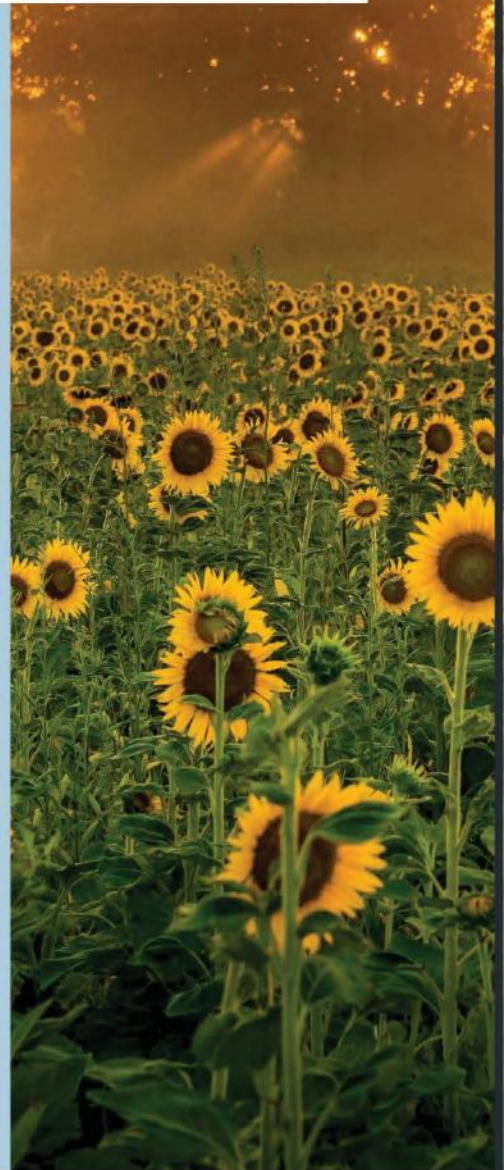
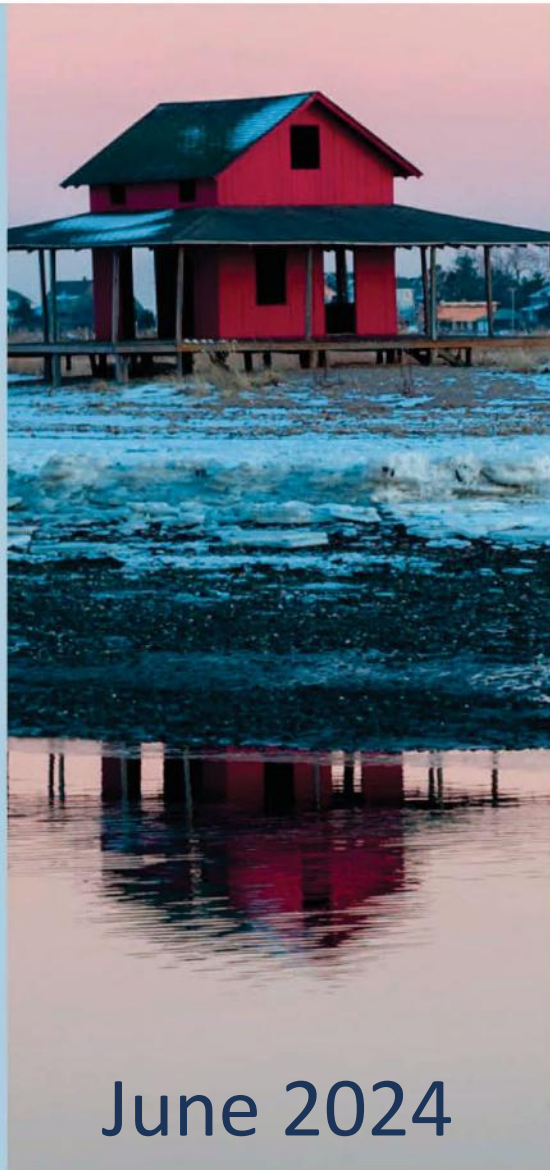
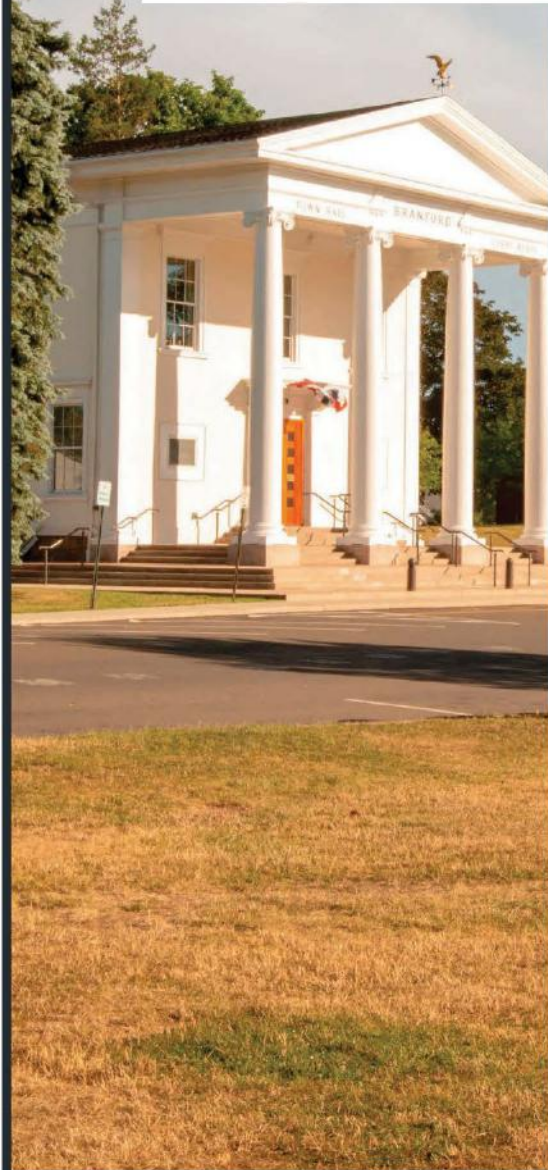


