's been beneath the surface in key conversations. Practical advice: speak clearly but kindly; truths released now can strengthen relationships rather than undermine them.

**Cancer (June 21 - July 22)**

Home and family life are in focus. Use this week to address emotional needs with confidence. Practical advice: structure discussions with loved ones around solutions rather than frustrations; shared intentions build steadier bonds.

**Leo (July 23 - August 22)**

Professional ambitions intensify. Mars meeting Pluto empowers action toward goals. Practical advice: narrow your focus to top priorities; deep engagement now enhances credibility and yields progress on long-term plans.

**Virgo (August 23 - September 22)**

Daily routines and wellness benefit from renewed energy. Mercury's depth encourages

practical refinement. Practical advice: reorganize tasks and streamline schedules to reduce stress and build long-term stamina.

**Libra (September 23 - October 22)**

Partnership dynamics are illuminated. Honest conversations sharpen understanding. Practical advice: prioritize balance and mutual respect; clarity about needs prevents misunderstandings as you align shared goals.

**Scorpio (October 23 - November 21)**

Intuition and insight deepen. Mercury guiding conversations helps you articulate complex feelings. Practical advice: trust your instincts but communicate with patience – complex truths can be heard more easily when delivered with care.

**Sagittarius (November 22 - December 21)**

Creative energy flows strongly. Mars-Pluto urges you to pursue what ignites passion. Practical advice: refine your ideas thoroughly before revealing them; focus heightens impact and aligns you with opportunities.

**Capricorn (December 22 - January 19)**

Community and collaborations grow richer. Aquarius season boosts collective thinking. Practical advice: engage with groups and ideas that broaden your perspective; strategic networking enhances both personal and professional influence.

**Aquarius (January 20 - February 18)**

This is your cosmic week. With Mercury and Mars intensifying your own sector, your voice and direction are powerful. Practical advice: lead with innovation and listen with intent – your ideas can inspire others and build momentum.

**Pisces (February 19 - March 20)**

Introspection gives strength. Focus on inner alignment and vision. Practical advice: quiet reflection early in the week enhances clarity later, and connecting your dreams with practical steps brings soulful progress.

**Summary:**

January 22-29 brings clarity, intensity, and forward motion. Mercury's deep conversation energy on the 22nd and Mars-Pluto's drive on the 27th encourage honesty, precision, and purposeful action. This is a week to speak truthfully, plan carefully, and pursue your goals with both heart and focus.

**7 LITTLE WORDS**

Find the 7 words to match the 7 clues. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in each solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.

**CLUES**

- 1 tree shredder (7)
- 2 "handy" digit (6)
- 3 fibber (11)
- 4 knocked off the shine (7)
- 5 unwell (6)
- 6 like grapevine news (10)
- 7 1950s TV star Lucille (4)

**SOLUTIONS**

ON	GER	CH	EL	PER
FIN	MMY	STO	SC	CRU
RYT	DHA	UF	IP	BA
ND	LL	SEC	FED	LER

Previous Answers: 1. LEGROOM 2. PITT 3. CATHERINE

4. ARIZONA 5. STUFFED 6. PANERA 7. TOASTINESS

**Family Time Crossword**

Created by Timothy E. Parker

**ACROSS**

1. Send away as punishment  
7. Small, poisonous vipers  
11. Aural pain  
12. 1,000 in Paris  
14. (K) 10-year-old, e.g.  
15. (K) Hunts  
16. Bank's savings offering  
17. California place that starts with Santa  
19. (K) Insect that builds hills  
20. (K) What many Christians do on 36-Across  
24. (K) Ocean relative  
25. (K) Word of the past  
26. Firstborn of the bunch  
28. (K) Large amounts of land  
31. The "1" in Matthew 2:1  
32. Grad student's major project

34. (K) Cheap metal material  
35. Just a little bit  
36. (K) What Dec. 25 is  
41. Curved path in the sky  
42. (K) Have some spaghetti and oysters  
43. " \_\_\_ the only one seeing this?" (2 words)  
44. Workbench thing  
47. Made sheep sounds  
50. Person saying, "Welcome to the company!"  
51. Straightest possible pathway  
52. (K) Part of a ruler  
53. (K) Place with plenty of beach

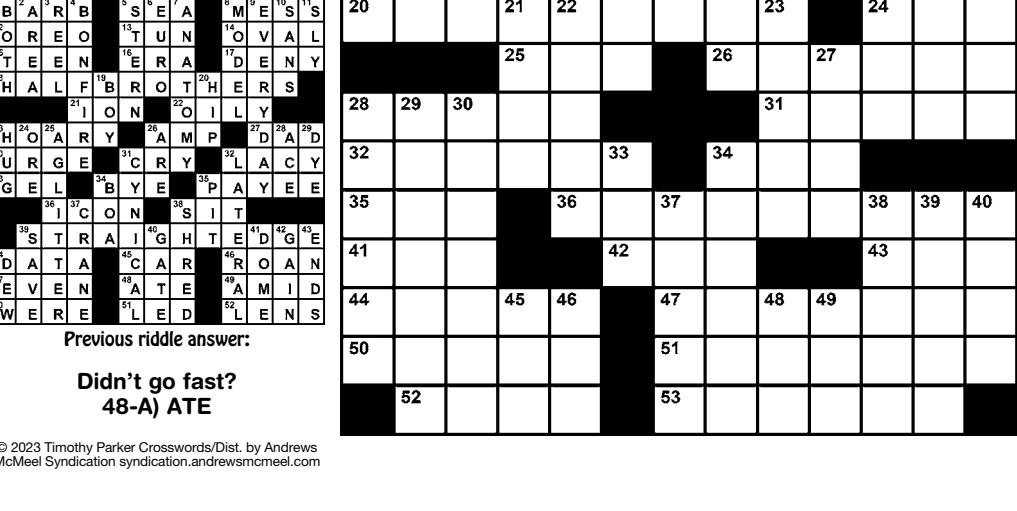
1. Ballet school handrail  
2. "You are in for \_\_\_ treat!" (2 words)

3. Legendary singer "King" Cole  
4. (K) Slip-and-fall cause  
5. Sheep clippers  
6. Reddish-brown hair dye  
7. (K) Plug your guitar into this  
8. (K) "Mister" alternative  
9. With "crowd," a great entertainer  
10. Fox's clever trait  
11. Grand or majestic  
13. A manor is on it  
18. (K) Already had the spaghetti and oysters  
21. (K) Mamas saying "maa"  
22. Word before "cable" or "training"  
23. Singing legend from Graceland  
27. (K) Bike-hitting-a-car-door result

Can you find the answer to this riddle within the solved puzzle?

It looks like a C for carpenter?

Look for the answer in next week's paper.

**PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER**

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The answers to this week's puzzles can be found in the next issue.

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# THE HOUSE AT POOH CORNER BY A.A. MILNE

## CHAPTER I IN WHICH A House Is Built at Pooh Corner for Eeyore

One day when Pooh Bear had nothing else to do, he thought he would do something, so he went round to Piglet's house to see what Piglet was doing. It was still snowing as he stumped over the white forest track, and he expected to find Piglet warming his toes in front of his fire, but to his surprise he saw that the door was open, and the more he looked inside the more Piglet wasn't there.

"He's out," said Pooh sadly. "That's what it is. He's not in. I shall have to go a fast Thinking Walk by myself. Bother!"

