

Milford-Orange Times

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New Orange Officials Sworn In



Carmen Rodrigues was sworn in Jan. 6 to the Orange Board of Education to fill the seat vacated by Mary Welander after she won election to the state House of Representatives. Photo courtesy of Ann Denny.



Democrat Janice Casey and Republican Valerie Spinaci were sworn in Jan. 6 as Orange's registrars of voters. Photo courtesy of Ann Denny.

Take The Poll: Should Orange Purchase The Race Brook Country Club?

Orange officials are considering whether to buy the 287-acre Race Brook Country Club property for \$8.5 million. The land would be leased back to the country club. Take our poll and let us know what you think. The poll is available on the home page at milford-orangetimes.com. Results will be released Feb. 15.

Inside: Arguments for and against purchasing Race Brook Country Club. Page 5

Orange To Vote On Buying Race Brook

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

Orange residents will have the opportunity on Feb. 16 in a town referendum to weigh in on a proposal for the town to purchase the Race Brook Country Club property and lease it back to the club.

The plan, if approved, would be to buy the 287-acres on which the Race Brook Country Club sits for \$8.5 million, then lease the land back to the club with rent starting in 2022 at \$250,000 per year. The lease would last 40 years with an escalation to the rent every five years.

A letter sent to residents signed by First Selectman Jim Zeoli estimated the cost to

the town to pay back the bond over 20 years would be \$10.3 million, while the lease would bring in revenue of approximately \$10.6 million over its entirety.

The deal has been in the works for several months. In late fall the Board of Selectmen unanimously approved holding a referendum on the matter. It has bipartisan support within that body. Zeoli, a Republican, has been instrumental in negotiating with the club, while Democrat Mitch Goldblatt has been championing its benefits in letters and op-eds.

"This is a unique opportunity for the Town
Continued on page 19

Touchdown Nutrition Opens In Milford



Touchdown Nutrition, a smoothie and juice bar, recently held a ribbon-cutting sponsored by the Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce for its location at 750 Boston Post Rd. in Milford. People pictured include owner Jennifer Langlois, owner Mark Manes, employees Kate Roumeles, Lacie Medina and Ashely Bell, parents Ron Langlois and Linda Audet, family members, MRCC executive director Pam Staneski and Milford Mayor Ben Blake. Photo by G. Gregory Geiger.

Pet Daycares Thriving In Pandemic

By Andrew Kane

For dog owners, the burden of COVID-19 is lessened a bit.

People at home have more time to spend with their pets and get a much-needed emotional boost. But it can also present a need for their dogs to get acclimated for when their owners eventually return to the workforce.

"Pet owners are realizing that because they are home all the time, the best thing for them to do is to bring them to a pet daycare center

at least a couple of times per week," says Mary Beth Stark, owner of Bark Avenue Pet House in Milford. "Because when they do end up going back to work, there's going to be a lot of separation anxiety."

There are many amenities to help dogs experience a change of scenery at Bark Avenue. Daycare options include large indoor and outdoor play areas, a spacious kennel room for naps and feeding and frequent supervision. Group nap time is from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. daily.
Continued on page 19

Milford Resident Running For State GOP Chair

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

Milford resident Chris Lancia is running to become the next chair of the state Republican Party Committee.

Lancia, a member of the Milford Republican Town Committee, most recently served as campaign manager in Margaret Streicker's 2020 campaign for the 3rd Congressional District seat, which was won by incumbent Democrat Rosa DeLauro.

Former party chair J.R. Romano abruptly quit the position on Jan. 12 in the middle of his third

two-year term. Aside from national political turmoil, the state GOP suffered the loss of seats in the state legislature in November, further compounding losses from the 2018 election cycle.

The state chair serves as a major organizer for the party, as well as assisting in fundraising and acting as spokesman.

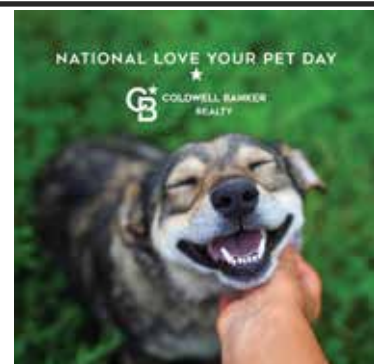
Lancia, who was born and raised in Bridgeport, has said his experiences living in the inner city would help him make inroads with groups that traditionally align with Democrats.



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VOTE “NO” ON RACE BROOK COUNTRY CLUB BAILOUT

On Feb. 16th Orange taxpayers are being asked to approve issuance of \$8,600,000 in bonds to purchase the Race Brook Country Club.

- **COST TO THE TAXPAYERS:** \$10,300,000 over the next 20 years.
- **PROPERTY TAXES PERMANENTLY ELIMINATED:** Lost tax revenues of over \$2.5 million while the bonds are being repaid, and increases in Town insurance premiums.
- **THE TOWN LEASES BACK THE PROPERTY FOR FORTY YEARS FOR THE EXCLUSIVE USE OF RACE BROOK MEMBERS:** The entire 287-acre property is for the exclusive use of the Country Club members (2/3rds of whom are not Orange residents or taxpayers).
- **A “NO BID” LEASE:** No consideration was given to the national golf course management companies who are interested in submitting bids to lease and operate the property as a country club. How’s that keeping your taxes in check?
- **A “SWEETHEART” LEASE:** If the Country Club is successful over the next 40 years, it will pay \$10,600,000. That means the Town will LOSE over \$5 million in tax revenues and have spent \$10.3 million in bond costs to support a private membership club.
- **A BAILOUT OF THE CLUB’S MISMANAGEMENT:** The Club members say they are selling their prestigious country club to repay loans made over twenty years ago to expand their country clubhouse. Why did the RBCC not pay them off by now?
- **IT’S A VERY BAD DEAL FOR THE TOWN:** The truth is RBCC’s tax returns show it has revenues of over \$4,000,000 per year for each of the last five years, and membership is GROWING. It can afford to pay a market rate lease at twice that amount.
- **IT’S A RISKY DEAL FOR THE TOWN:** In 2009 the Town of Woodbridge bought the Woodbridge Country Club, which it ended up having to close, resulting in a significant tax increase. We are told that will not happen to Orange, because Race Brook Country Club “has a solid business plan.” If the Club’s business plan was solid, why do the Race Brook Club members claim they need to sell part of their property to pay their loans?
Why is Orange taking this risk?
- **WE CAN DO BETTER THAN THAT WITH OUR TAX DOLLARS!** There are many other capital projects that the Town could benefit from: new schools, parks, playgrounds, a fire station, community center, or senior housing. All would be of greater benefit than buying and leasing back a private country club. Taxpayers should not subsidize the members of Race Brook to exclusively use Town property as their private country club.

