Manage your disappointments

Winning Ways
By PAT IANNUZZI
Insights for Constructive Living



We all face disappointments as part of our daily lives. It happens to all of us, and it can be distressing and demoralizing. Disappointments, whether in our personal or work lives, can sometimes take the wind out of our sails or even make us feel as if we had taken a powerful punch to the gut. Such feelings can rob us of our energy and dampen our drive and determination.

Sometimes we are disappointed by others who have let us down or treated us wrongly. When this happens, the first thing we should to do is accept the situation, control our emotions and turn our attention to something positive. Being angry with someone can weaken us emotionally, mentally and physically. All our energy goes into dealing with our anger, and we have little strength and few resources left for anything else. Getting mad or trying to get even with someone usually will only make a situation worse.

The most insidious kinds of disappointments are those we inflict upon ourselves. These often can have a serious negative impact on our self-esteem. It's important to recognize that we all make mistakes in our lives and to understand that this is natural. It's just how life is.

In fact, this is a key mechanism by which we learn and develop as human beings. Looking back often gives us a clearer view of what might have been, or should have been, but dwelling excessively on negative history can lead to the development of unjustified limiting beliefs about our capabilities and overall personal worth. Such feelings can seriously interfere with attainment of our true potential.

At its core, disappointment is the outcome of unmet expectations, and the best way to minimize their occurrence in our lives is to set realistic expectations. Here are a few suggestions for achieving this:

> *"The size of your success is measured by the strength of your desire; the size of your dream; and how you handle disappointment along the way."*
>
> ~ Robert Kiyosaki

Exercise good judgment: Since the feasibility of an expectation being achieved can play a significant role in the level of stress caused by a disappointment, we should continually strive to evaluate what we expect from ourselves and others and realistically assess whether our expectations are fair and reasonable. Disappointments often result from our expectations being out of touch with reality. Even if we think our expectations are appropriate and realistic, they may not be. Whenever possible, we should seek others' input to help us effectively define our expectations

Never be overconfident: We should always understand that our expectations – no matter how likely we believe they will come true – may never be fulfilled. By keeping this in mind, we are less likely to be overwhelmed by the impact of a disappointment. Restraining our anticipation a bit usually won't diminish the possibility that our expectation will be realized, but it can significantly lessen our devastation if it doesn't.

Have a backup plan: Having a backup plan will not only make us feel more secure, it will also lessen the impact of a disappointment when something unexpected happens. If we are prepared to quickly move on to plan B (or C for that matter), we will tend to be much less stunned or distraught if Plan A doesn't work out as expected.

We need to continually keep in mind that we are all works in progress as human beings and forgive ourselves for our past disappointing behaviors. We need to accept the idea that personal and professional growth arises out of our disappointments as well as from our successes. Disappointments can't be avoided but they can be managed. Managing disappointment is the difference between getting stuck in fear, frustration, and doubt, and instead using that experience to learn, grow, and embrace the next opportunity that comes our way.

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Horses and riders cross Long Meadow road during a recent event. Cars have stopped and are waiting for them to safely make it to the other side of the road. (ShawnaLee Waterbury Kwashnak photo)

Yield to horses and riders

By MARJORIE NEEDHAM

A horse and rider were crossing a street in a crosswalk in Litchfield on November 11, 2026, when a hit-and-run driver crashed into them. The rider survived. The horse did not. It had to be humanely euthanized. The Waterbury "Republican-American" reported state police found the driver, who said he wasn't able to see properly due to the sun's glare. The newspaper reported State Police issued him a citation for failing to yield to a pedestrian in a crosswalk.

Following this tragedy, Middlebury resident and equestrian ShawnaLee Kwashnak reflected on the need for drivers to be aware that roads cut across many bridle trails. Kwashnak, a member of the Middlebury Bridle Land Association (a non-profit organization that preserves, upgrades, and maintains bridle trails for horseback riding), rides local trails regularly. The Larkin State Park Bridle Trail passes through Middlebury, and other bridle trails are on private land. Riders, mainly those in the MLBA, maintain the trails. Kwashnak said a group of about 30 riders and eight volunteers have spent hundreds of hours clearing them, hacking back brush, cleaning up fallen trees and branches after every storm, and moving rocks dirt bikes kick up.

She said bridle trails in Middlebury cross Shadduck Road, Wooster Street and South Street. Drivers may suddenly come upon riders and their horses and need to know state law requires them to yield to horses at all times. Find more information at the Connecticut Horse Council website, www.ctchorsecouncil.org/home/publications/trails.