But first he thought that he would knock very loudly just to make quite sure ... and while he waited for Piglet not to answer, he jumped up and down to keep warm, and a hum came suddenly into his head, which seemed to him a Good Hum, such as is Hummed Hopefully to Others.

The more it snows  
(Tiddely pom),  
The more it goes  
(Tiddely pom),  
The more it goes  
(Tiddely pom),  
On snowing.  
And nobody knows  
(Tiddely pom),  
How cold my toes  
(Tiddely pom),  
How cold my toes  
(Tiddely pom),  
Are growing.

"So what I'll do," said Pooh, "is I'll do this. I'll just go home first and see what the time is, and perhaps I'll put a muffler round my neck, and then I'll go and see Eeyore and sing it to him."

He hurried back to his own house; and his mind was so busy on the way with the hum that he was getting ready for Eeyore that, when he suddenly saw Piglet sitting in his best arm-chair, he could only stand there rubbing his head and wondering whose house he was in.

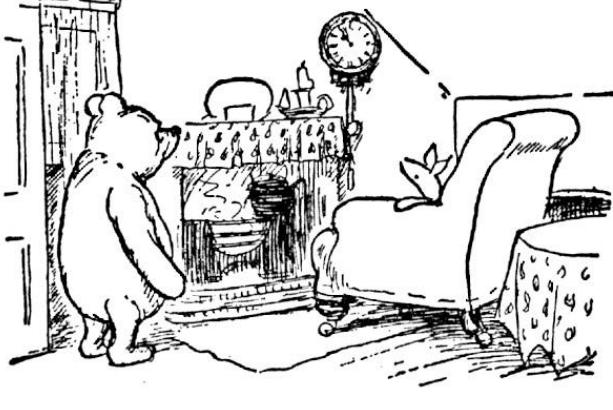
"Hallo, Piglet," he said. "I thought you were out."

"No," said Piglet, "it's you who were out, Pooh."

"So it was," said Pooh. "I knew one of us was."

He looked up at his clock, which had stopped at five minutes to eleven some weeks ago.

"Nearly eleven o'clock," said Pooh happily. "You're just in time for a little smackerel of something," and he put his head into the cupboard. "And then we'll go out, Piglet, and sing my song to Eeyore."



"Which song, Pooh?"

"The one we're going to sing to Eeyore," explained Pooh.

The clock was still saying five minutes to eleven when Pooh and Piglet set out on their way half an hour later. The wind had dropped, and the snow, tired of rushing round in circles trying to catch itself up, now fluttered gently down until it found a place on which to rest, and sometimes

the place was Pooh's nose and sometimes it wasn't, and in a little while Piglet was wearing a white muffler round his neck and feeling more snowy behind the ears than he had ever felt before.



"Pooh," he said at last, and a little timidly, because he didn't want Pooh to think he was Giving In, "I was just wondering. How would it be if we went home now and practised your song, and then sang it to Eeyore tomorrow—or—or the next day, when we happen to see him?"

"That's a very good idea, Piglet," said Pooh. "We'll practise it now as we go along. But it's no good going home to practise it, because it's a special Outdoor Song which Has To Be Sung In The Snow."

"Are you sure?" asked Piglet anxiously.

"Well, you'll see, Piglet, when you listen. Because this is how it begins. The more it snows, tiddely pom——"

"Tiddely what?" said Piglet.

"Pom," said Pooh. "I put that in to make it more hummy. The more it goes, tiddely pom, the more——"

"Didn't you say snows?"

"Yes, but that was before."

"Before the tiddely pom?"

"It was a different tiddely pom," said Pooh, feeling rather muddled now. "I'll sing it to you properly and then you'll see."

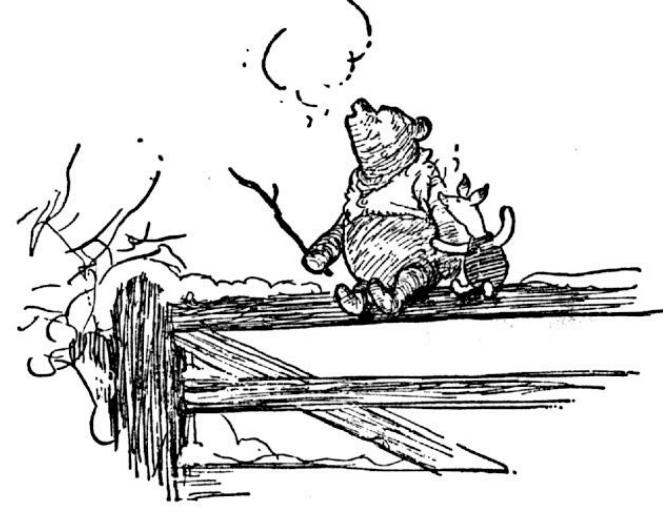
So he sang it again.

The more it  
SNOWS-tiddely-pom,  
The more it  
GOES-tiddely-pom  
The more it  
GOES-tiddely-pom  
On  
Snowing.  
And nobody  
KNOWS-tiddely-pom,  
How cold my  
TOES-tiddely-pom  
How cold my  
TOES-tiddely-pom  
Are  
Growing.

He sang it like that, which is much the best way of singing it, and when he had finished, he waited for Piglet to say that, of all the Outdoor Hums for Snowy Weather he had ever heard, this was the best. And, after thinking the matter out carefully, Piglet said:

"Pooh," he said solemnly, "it isn't the toes so much as the ears."

By this time they were getting near Eeyore's Gloomy Place, which was where he lived, and as it was still very snowy behind Piglet's ears, and he was getting tired of it, they turned into a little pine wood, and sat down on the gate which led into it. They were out of the snow now, but it was very cold, and to keep themselves warm they sang Pooh's song right through six times, Piglet doing the tiddely-poms and Pooh doing the rest of it, and both of them thumping on the top of the gate with pieces of stick at the proper places. And in a little while they felt much warmer, and were able to talk again.



"I've been thinking," said Pooh, "and what I've been thinking is this. I've been thinking about Eeyore."

"What about Eeyore?"

"Well, poor Eeyore has nowhere to live."

"Nor he has," said Piglet.

"You have a house, Piglet, and I have a house, and they are very good houses. And Christopher Robin has a house, and Owl and Kanga and Rabbit have houses, and even Rabbit's friends and relations have houses or somethings, but poor Eeyore has nothing. So what I've been thinking is: Let's build him a house."

"That," said Piglet, "is a Grand Idea. Where shall we build it?"

"We build it here," said Pooh, "just by this wood, out of the wind, because this is where I thought of it. And we will call this Pooh Corner. And we will build an Eeyore House with sticks at Pooh Corner for Eeyore."

"There was a heap of sticks on the other side of the wood," said Piglet. "I saw them. Lots and lots. All piled up."

"Thank you, Piglet," said Pooh. "What you have just said will be a Great Help to us, and because of it I could call this place Poohpiglet Corner if Pooh Corner didn't sound better, which it does, being smaller and more like a corner. Come along."



So they got down off the gate and went round to the other side of the wood to fetch the sticks.

Christopher Robin had spent the morning indoors going to Africa and back, and he had just got off the boat and was wondering what it was like outside, when who should come knocking at the door but Eeyore.

"Hallo, Eeyore," said Christopher Robin, as he opened the door and came out. "How are you?"



"It's snowing still," said Eeyore gloomily.

"So it is."

"And freezing."

"Is it?"