VOTE “NO” ON THE FEBRUARY 16TH REFERENDUM.

News & Events

Your Health

Greater Efforts Needed For Vaccine Distribution

The best way to prevent the spread of coronavirus is to immunize as many people as quickly and safely as possible. However, to achieve this goal educational campaigns to raise the public's awareness and willingness to consider COVID-19 vaccine are desperately needed.



DR. AMIR MOHAMMAD

The vaccines are our best tools for controlling this pandemic. However, it will be essential to

continue to practice all the established safety protocols (wearing a mask, social distancing and hand hygiene) to keep our schools and economy open. It is therefore imperative that both local leaders and state policymakers prioritize and support funding and staffing of local health departments to accomplish this essential task.

According to the most recent data from the Connecticut Department of Public Health, only 12 percent of Orange residents have been vaccinated. Among them only 36 percent are age 75 and above. We have more than 1,500 eligible residents who are 75 and older. This low level of immunization indicates that demand will exceed the supply as more individuals are included under the eligibility criteria. In addition, relying on healthcare systems solely will not be enough to reach herd immunity (which requires 80 to 90 percent of the population being vaccinated).

Local municipalities and their public health departments must step up their

efforts to take an active role in this campaign. The local health departments will need to plan strategically as the state supply of COVID-19 vaccines will likely dictate how timely these vaccines can be offered to their residents.

I am pleased to share that the Orange Health Department is now an established vaccine clinic site per DPH requirements. Through collaborative efforts between town departments, community leaders and volunteer organizations, we successfully hosted our first clinic on Jan. 28 at High Plains Community Center.

We have also developed an online portal on the town's website at orange-ct.gov/ where Orange residents can fill out a COVID-19 vaccine form. This demographic survey will be used to allocate the appropriate number of COVID-19 vaccines according to the eligibility phases established by the DPH. The Orange Health Department will follow the eligibility criteria during their vaccine clinics.

I urge our town residents to take some time and complete the form. We are also actively looking for licensed clinicians, nurses and other healthcare workers who are Orange residents and available to volunteer at our clinics and take part in this community service. We will be posting important information on the town's website.

Dr. Amir Mohammad is the Director of Public Health for the town of Orange.

A Look Back

By Priscilla Searles

People my age, while reminiscing about the days of our youth, will relate stories concerning the huge amount of snow we remember from the snowstorms of our childhood. I, for example, can remember building snow forts with my friends that we built by tunneling into snowbanks and that were big enough to stand up in once completed. Fish story? Nope. Maybe decades ago we really did get more snow. I'm trying to remember that bad snowstorms are a rarity these days, as my son digs me out from the early February blizzard we are in the middle of.

The white in this photo isn't because it's a bad pic; it's snow. Taken in 1934, Harry Riggs has his hand on top of a snowdrift as Oliver Russell cheers him on. Russell, his brother Frederick and Riggs shoveled Chestnut Ridge Road by hand so that a vehicle could get through with feed for the cows. We may have made a little progress since 1934.

If you have a vintage photo of Orange and are willing to loan it to Town Historian Priscilla Searles, contact her at publisher@



Orange residents clear a snowdrift on Chestnut Ridge Road in 1934. Photo courtesy of the Doris Russell collection.

theorangetimes.com. All photos on loan will be scanned, with the scan becoming the property of the Orange Historical Society. Originals will be returned to the owner.

Priscilla Searles is the Orange Town Historian.



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Opinion & Editorial

Navigating The Virtual Session



STATE REP. (D-114)
MARY WELANDER

The legislative session has officially begun with concept bills submitted, committee meetings being held and public hearings beginning. All of these actions are being done remotely, which poses a number of challenges. But it also allows for a different – and in some ways easier – method of involvement for those who would like to monitor or participate in the proceedings.

There is no denying the power of giving or hearing testimony in person, and I am disappointed to not be able to participate in that process, but I also know that not everyone who has a story to tell or valuable experience in a matter can spare the hours often needed to do so.

Though virtual, it is still vitally important that we hear your thoughts and concerns directly from you. If you would like to submit public testimony, here are the steps:

1. Visit the CGA website at cga.ct.gov/asp/CGABulletin/Bulletin.asp.

2. At the top of the screen you will see different sections. Click Public Hearings, scroll down to find the different hearings, and click “On-Line Testimony Registration Form.” There is a deadline to sign up for virtual testimony. Written testimony can be submitted via Word or pdf file to the email address provided for each committee.

3. You will first be asked to register for the webinar. Be sure to know the bill or resolution number about which you wish to testify.

4. Once the form is submitted you will receive a “pending approval” email; keep the information in this email handy. Within 24 hours you will receive a confirmation email, where, if needed, there will be a button to cancel your registration.

5. A speaker list will be posted on the committee page on the morning of the hearing. Go to “Public Hearings” and click “testimony,” then select the hearing date. In the right corner, there will be a document labeled “Speaker Order.” Click it to find your placement.

6. Make sure to log onto Zoom before the hearing starts. Turn off your camera and make sure your microphone is muted until it is your turn. You will wait to speak as if you are sitting in a hearing room.

You can watch every public hearing in real time on each committee’s official YouTube channel at cga.ct.gov/asp/menu/broadcastmedia.asp under the “CGA Live Streaming Feeds” heading. Some public hearings are broadcast live on CT-N, which is also available on Roku. If you are unable to access reliable internet but would still like to testify, please call me at 203-881-6207 and I will get you the correct phone number for that committee.

I also had the honor of working on a suicide prevention forum with Sen. James Maroney recently. I am proud to be working with an incredibly talented group at the state level to make appropriate resources more available for all of our residents. You can find more information from the Suicide Advisory Board at preventsuicidect.org.

I will continue working for and listening to all of my neighbors; please contact me with any way I can help at Mary.Welander@cga.ct.gov.

Fighting For Working Families



STATE REP. (R-119)
KATHY KENNEDY

Now that the 2021 session is underway, many different legislative proposals are popping up. Some are making statewide news because they will have a direct impact on the pocketbooks of Connecticut families.

