



# The Old Guardian

Month 12 of our 59<sup>th</sup> year

January 2025

## **“Good morning Old Guard”**

Gentlemen,

Here what's in the Newsletter:

- The President's Corner
- Committee Chair Reports
- January Storyteller
- January Speaker
- Officers and Chairs

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## **The President's Corner – John Keleher**

A Happy and Healthy New Year to all Old Guard Members and their families.

We embark on another year of activities and speakers and yes Old Guard good works. No rest for the weary but motivated group.

Great time to say thanks to all our committee chairs and volunteers for a job well done in '24 and best wishes for continued success in '25.

Looking forward to big turnout on January 7th

John

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## **Committee Reports:**

### **CT Foodshare & The West Hartford Youth Food Program- Jeff Lee**

2024 was a wonderful year of Old Guard giving for Foodshare and the WHYFP! The impact on fighting food insecurity ended up with these incredible numbers:

Foodshare- 54,072 lbs. of food, earmarked for their clients, that was inspected, sorted by quality, weighed, boxed, and stacked on pallets for distribution...an amazing efforts by an even more amazing group of volunteers!

WHYFP- Through your consistently generous once a month donation of food and cash we delivered \$10,800 in actual food value to this increasingly essential program.



Hunger is big. Our community is bigger.





Thanks for all your invaluable contributions, and I look forward to 2025 where I know The Old Guard will continue to make a difference in the lives of so many of neighbors in need!

The Jan. Foodshare First Friday was on Jan. 3rd...The date in Feb. is on the 7th. March's Foodshare First Friday is also on the 7th.

The January food donation date for The West Hartford Youth Food Program is on the 21st!

Happy New Year!

**Sign up for future CT Foodshare volunteer dates**

[Quick Link to CT Foodshare Sign-up or Sign-in](#)

## **UCONN Hospital - Bill O'Connor**

The New Year is here. Time to set some goals and objectives. Consider following the longstanding history of volunteering of the Old Guard. The Guard had a long commitment for volunteering at the UCONN Hospital in Farmington. Old Guard members assist patients in finding their appointments and may assist them with a wheelchair.

Volunteers serve a 4-hour shift 8 to noon or noon to 4 on Monday, Wednesdays, Thursdays, or Fridays. Some training is required per HIPPA rules. This is a rewarding activity for our service.

Contact Bill OConnor for details:

## **Historian – Tew DuBois**

As Historian I maintain a list of Old Guard members who pass away between 5/1/24-4/30/25.

Should you learn of a member of the Old Guard who passed away—perhaps in the Courant, by word of mouth, or however, let me know.

Thanks,

Tew

## **Foodbank – Lou Aiello, Mike Feehan**

January we will be asking for your update of donations made to the West Hartford Foodbank, CT Foodshare, Loaves & Fishes, House of Bread., and West Hartford Foodbank.

Total donations to our charities since September is \$21,525 includes:

- CT Foodshare \$13,465
- Loaves & Fishes \$1,000.
- West Hartford Foodbank \$1,000.
- House of Bread \$1,000.
- West Hartford Youth program value of bagged groceries \$5,060.

**Plus, for CT Foodshare: 1x Matching Gifts \$250, 2x Matching Gifts \$5,000, 3x Matching Gifts \$420**

Total including CT Foodshare **5x** food value is \$103,735.

All donations are tax deductible.

A contribution of \$30.00 would feed one person for 30 days based on the CT Foodshare cost. Or your gift helps provide 40 meals to family facing hunger this holiday season.

Every \$1 helps provide up to 2 meals!

Click on this link to learn more about FoodBank with links and addresses to make donations [ctoldguard.org/food-bank](http://ctoldguard.org/food-bank)

If you donate to the food charity of your choice, please remember to:

- Advise the Food Charity that you are an Old Guard member
- Let us know about your donation so that it can be banked.

**BOWLING - Tom Goodrum**

Come and join us for Fellowship and Fun. Bowling continues every Thursday morning at 9:30 am at Callahan's Bowl-O-Rama, 2143 Berlin Turnpike in Newington. No experience is necessary. The cost is \$8.25 per person for the three games, including shoes and balls that are provided.

We start back up on Thursday, January 9. Reminder, if West Hartford schools are delayed or cancelled, we will not be bowling.

Time to get out of the house and be with fellow Old Guard members. Hope to see you there.

**Salvation Army – Larry Carr**

We had a most successful Red Kettle campaign this year on behalf of the Greater Hartford Salvation Army. Our campaign went for about 5 weeks and included four successive Saturdays manning the Red Kettle outside the LaSalle Road post office. We had 40 of our members volunteer to don

the Santa hat and red apron for these Saturday events. Thank you so much for those who volunteered their time for this most worthy cause.

