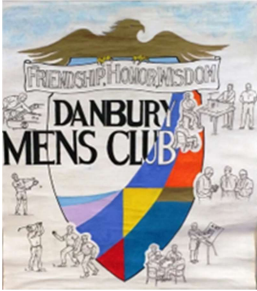


Volume 2 Issue 1 March, 2026 Wayne Covill, Editor covillw@yahoo.com		GDAMC Spring Newsletter
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**"If I keep a green bough in my heart, the singing bird
will come." - Chinese Proverb**

Spring Fling!

Time to dust off the golf clubs and pump up the bicycle tires! If Spring isn't quite here yet, it's very near! While meteorological spring is March 1st, Spring officially arrives with the equinox on Friday, March 20 at 10:46 AM this year. Gardeners have already started their lettuce, spinach, cauliflower, broccoli, and Brussel's sprouts and are waiting impatiently to transplant outdoors. What are **You** most looking forward to: trying out the new trout flies you tied, finding new trails to hike, or taking Pickle Ball outdoors again?

Be sure to check on our website (<https://www.gdamc.org/>) for even

more timely news and events!

We hope you'll find this newsletter interesting and helpful! Please let us know what you think about it! We are always looking for new ideas and contributors, photos, stories, poems, and events, so please don't hesitate to email me with your critiques and/or suggestions.

A Message From Our President:

Shifting into Spring Mode in Danbury

Did you know that Connecticut's primary equivalent to Punxsutawney Phil is Chuckles. Chuckles XI, or often referred to as Charles XI, to be exact. This "groundhog prognosticator" has been around since 1968 and is located at the Lutz Children's Museum in Manchester, where every year the groundhog makes its prediction to the Mayor of Manchester. This year Chuckles saw his shadow and predicted 6 more weeks of winter.

So, looking out at all the snow this morning (it is Monday, February 23), it was not a surprise, groundhog or not, that winters grasp is still with us. And it has been a cold and snowy winter. But it also got me thinking that while everything's quiet (except for the occasional plow truck going by) and snowy white today, in just a few weeks western Connecticut starts to wake up gorgeously to spring.



By late March and April, we'll start seeing:

- Daffodils pushing through the last frost
- Cherry and magnolia trees blooming
- Tarrywile Park trails turning green again
- That first warm 55° day that feels like summer after winter

If you're near Tarrywile Park & Mansion, that's one of the best early-spring spots for a reset walk. Perhaps our hiking group will be there soon.

Little Ways to Bring Spring Closer (Even While It's Snowing)

While you're snow-watching:

- Start seeds indoors (herbs are easy and optimistic ☐)
- Plan a spring day trip somewhere, perhaps to the Connecticut

River Valley

- Open the windows for just 5 minutes on the next mild day
- Make something lemony (your brain associates citrus with spring)
- Clean those golf clubs from last year (or even from the year before that)
- Start getting the tackle box ready

There's something kind of cozy about being warm inside while winter does its dramatic thing outside — and knowing it won't last forever.

But I am ready for spring and for:

- ☐ flowers
- ☐ warmer weather
- ☐♂ getting back outside
- or just not shoveling anymore?

Okay, I live in a condo, and they shovel for me, but you get the idea.

As for Chuckles, Connecticut also has other, perhaps more accurate, animal predictors:

- Scramble the Duck: Located in Eastford, this duck has been providing predictions since 2015 and boasts a 100% accuracy rate, often garnering more attention for its accuracy than the state groundhog.
- Beardsley Bart: A prairie dog residing at the Beardsley Zoo in Bridgeport, who also makes annual weather predictions.

So, while Chuckles is the official state animal for weather predictions, research has shown that in some years, the other Connecticut animal prognosticators, like Scramble or Beardsley Bart, have better predicted the coming of spring. In fact, this year Beardsley Bart predicted an early spring to Bridgeport Mayor Joe Ganim. Let's hope this prairie dog, and not Chuckles or Scramble, made the correct weather prediction. Fore!

GDAMC New Members (December - March)

Our membership is growing. Welcome to our new members who have joined recently:

Joe Dobbins

Manny Furtado

Activities Spotlight:

Activity Leaders: Send me photos and info about one of your group's "special" days to be highlighted here each quarter.

