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On the cover: Erin Brady (Nick Cato photo).
Welcome to Our Fall/Winter Issue of Decades!

A glance at our photo will show that there are more Hoffman family members involved in the business than ever, yet more proof that Hoffman Auto Group is, not just metaphorically but literally, one big happy family!

Hoffman Auto Group is pleased to announce that Zachary Hoffman has joined the company, effective August 11, 2014. An Avon High School graduate and Arizona State University graduate majoring in communications, he brings a wealth of automotive experience with the Penske Auto Group in Chandler, Arizona, and before that, at Prestige Imports in Miami Beach, Florida as a business development representative.

Of course, the best families look out not just for their own but for others. Hoffman Auto Group has always been committed to giving back to the community that has supported it all these years by championing worthy causes. In this issue, writer Rebecca Cretella takes a closer look at Foodshare and tells what you can do to make a difference, while writer Melinda Tuhus and photographer Nick Cato introduce eight unsung heroes of volunteerism.

Cultural reporter extraordinaire Christopher Arnott gets the jump on the upcoming 85th anniversary of The Bushnell with a look at its origins and some of the productions and personalities that have come through it. He reveals The Bushnell’s anniversary calendar and points out other performing arts venues celebrating anniversaries.

Our editor Ellis Parker takes you on a tour of Connecticut’s best river dining experiences. Parker also interviews Connecticut’s sweetheart, Erin Brady, Miss Connecticut USA and Miss USA 2013, who has a cause or two of her own she likes to support.

In our calendar, writer Robert Bailin informs you of appealing fall activities to keep in mind, while in our Details column, he unveils nifty auto gadgetry and breakthrough technology. Parker previews two all-new, highly anticipated Lexus models, the NX and the RC. In keeping with the car theme, the ever-so-stylish Chloe Davis, with an assist from models Mallory and Andrei, introduces you to fall fashions appropriate to a foliage-viewing outing. (And making the entire issue look effortless pretty is our talented creative director, Kate Dawes.)

So let Hoffman Auto, and our lifestyle magazine Decades, take you where you want to go!
An emotional ceremony provided an Honor and Remember Flag to the Gilman family. Riders and their families met at Fidelco in Bloomfield. Attendees were treated to a Retired Air Force SSgt. Michael Malarsie and his “wingman,” Fidelco Guide Dog, purchased a 911S (2013) from Ric Nanni last year and we absolutely love the car. In fact, Hoffman Porsche treated customers to a fun track day experience at Lime Rock Park on Friday, June 27. The more than 40 participants enjoyed sunny skies as they drove through corner from East Hartford to the track. It was quite the eye-opening sight to see how many Porsches drove dawn Route 44. The weather and the Lime Rock Park staff were top-notch. The day was exciting and all for a good cause. Porche enthusiasts had the opportunity to put their own Porche to the test as well as some companions shopping for their next one. One of our attendees had to say: “My wife and I purchased a 911S (2013), from Ric Nanni last year and we absolutely love the car. In fact, we are now looking at the Boxster or possibly the Macan for our next car. It’s the perfect track experience at Lime Rock. I was able to get the Boxster and Cayman side by side for performance, handling and comfort comparisons. Heads down the course now, but I would have been able to compete handling and performance.”

Paving the (Green) Way With Solar Energy
Hoffman Auto Group endeavors to give back to the community wherever possible and believes that the use of solar power and reducing our carbon footprint is another way to improve the environment in which we live. Hoffman Auto Group will be one of the first dealerships in the area to “go green” with solar energy. We are partnering with Greenskies of Middletown to install solar panels at four of our dealerships in Avon and East Hartford, and are committed to reducing energy consumption for a more sustainable tomorrow.

The Hoffman Audi quattro Cup Returned to Hartford Golf Club
It was a beautiful day on June 17 for the 3rd annual Hoffman Audi quattro Cup Golf Tournament. Over 100 golfers were welcomed this year, some of them returning for the third time. The weather was perfect for all in attendance as the tournament fielded an impressive field of 113 players. The Hoffman Audi quattro Cup was hosted by Hoffman Audi in support of Special Olympics Connecticut. The tournament was held at the Hartford Golf Club and raised over $30,000 for Special Olympics Connecticut.

Hoffman Employee’s Join Forces for Special Olympics!
On Sunday, May 18, Hoffman Auto Group 77 employees joined hundreds of volunteers from Leona Chaffee School and other organizations to support the athletes of the 2014 Special Olympics Connecticut Northern Time Trials. As the presenting sponsor, Hoffman Auto proudly partnered again with Special Olympics for another world-class event. Co-Chair Nancy Hoffman greeted all in attendance, thanking volunteers for their time and encouraging the athletes to be the best in each of their competitions.

Thanks to All Who Supported the Burton C. Hoffman 16th Annual Charity Golf Classic
On Thursday, June 26, the Burton C. Hoffman Golf Classic celebrated its 16th year. Over 165 golfers tested their skills at the beautiful Tumblebrook Country Club. Proceeds from the event benefited The Burton & Phyllis Hoffman Foundation. The Foundation was founded on May 11, 1999 due in part to Burton and Phyllis’ passion for giving back to the community. The tradition continues through the efforts of Phyllis and her entire family, impacting the lives of many. The foundation inspires and encourages the community to join in these acts of kindness while supporting the arts, health, medicine, education and social well-being.

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Slime Safety Spair

The Slime Safety Spair is an emergency tire repair kit that is easily stored in your trunk and can instantly seal and re-inflate your flat tire in minutes. The kit features a 12V built-in compressor which goes to work with just the push of a big green button, forcing air through the replaceable sealant cartridge, sending the Slime latex tire sealant and air into your tire. This repair system is quick and easy, and it gets you and your family back on the road in minutes. Slime sealant seeps out and repairs punctures up to ¼", is non-toxic and non-corrosive, and is safe for TPMS (tire pressure) sensors. Slime Tire Sealant is for temporary repair only (up to 500 miles). After using Slime, have your tire professionally repaired as soon as possible. Kit includes inflator with LED light, built-in pressure gauge and zippered carry case. $39.97 at Amazon. www.slime.com.

