

Hoffman DECADES

FALL/WINTER 2014

Connecticut's Sweetheart, Erin Brady, Miss USA 2013



Unsung Heroes
of Volunteerism
See page 8



85 Years of
The Bushnell
See page 14





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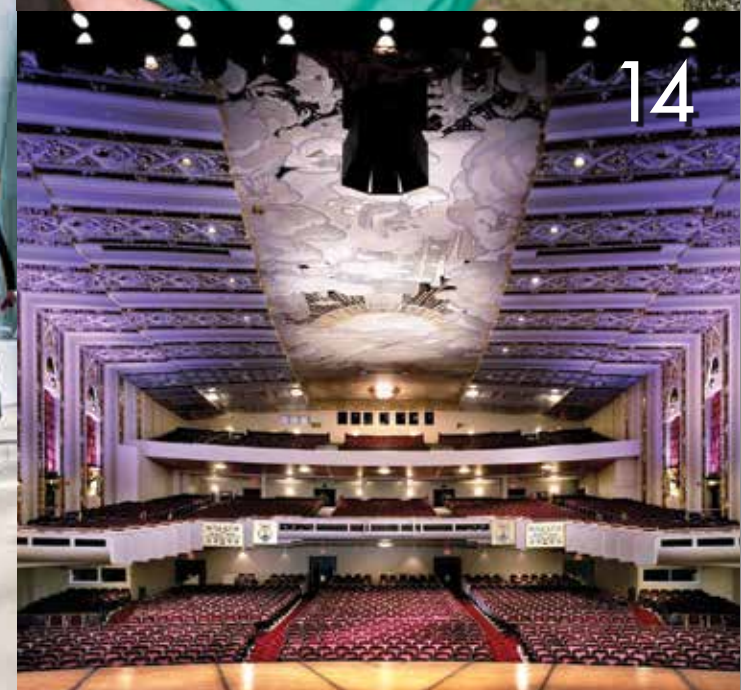
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On the cover: Erin Brady (Nick Caito photo).

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 close look at Foodshare and tells what you can do to make a difference, while writer Melinda Tuhus and photographer Nick Caito 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 effortlessly pretty is our talented creative director, Kate Dawes.)



PHOTO BY MICHAEL MUSTO

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We are the Best of Hartford.

Over 100 employees have been with the Hoffman Auto Group for at least 10 years; some for as many as 45 years!



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Hoffman Audi Sponsors CT Science Center Liquid Lounge

With a record crowd of over 2,600 attendees, the Connecticut Science Center held another of its famous Liquid Lounge events. Hoffman Audi, as presenting sponsor, featured the all-new 2015 Audi A3 for the nationwide Audi launch event. Held four times each year, the CT Science Center Liquid Lounge provides an exciting venue for attendees to enjoy the latest feature exhibit, various fun hands-on games, music, food and beverages. In April, the feature exhibit was Ancient Egypt and attendees were encouraged to wear their favorite Egyptian attire. Hoffman personnel raffled off several Audi Bluetooth speakers and had two beautiful new A3 vehicles on display for attendees to view up close. The CT Science Center offers a fantastic learning experience in a fun and engaging way to members. Take a look at what it has to offer at www.ctsciencecenter.org and plan to stop in soon.



Hoffman Employees Join Forces for Special Olympics!

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

Athletes participated in various events, ranging from track and field to swimming competitions. Friends and families joined together to cheer for the athletes and celebrate their many successes!

Words to live by that the Special Olympians hold true: "Let me win. But, if I may not win, let me be brave in my attempt."

Fidelco's 4th Annual Ride for Independence

Hoffman Auto Group sponsored Fidelco Guide Dog Foundation's 2014 Ride for Independence. The event celebrates the freedom and independence that Fidelco Guide Dogs bring to men and women who are blind across North America. Riders and their families met at Fidelco in Bloomfield. Attendees were treated to a K-9 demonstration, great southern rock music by Shovelhead, Creative Caricatures by Christopher Eastwood, and so much more. As usual, Fidelco had many of its guide dogs and puppies at the event bringing smiles to everyone. An emotional ceremony provided an Honor and Remember Flag to the Gilman family in honor of the sacrifice of their son, Army Sergeant Benjamin Gilman, who was killed on January 29, 2004 in Afghanistan. The family was presented the flag by Gregg Barratt, State Captain of the Connecticut Patriot Guard Riders, and Rob Hecker, State Director, Honor and Remember - Connecticut Chapter. Retired Air Force SSgt. Michael Malarsie and his "wingman," Fidelco Guide Dog, Xxon, joined the excitement for the day. Learn more about Michael and Xxon's story at www.fidelco.org and find ways you can get involved with the mission of Fidelco. *Riders preparing to depart from Fidelco Guide Dog Foundation Headquarters in Bloomfield, CT*



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 field dined on fantastic food at the Hartford Golf Club, competed for prizes and celebrated with the winners of this year's tournament.

There was an intense competition at the end of the day between the four "closest to the pin" players. At the 18th hole each of the four players had one shot for a hole-in-one and the opportunity to win a new Audi. It was close, but no cigar... well, except for the cigars enjoyed by various players at the conclusion of the day. There's always next year!

This year's Audi quattro Cup champions, Robert Baker and Chris Grieder, went on to represent Hoffman Audi at the National Tournament. They competed with other quattro Cup regional champions at Pebble Beach in California from August 21 through 24.

A heartfelt thank you to the staff at Hartford Golf Club and everyone who made the day a great success. We look forward to seeing you all again next year!

Pictured left to right: Jonathan T. Hoffman, Matthew S. Hoffman, I. Bradley Hoffman, Robert Baker, Chris Grieder, and Jeffrey S. Hoffman



Hoffman Porsche Takes Over Lime Rock Park Racetrack for Customer Event

Hoffman Porsche treated customers to a fun track day experience at Lime Rock Park on Friday, June 27. The more than 40 participants surprised many as they drove through towns from East Hartford to the track. It was quite the eye-catching sight to see so many Porsches driving down Route 44. The weather and the Lime Rock Park staff were top notch. The day was exciting and safe for all involved. Porsche enthusiasts had the opportunity to put their own Porsche to the test on a track as well as do some comparison shopping for their next purchase. One of our attendees had this 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 her next car. At yesterday's track experience at Lime Rock, I was able to pit the Boxster and Cayman side by side for performance, handling and comfort comparisons. Hands down the Boxster wins, but I wouldn't have been able to compare handling and performance on Rt. 2 vs. Lime Rock."

