SANCTUARY

Newsletter of
The White Memorial
Conservation Center
Vol. XLIV No.1
Winter 2026

Museum Hours:

Tuesday - Saturday
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Sunday
12:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

For Information:
Phone: 860-567-0857
Email: info@whitememorialcc.org
Website: www.whitememorialcc.org

All Hands on Deck! Coach Wendy Welshans and her students with the MayAlain. Photo credit: Gerri Griswold

Welcoming the *MayAlain*: A Handmade Gift from Forman School

by James Fischer, Research Director, The White Memorial Conservation Center

You may have heard the story of what inspired this place we now call White Memorial. It was 1908, and Alain C. White was fishing on the waters of Bantam Lake with his friend William Mitchel Van Winkle when Alain asked his friend, "Wouldn't it be wonderful to preserve this lake, river, and countryside as we see it now?" Oh, the thoughts that are conjured while sitting in a boat and letting one's mind wander through the possibilities of what could be. Those ideas became reality, primarily because of the support Alain received from his friends and his older, yet dearest sister, Margaret, or as others called her, May.

We're delighted to share some beautiful news that will encourage us to continue to tell this story: students at the Forman School have built and gifted us a handmade wooden boat. Crafted with care, patience, and extraordinary skill, the *MayAlain*—named in honor of our founders—embodies exactly what we hope young people discover when they work with their hands and their hearts.

This isn't just a boat. It's two years' worth of problem-solving, teamwork, and stewardship made tangible. In the Forman woodshop, students began with locally sourced lumber—harvested within 200 miles—to underscore a simple, powerful idea: healthy, well-managed forests can supply high-quality materials close to home. From the first plank to the final brushstroke, they learned that responsible forestry and local supply chains are not abstract concepts; they're choices you can see and touch.

Coach Wendy Welshans guides students in the Forman School's boat-building workshop. Photo courtesy of The Forman School

The students selected spruce, red cedar, and white ash—each chosen for specific qualities. Spruce offers remarkable strength for its weight; red cedar brings natural durability; white ash is prized for toughness and flexibility. Understanding those differences turns a woodpile into a palette, teaching respect for materials and the forests that grow them. Along the way, students met foresters, sawyers, and craftspeople—discovering that "local wood" is not a slogan, but a community.

Their craft repertoire is as rich as the materials. They learned to read grain and choose cuts, to fair curves until the hull runs smooth to the eye and the fingertip, and to join pieces so neatly that the strength seems invisible. Steam bending—one of the project's most memorable moments—combines heat, moisture, timing, and nerve. It's a lesson in physics, patience, and persuasion: warm a stubborn piece of wood just right, and it will take a graceful curve that lasts a lifetime. Those curves are then skinned in canvas, sealed with lacquer, and finished with hand-applied paint. Even the details carry meaning: the seat is hand-caned, a heritage skill that rewards rhythm and focus. Every step invites students to slow down, check their measurements, and take responsibility for the outcome.

What students learn looks like life. They plan, budget time, adjust when a joint doesn't fit, and reflect on decisions that can't be undone once the glue sets or the paint dries.

Continued on page 4

White Memorial Conservation Center Announces Annual Year-End Appeal

By Gerri Griswold, White Memorial Conservation Center Director of Administration and Development

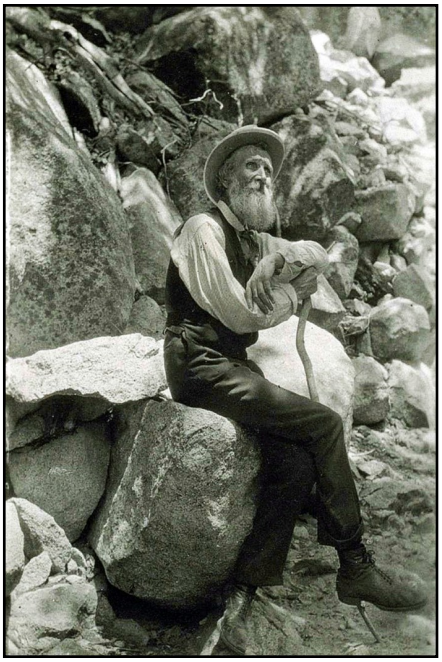
"In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks." — John Muir

Each time a child kneels to examine a salamander beneath a log, watches a monarch butterfly take flight, or hears the rustle of trees in the wind, something extraordinary happens: a connection is forged. It is in those moments that curiosity awakens, understanding begins, and a lifelong respect for the natural world takes root.