One such proposal is a new one percent tax on homes with a market value of at least \$430,000. That new revenue would then be sent to cash-strapped cities. Some will say it only adds up to \$50 to \$100 dollars a year for a homeowner, but that how these taxes start. Then suddenly an eye-popping tax bill is delivered to your mailbox. Does anyone doubt that the tax will eventually increase, and the value of homes taxed would fall as the thirst from some big city legislators for more and more revenue seems to be unquenchable?

Another offensive and onerous piece of legislation would outrageously fine someone \$20 who chooses not to vote unless the excuse was deemed acceptable to the state. How does this foster democracy? I see this proposal as the antithesis of freedom and democracy. Yes, voting is exercising your democratic right to have your say, and it is also the true that when a person does not vote they are exercising their right not to speak and, as a result, they are sending their own political message.

Put simply, the First Amendment guarantees that our government cannot force folks like me and you to speak, or, in other words, to vote. And no, a \$20 fine should never be assessed for that free speech right.

Still another proposal would establish an additional surcharge of one percent on the net proceeds of capital gains. Does it make sense to add a new tax to one of the few things doing well in the economy? Many of my friends rely on Wall Street markets to supplement their current or future retirement, and they pay a tax on those investments. Now state government wants another slice of the pie. Don’t they know it is already expensive to live and retire in this state?

If that wasn’t enough, there is a proposal to tax sugar-sweetened beverages (soda, juice and sweet tea) to combat obesity. The problem is these types of taxes punish working-class families and single out beverages, not other types of food. It does not promote exercise as a way to stay healthy. It just feels like another money grab by state government.

State government bureaucrats need to stop the constant refrain of taking more and more money from the families in our state.

In contrast, I have called on state government to stop making a profit off Connecticut residents forced to buy facemasks and face shields during a pandemic by stopping the sales tax on essential life-saving equipment. I have proposed a bill to eliminate that tax on masks.

I will continue to fight for an affordable Connecticut and not propose or vote for bills that will make living in our great state less affordable.

As always, please contact me should you have any questions about this important issue or concerns on any other topics relating to state government at Kathy.Kennedy@housegov.ct.gov or at 800-842-1423.

Rebuilding In2021



STATE REP. (R-117)
CHARLES FERRARO

Everyone has felt the negative impact and financial burden from the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting shutdown.

As we begin our 2021 legislative session, I am eager to support legislation that will help individuals, families and businesses recover as quickly as possible. Individuals and families have struggled with increased home costs due to working from home and some have had to rely on unemployment compensation when their workplace closed. Businesses have worked tremendously hard to keep their doors open, with increased cost and loss in revenue.

Connecticut is in desperate need of recovery and I am in full support of legislation that will assist businesses and individuals from the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Such proposed legislation is prohibiting the increase in business insurance premiums and exempt sales tax on personal protective equipment for businesses with fewer than 100 employees.

Like many restaurants, nonprofit clubs have also been hit hard. I’m once again supporting legislation to reduce liquor permit costs to nonprofit clubs. These clubs operate on a lower income ratio. Spiking their liquor permit costs, especially during the financially insecure times caused by the pandemic, would overburden these facilities.

Personal protective equipment has always been a vital aid in certain professions; now more than ever. With the strong need for PPE in these professions, and requirements among citizens, I fully support the repeal of the tax on PPE. Connecticut, like other states, had a high demand for PPE due to the overwhelming numbers in medical facilities as well as requirements through executive orders. These facilities, along with Connecticut residents, have been hit with financial burdens and the addition of another fee is arbitrary.

After a year that brought rate increases and uncertainty with utility reliability, I look forward to working in a bipartisan fashion alongside colleagues in the Energy and Technology Committee to draft and endorse legislation to make Connecticut more dependable and affordable. As the ranking member, I will continue to support legislation that improves the reliability of Connecticut’s electric grid and will advance Connecticut closer to achieving its carbon-free energy goals.

There are also a few pieces of proposed legislation coming up regarding support for victims of domestic violence and safe harbor laws. I am proud to stand with my colleagues for the residents of Connecticut and support resources and safety measures to assist those that need them most.

The Connecticut General Assembly’s website, cga.ct.gov, offers a full legislative calendar and bill tracking tool so you can stay up to date on legislation that is important to you. Remember, even though the legislative process is virtual this year you absolutely can participate. Public hearings will be held through Zoom and individuals will be able to sign up for virtual testimony; email testimony is also accepted. As always, please continue to reach out to me with legislative issues, questions, concerns and input at Charles.Ferraro@housegov.ct.gov.

The Suicide Conversation



STATE SEN. (D-14)
JAMES MARONEY

The conversation starts now. Helping each other begins today. Knowing what to do and the resources surrounding mental health is a successful way to stop a preventable health threat.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, suicide is among the top 10 leading causes of death in the country. It is the highest among middle-aged white men and the third leading cause of death in young people. The definition of young people is expanding and includes a large age range, as the brain doesn’t fully finish forming until a person is in their mid-20s.

In August 2020, surveys were conducted among adults over 18. Of the respondents, 10.7 percent reported seriously considering suicide in the 30 days prior to taking the survey, while 25.5 percent of young adults ages 18-24 reported they seriously considered suicide.

According to the Research and Evaluation Center at the University of New Haven, suicidality and COVID-19 is a concern. Researchers are aware of the psychological stressors contributing to overall increased symptoms of depression and anxiety since pandemic restrictions began. Although current projections do not show clear signs of COVID-19-related suicide increases, especially in states and countries with high income and more resources, researchers conducting studies to model the effects of COVID-19 expect an increase in suicide deaths of anywhere from one percent to 145 percent by the pandemic’s end, particularly with youth and young adults.

I organized a virtual suicide prevention policy summit on Jan. 22 along with state Rep. Mary Welander hosted by the University of New Haven. The summit provided legislators and community members with a space to discuss policy solutions to improve the mental health and wellness of Connecticut residents. Suicide is preventable and our conversation was a reminder to know the warning signs and know that help is always available.

We have many universities in Connecticut, and one of my goals is to incorporate them into our policymaking. It is important that we work together. I am committed to finding solutions to put an end to a preventable health threat.

Right now, we are living through collective trauma and as a community fighting to recover and rebuild Connecticut. Individually, people are hurting mentally with a sense of hopelessness. Through this discussion, I am hopeful we will continue to bring new solutions to members of the community, including children and adults, in order to help those fighting their challenges know there is always someone willing to listen.

Strategies discussed during the summit included the importance of intervening at multiple levels.