Aervoe Super LED Road Flare

Aervoe Super LED Emergency Road Flare is a smokeless, flameless, non-toxic alternative to standard incendiary flares. Its rechargeable design with 24 red Super Bright LEDs in 2 layers of lights features 5 different flash patterns—reverse rotate, quad flash, alternating blinks, S.O.S and steady-on (high)—that are visible up to 1 mile away. The 3.7V Li-ion battery fully recharges in less than 4 hours, provides light for 6 to 10 hours (depending on the selected flash pattern) and retains its charge for at least 90 days while stored in your trunk or emergency kit. The flare is crashproof, waterproof (down to 33 feet), buoyant and has a hefty magnet that allows it to attach to any metal surface without scratching the painted finish. The single pack includes a storage bag, 120V wall charger, 12V vehicle charger and a charging hub. $32.90. www.pegasuslighting.com.

Audi Robotic Telepresence

Hoffman Audi of East Hartford has a brand new, state-of-the-art robot—one of only about 40 in the entire country. With this new technology, Hoffman Audi technicians will be able to quickly diagnose and troubleshoot repair issues using a one-on-one virtual link that connects them to the expert technicians at Audi of America.

Called ART (Audi Robotic Telepresence), this innovative technology is the first of its kind in the region and also among automakers. Using this telepresence, expert technicians at Audi of America can virtually stand right next to our own technicians, helping them to inspect and service vehicles as if they were right in East Hartford.

The system is remotely controlled and displays the operator’s face on a screen while it agilely moves around a vehicle. Using the attached borescope and handheld camera, the operator can even inspect engine components and other difficult-to-reach parts of the vehicle while discussing the situation with the local service technician.

“ART was designed with both Audi technicians and consumers in mind,” said Brian Stockton, General Manager, Technical Support, Audi of America. “The device will give local service technicians valuable one-on-one interaction with their counterparts at Audi of America, which will not only benefit the speed and depth of service at the dealer level, but create an improved ownership experience for the customer in general.”

The ART system concept was developed by the Audi Technical Support team in conjunction with VGo Communications, Inc., a provider of robotic telepresence solutions for healthcare, education, and the workplace. The ART user interface system, including the screen, handheld camera, and borescope, is unique to Audi specifications for optimal dealership technical use. ART represents the first step in Audi dealership telepresence. The Audi Technical Support team and VGo Communications are researching new tools and accessories to further improve ART’s capabilities.

To see ART in action, go to http://bit.ly/1Ev80gB.

Odyssey

Getting there is all the fun.

Hoffman Honda
Route 44, Avon/Canton Line
800.225.7266 / hoffmanhonda.com

Hoffman Nissan
Route 44, Avon/Canton Line
800.225.7266 / hoffmannissan.com
There are so many unsung heroes volunteering in Connecticut’s non-profit organizations. We bring you eight of the most dedicated.

Lisa Kociubinski uses her flute to make a connection with Alzheimer’s patients. Her own grandmother was one. “Eventually, she didn’t recognize me, but she could recognize some of the tunes she sang to me as a child. Music created a connection through the tangles and plaques of the disease.”

Kociubinski is the team captain of the aptly named Team Harmony for the Walk to End Alzheimer’s. This is her fourth year walking. In early September, she was organizing a fundraiser at Curves in West Hartford. “We have a purple raffle so everyone brings in purple items and all that money goes to the association.” The walk this year was on September 21. “The whole event is a celebration of fundraising and meeting people who have the disease, meeting caregivers and just raising awareness,” she says. “The number of people who are becoming more aware and more involved is amazing. Alzheimer’s disease affects everyone. No one ever asked me how my grandmother’s journey with Alzheimer’s affected me, and I try to remember it’s not just the person living with the disease; everyone has to keep making changes as the disease progresses.”

In addition to her volunteer job, Kociubinski is program coordinator at the Alzheimer’s Association for those with early-stage dementia, and she also works at the Mark Twain House. She says, “It’s been amazing to see how music can help people that have dementia. They can’t remember what they had for breakfast but if you start singing a song they can remember the lyrics or the memory. It might be as simple as their eyes lighting up or tapping their feet to the beat of the music.”

Rob Dexter of West Hartford is a Connecticut ambassador for the East Coast Greenway. What’s the East Coast Greenway, you may ask, and what does an ambassador do? Dexter is the state’s biggest booster for the Greenway, which aims to connect the northern tip of Maine with Key West, Florida in a 3,000-mile continuous ribbon of on- and off-road cycling options. REI, the outdoor gear and clothing store, sponsored a program a few years ago for people to promote the trails. “I’m still involved in promoting it and still trying to get more pieces of the trail built,” he says. “One of my goals is to get all the pieces of the East Coast Greenway signed in Connecticut.”

That directs cyclists how to follow the Greenway from town to town. “About 30 percent in the state is designated, signed and off-road,” he says. He participates in an annual week-long ride along a different part of the East Coast Greenway with a group of other advocates. “We have a 9-year plan to do all 3,000 miles. We started in Canada and are in our fourth year now. We’re doing Philly to Frederickburg, Virginia, this year. Some mayors will greet us when we reach their town, or the local trail advocates will come and we’ll have a little celebration of the trail continuing.”

“I love cycling for the exhilaration; testing your physical limits makes it a real pleasure,” he says, “and I like going somewhere and seeing new things at bike speed, and making friends.”

Yogi Didonato is such a fixture at the Connecticut Children’s Medical Center that everyone just calls him Yogi and no one seems to know his last name. He’s been volunteering since 1979—35 years—and will proudly tell anyone who asks, “I’m the only volunteer at the hospital with 15,000 hours. I check in with the kids; I check in with the parents. I love everybody and they love me.”

Deborah Sheridan, a paid Visitor Access Associate at the hospital, agrees. “Everybody loves Yogi. He finds wheelchairs for people; he gives directions; he takes people where they need to go if they don’t know how to get there; he organizes the lanyards and stock; he checks the mail; he goes and visits the kids. He has a stash of toys in the bottom of his drawer that he gives out to kids. He’s been there forever. He does stand-up comedy, and it’s great to talk to him because you learn so much about history, especially about the Yankees. He’s 83. He takes the bus down here and goes to work. He has breakfast at 6:30 every day, reads his newspaper and is on his way again. Everybody chats with him,” Sheridan adds, “from the CEO to the youngest patient. I had a woman come in last night who asked if Yogi was still here. It was his birthday, so she wrote him a note that said, ‘I came in as a child and the only one I remember is you. Happy birthday!’”
... unsung heroes who volunteer in all kinds of non-profits...