At White Memorial, we believe that educating children about nature is not just important — it is essential. It shapes the stewards of tomorrow. Through hands-on experiences, guided exploration, and programs rooted in environmental learning, we open young eyes to the beauty, complexity, and fragility of the world around them.

But this work doesn't happen by chance — it happens because of people like you.

Your support ensures that classrooms with and without walls continue to inspire awe and understanding, and vital research focusing on vulnerable plants, animals, and habitats moves forward.



John Muir: 1838 - 1913
Scottish born American founder of the modern conservation movement
Photo credit: https://www.johnmuirtrust.org/

Your tax-deductible gift to our Annual Appeal helps us offer camps, workshops, and educational outreach that spark wonder in the next generation.
And it safeguards the places where all of us — children and adults alike — can go to reconnect with what matters most.

This year, as you reflect on the value of time spent in our Sanctuary and the need to conserve it, we invite you to contribute a gift that gives back to nature — and to the future. A donation in any amount makes a difference. You can securely donate online by using this QR code.

Donate Here!

Together, we can protect these sacred spaces. Together, we can nurture a deeper bond between children and the natural world. Together, we can ensure that every walk with nature continues to offer far more than we seek. Together, we'll uphold the legacy of Alain and May White.

Community Service at The White Memorial Foundation 2025

By Mike Berry, White Memorial Foundation Forest Manager

Every year a variety of groups and individuals volunteer their time to help us accomplish our conservation goal. 2025 was no exception. We had a successful and productive year for volunteers here at The White Memorial Foundation.

In the spring we were happy to welcome back two groups to help us get ready for the 2025 family camping season. The Family Campers and RVers were back at the Point Folly Family Campground helping clean up, paint, and get ready for our highly anticipated opening day. They do a great job every year and are a huge help in the process of getting Point Folly ready. The second group to return this year was Scout Troop 102. Troop 102 has a history of coming in the spring and having a camp-out while helping to get Windmill Hill Campground cleaned up. They rake the sites, pick up sticks, and fix up fire rings to ensure the campground is ready to go. We truly appreciate the tremendous amount of work these groups do.

Continuing the tradition of service and education, a few Connecticut schools came to help us out. In April, The Forman School was the first to return with 20 volunteers. Students added gravel to the Interpretive Trail. On Earth Day, 12 volunteer students from Plumb Hill Middle School,

Scout Troop 29 from Bantam added 184 feet of gravel to the Ongley Pond Trail!

along with volunteers from Litchfield Land Trust, collected garbage from the North Bay of Bantam Lake. In the fall, Enfield Montessori school returned for the fourth year with 26 volunteers. Students cleaned out a garden bed and planted some tree saplings to overwinter that will be used other places on the property come spring. We would like to thank Enfield for their extraordinary work as usual. We are grateful for all the work done by these dedicated students.

In June we were honored to have Attie Bergin of Troop 77 in Simsbury complete her Eagle Scout project with us. Attie and her crew replaced and installed 100 feet of new boardwalk to the Ongley Pond trail to kick off our accessibility upgrade. Attie diligently planned out the project, raised the money to buy the materials, and led crews on a few work days to get the project completed.

Every year we have a few Scout groups help us out. This year New Canaan Troop 70 re-planked the Bantam Lake platform. Bantam Troop 29, led by Zachary Stowe added gravel to 184 feet of the Ongley Pond Trail to continue the work of Attie Bergin, making the trail more accessible to people with all abilities (the work is not yet completed.)

In 2025 so far, we are up to about 390 person hours of volunteer time performed. White Memorial is very grateful to have help and support from the community. If you or your group are interested in volunteering your time, please contact Mike Berry: mike@whitememorialcc.org .

The 43rd Annual Family Nature Day!

