



Fall 2015

Green Living News

Quote of the Quarter

Bill Brennan

First Selectman
Town of Wilton

"It is in the interest of every citizen to be conscious of our environment and to preserve precious energy resources. The 'No Idling Program' is a great way to support these goals."



Autumn Events

Wilton and neighboring towns offer a variety of opportunities to enjoy and protect the environment. Here are a few of our favorites.

Wilton Go Green / Wilton Library Association Green Speaker Series

Daryl Hawk: Sacred Places of the World
International documentary photographer, Daryl Hawk, gives a special presentation highlighting sacred and spiritual landscape photographs from faraway places. September 21st, 7:00-8:30 p.m. at the Wilton Library. [Learn more](#)

BOARD NEWS

Bright Idea!

Wilton is a [Clean Energy Community](#), supporting energy efficiency and renewable energy while creating a cleaner future for generations to come. Working together with town leaders, residents and local businesses to set and achieve clean energy goals, WGG has helped Wilton earn its second \$10,000 [Bright Idea Grant](#) from Eversource. The town's first grant funded the top-to-bottom insulation of the historic, town-owned yellow farmhouse at Ambler Farm. This year's award will likely be used to increase energy efficiency by reducing the town's lighting costs.



Wilton Energy Challenge Update

Launched in 2012, the Wilton Energy Challenge provides residents with information and resources on ways to save money and energy. One key component is the Home Energy Solutions audit offered through Energize Connecticut. To date, 1,301 homeowners -- or 21% of all Wilton households -- have taken advantage of this nationally-recognized service, placing Wilton in the top 8% of CT towns participating in the program. For each audit completed, \$25 is donated to the [Norwalk River Valley Trail](#) (NRVT). Thanks to those of you who made the smart energy choice by participating in this program, Wilton Go Green has contributed more than \$6,000 to the continued expansion of the NRVT.

To register for an audit and learn ways to lower your energy bill for immediate and long-term savings, visit energizect.com or call (877) 947-3873.

The Great Healthy Yard Project

Dr. Diane Lewis discusses the impact of chemical lawn pesticides on our streams, rivers and well water, offering healthier ways to steward our yards. October 19th, 7:00pm--8:30 p.m. at the Wilton Library. [Learn more](#)

Idle Threat

A special screening of the film, Idle Threat, followed by a discussion will be held in conjunction with No Idle Week. November 17th, 7:00--8:30 p.m. at the Wilton Library. [Learn more](#)

Celebrate National Public Lands Day

Weir Farm National Historic Site will host a volunteer invasive plant pull followed by old-fashioned apple cider making. Tools, gloves and water provided. September 26th 8:45 a.m.-2:00 p.m. [Learn more](#)

Ambler Farm Day

Enjoy a quintessential autumn family festival, complete with hay rides, make-your-own scarecrows, farm animals and more. October 4th, noon-4:00 p.m. [Learn more](#)

Riverbank Restoration

Join volunteers from Builders Beyond Borders, who will return to Merwin Meadows to cut back invasive plant species and plant native ones along the banks of the Norwalk River and at the park. October 10th, 9:30 a.m.-noon.

Shred Day

Safely dispose of personal and sensitive documents. October 17th, 9:00 a.m.-noon at Bankwell in Wilton, 47 Old Ridgefield Road. Free to the community.

Where the Wild Things Run

A fun run at Woodcock Nature Center for runners, joggers and walkers of all ages (no strollers). The 5K course covers a mix of groomed and rugged trails, narrow bridges and boardwalks, highlighting the property's beauty. October 18th. [Learn more](#)

Ambler Farm Fright Night

Drop off kids grades 3-5 for haunted activities, storytelling and refreshments. October 23rd & 24th, 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. [Learn more](#)

Family Fun Prowl

Bring your flashlight and enjoy a night scavenger hunt along Woodcock Nature Center's boardwalk

Carry On, Carry Off

The air is crisp and filled with the cheers of thirsty players and fans on Wilton's athletic fields. Please do your part to curb the harmful environmental impact discarded plastic by bringing your own reusable water bottle to games, whether you're on the team or in the stands. If commercially bottled beverages are your only option, take your cans and bottles home and recycle them rather than tossing in the trash or leaving at the field.

A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

Wilton becomes an idle-free town



Idling -- we all do it from time to time, picking up children at school, waiting for a take-out order, sitting in line at the bank drive-up window or outdoor post box, even warming up the car before heading off to work on a chilly morning.

So, what's the problem with idling? It turns out, lots.