Sarah Raskin

Traumatic brain injury, or TBI, has been in the news a lot in recent years because so many returning veterans from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been diagnosed with it. But before it was famous, SARAH RASKIN was working on it. She’s a professor at Trinity College in the Departments of Psychiatry and Neuroscience, and a 20-year volunteer with the Brain Injury Association of Connecticut. Her research focuses on TBI and rehab techniques, as a way of helping people who have brain injury. She says she first got interested in studying the brain because she thought it was “fascinating.” So she went to law school in order to work with volunteer in one of their support groups.

“That’s when I got the idea of going into this field. It made me realize how important brains are and how they impact every aspect of who we are. I’ve been reaching out to people who have brain injuries because they’re the ones who can tell me what’s important and what areas of research we should be doing.”

Raskin has been running a support group for BIAs for 15 years. “You always have all these wonderful people who want to keep living in a community: it’s hard to say. I don’t know of any community service that would help.” She says she loves that the association makes it easy to volunteer, and to bring her Trinity students to volunteer.

KEVIN ADAMS made so much enthusiasm just talking about ‘The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp’ in Ashford. Conn., that it’s easy to imagine the enthusiasm he brings to his volunteer job as counselor there. “I went to camp as a kid and in high school and college. I was a camp counselor during summers,” he says, “and always saw the benefit of a camp for kids. I always admired what Paul Newman did when he started ‘The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp.’ But he never acted on it until he saw an interview with Newman that was replayed on the day he died in 2008.

When the interviewer asked Newman what the average person could do, he responded, “Participate.” So, Adams, said, “at that moment I got on the website and found volunteer opportunities.”

The camp serves children with life-threatening illnesses. Adams volunteers for a weekly session in the summer, and tries to do a couple of workdays in the spring and fall. “Every couple of months, if I can touch camp it keeps everything in perspective and keeps me feeling good.”

“When you’re sick your life just revolves around your illness, and you can’t participate like other kids. At camp every kid gets a chance to participate in every single activity, so they feel like they fit in, where they are part of a gang. We’re all equals here; it’s a ‘hurricane’ based on the movie ‘Beast Candy’ and ‘Sundae Kids’ where Newman played the outlaw ‘Candy’.”

For LEIGH PECCHILO, involvement with the American Heart Association is a family affair. She, her husband, and their three-year-old daughter began volunteering in 2007, after her son had open heart surgery at the age of nine months to correct two congenital heart defects. Then her father had quadruple-bypass surgery. She says her son and her father inspired her first Hartford Heart Walk.

“We just continued our dedication to the Heart Association because we knew the money that had been donated in the past created the technology that saved my son and my father. We wanted to put it forward.” Over her kids were in school, Pecchillo started getting the students at Hatton Elementary involved in Jump Rope for Heart. “There’s one week when the kids jump for their physical education class. They raise money to help other children with heart disease. I think over the past five years we’ve raised $22,000 in our school.”

The latest chapter in her family’s heart story is that on Mother’s Day this year Pecchillo had a massive heart attack. “I had shortness of breath the night before and then in the morning I had really bad heartburn. The doctor told me to take an aspirin and if it didn’t get better to go to the E.R., but I collapsed first at home. My husband performed CPR while my daughter called 911. I went to the local hospital and was admitted to Hartford Hospital where they found a 70 percent blockage in my left anterior descending artery. That’s the one called the ‘window maker’ because of how often a blockage there is fatal.

Pecchillo says she’s recovering well. “I would not have been able to do all that research that’s funded by the money that’s been raised over the years. It’s the only way to thank the people who came before us.”

Then I got involved at other levels. In 1971, I became a coach for the International Games.” Eventually, she became that organization’s director for the state Summer Games for cycling. “I have about 40 people working with me on a committee who get all the nuts and bolts, build the course, officiate, do the timing, and then we have walk-in volunteers who come to do inspections of the bicycles. It’s a lot to juggle, and on top of that Kalenauskas still coaches a cycling team at the Training School, even though she retired five years ago. Some team members are on two-wheelers and some are on adult trikes.

She says about 180 cyclists participate in the Connecticut Summer Games, which includes about 35 community members who ride with the athletes as two-person teams. They ride all the distances from 500 meters up to 15 kilometers (9.3 miles).

Kalenauskas got on the organizing committee for cycling for the World Summer Games held in New York in 1991, which brought thousands of athletes, volunteers and spectators from all over the world to the city in 1991. “If we recruited a bunch of people for that still volunteer,” she says proudly.

She was hooked and has since volunteered for the World Summer Games in Greece in 2011; and we’ve already registered to volunteer next year in Los Angeles.” (They’re held every four years, just like the better-known Summer and Winter Olympic Games.)

She says the best thing about volunteering for Special Olympics is the people she’s met, “A lot of people who volunteer just superb people. They’re in it to do a really good job for the athletes. They give a lot of themselves. I’ve made a lot of really wonderful friends,” she says, adding, “I love dealing with the athletes—they are all just wonderful people.”

JOHN HUMPHRIES is the mostly volunteer convenor/organizer of the Connecticut Roundtable on Climate and Jobs, which is an innovative partnership between the Interfaith EcoJustice Network and the Connecticut AFL-CIO. The seed was planted in March 2012 when Humphries organized the meeting for some religious and other climate activists with John Olens, former long-time president of the Connecticut AFL-CIO. That was followed by a bishop that attracted about 45 labor, religious and environmental folks for an initial conversation about climate change and jobs. People agreed to keep meeting to see what collaborations might look like. “There was an explicit understanding at the beginning that these groups would not agree on everything,” says Humphries, “but we had faith that there’s sufficient common ground that we find areas that we could work on together.

As a long-time community organizer, he says, “Over the last three or four years I’ve felt called-on to be more focused and more engaged in working on climate change, as the evidence of the seriousness of the crisis continues to emerge upon us.”