"Yes," said Eeyore. "However," he said, brightening up a little, "we haven't had an earthquake lately."

"What's the matter, Eeyore?"



"Nothing, Christopher Robin. Nothing important. I suppose you haven't seen a house or what-not anywhere about?"

"What sort of a house?"

"Just a house."

"Who lives there?"

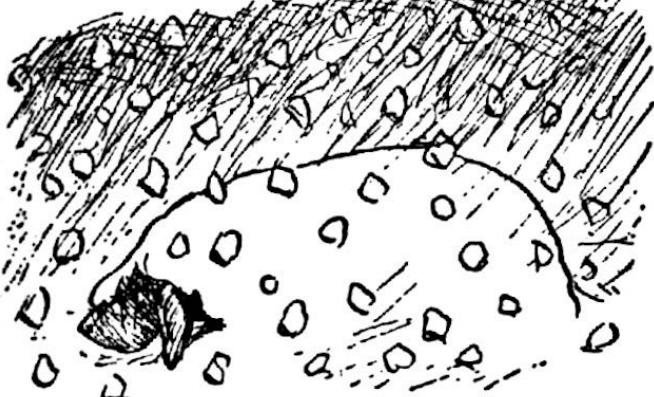
"I do. At least I thought I did. But I suppose I don't. After all, we can't all have houses."

"But, Eeyore, I didn't know—I always thought—"

"I don't know how it is, Christopher Robin, but what with all this snow and one thing and another, not to mention icicles and such-like, it isn't so Hot in my field about three o'clock in the morning as some people think it is. It isn't Close, if you know what I mean—not so as to be uncomfortable. It isn't Stuffy. In fact, Christopher Robin," he went on in a loud whisper, "quite-between-ourselves-and-don't-tell-anybody, it's Cold."

"Oh, Eeyore!"

"And I said to myself: The others will be sorry if I'm getting myself all cold. They haven't got Brains, any of them, only grey fluff that's blown into their heads by mistake, and they don't Think, but if it goes on snowing for another six weeks or so, one of them will begin to say to himself: 'Eeyore can't be so very much too Hot about three o'clock in the morning.' And then it will Get About. And they'll be Sorry."



"Oh, Eeyore!" said Christopher Robin, feeling very sorry already.

"I don't mean you, Christopher Robin. You're different. So what it all comes to is that I built myself a house down by my little wood."

"Did you really? How exciting!"

"The really exciting part," said Eeyore in his most melancholy voice, "is that when I left it this morning it was there, and when I came back it wasn't. Not at all, very natural, and it was only Eeyore's house. But still I just wondered."

Christopher Robin didn't stop to wonder. He was already back in his house, putting on his waterproof hat, his waterproof boots and his waterproof macintosh as fast as he could.

"We'll go and look for it at once," he called out to Eeyore.

"Sometimes," said Eeyore, "when people have quite finished taking a person's house, there are one or two bits which they don't want and are rather glad for the person to take back, if you know what I mean. So I thought if we just went—"

"Come on," said Christopher Robin, and off they hurried, and in a very little

time they got to the corner of the field by the side of the pine-wood, where Eeyore's house wasn't any longer.

"There!" said Eeyore. "Not a stick of it left! Of course, I've still got all this snow to do what I like with. One mustn't complain."

But Christopher Robin wasn't listening to Eeyore, he was listening to something else.

"Can't you hear it?" he asked.

"What is it? Somebody laughing?"

"Listen."

They both listened ... and they heard a deep gruff voice saying in a singing voice that the more it snowed the more it went on snowing, and a small high voice tiddely-pomming in between.



"It's Pooh," said Christopher Robin excitedly....

"Possibly," said Eeyore.

"And Piglet!" said Christopher Robin excitedly.

"Probably," said Eeyore. "What we want is a Trained Bloodhound."

The words of the song changed suddenly.

"We've finished our HOUSE!" sang the gruff voice.

"Tiddely pom!" sang the squeaky one.

"It's a beautiful HOUSE...."

"Tiddely pom...."

"I wish it were MINE...."

"Tiddely pom...."

"Pooh!" shouted Christopher Robin....

The singers on the gate stopped suddenly.

"It's Christopher Robin!" said Pooh eagerly.

"He's round by the place where we got all those sticks from," said Piglet.

"Come on," said Pooh.

They climbed down their gate and hurried round the corner of the wood, Pooh making welcoming noises all the way.

"Why, here is Eeyore," said Pooh, when he had finished hugging Christopher Robin, and he nudged Piglet, and Piglet nudged him, and they thought to themselves what a lovely surprise they had got ready.

"Hallo, Eeyore."

"Same to you, Pooh Bear, and twice on Thursdays," said Eeyore gloomily.

Before Pooh could say: "Why Thursdays?" Christopher Robin began to explain the sad story of Eeyore's Lost House. And Pooh and Piglet listened, and their eyes seemed to get bigger and bigger.

"Where did you say it was?" asked Pooh.

"Just here," said Eeyore.

"Made of sticks?"

"Yes."

"Oh!" said Piglet.

"What?" said Eeyore.

"I just said 'Oh!'" said Piglet nervously. And so as to seem quite at ease he hummed Tiddely-pom once or twice in a what-shall-we-do-now kind of way.

"You're sure it was a house?" said Pooh. "I mean, you're sure the house was just here?"

"Of course I am," said Eeyore. And he murmured to himself, "No brain at all some of them."

"Why, what's the matter, Pooh?" asked Christopher Robin.

"Well," said Pooh.... "The fact is," said Pooh.... "Well, the fact is," said Pooh.... "You see," said Pooh.... "It's like this," said Pooh, and something seemed to tell him that he wasn't explaining very well, and he nudged Piglet again.

"It's like this," said Piglet quickly.... "Only warmer," he added after deep thought.

"What's warmer?"

"The other side of the wood, where Eeyore's house is."

"My house?" said Eeyore. "My house was here."

"No," said Piglet firmly. "The other side of the wood."

"Because of being warmer," said Pooh.

"But I ought to know——"

"Come and look," said Piglet simply, and he led the way.

"There wouldn't be two houses," said Pooh. "Not so close together."

They came round the corner, and there was Eeyore's house, looking as comfy as anything.



"There you are," said Piglet.

"Inside as well as outside," said Pooh proudly.

Eeyore went inside ... and came out again.

"It's a remarkable thing," he said. "It is my house, and I built it where I said I did, so the wind must have blown it here. And the wind blew it right over the wood, and blew it down here, and here it is as good as ever. In fact, better in places."



"Much better," said Pooh and Piglet together.

"It just shows what can be done by taking a little trouble," said Eeyore. "Do you see, Pooh? Do you see, Piglet? Brains first and then Hard Work. Look at it! That's the way to build a house," said Eeyore proudly.

