

HAMPTON *Connects*

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HAMPTON TRACTOR PULLERS

Wayne DeCarli and Barbara Jello

If you think tractors are all work and no play, think again. They are the stars in tractor pulls, popular at fairs and farms throughout Connecticut and beyond. Just ask Wayne DeCarli and Barbara Jello who have been enjoying the challenge and fun of tractor pulls for many years.

Wayne's interest in tractors began when he was 12 and worked on his uncle's dairy and tobacco farm in Ellington. Years later a fellow Hamptonite introduced him to tractor pulls. At first Wayne used one of his friend's tractors but eventually bought his own, a 1949 Ferguson which he restored. He drove all the way to Illinois to purchase his current tractor, a 5500 lb. Minneapolis Moline. Barbara's enthusiasm for tractor pulls ignited after she watched her first one. Her immediate response was, "I want to do that." And for 26 years she has, using 10 different tractors she's owned over the years. Her current one is a 1951 Oliver 77, weighing in at 3500 lbs.

Wayne and Barbara explained there are two types of tractor pulls: the stone boat

and the transfer sled. The stone boat is a flat wooden sled to which weights are added for each round. If you pull the farthest distance (a full pull), more weight (cement blocks) is added. The process continues until one person pulls the farthest. A transfer sled has a weighted pan that moves continuously from the back of the sled to the front, increasing the drag and making it more difficult for the tractor to move forward. In each type of pull, the weight of the tractor and the driver determine the weight class you're in, and the person who pulls the farthest is the winner.

Wayne and Barbara have plenty of expertise to offer anyone interested in tractor pulling. Wayne advised not to jump right into anything before you know if you're going to like it. He suggested that if you're interested, you should first go to tractor pulls to see how they're run. If your interest continues, he suggested borrowing a pulling tractor for your first competition to see if you really enjoy it. Barbara knows all aspects of tractor pulls because she not

only competes, but she also runs many pulls at local fairs. Her Facebook page, Barb Jello, offers a wealth of information.

After so many years of competing, Wayne and Barbara have many memories. Although Wayne's first tractor pull was 15 years ago, he remembered asking himself at the start, "What am I doing?" It didn't take him long to figure things out. Barbara's first pull was in upstate NY in the late 90's. And her 1st place win, a full pull with a transfer sled in Brooklyn this past June, is something she won't soon forget.

Although Wayne and Barbara continue to haul their tractors to pulls near and far, they know that tractor pulling isn't just about the tractors. They both agree that it's about the friends you make along the way, and that's why Wayne and Barbara's enthusiasm for tractor pulls will always go the distance.

For more information about tractor pulling contact: waynedecarli@gmail.com
Or phone or text Barb Jello at: 860 235 7820



What's Your Number?

By Claudette Russell

The first time it happened was many years ago when I was paying for my groceries. The young man bagging my items asked, "Do you need help getting these to the car, ma'am?" When I didn't see anyone else checking out, I realized I was the "ma'am." Despite all the birthdays that had been adding up, I somehow managed to miss (or deny) becoming a senior citizen. If you're not sure your own over-the-hill moment has taken place, see if any of the following sound familiar.

- For your birthday, your children give you a lifetime membership to AARP.
- You think your daily walk to the mailbox and back to the house is a complete workout.
- When your friends invite you out for the afternoon, you decline, saying you need more alone time. No one needs to know alone time is code for nap time.
- You would like to complete your to-do list if only you could remember where you left it.
- Your shoe shopping is governed by the world orthopedic. You've said your goodbyes to skyscraper heels, flimsy flip-flops, accident-waiting-to-happen platforms, and other styles that put you at risk.
- You don't understand your children's lack of enthusiasm when you tell them your landline is part of their inheritance.
- You think your calendar filled with medical appointments indicates you have an active social life.
- You keep three pairs of reading glasses in every room. And you'll find all of them . . . eventually.
- You have no control over your weight gain or its distribution.
- When someone tells you you look good, you know it's a lie, but you don't care.
- Your doctor says it's time for multiple replacement parts.
- You think Venmo is a new drink size at Starbucks.
- At the spa, the aesthetician strongly urges you to try the full-day treatment package for *mature* skin.
- Your grandson asks if he can interview you for his report about life in the 1800's.
- The frosting on your cake liquifies from the candle inferno.

If you have experienced any of the above, accept the inevitable with good humor. But remember that seniors are so much more than forgetting where they left their readers. (Hint: they're on your head.) Yes, we've gained years and a few quirks, but we've also gained knowledge, wisdom, experience, and understanding. These are life's gifts to us. Use them well.

Hampton Connects Mission Statement

Hampton Connects focuses on building community by promoting a positive view of the people and events in our town. We provide news, features, and information to connect our readers and to foster respect and appreciation for each other and all our town has to offer.

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www.hamptonconnects.com.

Feedback about our newsletter can be emailed to info@hamptonconnects.com, or mailed to Hampton Connects, PO Box 216, Hampton, CT 06247.

If you would like to receive future issues of *Hampton Connects* online, contact info@hamptonconnects.com and we will add you to our email list. Hard copies will not be mailed on a regular basis.

We hope you enjoy *Hampton Connects*.

Claudette Russell and Joan Fox

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Zucchini - Friend or Foe

Still looking for ways to use up that mountain of zucchini?
Check out suggestions for dealing with the onslaught in our Summer issue.