He says one example of when they all worked together was support for local renewable energy. The primary area of difference is on expansion of natural gas in the state. “In June 2013 we organized a forum on natural gas, the goal being not unity but information sharing and building relationships and enhancing understanding.”

The Roundtable also organized support for the People’s Climate March, a massive outpouring of diverse constituencies demanding action on climate change that took place in New York City in September 2014. “We got 14 unions and labor groups to endorse it, including the Connecticut AFL-CIO, which was the first and perhaps the only state affiliate in the country to endorse the march. H

Karen Kalenauskas

KAREN KALENAUSKAS of Watertown spent her career at Southbury Training School, working with residents with disabilities. “I spent most of it in recreation,” she says, “where part of the services included a Special Olympics program.

Kevin Adams

Leigh Pecchillo

www.hoffmanauto.com

www.hoffmanauto.com
24 Questions for Connecticut’s Sweetheart, Erin Brady

By Ellis Parker

Photography by Nick Caito

After placing First Runner-Up in 2012, East Hampton native Erin Brady won the title of Miss Connecticut USA 2013. She subsequently went on to be crowned Miss USA in 2013, a Nutmeg State first, and then represented America well at Miss Universe 2013, placing in the Top 10. Brady is a 2010 Central Connecticut State University graduate with a major in Finance and a minor in Criminal Justice. She works at Prudential retirement in Hartford.

1. What was life like the year after being crowned Miss Connecticut USA? Life was great. It was an amazing year full of ups and downs, travel, meeting new people and living in New York, the most amazing city in the U.S. I loved having the support of the entire state and nation.

2. Was your pageant reign why Miss USA or appealed to Miss America? I actually researched Miss USA on a friend’s recommendation and loved its message about empowering women. I did have dancing talent, but I loved the opportunity to showcase my personality and stage presence. I’m glad I chose Miss USA because it’s an amazing organization and the girls who come from it are very special.

3. What part of the pageant process do you feel validates you? I enjoyed meeting the people I was able to meet. I liked showing a different side of pageant winners to people who weren’t pageant fans and assumed a) we’re stupid and b) we have nothing to contribute.

4. What was your least favorite part? It’s hard having someone else tell you what to do every day for an entire year. Having someone wake you up and tell you your schedule.

5. What did you feel was your greatest area of strength? I’m a realist, so even though Miss Venezuela won two pageants in a row, if you have some of that I did beat a few people say that it wasn’t intentional—I was very fit when I went and lost weight during a week of competitions.

6. If you knew the mother to a daughter, would you encourage her to compete in pageants? Yes, if she came to me and said I want to do this. And if she came to me and said it’s not for me, that would be okay too.

7. What would you advise a national pageant winner with the international competition ahead of her? The fitness is obtainable in a heartbeat. The keys is never to change who you are. Competing at the international level against 75 of the world’s most beautiful women, you can’t second guess yourself. Know that you won and you’re there for a reason.

8. You were obviously one of the hotter candidates, with even a few people excluding ‘She’s not thin.’ Did you have some of that? I did beat a few people say that. It wasn’t intentional—I was very fit when I went and lost weight during a week of competitions.

9. What was your biggest fear? You would encourage her to compete in pageants? Yes, if she came to me and said I want to do this. And if she came to me and said it’s not for me, that would be okay too.

10. What would you advise a national pageant winner with the international competition ahead of her? The fitness is obtainable in a heartbeat. The keys is never to change who you are. Competing at the international level against 75 of the world’s most beautiful women, you can’t second guess yourself. Know that you won and you’re there for a reason.

11. You won Miss Connecticut USA on your second attempt—is persistence one of your most important traits? Yes, not just in pageants but in life in general. Growing up the oldest of three daughters when my parents separated, it was important for me to be the mom of the group and to excell in school, get a job, get an apartment and be able to pay my bills. Some things take a 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th or 5th try. When your heart’s in it, you can overcome all obstacles.

12. Are the days of men being intimidated by beautiful, smart, successful, outspoken women over? I still think it can be an issue, but it always get by it by breaking the ice. Honestly, not all such women are kind and some will pay no attention to someone they’re not interested in.

13. You had to postpone your wedding plans due to your pageant responsibilities—where do they stand now? They’re in full bloom. I’m getting married on December 13 this year as Prospekt.

14. Tell us about your fiancé? His name is Tony Capasso, he’s a Connecticut native and I met him almost five years ago. We started hanging out and never stopped. He works in his dad’s construction company in Middletown. Winning Miss USA was a testament to our relationship and only brought us closer together.

15. Do you plan on keeping your name? I’m going to keep my birth name for business use, but I’ll change it legally to Erin Capasso.

16. Speaking of your name, no relation to James or Tom or Wayne or obviously Marcia, I presume? Is there anyone famous...but I’ve learned you never know what’s going to happen. What’s meant to be is meant to be. Just enjoy the moment.

17. What in your background has made you want to be an advocate for children of alcoholics? I grew up in a household surrounded by addiction and have always wanted to work with others because I know how it impacted me and my sisters.

18. Do you approach life from a religious or secular perspective? My fiancé and I are both Catholic. I’m religious but I don’t go to church every Sunday. It’s important in my life to have a little spirituality.

19. How do you feel about the term “feminist,” which seems to have gotten a bad rap lately? I don’t think being a feminist is necessarily a bad thing. Being able to be a powerful and strong woman is a good thing. I work in support of girls in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) so Connecticut Women can be doctors or CEOs or CFOs or sometechniques designers.

20. Connecticut’s economy may be struggling, but our actors, singers, athletes, and pageant winners have been representing the state extremely well. How much was Connecticut as opposed to personal pride a motivating factor? I have great pride in my home state, and the support I get was unbelievable. I was invited to ceremonies, met the governor, received the keys to cities, saw old teachers and professors, and was invited to speak at Central Connecticut. People stopped me at the grocery store. The transition back to real life hasn’t been the easiest.

21. Do you find it hard to live up to people’s expectations of a beauty queen all the time? I do. It may easy to relax and just be yourself? I stayed pretty grounded throughout the entire experience, but I feel a bit more relaxed now.