Paving the (Green) Way With Solar Energy

We're thrilled to announce that 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 installations will take place at Hoffman Honda and Hoffman Toyota in Simsbury, and Hoffman Porsche and Hoffman Used Car Superstore in East Hartford. The project will necessitate the installation of 1,137 panels across the 4 dealerships – an estimated solar output of 450,820 kWh per year. We also plan to install solar panels at our remaining dealership locations after the initial roll out phase.

The solar panels will provide the energy needed to run both campuses during operating hours, and will be fed back into the grids where they can be used within the community when the dealerships are closed. The anticipated environmental savings from this switch to green energy is equal to **65 homes per year, 540,984 lbs. of CO2 offset per year, and 9,660 trees saved per year!**

We're currently in the engineering and permitting phase; construction is slated for fall and we expect to be supplying solar energy by the end of the year. Upon completion, Hoffman intends to stream live solar monitoring on the TV's in its customer lounges to illustrate in real-time how much solar energy is being produced throughout each day (as well as over the lifetime of the project).

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.



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 Tumble Brook 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.

A very special thank you to our sponsors. Our sincere appreciation to Tumblebrook Country Club staff, the golfers and all of the volunteers.



DETAILS

By Robert Bailin



Slime Safety Spair

The Slime Safety Spair is an emergency tire repair kit that is easily stowed 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 seeks out and repairs punctures up to 1/4", 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

The 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 crushproof, 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>.



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Unsung Heroes of Volunteerism

By Melinda Tuhus

Photography by Nick Caito

There are so many unsung heroes volunteering in Connecticut's non-profit organizations. We bring you eight of the most dedicated.



Lisa Kociubinski

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, it's everyone because 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.

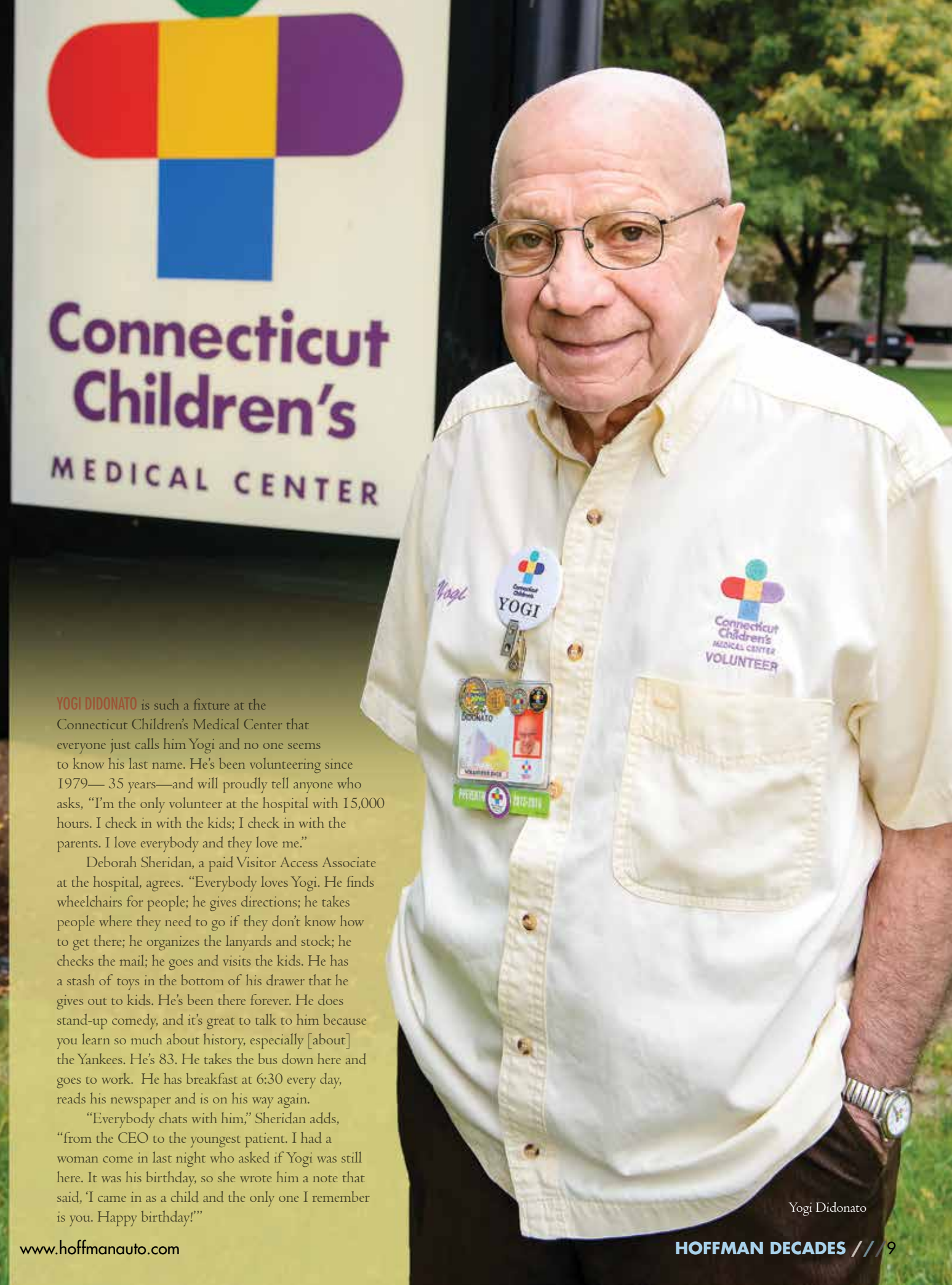
He participates

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 Fredericksburg, 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."



Rob Dexter



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!'"

