

Fairfield Museum Board Members 2024-25

Officers:

Steven F. Schiffman, *President*

Steve is recently retired as the CFO of Devonshire Investors (the private investment arm of Fidelity Investments) and as President of Eight Roads (the international venture capital group of Fidelity). He has over 35 years of corporate experience, including roles at Starwood Hotels, PepsiCo and Ford Motor Co. Steve has served on multiple corporate Boards and chaired a number of Audit & Risk Committees. He is currently on the Board of Advisors of the Int'l Business School at Brandeis University. Steve, his wife D'vorah and son Izzy have lived in Fairfield since 1998, after relocating here from Hong Kong. They own a prominent historic home in the heart of town which they've lovingly restored to period.

Patricia (Patti) Spaght, *Vice President*

After graduating with a BA from Stanford, Patti joined IBM as a systems engineer working in the San Francisco Bay area and later in Boston. With the advent of children, she began a career of volunteering for non-profit organizations. Moving to Southport in 1982, she immediately volunteered at the Fairfield Historical Society as its first Coordinator of Education. She was Board President from 1996-1999 and chaired the Capital Campaign Committee for the new Fairfield Museum and History Center from 1999-2008. During these past 40 years, she has assumed many roles in her continuing involvement with the organization. She has also been actively involved with the Fairfield Garden Club and The Garden Club of America. She has chaired three GCA National Committees including Nominating, participated in Strategic Planning and served as a Director. Locally she served on the RTM for 12 years and has been a past Moderator and Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Southport Congregational Church.

Chris Daley, *Treasurer*

Chris and his family have lived in Fairfield since 1992. He is co-founder of a Fairfield-based private equity investment firm and has been in banking and investing for over 30 years. Chris serves on numerous corporate Boards, as well as the Boards of the Fairfield Beach Club and Fairfield American Little League. He received a BA in Economics from Cornell and an MBA from The Wharton School (University of Pennsylvania).

Susan Bonner, *Secretary*

Susan is owner of The Golden Ribbon, a corporate gift service which she started in 1987. She graduated with a BA from Vassar College and worked for *Redbook Magazine* and J. Walter Thompson Advertising Agency early in her career. She was also Editor in Chief and Publisher of a monthly magazine she started in 1978 called *Profiles Magazine*. Susan sits on the Board of The Near & Far Aid Association and served as its President from 2007-2009. She has

served on the Annual Giving Committees for Greens Farms Academy, Deerfield Academy, Williams College and Trinity College, and was a past Board member of the Nature Center in Westport (Earthplace). Susan has lived in Fairfield County her whole life. She is married to Larry Erdmann and they reside in Easton.

Board Members:

Eddie Blair

Eddie grew up in Fairfield and has always had an interest in researching and writing about its history. After graduating from Yale in 1977 she went to work at Morgan Guaranty Trust Company for many years before turning to freelance writing, primarily for banks and investment banks. Eddie has worked for many organizations, schools, and clubs as a volunteer researcher, writer and producer of literary events. Eddie and her husband Michael raised their three children both in New York and in Fairfield. For many years Eddie has served on the board of the Fairfield Garden Club. The opportunity to serve on the board of the Fairfield Museum is particularly meaningful to Eddie as it places her in the footsteps of her mother who served on the board of the Fairfield Historical Society. As a member of the board of the Fairfield Museum I believe I could contribute to the activities of the library and children's programs. I also would work on supporting the museum's relationship with the Fairfield Garden Club and its activities at Ogden House.