22. How do you put stress in your life in 10 years? I would like to live in Fairfield County so I’m a little closer to the City. I’m low maintenance. I don’t need a large house, but I should have a nice backyard. I would like three children, a French bulldog and a saltwater aquarium.

23. Do you think you’ll like to have people with? I’m the biggest planner, but I’ve learned you never know what’s going to happen. Who’s meant to be to me is meant to be. Just enjoy the moment.

24. What do you think about the term “feminism,” which seems to have gotten a bad rap lately? I don’t think being a feminist is necessarily a bad thing. Being able to be a powerful and strong woman is a good thing. I work in support of girls in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) so Connecticut Women can be doctors or CEOs or CFOs or sometechniques designers.
Names to conjure with—what do all these acts have in common?

Hoffman Decades

MARIAN ANDERSON WITH WILLIAM H. MORTENSEN

“Without Love”

The Bushnell was not studded by world premieres or unique presentations. Instead, the theater has prided itself on the diversity of its programming. Consider this gear-bag of shows from the 1962–1963 season: the Gallic charm of Maurice Chevalier; the opera.kind, Madame Butterfly; and the Orson Welles production of Shakespeare’s Othello, which co-starred Jose Ferrer and Uta Hagen. When June Hendrix played the Bushnell on Aug. 24, 1969, Henry McNulty wrote in the Hartford Courant that the famously flashy guitarist “bore a marked resemblance to a witch. For one thing, he is thin—pencil-thin—and he was dressed in black with silk calls a foot around. For another, he walks like a witch.”

The Bushnell has hosted many famous stars besides that one. Marilyn Brando played the title role in the 1946 tour of the legendary Katherine Cornell, Helen Hayes played Vistoria Regina in Laurence Olivier’s production of the same name in 1937, a year of royalty which also brought Maurice Evans as King Richard II and the Orson Welles production of John Gielgud’s Bela Lugosi played Dracula at the Bushnell in 1941—10 years after the release of the classic film version, and 14 after he’d first played the role on Broadway.

Of course, this being a Connecticut theater, there are Katherine Hepburn stories. The Hartford-born actress’ notable reaction to seeing the Bushnell for the first time was “What a barn!” When Hepburn appeared there in 1942, in a tour of Philip Barry’s melodrama Without Love, she signed the wall of the electrician’s room—a longstanding Bushnell tradition—with annotation “local girl.”

As for musical concerts, everyone from Dizzy Gillespie to Weird Al Yankovic has played the Bushnell. The world-famous conductor Leonard Stokowski appeared at the Bushnell over 30 times. Classical music lovers and longtime Connecticut resident Victor Borge was another regular, playing the Bushnell (alongside the Hartford Symphony) as late as 1998, when he was 88. The two leading African-American vocalists of the first half of the 20th century, Paul Robeson and Marian Anderson, both sang at the Bushnell, with Robeson returning in 1944 in a production of Shakespeare’s Othello which co-starred Jose Ferrer and Uta Hagen. When June Hendrix played the Bushnell on Aug. 24, 1969, Henry McNulty wrote in the Hartford Courant that the famously flashy guitarist “bore a marked resemblance to a witch. For one thing, he is thin—pencil-thin—and he was dressed in black with silk calls a foot around. For another, he walks like a witch.”

Scotland’s Black Watch brought their bagpipes and Tartan kilts to the Bushnell in 1979. Reonna Reynolds says the Bushnell was one of the first theaters in the country to host a troupe of Chinese acrobats, following the end of the Chinese Cultural Revolution. As a lecture hall, the Bushnell hosted talks by North Pole explorer Admiral Richard Byrd and the great British writer G.K. Chesterton.

It’s remarkable, then, in this current era of pinched budgets, competition with online streaming and other obstacles, the Bushnell continues to live up to its original 1930 mission and offer a wide variety of inspirational, uplifting and thought-provoking cultural events. There are still high-end, nationally touring theater shows, including the latest Broadway musicals. There are still lectures, including talks by bestselling authors and slide shows from world travelers. There are still classical concerts. There are dance companies, circus theater troupes, magic acts. In recent years, there’s been a rise in staged versions of reality-based TV shows such as Mythbusters, and stand-up performances by articulate humorists who make up names on cable TV, like John Hodgman. The addition of the smaller, though still impressively spacious, 907-seat Belding Theater (named after the indefatigable Hartford arts patrons Maxwells and Ruth Belding) in 2001 has allowed the Bushnell to book acts which couldn’t fill the vast main 2,800-seat Mortensen Hall (named for the philanthropist William H. Mortensen, who was a State Senator from 1941 to 1943 and Mayor of Hartford from 1943 to 1945).

One way that the Bushnell has assured that it will continue to offer such breadth and cultural variety is by supporting other local arts institutions, bringing some of them on board as Bushnell “resident companies.” The Connecticut Forum, which brings an array of famous people to the Bushnell stage to discuss pressing issues of our time, is one of those residencies. (One of Connecticut Forum’s residencies. (One of Connecticut Forum’s residencies.)
HoFFmAN DEcADEs

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That “strategic collaboration” allows the presenter but a co-manager of the orchestra. When the Bushnell legally became not just a presenter but an owner and Executive Director of the Missouri-based Dance St. Louis.

In the case of Showcase, the Bushnell has exercised a level of control which only dream of. Since, as Reynolds puts it, “the health of Broadway at a paramount importance to us,” the theater became a member of the Broadway production company Elephant Eye Theatrical, which created the long-running hit Thé Addams Family. Even before Elephant Eye, the Bushnell was producing its own Broadway-styled shows, including a series of concert versions of classic musicals featuring established Broadway stars. Recent national and international productions which the Bushnell has presented have included a revival of Thé Most Misérable (starring Shirley Jones from the show’s movie version) and a stage version of the Gene Kelly/Candace Brown film An American in Paris. Meanwhile, on the local level, the Bushnell has been attentive to the needs of Hartford, the state of Connecticut and the New England arts region, determining what Reynolds deems “a very multidimensional arts resource.”

