

Haddam Killingworth News

AN INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER COVERING HADDAM, HIGGANUM, HADDAM NECK AND KILLINGWORTH

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September 1, 2022

For breaking news go to HK-Now.com every day

Free weekly

HK Group Participates in Tractor Pull Events



By Tony Giamei

A group of six HK graduates have become involved in tractor pull events. Cody Walczak agreed to an interview recently with HK News. His group has been involved in tractor pulls for the past 5 years. The tractors must have been manufactured prior to 1955. These are mostly Farm All and John Deere vehicles. Original horsepower was 20-40 HP, but can be modified to 80 HP. Such equipment requires a lot of maintenance, but that's part of the fun. The work is self-taught. Equipment can be expensive (e.g. tires at \$3k per set) and is frequently hard to find.

Here is a description of the types of sleds that are pulled: Stone Boat Sled is a "dead weight" sled where everyone pulls the same load. It requires more skill on the part of the driver, not just the strength of the tractor.

Transfer Sled pushes weight forward as the tractor travels down the track. It is more reliant on the tractor's

horsepower and tires than the driver's skill level.

Gloria Maynard, a Higganum resident says she is "hooked" on these events and has employed Cody to help her manage her property when he is available.

Supporting funds are mostly earned through their jobs and occasional cash prizes. A first place award was recently earned at the Haddam Neck Fair.

Information on past and upcoming events is supplied by Barb Jello (see Facebook page).



Photos courtesy of Cody Walczak.

Take the Pig Home: A History of Prizes at the Haddam Neck Fair

By Elizabeth Malloy, Executive Director, Haddam Historical Society

The 110th Haddam Neck Fair will be held over Labor Day Weekend, September 2-5, 2022.

Over the past century townsfolk have entered everything from baked goods, chickens, flowers, cows, oxen, horses and even children (the baby contest). In the early 20th century, residents could enter everything from cottage cheese to their finest piece of tating. There was a prize for the best collection of antiques and you could enter and show your "tame" raccoon, skunk or ferret.

Most entries received a cash prize and ribbon as they do today, but

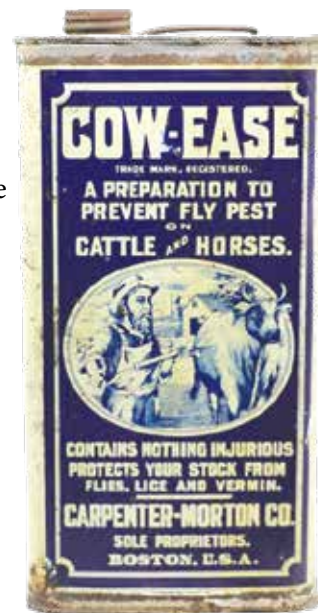


Photo provided by Haddam Historical Society.

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RSD 17 Board of Education Update: June/July

By Shawna Goldfarb, BOE Member, Haddam

Cougar Pride: The Board recognized and celebrated our District Teachers of the Year, District Staff of the Year, District Retirees and HKHS Top 10 Students of 2022. The Board and Administrative Staff gave a short description and thank-you for each celebrant and gave certificates.

Superintendent's Update: The Board received an

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BML Celebrates Library Card Sign-Up Month!

By Robbie Marshall, Assistant Director,
Brainerd Memorial Library

September is Library Card Sign-Up Month, when libraries nationwide join the American Library Association (ALA) to remind parents, caregivers and students that signing up for a library card is the first step on the path to academic achievement and lifelong learning.

Libraries play a crucial role in the education and development of children, offering a variety of programs to spark creativity and stimulate an interest in reading and learning. Through access to technology, media resources and educational programs, a library card gives students the tools to succeed in the classroom and provides people of all ages opportunities to pursue their dreams, explore new passions and interests, and find their voice.

At Brainerd Memorial Library in Haddam, patrons of all ages can find a variety of educational resources and activities. "Libraries play an important role in the education and development of children," says Marissa Lehmacher, Children's Librarian. "We have

library programs that serve students of all ages and backgrounds, such as weekly story and music times, interest clubs, Teen Advisory Board, craft and STEM activities, and special programs.

During September, Brainerd Memorial Library will host Library Card Sign-Up activities for children, including make your own library card holder, library card bingo, decorate a library bookmark, and fun prizes!