Yogi Didonato

... unsung heroes who volunteer in all



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 her local Brain Injury Association and started to volunteer with 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 BIAC for 20 years. "I would say I learn something new every time; for example, how plastic the brain is and what you do can make your brain better." Veterans are part of the support group, along with civilians. "TBI can be from combat, from an accident, from a car crash, from a fall. 'Acquired brain injury' can include strokes or tumors," she adds.

She says the hardest thing about her volunteerism is that there aren't enough services available. "You 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 exudes 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



Kevin Adams

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, and 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 weekends 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 hideaway" based on the movie *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, where Newman played the outlaw Cassidy."

For **LEIGH PECHILLO** of Southington, 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 pay it forward."

Once her kids were in school, Pechillo



Leigh Pechillo

kinds of non-profits...

started getting the students at Hatton Elementary involved in Jump Rope for Heart. "There's one week where 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 \$29,000 in our school."

The latest chapter in her family's heart saga is that on Mother's Day this year Pechillo 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 antacid 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 airlifted to Hartford Hospital where they found a 70 percent blockage in my left anterior descending artery." That's the one called the "widow maker" because of how often a blockage there is fatal.

Pechillo says she's recovering well. "I would not be alive if it were not for all the 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."



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.

Then I got involved at other levels. In '87 I became a coach for the International Games." Eventually she became the venue 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 Haven that year, which brought thousands of athletes, volunteers and spectators from all over the world to the city in 1995. "I recruited a bunch of people for that who 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 Olympics.)

She says the best thing about volunteering for Special Olympics is the people she's met. "A lot of people who volunteer are just superb people. They are 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 convener/organizer of the Connecticut Roundtable on Climate and Jobs, which is an innovative partnership between the Interreligious Eco-Justice 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 Olsen, former long-time president of the Connecticut AFL-CIO. That was followed by a workshop 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 collaboration 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 was sufficient common ground that we'd find areas that we could work on together."

As a long-time community organizer, he says, "Over the last three or four years I have 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 could all work 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 union 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**



John Humphries

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. *With two pageant regimes, why Miss USA as opposed 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 nostalgia for?* 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?* Being able to be interviewed and speak to large groups of people. I was asked to give the commencement address to 12,000 people at Central Connecticut.
6. *Your greatest area of weakness?* Being self-conscious to the point of questioning myself. You forget how easy it is for people to place judgments on you. You don't encounter much negativity face to face, but people bring to your attention things said on blogs. You run into the negativity of people who question the purpose of pageants. Obviously, everyone's beautiful. If you're not beautiful you can't win, but it's one little part of it. You're the marketer for the entire brand for the year.
7. *The prior Miss USA won Miss Universe 2013. Did you or other observers feel that there was little chance of consecutive Miss USAs being picked Miss Universe?* I'm a realist, so even though Miss Venezuelas won two years in a row, statistically I'd say yes. But attitudinally, I approached it believing I could win.
8. *You were obviously one of the fittest candidates, with even a few people exclaiming "She's so thin!" Did you hear some of that?* I did hear a few people say that. It wasn't intentional—I was very fit when I went and lost weight during a week of competition.
9. *If you became 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.
10. *What would you advise a national pageant winner with the international competition ahead of her?* The fitness is obtainable in a heartbeat. The key 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 excel 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 I always got 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 of this year in Prospect.
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 in your extended family?* No one famous (laughs) in my family, except I was apparently "engaged" to Aerosmith lead singer Steven Tyler. I got to meet him one day and he said, "My fiancée has the same name as you."
17. *Your makeup is Armenian, Polish, German and Irish—do you feel a stronger kinship with one than the others?* I'm very close to my dad's side of the family. My grandmother is 100% Polish and makes amazing Polish food for the holidays. My mom is Armenian and German and brings Armenian food for the holidays. I would love to visit all those countries, especially Ireland and Poland.
18. *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.
19. *Do you approach life from a religious or secular viewpoint?* 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.
20. *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) in Connecticut. Women can be doctors or CEOs or CFOs or someone who designs apps.
21. *Connecticut's economy may be struggling, but our actors, singers, athletes, and yes, 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 got 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.
22. *Do you find it hard to live up to people's expectations of a beauty queen all the time or do you find it easy to relax and just be yourself?* I stayed pretty grounded throughout the entire experience, but I feel a bit more relaxed now.
23. *How do you picture 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 it should have a nice backyard. I would like three children, a French bulldog and a saltwater aquarium.
24. *Is there a thought you'd like to leave people with?* I'm the biggest planner, 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. **H**

85 YEARS OF THE BUSHNELL

Hartford's arts palace turns 85

By Christopher Arnott

Names to conjure with—what do all these acts have in common?

1930: Fulton J. Sheen. 1931: Paul Robeson. 1932: Lily Pons. 1933: Leopold Stokowski. 1934: Count de Prorok. 1935: Lowell Thomas. 1936: Jane Withers. 1937: Lunt & Fontanne. 1938: Alexander Woollcott. 1939: Ethel Barrymore. 1940: Ethel Waters. 1941: Dorothy Gish. 1942: Katharine Hepburn. 1943: The Trapp Family Singers. 1944: Clifton Webb. 1945: Ruth Gordon. 1946: Zasu Pitts. 1947: Leonard Bernstein. 1948: Ilka Chase. 1949: Edward Everett Horton. 1950: Tallulah Bankhead. 1951: Eddie Rickenbacker. 1952: Billy Graham. 1953: Louis Armstrong. 1954: Oral Roberts. 1955: Arthur Rubinstein. 1956: Victor Borge. 1957: Yehudi Menuhin. 1958: Ella Fitzgerald. 1959: Bert Lahr. 1960: Abigail Van Buren. 1961: Van Cliburn. 1962: Carol Channing. 1963: Ferrante & Teicher. 1964: Josephine Baker. 1965: Joan Sutherland. 1966: Martha Graham. 1967: Lyle Talbot. 1968: Marcel Marceau. 1969: Shirley Verrett. 1970: Zubin Mehta. 1971: José Greco. 1972: Alvin Ailey. 1973: Max Morath. 1974: Imogene Coca. 1975: Hal Holbrook. 1976: Adele Rogers St. John. 1977: Kurt Kasznar. 1978: Jack Anderson. 1979: Letitia Baldrige. 1980: Orson Bean. 1981: David Frost. 1982: Pearl Bailey. 1983: Engelbert Humperdinck. 1984: B.B. King. 1985: Mickey Rooney. 1986: Arlo Guthrie. 1987: Randy Gardner. 1988: P.D.Q. Bach. 1989: Rudolf Nureyev. 1990: Topol. 1991: Joe Jackson. 1992: David Copperfield. 1993: Cathy Rigby. 1994: Robert Goulet. 1995: Bernadette Peters. 1996: Jim Brickman. 1997: Christopher Plummer. 1998: Robert Hughes. 1999: Toni Tenille. 2000: "Weird Al" Yankovic. 2001: Toni Morrison. 2002: Charles Nelson Reilly. 2003: Bobby McFerrin. 2004: Tim Conway. 2005: Wayne Brady. 2006: Garrison Keillor. 2007: David Crosby. 2008: Louis C.K. 2009: Kenny G. 2010: Dr. Melba Pattillo Beals. 2011: Diana Ross. 2012: Mary Poppins. 2013: Jerry Seinfeld. 2014: Itzhak Perlman.