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River Dining—25 Restaurants Where the Food Matches the View

Connecticut is blessed with numerous scenic rivers and streams. The major water courses tend to flow north to south, following the path of least resistance between Connecticut’s gradually scooped out tributary wells, while lesser tributaries are more likely to take an easterly or westerly direction. How many people realize that the Connecticut River, which begins at 2,670 feet of elevation in Pittsfield, New Hampshire, a quarter of a mile south of the Canadian border, drains portions of five states plus Quebec? Or that at 410 miles, the Connecticut River is 95 miles longer than the mighty Hudson River and has only a 20% five states plus Quebec? Or that at 410 miles, the Connecticut River is 95 miles longer than the mighty Hudson River and has only a 20% five states plus Quebec? Or that at 410 miles, the Connecticut River is 95 miles longer than the mighty Hudson River and has only a 20% five states plus Quebec? Or that at 410 miles, the Connecticut River is 95 miles longer than the mighty Hudson River and has only a 20%

Our state’s waterways can be shallow and swift, or deep and slow. Moving slow can be expected where our rivers and streams have reached the tidal influences of Long Island Sound or been dammed, whether due to development during the Industrial Revolution, efforts at flood control or even the occasional industrial bearer. Since our rivers and streams produce some of Connecticut’s prettiest scenery, it’s only natural that a number of restaurants will try to take advantage of the barrier setting. Unfortunately, there are many that coast on these views and provide mediocre dining experiences, leading us to include only year-round restaurants with 3 or more stars from Yelp (not that is gospel) and a good connection to the water. Here are 25 restaurants where you may find that the food matches the view:

1. Adrienne’s
2. Apricot’s Restaurant & Pub
3. Baingan India Cuisine
4. Black Duck Café
5. Blackstone’s Grill
6. Bill’s Seafood
7. Blacksmith’s Mill
8. Blackwater Cruises
9. Blackwell’s
10. Blackened Oyster
11. Blackdog’s
12. Blackwood’s
13. Blackwood’s
14. Blackwater’s
15. Blackwater Grill
16. Blackwater Grill
17. Blackwater Grill
18. Blackwater Grill
20. Blackwater Grill
21. Blackwater Grill
22. Blackwater Grill
23. Blackwater Grill
24. Blackwater Grill
25. Blackwater Grill

Dining

203-557-9375; arezzowestport.com

On The Waterfront, 250 Poynt Ave., New London
860-444-2800; waterforntwaterfront.com

Unlike in the Marlin-Brooks-acted and Elia-Kasan-directed movie of the same name, you don’t have to take on a crime syndicate to enjoy a great dining experience at this restaurant. On The Waterfront boasts lovely views of the Thames River and a creative Italian menu with sea and seafaring lore. Cover us!

Paul’s Pasta Shop, 223 Thames St., Groton
860-445-5276; paulspastashop.com

On the far bank of the Thames and further upriver is Paul’s Pasta Shop, owned by husband-and-wife culinary school graduates Paul D. Dorothy Fulgosi since 1989. Their many loyal customers enjoy formidable portions of fresh homemade pastas finished with homemade sauces, many of which may be available for carryout or retail purchase. And the covered deck has amazing views of the water.

Red 36, 2 Washington St., Mystic
860-536-6004; red36ct.com

This is the latest restaurant by Carol Kauth, who also owns near Branford and Asa with two in Groton. Red 36 has a nautical-centric menu that will still have most patrons and all but its appetizers options for vegetarians and non-smokers. It’s spacious and benefits from great views of Mystic River from its Seaport Marine location.

Restaurant at Rowayton Seafood, 89 Rowayton Ave., Rowayton
203-866-4488; rowaytonseafood.com

Included are a number of restaurants one could visit by kayak—the ones we actually like. Pivoted on the east bank of the Four Mile River, the Restaurant...
Introducing the new face of Lexus. Where invigorating handling, next-generation technology and unforgettable styling combine to provide an experience that just doesn’t raise the bar, it sets a new one altogether.
Excitement is building in anticipation of the release of two new Lexus models, expected soon in the Hoffman showroom. However, you may previously have pigeonholed this premium brand in your mind—but if Lexus were just focused on looks, comfort and amenities, you may be prepared for something—or two somethings—different. The first is the Lexus NX, representing the carmaker’s first venture into the crossover market. The second is the Lexus RC F coupe, the most powerful V8 performance car ever developed by this manufacturer.

Let’s take a closer look. Drumroll, please!

The Lexus NX

The NX represents Lexus’ effort to tap into the young, urban, luxury-driving market. Lexus certainly appears to have done its homework. This crossover has aggressive good looks that communicate power and agility not usually found in SUVs. In the front, bold design elements include flares that meld with the spindle grille and eagle-eyed LED headlamps and daytime running lamps. In the rear, the NX’s contours and Lexus’ signature L-shape combination lamps echo the spindle design in front. From the side, the body is diamond-shaped and arches and 17- or 18-inch wheels, these features give the feeling of a crouching beast ready to spring into action.

Amenities are plentiful. The console, for instance, is enhanced by the Advanced Human Machine Interface, which takes ergonomics and intuitive user interface to another level, to answer you.

The Lexus RC Coupe

Clearly positioned to make big waves is the new Lexus RC F Coupe, which is equipped with an attention-getting 5.0-liter engine capable of producing well over 467 hp, 389 lb-ft of torque, 0 to 60 mph in 4.5 seconds and a top speed of 168 mph. It will be the most powerful car ever unleashed from the Lexus stable. Not surprisingly, some have termed the Lexus RC F a “halo model,” namely, one designed to cast a warm glow over the entire product line.

Building in the warmest glow from this halo effect should be the new Lexus RX, which will start at $42,790 (excluding destination charge). But what a car it is in its own right, with a dual-injection, 3.5-liter V6 engine capable of generating 318 hp at 6,400 rpm and peak torque of 280 lb-ft at 4,800 rpm. Engine sound has been tuned “to ensure it delivers a stirring exhaust note under spirited driving conditions.” The RC should raise Lexus’ profile, broadening its audience and helping the driver maintain a suitable separation.

Put it all together—looks, comfort, amenities, power, handling and safety—and the new NX crossover, which will start at $34,480 (excluding destination charge), is clearly positioned to make big waves with young, urban, luxury drivers.
Touring Fall Foliage in Fashion

By Chloe Davis  Photography by Nick Caito

It’s a beautiful day for a drive! Gather up your favorite traveling companion and hit the road. Our state may be small but it sure is beautiful. Pick a direction and step on the gas!