This year, Tony Award-winning performer, actress, singer-songwriter, and philanthropist Idina Menzel (Frozen, Wicked) and her sister, author and educator Cara Mentzel, will serve as honorary chairs of Library Card Sign-Up Month. Idina and Cara are excited to remind everyone that one of the best places to find your voice is at the library. During Library Card Sign-Up Month, they want us to explore all the library has to offer, like new children's books, access to technology, and educational programming.

Brainerd Memorial Library, along with libraries everywhere, continues to adapt and expand services to meet the evolving community needs. To sign up for a library card or to learn more about the library's resources and programs, please visit www.brainerdlibrary.org or stop by Brainerd Memorial Library today!

brainerdlibrary.org or stop by Brainerd Memorial Library today!



COMMUNITY

News from High Meadow: A Summer Concert and More

By JoAnn Woickelman

Residents of High Meadow in Haddam were treated to a summer concert on August 16, 2022 by The Swallowtails. They are an ensemble of one violinist and three guitarists.

The group consists of Nancy Meyers, Mary Cooke, Wayne LePard and Tom Worthley. After the program, light refreshments were served. Anyone interested in providing entertainment for our residents should contact Jo Ann Woickelman at 860-345-2077.

On the first day of summer, June 21st, a picnic was



Photo by Sue DeCarli.

held. It was catered by Cyr BBQ of Middletown. Greg McKenna of Nutmeg Pharmacy in Higganum provided the funding. A delicious meal was enjoyed by all!

A holiday luncheon is planned for November. A hot turkey dinner with all the fixings will be served. Board members are also working on a Christmas chorale program for December.

High Meadow is a facility for 62+ as well as for individuals with disabilities. There are 22 units, a mix of studio and one-bedroom apartments. The facility is managed by Wildwood Property Management, LLC.

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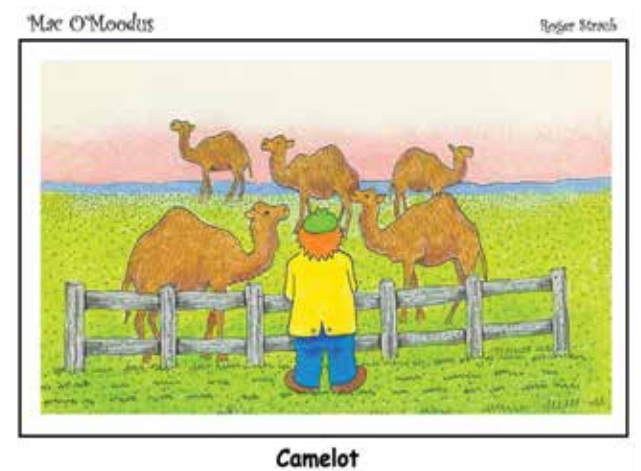
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Club 60: Upcoming Events and Welcoming New Members

By Marjorie DeBold and JoAnn Woickleman

September is right around the corner, and it's time for Haddam Club 60 members to be reminded about plans for the upcoming year. It's also a good time to introduce prospective members to a well-established club right in their neighborhood. Haddam Club 60 has been around for a long time, and in a recent count had about seventy members last year. Club members get together in the early afternoons twice a month. During the 2022-2023 year we anticipate a Holiday Party, a Town-wide Picnic for Seniors, a possible HC60-sponsored trip, information that is important to Seniors, and lots of good companionship.

We try to foster greater friendships among those of us who are sixty years of age and older. We bring senior-pertinent information to our group. Haddam Club 60 members enjoy and appreciate programs that entertain as well as those that inform us. Club 60 also works with other local agencies that share our goals.

A few important notes:

Membership is open to Seniors, sixty years of age and older. (Associate Membership is available to spouses who are younger.)

Members must live in Haddam or one of the surrounding towns of Middlesex County, including Killingworth.

Annual dues are \$8.00.

We meet at the Community Center in Higganum Center (across from the Town Green), near the Veterans Museum.

Meetings are held on the first and third Mondays of the month at 1:00 p.m. (If there is a holiday on a regular meeting date, the meeting will be postponed one week. If a snow day closes the schools on a meeting day, our meeting is cancelled.)

Refreshments will be enjoyed at most meetings.

