

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Adrienne Walkowiak, Adrienne@AdrienneWalkowiak, 603/659-9345

Website: <https://paulstreampress.com>

Local Author Launches Compelling New Novel: *The Weight of Snow and Regret*

For Over 100 years, No One Wanted to be Sent to the Sheldon Poor Farm;

By 1968, No One Wanted to Leave

Nottingham, NH, November XX, 2025 – Local author Elizabeth (Liz) Gauffreau has launched a compelling new book, **The Weight of Snow and Regret**, which tells the story of the closure of the last poor farm in Vermont in 1968. Poor farms were publicly funded farms established by local governments to provide shelter and support for the indigent, elderly, and disabled. Common from the 1850s to the early 1900s, these institutions were intended to be self-sustaining through residents' labor.

This new novel is a character-driven work that demonstrates through immersive storytelling that everyone has a story, and everyone's story is important, regardless of their circumstances. Told with compassion and humor, **The Weight of Snow and Regret** tells the poignant story of what it means to care for others in a rapidly changing world.

"I wanted to honor the residents who had lived, worked, and died at the Sheldon Poor Farm by creating characters people would care about and remember. **The Weight of Snow and Regret** envisions the lives of the indigent, infirm, elderly, and disabled residents who couldn't live on their own and support themselves before the government shut the facility down and separated these residents forever," explained Liz Gauffreau, the book's author.

"The inspiration for this book came from an online writers' group. I connected with another writer originally from Vermont, who had written an article about the Shelton Poor Farm for Vermont Life Magazine. I grew up only seven miles from the poor farm, yet I didn't know a thing about it," Liz added. "When I started doing research, the images of the poor farm and the articles about it in the local newspapers drew me in. It was such a compelling story but there was little, if any, fiction written about it, so I decided to write **The Weight of Snow and Regret** to bring awareness to the lived experience of the poor farm's residents at various stages in its history."

[Liz Gauffreau](#), an award-winning fiction writer and sometime poet, lives in Nottingham, NH, and grew up in Enosburg Falls, VT. She holds a BA in English/Writing from Old Dominion University and an MA in Fiction Writing from the University of New Hampshire. Her professional background is in non-traditional higher education teaching, advising, and administration.

The Weight of Snow and Regret is available now, and the audiobook will launch in January 2026. **The Weight of Snow and Regret** will make a great holiday gift for historical fiction lovers, social justice advocates, and anyone who appreciates compelling stories about the New England area. For more information or to purchase the book, please visit <https://paulstreampress.com>.

###

2.

[Poor Houses and Town Farms: The Hard Row for Paupers](#)

From its earliest settlements New Hampshire has struggled with issues surrounding the treatment of its poor. The early Northeastern colonies followed the lead of England's 1601 Poor Law, which imposed compulsory taxes for maintenance of the poor but made no distinction between the "vagrant, vicious poor" and the helpless, and honest poor. This confusion persisted for generations and led ...

www.nhhumanities.org

2. **“Sheldon’s Story in Fiction”** – A hometown feature about how local history inspired the book, highlighting connections between Sheldon, VT and the novel’s setting. **A big one for me.**
3. **“Unearthing Hidden Histories in Nottingham”** – A feature that ties your Nottingham residency to your exploration of overlooked New England histories. - **What is most relevant for this one would be my poetry, rather than this particular novel. (“New Hampshire Comfort,” “Stopping by a Cellar Hole in Pawtuckaway.”)**

Possible pitch: In *The Weight of Snow & Regret*, Liz Gauffreau moves us beyond the ledgers of poor farm records to reimagine the humanity of those whose lives were reduced to numbers and notes. Her novel asks us to consider: what did it mean to live, love, and hope in a place where society only recorded your cost of existence? **This pitch is perfect.**

Literary & Cultural Angles

4. **“Why Historical Fiction Matters Now”** – Op-ed on how fiction can give voice to those erased from history, framed through the novel. **I think this one ties in with #6.**
5. **“From Local Archives to Literary Fiction”** – How archival digging and oral histories shaped the book, spotlighting your process as both a novelist and historian. **This one sounds doable, although I’m a novelist, not a historian!**
6. **“Bringing Marginalized Voices to the Page”** – A cultural/literary angle about why telling stories of the forgotten poor is relevant today. **This is the BIG one for me.**