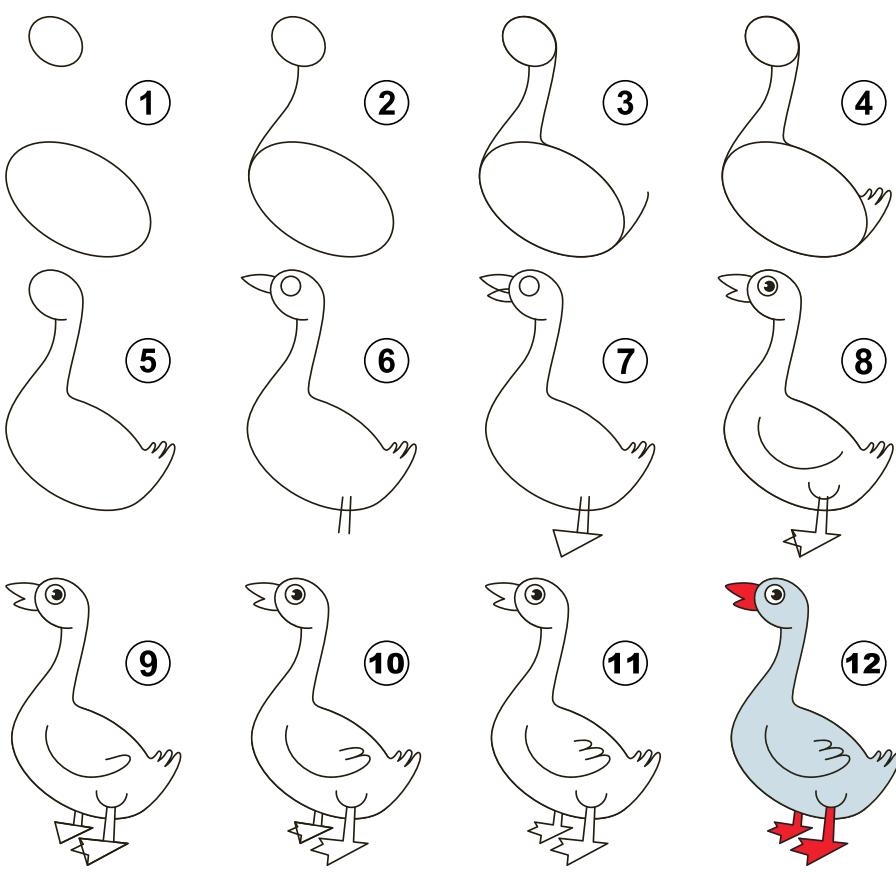
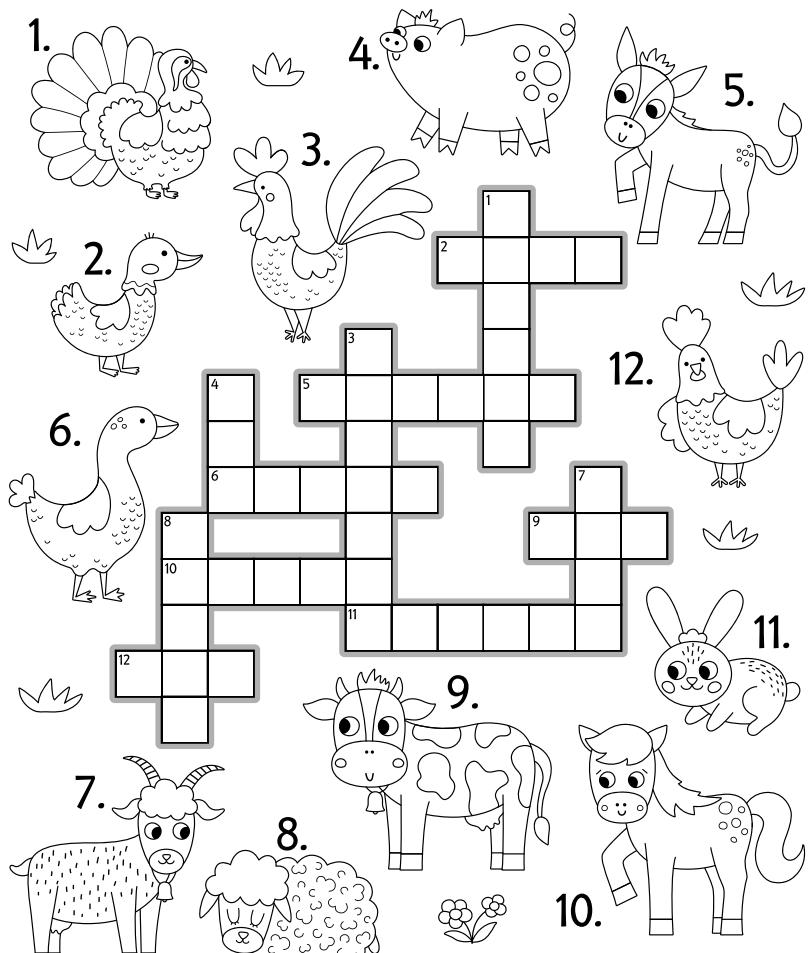
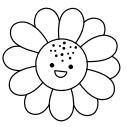
So they left him in it; and Christopher Robin went back to lunch with his friends Pooh and Piglet, and on the way they told him of the Awful Mistake they had made. And when he had finished laughing, they all sang the Outdoor Song for Snowy Weather the rest of the way home, Piglet, who was still not quite sure of his voice, putting in the tiddely-poms again.

"And I know it seems easy," said Piglet to himself, "but it isn't every one who could do it."

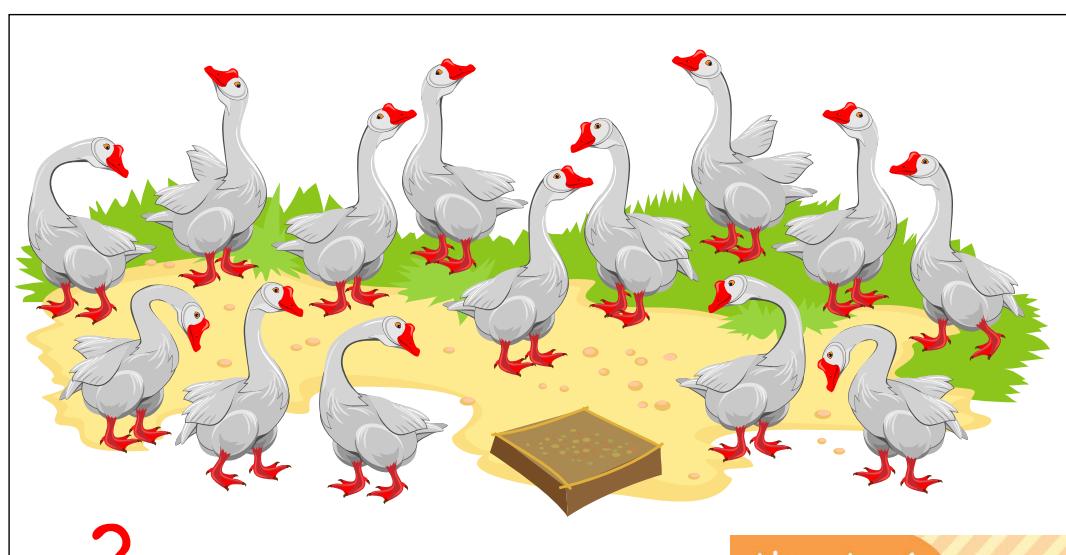
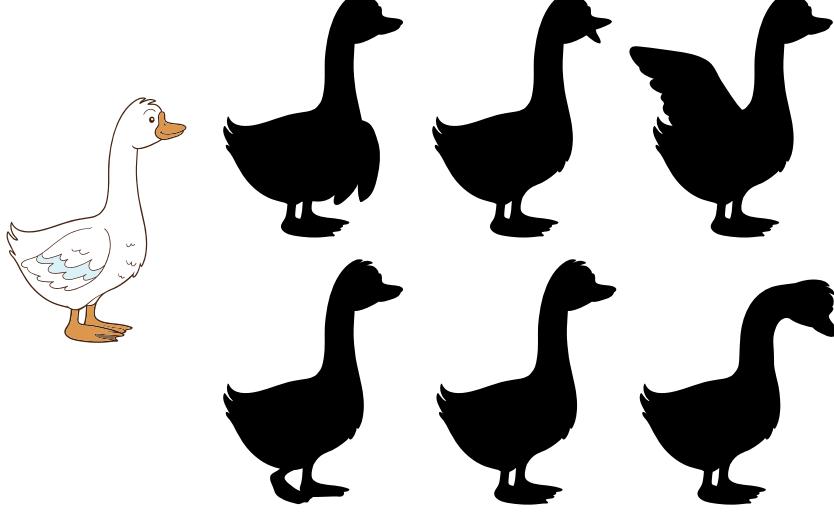