An important date to remember, as we look at what's going on: Monday, September 12 at 1:00 pm at the Community Center in Higganum. That will be our first meeting of the 2022-2023 year,

a Business Meeting/Meet and Greet. Mark your calendars now for that date and the next three Mondays:

September 19 Speaker: First Selectman Bob McGarry

October 3: Business Meeting

October 17: Vicki Harlow, local author.

We look forward to seeing friends and members from last year! We look forward to welcoming new members! Please join us! If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the President of Haddam Club 60, Mary Pierce, at 860-685-1783.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Please visit www.haddam.org, www.townofkillingworth.com or hk-now.com for the most current information, including cancellations, location changes, time changes. See hk-now.com for more information on calendar items.

Thursday, September 1

Toddler Tunes - Brainerd Memorial Library 10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Haddam Planning & Zoning meeting 7:00 p.m.

CT Summer at the Museum - 2:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Thankful Arnold House.

Killingworth Parmelee Farm Committee meeting 7:00 p.m. Pond Room

Friday, September 2

CT Summer at the Museum - 12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. Thankful Arnold House.

Killingworth Historic Review Committee meeting 11:00 a.m. (remote).

Haddam Neck Fair 7:00 p.m. - 10:30 p.m.

Saturday, September 3

Haddam Neck Fair 7:00 p.m. - 10:30 p.m.

Sunday, September 4

CT Summer at the Museum - 1:00 p.m. - 4:00

p.m. Thankful Arnold House.

Haddam Neck Fair 4:00 p.m.

Monday, September 5

LABOR DAY

Haddam Neck Fair 7:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, September 6

Preschool Storytime at Brainerd Memorial Library 10:00 a.m. Join us every Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. for themed stories, songs, finger plays, and crafts. Appropriate for children ages 2 to 5, but siblings are always welcome. Storytime is held outside, weather permitting. Folding chairs will be provided, and families are welcome to bring a picnic blanket if they prefer.

Thursday, September 8

Haddam Park & Recreation meeting 7:30 p.m.

Killingworth Conservation Commission meeting 7:00 p.m. (remote).

Toddler Tunes - Brainerd Memorial Library 10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

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RSD 17 Board of Education Update: June/July

Continued from page HK1

update from student representatives from the HK Middle School, Catherine Nguyen and Tetsuy Imai. This is the first of quarterly reports the Board will receive from HKMS.

Board Sub-Committee Reports:

Facilities: The committee reported they have been working with the Director of Operations on the small needs that have come up throughout the district. They also reported meeting at Killingworth Elementary School to tour the facility to see all the work that has been completed and any additional needs that still have to be done. The next tour will be at Burr Elementary, and then HKIS. The committee also reported on the meeting with town leaders where the Tecton Assessment was presented. There was a discussion about having a follow-up meeting.

Finance: The committee reported the final 2021-2022 budget has an anticipated balance of \$298,217.10. This balance includes an insurance pre-payment for the 2022-2023 year that will offset the difference between the budgeted insurance increase of 8% and the actual increase of 10.5%. This balance can be used to purchase any year-end needs of the district. A final year-end report will be presented after the close of the Fiscal Year.

Policy: The committee reported working on policy #6146 and a revision to policy #6148. The committee will bring the Board additional policies at the August or September meetings. It was also reported that the 1000, 2000, 3000 and 4000 series are complete and the 5000 series is almost complete. The committee says all policies should be complete by October or November.

Personnel and Evaluation: The committee reported finalizing the Superintendent's Year-End Review and 2022 Goals. Both reports were given to the Board to be discussed and/or voted on. The Review passed unanimously.

Strategic Planning: The committee reported the ongoing process of the Strategic Plan. The plan has officially been passed to Superintendent Wihbey, who will work with his team of Administrators, Staff and Teachers to create the strategies for the

Plan. These strategies will then come back to the Board for approval. Superintendent Wihbey had a retreat with his full team, where sub-teams for each goal were created. These teams were tasked with creating the beginning portions of the strategies for their goal. The full team will meet again in August to finalize their strategies and prepare to present them to the BOE at the August workshop. The Strategic Planning sub-committee and the Communications sub-committee also will be working together to create the District Strategic Planning Archive Document.

Curriculum: The committee reported they are reviewing the new Black and Latino curriculum class. They will bring more information to the August and September Board meetings.