The emissions created by idling vehicles can have a direct effect on the health of adults and children who inhale the often-invisible exhaust. Increases in asthma, allergies, heart and lung disease, and cancer have all been linked to idling, and breathing exhaust fumes can damage brain cells and may contribute to autism. Children are particularly vulnerable because they breathe 50 percent more air per pound of body weight than adults.

Idling harms the planet as well, spewing toxins, chemicals and carbon dioxide (a noxious greenhouse gas) that contribute to haze, acid rain and global warming. In fact, an idling vehicle emits 20 times more pollution into the air than one traveling at 30 miles per hour.

trail and raft trips onto the pond. Meet Woodcock's resident animals and learn about exotic ones from Stamford's Animal Embassy. October 23rd. [Learn more](#)

Once Upon a Farm

Ambler Farm's 10th Anniversary Gala. November 7th, 6:30 p.m.-11:00 p.m., Silver Spring Country Club. [Learn more](#)

Wilton Farmers' Market

Local farmers and artisans join together to provide fresh produce, baked goods, organic dips, jams, olive oil, pies, soaps, lotions, and other home-grown goods. Open Wednesdays through October 28th, noon-5:00 p.m., at the Wilton Historical Society. [Learn more](#)

Ambler Farm Stand

Enjoy a variety of organic, seasonal produce and the farm's own Maple syrup. Wednesdays at the Wilton Farmers' Market and Saturdays through October from 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. at Ambler Farm. [Learn more](#)

Georgetown Farmers' Market

Bring home farm-fresh produce, gourmet prepared foods, eggs, artisan bread, baked goods, pasta and more. Sundays, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. rain or shine. 4 Old Mill Road, Georgetown. [Learn more](#)

Junior Ranger

Earn a Weir Farm Junior Ranger badge by completing one of three fun-filled activities. Or complete two and earn the special Weir Farm Junior Ranger patch. Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays through October. [Learn more](#)

Take Part in Art -- Watercolor Painting

Discover your inner artist while enjoying beautiful Weir Farm National Historic Site. Watercolor supplies are provided and professional artists are available for laid-back instruction. All ages and abilities are welcome, no fee. Sundays from 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. through October. [Learn more](#)

Take Part in Art -- Sketching

Take inspiration from the great outdoors while sketching plein air with graphite pencils, colored pencils or chalk pastels provided by Weir Farm. All ages and experience levels are welcome, no fee. Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. through October. [Learn more](#)

Idling also hits our wallets -- and hard. Americans spend a whopping \$13 million *every day* on 12 million gallons of fuel wasted idling. Most cars need only 30 seconds to warm up, even in the winter, and leaving a vehicle running causes more wear and tear on its engine than turning it off and on again.

The amount of fuel used to turn an engine on and off is equivalent to that used while idling a mere 10 seconds, and, contrary to popular belief, causes virtually no wear and tear on a car's starter.

Connecticut law prohibits idling and now the Town of Wilton has adopted its own [No Idling Resolution](#) to further support the state statute. Proposed by Wilton Go Green, the new policy is unanimously supported by the Board of Selectmen.

Look for green and white no idling signs prominently posted around town this fall, instructing drivers to turn off their engines (except while sitting in traffic or in extreme temperatures). While signs will not appear in every parking and drive-up location, the no-idling resolution is a town-wide mandate.

On November 16th, WGG will kick off No Idling Week in collaboration with the Wilton Public Schools. Students will patrol the pick-up lines at the schools, reminding parents to turn off their cars' engines while waiting for their children to be dismissed. WGG and the Wilton Library will also host a special screening and discussion of the film, *Idle Threat: Man on Emissions*, on November 17th, from 7:00--8:30 p.m.

The Wilton School District, Wilton WMCA and Wilton Library have already pledged their support of the policy. Join them in keeping Wilton's skies blue and our air clear by taking the [No Idling Pledge](#).

And, remember: *If you're stopped for more than ten, turn it off and on again!*

A WALK IN THE WOODS

Exploring Wilton's Open Spaces



Seasonal Recipes

Cooking with local, organic produce and eating with the seasons nourishes not only body and soul, but the environment as well.

Squash Bisque

Hard squash are some of late-summer's most cherished harvests. Sweet and nutty, acorn squash is at its peak in autumn -- from early October through December -- and particularly good for this bisque. [Get recipe](#)

Pasta Ratatouille-Style

This recipe takes advantage of the last vegetables in your garden during Indian Summer. Grill them outdoors for added flavor, or broil inside if the weather's wet. [Get recipe](#)



Protecting Wilton's Wildlife

Large and spectacularly plumed, Wild Turkeys can be spotted striding around woods, field edges, clearings and roadsides. Courting males



Wilton is home to 23 parks, preserves, farms, sanctuaries, fields, forests and other protected land, totaling about 1,250 acres. This autumn, immerse yourself in the breathtaking artistry of fall's leafy palette and breathe in some clear, crisp air during a rejuvenating walk in the Town Forest.