## FARM ANIMALS AND BIRDS

crossword puzzle

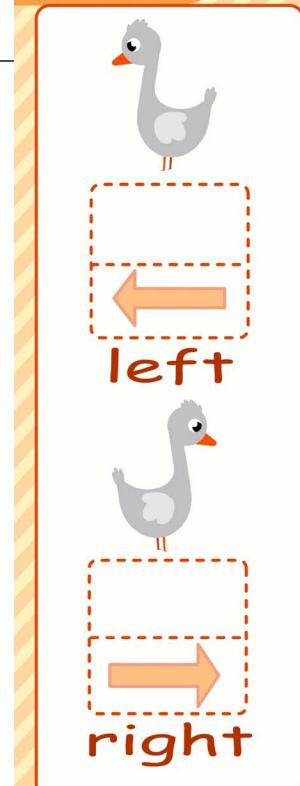
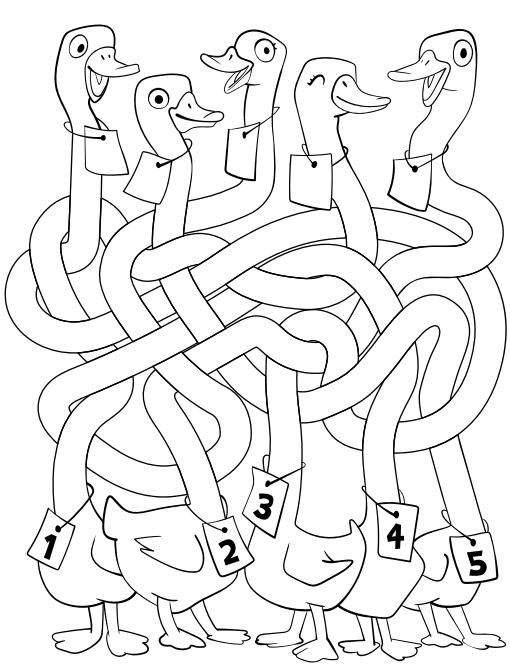


### Find the correct shadow

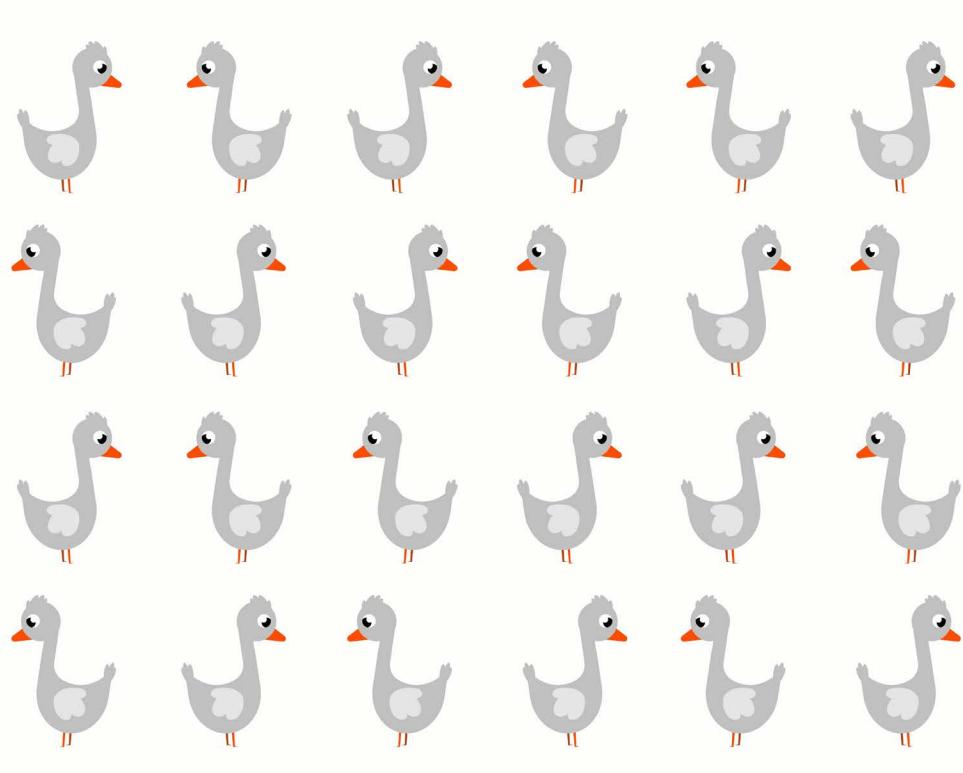


FIND TWO  
IDENTICAL GEESE

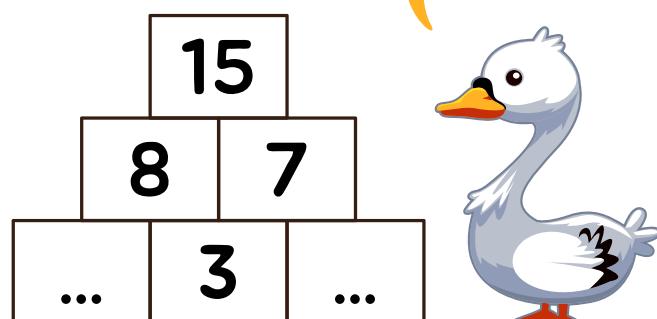
time to play



How many?



COMPLETE THE CORRECT NUMBER  
the box above is the sum of the two boxes below



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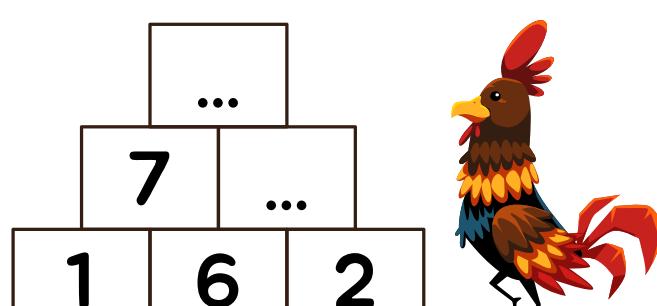
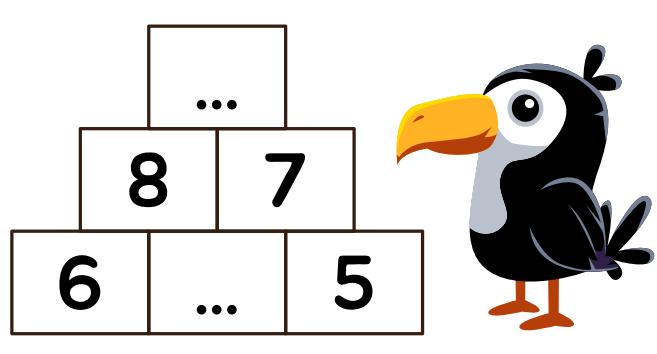
Learning

Building

Discovering

Dreaming

LEGO, Playmobil, Corolle Dolls, Brio Trains, Bruder Trucks, Calico Critters, Puzzles, Games, Science & Nature, Infant & Toddler Toys, and so much more!!!



