

Local News

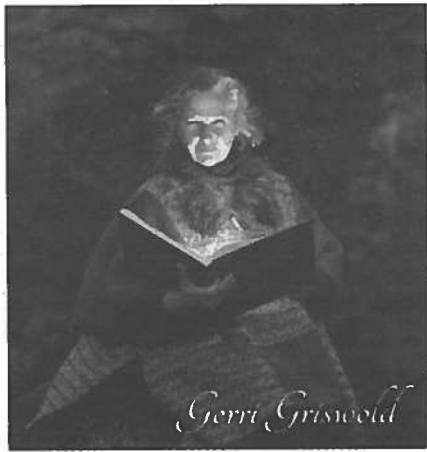
WOMEN'S FORUM PRESENTS:

Gerri Griswold – Iceland Through my Heart

The Women's Forum of Litchfield welcomes Gerri Griswold to speak on a wide range of fascinating topics at the Litchfield Community Center, 421 Bantam Road, Litchfield, CT on Thursday, March 7, beginning at 2:30pm.

Gerri Griswold is Director of Administration and Development at the White Memorial Conservation Center in Litchfield, Connecticut. She has handled bats for twenty-seven years as a wildlife rehabilitator and educator and is licensed by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and the United States Department of Agriculture to keep and exhibit non-releasable bats and more recently, porcupines for education.

Over the years Griswold and her bats have delivered hundreds of programs to libraries, classrooms, Scout troops and organizations like the National Park Service and the Yale Peabody Museum. They have appeared on



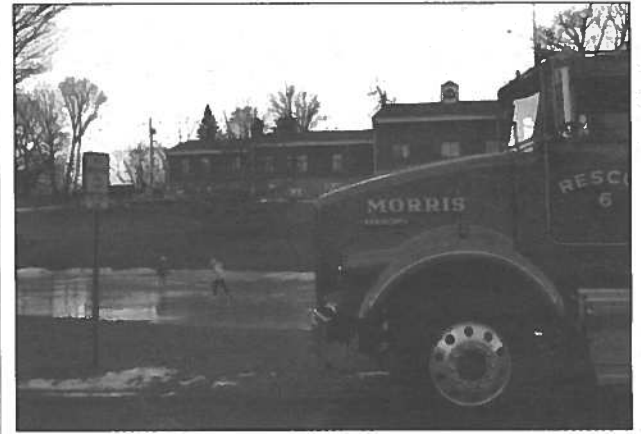
the cover of The Weekly Reader and produced a segment about bats for The Late Show with David Letterman. Griswold was featured in "Seasons of Connecticut" by Diane Smith, published by Globe Pequot Press, released in June 2010. Griswold also serves as the morning voice of traffic on WTIC AM and WZMX FM. Griswold began traveling to Iceland in 2002 when the Elves and Hidden People called her to the Land of Fire and Ice. Since then she has visited Iceland 49 times. In 2010 she launched a travel company, Krummi

Travel LLC, which takes small groups of extraordinary adults on extraordinary trips to Iceland.

The event will be open to non-Forum members with a \$10 fee at the door, which includes a High Tea reception. The contacts for more information are 860-567-3966 and womensforumoflitchfield.org

Light up the Pond

Morris Fire Company Invites Families to their "Light up the Pond" Ice-Skating Rink



On a recent bitter cold Saturday evening, the small pond behind the Morris firehouse was turned into an ice-skating rink complete with outdoor lighting that welcomed local families, including one father and son team from Litchfield who brought their own hockey sticks.

Photo by Jo Ann Jaacks. The first two skaters were the daughters of Dwayne and Jaime Pond, who hosted the event on behalf of the Morris Fire Company.