Communications: The committee reported they reviewed feedback on the communication for the Budget/Budget process. A new pre-budget presentation process is being created that will include meeting with town leaders to get suggestions early in the planning process. This will be presented to the Board at the August or September meeting. The committee is also working on Staff engagements, including Staff Anniversaries and additional recognition. They are finalizing the new tri-annual BOE Newsletter format and plan. The committee will bring the plan to the Board at the next meeting.

Board Liaisons:

Haddam Board of Selectmen: No Report

Killingworth Board of Selectmen: No Report

LEARN Board of Directors: Jennifer Favalora

reported the organization discussed how important it is to have student representatives at the table for their perspective. She also reported that Tecton is also working with LEARN and that lead times for supplies are at 50-72 weeks.

Park and Rec: No Report

HK Youth and Family Services/Coalition: Shawna Goldfarb reported the work HKYFS is doing regarding hiring a new Executive Director and Prevention Coordinator. The agency is also working on new fundraising opportunities, such as taking over the HKMS Fall Craft Fair and working with town leaders and other Youth & Family Service agencies to gain support and advice on re-building the agency.

Consent Agenda: The Board approved minutes for May, 2022 Board meetings, personnel reports, enrollment reports, District donations, and first-read Policy revisions.

New/Old Business: The Board discussed and approved revised Policies. The Superintendent's 2021-2022 Year-End Review was approved and goals were discussed. Superintendent Wihbey proposed and discussed new District hires. The new Seasonal Maintenance Position, Special Education Coordinator and HKMS Assistant Principal were recommended and approved. The Board also had a final interview with the Assistant Superintendent candidate and approved the Superintendent's recommendation to hire.

Superintendent Wihbey also presented the final list of Prioritized Year-End Purchases. The Board approved these purchases not to exceed \$215,000.

COMMUNITY

Upcoming Fall Invasive Plant Clean-ups and Trash Pick-ups

By Cherry Czuba

Come join the fun! Join an enthusiastic group of volunteers at the beautiful Haddam Meadows State Park for our annual fall invasive plant clean-ups and trash pick-ups. The first clean-

up will be in partnership with the Connecticut River Conservancy's Source to Sea on Saturday, September 24, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. The rain date is Saturday, October 1. The second fall clean-up will be Saturday, October 22. The rain date is Saturday, October 29.

Participants are asked to meet in the middle picnic area. Adults and youth, under 16 years of age (accompanied by an adult), are encouraged to participate in removing oriental bittersweet and other invasives and/or picking up trash. Please dress for the weather. Wear waterproof boots, bring garden loppers or saw, insect repellent, sunscreen, water, and first aid supplies. Refreshments will be served. Do not bring pets. Volunteers with dump trucks with Haddam stickers are needed.

The event is being planned by CT DEEP Adopt-a-Park Volunteers, Jamie Burgess, Deborah Cooney, Cherry Czuba, Joanne DelCioppo-McHugh, Richard Gill, Mary Lou Heger, and David Stiles.

Please register by emailing Cherry Czuba at cherylczuba@comcast.net



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Three Connecticut Doctors in the Polio Hall of Fame

By Philip R. Devlin

Recent news reports out of New York City indicate that the dreaded polio virus has been making a comeback. These studies are based upon sewage studies in Middletown that were pioneered in the 1950's by Wesleyan grad Joseph Melnick.

Most often, people associate a Hall of Fame with athletic achievement. The Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York, and the Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio, are perhaps the two most widely known halls of fame in the world; nevertheless, there are halls of fame for other notable achievements. Among those other achievements is a hall of fame established in Warm Springs, Georgia, in 1958 called the Polio Hall Of Fame.

Warm Springs, Georgia, of course, is a most appropriate location for the Polio Hall of Fame, as it is most readily associated with polio's most famous victim: President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. It was in Warm Springs that FDR sought hydrotherapy for his paralyzing condition, and it was there that he died in April of 1945.

There are 17 bronze busts there placed in an irregular linear fashion against a wall; 15 of these busts represent doctors or medical scientists; 16 of them are men; 4 are Europeans. Of the 13 Americans represented there, no state has more inductees than Connecticut.

One of those Connecticut inductees is Dr. John R. Paul. John Rodman Paul was born on April 18, 1893, in Philadelphia. His early education occurred in the Mid-Atlantic area; he received an undergraduate degree from Princeton and then an M.D. from Johns Hopkins in 1920. Dr. Paul began his long association with Connecticut when he joined the Yale School of Medicine in 1928. At Yale, he began a polio study group in the 1930's. He and his associates began to receive yearly study grants from the March of Dimes immediately after FDR founded that group in 1938.