Story and Photo by Gerri Griswold

Blue skies and warm temperatures in the 80's heralded in the 43rd Annual Family Nature day on September 25, 2025. None of us could quite pinpoint what it was that made us anticipate a record-breaking event. There was magic in the air and everybody felt it. Almost 1300 Nature lovers skipped the Durham Fair, The Big E, and all sorts of fall festivals, finding their way up Whitehall Road to a happening filled with birds of prey, opossums, riveting reptiles, our very own Animal Ambassadors, potion tables, astronomy, birdwatching, bee-keeping, wood-carving, goat-keeping, candle-making, pies, delicious food, music, tractor rides, and a tent that bustled with nature crafts. A carefully curated "town" of vendors sold everything from handmade brooms to organically raised meats and vegetables, honey, soaps, books, jewelry, crocheted creations, hot sauces and more. Fred Bunnell's tractor spun around the main area packed with happy passengers,.The joyful sounds of Wry Bred's contra tunes punctuated the air.

Families learned about geology, wolves, native people, dog rescue, America 250, and author, Arjun Singh, from Jaisalmer India sold copies of his book, Desert Teacher, to friends he had met through White Memorial. The membership table sold all 30 pies in the annual Pie Sale. All 3000 raffle tickets sold in advance of the 4:00 pm drawing. The stakes were extremely high this year with a two-week trip for two to the Galapagos Islands, donated by Stewart McPherson, Redfern Adventures, serving as first prize. Chris Goyette of Enfield emerged as the lucky winner. She has been a vendor at Nature Day for many years selling beautiful minerals and jewelry.

Mary Beth Kaeser, Horizon Wings Raptor Rehabilitation Center and her Raven, Mave, were just two of the outstanding presenters at the 43rd Annual Family Nature Day!

The 10th Annual Ray and Jean Packard Turtle Race was greeted with enthusiastic cheers. When the dust settled, it was sprightly Frankie the Painted Turtle who took home the coveted trophy!

The Conservation Center is deeply grateful to the 50 volunteers, spear-headed by our Education and Activities Committee, for carrying Family Nature Day to its zenith. We are also incredibly appreciative of our sponsors who helped make this year's edition the most successful Family Nature Day in history: Redfern Adventures, Jeff and Zoe Greenwood, The Connecticut Community Foundation / Give Local, Miles and Ann Borzilleri, Litchfield Ace Hardware, Monica Richman and Steve Lerangis, Thomaston Savings Bank, Gerri Griswold's Facebook Birthday Fundraiser, Susan and Victor Atkins, two Anonymous Donors, Ferncroft Wildlife Rescue, New Morning Market, All Star Transportation, LSC Cards, Litchfield Lions Club, and Rae Lynn Giannaccio.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN

Nature's Nursery Series

Second Thursday of Every Month
(Jan. 8, Feb. 12, Mar. 12)
Ages 3—6 years
4:00pm

Members: $10/child per session or $27 for the series
Non-Members: $15/child per session or $42 for the series

Every session includes a story, a live animal, and an activity or craft. *One adult must stay for the duration of the program. Meet in the Ceder Room.*

Tiny Trekking

Friday, January 2; Tuesday, February 10; Friday, March 20
Ages Newborn—5 years

FREE for Members and Non-Members
(donations accepted to defray program costs)

Experience the outside world at a child's pace! You and your child will explore each colorful leaf, climb each rock and log, and probably get a little dirty in the process! Dress for the weather! Extreme weather will cancel. *Meeting locations vary.*

After-School Adventures

Grades 1-3: Tues., March 3, 10, 17, 24
Grades 4-6: Weds., March 4, 11, 18, 25
4:15—5:30pm

Members: $10/child per session or $35/child for the series
Non-Members: $15/child per session or $55/child for the series

Every session brings a new adventure, such as exploring secret places, meeting live animals, and doing fun outdoor activities. *Adults can stay, but it is not required. Meet in the Ceder Room.*

Spring Break Camp

Tuesday, April 14—Friday, April 17
Grades 1-3: 9:30am-12:30pm
Grades 4-6: 1:30pm-4:30pm

Members: $25/session or $90/week
Non-Members: $40/session or $150/week

Kids can spend their school vacation playing games, making crafts, meeting live animals, and exploring White Memorial. We guarantee they'll learn amazing things along the way. *Adults can stay, but it is not necessary. Meet in the A.B. Ceder Room.*

Advanced registration is required for all programs. Please visit whitememorialcc.org or call 860-567-0857. Please inquire about financial aid as needed.