They all played the Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, the Hartford arts landmark which turns 85 years old in 2015.

ALVIN AILEY BALLET

Ronna Reynolds is the Executive Vice President of the Bushnell. She has worked there, under several different titles, since 1978, and has witnessed many changes in that time.

She has a unique perspective on the inner workings of this hallowed auditorium, with its inspiring ceiling mural (titled "Drama" and painted by Barry Faulkner) and its reputation for high standards, diversity and unpredictability. "We once had the Shriner Circus here," Reynolds recalls, "when the Armory was getting renovated. We had to have a weigh-in for the elephants so that the stage wouldn't collapse. One of the elephants was too heavy, and didn't make the cut."



"DRAMA" BY BARRY FAULKNER

That spangly, sequined Shriners circus booking, not to mention the Presidential Debate between Bill Clinton and Bob Dole held at the theater in 1996, is a reminder that the Bushnell isn't just known for orchestra concerts and Broadway shows. For all of the building's 85 years, it's served a broad swath of the Hartford community. Reynolds mentions the Bushnell as the site of the largest

naturalization/immigration ceremony in the United States.

There were theaters in Hartford before the Bushnell, but they didn't connect to the community in quite the same way. The Wadsworth Atheneum has always had a theater stage, but one which served the modern-art aspirations of its central museum. In 1934, when the Atheneum famously world-premiered the Gertrude Stein/Virgil Thomson opera *Four Saints in Three Acts*, the still-new

Bushnell had already established itself as an all-purpose community hall, offering everything from marionette shows to glee club concerts to high school graduations and revues sponsored by local churches. There was a method in this randomness, however, and a concerted attempt to set high presentational standards for this gorgeous and imposing theater.

One of the largest and most popular commercial theaters in the area when the Bushnell was being built was the 1,817-seat Parsons Theater on Prospect Street. "The Parsons ending had a direct connection to the Bushnell opening," Reynolds says. The Parsons welcomed vaudeville acts and other entertainments that were perceived as low-class. A local philanthropist, Dotha Bushnell Hillyer, was active on the Newsboys and Newsgirls Committee for the

Consumer's League of Hartford, and worried about the effect that some of these shows might have on the city's youth. She decided to build a theater which would simultaneously serve as a monument to her father, Rev. Horace Bushnell (a nationally known religious leader who had spurred the development of the major Hartford park which also bears his name) but would also raise the standards of



YEHUDI MENUHIN



HAL HOLBROOK



PEARL BAILEY



GENE KRUPA, WM. MORTENSEN AND LOUIS ARMSTRONG

biggest hits was a 2004 “conversation” with political polar-opposites Al Franken and Ann Coulter; the event became a key element of a documentary film about Franken.) Another core resident company is the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, which was founded in 1934, just four years after the Bushnell first opened its doors. The theater and the orchestra’s interests have been closely aligned for their entire histories, never more so than last year, when the Bushnell legally became not just a presenter but a co-manager of the orchestra. That “strategic collaboration” allows the

groups to remain as independent non-profit organizations yet lets them share certain management resources and office space. The initial co-management agreement lasts through 2016 and is likely to be renewed.

Not all resident companies have lasted, alas. Connecticut Opera, which gave its inaugural performance at the Bushnell in 1942, folded in 2007 after 67 seasons. Hartford Ballet lasted 27 years, from 1972 to 1999. For 20 of those years, its leader was the admired dancer/choreographer Michael Uthoff, who used Hartford as the home base for a dance troupe that toured internationally and premiered dozens of new works. Uthoff is still active in the dance world, as Artistic and Executive Director of the Missouri-based Dance St. Louis.

Even in the case of Broadway shows, the Bushnell has exercised a level of control which most so-called “presentation houses” can only dream of. Since, as Reynolds puts it, “the health of Broadway is of paramount importance to us,” the theater became a member of the Broadway production company Elephant Eye Theatrical, which created the long-running hit *The Addams Family*. Even



NUREYEV IN THE NUTCRACKER



BEVERLY SILLS

before Elephant Eye, the Bushnell was producing its own Broadway-styled shows, including a series of concert versions of



THE ADDAMS FAMILY MUSICAL

classic musicals featuring established Broadway stars. Recent national and international productions which the Bushnell has been a part of are a revival of *The Music Man* (starring Shirley Jones from the show’s movie version) and a stage version of the Gene Kelly/Gershwin Brothers film *An American in Paris*.