Dr. Paul used the grant money



to study the spread of polio in Connecticut, in the neighborhoods of both Middletown and New Haven. His group found that infected patients excreted the disease into sewage systems. An historian of the disease, Paul noted that for many centuries, children received antibodies from their mother's milk at an early age and that early-age exposure had conferred immunity upon children; however, as civilization progressed with better sanitation, cleaner water, better hygiene, etc., children were no longer exposed to the virus at an early age and therefore lacked immunity to it. Dr. John R. Paul retired from Yale after 33 years there in 1961. A longtime resident of Guilford, he died on May 6, 1971.

A disciple of Dr. Paul was Joseph L. Melnick (photo above). Born in 1914 in Boston, Melnick's family moved to New Haven when he was just 7. After graduating High School in 1932, Melnick attended Wesleyan University in Middletown, graduating from there in 1936. He then pursued a Ph.D. at Yale and was named a professor of epidemiology there in 1954. He assisted Dr. John Paul in his studies of polio and then proceeded to advance the study of that virus on his own. It's interesting to note that much of the data gathered in Melnick's studies came from the two cities that were most familiar to him: New Haven and Middletown.

Melnick found that the polio virus multiplied more rapidly in sewage during warm weather, thereby verifying that outbreaks of polio during warmer weather was not a coincidence. He also noted that fecal

contamination of the hands was a means by which the virus could be spread. His discoveries led to better waste disposal methods as well as better hygienic practices to contain the spread of the polio virus. Furthermore, Melnick found that the polio vaccine could be stored for a longer period of time by using magnesium chloride as a preservative. He began a longtime association with Baylor University in 1968. After a long and productive life, Joseph Melnick died in Houston on January 7, 2001 at age 88.

Perhaps the most interesting Connecticut member of the Polio Hall of Fame is Dr. John Franklin Enders—a lifelong resident of Connecticut. Born in West Hartford in 1897, Enders attended Yale for a while before joining the Army Air Corps and fighting in World War I. Enders was one of many aviators from Yale who volunteered for service in the war, including his classmate, Robert Lovett—Harry Truman's future Secretary of Defense. Following the war, Enders returned to Yale to finish his undergraduate degree. He then tried several careers before deciding to pursue a career in infectious diseases. To that end, he received his Ph.D. from Harvard in 1930.

Dr. Enders teamed with Thomas Weller and Frederick Robbins to do research on the polio virus. The trio received the Nobel Prize in Medicine

in 1954 for their outstanding work in discovering the ability of the polio virus to grow in "cultures of various types of tissue." Dr. Jonas Salk built upon their research to create the first vaccine against polio shortly thereafter. Salk's failure to credit the help he received from other researchers in developing his vaccine became controversial. By contrast, when Enders successfully developed a measles vaccine in the early 1960's, he went out of his way to credit the help of others who had assisted him. A resident of Waterford later in his life, Dr. John F. Enders, war hero and Nobel Prize winner, died on September 8, 1985 at age 88.

During the early 1950's, fear of contracting polio was exceeded only by fear of a nuclear attack, according to a PBS documentary on polio in 2009. The worst outbreak of polio in history occurred in 1952, with more than 52,000 Americans contracting the disease. Shortly thereafter, however, the Salk vaccine was developed followed by the Sabin vaccine. Soon, the once-feared poliomyelitis was no longer a major concern for most people in the world, in large part due to the pioneering research and work by three men with strong Connecticut connections—John Paul, Joseph Melnick and John Enders—all worthy members of the Polio Hall Of Fame in Warm Springs, Georgia!