# SHORELINE CONNECTIONS

A Magazine About Events, Businesses and  
People Along the Shoreline

Branford, Guilford, North Branford



June 2024

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## Table of Contents

Table of Contents  
Area Map  
Welcome New Members  
Artisan Marketplace  
So You Want To Stain Your Deck –Expert Article  
Meet Our Members  
Ribbon Cuttings  
Rebranding –Expert Article  
Meet Our Members  
Community Calendar  
The Power of a Centralized Data Repository-Expert Article  
Member Recognition and Milestones  
History of the Shoreline: Historic Houses – The Whitfield House  
Meet Our Members  
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# SO, YOU WANT TO STAIN YOUR DECK?

Staining a deck can be an easy job if you take the time to prepare. Every deck needs to be clean, sound (not peeling) and dry before stain is applied. This is true for all wooden decks, whether they are “hardwood” (Ipe, Mahogany, etc.), pressure-treated, or cedar. The deck cannot have dirt, grease, mildew, or mold on it. Clean wood ensures the new coat of stain interacts directly with the wood surface and is not hindered by any foreign matter lying on top of it.

Preparation of the deck is of utmost importance to the longevity of the finish you are about to apply. There are many excellent cleaning products on the market, some containing bleach and many clean without bleach. If you have mold on your deck, then you must use a cleaner with bleach or another mold killer. In some cases, you will want to use a deck-finish stripper, followed by a deck brightener. While cleaning, look for rotting or splintering boards that need to be replaced or sanded before staining.



**John Anderson (left), Mark Caserio (right)**  
**PAGE HARDWARE**

Once your deck is cleaned, the second step is to determine how sound the old finish is. Deck finish has a difficult job to do. Almost as soon as a new coat of stain is applied, the weather begins to break it down. It is warding off daily attacks of UV rays and wear from people walking on it. The rainstorms which have plagued the Shoreline this spring are tough on deck finishes.

When it is time to apply a new coat of stain, the old stain is usually severely thin or even nonexistent, especially in high-traffic areas and spots with prolonged sun exposure. This is why decks must be re-stained every two or three years. If the finish is peeling, you must address this, and usually, washing is enough. This can be done with a pressure washer or a garden hose and spray nozzle. Sometimes, scraping is required, to remove stubborn flakes. Another option is to apply Mad Dog's Deck Fix Primer that will “glue” down any peeling paint and stabilize the current substrate.

After cleaning is complete, you must decide what coating you want to put on your deck. If the deck is in decent shape, you can apply a translucent or semi-transparent stain. These options add a hint of color, while highlighting the woodgrain of your deck.

**CONTINUED**

When the deck boards are in rough shape, the best option is to use a semi-solid stain or a solid stain. These stains, much like paint, coat the substrate completely (solid) or almost completely (semi-solid). The more solid the stain, the better the UV protection, as well.

The current stain on your deck will influence your transparency choices. You can apply solid stain over transparent stain, but not the other way around. Once the wood grain is covered with a solid stain, you will need to sand or use stripper to completely remove the coating before applying a more transparent stain. When selecting a stain color, note chip samples are applied on light wood. The color of your deck's wood can significantly affect the look of a transparent, semi-transparent, or semi-solid stain.

Applying deck stain is the easiest part of the process. Pour stain into a deep paint tray and use a big brush on the end of a pole, to brush in the stain without bending over. A small brush can be used for railings and "cutting" around where the deck meets the house. We stock big, soft brushes in our paint department that are perfect for applying stain. Tackle three or four boards at a time, running the brush down the entire length of one board before moving to the next. You always want to apply stain "wet on wet." Once the stain dries in the middle of a board, brushing more stain on to continue along that board will create a "seam" that is darker than the rest of the wood. It is also important to gauge your remaining stain because color may vary slightly from one stain can to the next can. If you cannot finish a board with the amount left in one can, start a new one. Most homeowners stop after one coat of stain. This may look sufficient, but adding a second coat will increase the UV protection, abrasion protection, and overall longevity of your finish.

Stop by our paint department for Benjamin Moore's new Woodlux exterior stain. We are ready to help walk you through any steps in the process.

John Anderson (left) has been offering advice in Page Hardware's paint department since 2015, and Mark Caserio (right) joined our team three years ago. Both have decades of experience, working at paint stores and painting as handymen in the Shoreline community before coming to Page's.