Meet Our New Campground Manager Dan Bergeron

Story and Photo by Gerri Griswold

In conversation with our newly minted campground manager, Dan Bergeron, you would think he is a cat with nine lives! His resume is overflowing with a treasure trove of experiences. From his first job as a nine-year-old on his family's cattle farm in Bantam / Morris, to carpentry (he is a graduate of Oliver Wolcott Technical School) and masonry. He has also been an arborist, volunteer fire fighter, certified personal trainer, nutritionist and strength coach, and landscape. Is Dan for real? Absolutely! Dan is the real deal! " My whole life I never had just one job."

A follower of Nordic history and philosophy, Bergeron regularly reads Hávamál, a Norse book of the Viking age dating back 1000 years. The series of short poems present advice for living, proper conduct, and wisdom and are still pertinent to modern times. "The writings make me a better version of myself." He patiently looks for signs to guide him through day-to-day life.

Growing up, Dan never spent much time at White Memorial other than the obligatory stroll around the Boardwalk. He had no idea how many acres and miles of trails were in the Foundation's possession. Heck, he didn't even know there were campgrounds! Earlier this year he was thinking of buying a gym. One day a friend sent Dan a text. The friend was holding a turtle he found in front of Dan's house. The text said, "Did you lose a turtle?" Bergeron's spirituality led him to look up the meaning of a turtle (something he had never seen in his neighborhood). "Security, wisdom, and patience." Not long after the text it was determined that the gym was a financial liability. Looking for a little financial consistency while he sorted out his next move, Bergeron learned about a seasonal position at Point Folly Campground and applied. "Not even halfway through the season I thought, I could do this for the rest of my life."

Viking on Board! Dan Bergeron
White Memorial Foundation
Campground Manager

With John Grabowski retiring after 50 years as campground manager, a new opportunity presented itself to Dan, "There is no filling John's shoes. I just hope to make a place to fit my boots."

Welcome to White Memorial, Dan. We have every confidence that you are about to greatly enhance the experience for so many campers who treasure their summers camping at Point Folly and Windmill Hill.

Welcoming the *MayAlain*

Continued from page 1

Math shows up in lofting and layout; science in buoyancy, moisture, and curing; art in elegant lines and color; language in the way team members explain choices and record progress. Safety is constant, not as a rulebook lecture but as a culture of attention and care—because a chisel is sharp, a steam box is hot, and respect keeps everyone whole.

Our connection with Forman students goes beyond the boat shop. On our property, they've pitched in on habitat projects—most notably building brush piles. It's simple work with big impact: a thoughtfully placed brush pile provides year-round cover for songbirds, small mammals, and beneficial reptiles and amphibians, and it creates pockets of food and shelter that help wildlife weather storms and winter alike. In the process, students see how sustainable forest management isn't only about harvesting wood; it's also about leaving the woods richer in structure and habitat. Our forests can supply durable materials and, with care, provide the habitat that keeps those forests alive.

They also learn about impact. Choosing regionally sourced wood reduces transport, supports local jobs, and keeps value in the community. Using traditional, repairable construction demystifies maintenance and extends the working life of an everyday vessel. A hand-built boat is inherently teachable—it invites questions about where materials come from, how they're grown, and what it means to take only what a forest can sustainably give.

WMCC Education Director Carrie Szwed (R) admires the the MayAlain's interior.

And then there's the gift itself. The *MayAlain* will serve as a floating reminder of the values that shaped it—craftsmanship, sustainability, and generosity. It will spark conversations with visitors and students about why local wood matters, why steam can bend a board but not break it, and why the best tools in any shop are careful hands and a curious mind. When people step aboard, they'll be stepping into a story that began in a school shop and continues on the water.

We're profoundly grateful to the Forman School students and their coaches, Wendy Welshans and Brittany Bloom-Price, for the time, talent, and heart invested in this project. Thank you for letting us see the world through your work: the straight line of a true keel, the clean arc of a bent rib, the quiet pride of a hand-painted hull, the woven patience of a caned seat. The *MayAlain* carries more than people; it carries the lessons you learned and the hope you've built into every frame.

Please join us in welcoming *MayAlain* and celebrating the young builders who made her. May she remind us, each time she meets the water, that our community's future is strongest when it is rooted in local forests, guided by good teaching, and shaped by skilled, caring hands. May and Alain would be proud.