Each county so different in look and offerings... Lots to learn and explore while enjoying a nice old-fashioned Sunday drive. No fretting if you haven’t a plan—often, it’s more fun if you don’t! Your GPS can get you back home.

Get the convertible out of the garage and head east towards the “Quiet Corner.” There are antique stores galore and pretty little inns. Taking the kids along? Load up your trusted SUV with snacks and play some old-fashioned games. Friendly competition pits the front seats against the back seats. Who sees the first sign that reads “Scenic View”? Meander down Route 9 along the river bed and stop at some historic attractions. Flip the coins for north or south as you hit Interstate 95 or head to your favorite beach town on our own piece of Long Island Sound. The crowds will be gone and the restaurants and parks will welcome your brood.

Looking for bucolic scenery and lush fall colors? If so, Litchfield County is your destination. From strolling around the picturesque towns to crossing the Cornwall Bridge, the vibe feels as if you are relaxing on a long weekend. Treat yourself to the best ice cream around at Arethusa Dairy Farm in Bantam. Beautiful day... beautiful vehicles... beautiful clothing. You will look sharp and travel comfortably in these fabulous fall outfits, all available locally.

A sophisticated autumn afternoon picnic is perfect after a relaxing drive. Mallory is wrapped in luxurious cashmere from Kinross, coat ($795), scarf ($205). Her fitted blouse by Walter Vouaz ($224) and Red Engine jeans ($170) are tucked into the latest Italian boot from Florentine & Baker ($520). Crossbody bag ($295). All can be found at Coco Lily on Route 44 in Avon.

Andrei is oh so comfortable in his Coppley garnet sports jacket ($695) over a Lipson sport shirt ($225). His indigo plaid 34 Heritage jeans ($198) go along for the ride! All from Daswani Clothiers in West Hartford Center.

Stay dry and spread out on a 100% virgin wool motor robe ($110) from Spin Monograms & Gifts in Blue Back Square to keep you warm. Mallory sports a leather moto jacket ($550) over a white silk blouse from Trina Turk ($180). Cool zip leggings ($210). Frye boots ($350) with a rockin’ quilted bag finish her outfit, all from Kimberly Boutique in West Hartford Center. Andrei sports a Coppley Santa Fe cognac microfiber blazer ($695) over a Lipson sport shirt ($225). His indigo plaid 34 Heritage jeans ($198) go along for the ride! All from Daswani Clothiers in West Hartford Center.

So very chic yet comfortable. Mallory’s olive green quilted vest ($249) and black jumo turtleneck ($135) from Germany top off fabulous alpaca pants from A Woman ($170), A French Linen Designs Cardigan ($540), Necklace by Sibilla Styles ($250).

Andrei is ready to roll in a green sweater ($265) and shirt ($198), both by Robert Talbott. His slacks are by Agave ($218). Both models totally outfitted by Stackpole Moore Troyes Tuesdays in Hartford.

Credits: Make-up by Shari Phillips, Per Se Aveda Salonspa in Blue Back Square
Apples and pie from The Pickin’ Patch in Avon

Touring Fall Foliage in Fashion
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FASHION

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Stay dry and spread out on a 100% virgin wool motor robe ($110) from Spin Monograms & Gifts in Blue Back Square to keep you warm.
Foodshare: Feeding Connecticut’s Hungry & Challenging Us All to Do More

By Rebecca Cretella

Here’s some food for thought: what if you had no idea where your next meal was going to come from? Or the one after that? Or the one after after that?

I’m not talking about missing your weekly run to the local supermarket or forgetting to take the chicken out of the freezer for dinner. I’m talking about not having the money or the means to feed yourself or your family.

For one out of every seven Connecticut residents—including one out of every five children—hunger is a very real daily struggle. Considering it’s one of the nation’s wealthiest, the Nutmeg state has a surprisingly large population of people who lack the wherewithal to feed themselves.

Hunger has many faces here; it includes retired people, working families, and laid-off executives. It includes residents of the wealthiest and poorest towns alike. In working families, and laid-off executives. It includes retired people, laid-off executives, and working families. Hunger has many faces here: it includes working families, laid-off executives, and retired people.

Cherrington says the initial results of the Freshplace program have been highly encouraging. “Researchers at the University of Connecticut found that the program cut participants’ food insecurity in half and that their level of self-sufficiency was three times higher than a control group that didn’t have access to these services.” Cherrington says Foodshare’s next goal is to apply the lessons learned from Freshplace to the 300 food pantries, soup kitchens, and other partner programs they work with.

On the food banking end of the operation, Foodshare secures and distributes donated items from the food industry to food pantries, community kitchens, shelters, and other programs serving those in need. It also delivers fresh fruits and vegetables directly to low-income neighborhoods through its Mobile Foodshare program.

In 2013, Foodshare donated enough food for 12 million meals—a truly commendable feat. And this past August, the Connecticut Health and Education Facilities Authority (CHEFA) awarded them a $75,000 grant, which will enable the organization to provide an additional 275,000 meals to help hungry families in Greater Hartford. Although the additional funds are an incredible help, Foodshare needs a lot more in order to feed all the hungry mouths.

All to Do More

Foodshare strives not only to supply food to local service bodies, but also to build self-sufficiency and reduce the need for food through programs like Freshplace (a food pantry that includes a full-time case manager who works with clients to help them set and achieve goals) and Bridges Out of Poverty/Getting Ahead (a program that helps participants understand class differences, assess their own circumstances, and set and achieve goals that will move them from poverty to middle class status). The ultimate goal of programs like these is to help hungry individuals identify their goals and then give them resources and support to achieve them.

So how does the organization, whose mission is to create a hunger-free community, combat this intransigent problem? Foodshare’s approach is three-pronged:

1. Increase people’s ability to purchase their own food
2. Increase the efficiency and use of Federal Nutrition Programs
3. Maximize food donations and the efficiency of the emergency system

Foodshare is working hard to raise $8.5 million by next spring to expand their programs and tackle the problem of hunger once and for all.