Meanwhile, on the local level, the Bushnell has been attuned to the needs of Hartford, the state of Connecticut and the New England arts region, remaining what Reynolds dubs “a very multi-dimensional arts resource.” **H**

The Bushnell will be marking its 85th anniversary in a number of ways, large and small. The best thing it will be doing is continuing to be itself. The theater is deeply woven into the fabric of Hartford life, a metaphor which deepened with the Bushnell’s heavy involvement in iQuilt, a handy new way of connecting Hartford’s arts institutions both professionally (through shared events and a unified view of how increased tourism helps everyone) and geographically (with fun, clear maps and paths that help patrons find their way to theaters, museums and historic landmarks in the city). In September, the Bushnell finally redesigned its website (www.bushnell.org), a long-term and rather expensive project. The new site is much brighter, cleaner, and easier to navigate, greeting web visitors with large, colorful photos from upcoming Broadway musicals at the Bushnell.

The list of events at the theater now makes abundantly clear the variety that the Bushnell has to offer. Treats in store for 2015 include: the musicals *Pippin* (Jan. 6-11), *Nice Work If You Can Get It* (a Gershwin spectacular, Feb. 3-8), *Camelot* (April 21-26) and the newer-fangled Broadway sensations *Once* (May 26-31) and *Kinky Boots* (June 23-28); children’s theater productions of *Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad* (March 4), *Dog Loves Books* (March 17), *The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley* (May 5), Lois Lowry’s *The Giver* (May 12); Connecticut Forum panels on Explorers & Adventurers (March 13, with swimmer Diana Nyad and novelist

Cheryl Strayed) and Looking Back and Forward With Two Pulitzer Prize-Winning Authors (May 9, featuring David McCullough & Stacy Schiff); and dance from the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater March 24. The Hartford Symphony Orchestra concert season at the Bushnell shows that organization to be one of the busiest classical music groups in the state: Jan. 15-18 (“Leonid Sigal Plays Carmen Fantasie”), Feb. 12-15 (“Rachmaninoff and Firebird”), Feb. 28 (“The Music of Michael Jackson”), March 12-15 (“Saint-Saëns & Brahms”), March 13 (“Playing With Food 3”), April 9-12 (“Tchaikovsky’s Sleeping Beauty”), April 18 (“Broadway with the Callaways,” i.e., singing sisters Ann and Liz Callaway), May 7-10 (“Beethoven & Mozart: Symphony No. 6”), May 28-31 (“Mahler’s Fourth,” spotlighting a composer who will be featured in several of the other HSO concerts as well) and June 6 (“Disney in Concert—Magical Music from the Movies,” with the orchestra accompanying projected images from Disney films). The 2015-16 Bushnell season will be announced this spring.

The new website and a related “new visual identity” for the Bushnell, plus special events geared to the latest anniversary “sets a tone for the new stage of where we are,” Reynolds boasts. After all this is a theater with a reputation for presenting the best big-theater events available in the state—and when they’re not available, creating them itself.

Other Theater Dates

The Bushnell is not the only one looking at a big birthday. Here are some recent and upcoming anniversaries at other Connecticut theaters:

■ **New Haven’s Shubert Theatre** turns 100 in December 2014. The theater was built as part of a national chain run by the legendary New York theater producers the Shubert Brothers. When the Shuberts moved on, the theater that still bears their name hit its stride as a pre-Broadway try-out house in the 1940s. Among the shows that had their world premieres there: *Oklahoma*, *My Fair Lady* and *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

■ **The Long Wharf Theatre** in New Haven was founded in 1965. The Long Wharf’s 50th anniversary season began in October with a new production of Thornton Wilder’s *Our Town*. The Long Wharf has done the play before, in 1988, to mark a different sort of anniversary: 350 years since the founding of New Haven.

■ **The Yale Repertory Theatre** was founded in 1966 as a regional theater space where students at the Yale School of Drama can work directly with professional actors, directors and designers. The Rep will turn 50 in 2016, while the School of Drama turned 90 in 2014.

■ **The Yale Dramatic Association**, commonly known as the Yale Dramat, is one of the oldest undergraduate theater organizations in the country, turning 115 years old in 2015. Students who worked on Dramat shows range from Cole Porter (class of 1910), the legendary composer of *Anything Goes* and *Kiss Me, Kate!*, to Alex Timbers (class of 2001), the hot Broadway director of *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* and the musical version of *Rocky*.

■ **The Garde Arts Center** in New London was built as a movie house in 1926, so the building will turn 90 in 2016. In 2015, the Garde will mark 30 years in its current role as a non-profit performing arts organization.

■ **The Yale Summer Cabaret** turned 40 years old this past summer, and celebrated with a gala party that brought back some of the company’s founders. The Yale Summer Cabaret is separate from the Yale Cabaret, which operates during the school year and will turn 50 in 2018.

■ **Goodspeed Musicals** in East Haddam turned 50 in 2013 with a big gala and has extended that festive spirit by producing anniversary revivals of famous musicals. Last year, it staged a 50th anniversary production of *Fiddler on the Roof*. Goodspeed is entitled to other anniversaries if it chooses—the Goodspeed Opera House, where most of the musicals are presented, originally opened as a playhouse in 1877. The Goodspeed’s Norma Terris Theatre in Chester was added in 1984, making that building 30 years old.

A year from now, Seven Angels Theatre in Waterbury will celebrate a quarter-century of producing plays and concerts. The theater’s 2015-16 season will be its 25th.



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River Dining— 25 Restaurants Where the Food Matches the View

By Ellis Parker

Photography by Ellis Parker

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 glacially scoured traprock ridges, 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 Pittsburg, 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% smaller discharge?

Our state's waterways can be shallow and swift, or deep and slow

moving. Slow flows 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 industrious beaver.

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 bucolic setting. Unfortunately, there are many that coast on their views and provide mediocre dining experiences, leading us to include only year-round restaurants with 3 or more stars from Yelp (not that it's gospel) and a good connection to the water. Here are 25 restaurants where you may find that the food matches the view:

■ **Adrienne's**,
218 Kent Rd. (Rt. 7), New Milford;
860-354-6001; adriennerestaurant.com
This charming restaurant set in a colonial house just north of New Milford offers refined indoor dining as well as some of Litchfield County's nicest outdoor dining from its stone patio, with beautiful views from its bend on the Housatonic River. Adrienne's seasonal menu is traditional American with a few contemporary flourishes and game meats like quail and venison.

