

Art exhibit supports Newport Tree Society

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Works by a Who's Who of 19th-century American art are featured in "God's First Temples: Images of Trees in American Art," at William Vareika Fine Arts in Newport. Shown here: "Paradise Pond from Nature, Newport, RI," an 1884 painting by Samuel Colman.

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Posted May. 28, 2015 @ 12:01 am

NEWPORT, R.I. -- Over the years, Newport gallery owner Bill Vareika has used art to support a wide variety of worthy causes — everything from animal shelters to Save The Bay. This year, he's put together an exhibit aimed at supporting the Newport Tree Society, a nonprofit group dedicated to preserving tree species and green space throughout the City by the Sea.

As you might expect, the show focuses mainly on landscapes, with works by 19th-century luminaries such as Alfred Thompson Bricher, William Trost Richards and the underrated Hudson River School artist Thomas Doughty.

Of special note: several works by founding members of the Providence Art Club, including a charming Edward Bannister painting, "Walking Through a Field," a brooding, heavily impastoed forest scene by George W. Whitaker, and a series of luminous watercolor studies by another underrated artist: Sydney Burleigh.