Possible Pitch: *The Weight of Snow & Regret* shines a light on the forgotten residents of New England’s poor farms—people’s history reduced to names and numbers in dusty ledgers. Liz Gauffreau uses fiction to restore their dignity, exploring lives and voices too often left out of the historical record. At a time when society is questioning whose stories get told, her novel offers a moving reminder of the power of literature to recover marginalized voices and connect past inequities to present struggles. **This pitch is perfect.**

Social Justice & Current Events Tie-ins

7. **“Fiction that Gives Dignity to the Forgotten”** – Pitch timed around conversations on poverty, housing insecurity, and healthcare inequities, making the book timely for editorial pages. **I’m reluctant to do anything that is politically charged.**
8. **“Echoes of Poor Farms in Today’s Rural Poverty”** – A feature that draws parallels between the historical poor farm system and modern challenges in rural New England (affordable housing, access to healthcare). **This subject is a political landmine. The “safety net” replacement for the poor farms has been a failure. Yet the poor farm system also failed for the same reasons: power, control, money and the attitude that there are “deserving poor” and “undeserving poor,” in addition to poor farms not being equipped to treat mental illness, substance abuse, or educate the developmentally disabled. I don’t want to promote the book with a full dose of my own cynicism.**

9. **“Libraries as Modern Poor Farms”** – A creative hook: libraries as today’s community safety nets, tying in your library events and donation initiative to Humanities Councils. **I think this one is a bit of a stretch.**

Possible Pitch: *The Weight of Snow & Regret* reimagines the lives of New England’s poor farm residents, whose existence was reduced to ledger entries. The novel feels timely today, as rural communities across Vermont and New Hampshire still face poverty, housing shortages, and limited healthcare access. Liz Gauffreau’s work invites readers to see how the struggles of the past echo in the present. **This pitch is accurate, but I’d prefer that readers and presentation attendees come to this conclusion themselves. Maybe do a presentation on the role of literature in promoting social justice— although now that I think about it, this approach is politically charged, too, what with identity politics muddying the literary waters.**

Seasonal & Calendar Hooks

10. **“A Chilling Read for Autumn”** – Pitch for fall reading lists, tying in the October 1 launch and the stark imagery of snow/regret. **“Chilling Read” immediately brought to mind domestic thrillers and horror. I’ve gone thesaurus-hunting, and I can’t come up with a more accurate descriptor.**
11. **“Harvesting Forgotten Stories”** – Seasonal hook around fall harvest and rural life, linking to the book’s themes. **This one should work well.**
12. **“Holiday Gift Guide for the History Lover”** – Targeted late-fall pitches for gift roundups. **This one should work well.**

Local Media Profiles

13. **“From Nottingham to Sheldon: An Author’s Journey”** – A human-interest profile in NH and VT media about your roots, writing journey, and community impact.
14. **“Giving Back with Every Book”** – Highlight the Humanities Council donations, positioning you not just as an author but a community supporter. **I need to do some more work with this concept because I can only donate if the paperback is purchased from me in person or from the publisher’s website. If the book is purchased from a vendor (Amazon, Barnes and Noble, etc., I’d lose money. (I priced the book fairly low.)**
15. **“Local Author Reimagines New England History”** – Targeted NH and VT press with a clear community pride angle.

Event & Partnership Angles

16. **“History Comes Alive at the Library”** – Pitch around immersive events— audience members don’t just hear a reading, they experience history. **I’m not up for immersive events. I need to keep presentations as simple as I can.**
17. **“When Fiction Meets History: A New Way to Engage Communities”** – Position your events as educational entertainment (appealing for NPR, NHPR, VPR, or regional culture desks). **This makes sense, maybe say “Regional Fiction”?**
18. **“How Small-Town Historical Societies Keep Stories Alive”** – Highlight collaboration with Sheldon Historical Society. **This sounds like it has possibilities.**

I'd recommend grouping pitches by **audience** when we send them out: **These all make sense.**

- **Sheldon/VT:** Focus on local pride, poor farm history, and historical society partnership.
- **Nottingham/NH:** Emphasize your roots, community ties, and local author pride.
- **New England region:** Tie into broader themes—historical fiction, rural poverty, forgotten voices, cultural relevance.