■ **Apricots Restaurant & Pub**,
1593 Farmington Ave., Farmington;
860-673-5405; apricotsrestaurant.com
Occupying a former trolley barn from the early 1800s, Apricots provides polished dining in both its downstairs pub and upstairs dining room, with exquisite views of the Farmington River, especially from its stone patio. While you may feel the urge to catch your own trout, you'll find plenty of temptations on this creative American-Continental menu.

■ **Arezzo Ristorante**,
5 Riverside Ave., Westport;
203-557-9375; arezzowestport.com
Enjoy an arresting view of the Saugatuck River and the Ruth Steinkraus Cohen Memorial Bridge from Arezzo's spacious stone patio, or linger inside its

rustic dining room or stylish wine bar. A global wine list complements an upscale Italian menu with wood-fired pizzas, housemade pastas and various other culinary delights.

■ **Baingan India Cuisine**,
94 River Rd., Shelton;
203-924-2626; bainganindia.com
Thanks to its location high on a hill over the Housatonic River, Baingan India enjoys a commanding view, especially from its nice seasonal patio. No run-of-the-mill Indian, Baingan India pulled in one of the highest Yelp ratings of all the restaurants we are featuring. Baingan also offers a tremendous vegetarian selection, lunch time buffets and Indo-Chinese specialties.

■ **Bill's Seafood**,
548 Boston Post Rd., Westbrook;
860-399-7224; billsseafood.com
Bill's Seafood, located at Westbrook's "singing bridge," may be one of the less upscale restaurants we've included, but everyone would have been up in arms if we hadn't. Enjoy all manner of denizens of the deep fried, baked or broiled while seated in Bill's nautically themed dining room or, weather permitting, at the Dolly Rose Bar or picnic tables on its deck overhanging the winding Patchogue River. Be forewarned that Bill's accepts neither credit cards nor reservations.

■ **Black Duck Café**,
605 Riverside Ave., Westport;
203-227-7978; blackduckcafe.com
Like something out of Tannery Row or Popeye, there's something charmingly ramshackle about Black Duck Café, which is housed on the west bank of the Saugatuck River in a former seagoing refrigeration-and-ice-storage barge. Black Duck's food was featured in Diners, Drive-Ins & Dives, and although it seems to offer a bit of everything, it's neither a diner nor a drive-in. What it is is a place with a ton of atmosphere and a menu with a slight tilt, like the restaurant itself, toward New Orleans.

■ **Cobb's Mill Inn**,
12 Old Mill Rd., Weston;
203-227-7221; cobbsmillinn.com
Located on the west branch of the Saugatuck River in what is without doubt one of the prettier mill settings in Connecticut, the Cobb's Mill Inn has been reborn under Drew & Laura Friedman's stewardship. Executive chef Patrick Mims has put together a classic inn menu lightened with a few contemporary touches. The Inn is a popular spot for Sunday brunches or even nuptials.

■ **Foundry Kitchen & Tavern**,
1 Glen Rd., Sandy Hook; 203-491-2030;
foundrykitchenandtavern.com

A number of recent restaurants have foundered in this location, but Foundry Kitchen & Tavern appears to have what it takes to build a lasting foundation. Its "progressive American menu with a tavern twist" seems upscale enough for all of Newtown but down-to-earth enough for the village of Sandy Hook. The restaurant has been restored, exposing many of its original materials, and its porch overlooking the Pootatuck River can be one of Fairfield County's nicest spots to dine.

■ **Fresh Salt**,
2 Bridge St., Old Saybrook;
860-388-1111; saybrook.com
Named for its location where the fresh water of the Connecticut River and the salt water of Long Island Sound collide, Fresh Salt is a beautiful modern restaurant located within the Saybrook Inn & Spa. Its menu manages at once to be creative and classic. I would argue that Fresh Salt, as polished as the yachts in the nearby boat slips, is Connecticut's best seafood restaurant located on the water.

■ **Mia's Prime Time Café**,
1 West Broad St., Pawcatuck;
860-599-3840; miaspt.com
Hanging over the Pawcatuck River that separates Connecticut from Rhode Island is Prime Time Café, which picked up the "Mia's" in front of its name during a recent change in ownership. That change hasn't seemed to dim the café's star one bit. In fact, there are many who feel that this creative little charmer that has an affinity for seafood and serves three meals a day is better than ever.

■ **Mill on the River**,
989 Ellington Rd., South Windsor;
860-289-7929; themillontheriver.net
One of Connecticut's most iconic dining spots, Mill on the River regularly packs in lively crowds to enjoy its nice food and setting. Who wouldn't enjoy entry

by covered bridge with a view of a beautiful dam waterfall? The well-groomed grounds along the Podunk River and Pond are just lovely, while the menu is classic enough to please conservative palates and creative enough to satisfy adventurous ones.

■ **Millwright's**,
77 West St., Simsbury;
860-651-5500; millwrightsrestaurant.com
Not just a strong candidate for Connecticut's best riverside restaurant but for its best restaurant—period—is Millwright's, which is located in a restored mill on Hop Brook in Simsbury. The high priest of this temple of gastronomy is Tyler Anderson, whose creative fare made him a semifinalist in 2013 for the James Beard Foundation's Best Chef Northeast award. And there are beautiful water views from the main dining room, tavern, loft test kitchen/special event room and deck over the water.

■ **Nellie Green's**,
50 Maple St., Branford;
203-483-8400; nelliegreens.com
Named for the famous female bootlegger who plied this stretch of shoreline, Nellie Green's enjoys great views of the Branford River from its dining room and popular outdoor patio and bar. But it's still the food first and foremost that brings people in, an inventive menu with a seafood emphasis and no obvious culinary allegiances or boundaries.

■ **New Mill Restaurant**,
493 South End Rd., Plantsville;
860-620-0300; newmillrestaurant.net
You'll experience nothing but conviviality and culinary joy from New Mill in Southington, whose pretty view looks out upon a mill pond waterfall on Misery Brook. Its menu offers that comforting mix of contemporary American and Italian cooking that we Nutmeggers have so come to love.