Haddam Killingworth News

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Saybrook at Haddam Resident Gives Back to the Community & to Alzheimer's Association

By Dee Swift, *The Saybrook at Haddam*

Tom Barnett has had a passion for photography since he was 8 years old. His family considered him a nuisance for many years with his Baby Brownie camera at every birthday party. When he was 18, he became the family photographer and also worked on high school events. At 48, he began to focus on photojournalism, that is, how to photograph action. At 68, he was immersed in digital photography, and now at 88, his appreciation is the automatic setting. It gives him the ability to see the picture



Photo by MerriAnne Larensen – Recreation Director at The Saybrook at Haddam.

within the picture with a few basic rules of effective composition and other tools on a computer. Tom now resides at The Saybrook at Haddam Independent/Assisted Living and Memory Care Community. He has created a beautiful display of photographs from his extensive traveling throughout his life. Tom has assembled a gallery in one of the corridors for all to enjoy. Members of The Saybrook community and anyone from the public who would like to view his work are welcome. There is even a bench for people to relax and contemplate.

All photographs are being sold and Tom is generously assisting The Saybrook's fundraising effort by donating the profits to the Alzheimer's Association. Thank you, Tom, for gifting us not once, but twice.

If you would like to see Tom's photographs, please feel free to stop by The Saybrook at Haddam, 1556 Saybrook Road/Route 154, Haddam, or come join us for our Country Craft show on Saturday, September 17, from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Take the Pig Home: A History of Prizes at the Haddam Neck Fair

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there have been some unusual premiums over the years. The 1914 fair sponsored a pig contest which consisted of contestants having to chase a greased pig let loose on the fairgrounds. If you caught the pig, it was yours to take home.

In 1918, the youngest pair of steers won a gallon of Cow Ease (seen above) valued at \$1.25; the best heifer, not in milk, won a flashlight, and the best registered cow was awarded a quart of carriage varnish. One of the most practical prizes was for the best- grade cow which won "one bull service by herd sire."

Special Premiums in the past included a roll of roofing paper for best sow and litter and one aluminum sauce pan for the best exhibit of baked goods. A pair of shoes was the prize for "finest piece of hand sewing," and a raincoat, valued at \$8, for the most exhibits entered.

By the late 1940's, prizes included "a furnished home, car, and radio." Smaller contest awards were blankets, candy, dolls and a grocery basket. In the 1950's you could win a bag of sugar or can of beans in a Fair contest. Today most prizes are limited to ribbons, trophies and cash, but last year the skillet throwing contest winners were awarded a large, medium and small skillet for first, second and third place.

I have a drawer full of my Haddam Neck Fair ribbons, including my 1973 first place blue ribbon for my corn husk doll collection, and my recent 10th place ribbon for skillet throwing.

This year the Haddam Historical Society sponsored a baking contest of Soft Gingerbread (page 40 of the Fair book). First place will be two tickets to our Fall House Tour on October 8, 2022 valued at \$70, along with a nice ribbon. Visit www.haddamneckfair.com for additional information.

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A Day of Stories and Songs with the Nehantic and Abenaki

By Jane Raunikar, Connecticut River Museum

Come together for a day of stories and songs with the Nehantic Native Nation and the Elnu Abenaki Tribe. This free, one-day, outdoor event is planned for Saturday, September 17, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on the Connecticut River Museum waterfront lawn. Please check ctrivermuseum.org for updates and information.

Both the Abenaki and Nehantic have inhabited New England for thousands of years. The Abenaki Tribe are original natives of Northern New England and the Nehantics moved throughout the lower Connecticut River Valley and Pawcatuck Rivers.

“We look forward to bringing together artists, speakers and musicians from both the Abenaki and Nehantic nations,” said David Brule. Brule is part of the Nolumbeka Project, a non-profit organization based in Greenfield, Massachusetts, whose mission is to honor Northeastern Tribal Heritage.

The day is centered on Indigenous arts, traditions, stories and language. Presentations, demonstrations, and Native drum groups (above photo) are scheduled for the day. The Connecticut River Museum will be open free of charge for the duration of the event.

Essex Historical Society Executive Director Melissa Josefiak commented, “The Connecticut River Museum and the Essex Historical Society are honored to once again host the Indigenous Connecticut River celebration. This day helps us to make meaningful connections as we continue to learn more about Indigenous people’s rich heritage.”

The Nolumbeka Project, Inc. envisions a Connecticut River Valley where the histories, cultures and persistence of Northeastern Indigenous Peoples are recognized and celebrated, and where all beings are recognized as sharing a mutual existence



in an environment of balance and reciprocity. Event collaborators for this day are the Nehantic Native Nation, Elnu Abenaki, Connecticut River Museum, The Nolumbeka Project and the Essex Historical Society.

