

The Valley-Voice newsletter marks 5th anniversary

By Ralph Villers

Given the volatile climate we seem unable to escape these days, we're often inundated with the worst of the world. The media is awash in bad things such as pandemics and bitter politics. But what of the Lower Naugatuck Valley? We might not want to dwell so long in the wider world and by doing that miss events closer to home.

There certainly is more to see in Ansonia, Derby, Oxford, Seymour, and Shelton than the usual bad news. We offer the Valley-Voice CT e-publications as an antidote.

Our [Valley-Voice Newsletter](#) celebrates its fifth birthday today. From our first edition (click image to view), the features, notices and advances have remained informative. Likewise, photos, layout and have allowed for a stylish easy to read publication.

Also, the [Valley-Voice Blog](#) has been published since September 2014 with over 10,000 informative posts highlighting our dynamic Valley.

In both the newsletter and blog, we look for features and subjects you might not have considered. We avoid hard news and politics in every article and posting. There are seemingly thousands of places you can go to read about those subjects.

The Valley-Voice covers neither!

We thank our many loyal readers for their views and shares. We appreciate it!

We love residing in the Valley and writing about the dynamic people, places, and organizations that call this area home.

Take a look at a sampling of our newsletter throughout this issue. Click on any (or every) issue to see more of the best of the Valley!

The Valley

VOICE

News, Views & Entertainment

Inaugural Issue, Jan. 22, 2016 Page 1

Derby Historical Society Issue

DHS Receives Grants for Humphreys House Restoration from Persbacker and Valley Community Foundations

Last year, the Derby Historical Society received a \$20,000 grant from the New Milford based Persbacker Family Foundation toward the restoration project at the General David Humphreys House & Museum at 37 Elm Street in Ansonia.

This generous grant was a great impetus for the campaign for the extensive work required.

As a further incentive to get donors and the public involved, the Persbacker Family Foundation has also given the DHS an opportunity to receive an additional \$30,000 in matching funds.

The organization has received \$4,494.00 towards our matching funds to date, and it hopes to meet the matching funding at the earliest.

Toward that end, DHS is in discussions for a major fundraising event in April. This and every event will help to benefit the restoration.

The Derby Historical Society has also been awarded a multi-year Capacity Building Grant from the Valley Community Foundation, to assist with the costs associated with the Restoration Project. The grant, totaling \$50,000, will be paid over the next three years.

Contact DHS Executive Director Paula Norton with any suggestions for this and other fundraising events at: (203) 735-1908 or paula@derbyhistorical.org

Who was David Humphreys of Derby?

Many people do not know the accomplishments past members of their hometowns. Yet for Derby and its environs, we know of such an individual, and that is David Humphreys.

He was born in Derby, the son of the Rev. Daniel Humphreys and Sarah Riggs Bowers Humphreys, the owners of the present day house and museum. He received his Masters degree in 1774 from Yale and was a teacher until 1776.

He enlisted in the 2nd Connecticut Regiment of the Continental Army in July of 1776.

Humphrey was part of the successful battle at Sag Harbor, NY, and due to this, Humphreys was promoted to the rank of Major. After being an advisor to two American generals, he was appointed aide-de-camp of General George Washington in 1780.

There are even more impressive factoids about Humphreys life aside from the Continental Army:

- He was a member of the State's General Assembly.
- He was named U.S. Minister to Portugal, and later, Spain.
- He introduced the Merino breed of sheep and its fine quality wool the state and country.
- He built the first successful wool mill factory in the U.S.
- He owned a factory in Seymour that produced iron tools.

In short, Humphreys was an important person in the development of the Lower Naugatuck Valley as well as the Nation.

David Humphreys House Restoration Continues

The Derby Historical Society continues the restoration of the exterior General David Humphreys House & Museum in Ansonia.

The extensive project is set to be completed in 2018. Estimated at \$200,000 the project involves the removal of the existing siding for the repair of deteriorated sills and framing and to address moisture infiltration issues.

The current exterior consists of a mixture of older pine and modern cedar. The trim is a mixture of older oak casings and corner boards required with pine.