Help is available 24/7. Counselors are available to talk if someone is thinking about suicide by calling 211. There is also a crisis text line; text CT to 741741. There are prevention and response resources available. Mental health is just as important as physical health.

Opinion & Editorial

Race Brook Bailout A Bad Idea

Purchase Of Race Brook A Win/Win

By Michael Richetelli

First Selectman Jim Zeoli and the entire Orange Board of Selectmen have recommended the town purchase the property currently owned by Race Brook Country Club. The property encompasses approximately 287 acres and includes 27 golf holes, a clubhouse, maintenance facility, two residential structures as well as other improvements. The purchase price of \$8.5 million would be financed through a bond process, which would be financed over 20 years. The purchase price equates to about \$29,600 per acre, a tremendous value considering the current real estate market.

Orange has always valued our most precious resource: land. The town has acquired numerous parcels over the years to be preserved and protected as "open space." These purchases include Wright's Pond, Fred Wolfe Park, Turkey Hill Preserve, Race Brook Tract, the Ewen Preserve and more. These purchases help maintain the character of the town, while also providing areas for recreation, natural habitat preservation and other uses by the residents.

This proposed acquisition is different in the sense that Race Brook Country Club would continue to occupy and use the property as a tenant, operating a first-class private golf club and banquet facility. Race Brook Country Club would enter into a long-term lease, paying the town an annual rent starting at \$250,000 in 2022, with increases thereafter every five years. Once the bond is paid off, the town will have the benefit of the rental income for years to come while maintaining control over this pivotal piece of real estate. The purchase would be an investment in the town's future, an investment that unlike prior open space purchases would produce revenue for the town.

Race Brook Country Club has been in operation since 1912. It is one of the finest golf courses in the state and has been an asset to the town and the region for over 100 years. Its history is filled with rich tradition and character. Its most famous member was President William Howard Taft, who played at Race Brook from

1913-1921. There have been numerous other celebrities who have enjoyed a round at Race Brook, including Bob Hope, Bing Crosby and Jackie Robinson. Race Brook has also been visited by world class golfers such as Walter Hagen, Ben Hogan, Gene Sarazen and Tom Watson. The club has hosted numerous state and regional golf championships and was Yale University's home course until the opening of the Yale Golf Course in 1926; the Bulldogs captured three intercollegiate championships while at Race Brook. It has truly been a notable and important part of Orange's history.

Although the golf industry – especially private clubs – has been faced with many challenges in recent years, including a drop in memberships, Race Brook has seen a resurgence this past year, adding many new members and stabilizing its balance sheet. It has always been an impeccably maintained course and offers a beautiful venue for weddings and other events.

The proposed purchase of the property by the town will provide the club financial flexibility and help to ensure that Race Brook Country Club will continue to be part of the fabric of the town for decades to come.

It will also protect a large tract of centrally located land from future development. A parcel this size, if developed for residential use, could create unprecedented density for the town and a tremendous burden on town services, ultimately having an adverse effect on taxes for the residents. This scenario would end up having a detrimental effect on property values in the future.

This purchase is truly a win/win proposition; both the Town of Orange and Race Brook Country Club will enjoy a mutually beneficial long-term relationship.

I would encourage all residents to vote to approve the purchase at the town referendum on Tuesday, Feb. 16.

Michael Richetelli is an Orange Resident, president of Colonial Properties and Race Brook Country Club member.

By Kenneth Lenz

On Feb. 16 – in less than a week – the voters of Orange will be asked to authorize one of the largest land purchases in the town's history. I am opposed to the Race Brook Country Club purchase-lease back proposal. In my estimation it's a bad deal for the town and comes with the risk that Orange will repeat the mistake made by the Town of Woodridge in 2009 when it purchased the Woodbridge Country Club, bought a long-term tax increase and ended up having to close it. Here are my reasons why.

The \$8.6 million purchase proposal is scheduled to go to a town vote with very little information being provided, with just a last-minute Zoom call in lieu of a town meeting. There is no objective need to rush the purchase. So why is it being rushed? This is a major deal, yet the public has received only an informational letter in which facts are selectively disclosed, and as mentioned below, containing at least one deception. Are the COVID restrictions being used as "cover" to sneak this proposal through?

The purchase proposal is being driven by the false narrative that if the town doesn't buy the RBCC property it will be sold to developers and be converted into a large number of residences. Steve Pepe, a member of the board of RBCC, stated at a presentation to the Orange Rotary Club recently that the RBCC was considering selling only some excess wooded acreage it owns outside the country club's 27-hole golf course in order to raise funds to meet a bank balloon loan payment that is approaching. He acknowledged that RBCC has had a good year from a financial point of view with over \$4 million in revenues (in line with prior years), adding 30 new members last year, a big increase in golf rounds played and increases in food and beverage sales. Only its major events revenue decreased, but that segment never exceeded 15 percent of overall revenue.

Race Brook's members, most of whom live outside of Orange, did not intend to sell the entire country club. It was the town's first selectman who made the proposal to buy the entire country club and then lease it back to the members. Given the "sweetheart" lease offer made by the town, I am not surprised that RBCC jumped at it.

I submit that the members of RBCC – which has had a century-long history as a prestigious country club – would not allow their beloved country club to become a housing development. Pepe acknowledged that if push came to shove with its lender its members would be assessed to pay the balloon payment.

If the town's proposal is adopted at referendum, the addition of \$8.6 million in bonded debt will severely limit or increase the cost of future capital improvements through future bonding. The Orange Board of Education has identified several needs for capital expenditures, and a long-range plan for replacing our aging school buildings, all

of which are over 50 years old, which this \$8.5 million bonding will make very difficult. Fred Wolfe Park is being developed in slow-motion to avoid adding to bond debt. High Plains Community Center continues to require ongoing repairs and upgrades, in a long series of bond expenditures, and will ultimately need replacement. All of those future capital expenditures and many others would benefit the town's residents. In comparison, if RBCC is purchased by the town it will not benefit its citizens at all, as there will be no access to RBCC facilities except to its private members. So we have to ask: why are we using Orange tax dollars for the next generation to bail out Race Brook Country Club?

The RBCC property purchase and lease back to its members would create a continuing financial drain that would have to be paid in increased property taxes. The first selectman stated in his letter to the residents that "The Town would own the entire facility as a business investment" and that the cost of the \$8.5 million bond over 20 years would be \$10.3 million and the return on a 40-year lease would be \$10.6 million. The referendum is for \$8.6 million, not \$8.5 million, but what's \$100,000 to Zeoli?