# Calendar of Events for Your Fridge

## Thursday, Feb. 5

### **Blossom Hill Annual**

### **'For the Love of a Child'**

### **Galentines Event**

11 AM- 2 PM at the Country Club of New Canaan

Start Valentine's week with purpose at this annual fundraiser. Guests are invited to drop in with friends for an afternoon of connection and giving, featuring a curated selection of vendors and artisans perfect for Valentine's shopping. All proceeds will support the organization's mission of education for peace, transforming the lives of displaced and at-risk children and youth globally. Tickets are \$50 and available at <https://blossomhill-foundation.org/galentine/>.

### **Introduction to YouTube**

2 PM at the New Canaan Library, Craig B. Tate Conference Room

Join reference librarian

Flannery to learn the basics of navigating YouTube. In this class, cover how to search for specific content, create video playlists, and protect your privacy while enjoying the information YouTube has to offer. Register at <https://www.newcanaanlibrary.org/event/youtube-class-194347>.

### **Valentine's Bottle Painting, Evening workshop with Ashley McNeal**

6:30 PM at the Carriage Barn Arts Center

Join for a fun and social evening with friends and take home a unique keepsake for Valentine's Day. Unleash your creativity with artist Ashley McNeal, who will guide you through designing and painting a bottle of your choice—whether it's champagne, prosecco, wine, or another favorite. Tickets are \$25/members, \$30/non-members, and available at <https://carriagebarn.org/event/valentines-bottle-painting/>.

### **Motivating Your Unmotivated Student**

7 PM, Online

This webinar will equip parents with actionable tips, tools, and strategies to motivate, inspire, and support their students.

Free. Register at <https://shorturl.at/445ku>.

## Friday, Feb. 6

### **Developing Athletes for the Long Game**

9:30 AM at the New Canaan Library

New Canaan CARES will host a parent education program focused on the growing pressures of youth sports and early specialization. The event will feature a panel discussion followed by a Q&A with NCHS Football Coach Lou Marinelli, a legendary community figure with nearly 50 years of coaching experience, alongside clinical psychologist Dr. Suzanne Allen of The Parenting Pair and physical therapist Dr. Becky Nardi of Wellness Insights & Concierge PT. Register at <https://shorturl.at/HgChy>.

### **Valentine's Watercolor Card Making Workshop with Carolyn Childs of Art B.L.I.S.S.**

10:30 AM at the Carriage Barn Arts Center

Join for a Watercolor Card Making workshop led by Carolyn Childs of Art B.L.I.S.S. at the Carriage Barn. Whether you're a seasoned artist or a curious beginner, this workshop welcomes all skill levels. Tickets are \$40 and available at <https://carriagebarn.org/event/valentines-watercolor-card-making/>.

## Saturday, Feb. 7

### **Cut the Cord to Cable**

2 PM at the New Canaan Library, Craig B. Tate Conference Room

If you're considering cutting the cord to cable, then this class will give you the latest information on possible options and alternatives. Librarian James Ludy will also give an overview of Kanopy and teach you how to use your New Canaan Library card to stream free films, series, and documentaries every month. Register at <https://www.newcanaanlibrary.org/event/cut-cord-cable-194349>.

## Sunday, Feb. 8

### **Mad Hatter Valentine's Tea Party**

12 PM at the New Canaan Museum & Historical Society Join for the third annual Mad Hatter's Tea Party. This family friendly event will include tea sandwiches, hot beverages, sweets, craft projects and other surprises. Tickets are available at <https://nchistory.org/3rd-annual-mad-hatter-valentines-tea-party/>.

### **Computer Basics: Digital Privacy**

2 PM at the New Canaan Library, McLaughlin Meeting Room

In this class, you will learn strategies and tools to help control what information about yourself you leave online. Topics covered in the class include how to find and change privacy settings, choosing internet browsers and search engines, basic tech security, and more. Register at <https://tinyurl.com/2ncfbazc>.

### **Classical Argentine Guitar: Music & Stories with Carlos Pavan**

4 PM at the Carriage Barn Arts Center

Learn about the history and culture of Argentinian Classical Guitar during this unique afternoon recital. Sample some wines from Argentina, then get swept away in the stirring and dramatic music of Carlos Pavan interspersed with anecdotes from his travels and musical experiences. The Argentine Born/Brooklyn based chamber music composer skillfully blends Argentine tango & folklore rhythms with classical and jazz concepts. Tickets are \$35 and available at <https://carriagebarn.org/event/argentine-guitar-carlos-pavan/>.

## Tuesday, Feb. 10

### **Flower Arranging with Juliet Howe of Twigs Design**

11 AM at the Lapham Center

In this hands-on workshop, Juliet will guide you through echo-friendly, approachable floral design techniques, sharing some of her favorite tips and creative strategies as you craft your own unique arrangement. Containers and choice of fresh flowers will be provided. Participants are asked to bring clippers, if possible. \$50/person. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

### **South Indian Breakfast & Sweet Delights**

11 AM at the Lapham Center

Experience the comforting flavors of South India with this breakfast-themed class. Learn to make Idli, soft and fluffy steamed rice cakes, served with a hearty lentil stew (Sambar) and fresh Coconut Chutney. To end on a sweet note, prepare Carrot Halwa, a traditional dessert. \$60/person. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

### **Lunch & Learn with Mary Frances Malone, and The Town Players of New Canaan on the History of Valentines Day**

12 PM at the New Canaan Museum & Historical Society

Bring your sandwich, soup or snack and join for a Lunch &

Learn session. On this special day, Mary Frances Malone, along with The Town Players of New Canaan, will delve into the History of Valentine's Day. Discover the stories behind the celebration through engaging narratives and performances. Register at <https://shorturl.at/F5Llt>.

## Open Tech

2-4 PM at the New Canaan Library, McLaughlin Meeting Room

If you need help with email, smartphones/tablets, social media, or accessing our digital library, stop by for one-on-one support from a tech librarian. Tech assistance is limited to 20 minutes per session and is provided on a first-come, first-served basis.

### **The Attwood Lecture: Simon Winchester Returns with The Breath of the Gods**

7 PM at the New Canaan Library, Jim & Dede Bartlett Auditorium

Attend the Attwood lecture discussing "The Breath of Gods". Register at <https://shorturl.at/WNuPs>.

## Wednesday, Feb. 11

### **Blood Sugar & Blood Pressure Clinics**

12:30 PM at the Lapham Center

Ellen Samai from New Canaan's Department of Health provides in-person blood sugar and blood pressure testing. If you plan to have your blood sugar level tested, it is recommended you fast for four hours prior to testing. To register, call (203) 594-3620. Walk-ins welcome.