Morris Community Activities:

TRIVIA NIGHT! – Saturday, March 16

Doors open at 7:00 pm / Games begin at 8:00 pm; tickets \$20.00. Get a table together and join us for Morris Beach & Recreation's second annual Trivia Night – a fundraiser for Morris Beach and Recreation. Event held at South Farms, Morris. Beer / wine / snacks will be available for purchase. No outside food or beverages permitted. Tickets are \$20.00 per person and are on sale at Eventbrite.com.

www.townofmorrisct.com/morris-beach-and-recreation

February Monthly Musings

A Toll Tale by Jane Bailey



Every February since 1985 I remember with shame, and a touch of hubris, that I am a convicted toll evader. Shame and hubris usually don't go together, so I should explain.

We lived in Hampton, New Hampshire, near the coast and spent weekends at our small get-away chalet overlooking Lake Winnepesaukee. This one weekend was especially cold, but we'd had a good time cross-country skiing. My husband and I had come in separate cars, so we headed home at different times on Sunday evening. He took our 8-year-old daughter, and I had our 4-year-old who promptly fell asleep.

As I rolled into the first of three toll booths I discovered my wallet was empty. I frantically searched the glove compartment, the ashtray, the side panel, the floor mats, the seats and found nothing except a wad of chewed gum and a couple of goopy lollipop sticks. I looked sheepishly at the toll collector, "Mmm, I don't seem to have twenty cents. I'm sorry; I didn't know my wallet was empty."

"Just pay forty cents the next time you come through," the attendant said.

Relieved, I drove on. About twenty minutes ahead, I hit the second toll. This time I was more brazen. "Hi, I don't have any money in my wallet, but I come through here every week, so I'll put double in next week. Is that okay?"

"That's not our procedure. Please park on the right, cross to the office on the other side of the highway and arrange your payment there."

"Sir, do you mean I have to cross all six lanes of toll booth traffic? I've got a 4-year-old asleep who I'll have to carry with me."

"Yes M'am, that's what I said."

In disbelief, I pulled into the parking lot. I looked at the 6 lanes of highway traffic backing up at the toll booths and looked at my sleeping son. This is where the hubris comes in. I'm sorry, but I'm NOT about to carry my child across 6 lanes of icy roadway. After emptying every possible pocket in the car and taking a furtive glance at the tollbooth, I gunned it out of there.

Okay, one more and I'm home free. The last toll booth was only a mile from home. There I told my story for the third time! The attendant smiled and handed me a pre-addressed envelope. "Simply put your toll in here and mail it in. Have a good night."

Whew! I made it.... until I was on the off-ramp and heard a siren behind me. I glanced in the mirror and saw



an ominous red light. The officer was young and handsome. "M'am, did you evade a toll back in Dover?"

"Officer, I didn't evade the toll. I tried to pay. My 4-year-old is asleep, and I would have had to carry him across six lanes of highway. Frankly, it wasn't worth it."

He ripped my ticket out of his book and handed it to me. "You can mail in your fine or take it to court. Good night." My hubris now really kicked in. *You bet I'll take this to court!*

Weeks later I sat in the courtroom telling my story under oath, sure that no judge would convict an apple-pie eating, Chevrolet driving, first-grade teacher of toll evasion. All was going well until that handsome officer was called forward. He looked down at his notepad, then looked me in the eye: "Mrs. Bailey, on the evening of February 24 did you or did you not state to me, "Frankly, it wasn't worth it.?"

"Well...um, yes that's what I said; but I didn't mean it *that way*..."

"Guilty!" the judge declared with a bang of his gavel.

I slunk out of the courtroom and, shame-faced, paid my fine.

Coda:

When I got home, I wrote an eloquent complaint to Governor John Sununu.

Soon I received an embossed letter signed by the Governor stating he was sorry he couldn't retroactively clear my conviction; however, there would now be one standard collection procedure across the state. Who knows, maybe you can thank me for EZ-Pass!

Jane Bailey is a freelance writer who lives in Litchfield. She is a retired educator who enjoys writing creative nonfiction that explores matters of the heart. (<http://janembailey.com>)

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