No mention was made of the loss of real property tax revenues of over \$130,000 per year if the town purchases the property. The announced initial lease payment is \$250,000 but the first payment is deferred to September 2022. Why? So RBCC can build up its capital. A cashflow analysis of this "business investment" has RBCC making annual lease payments over 19 of the next 20 years of around \$5 million, but it would have been relieved of the obligation pay \$2.6 million in real estate taxes (plus probable future increases). However, Zeoli estimates the bond would cost the town \$10.3 million over 20 years or approximately \$515,000 per year.

Factoring in lost tax revenue, that's an annual loss to the town of \$395,000 per year, or \$7.9 million in extra taxes levied on us taxpayers over 20 years. Do you know of any business investors who would willingly enter into such a losing business investment?

Orange town residents would have no use of the RBCC or any of the open land surrounding it. There is simply no public benefit. It is a municipality using taxpayer dollars to bail out a private business that really is in no present danger of failure. It creates a very bad policy precedent. Will Orange have to purchase every large parcel of land that is available for sale?

The town will have no voice on Race Brook Country Club's management. A big risk is that at some time over the next 40 years RBCC will fold, forcing the town to manage the complex. Are we prepared for that eventuality?

Vote no on the Race Brook bailout.

Kenneth Lenz is a former selectman and an attorney at the law offices of Russell Gary Small.

Letters to the Editor:

Orange Democrats Thank You

To the Editor:

In the recent presidential election, Orange voted for President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris. There are now more registered democrats (2,918) in Orange than Republicans, by the widest margin ever. This is a trend that has been growing for the last few years. Orange has always been considered a "Republican" town, but that tide is turning and Orange is moving to blue.

I would like to thank all of those who supported our democratic candidates. In Orange, we have Rep. Rosa DeLauro heading back to Congress to represent our state and our nation. We look forward to Rosa working to make Connecticut an even stronger state than it is now. On the local level, we have State Sen. James Maroney heading back to our state Senate to represent us. Also, we are thrilled that we once again have an Orange resident to represent us in the state House of Representatives with the historic win by Mary Welander in our town's largest district. Mary is a passionate, humble person who understands the challenges we face and is strong enough to take them on.

As we move into 2021, we turn our attention to the local municipal elections. In July, we will hold our caucus to nominate our slate of candidates for first selectman, Board of Selectmen, town clerk, tax collector, Board of Education for both Orange and Amity, Board of Finance, Planning and Zoning and constables. All registered Democrats are invited to attend the caucus

and vote on the slate. The work for towards this starts now.

If you are interested in learning more about the process, please reach out to me. You do not have to be on the Orange Democratic Town Committee to run for office or become involved. I can be reached at 203-314-9975 or via email at JLDOrange@yahoo.com. You can also contact Jared Millbrandt, chair of the Nominating Committee at jared.millbrandt@gmail.com.

Jody Dietch
Chair, Orange Democratic Town Committee

Race Brook Open Space Good For Town

To the Editor:

I am proud of the fact that for several decades and under different administrations the Town of Orange has acted to preserve open space and strengthen the fabric of our community. We have made several acquisitions and utilized both public and private means to retain parcels of land. The 2015 Plan of Conservation and Development identified Race Brook Country Club as a priority open space area, and we have the ability to make that happen in next week's referendum.

Race Brook Country Club includes a 27-hole golf course, which has a storied history of over 100 years. Unlike property on the Post Road, though, this is not a business that

Continued on page 6

Milford-Orange Times

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Senator's Seat: Sen. James Maroney

Columnists:

Annamarie Amore, Flooring	Patricia Houser, Environment	Priscilla Searles, Orange History
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Opinion & Editorial

Ponder This

Loaded Terms Undermine Consensus

An example of building consensus starts with the question: Who wants to come to the table and figure out how to refurbish and rebuild our healthcare system?

This is just one important, pressing question facing legislators as the new Congress begins. The purpose of such discussion should not be to negotiate so that partisan interests, of either party, are foremost. To negotiate in such a manner means that everyone loses to some degree, which can be detrimental to the common good. When operating in governance circles, the aim should not be to thrust one's ideology into policy but to figure out the best possible solutions to problems based on national interests.

The United States has an inadequate public health system that requires development and restructuring to meet the many challenges of the current pandemic. Although retail operations may provide an effective temporary strategy, they do not represent a long-term solution to public health concerns. For-profit retail pharmacies are clearly not "healthcare providers."

Elected officials of both parties must understand essential differences between a healthcare delivery system and private pharmaceutical conglomerates, heavily

subsidized directly and indirectly via Medicare/Medicaid payments by the government.

A bipartisan effort to discuss funding and implementation of the public health machinery to distribute vaccines is long overdue. Such an effort is not the same as members obstructing for their own interests or to keep the status quo.

Unfortunately, a bipartisan resolution to public health issues has not been achieved. The responsibility coupled with opportunity to do so now exists in Congress. Valuable resources of time and energy must not be squandered on those who wish to impede progress against the will of the people.

The Affordable Care Act is not "Obamacare." The term is a misnomer that should not be allowed to stand in serious discussion. Some news media outlets use this incorrect term as a synonym for universal healthcare in reporting. For some Americans, this inaccurate label connects a political opponent with policies that have the potential to help people.

This lazy use of language has delayed



ELLEN RUSSELL
BEATTY

engagement in critical discussions required to create effective healthcare programs. Inaccurate dialogue and faulty labeling have engendered opposition where it might not otherwise exist. The national conversation should revolve around ideas for affordable, high quality healthcare. Alternative financial underpinnings, enhanced access and outcome measurement must be part of the planning. These issues cannot be considered if conversation stops before it can become productive.

Potential policy changes designed to improve healthcare are opposed because they hint of Obamacare. Imagine if I called my physician's office and asked if they take "Johnsoncare," since Medicare was implemented in 1965 during the Lyndon B. Johnson administration.

On the national level, the results of such faulty labeling can be catastrophic. This can lead to tragedy if it prevents us from moving forward as a nation to develop an effective public healthcare system during the COVID crisis. Language obstructions based on special

interests interfere with adoption of critical policy initiatives. Including opponents of the common ground when exploring options for a universal healthcare system makes achieving a united approach impossible.

Bipartisanship strategies, although inherently laudable, run the risk of supporting watered-down, middle-of-the-road positions that delay real solutions to pressing national concerns.