The total donations from our efforts came to \$5,379 as of December 28<sup>th</sup>. Once again, a very good take on behalf of the underserved in our community.

In addition to braving the elements on those Saturday mornings (Actually, the weather cooperated well with us this year), we helped pack over 400 lunches for the folks working at the Hartford Marathon. We also got some exposure for The Old Guard both by having our banner displayed beside the Red Kettle each Saturday, and through two live radio broadcasts on WTIC radio as a part of the Holiday Store at the Orchard Farms site, and from the Homewood Inn & Suites in Glastonbury.

I was proud to represent The Old Guard for this year's campaign and to be a part of this remarkable organization which provides us a forum for good fellowship, friendship, and fun.

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## **January Storytellers**

**January 7<sup>th</sup> - Art Greene - "Finding Connecticut"**

**January 14<sup>th</sup> – John Mitman - "B-Tub"**

**January 21<sup>st</sup> – John Perra – "A Visit to Vietnam"**

**January 28<sup>th</sup> – Mark Kindall - "Making Lemonade — The rebirth of Seattle."**

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## **January Speakers**

## **January 7<sup>th</sup> - Clair Kendall: Treasurer – Fellowship Housing – Town of West Hartford**

West Hartford Fellowship Housing provides affordable housing designated for seniors and physically disabled individuals. Our attractive community is located on sprawling grounds behind Bishop's Corner on Starkel Road in West Hartford.

See: [WH Fellowship Housing](#)

## **January 14<sup>th</sup> - Jessica LeClair, Executive Director – Sustainable CT,**



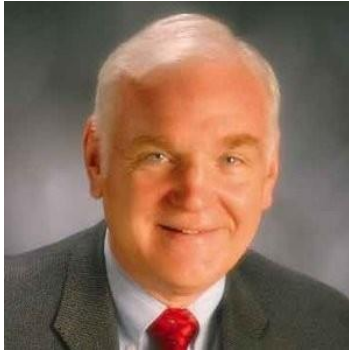
Born and raised in Connecticut, Jess LeClair attended Connecticut College where she received a BA in environmental studies and international relations. She went on to receive an MS in climate science and policy at Bard College. Jess began her professional career in the Office of Climate Change at the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP); she went on to join the newly created Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation (CIRCA). While at CIRCA, she became keenly aware of the importance of local governments as a lever of change and was thrilled to join Sustainable CT's founding executive director as one of the program's primary staff members.

"I'm thrilled to step into the executive director role at Sustainable CT," said Jessica. "As a life-long Connecticut resident, I'm inspired by the positive changes we are seeing across our cities and towns as they engage with Sustainable CT. It has been a privilege to support the development and growth of Sustainable CT since its inception and I look forward to working closely with municipalities as they move forward on their sustainability



programs. We've accomplished a great deal together, but there's still so much more to do, and I'm excited to be a part of the progress."

### **January 21<sup>st</sup> - Bill MacDonnell: Cedar Hill Cemetery, Jan 21, 2025**



Bill is the Board Chair of the Cedar Hill Cemetery & Foundation. Now retired, he was a Dental Anesthetist.

Established in 1864, Cedar Hill Cemetery is a nonsectarian, privately-managed, not-for-profit organization. For generations, Connecticut families have chosen this unique and beautiful place of remembrance as the final resting place for themselves and their loved ones.

Cedar Hill Cemetery's reputation as a premiere example of the American "rural" cemetery is enhanced by its historic landscape, finely sculpted monuments, and natural resources. The Cemetery's landscape and ornamental foreground of ponds and meadows is unique in New England cemetery design.

Cedar Hill is the final resting place of a number of distinguished individuals. Its historic structures and many of its beautiful monuments were designed and executed by prominent artists. The grounds encompass 270 acres of landscaped woodlands and watercourses providing a natural habitat for a wide variety of wildlife.

Throughout its history, Cedar Hill has maintained its standards of excellence by providing its families with comprehensive cemetery services of the highest quality. Our full range of [services](#), [on-site crematory](#), [beautiful memorial grounds](#), and professionally maintained landscape all serve to make Cedar Hill one of America's finest cemeteries.

### **January 28<sup>th</sup> - Derek Slapp, CT State Senator**



**Senator Derek Slap Deputy Majority Leader Chair: Aging  
Vice-Chair: Human Services  
Member: Commerce; Higher Education & Employment Advancement**

State Senator Derek Slap was elected in the special election February 26, 2019 to represent the 98,000 residents of the 5<sup>th</sup> State Senate District towns of West Hartford, Farmington, Burlington, and the western portion of Bloomfield. He had previously served one term as state representative for the 16<sup>th</sup> House District, serving constituents in West Hartford, Avon and Bloomfield.