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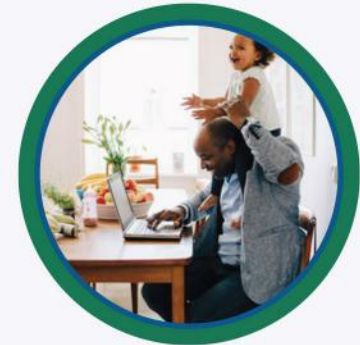
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# Ribbon Cuttings & Milestones

## RIBBON CUTTING



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Photo credit: Shoreline Chamber



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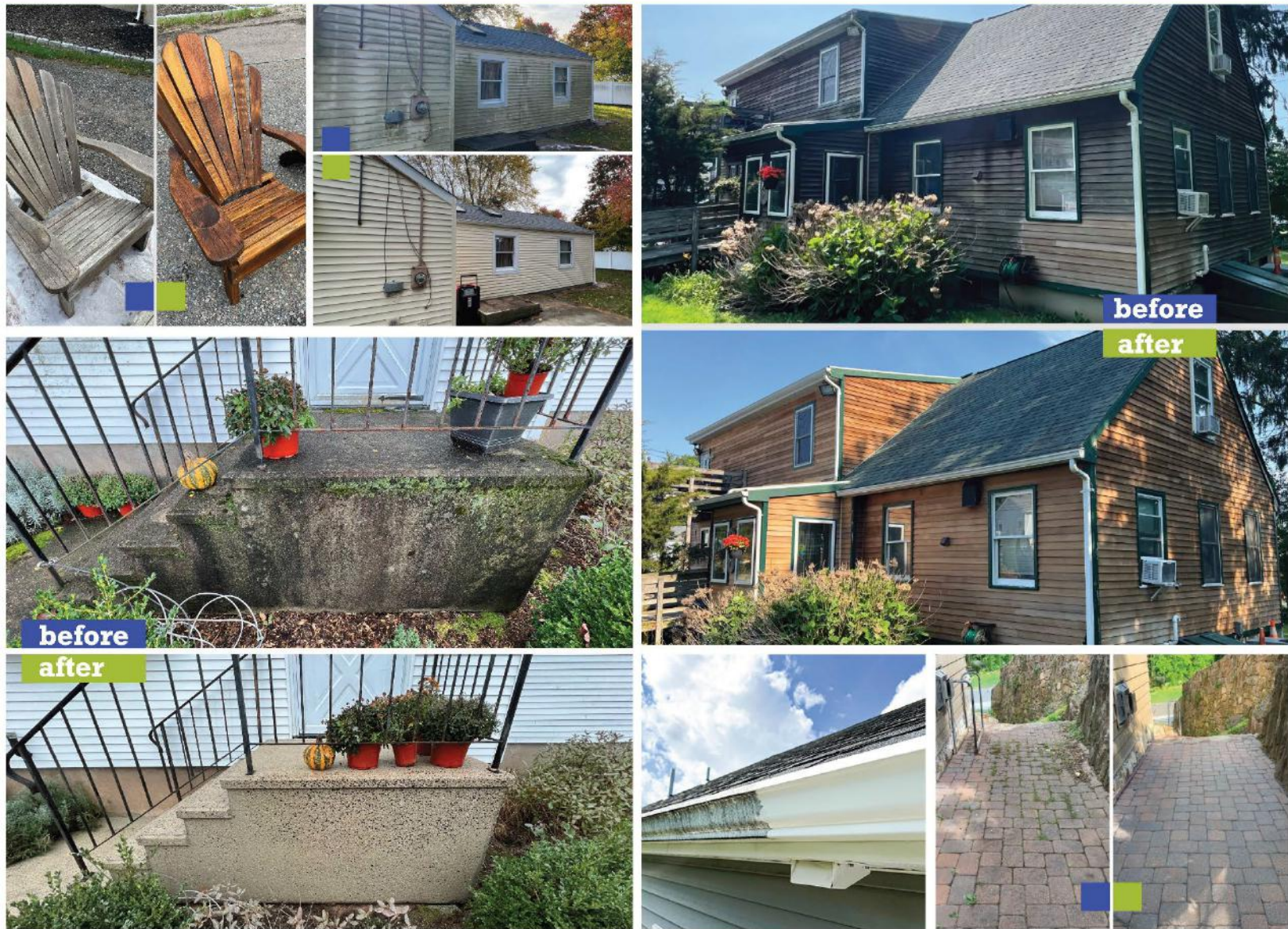
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## **Reflection on a Rebrand: Patience, Open-mindedness, Boldness, and Transparency**

After a three-year intensive process, we at SARAH Inc. are excited to announce that we underwent a full rebranding, including a new name, and will announce it on July 1st. In early 2021, we started this journey with a strategic plan that recognized the need to address long-standing brand confusion with other SARAH agencies and the nature of an acronym no longer aligned with our values.

Taking on the task of rebranding, especially on the scale that we did, was no small feat. Many agency-wide considerations needed to be taken into account. Recognizing the importance of such a decision, we created a task force comprised of our Board of Directors and agency staff. After researching branding consultants, we partnered with Krative, a local agency. Krative conducted a detailed brand assessment involving surveys, one-on-one meetings, and workgroups with various stakeholders. This thorough process ensured that the rebranding was a well-informed decision, aligning with our mission to enhance and transform the lives of individuals with differing abilities. In 2022, the decision was made to move forward with the rebranding with Krative.