Kate (Foley) Browning

Kate grew up in Fairfield and has lived in town with her family since 2013. She is currently a Senior Product Specialist at the Carlyle Group and leads product strategy globally for infrastructure credit. Previously, she worked at Invesco, Ltd., where she designed and delivered private market investment solutions for institutional investors. Earlier in her career, Kate held a range of strategy and business development roles in asset management and healthcare. Kate graduated magna cum laude from the College Scholar program at Cornell University and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. She has been engaged in the local Fairfield community for most of her life and enjoys volunteering with the Junior League of Eastern Fairfield County, where she served five terms on the Board and as President from 2019-2020. She is excited to contribute her knowledge of and enthusiasm for the Fairfield community to the Fairfield Museum's Board and continue advancing its community engagement efforts

Ellen Gould

As a BFA graduate of Carnegie Mellon University, Ellen moved to NYC from Cleveland, Ohio to pursue work in the graphic design field. After working at a scientific book publisher, she became the Art Director of *New York Magazine* and then moved as Art Director to *Money Magazine* for many years followed by *Memories Magazine* and lastly David Lauren's *Swing Magazine*. Among her freelance projects, she did design work for the education department of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and volunteer design work for The Museum of American Folk

Art. In Southport, Ellen's love of historic architecture and design led her to become a member of The Fairfield Historic District Commission, where she served for 12 years and was its Chairman for 10. As an active member of The Fairfield Garden Club since 2005, Ellen served on its Board for over 10 years. She is currently on the Board of Trustees for Preservation Connecticut (formerly The Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation).

Joyce Hergenhan

Joyce is the retired vice president for communications at GE, and the retired president of the GE Foundation. She serves on the Board of Trustees at Southport Congregational Church and serves on (or has served on) the boards of Syracuse University, Connecticut Audubon, Westport Country Playhouse, the Inner City Foundation for Education and Charity, the Jackie Robinson Foundation, the Civilian Advisory Board at USMA (West Point).

Erin W. Hermann

Calling Fairfield home with her husband and two children for the past 16 years, Erin has been involved and continues to enjoy supporting the community. She spent six years at Mitchells Stores with responsibilities that included Spatial Designer and Director of Ecommerce where she exceeded the five-year revenue target while executing a variety of innovative and engaging customer experiences. She currently is a Managing Partner of Laurine Group LLC, a style and image consultancy. In this capacity, she supports individual clients, as well as plans and executes luxury shopping and lifestyle events.

Previous board experience includes Near & Far Aid where she served as two-time chair of their primary annual fundraising gala with 500-800 attendees and raising \$2M+ for Fairfield County charitable organizations. Erin holds a B.A. in Journalism and Multimedia from Indiana University. She hopes to bring creativity to program development and execution, as well as driving broad community outreach and involvement.

David R. Hermenze

David is a principal of the Southport law firm Brody Wilkinson PC and a member of the firm's Executive Committee. Dave practices in the areas of estate planning and trust and estate administration. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the Connecticut Bar Association's Estates and Probate Section, and an active Fellow of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel. Dave graduated from Weston High School in 1978, received his B.A. in history, magna cum laude, from Beloit College in 1982 and his J.D., cum laude, from Cornell University in 1986. Dave resides in Redding, Connecticut, and has three grown children. He serves as an elected Commissioner of Redding Fire District No. 1 and is a Life Member of Redding Fire & EMS Co. No.1.

Niels Lyng-Olsen

I am fascinated by local CT history, in particular the founding of Fairfield town and the process by which our community was initially created, how acquisitive colonial growth resulted in the creation of the surrounding towns of Westport, Weston, Easton and Redding, and how the natural ports of Blackrock and Southport sparked a rich, local maritime history. I have spent time researching the history of the Fairfield Long Lots and the Burr family's impact on Fairfield. Professionally, I provide strategic and financial expertise to the international maritime sector, and I have for the last three years been the CFO of a US family-owned shipping company with operations in Hamburg, Germany. Previously, I worked in investment banking as partner of Pareto Securities, CEO of DNB Markets Inc., a broker/dealer, and as VP at JPMorgan Securities. I have an MBA from Columbia Business School and a Bachelor's degree in economics and public policy from Brown University.