The Connecticut River Museum is located on the Essex waterfront at 67 Main Street in Essex and is open Tuesday through Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The Museum, located in the historic Steamboat Dock building, offers exhibits and programs about the history and environment of the Connecticut River. For a full listing of Museum programs please visit www.ctrivermuseum.org or call 860-767-8269.



Photos courtesy of the CT River Museum.

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A Lover of Haddam Meadows and the Woods

By Sharon Challenger

Each Spring and Fall, volunteers from our communities gather at Haddam Meadows State Park to remove invasive plants and trash. Their goal: to preserve the Meadows and keep it looking beautiful. Led by Haddam resident Cheryl Czuba, the event is a work of passion and dedication. The work has been ongoing since 2013. With another Fall Cleanup fast approaching HK-News wanted to know more about this generous effort by the volunteers. We hope you will be inspired to join in the effort!

The planned dates are, Saturday, September 24, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. The rain date is Saturday, October 1. The second fall clean-up will be Saturday, October 22. The rain date is Saturday, October 29.

The event is promoted annually at the Brainerd Memorial Library.

Q: When did you first get the idea to help clean up Haddam Meadows State Park and why?

Czuba: I retired in June of 2013. After completing a Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (CT DEEP) Adopt a Park Volunteer application in the fall of that year, I began picking up trash. When I saw how Oriental bittersweet was killing trees at the Meadows, I asked permission from CT DEEP to organize invasive plant cleanups and trash pickups. It was so sad to see perfectly lovely trees dying because of bittersweet and other invasives. In 2014 we held five invasive plant cleanups. We've been doing them ever since; two in the spring and two in the fall. We get anywhere from six to thirty volunteers at each cleanup. They are parents, young kids, kids who want school community service credit, Scouts, Coast Guard cadets, college alumni, seniors, DEEP employees who work one day in a park, and folks from as far away as Hartford, Stamford, and Niantic. We serve refreshments. Several volunteers come almost every time. There is a great spirit of camaraderie.

Q: Which groups do you seek help from?

Czuba: We have promoted cleanups through CT DEEP, Haddam Killingworth News, Haddam Bulletin, faith communities, UCONN Extension, where I worked, and the town's website. We've been partnering with Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC) Source to Sea for trash pickups on the last Saturday in September for about 4 years.

Q: How long does the work typically take?

Czuba: We work about 2.5 to 3 hours at our cleanups. CT DEEP Adopt A Park volunteers pick up trash at the Meadows year round. The DEEP staff really appreciate all that we do. We see ourselves as part of a park team to maintain our beautiful Haddam Meadows. CT DEEP staff welcome our input on projects at the park.

Q: How do you treat the invasive weeds along the river?

Czuba: We use saws and loppers to pull the invasives off trees and we also remove the roots. Our most recent challenge is Japanese knotweed by the Northern Pike fish dam. We have had great UConn Master Gardeners, and CT DEEP Adopt A Park Volunteers assist us in recognizing invasives. Richard Gill, one of our Adopt a Park Volunteers, who is also a UConn Master Gardener, tagged at least 30 flowering trees.

Q: How can members of our communities be of help?

Czuba: We welcome people from the community. Sometimes people will come up to me and the other volunteers and tell us how we inspire them to pick up trash. If there is less trash, folks will often think twice before they litter. Anyone interested in volunteering



Photo courtesy of CT DEEP.

could contact me at cherylczuba@comcast.net and I can include them on our long list of volunteers for the fall and spring cleanups. I would suggest that they contact Wanda Torres, CT DEEP Adopt A Park Volunteer Coordinator, so she can share important information on volunteering.

Q: Are there any plans to establish a non-profit organization to support the work in the future?

Czuba: No we haven't. We have had community members interested in donating picnic tables, benches, dog stations and the butterfly garden. They have worked directly with the CT DEEP Supervisor at Cockaponset State Forest Headquarters in the old CCC Camp Filley on Ranger Road, Haddam. This has worked out well.

Q: If there is anything else you would like our readers to know, please feel free to add your thoughts.

Czuba: Most important are the names of our CT DEEP Adopt A Park Volunteers:

Jamie Burgess, Haddam; Deborah Cooney, Southington; Mary Lou Heger, Higganum; Joanne DelCioppo-McHugh, Higganum; Richard Gill, Higganum; David Stiles, Middletown; Cherry Czuba, Haddam

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