### **Key Steps During the Process**

- **Define Your Brand Strategy:** It was important that our new brand represented our mission, values, and long-term goals. This served as the foundation for all of our rebranding efforts.
- **Conduct a Brand Audit:** With Krative, evaluated our current brand assets, including our name, logo, website, marketing materials, and customer feedback. We identified what works well and what needs improvement.

**CONTINUED**

- **Develop Your New Brand Identity:** One of the most intensive parts of the process for us was choosing a new name. We focused on choosing a unique, vibrant name that embodied our mission and vision. Once the name was selected, the rest of the brand identity started to come to life, including a logo, color palette, typography, and other visual elements.
- **Update Your Brand Messaging:** This initiative led to a close review of our messaging and website content. This includes tagline, mission statement, and key marketing messages. One thing we felt strongly about was not changing our mission statement, as that remains the same, regardless of the branding changes.
- **Create a Rebranding Timeline:** Plan the rollout of your new brand. This included updating and creating a brand-new website, social media profiles, marketing materials, and internal documents. We set deadlines for each task to ensure a smooth transition. This is where the “be patient” segment below is critical.
- **Communicate with Employees and Stakeholders:** As we near the launch on July 1st, we have used a mix of communication channels, such as internal updates, emails, social media posts, and in-person meetings.

## **Lessons Learned and Helpful Advice**

### **Be Patient**

As you can see from our timeline, rebranding is not an overnight process. It involves careful planning, research, and execution. Patience is crucial throughout this journey, from conceptualizing your new brand identity to implementing it across all platforms. Rushing the process can lead to mistakes and inconsistencies and undermine your efforts.

Expect challenges and delays along the way; it is all part of the process.

### **Be Open-minded**

Rebranding requires a willingness to embrace change and consider new perspectives. It's an opportunity to redefine your business and explore creative ways to communicate your message. Being open-minded allows you to evaluate ideas and select the best ones that align with your vision.

**CONTINUED**

Our team included Board members, Krative, and staff members. We encouraged brainstorming sessions to share ideas and suggestions. Being open-minded included being mindful of the decision-makers at the table. While having a designated team member to lead the process is essential, it is valuable to collaborate and understand everyone's needs. This fosters a sense of ownership and brings diverse viewpoints to the table.

### **Share Progress with Staff**

Transparent communication with staff is very important during rebranding. With so many changes ahead, our team was informed throughout the decision-making process. Change can be a challenge to accept by nature. Regular updates about the progress, challenges, and successes can foster a collaborative environment and reduce anxiety about upcoming changes.

### **Do Not Be Afraid to Be Bold and Unique**

A successful rebrand often involves bold choices that set your business apart. Don't be afraid to take risks and think outside the box. Have some fun with it! Undergoing a rebrand allows an organization to redefine itself in many ways. We are excited to share our announcement as we embrace a bold and unique name that highlights our mission.

### **Conclusion**

You can create a brand that truly represents your business by being patient, open-minded, bold, and involving your team in the process. Remember, rebranding is not just about changing your logo or name; it's about redefining your business's identity and setting the stage for future success.

Lastly, as I have repeatedly said over the last few years, "Trust the process!"

Chrissy Racho

Marketing & Communications Manager, SARAH Inc.



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Guilford  League

The Guilford Art League is dedicated to promoting and supporting the arts in the local community. Founded to foster artistic expression and appreciation, the league offers opportunities for artists of all levels to showcase their work, participate in exhibitions, and engage in educational activities. Members of the Guilford Art League range from emerging artists to seasoned professionals, contributing to a diverse and vibrant artistic community. The league hosts regular exhibitions and events throughout the year, providing a platform for artists to display and sell their artwork. In addition to exhibitions, they organize workshops, demonstrations, and lectures led by experienced artists and instructors. The Guilford Art League plays a vital role in enriching the cultural fabric of Guilford, by promoting artistic excellence, fostering community connections, and supporting the growth of local artists.

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# COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