■ **On The Waterfront**,
250 Pequot Ave., New London;
860-444-2800; onthewaterfrontnl.com
Unlike in the Marlon-Brando-acted and Elia-Kazan-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 steak and seafood leanings. Count us in!

■ **Paul's Pasta Shop**,
223 Thames St., Groton;
860-445-5276; paulspastashop.com
On the far bank of the Thames and farther upriver is Paul's Pasta Shop, owned by husband and wife culinary school graduates Paul & Dorothy Fidrych since 1988. Their many loyal customers enjoy formidable portions of fresh housemade pastas finished with housemade 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;
860-536-3604; red36ct.com
This is the latest restaurant by Carol Kanabis, who also owns nearby BravoBravo and Azu as well as Olio in Groton. Red 36 has a seafood-centric menu that will thrill pescetarians but still has appealing options for vegetarians and carnivores. 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—this one I actually have. Perched on the east bank of the Five Mile River, the Restaurant

enjoys serene views from both its dining room and decks, especially at sunset. The Restaurant sources its fish from its market next door, resulting in a seafood-oriented menu that includes not only fried and steamed seafoods but raw bar and upscale menu items.

■ **Rive Bistro,**
299 Riverside Ave., Westport;
203-557-8049; rivebistro.com
Dining at this Gallic charmer, you have as close a relationship with the water as anywhere in Connecticut as you watch waterfowl bob and preen in the Saugatuck River current just a few feet away from your window or patio seat. A substantial upgrade from predecessor River House, Rive Bistro offers a refined ambiance and chef-owner Eric Sierra's mix of creative and classic bistro fare.

■ **Riverview Bistro,**
946 Ferry Blvd., Stratford;
203-690-1616; riverviewstratford.com
There have been a number of Connecticut restaurants named Riverview in recent years; this is the only surviving one that has actual river views and highly rated food. Located on the southwest side of the Devon Bridge over the Housatonic River, Riverview's menu strikes a good balance between land fare and shelled, wrapped, battered, broiled, blackened or stuffed sea fare.

■ **S & P Oyster Company,**
1 Holmes St., Mystic;
860-536-2674; sp-oyster.com
A decade ago, S & P Oyster Company's perch on the bank of the Mystic River afforded it some of Connecticut's best water views, but its food wasn't on the same level. Today, in the hands of in the hands of talented CIA-trained Ecuadorian chef Edgar Cobena, S & P's traditional New England food exhibits South American flair that has its ratings on the rise.

■ **Stonebridge Restaurant,**
50 Daniel St., Milford;
203-874-7947; stonebridgerestaurant.com
Stonebridge Restaurant in Milford occupies such a tranquil spot above a dam waterfall on the Wepawaug River that it's easy to forget it's just a block from all the action on the east end of Milford Green. Its American menu is creative, varied and seafood heavy. Guests will find the water views are especially nice from its decks and patios.

■ **The Boathouse at Saugatuck,**
521 Riverside Ave., Westport;
203-227-3399; saugatuckrowing.com
For years a private restaurant whose barriers I managed to breach just once with a secret password, The Boathouse at Saugatuck is open these days to the public.

It can be fun watching the scullers and rowers taking out or putting up their shells. Except for raw bar items, The Boathouse's creative American menu features a roughly even split between land and seafood items.

■ **Westbrook Lobster Restaurant & Bar,**
300 Church St., Wallingford;
203-265-5071; westbrooklobster.com
Ironically, one of the most seafood-oriented restaurants I have listed is located far up the Quinnipiac River, beyond all tidal influences. (Of course, it has a Westbrook sibling.) With its many seafood temptations and beautiful view of the Quinnipiac, especially from its porch seating, Westbrook Lobster has become a popular dining destination.

■ **White Horse Country Pub & Restaurant,**
258 New Milford Tpk., Washington;
860-868-1496; whitehorsecountrypub.com
The White Horse Country Pub is one of New England's most storied pubs and Connecticut's most popular dining destinations. Its stone patio seems almost to hang over the East Aspetuck River. Its menu offers a nice balance between classic comfort food and more creative fare—and there are a dozen “ridiculously good desserts.” **H**



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2015 Lexus RC F

2015 Lexus NX F-Sport



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Lexus Unveils Two Highly Anticipated New Models

By Ellis Parker



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—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 the roofline peaks at the rear. Combined with distinctive flared wheel arches and 17- or 18-inch wheels, these features give the feeling of a crouching beast ready to spring into action.

The design of the cabin maximizes seating and interior space. The lowest hip point in the segment increases headroom in front. That roofline peak mentioned earlier assures good headroom in the rear. And the NX is best in class in both luggage load length and rear seat leg length.

Comfort is paramount. The NX's interior is designed to evoke the vehicle's premium urban feel. Its structural beauty says performance, while its interior materials say functionality and luxury can coexist. You may be tempted to say: "Where have you been all my life?" And you wouldn't be

completely crazy if you expected the Advanced Human Machine Interface, which takes ergonomics and intuitive user interface to another level, to answer you.

Amenities are plentiful. The console, for instance, is enhanced by a Lexus-first wireless charging tray for your portable devices, a new Lexus Remote Touch Interface with a touch pad, and a Panoramic View Monitor and comprehensive Multi-Information Display. The center silver frame embedded in the instrument panel communicates strength and style all at once. Knee pads on either side of the frame firmly support driver and passenger alike, making them feel more "at one" with the vehicle.

But if Lexus were just focused on looks, comfort and amenities, well, it wouldn't be Lexus, would it? So let's talk about the NX's



performance. A new 2.0-liter, direct-injection engine features the world-first combination of a cylinder head with a water-cooled cylinder head with an integrated exhaust manifold and a twin-scroll turbocharger. (Don't worry—we won't test you.) Paired with this new turbo engine is a new 6-speed automatic transmission with new torque control demand logic that calculates required engine torque to guarantee exhilarating acceleration while conserving fuel.

For all its power, the NX is reassuringly stable. Capable of controlling almost undetectable fluctuations, a newly developed shock absorber contributes to excellent handling stability and ride comfort. Lexus manufacturing techniques heighten the rigidity of both body and suspension, improving overall driving performance.