Elected members of congress who do not appreciate the gravity of the situation need to listen, learn and craft best solutions to complex problems. Through crisis comes opportunity and the possibility to build consensus around healthcare delivery.

Dr. Ellen Russell Beatty served seven years as Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs at Southern Connecticut State University, and also served as interim Academic Vice president, Dean of Health & Human Services and Director of Faculty Development. In addition to the broad perspective and a multitude of skills required of high-level administrators, her areas of special expertise lie in strategic planning, accreditation, assessment and planning and budgetary allocation.

Commentary:

Getting Your Mind Around The Debt

A recent Wall Street Journal headline declared "Janet Yellen's Debt Burden: \$21.6 Trillion and Growing." Before we start our next fiscal cycle, let's ruminate on this number: a 216 with 11 zeros after it.

You can envision that, right? No? How about the number of stars in the Milky Way galaxy? Surely you can get a head around 400 billion (a four with 11 zeros); that was approximately the US debt in 1972. How about 13.8 billion? You may recognize this number as the current age estimate of the universe in years. That amounts to 5.0403 trillion days give or take a day or two. Our dollar debt is about four times the number of days in the universe.

Still not seeing this? The current working age population in the US is about 155.76 million. The average daily wage is \$191.40 for

five days a week or about \$136.72 per day when stretched over a full week.

So let's all get really, really generous and give all our salary to the government until the debt is paid off. After all, we are patriotic socialists aren't we? Per day's work, all of us will average \$21,295,507,200 per day. Our debt divided by our daily average salaries will give the number of days that we will have to go without making money ourselves and just provide for the government debt to date: about 1,014.3 days or just under three years.

And that's if we stop spending any more money on the US government and government



THOMAS P.
HURLEY

programs. This would include defense, Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid (the largest of the programs) and all legislative, judicial and executive branch salaries – just to pay debt.

How many of you are willing to volunteer your time at this rate? What would really happen to the economy? People would eventually stop working until forced to do so. The economy would therefore collapse (read Communism, guaranteed to fail wherever it is tried). Companies wouldn't have the money to pay you anyway over this period. Remember you have no money to spend. It is all going to the government to pay down debt. Would you

comply?

States would have no income to tax, and without spending the sales tax collapses, so no relief there either. How about we take 75 percent of the income? Now we would have to do this for 3.7 years. So how about 50 percent of everybody's salary? Then it rises to 5.5 years.

Progressivity on tax rates doesn't make these numbers much better, as the incentive to make money and take risks falls rapidly at these rates. Robin Hood only works until everybody is poor. It doesn't help if you take all the individual wealth and property either, because nobody can buy anything. Who would you sell it to? China?

Charity begins at home, then elsewhere. Support the volunteers first.

Letters

(Continued From 5)

can be easily repurposed.

Race Brook currently pays the town about \$125,000 per year in property taxes, and while such payments would cease, so do the property taxes of all parcels that the town acquires. When we purchase land in Orange, we do so to preserve it – as a farm, a forest, a pond, an overlook or a recreation area. However, unlike any other town open space, not only will we preserve it, but we will lease this property for a considerable sum that would completely pay for the cost of bonding.

Some are calling this a bailout of Race Brook Country Club. This is not a bailout, but rather a partnership and an investment. Think about it. Almost every tract of open space we own has financially helped a private entity. Perhaps it was a landowner who could no longer make a living by farming, or a developer who invested in property for better or for worse or a business that no longer wanted to steward excess land. In every case, we felt it would be beneficial for the Town of Orange to own that land and we purchased it. Someone received that money who otherwise may have either gone bankrupt or sold to the highest bidder. In this case, the town and Race Brook Country Club have collaborated to maintain a parcel of 287 acres from falling into disrepair or

unknown development.

So yes, we will pay Race Brook Country Club so that they can resolve their immediate financial difficulty. But, unlike nearly every other parcel we have procured, there will be a significant revenue stream to the town over the next 40 years. Every lease payment we receive is more than we have received for any other land holding in town.

There is legitimate concern that the public will be unable to utilize this land while it is being leased. I am hopeful that a final contract will help alleviate that, but let us not lose sight of what is most important – our ability to preserve open space today and to determine the development of our town in the future.

If Race Brook had decided to sell their land, there is no guarantee as to what would happen to this property. Perhaps it would become another Fieldstone Village of senior living, another Farm River Estates of multimillion dollar homes, another Avalon of hundreds of apartments, or some other venture we haven't even considered. Now the town will not have to determine the impact of such a development and also not need to negotiate with a landowner who holds us hostage before buying property at an inflated price.

We purchased Ewen Farm for approximately \$100,000 per acre and Race Brook Country Club would be bought for under \$30,000 per acre. Based on the current cost of building lots, this is a bargain. And

that price will probably only rise as time goes on. Working with the owners of Race Brook has allowed us to negotiate a fair deal and not one that was inflated by potential building lots. As long as Race Brook continues as a country club, everything will stay the same. The town currently leases certain parcels for farming purposes, at a very low rate, so that we may maintain the property as we remember it. So, once again, we will enter a lease to maintain the property as we remember it.

It is possible that over the years the business will fail. If that were to happen, the town would own the property. Perhaps we would sell a portion for development that we feel is appropriate at the time. Perhaps it might be at a time that we are seeking property for a new school, a new fire house, a new senior center, a performing arts center or some other municipal enterprise. Any of these developments would require significant land, but in that case the town would already own the land and would have an opportunity to make any of these visions a reality without having to purchase property at some higher market price.

This is a unique opportunity for the Town of Orange and one that requires looking towards the future of our community. We need to consider what happens beyond today and embrace this as an investment in our town for generations to come.

Therefore, I strongly urge everyone to vote yes for the purchase of the Race Brook

Country Club on Tuesday, Feb. 16.

Mitch Goldblatt
Board of Selectmen, Orange

Race Brook A Rushed Decision

To the Editor:

I write with concern about the recent, fast-tracked proposal from the Town of orange to borrow \$8.5 million to buy the property owned by Race Brook Country Club.

I believe this proposal has a number of inherent risks. At the very least, it would be appropriate to allow more time to understand the benefits and long-term costs and risks of this proposal, and to allow the town residents ample time to make an informed decision given the size of this investment.

First, it seems beyond the scope of government to bail out a failing business in the private sector and use public resources to do so. While the benefit of open land is the stated reason, the expense and risks of doing this by propping up a private business does not seem in line with the goals of our local government.