## Thursday, Feb. 12

### **Clever and Crafty with Tricia**

1 PM at the Lapham Center

Join Tricia to create felt needling penguins. Free. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

### **Tech Workshop with Cooper Young and George Geist of Good Kid Tech**

2 PM at the Lapham Center

The program will begin with a fifteen-minute presentation on a tech-related topic, followed by time to answer your personal tech questions. Free. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

### **Ask the Attorney with Nedder and Associates**

2-4 PM at the Lapham Center

An attorney from Nedder and Associates, LLC will be available for a free, private, fifteen-minute consultations to answer your legal or financial questions. Please call (203) 594-3620 to schedule your appointment. No drop-ins.

### **Implementing AI Responsibly in Your Organization**

6:30 PM at the New Canaan Library, Craig B. Tate Conference Room

AI is already showing up in many workplaces, often without clear rules, policies, or guidance. This practical presentation explores how professionals can use AI responsibly without creating legal, ethical, or reputational risk. Register at <https://www.newcanaanlibrary.org/event/artificial-intelligence-business-195604>.

### **Free Medicare Counseling**

By appointment at the Lapham Center

Dick Neville is a CHOICES certified Medicare counselor providing free, objective, person centered assistance about Medicare options and related benefits. Sessions are offered free of charge to New Canaan residents and Town employees. Call (203) 594-3620 to schedule an appointment, no drop-ins.

## Friday, Feb. 13

### **Valentine's Bingo**

11 AM at the Lapham Center

Play bingo and win prizes with a Valentine's Day theme. Free. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

### **Health Talks with Shannon and Ellen**

11 AM at the Lapham Center

Meet up with Shannon and Ellen from the Health Department for coffee, conversation and snacks. These engaging discussions will help improve your mood and your health. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

## Wednesday, Feb. 18

### **Recognizing Cognitive Biases and Building Healthier Thinking Habits**

10:30 AM at the Lapham Center

Join Gabriel Corredor, founder of Evergreen Daytime Senior Care, for an engaging presentation on how confirmation bias, the spotlight effect, and loss of aversion quietly influence our decisions - and how understanding them can help us think more clearly, act more confidently, and connect more effectively. Free. Coffee and treats will be served. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

## Thursday, Feb. 19

### **Understanding Hospital and Subacute Evaluations: Purpose, Process and Patient Benefits**

11 AM at the Lapham Center

Ever wonder why hospitals and subacute care facilities conduct so many tests and evaluations? Join Kathy Collins to learn about the purpose behind these assessments, how they help ensure safety, guide treatment and support recovery. Free. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

## Friday, Feb. 20

### **Winter Drop in Movie | Wicked**

11 AM at the Lapham Center

Elphaba, a young woman ridiculed for her green skin, and Galinda, a popular girl, become friends at Shiz University in the Land of Oz. After an encounter with the Wonderful Wizard of Oz, their friendship reaches a crossroads. Free.

### **Polar Bear Picnic**

5:30 PM at Grace Farms

Join the Polar Bear Picnic, and have breakfast for dinner. After enjoying a meal, take part in winter-inspired crafts and games. Tickets are \$24/members, \$30/non-members, and available at <https://gracefarms.org/event/polar-bear-picnic-2026>.

## Tuesday, Feb. 24

### **How to Use My Rec with Kathy Collins**

11 AM at the Lapham Center

If you've used MyRec to register for a program at Lapham only to find out when you come to the program that you were not registered, this talk is for you. Join Kathy to learn how to use this system to register for all your Lapham programs and activities. We'll review Step-by-step how to create an account, browse programs, add choices to your account, register and receive confirmation. Free. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

## Wednesday, Feb. 4

### **Alzheimer and Dementia Support Group with the Waveny LifeCare Network**

2 PM at the New Canaan Library, McLaughlin Meeting Room

Family members, caregivers, and friends are invited to meet for informative and supportive group sessions to help navigate changes related to memory loss and cognitive decline. Attendees can find guidance, offer support, and ask questions in a safe environment. Register at <https://shorturl.at/4dbTT>.

## Thursday, Feb. 19

### **Understanding Hospital and Subacute Evaluations: Purpose, Process and Patient Benefits**

11 AM at the Lapham Center

Ever wonder why hospitals and subacute care facilities conduct so many tests and evaluations? Join Kathy Collins to learn about the purpose behind these assessments, how they help ensure safety, guide treatment and support recovery. Free. To register, call (203) 594-3620.