Whether your "shtick" is a pool cue...



...or a golf club...



...a trekking pole...



... or a fishing rod...



...we've got something right up your alley!!



Spring Meeting Dates and Featured Speakers

Meeting Date	Scheduled Speaker
March 11	Kerri Landa - A Peace core veteran to relate her hike up Kilimanjaro
March 25	Andrea Gartner, Exec. Director Norwalk River Valley Trail
April 8	Margaret Smith - Owner Wild Birds Unlimited
April 22	Jerry Green - club member - to discuss Lyme disease

May 13	John Pawloski - President Ct. Museum of Mining and Mineral Science
May 27	Bill Rasmussen - Ameriprise Financial Advisor

Upcoming Special Events!

Date	Event
June 10	Installation Luncheon
July 8	Picnic

Local History:

Are you a Connecticut “native?”

Native tribes in Fairfield County, Connecticut, primarily belonged to the Paugussett Indian Nation, an Algonquian-speaking group that occupied the southwestern corner of the state, including the Housatonic River Valley. Major subgroups or clans in the area included the Pootatuck, Pequonnock, Unquowa, and Aspetuck.

Key Details About Local Tribes:

- Paugussett Nation: The main governing group with five sister tribes (Paugussett Proper, Paugussett minor, Pequonnock, Pootatuck, and Weantinock).
- Subgroups in Fairfield County:
 - Pequonnock: Located in the Bridgeport/Fairfield area.
 - Unquowa: Inhabited the immediate area of modern Fairfield.
 - Aspetuck: Occupied areas in modern Weston and Easton.
 - Pootatuck: Situated around Newtown and the upper Housatonic River (From the Mohican phrase "usi-a-di-en-uk" meaning "beyond the mountain place," "river of the mountain place," or simply "over the mountain").
- The Paugussetts' legacy lives on in the names of local rivers, streams, and state forests.
- The sinking of USS Housatonic on 17 February 1864 during the American Civil War was an important turning point in naval warfare. The Confederate States Navy submarine, H.L. Hunley made her first and only attack on a Union Navy warship when she staged a clandestine night attack on USS Housatonic in Charleston harbor.
<https://civilwaronthewesternborder.org/timeline/hl-hunley-sinks-uss-housatonic>
- Lifestyle: They were farmers and fishermen, known for using stone axes, controlling land with fire, and participating in the wampum trade.
- History: The population was severely reduced by epidemics in

the early 1600s, with survivors later facing war, displacement, and enslavement by English settlers.

The Golden Hill Paugussett Indian Nation maintains a historical presence in the area, with recognized, though often contested, reservations established in Trumbull and Colchester. For more information, see:

<https://librarybestbets.fairfield.edu/c.php?g=1396965&p=10333502>

Some Fun Things to do this Spring:

March:

- **Music At The Ridge** Various Performers, Sundays @ 4PM, 24 Clapboard Ridge Rd., Danbury www.musicattheridge.org
- 2/5 – 3/8 ACT Theater, Ridgefield, **Frozen** www.actofct.org
- 03/07 – Ridgefield Playhouse, **Seth Meyers Live** ridgefieldplayhouse.org
- 03/08 – **WCSU Wind Ensemble/Symphonic Band** www.eventbrite.com
- 03/15 – Danbury Music Centre, **Spring Concert**, Newtown Congregational Church www.danburymusiccentre.org
- 03/15 – **CT Master Chorale**, First Congregational Church (Dinner Afterwards) Connecticut Master Chorale
- 03/18 – Ridgefield Playhouse, **John Scofield Trio** (BMW Jazz Series) ridgefieldplayhouse.org
- 03/22 – Danbury Music Centre, **Symphony Orchestra** www.danburymusiccentre.org
- 03/27 – **WCSU Jazz Combos** www.eventbrite.com
- 03/29 – **WCSU Large Jazz Ensemble** www.eventbrite.com

April:

- 04/11 – **WCSU Opera Ensemble**, Evening of One Acts
www.eventbrite.com
- 04/12 – **WCSU, Percussion Ensemble** www.eventbrite.com
- 04/12 – Ridgefield Playhouse, **Al Jardine & the Pet Sounds Band**
- 04/18 – **WCSU, Piano & Chamber Music** www.eventbrite.com
- 04/25 – **WCSU, Wind Ensemble & Symphonic Band**
www.eventbrite.com
- 04/26 – **WCSU, Orchestra & Concert Chorale**
www.eventbrite.com

May:

- 5/14/26 – 6/21/26 – ACT Theater, Ridgefield, **Dear Evan Hansen**
www.actofct.org

**Looking for even more fun events a little farther
afield? Visit:**

<https://www.visitnewengland.com/all/events/events/>

<https://destinationdutchess.com/calendar>

<https://travelhudsonvalley.com/events/category/putnam/>

<https://www.visitwestchesterny.com/things-to-do/events/>



Looking to give away or locate some “stuff?” Post your unwanted items and/or your wants on **Buy Nothing**: <https://buynothingproject.org/>

You can also email your Freebies giveaways or wants to covilw@yahoo.com to be listed here as well.

On Being Old, by Bill Hutchinson

I am old. A lot of ancients won't admit to being old, but I love the idea. First of all, I love all the discounts. You have to ask for most of them, but so what? I ask everybody: the cop who gives me a ticket for speeding, gas stations, my doctor. I don't care. Sometimes they come through. Think of it this way - getting a discount is like taxing businesses to pay for your advanced age. I don't honestly feel that it makes a lot of sense, but they don't think twice about taxing me or raising prices.

I also like the idea of being blessed. People ask me how old I am. I tell them, and bingo - it's "God bless you." I don't know if it's because they think I am going to drop dead right there in front of them, or they want to inherit my money. I don't care. It's a nice gesture. Actually,

now-a-days you have to be really old to get a lot of blessings, but I'm happy to get the ones that do come my way.

Even better is the fine art of retirement. You are as free as a kid and you can get away with it. You can say whatever you want, and the only thing people will say is, "Well you know, he's kind of old." Remember those days when you had to impress people: teachers, those who outranked you in the service, your bosses? Think of the show you put on for the opposite sex - especially in your youth. What a production THAT was! Now you can be honest. Well, I have to admit, my wife still tries to civilize me. "You need a haircut" or "My God! You aren't going out in public looking like that?!"

The good Lord has given me poor hearing. It's a pain sometimes, but when you need it, it's great!

Young people start opening doors for you giving you their seat on the bus, even calling you "Sir". I sometimes get more respect than I ever did as a young one.

One of the biggest complaints we old people have is our lack of memory. I admit it, that can be a problem, but not always. I've learned more shortcuts and interesting places to drive through simply because I forgot where I was going in the first place. Furthermore, when I'm supposed to go somewhere I don't want to go, the good Lord sees to it that I forget the time, or even the day when I'm supposed to arrive.

Finally, there are the grandchildren. Unlike with your own kids, you never have to change their diapers, bathe them, or get up in the middle of the night to quiet them. All you have to do is read to them, and stuff the little ones with candy (when the parents aren't around. After that, you can go home to peace and quiet.

Yep, old age is good.

Fun Fact:

- Spring fever isn't just a saying. Back in the 18th century, people came down with scurvy around springtime after having gone through winter with little to no fresh vegetables, resulting in a depletion of **vitamin C**. This seasonal illness became known as "spring disease" or "spring fever." Nowadays, the term is often used to express our anticipation of spring – when we cannot wait to get outside once again.

Wheel It Forward

Wheel It Forward is a new kind of community library lending out durable medical equipment at no cost. (Suggested donations are always welcome!)

Wheel Chairs

Canes

Shower Chairs

Knee Scooters

Crutches

Toilet Risers

Commodes

Rollators

Hospital Beds

**Rolling
Walkers**

Ice Machines

Plus More!

With locations in Stamford, Bridgeport-Stratford, Newtown, and soon at North Haven, they also accept donations of unneeded, serviceable equipment which are then lent out along with new equipment.

Phone: 203-652-8600

Website: WheelItForwardUSA.org

Look for the next issue on or about June 1!



Our "Home Away From Home!"