To learn more about Forman's Boat Building Team, visit: https://www.formanschool.org/athletics/our-sports/boatbuilding

Make a Difference

In her continuing series, Zoë Greenwood helps you find small ways to help the environment

By the time this issue arrives in your mailbox, Thanksgiving will be behind you. After the turkey and pie are eaten, most thoughts turn to Chanukah, Christmas and Kwanza. It's a time filled with love and family and *frustration*! How on earth are you expected to shower loved ones with gifts while staying in budget and still pay the mortgage and put food on the table? Prices have gone up on nearly everything and many people are forced to cut back. Well, the bank still expects its payment and exploring less costly food choices can be fun and educational, but what about the gifts?

When our kids were small, the day after Thanksgiving was spent figuring out what to give aunts and uncles and grandparents and parents and friends for Christmas. It was a day spent going through books and magazines and pamphlets to figure out what to MAKE for everyone. The gifts were simple and appropriate to the age of the giver…easier projects when they were younger and more complex ones as they aged. Hubby and I are pleased to announce that these many years later, we are the happy recipients of handmade gifts from both of our kids.

So, let's put on our thinking caps and come up with a list of things that you and your family can make for the people on your gift list. Remember always, that gifts come from the heart and that when you make something for someone else, love is poured into the gift, too. In fact, when you open something that someone has made for you, you can almost *feel* the love.

Here goes: For people that heat with wood or have a fireplace, gather downed branches and cut them to fairly equal lengths and give a gift of kindling. Putting the kindling into a wooden box that you have made or a burlap sack or a grocery store brown bag is an easy wrapping solution. Just stacking and wrapping the bundle with twine will work, too. Try your hand at an easy platform birdfeeder or birdhouse. Lots of ideas and plans can be found on the internet. If there is a construction sight nearby, go and ask if they have a pile of discarded ends of wood that you can have. Lots of times workers are happy to give them away. Carting them away costs them money. You are helping them and keeping more things out of the landfill.

If wood isn't your thing, maybe cooking is. Consider a gift of the pickles you put up last summer or the jam you made from blueberries or strawberries. How about a jar of your famous spaghetti sauce? In fact, when you make your garden plans this spring, think ahead and put in extras to make pickles or sauerkraut or jam. That will give you a leg up in holiday gifting in 2026. Bread of any kind is always a nice gift; sourdough, English muffin, pumpkin, apple, cranberry. Add a fancy ribbon and you're done. If you are more inclined to go for the sweet, think fudge or caramels or spiced nuts. Put them in a nice jar that you have washed out and you're finished. You can find lots of recipes on the internet for pretty cookie or bread kits. Include the recipe and you are good to go. They don't have to be sweets; there are lots of recipes for soup kits as well.

Do you like to sew? How about an apron? Or some potholders? Or a table runner? Bowl covers? We have some dear friends who earn six figure incomes, and they ALWAYS give handmade gifts. We've received everything from candles to wallets to crocheted afghans. All of them wonderful and useful and full of love.

Still undecided? How about a coupon book? It doesn't need to be fancy. Use plain white or colored paper, cut and stapled. You can decorate the sheets or not, depending on your mood. Offer things like free babysitting or a homecooked supper or car-washing or leaf-raking or snow-shoveling. Think of things that you would like someone to offer you and offer those things to people that you love. Perhaps you'd offer a gift of an experience instead of a "thing." Think walks in the woods, or an afternoon of games and visiting, or help with a project of their choice.

So, at this time of year, get creative with your gift-giving. Keep your budget in check and in all things, think of ways that *you* can ***make a difference***.

February 28: Snow Snake Workshop and Live Snake Meet & Greet at The Institute for American Indian Studies, Washington, Connecticut

Did you know that *Snow Snake*, a traditional winter game commonly practiced by the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois), is still played today in many Northern Native American communities? This game involves a stick that is carved and decorated to resemble a snake. Competitors throw the stick along a snow trench and try to see how far they can make it go. Now you have a chance to make your own snow snake! Join Susan Scherf, educator with the Institute for American Indian Studies and an expert wood crafter, for one of two workshops filled with whittling good fun. We will provide the materials and have some wood-burning kits on hand. Participants are welcome to bring a whittling knife. If weather permits, join in a friendly competition following each workshop.