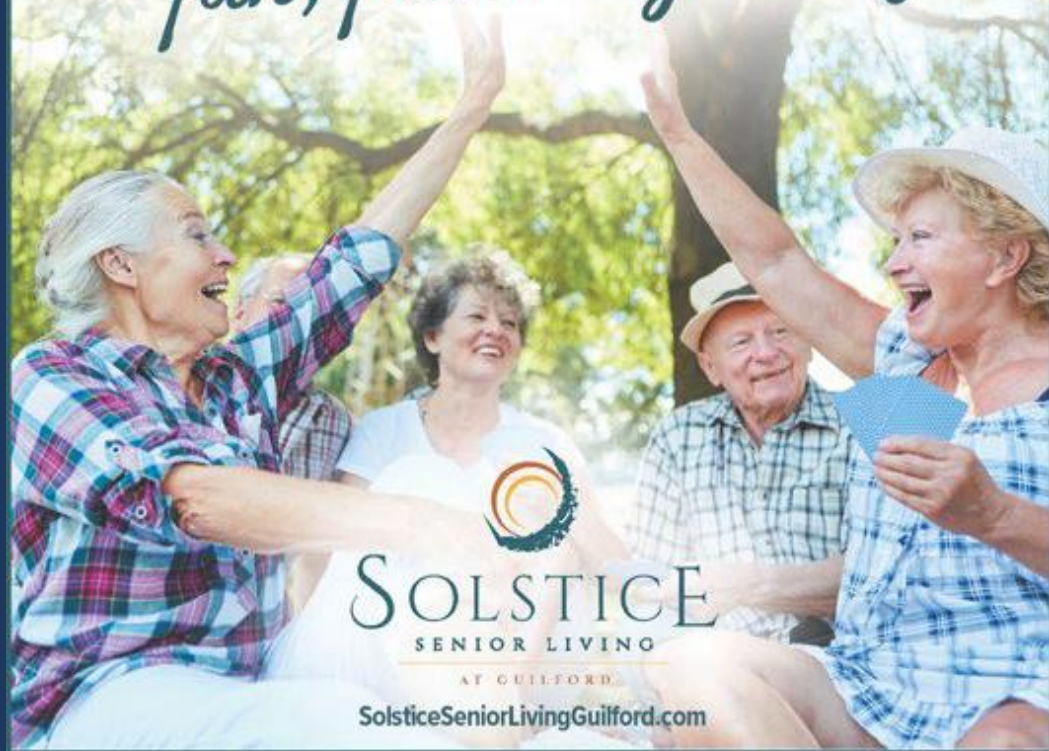
Chamber events are highlighted in Green

<b>JUNE 30, SUNDAY</b>	The Legacy Theatre Presents: Kate Baldwin with John McDaniel at the Piano!	2:00PM - 3:30PM	The Legacy Theatre, Branford	<a href="#">details</a>
<b>JULY 4, THURSDAY</b>	Farmers market at the Guilford Fairgrounds	4:00PM - 7:00PM	Guilford Fairgrounds	<a href="#">details</a>
<b>JULY 11, THURSDAY</b>	Farmers market at the Guilford Fairgrounds	4:00PM - 7:00PM	Guilford Fairgrounds	<a href="#">details</a>
<b>JULY 11, THURSDAY</b>	Grassy Strip Music Series at Madison Beach Hotel, Curio Collection by Hilton	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Madison Beach Hotel	<a href="#">details</a>
<b>JULY 14, SUNDAY</b>	18th Shoreline Jewish Festival	12:00PM - 5:00PM	The Guilford Green	<a href="#">details</a>
<b>TUES JUL 16 - THURS JUL 18</b>	Dinos in the Creek Week	July 16 at 3:30PM July 17-18 9AM - 4PM	Stony Creek Museum and Legacy Theatre	<a href="#">details</a>
<b>JULY 17, WEDNESDAY</b>	Camp Rising Sun - Annual Night Out	6:00PM - 10:00PM	Owenego Inn, Branford	<a href="#">details</a>
<b>JULY 18, THURSDAY</b>	Farmers market at the Guilford Fairgrounds	4:00PM - 7:00PM	Guilford Fairgrounds	<a href="#">details</a>
<b>JULY 18, THURSDAY</b>	Grassy Strip Music Series at Madison Beach Hotel, Curio Collection by Hilton	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Madison Beach Hotel	<a href="#">details</a>
<b>JULY 19, FRIDAY</b>	Tee-Off for Epilepsy Golf Benefit	9:00AM - 5:00PM	Lyman's Orchard	<a href="#">details</a>
<b>JULY 25, THURSDAY</b>	Farmers market at the Guilford Fairgrounds	4:00PM - 7:00PM	Guilford Fairgrounds	<a href="#">details</a>
<b>JULY 18, THURSDAY</b>	Grassy Strip Music Series at Madison Beach Hotel, Curio Collection by Hilton	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Madison Beach Hotel	<a href="#">details</a>
<b>JULY 27, SATURDAY</b>	Cardboard Explosion!	10:00AM - 11:30AM	Legacy Theatre	<a href="#">details</a>
<b>AUGUST 1, THURSDAY</b>	Farmers market at the Guilford Fairgrounds	4:00PM - 7:00PM	Guilford Fairgrounds	<a href="#">details</a>
<b>AUGUST 1, THURSDAY</b>	LOBSTER BAsh at The Guilford Lobster Pound	6:00PM - 9:00PM	Guilford Lobster Pound	<a href="#">details</a>
<b>AUGUST 2, FRIDAY</b>	BACA's Sunset Cabaret at The Estate	5:30PM - 9:00PM	New Haven	<a href="#">details</a>
<b>AUGUST 8, THURSDAY</b>	Farmers market at the Guilford Fairgrounds	4:00PM - 7:00PM	Guilford Fairgrounds	<a href="#">details</a>
<b>AUGUST 8, THURSDAY</b>	Grassy Strip Music Series at Madison Beach Hotel, Curio Collection by Hilton	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Madison Beach Hotel	<a href="#">details</a>
<b>AUGUST 13, TUESDAY</b>	9th Women of Excellence Awards Luncheon	11:30AM - 1:30PM	The Woodwinds	<a href="#">details</a>

[Click here for full list of events.](#)



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# THE POWER OF A CENTRALIZED DATA REPOSITORY FOR BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, leveraging data effectively can significantly enhance operational efficiency and profitability. A centralized data repository (CDR) stands out as a pivotal solution for businesses aiming to streamline operations and harness the full potential of business intelligence (BI).