Town Forest

The Town Forest is Wilton's largest, most rugged open-space park, comprised of approximately 192 acres. It's also home to important historical features, including a large, overhanging rock that first sheltered Native Americans and later, Colonial settlers. During the American Revolution, this area was known as Rock House Woods.

A hike to the northeast corner reveals a waterfall known as Sheep Falls, where Charles Morgan, a miller and area property owner, had a large herd of sheep. Presumably, the falls served as a place to bathe the sheep, which later led to its name.

Trails meander along and across Barrett's Brook, up ridges, among Spring-blooming wildflowers, and through majestic stands of deciduous hardwoods and two small hemlock groves.

Riding is permitted on designated bridle trails, which are narrow and rocky in places, so caution is advised. Camping is also allowed at two camp sites within the Town Forest. Camping permits can be obtained from the Conservation Office at Town Hall.

For more information, directions, parking, access and a trail map, [click here](#).

SUSTAINABLE LIVING

puff themselves up into feathery balls and fill the air with exuberant gobbling. Newly hatched chicks follow their mother for a few days, learning to find food on their own. As the chicks grow, they band into groups composed of several hens and their broods. Winter groups can exceed 200 turkeys! Wild Turkeys eat plant matter foraged on the ground, occasionally climbing into shrubs or low trees for fruits. Cold-weather fare includes acorns, American beech nuts, pecans, hickory nuts, wild black cherries, and other seeds and berries. If you have a large yard near woods, you can attract Wild Turkeys by planting nut-bearing or berry trees.

Green Reads

Our favorite books

H is for Hawk

by Helen Macdonald

For the past few years, I have noticed hawks gliding more and more frequently over our home in North Wilton. One day, to my astonishment, I discovered that there was a hawk nest up high in a tree in the back woods. I have observed a pair of hawks building a nest there for the last two springs. When a friend recommend *H is for Hawk*, I thought it's time to learn more about these majestic birds.

H is for Hawk is a beautiful memoir that introduces you to the world of training hawks. The author attempts to train the most challenging of Hawks -- the Goshawk -- in reaction to her overwhelming grief at the sudden loss of her father. She leads us through this highly difficult task and identifies with the persona of her hawk, its fears, its triumphs. Her human life and her hawk life become entwined -- love and loss, illness and extinction. How can we deal with our personal losses as well as the losses we are inflicting on the natural world around us? I became mesmerized with the author's fluid poetic writing about the big issues of life magnified through her hawk training journey.

Reviewed by Jana Bertkau



Tips for a greener life



Going organic is a commitment to living holistically. And it's never been easier to purchase household and personal care products that are kind to people, animals, and the environment. Or you can make your own. Why not start with one of these treatments to restore hair to its natural luster after a summer of fun in the surf and sun?

Condition Heat a couple of tablespoons of jojoba oil and apply to the roots of your hair before combing through. Wrap a warm towel around your head and leave on for 30 minutes before washing out the oil with a mild shampoo. Or, use a garlic press to squeeze a piece of fresh ginger root until you have enough juice to cover your hair (a tablespoon or more). Mix with an equal amount of sesame oil and massage into your hair and scalp. Wrap your head in a warm towel and leave the mixture on for as long as possible before shampooing out.

Boost To give your hair a boost, add 10 drops of geranium, rosemary, lavender or bergamot oil to a miniature bottle of vodka (yes, vodka!), shake well, and rub into your scalp occasionally.

Stimulate To stimulate your scalp, add a handful of fresh rosemary sprigs to cold water, simmer for 15 minutes, then swab the roots of your hair with the liquid before shampooing. In a hurry? Rub the cut half of a raw onion into the roots before shampooing.

Defy Dandruff For dandruff and other scalp problems, add a few drops of tea tree oil to your shampoo.



Our Vision

Wilton will be the most environmentally sustainable town in Connecticut.

Giving the planet a helping hand is just a matter of making one simple change at a time. And there's a big bonus: small lifestyle changes not only benefit the planet, they often save money, too.

Got a favorite green tip that you'd like to share? Email it to us at info@wiltongogreen.org and we'll be sure to include it in an upcoming edition of Green Living News.

Go Green! Submit your conservation news, favorite seasonal recipes, sustainability tips, green-event listings and wildlife photos to: info@wiltongogreen.org



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