Illustration credit: Smithsonian Magazine

Since we're making "snow snakes," let's also meet some *live* snakes while we're at it! Colleen Harrak from White Memorial Conservation Center will bring several live snakes from their Education Collection to IAIS to visit with program participants. From juvenile rat snakes to a big, friendly giant named "Peaches," White Memorial's resident snakes give people an up-close and personal encounter with some radical reptiles. If you sign up for the first workshop, hang out afterwards and meet our snakes. Or, if you sign up for the second workshop, arrive an hour early to see the snakes.

February 28, 2026
Snow Snake Workshop Time Slots:
12:00-1:00pm or 2:00-3:00pm
Live Snake Meet and Greet: 1:00-1:45pm
(By signing up for either workshop, you can attend the Meet & Greet.)

Space is limited, so pre-registration is requested. Please visit the IAIS website to register: https://www.iaismuseum.org. Questions? Email events@iaismuseum.org or call (860) 868-0518. Participants under 18 must be accompanied by an adult.

For IAIS and WMCC Members: $20/participant;
Non-Members: $40/participant

Winter Calendar of Events 2026

For more information on our live, virtual, and hybrid programs, please call 860-567-0857 or register online: www.whitememorialcc.org

JANUARY

1 **HAPPY NEW YEAR!**
Museum & Offices Closed

2026!

2 **Tiny Trekking with Kelly Orr**
Owl Prowl!
5:00 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room

3 **All About**
the North American Porcupine
10:00 a.m., A. B. Ceder Room

January 3, 18, February 15, March 7, 22
Llama Walks with Debbie Labbe
Call 860-248-0355 for more information

6 **Fresh Start Hiking Club**
with Gerri Griswold
7:45 a.m., Meet in the A. B. Ceder Room.

8 ***Nature's Nursery Series***
See page 3 for details.

8 **Happy Hour Hiking Club**
with Gerri Griswold!
4:00 p.m - 5:00 p.m., Meet in the Museum.

10 ***Artistry with Animals***
with Colleen Harrak: Turtles!
See page 7 for details.

10 ***3rd Annual Sweet Hike***
with Gerri Griswold & Kelly Orr
See page 7 for details.

12 - 18 **Children's Free Week in the Museum**
Free admission to children ages 12 and under when accompanied by an adult.

January 14, 28, February 11, 25, March 11
Virtual Dark of Winter Yoga with
Judith Ehrman-Shapiro
5:30 p.m. - 6:45 p.m. $12.00
A portion of the proceeds is donated to WMCC. Call Judith: 860-309-9489
For more information:
judith.ehrmanshapiro@gmail.com

16 ***SOUP-er Winter Hike***
with Kelly Orr & Gerri Griswold
See page 7 for details.

17 **Winter Walk Through Old Camp**
Townshend with Gerri Griswold
10:00 a.m., Meet in the Museum

19 ***Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. Day***
Offices Closed

24 **DEEP CARE FAMILY**
ICE FISHING WORKSHOP
Families and individuals ages 9 and up are welcome to attend this unique event now in its 9th year! Taught by certified volunteer instructors. All materials are provided. FREE! BRING LUNCH.10:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room. Pre-register online: www.whitememorialcc.org

24 ***Snowflake Bentley with Tom Alena***
See page 7 for details.

31 **Getting to Know Groundhogs**
with the Children's Museum
of West Hartford
2:00 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room,
Pre-register: www.whitememorialcc.org

FEBRUARY

3 **Fresh Start Hiking Club**
with Gerri Griswold
7:45 a.m., Meet in the A. B. Ceder Room.

7 ***WINTER FESTIVAL***
Burr Pond State Park, Torrington CT
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Visit our booth! Meet an Avian Ambassador!
For more information:
https://portal.ct.gov/NCLI/Events/Winter-Festival

7 ***Cut it Out!***
The Local Practice & History
of Ice Harvesting
See page 7 for details.

10 **Tiny Trekking with Kelly Orr: Point Folly**
10:00 a.m., Meet at Point Folly
(130 North Shore Road)

12 ***Nature's Nursery Series***
See page 3 for details.

12 **Happy Hour Hiking Club**
with Gerri Griswold!
4:00 p.m - 5:00 p.m., Meet in the Museum.

14 ***Artistry with Animals***
with Colleen Harrak: Snakes!
See page 7 for details.

14 ***Valentine's Day Coffee House***
with Jeff & Zoe Greenwood
See page 7 for details

16 - 22 **Children's Free Week in the Museum**
Free admission to children ages 12 and under when accompanied by an adult.