By: David Gemma  
UNAPEN

Let's explore how a CDR facilitates the creation of BI reports and alerts, enabling proactive management of tasks, data exceptions, and outliers, ultimately driving business success.

## Centralized Data Repository: An Overview

A CDR consolidates data from various sources into a single, unified platform, typically I like to leverage a Microsoft SQL database. This approach contrasts with decentralized systems where data is scattered across multiple databases, spreadsheets and files, often leading to data silos and inefficiencies. By centralizing data, businesses can achieve a holistic view of their operations, ensuring consistency, accuracy, and easy accessibility to information.

## Enhancing Business Intelligence

### Streamlined Data Access and Integration

A CDR simplifies data access and integration, providing a single source of accurate information for BI tools. This seamless access enables businesses to aggregate and analyze data from different departments, systems, and processes without the complications of data fragmentation.



Consequently, decision-makers can generate comprehensive and accurate BI reports that reflect real-time insights across the organization. And, these reports can be scheduled to be automatically created and delivered to the appropriate staff.

## Improved Data Quality and Consistency

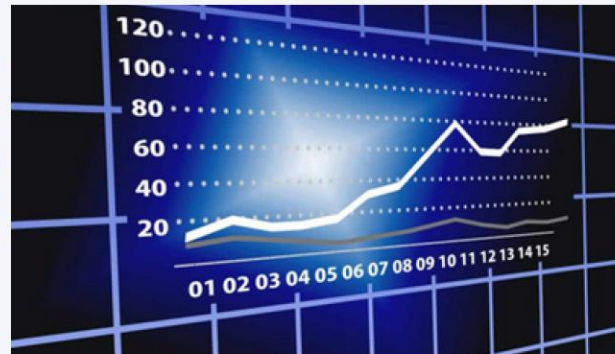
Centralized data storage ensures that all data adheres to uniform standards and formats, enhancing data quality and consistency. BI tools can rely on this consistent data to produce reliable and accurate reports.

**CONTINUED**

Moreover, data cleansing and validation processes are more efficient in a centralized system, reducing the risk of errors and discrepancies that could compromise the integrity of BI insights.

### **Real-Time Reporting and Alerts**

One of the significant advantages of a CDR is its ability to support real-time reporting and alerts. By continuously aggregating and analyzing data, businesses can generate up-to-the-minute BI reports that provide actionable insights.



Additionally, real-time alerts can be configured to notify stakeholders of important or late tasks, data exceptions, and outliers.

This proactive approach allows businesses to address issues promptly, or proactively, minimizing or even avoiding disruptions and optimizing operational efficiency.

### **Proactive Task Management**

#### **Automated Alerts for Important and Late Tasks**

A CDR enables the automation of alerts for critical tasks. By monitoring task deadlines and progress in real-time, the system can automatically notify relevant personnel of impending deadlines or overdue tasks.

This proactive notification system ensures that tasks are completed on time, reducing operational bottlenecks and enhancing productivity.

#### **Enhanced Collaboration and Accountability**

Centralized data facilitates better collaboration across departments by providing a transparent and unified view of task statuses. Team members can easily track the progress of tasks, identify dependencies, and address potential delays.

This visibility fosters accountability, as individuals and teams are aware of their responsibilities and can be held accountable for their contributions.

### **Managing Data Exceptions and Outliers**

#### **Detecting Anomalies and Exceptions**

A CDR is instrumental in detecting anomalies and exceptions within the data that could easily be missed otherwise. By applying advanced analytics and machine learning algorithms, businesses can identify patterns that deviate from the norm.

These exceptions could indicate potential issues such as fraud, operational inefficiencies, or compliance breaches. Early detection allows businesses to take corrective actions swiftly, mitigating risks and ensuring smooth operations.

### **Tailored Alerts for Specific Scenarios**

Businesses can configure the CDR to trigger tailored alerts for specific scenarios. For instance, if a financial transaction exceeds a predefined threshold, the system can automatically alert the finance team.

Similarly, if inventory levels fall below a critical limit, the system can notify the supply chain manager. These targeted alerts enable businesses to respond promptly to critical situations, maintaining operational continuity and preventing losses or issues.

## **Streamlining Operations and Automating Processes**

### **Automating Routine Tasks**

A CDR supports the automation of routine tasks, reducing manual intervention and enhancing efficiency. For example, data entry, report generation, and compliance checks can be automated, freeing up valuable time for employees to focus on strategic initiatives. Automation not only improves accuracy but also accelerates processes, leading to faster decision-making and execution.

### **Enabling Predictive Analytics**

Centralized data is a foundation for implementing predictive analytics. By analyzing historical data, businesses can forecast future trends and identify potential challenges before they arise

Predictive analytics can guide strategic planning, inventory management, customer behavior analysis, and more. This forward-looking approach empowers businesses to make informed decisions, stay ahead of the competition, and drive growth.

My mantra for this is we help businesses evolve from hindsight, to insight, to foresight.



## Conclusion

A CDR is a transformative tool for businesses seeking to enhance their BI capabilities and operational efficiency.