As always, the restoration will be sensitive to the original architectural details of the 1692 house while allowing for modern construction and materials practices.

The repairs will incorporate the use of modern materials to better insulate the walls of the house. Measures will also be taken to protect and control the house against moisture issues.

Alcam Writing & Admin LLC

Contact Ralph or Patti for:

- Writing, Editing and Design Services
- Public Relations, Digital Content, SEO

203-305-9255 • 203-893-8623
e-mail: thevalleyvoice@gmail.com

The E-Street Gallery

Visit us to shop and view our local artists

The Valley Arts Council
35 Elizabeth Street • Derby
203.516.0822

The Valley

VOICE

News, Views & Entertainment

More of the Best of the Valley May 7, 2019

Bronze bust of MLK unveiled at inspiring ceremony in Ansonia

Several hundred turn out to witness history in front of City Hall

By Patricia Villers

ANSONIA - A bronze bust of the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. that now stands in front of City Hall symbolizes equality, and unity in the community.

The unveiling Saturday of resident Vasil Rakaj's beautiful art work in front of City Hall was an incredibly moving and historic event.

"I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal.'"

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Aug. 28, 1963, March on Washington

Rakaj, a native of Albania, is a world-renowned sculptor. He is a member of the Valley Arts Council and works one of the Council studios in the Ansonia Armory.

As a resident I was thrilled my daughter and I were there to witness history in the making.

Mayor David S. Cassetti said, "The theme of Martin Luther King's teachings and writings is unity. King unified a nation when it was in turmoil."

King led the civil rights movement from the mid-1950s until he was assassinated April 4, 1968 in Memphis, Tenn. He was 39.

The Rev. Alfred Smith, pastor, Macedonia Baptist Church, and member of the Martin Luther King Memorial Bust Committee, said King's "dream will live on here in Ansonia."

Article continues on P.2

May 7, 2019

June 3, 2020

The Valley

VOICE

News, Views & Entertainment

More of the Best of the Valley June 3, 2020

Congratulations to members of the Class of 2020

The Valley Voice wishes all the best to members of the Class of 2020 who are graduating during the COVID-19 pandemic. They have become a part of history. Here's to a bright future for all!

- Photos by Patricia Villers

Take a look at a sampling of our newsletter throughout this issue. Click on any (or every) issue to see more of the best of the Valley!



The Valley
VOICE
News, Views & Entertainment

More of the Best of the Valley

October 1, 2013

Van issues stall commission chairman's Harvest Festival plans

by **Ralph Villers**

NSNOLA - This summer, I wrote that everything in life is subject to change. As inevitable as the seasons, we have no choice but to learn to live with change.

Since I do not drive these days, we had our van modified with a wheelchair lockdown so I could be a passenger while my caregiving posse drives.

and thus regain a semblance of independence and get out on occasion.

all went fine until a week ago when the key would not turn, the steering wheel was locked and the van unable to shift gear. Stuck again.

Granted, that's a first world problem. Unfortunately due to my inaction years ago, this mechanical issue might not have occurred.

In 2015, my 2008 Grand Caravan was subject to a recall (14-273) which requires changing the ignition switch that that holds the wireless key. If anyone reads the recall notice, one finds it is a bit opaque.

Calls to service departments at Chrysler-Dodge-Jeep Dealers indicated that the parts for the recall can only be ordered from the factory. And, the parts will not be ordered unless the van is towed to the dealer. Much like the chicken vs. egg scenario.

This morning, AAA sent a tow truck and the van was towed to a dealer who I assume placed the order with the factory for the necessary items.

Naturally, I'm disappointed not so much for losing my ride but much more so that I had to miss this past weekend's fabulous Ansonia Harvest Festival. As chair of the city's Cultural Commission, I missed what I hear was by far the best Harvest Festival to date.

I attempted to roll down from the Hilltop in my wheelchair, but thought the better of it when the very steep hill started downhill. I've written about the lack of transit options in the Valley in 2016 - and the issues are the same as they ever were.

Continued on P. 2

Oct. 1, 2019