State of Connecticut roadside signs showing a horse and rider warn drivers a bridle trail crossing is ahead. Kwashnak said all of Middlebury's signs have been stolen. She tried unsuccessfully to get the former administration to replace the signs. Since they are no more, please be on the lookout for riders crossing our roads. Please remember, you are required to stop your vehicle and wait until the riders have safely crossed the road.

State law also prohibits ATVs and dirt bikes on these trails, but that doesn't stop them. Kwashnak said most folks are surprised to learn neither are allowed on any of the trails off of Long Meadow or between Long Meadow and the Larkin Bridle Trail. She also said loose dogs and dirt bikes coming up suddenly behind the horses can make riding challenging.

If you venture out afoot on bridle trails, the horse council asks you to participate in the Trails Safe Passing Plan: Stop, Speak and Stand Back. Their booklet explains that horses are prey animals and naturally can be afraid of unfamiliar people and objects. They have natural "flight" survival instincts and prefer to move toward an exit route. People on horses should pass at a walk while other trail users remain stopped until the horses have passed. You need to say "Hi" to announce your presence and help horses stay calm, and then stand back with everyone in your group on one side of the trail, containing children and dogs. Do not hide or stand behind a tree because you may then appear to the horse to be a predator.

Commission lifts orders

By NANCY DZIJA VAUGHAN

SOUTHBURY – The Inland Wetlands Commission conducted three show cause hearings during its November 18 meeting, including one that has dragged out over two and a half years.

Commissioners lifted a cease and correct order that has been in place since 2024 for 471 Old Poverty Road after a neighbor cut down trees and disturbed a wetlands area on property owned by the Southbury Land Trust. SLT president Joseph Ruggiero said the issue with the neighbor has finally been resolved and SLT recently began replanting 23 trees on the parcel to replace the ones that were removed. Remediation work to the wetlands area will occur in spring.

Commissioners lifted a cease and correct order and approved a farming exemption for 299 West Flat Hill Road after hearing from the applicant's attorney, the town's attorney, and former First Selectman Jeffrey Manville. Property owner Steven Turmino and his attorney said he removed invasive species along the brook as part of his preparation to create an orchard. He said he removed the plants by hand and intends to restore the area with native plantings, including elderberries.

Town Attorney Thomas Kaelin said courts have ruled that work done in preparation for agricultural use also falls under the agricultural exemption. He gave as an example work done to create paddocks and pasture for horses before any horses are brought on site.

Manville, a former first selectman and now self-described full-time farmer, said he has been mentoring Turmino. He said Turmino is absolutely committed to farming the property.

Commissioners instructed the owner of 237 Old Waterbury Road to return next month with a landscape plan as well as a description of the trees and other vegetation he removed from alongside a watercourse. Zoning Enforcement Officer Deandra Nevin said she issued a cease and desist order after observing several trees had been cut down without any permit on a regulated area of the property.

In other action, commissioners approved a proposed 18 lot cluster subdivision for Lot 15R of the Burr Farm Estates. Owner/applicant Charles Spath said cluster housing allows Burr Farm Properties LLC to construct a private road that will not cross any watercourse on the property and will allow the designation of an additional 12 acres of land as open space. Commissioners questioned future maintenance of the road and drainage system and added a condition to the approval that the maintenance agreement be acceptable to staff.

Commissioners continued discussion on the town's application to replace culverts on Bucks Hill Road and Munn Road pending additional information and a site visit. Representatives of SLR, the company that will be replacing the culverts over Walnut Hill Brook, said they will be completing the project in two phases, starting with Munn Road. The culvert under Bucks Hill Road has already failed but was replaced temporarily, they said.

Commissioners approved a modification to an existing permit for 102 Housatonic Trail. The modification allows the homeowner to add a 2.5 ft. by 37 feet overhang on the back of house and a 2.5 by 37 feet overhang on the front of the house, as well as a stone wall.

Commission gives positive referral

By NANCY DZIJA VAUGHAN

SOUTHBURY – The Planning Commission provided a positive referral back to the Zoning Commission on an application for an 18 lot cluster development and new private road on Lot 15R of the Burr Farm Estates subdivision during its meeting on November 17. Charles Spath, owner of the lot and Burr Farm Properties LLC, said he initially planned a traditional subdivision for the parcel. He changed that plan to cluster housing after experiencing success developing the Transylvania Estates cluster type subdivision elsewhere in town.

Cluster housing developments typically allow greater housing density in one area of a new development in exchange for more open space elsewhere on the property. In this case, the cluster arrangement will provide the town with an additional 12 acres of open space that adjoins 21 acres of open space that was part of the original subdivision.