## Every Friday

### **AA Speaker Meeting**

Wheelchair Access

Fridays at 7:30 AM

Congregational Church of New Canaan

## Every Saturday

### **AA Meeting-Sober Citizens Group**

Saturdays at 9:15 AM

First Presbyterian Church of New Canaan

## AA Meeting-Laundry and Dry Cleaning Group

Saturdays at 10:30 AM

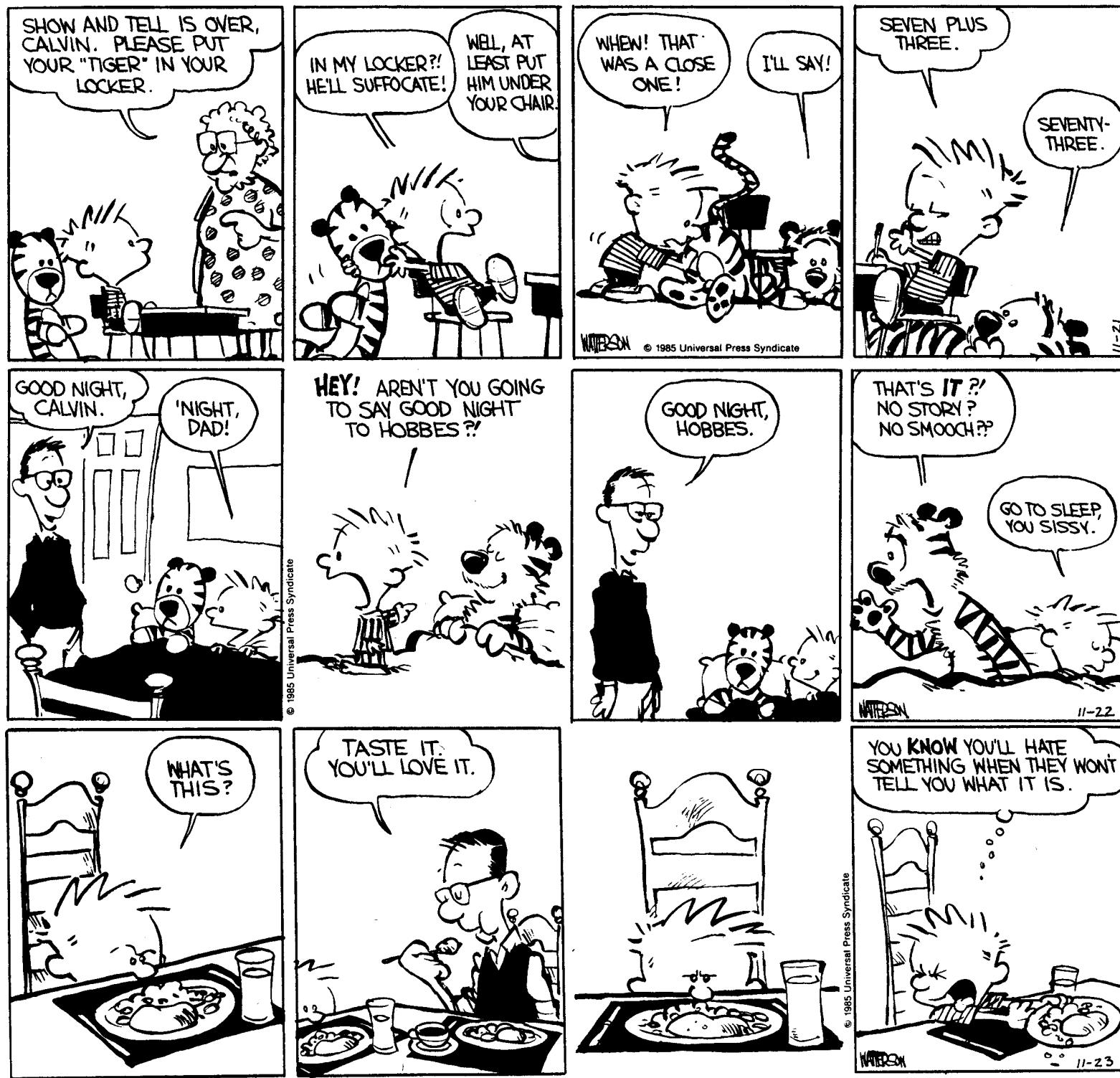
First Presbyterian Church of New Canaan

## Lost Then Found NA Meeting

Wheelchair Accessible

Saturdays at 7 PM

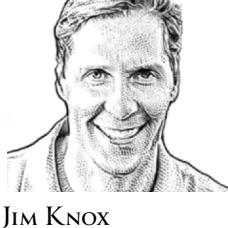
## EDUCATION

From the *Sentinel Foundation*: the educational page for our readers.

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COLUMN | WILDLY SUCCESSFUL: THE BOBCAT

## A Predator with Few Rivals and Phantom-like Stealth



By JIM KNOX

I'll always remember the first night my parents gave me the car keys. I had received my license and I was finally permitted to drive my family and friends. To celebrate, we went out to Friendly's for some ice cream. Yet, one thing made that night especially memorable. On the way home, a tawny creature streaked across my high beams with blurring speed. The animal covered Whippoorwill Road in just two bounds. If it weren't for the fact it paused at the hedgerow on the shoulder, or that my brother and our friend screamed out with excitement, I might have doubted my eyes. There, paused for a fraction of a second, was a ghost of an animal—often rumored, yet rarely seen.

Lynx rufus, or the Bobcat, is an American original. From the Mojave Desert to the Rocky Mountains and from Maine's north woods to the Florida Everglades, this compact predator thrives. Sporting versatile camouflage, shielding them from the eyes of predator and prey alike, bobcats are masters of stealth and ambush. Marked with a cream-colored belly, brown-gray flanks and back, the bobcat is flecked with cryptic black spots and bars overlaid with a reddish tinge. This reddish cast is what gives the bobcat the common name of Bay lynx, distinguishing it from its silvery-furred cousin, the Canada lynx of the far northern United States, Canada, and Alaska. Both cats possess a short, 4-7-inch bobbed tail and tufted ears. With an average height of two feet, an average length of three feet and weight ranging from 12 to 40 pounds, these small to mid-sized cats command a larger-than-life reputation.

In fact, the bobcat's ferocity and tenacity are



The Bobcat

### *In the bobcat we have a species and symbol of New England's wild heritage residing within our own zip codes.*

legendary. A frontiersman who could "lick his weight in wildcats" could be held in no higher esteem by his rugged peers. Possessing a rare blend of adaptability, speed and disproportionate power, the bobcat is equally capable of dining on grasshoppers or taking down full-grown deer. We must look no further for the secret of the bobcat's success than its adaptability. As a generalist, equally at home hunting rabbits on the ground, squirrels in trees, or frogs in streams, bobcats carve out a living by shifting gears when the prey is scarce. This accounts for the bobcat's ecological role as a creature of both untouched wilderness and suburbia.

It is the bobcat's tenacity and sheer toughness that deserve a second look. Unlike its larger cousin, the Amur tiger, which targets smaller prey when the hunting gets lean, the bobcat takes the

opposite tact, focusing on the largest prey—such as Whitetail deer—during the leanest times. And it is during those lean times when the bobcat proves its mettle. While its close kin the Canada lynx can endure a deadly 55 degrees below zero, the bobcat can match that lethal mercury plummet and raise the bar, and the mercury, to withstand 125 degrees Fahrenheit as a resident predator in aptly named Death Valley National monument. Fully capable of a 180-degree temperature range—that's one tough cat!

It is not just the bobcat's physical traits that mark it as a predator with few rivals. It is the cat's behavior that gains the bobcat advantage over competitors and prey alike. Placing its rear paw pads deftly within its front paw pad prints when stalking, the bobcat can approach prey with phantom-like stealth. These solitary predators

also shift their hunting from crepuscular (dawn and dusk periods) to nocturnal, or even diurnal periods to capitalize on prey abundance, avoid competition, or remain hidden from their human neighbors

With so many Connecticut residents embracing nature, we could ask for no better wild neighbor than the Bay lynx. This wild neighbor regulates small mammal populations—mitigating the spread of tick-borne diseases. Yet few of us know of its existence among the mosaic of woods, streams, golf courses and reservoirs around us. Found in every town in Fairfield County, the bobcat flies under

our collective radar, often mistaken as a housecat, fox, or small dog. With a natural aversion to humans, yet a demonstrated ability to thrive in our midst—without us being the wiser—the bobcat has the best of both worlds.

The h e i r h a l l m a r k adaptability has served bobcats well. While other predators diminish due to human expansion and habitat conversion, bobcat populations have remained remarkably stable in the U.S. and on the extremes of its range in northern Mexico and Southern Canada, despite hunting and trapping practices for this furbearer throughout North America.

In the bobcat we have a species and symbol of New England's wild heritage residing within our own zip codes. Imbuing our backyards with a hint of true wilderness, this speckled carnivore reminds us that it is possible to strike a balance between a wild that was once feared and can now be revered.

Jim Knox serves as the Curator of Education for Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo and as a Science Adviser for The Bruce Museum. His passions include studying our planet's rarest creatures and sharing his work with others who love the natural world.



In this first month of the year, we joyfully turn the pages back to the early days of a comic strip that has become a cultural icon, "Calvin and Hobbes." This time, we're looking at the fourth, fifth, and sixth strips from the series' inception in November 1985. These strips mark the early steps in a journey that would capture the imaginations of readers worldwide, blending childhood adventures with philosophical musings.

The charm and wit of these initial comics still resonate deeply with us, appealing to both the young and those who have followed the strip since its early days. They remind us of the simple joys found in the world of a precocious six-year-old boy and his tiger companion—a world that brilliantly combines the real with the fantastical. One reader shared last week how the reprints of these comics continue to bring laughter and delight, jokingly urging us to never cease publishing them. Rest assured, the adventures of Calvin and Hobbes will continue to grace our pages.

These early strips laid the groundwork for the themes that would pervade "Calvin and Hobbes" throughout its run, including commentary on societal norms, existential questions, and the limitless bounds of a child's imagination. This comic strip, which drew heavily upon creator Bill Watterson's own experiences and offered critiques of American culture, has maintained its relevance and appeal, even decades after its conclusion in 1995. It's not just a comic; it's a philosophical exploration that resonates with both children and adults, inviting readers to ponder life's larger questions while delighting in the whimsical escapades of its protagonists.

Next week, we'll return to our larger format color strips, but for now, let's continue to enjoy these early black-and-white gems that introduced us to the magical world of Calvin and his tiger friend, Hobbes.