By providing a unified and consistent data source, it enables real-time reporting, proactive task management, and effective handling of data exceptions and outliers.

Furthermore, the automation of routine tasks and the implementation of predictive analytics streamline operations, ultimately improving efficiency and profitability.

As businesses continue to navigate an increasingly data-driven world, investing in a centralized data repository is a strategic move that can deliver substantial long-term benefits.

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## Member Recognitions and Milestones

The Shoreline Chamber of Commerce wants to share your awards, recognitions, celebrations. You have worked hard to receive these **recognitions** and want to celebrate your accomplishments with our members and beyond each month. Send your recognition news to Mary at [mary@shorelinechamberct.com](mailto:mary@shorelinechamberct.com) by the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month.

**Meals on Wheels in Guilford** recently hit a major milestone, as the organization served its 750,000th meal. Under the umbrella of Guilford Interfaith Volunteers, Meals on Wheels started in 1986 with 12 meals served on the first day. According to Guilford Interfaith Volunteers Executive Director Christi Burton, the organization now averages 120 meals per day.

Congratulations to **European Wax Center** of Branford - celebrating their one-year anniversary - located in the Kohls shopping plaza.

The **Stony Creek Market** and **The Thimbleberry** eateries are now “cousins, each with their own distinct character and unique personality, but sharing some family traits.” The names will stay the same. Also, The Thimbleberry will be serving **Ashley’s Ice Cream** at the ice cream window. Congratulations to all.

Continued

# Member Recognitions and Milestones

**Digestive Disease Associates** welcomes their newest Gastroenterologist, Dr. Daniel Zanchetti, to their practice. He joined DDA on April 15.

**The Shanty by Supreme Seafood** will be opened and serving dinners at the Owenego Inn in Branford Monday - Thursday nights from 5-9PM during the months of June, July and August. Weather permitting.

**East River Energy** is proud to welcome **Total Comfort Control**, a heating and cooling (HVAC) solutions company to our Family of Companies.

**Country Paint & Hardware** celebrating serving North Branford, Branford, Guilford communities and beyond for 46 years.



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# Ribbon Cuttings & Milestones

## 40th Anniversary



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## 25th Anniversary



55 Whitfield St (On the Green)  
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Photo by: Shoreline Chamber



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# HISTORIC HOUSES – THE WHITFIELD HOUSE

By Mairi Bryan

The Connecticut shoreline has many historic houses, perhaps the most famous being the Henry Whitfield House, the oldest stone house in Connecticut, as well as in New England, and the first museum of the State of Connecticut.

The first settlers of the Guilford Colony, a group of English Puritans, including Minister Henry Whitfield and his family, began construction of their minister's home in September of 1639. They entered into an agreement with the Menunkatuck Indians who helped the settlers in the construction by transporting stone from the nearby quarries. The house was one of four stone houses in the newly formed settlement which served as defensive buildings as well as private homes. The Whitfield House while being the home for Henry Whitfield, his wife Dorothy Shaeffe Whitfield and their nine children, also served as a place of worship for the Puritan settlers before the first church was built, a meeting place for town meetings, and a protective fort for the settlers in case of any attack. The house was also frequently used as a shelter for travelers between the New Haven and Saybrook colonies.



The architectural style of the Whitfield House is unique for both its period and location as it is styled more like the structures in northern England and Scotland as opposed to the southern and London style architecture favored in most of New England. The walls were made almost two feet thick because of the abundance of stone in the Guilford area, and the rooms were large

despite the difficulty in heating larger rooms. Because of its use as a meeting house, church, and a sanctuary for travelers, the first floor included a kitchen and great hall, which was probably the most frequently used room in the house. The second floor included three bedchambers for the Whitfield family, and the house was constructed with six fireplaces, the largest of these in the great hall. This large fireplace, measuring ten feet across, remains a part of the museum today and is almost unchanged from its original construction.

In 1650, Henry Whitfield returned to England due to the improved political and religious environment under Oliver Cromwell's leadership, leaving his wife and some of their children living in the house. When she returned to England in 1659 the settlement of Guilford was led by William Leete and William Chittenden attempted to buy the house as a Grammar school for the town. This never happened as the funds were not available. Over the course of the next century

**CONTINUED**

the house changed hands a number of times, with Jasper Griffing, a descendant of William Chittenden, and a patriot in the Revolutionary War, buying the house in 1776. The Griffing and Chittenden families then owned the house for the next century, and the remodeling in 1868 occurred under their ownership.

In September 1900 the Whitfield House became the property of the State of Connecticut, purchased with help from the town of Guilford and members of the Connecticut Society of the Colonial Dames of America, and was transformed into a museum. In 1902 a major renovation was led by architectural historian Norman Isham and later by J. Frederick Kelly. Isham's restoration was to make the house attractive to visitors as a museum and was later criticized by architectural experts including Kelly as being more concerned about aesthetics than historical accuracy. In the 1930's J. Frederick Kelly conducted an extensive restoration with the aim of restoring the house to what he believed to be its original condition in 1639. While there are continuing minor restorations, the house remains close to its historical origins.

In 1972 the museum gained national recognition when it was added to the National Register of Historic Places, in 1997 when it was declared a National Historic Landmark, and again in 2006 when it was added to the list of State Archeological Preserves.