Of course, anything that contributes to better handling improves safety, but Lexus has plenty else in mind as well. The Panoramic View Monitor helps the driver avoid problems from all sides. Radar Cruise Control with All-Speed Tracking Function preserves inter-vehicle distance by detecting the vehicle ahead 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 inroads with young, urban, luxury drivers.

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.

Basking in the warmest glow from this halo effect should be the new Lexus RC, 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 injecting emotional appeal into the Lexus DNA which has become so well known for quality, refinement and reliability.

Said Mark Templin, Lexus International executive vice president, "Our focus is to strengthen the brand's emotional appeal through our products and RC is another demonstration of this focus."

Elaborated Junichi Furuyama, RC chief engineer, "The emotional attachment of a coupe is found in its purity of design and its engaging driving experience, and with RC the

engineers have achieved the balance. We developed RC to deliver extra response that exhilarates rather than overwhelms drivers, in keeping with the true spirit of Japanese hospitality, or *omotenashi*."

The exterior lines of the RC are deeply contoured, incorporating the widest and lowest application yet of the Lexus spindle grille. The RC is unique in the Lexus line, providing a road-hugging stance that's a full 1.2 inches wider, 1.4 inches lower and 2.8 inches shorter in wheelbase than the new IS sedan. The headlamp design reflects the Lexus L-shape of the taillights. There is a choice between two different aluminum wheel designs—one more refined, the other more muscular.

Inside, the two-plus-two coupe makes maximum use of contrasting materials, colors and lighting. A Lexus-first lighting package provides illumination that, rather than downwards, reflects upwards to envelop the cabin. The driver's cockpit is divided into operational and display zones, with the upper zone housing an instrument panel and seven-inch navigation screen while a layered center console implements a new Lexus-first Remote Touch Interface. Integrated foaming construction assures that the RC's seats are not only comfortable but provide the support needed in a sport coupe. Increased rigidity and improved suspension ensure the handling needed in a car harnessed to such an impressive power plant.

In short, anyone who appreciates an ideal marriage of comfort and aggressive performance when he or she sees it will recognize that this coupe is quite a coup. **H**





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 coin 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. [H](#)

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 Voulaz (\$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 (\$795) over a Daswani shirt (\$198). His Raffi russet quarter zip (\$155) and 5-pocket pants (\$150) by I in a Million. Pocket Square (\$75) 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.



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

So very chic yet comfortable. Mallory's olive green quilted vest (\$249) and black luxe turtleneck (\$135) from Germany top off fabulous slim-fit jeans from A Woman (\$170). A Frank Lyman Design handbag (\$140). Necklace by Sylvia's 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 Tryon Tuesday's in Hartford.



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.



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 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 Hartford and Tolland counties alone, there are 140,000

hungry people, the majority of whom are elderly or children. And those numbers have been steadily on the rise according to Foodshare, which describes itself as the region's food bank.

Observes Mark Cherrington, Foodshare's Director of Communications, "After the 2008 recession, we saw demand grow by 30%, mostly in suburban middle class neighborhoods. And despite the economy beginning to recover, we have not seen the totals go down. Rather, they are still climbing."

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 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.



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.



"Right now," says Cherrington, "Foodshare is only able to meet about one-third of the need in our community, and we've set ourselves a goal of closing that gap in the next seven years. We have the programs in place and the specific targets to achieve that goal, and we are confident we can do it, as long as the community supports us with their time, their ideas, and their donations." Foodshare is working hard to raise \$5.5 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!

HAPPENINGS

By Robert Bailin

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 5–23. “Wicked.” Long before that girl from Kansas arrives in Munchkinland, two girls meet in the land of Oz. One—born with emerald green skin—is smart, fiery and misunderstood. The other is beautiful, ambitious and very popular. How these two grow to become the Wicked Witch of the West and Glinda the Good Witch makes for “the most complete—and

completely satisfying—musical in a long time” (USA Today). Tuesday–Thursday, 7:30pm; Friday, 8pm; Saturday, 2pm & 8pm; Sunday, 1pm & 6:30pm. \$47.50–\$172.50. *William H. Mortensen Hall, The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, 166 Capitol Avenue, Hartford; 860-987-5900; www.bushnell.org.*

November 15. Companions Pet Adoption Day. Hoffman Auto Group is proud to support Our Companions as they are so committed to doing the right thing for animals, regardless of the cost or challenge. 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 utilities. 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 travel 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 \$3. *Connecticut Trolley Museum, 58 North Road, East Windsor; 860-627-6540; www.ct-trolley.org.*

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December 2—January 4. "Holiday Decorating." The Holiday decorating committee is pleased to announce a splendid lineup of trees that will grace the Museum lobby and galleries. In conjunction with the exhibition *Let Me Quilt One More Day*, the Museum Lobby will feature a 14-foot quilt Christmas tree decked out with handmade quilt-themed ornaments. The second floor will feature a Kwanzaa Tree decorated with handmade ornaments by artist and docent Loretta Eason. The Hudson River School Gallery will house a tree inspired by Albert Bierstadt's *Sea Rock*. The Academic Gallery will house a tree inspired by Winslow Homer's *Butterflies*. Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, 11am–5pm; Thursday, 11am–8pm; Saturday, 10am–5pm; Sunday, noon–5pm. Free with museum admission. *The New Britain Museum of American Art*, 56 Lexington Street, New Britain; 860-229-0257; www.nbmaa.org.

December 4—7. "Hartford Symphony Orchestra Masterworks Series: Mozart & Dvorák." Celebrate musical inspiration, as our guest conductor plays piano and conducts at the same time! William Eddins is music director of the Edmonton Symphony. Francaix's *Hommage à l'ami Papageno* was written with excerpts from Mozart's opera, *The Magic Flute*—while Mozart wrote the Piano Concerto in G 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 dance 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), 7:30pm. Adults \$30, seniors and students \$20, children 12 and under \$15. *Millard Auditorium, University of Hartford*, 200 Bloomfield 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! Events 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 details call 860-236-4571 or visit mandelljcc.org.



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