The Southbury Land Trust expressed interest in acquiring or managing the open space as part of its holdings. In a letter to the Planning Commission, the SLT asked for a 20 ft. wide access corridor for maintenance purposes. It said the 12 acres of open space would make a viable neighborhood preserve.

Spath said he plans to create a new private road for the 18 lots. The new road will not need to cross an existing watercourse on the property, something that would have happened in a more typical subdivision. The homeowners will provide maintenance for the road and drainage system as part of a new HOA.

Commissioners approved a special exception and site plan modification application for 800 Main St. S. The applicant plans to modify an existing individual office to create 15 spaces as flex space. The spaces will be leased for a minimum of one year and will include a common conference room, kitchen, and bathroom.

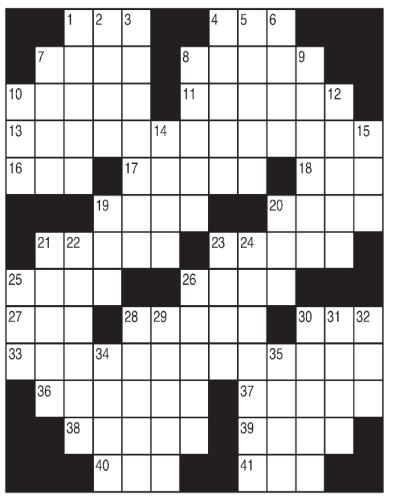
Commissioners also approved a site plan modification application for signage at 1570 Southford Road, to be designated as Cornerstone Ministry Center.

They denied a site plan modification for proposed work at 115 River Road because it was missing certain required elements of an application, including a landscape plan. The owner of Seven Seasons Properties said he wanted to demolish the existing building and construct a new six-unit multifamily dwelling in its footprint.

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Puzzle Corner Solutions on page 8

KingCrossword



ACROSS
1 Indent key
4 "Spring ahead" hrs.
7 Mentor
8 Japanese bedroll
10 Rock genre
11 European peninsula
13 1980 Lennon/Ono album
16 Mercedes-Benz models
17 Barbecue site
18 Scoundrel
19 Netting
20 Helps
21 Parisian river
23 Accra's country
25 Dumbstruck
26 Milne bruin
27 Standard
28 Hose woes
30 Cagers' gp.
33 Figure skater's jump
36 Wild scuffles
37 Unconventional
38 Actor McDowall
39 Gratis
40 Airport screening org.
41 Nourished

DOWN
1 Ballerinas' skirts
2 United — Emirates
3 Pitcher's warmup area
4 Persian Gulf emirate
5 Shorthand pro
6 Legal wrong
7 Earth sci.
8 Bourbon buy
9 B vitamin
10 ER workers
12 Carne — (Mexican dish)
14 Lighten
15 NFL measures
19 Prefix for "night" or "morning"
20 "That feels good!"
21 Honey bunch?
22 More spine-tingling
23 Type of dancer
24 Spray down with water
25 Suitable
26 Sucker
28 Winter coasters
29 "I — vacation!"
30 Famous
31 Drill
32 Chest-beating beast
34 Conspiracy
35 Entice

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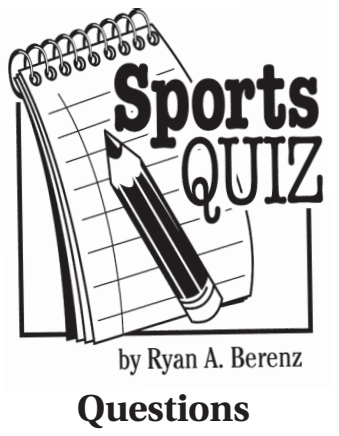
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Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆◆◆

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging
◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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Questions

1. Paydirt Pete is the mascot for which Texas college athletic teams?
2. Which Major League Baseball team had a starting infield of Steve Garvey, Davey Lopes, Ron Cey and Bill Russell together from 1973 to 1981?
3. Which rapper and TV personality became a sponsor of the U.S. Water Polo men's and women's national teams and frequently appeared at their 2024 Paris Olympics events?
4. The Omni Coliseum, opened in 1972 and demolished in 1997, was home to which NBA franchise?
5. In 1990, 60-year-old Fred Newman made how many consecutive free throws while blindfolded?
6. Which Kenyan female distance runner, nicknamed the "Pocket Rocket," won the gold medal in the 5,000-meter race at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics?
7. Which screen legend made his first appearance as the Tramp character in the 1914 film "Kid Auto Races in Venice," set during a pushcar race in Los Angeles?

Answers

1. The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) Miners.
2. The Los Angeles Dodgers.
3. Flavor Flav.
4. The Atlanta Hawks.
5. 88.
6. Vivian Cheruiyot.
7. Charlie Chaplin.

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