The Henry Whitfield House Museum is open from May through October with many activities and events, and from November through April by appointment.



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# BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT KRISTEN SIBLEY



*Kristen Sibley is the AVP, Branch Manager, at Guilford Savings Bank and has been on the board for 2 years.*

## **Where are you originally from?**

I'm originally from East Haven, where I lived there until I was 12 before moving to Guilford. I went through Junior High and High School in Guilford.

## **Where do you live currently?**

I've lived in East Haven for the past 10 years.

## **Can you tell me a little bit about yourself and what you do?**

I was born and raised in Connecticut. Growing up along the shoreline, I've always appreciated the natural beauty that surrounds us, from our town beaches to the serene state parks. I love the outdoors! From an early age, I developed a deep appreciation for our local communities. One pivotal moment in my childhood was when my younger brother faced a serious medical challenge. Despite having no prior connection, local organizations rallied around my family, offering support and encouragement. It was then that I truly understood the profound impact of community.

Since that experience, I've been passionate about giving back. Whether through volunteering, participating in charity events like poker runs and road races, or simply attending fundraisers, I've witnessed firsthand how a little time and compassion can make a significant difference.

Fourteen years ago, I embarked on a career change when I joined Guilford Savings Bank (GSB). Early on, I knew I had found the right fit. GSB's core values resonated with my own, and the support I received allowed me to flourish professionally. Today, I proudly serve as the AVP Branch Manager and Corporate Officer at our flagship office.

When I meet new people at networking events and mention that I work in banking, they often assume I'm a numbers person. I always laugh and say, "Not quite—I'm more of a people person." In my role, building relationships and fostering connections are what truly drive me. It's incredibly rewarding to be part of a community-oriented organization like GSB, where personal connections and community impact are at the heart of what we do.

## **Are you located in the Guilford office?**

Yes, I'm located at the Guilford office on the Green.

## **What was your earliest involvement with the chamber and why?**

That's hard to say. Guilford used to do a chowder challenge along the shops on the green. I volunteered for that way back when. The bank was a sponsor, and that might've been my earliest involvement. GSB highly encourages employees to participate in volunteer activities and many serve on boards. Officers of the bank are expected to actively serve on at least one nonprofit board. I believe we have close to 70 employees serving on Boards and average about 40 events each year where GSB employees are serving as volunteers. So, I've participated in many local events between Branford and Old Saybrook for several years now.

I was previously on the Guilford Preservation Alliance for four years as their treasurer. When my term was up and I became a branch manager, I wanted to get involved with the chamber so I could work more closely with local businesses in the area and support that channel a little more with my role. After reaching out to the president at the time, I joined the tourism committee with Jim Fennell to start and then later that year was voted on as a board member. My term officially started in February of 2022. So, I've been on the board for two full years now.

## **What's your current position with the board?**

Secretary.

## **Why did you decide to take on this role?**

Just this year I was asked by the executive team of the chamber if I would like to be the secretary, and I was happy to take on the role. I thought it was a great opportunity to support the chamber even more than just filling a seat as a board of director would.

## **How do you feel GSB has benefited from the chamber?**

GSB has greatly benefited from our partnership with the chamber. *(continued on next page)*

As one of their Benefactor sponsors, we've enjoyed substantial support and visibility through their marketing efforts, including their digital magazine, social media presence, and event sponsorships. This partnership has significantly boosted our exposure within the community.

A key benefit has been the networking opportunities. Attending chamber events allows us to connect with local businesses, understand their unique financial needs, and offer tailored banking solutions. This interaction not only strengthens our relationships but also helps us support the local economy more effectively.

Moreover, GSB's values align perfectly with the chamber's mission to support local businesses and foster community growth. The mutual referrals between chamber members create a trusted network, where people prefer to do business with those they know and trust. This community-focused approach reinforces our commitment to helping local businesses thrive and, in turn, strengthens our community as a whole.

**What's a fun fact, something people should know about you?**

I have a background in photography and hold a degree in fine art. For several years, I worked at a photography studio and also freelanced independently.

However, at the suggestion of one of my clients, I decided to give banking a try. Initially, I never thought banking would be my path, but I soon discovered it's not just about numbers. While numbers are obviously a part of it, my role in retail banking revolves more around building relationships.

In my photography days, I loved connecting with people and being part of their significant moments, capturing memories that mattered to them. When I reflected on what truly drives me, it became clear that connecting with people and helping them find solutions is where my passion lies. I realized that as long as I can connect with others and make a positive impact, whether through art or through helping with their financial needs, I am still fulfilling that passion.

**What's your favorite spot on the shoreline?**

Chaffinch Island! My husband and I both went to Guilford High School. We actually met there, but dated long after that. When we got married, we did everything very local. We always loved going to Chaffinch Island and taking our dogs there and always thought it was such a special spot, so we got married there. It was perfect! It was really easy to set up with the town. We were able to have a few chairs delivered there and it was just a beautiful, natural setting. Of course, that spot has a special place in my heart, but I can't choose just one. I also love The Place Restaurant in Guilford, Doma in Branford, and Nataz Restaurant in North Branford- which also happens to be the first place I ever worked! Clearly, I enjoy dining out!

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