Tom Mindrum

After graduating from Carleton College with a B.A. in economics, Tom pursued a career in consumer package goods marketing and marketing services. He was a co-founder of Catalina Marketing Corporation, a provider of consumer promotions in supermarkets, drug stores and mass merchandisers. Tom also founded and published Soccer Jr., The Soccer Magazine for Kids. He has served on corporate boards for Catalina Marketing, Health Resource Publishing Co. and Triplepoint, Inc., and on non-profit boards for Wakeman Boys & Girls Club, Burroughs Community Center and Students Partnership Worldwide/Restless Development.

Jason H. Mudd

Jason is currently a Managing Partner of Cindy Raney & Team, a luxury real estate advisory firm that he founded with his wife in 2020. Prior to advising clients on real estate, Jason worked for nearly 20 years in private and consumer banking for Bank of America and J.P. Morgan. From 2015-2017 Jason served on the Fairfield Museum's Finance Committee. He is currently the Vice Chair of the Yale New Haven Bridgeport Hospital Foundation. A graduate of Washington University (St. Louis), Jason and his wife Cindy, share 5 children and have lived together in Fairfield since 2018.

Joseph Rog

Joe and his wife Mimi have lived in Fairfield since 1999. Joe has a BA in telecommunications from Kent State University and began his career in corporate video production, winning numerous national awards for his projects. He moved to Kansas City in 1995 where he pursued his MBA at the University of Missouri and later joined the Kauffman Foundation, developing programs in entrepreneurial leadership and working on a national advisory board with the Young President's Organization.

Since moving to Fairfield, Joe has worked in small business consulting and held marketing leadership positions in several regional technology companies. He retired in 2021 after serving for 10 years as the Director of Development for the Fairfield Theatre Company.

Rosalina Thomas

Rose is principal at RMT MediaWorks, a boutique media consultancy providing business development services with a focus on digital strategy, partnerships, content distribution and operational management. Previously, she worked at Microsoft in business development and strategy for consumer properties and platforms. She was also Vice President for Media at Thomson Reuters where she headed up sales and account management for the Americas. Prior to her work at Reuters, Rose worked extensively in emerging markets and financial news and data at firms such as Internet Securities and Multex. Rose is a graduate of Tufts University and Suffield Academy. She is a member of the executive board at Near & Far Aid and serves on various committees at the Southport Congregational Church, the Fairfield County Hunt Club, and Goldens Bridge Hounds. She is an avid equestrienne and lives in Fairfield with her husband, Justin, and their two daughters.

Gerald Torres

Gerald is a Professor of Environmental Justice at the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies and Professor at the Yale Law School. He is former President of the Association of American Law Schools and has taught at Stanford Law School and at Harvard Law School, where he served as the Oneida Nation Visiting Professor of Law. Professor Torres served as Counsel to the Attorney General on environmental matters and Indian affairs at the U.S. Department of Justice. He has served on the Board of the Environmental Law Institute, the EPA's National Environmental Justice Advisory Council, as well as the National Petroleum Council. He is board chair of EarthDay Network and founding Chairman of the Advancement Project, the leading Civil Rights advocacy organization in the country. He is a trustee of the Natural Resources Defense Council. He has served as a consultant to the United Nations on environmental matters and is a life member of the American Law Institute and the Council on Foreign Relations.

Laura Wilson

Laura is a Senior Executive Producer at Penguin Random House Audio. Before joining PRH Audio, she was the Executive Director of Production at Macmillan Audio, and she has worked in the audiobook industry for the past 20 years. During that time, she's produced numerous Grammy-nominated and Audie Award-winning programs. Laura worked as a talk-show radio producer at WNYC in New York for a number of years before discovering audiobooks. She served on the board of Music Haven in New Haven from 2012-2017. Laura and her family have lived in Fairfield since 1998.

William Winget

Bill has had a 30+ year domestic and international career in oil and gas production and development, beginning with ExxonMobil and physical/financial trading of the associated commodities ending with Sempra Energy/JPMorgan. He sits on the board of several companies in the green power generation/electric transmission space, and started a new green technology water treatment business in Europe. Bill and his family live in Fairfield.