16 ***Presidents Day***
Office Closed

20 **Star Party!**
7:00 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room,
Weather permitting, there will be star gazing after the program.

21 ***Animal Tracks & Signs***
with Shirley Sutton
See page 7 for details

28 ***White Memorial Conservation Center***
& The Institute
for American Indian Studies
Snow Snake Workshop
& Live Snake Meet & Greet
See page 5 for details.
To register visit: https://www.iaismuseum.org

28 ***Mistaken Identity:***
Snakes in Connecticut
with Brian Kleinman,
Riverside Reptiles Education Center
See page 7 for details.

MARCH

2 - 8 **Children's Free Week in the Museum**
Free admission to children ages 12 and under when accompanied by an adult.

After School Adventures
Tuesdays and Wednesdays
in March
See page 3 for details.

3 **Fresh Start Hiking Club**
with Gerri Griswold
7:45 a.m., Meet in the A. B. Ceder Room.

7 **Point Folly Promenade**
with Gerri Griswold
10:00 a.m., Meet at the Campground Store
123 North Shore Road.

12 ***Nature's Nursery Series***
See page 3 for details.

12 **Happy Hour Hiking Club**
with Gerri Griswold!
4:00 p.m - 5:00 p.m., Meet in the Museum.

14 ***Artistry with Animals***
with Colleen Harrak:
Birds of Prey!
See page 7 for details.

14 **Late Winter Walk to Beaver Pond**
with Gerri Griswold
10:00 a.m., Meet at the trailhead RTs 63/61

20 **Tiny Trekking with Kelly Orr:**
Cranberry Pond Mattatuck Trail
4:00 p.m., Meet at 85 Webster Rd., Litchfield

20 **Star Party!**
8:00 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room, Weather permitting, there will be star gazing after the program.

21 ***9th ANNUAL***
NATURE TRIVIA NIGHT!
See page 7 for details.

23 - 29 **Children's Free Week in the Museum**
Free admission to children ages 12 and under when accompanied by an adult.

28 ***Raven: Bird, Myth, Legend***
with Mary Beth Kaeser & Gerri Griswold
See page 7 for details

IN PERSON, VIRTUAL, & HYBRID Nature Study Workshops and Saturday Programs: Winter 2026

Please pre-register and pay online: www.whitememorialcc.org

Artistry with Animals with Colleen Harrak
Saturdays, Jan. 10, Feb. 14, March 14, 2026
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., Ages 10 & up!
A. B. Ceder Room
Members: $10.00 /session, $27.00 /series
Non-Member: $30.00 / session, $80.00 /series

Unleash your creativity at these unique ANIMAL Life Drawing classes, led by our own artist and educator, Colleen Harrak. At each of the 3 sessions, you will create 2-D art using both taxidermy and live animals as your visuals. Materials included. Charcoal, acrylic, and mixed media available. All levels welcome.

3rd Annual Sweet Hike with Gerri & Kelly
Saturday, January 10, 2026
2:00 p.m.
Meet in the Museum.
Member: FREE Non-Member: $10.00

In the late 19th century hot potato vendors peddled their wares on the busy streets of Manhattan. Join Gerri Griswold and Kelly Orr as they lead you on a pretty winter hike to Pine Grove I Campsite where you'll be greeted with a roaring fire and roasted sweet potatoes. Comforting mulled cider will also be on hand!

SOUP-er Winter Hike with Gerri & Kelly
January 16, 2026
5:00 p.m.
Meet at the Mott-Van Winkle Classroom
$5.00 per person, Children under 12 FREE!

Bring a thermos full of soup, cider, hot chocolate…anything warm! Join us for a night hike somewhere (we'll let Old Man Winter decide where we'll be going!) After the hike, enjoy your treat by a roaring fire. Listen for owls, watch the stars above, share a story, or meet a new friend who also realizes that there is no such thing as bad weather…only bad clothing.

Snowflake Bentley with Tom Alena
Saturday, January 24, 2026
2:00 p.m. , A. B. Ceder Room
Member: $10.00, Non-Member: $20.00

The complexity and beauty of a single snow crystal was first captured on film by Wilson Bently, a farmer from Vermont. His story captures the dedication and perseverance of science-minded people. In this program, we'll look at some of his work and show how anyone can photograph snow crystals using a Smart Phone!