Furthermore, while it seems clear First Selectman Zeoli and the Board of Selectmen have been considering this prospect and negotiating with the current owner for months, the idea was literally sprung on

Continued on page 11

The Milford Chamber of Commerce

Businesses Opened With Chamber Support This Year

2020 saw an uptick in the number of new business starts in the area. Milford and West Haven each had over 400 new business filings, and Orange had over 150. That's almost 1,000 startups representing people who did not wait for that next conference to discover what is new and innovative.

The Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce has had a front row seat to the business growth as we provided resources and/or were the resource for these ventures. We witnessed an appetite to experiment and a need to be educated through things like training webinars, videos and online classes. These entrepreneurs were proactive and did not fear criticism. We applaud the tenacity, grit, and willingness to take that leap of faith.

We also recognize our established businesses that are still standing after all that 2020 threw at them. Our support for them remains a priority and we will continue to center those priorities around connecting, supporting and advocating for members. We know that when members communicate with each other, and have mutually respectful relationships, they feel like they are part of something – in this case, the chamber.

2021 will be a year of collaborative growth with three target audiences in mind: people, businesses and the community. People equal workforce. We need to support our school districts as well as promote our career tech and higher education institutions. We must show current businesses, as well as those that are considering relocating to our region, that we have the workforce that meets their needs



PAM STANESKI

and that they are trained to a high standard.

Big business is critically important to our region, and our chamber is only stronger with their participation. We should be encouraging our bigger businesses to create or expand their supplier programs. If there is a service or supply that a larger company needs, they should look locally first and give the small business community a chance to supply their needs.

From a community perspective, a focus on cultural education will ensure that we continue to be an interesting place to visit and shop.

Through a robust tourism effort, businesses will have an opportunity to thrive and capitalize on visitors from outside our region.

Chamber businesses are open. It has been incredible to see our business community and residents come together to support new and established businesses.

The chamber has been a presence in our community for over 65 years, adapting to better serve our membership and connect our members to consumers. I have had the great honor of working on behalf of the Milford Regional Chamber for two years. This time has confirmed my belief that this is an incredible place to raise a family, start and grow business and have a lot of fun. I want to thank the Board of Directors, ambassadors, City of Milford, Town of Orange, our chamber members and area professionals; our success is due to a collaborative effort from all.

We invite you to call, click or stop by to learn more about the area and our member businesses. Think local. Shop local.

The Rotary Club of Orange

Orange Rotary Helps In Kenyan Water Project

By Phil Smith



Having written in the last issue about many local activities in which Orange Rotary participates, I turn now to a brief discussion of Rotary on the broader world stage.

Rotarians around the world help raise funds for, and support, the Rotary Foundation. With headquarters in Evanston, Illinois, the foundation oversees and distributes grants domestically and abroad to help address issues in any one of the following six areas of focus: disease prevention and treatment; water sanitation and hygiene; basic education and literacy; community economic development; maternal and child health; and peacebuilding and conflict prevention.

One of the significant foundation programs is the awarding of global grants to help support a sustainable endeavor that aligns with one of the areas of focus and is designed in cooperation with a local community to address a real need in that community.

Among the roughly \$90 million global grant and program awards given out annually are several in which the Orange Club has participated. Rotary's support for eradicating polio in the world is well-known. (Since 1988, Rotary and its partners have immunized more than 2.5 billion children against polio, and as of June 2019, Rotary had committed \$2 billion to global polio eradication.)

I wrote a few months ago about our support for a children's hospital in the Dominican Republic and the significant number of heart operations undertaken there. Today's topic is a

water project occurring in a far distant part of the world.

Many years ago, the Orange Rotary Club was instrumental in raising funds to help launch a residential elementary school in a remote and poor part of western Kenya, adjacent to the Ugandan border. The school was designed to provide an education for orphans and other vulnerable children. Today the school has grown and is thriving (despite the presence of COVID-19) along with its own farm and livestock operation. (The coronavirus has sadly put a hold on some of its graduates' plans to study in the US.) Unfortunately, too, that part of Africa has been experiencing a significant rainfall shortage.

Orange Rotary's Lynda Hammond, partnering with Mathew Omogo of the Bondo, Kenya, Rotary Club, has overseen a global grant to create an ecofriendly water, sanitation, biofuel and agricultural irrigation system. Today most parts of the system are already functioning, providing safe water for student use and sufficient water for the school's farm. The initial 56-meter-deep borehole was finished one year ago. The biogas component is operational, providing waste management for humans and livestock while helping to conserve the area's natural resources. The biogas digester receives organic material in an anaerobic environment, allowing microorganisms to break it down and convert it into biofuel, which is then used for cooking in the school kitchen. The greywater recycling component is in process of completion.

Phil Smith is the 2020-2021 president of the Rotary Club of Orange. He can be reached at JamesPhilipSmith@gmail.com.



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Real Talk: You Ask, A Pro Answers

Don't Put Off The Move

Moving is a new beginning, from emptying closets to planting gardens on new land. Each decision to pick up the family and change quarters comes with lifestyle rewards. Those who move are content; they look back on the busy time it took to put it all together, but always with comfort about how good it came to be.

Right now seems like a hard time to move. There appears to be an unrest because of COVID. But if you put that aside and carefully review how to proceed, there has never been a better time.

The problem at the moment is low inventory, as homeowners stay in and stay close, anticipating the new normal as far off. I cannot say when things will mellow with the pandemic, but I can say that the market needs listings. If you want to move, do it

now. Never have the rates been better: under three percent for a 30-year fixed mortgage.

Everyone needs to get it together and put their properties on the market so that the cycle of smaller homes to bigger ones will start to improve. We need homes to purchase and therefore homes to sell. Buyers are out there, but with few options to choose from.

If your job is secure and you are just worried about the snow, then this is your time. You can see the prices are up: the closings that occurred in the summer and fall were higher than the year before. This means that you can ask more for your home (understanding that it must be reasonable or the lending institution may not



BARBARA LEHRER

appraise it at the value you set).

Sell high and buy a little high – with the interest rates so low, it is kind of a wash. Do not lose the focus that you really do want to move. So many clients I speak to say they have wanted to move to a bigger or smaller home for a year now but have put it off. Are you going to delay until the rates go up? Many are painting and sprucing up their properties because they have been home, so you may be ready to sell. The need for office space, more room for the whole family, or an entertaining yard design could be reasons to go house shopping.