September was Hunger Action Month, a movement Foodshare promoted heavily on its website via the “Turn Orange” campaign.

Foodshare is also taking a big bite out of the hunger plight with several planned events, like its annual Turkey and Thirty campaign, Empty Bowls event, HOG Run, the Jack Bannan Turkey Trot in Farmington Valley, and Turkey Tuesday.

Clearly Foodshare has a lot on its plate! But it still needs our help. There’s strength in numbers, fellow Nutmeggers. Hoffman Auto Group supports the battle to end hunger and we hope you will, too.

Want to know how you can make the biggest difference? Visit the Join the Movement page on the Foodshare website and submit your contact information. Someone from Foodshare will be in touch with a list of opportunities and ideas for how you can get involved.

And donate—believe it or not, a $30 donation is enough to feed a hungry person for a month. Let’s kick hunger’s you-know-what once and for all. Starting now!
Greater Hartford hosts a variety of special events throughout the year—from street festivals and art shows to major concerts and sporting events. Here is a sample of events that may be of interest to you.

November 15: Companion Pet Adoption Day
Hoffman Auto Group is proud to support Companion Pet Adoption Day. Our commitment to doing the right thing for animals, regardless of the cost or challenge, is one hundred percent of our capital campaign (construction at the Ashford sanctuary) and 99% of our operating costs (vet bills, pet food, various sanctuary and Program Center operational expenses, etc.) are made possible by the generosity of the community. There are few non-profit organizations, animal related or otherwise, whose ability to serve its constituents is so closely tied to the voluntary philanthropic support of the public. Over the past 11 years, so many have invested in our mission to always do the right thing for animals. We encourage you to get involved in the cause.
Valerie Friedman Program Center, 34 Sanrico Drive in Manchester.

November 21–23: “2014 Connecticut International Auto Show.” The Connecticut International Auto Show is the premier showcase of the newest model year import and domestic vehicles—cars, vans, crossovers, hybrids, light trucks and sport utility vehicles. Factory and dealer representatives from the car lines are on hand to answer your questions in a no-pressure environment at the Auto Show. There are cars to suit every budget and lifestyle, and it’s easy to compare prices and features, saving both time and money. So come sit in the cars, pop the hoods, inspect the trunks, kick the tires. The Connecticut International Auto Show is great entertainment for serious shoppers, car buffs and the entire family. Friday–Saturday, 10am–8pm; Sunday, 10am–5pm. Adults, $10; children (6–12), $5. Connecticut Convention Center, 100 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford; 800-251-1563; www.connautoshow.com.

November 28–December 30: “Winterfest and the Tunnel of Lights.” Start your own family tradition with a visit to the Trolley Museum during Winterfest. Dress warm and bring blankets so you can enjoy a trolley ride on the open “electric” sleigh like they did years ago. Join your motorman in singing traditional Christmas carols as you ride down the track. Inside the Visitors Center there are model trains, hundreds of decorations, and of course Santa will be here until December 21, with a gift for each child. Purchase a cup of warm cocoa, sit and enjoy the music, and enjoy the holidays the way they were meant to be enjoyed. Friday–Sunday, 5pm–9pm; Adults, $12; seniors $10, youth $8, children under 2, free. Connecticut Trolley Museum, 58 North Road, East Windsor; 860-627-6540; www.ct-trolley.org.
December 2—January 4. “Holiday Decorating.” The Holiday decorating committee is pleased to announce a splendid array of trees that will grace the Museum lobby and galleries. In cooperation with the exhibition Let Me Quit One Nice Day, the Museum Lobby will feature a 14-foot-tall Christmas tree decked out with handmade, quilt-themed ornaments. The second floor will feature a Homemade Tree decorated with handmade ornaments by artist and docent Lorena Evans. The Hudson River School Gallery will house a tree designed by Albert Bentzard’s 12 Peel. The Academic Gallery will house a tree inspired by Winslow Homer’s, Autumn Respite. Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, 11:30–4pm; Thursday, 1–4pm; Saturday, 9:30–4pm; Sunday, noon–4pm. Free with museum admission. The New Britain Museum of American Art, 59 Lyceum Street, New Britain; 860-229-0257, www.nbmaa.org.

December 4–7. “Harford Symphony Orchestra Masterworks Series: Mozart & Dvorák.” Celebrate musical inspiration, in our guest conductor’s piano concerto and concertos at the same time! William Edlin is music director of the Edmonston Symphony. Françaix’s Homenage à l’ami Papageno was written with excerpts from Mozart’s opera, Die Zauberflote which Mozart wrote the Piano Concerto in C Major especially for a gifted student. Dvorák’s Symphony No. 7 is a tribute to the perseverance of his Czech nation. Thursday, 7:30pm; Friday–Saturday, 8pm; Sunday, 3pm. Call for ticket information. Belding Theater, The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, 166 Capitol Avenue, Hartford; 860-244-2999, www.hartfordsymphony.org.

December 12–21. “The Nutcracker.” The Hartt School Community Division (HCD) will present the full-length classic directed for the third year by Artistic Director Samantha Dunster. The ballet features 100+ Hartt student dancers between the ages of 5 and 18 as well as guest artists. The HCD’s production of The Nutcracker is truly a Hartford community event, incorporating the talents of our young dancer artists, former members of the Hartford Ballet, Hartt School dance faculty and other members of the community. Friday–Saturday, 7:30pm; Sunday (Dec. 14), 2pm; Sunday (Dec. 21), 3pm. Ashlee $30, seniors and students $20, children 12 and under $15. Michael Anderson, University of Hartford, 300 Blossom Avenue, West Hartford; 860-768-4228; hcd.hartford.edu.

December 14. Mandell JCC’s Kick-Off Centennial Event. Celebrate 100 years with the Mandell JCC with an indoor family extravaganza, complete with delicious food, carnival games, street performers and entertainers, a community art project and more. It all culminates with an incredible indoor lightshow spectacular! Hours are 4:00–7:00pm. Purchase tickets in advance or at the door. Tickets in advance are $18 per person; free for children ages 12 and under (must be accompanied by an adult). At the door: $25 per person, free for children ages 12 and under (must be accompanied by an adult). For tickets call 860-236-4571 or visit mandelljcc.org.