Cut it Out! The Local Practice & History of Ice Cutting
Saturday, February 7, 2026
11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Meet in the A. B. Ceder Room.
Member: $5.00 Non Member: $10.00

Ice harvested from Bantam Lake was used for refrigeration throughout the year. Enjoy a presentation and display of old "tools of the trade." Weather conditions permitting, the program culminates with our own "Cut-Ups" James Fischer, Jeff Greenwood, and Gerri Griswold (caterer) demonstrating how ice was cut and moved using the same tools and methods. Dress for the weather!

Valentine's Day Coffee House with Jeff & Zoe Greenwood
Saturday, February 14, 2026
7:00 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room
All tickets: $10.00

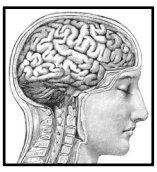
Spend a cozy evening with former WMCC Education Director Jeff Greenwood and his wonderfully fun, talented, and feisty wife Zoe Greenwood. These folks have made their mark in the folk and bluegrass genres. Hum along to Peter, Paul, and Mary, John Denver, Woody Guthrie, and more! Coffee and cake will be served. Bring your loved ones to this very special evening of music.

Animal Tracks & Signs with Shirley Sutton
Saturday, February 21, 2026
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
A. B. Ceder Room
Member: $15.00, Non-Member: $25.00
For ages 16 and up!

Discover who has been in the White Memorial Foundation woods by identifying the things they left behind! Join Master Wildlife Conservationist Shirley Sutton as she interprets the landscape and teaches you how to identify scat, tracks, and other signs of wildlife! Dress for the weather!

Mistaken Identity: Snakes in Connecticut with Brian Kleinman, Riverside Reptiles
Saturday, February 28, 2026
2:00 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room
Member: $15.00, Non-Member: $25.00
For ages 8 and up!

Connecticut has 14 species of snakes including two venomous species! Learn who's who…Northern Water Snake or Copperhead? Milk Snake or Timber Rattlesnake? Brian Kleinman will navigate you through the nuances of species of snakes commonly misidentified as venomous. Here is a rare opportunity to meet a copperhead…and Brian! He is the best in his field.



9th Annual Nature Trivia Night!
Saturday, March 21, 2025
7:00 p.m., Carriage House
All Tickets: $15.00
Bring dinner & BYOB. Dessert, coffee, tea, and water provided!

Are you prepared to test your nature knowledge at our 9th Annual Nature Trivia Night? Teams of up to six (we HIGHLY encourage team costumes) will compete for a valuable prize. Register individually and then form a team. If you don't have a team, we'll put you on one upon arrival!

Raven: Bird, Myth, Legend with Mary Beth Kaeser & Gerri Griswold
Saturday, March 28, 2026
2:00 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room
Member: $15.00, Non-Member: $25.00

Mary Beth Kaeser https://www.horizonwings.org/ , her lovely imprinted Raven, Maven, and Gerri Griswold team up for a program devoted to the most intelligent bird brain in the world. Learn about these amazing corvids (and their relatives which Mary Beth will be bringing along) and the massive impact Ravens have had in culture and folklore through the centuries and around the world!

Teachers, Group Leaders, and Program Coordinators,

White Memorial Conservation Center has established a tradition of providing quality environmental education programming since 1964. Let us help you incorporate the wonders of nature into your curriculum or Calendar of Events.

Education programs can be conducted at White Memorial or at your facility.

The Program Possibilities are Endless...

Animal Adaptations
Creature Features
Do the Locomotion
Habitat Chat
Pond Prowl
Measuring Our Impact
Rare and Remarkable
Take a Hike
Way to Grow
Wildlife in Winter
...and so many more!

We are also happy to design a program that caters to your needs. Just ask!

Visit whitememorialcc.org for more information and a complete list of programs with detailed descriptions, including the curriculum standards they meet.

Call 860-567-0857 or email Carrie@whitememorialcc.org to book your next program with White Memorial!

"I wonder if the snow loves the trees and fields
that it kisses them so
with a white quilt; and perhaps it says,
'Go to sleep, darlings, till the summer comes again.'"
- Lewis Carroll

What's Inside This Edition of
SANCTUARY

Give the Gift of Nature to Yourself or a Loved One. Become a Member of The White Memorial Conservation Center

Individual Membership: $40.00
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The White Memorial Conservation Center
P.O. Box 368
Litchfield, CT 06759

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