**Experience and Education:**

Derek is the former Chief of Staff for the Senate Democratic Caucus, where he managed a 70-person staff, helped achieve significant budget savings, and worked with citizen activists to address issues such as gun safety, school security and mental health reforms; GMO labeling; and access to high quality pre-k.

Before his tenure as Chief of Staff, Derek was Director of Communications for Senate Democrats for four years. Derek has also been Deputy Chief of Staff/Communications Director for the Secretary of the State, Communications Director for the DeStefano for Governor campaign, and Director of Public Information for the City of New Haven.

You may recognize Derek from TV; he was a news anchor and reporter at NBC Connecticut from 1999 until 2004, and before that worked at TV stations in Florida and at CNN Headline News in Atlanta.

Derek earned his MBA from the UConn School of Business and bachelors' degrees in Broadcast Journalism and International Relations from Syracuse University, where he graduated Magna cum Laude.

Derek makes his home in West Hartford with his wife, Alex, daughters Maggie and Zoe, and son, Charlie. He is Vice President of Advancement at The Village for Families and Children, working to grow and support technology activity across the state. Derek is a lecturer at Sacred heart University and has been a lecturer in Political Science at Yale University and an adjunct professor at Quinnipiac University, Central Connecticut State, Southern Connecticut State and Eastern Connecticut State universities. In 2017 he won an “ARC Angel Award” from ARC for his advocacy on behalf of people with disabilities

#### Legislative Goals:

As always, one of Derek’s most important goals is enacting an affordable, balanced and sustainable biennial budget that meets the disparate needs and demands voiced by a wide variety of Connecticut residents. Derek works across party lines to identify potential spending cuts and ways to make government more efficient wherever possible.

Derek believes that Connecticut’s fiscal health also depends on creating a stronger economy – one that generates more revenue from high-quality jobs. Workforce development, investments in transportation and higher education must also play a role.

Derek believes that the communities he represents enjoy wonderful public schools, and that it is critical, as difficult budget decisions are made in Hartford, that these communities are not unfairly targeted. Derek believes that all children deserve a quality education which provides them with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed. Derek also believes public school teachers must be embraced by policymakers as partners in the effort to strengthen and protect our schools.

#### Additional Legislative Priorities:

This year, Derek is focused on addressing the public health crisis of teen vaping with a multi-pronged approach: increasing the smoking age from 18 to 21; prohibiting the sale of flavored vaping liquids (which are especially popular with teens); and taxing electronic cigarette liquids at the same rate as cigarettes and other tobacco products.

Derek is also committed to fighting age discrimination in the hiring process by seeking to

prohibit employers from inquiring about birth or graduation dates on employment applications; the bill has more than two dozen co-sponsors and is supported by the Connecticut AARP.

Recently, Derek has sought to close the wage gap between men and women in Connecticut, arguing that different pay for the same work isn't only unfair, it's bad for working families, the economy, and for Connecticut's overall competitiveness. Derek supports pay equity between men and women to protect employees and prospective employees from gender-based discrimination on wages and compensation.

Derek has also worked to improve transparency and accountability on the Metropolitan District Commission, supporting legislation that adds a non-voting member to the MDC board of directors in the form of a consumer advocate, and requiring the MDC to disclose detailed information about applications for land use, zoning, wetlands, and tax abatements before it holds a hearing or acts on the request. Derek has also sought drought protections written into law so bottled water companies cannot continue to pump water from reservoirs during a drought while families are asked to conserve.

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### **Your officers for 2024-2025**

**John Keleher, President**  
**Clem Sayers, Vice-President**  
**Arthur Greene, Secretary**  
**Stephen Schneeberger, Asst. Secretary**  
**Jim Palma, Corresponding Secretary**  
**Stephen Guest, Treasurer**  
**William O'Connor, Asst. Treasurer**  
**Tew DuBois, Historian**  
**John Mitman, Chaplain**  
**Ed Turbert – Past President**

### **Committee Chairs 2024-2025**

**Mike Cabrey, Membership**  
**Don Kauke, Communications**  
**Russ Jones – Nominating Committee**  
**Bernie Weiss and Jim Doran, Storytellers**  
**Gary Banks, Information & Technology**  
**Bernie Weiss, Senior Job Bank**  
**Paul Dean & Ray Bliss, Special Events**  
**David Mangs, Music**  
**Parker Simonds, Hospitality**  
**Jeff Lee, CT Foodshare, West Hartford Youth Food program**  
**Lou Aiello and Mike Feehan, Foodbank**  
**Ron Robinson, Habitat for Humanity**  
**Dale Richter, Meals on Wheels**  
**Larry Carr, Salvation Army**  
**Bill O'Connor, UCONN Health Center**  
**Chuck Hasbrouck - Golf**  
**Tom Goodrum, Bowling**  
**Dan Tracy, Audit**

Art Greene, Secretary

Old Guard, Inc.