Your current location, the square footage, the kitchen size: these may all be

motivators as you picture something new. The spark may be the desire for a different floor plan and a reasonable transition into more bathrooms or a smaller yard to mow. Everyone has a unique reason to move, and real estate professionals are experienced in listening to what the client envisions for his or her future.

The right time is now. There is less competition, so you will get interest right away and there are serious buyers who will come out to preview your home in the cold weather. Take advantage of these rates. Call your lender or get a good lender from your realtor to see just what the move might cost you. You will be glad you did.

If you need more information on these issues, email Barbara.Lehrer@cbmoves.com.

Running

The Best Times For Exercise

The famous groundhog Punxsutawney Phil emerged from his burrow on a snowy Tuesday morning and saw his shadow, predicting there would six more weeks of winter.

People have been referencing the film Groundhog Day, like we are living the same day over and over. But the groundhog shows us the monotonous pattern will end. Groundhog Day is just one day, just a point in time. There is literally a new day coming on the horizon.

Even if there are six more weeks of winter that is no excuse to crawl back into our burrow and hibernate.

Our schedules are busy. It's hard to find time and motivation to get out and exercise, even though we know it is vital to both physical and mental health.

Maybe it would help to know what time is. There is a case for working out in the morning. You get your workout done and over before you even start your day. This means you begin your day with your endorphins flowing and a good feeling you have accomplished something before 9 a.m. That's more than some people



CATHY BRADLEY

accomplish all day long.

Studies show that walking briskly for 45 minutes increases metabolism, which means you burn calories throughout the day.

While morning is a great time to get up and out, there are benefits to exercising in the afternoon. Your body temperature increases through the day, and between 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. your body is the most ready and efficient for a brisk walk.

Some people prefer working out at night. While it may disrupt sleep for

some, others have said they have better quality and longer sleep.

While studies show different benefits from different exercise times, one thing is clear: getting up and moving is important. What really matters is finding the time of day that works for you, fits your schedule and that you can stick with.

By keeping your regimen consistent at the same time every day, you will make better gains. Isn't what really matters?

Cathy Bradley can be reached at cathy@ccenterprises.com.



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Milford Is Full Of Stories

By Marilyn May

The history of the Milford settlement spans 382 years, so there is no end of stories about the early town. Some stories never get written down and others simply seldom get told. Here are a few interesting stories.

High-Class Hotel: The large house on the green at 135 North Broad St. will be remembered as the Smith Funeral Home for decades to come, and many remember that the house was once the home of submarine designer Simon Lake. But there's more to the history of that house.

It was built in 1852-53 by New York banker John Fowler. At one time it was the largest house in Milford. After Fowler died the house was turned into the "Hotel Milford." An advertisement described it as "A high-class hotel furnished and managed with a view to making it an ideal summer and winter place for families, and a pleasant resting place for commercial men." The ad continues, "is the prettiest spot in all beautiful Milford." Rooms were \$2 and up. Smith bought the house in 1935.

Mary and Her Horses: Mary Hepburn Smith is a name familiar to many as a visionary philanthropist and the owner of the beautiful house on the corner of West Main and Maple streets. But that house was just her summer home. The November 1896 Journal-Courier tells us: "Mrs. Mary Hepburn Smith of Milford, regent of the Freeloze Baldwin Stow Chapter of the DAR, of that place, will, in accordance with her usual custom, leave early in the winter for Washington, (D.C.), where she has an apartment of eight rooms in the Cairo (Hotel). Mrs. Smith takes her handsome horses and equipages with her to Washington, and enters quite extensively into social life there."

St. George's Church: The stately St.

Peter's Episcopal Church on River Street had an interesting beginning. The first house of worship on this site built in the early 1770s was called St. George's Church, but there was no religious connection to the name. When early Episcopalians wanted a place to worship, the largest donor to the building fund was a man named St. George Talbot.

When the outside of that first building was painted, workers mixed sand in with the paint to give the wood the appearance of stone. The church we see today was dedicated in 1851 and re-named St. Peter's Episcopal Church.

Missed the Boat:

The 1936 "Milford News" tells what to do if you missed the boat for Port Jefferson, Long Island: take the seaplane. Pilot Jimmy Barber could fly one passenger at a time across the sound in 20 minutes for the price of \$10. You could arrive before the boat was halfway there. Barber was the only licensed seaplane pilot in Connecticut.

Kissing Bridge: There has always been confusion about the location of a bridge nicknamed the Kissing Bridge. Apparently it's not settled yet. We thought we had it settled after hearing a lifelong teacher and historian tell her story. She disputed that the



There were houses along River Street just north of the downtown railroad bridge. The house in the foreground was moved to Darina Place, and the whole area was cleared in the 1940s to make room for the A & P supermarket. The most recent use of this land was for the first Milford Farmers' Markets. Photo from the Daniel E. Moger photo collection.

bridge at the north end of the North Street pond was "Kissing Bridge." The bridge with that name was actually 0.03 miles north on Walnut Street. It made sense: that area was quiet and private because of the surrounding trees.

Not so, said another historian just recently. His story is that in the early days, the stretch of land along North Street pond between the river and North Street was lined with factories and mills. In the mornings, wives would walk their husbands to work and then kiss them goodbye. That took place at a spot just before the row of factories where the bridge curved down to meet North Street.

The women would never walk past the factories, so that spot by the bridge started being called "Kissing Bridge."

It's completely possible both stories are true, but which bridge had that nickname? Take your pick, but one thing's for sure: there was a lot of kissing going on. This much is also certain: today's bridge at the north end of the pond is the Col. Mazeau Bridge. He designed it.

Marilyn May is a lifelong resident of Milford and is on the board of the Milford Historical Society.

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Helping Others

COVID Shed Light On Food Insecurity

When looking for signs to understand how dramatically the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted our communities, look no further than a food line.

Throughout the past year, we watched these lines grow; folks on foot or in their cars, waiting hours to meet their most important and most basic needs. They are made up of new faces: those recently unemployed, families with increased expenses due to distance learning and those closely impacted by COVID-19, having experienced the loss of a loved one or recovering from their own battle with the deadly virus.

Otherwise invisible, food lines brought the significance of food insecurity in our community to light and provided evidence to how fragile our social safety nets are.

Broader than hunger, food insecurity is a social and economic condition with devastating impact. In women, it's an increased likelihood of obesity, poor mental health and poor pregnancy outcomes. In children, it is nutritional deficits like anemia, low cognitive functioning and increased behavioral needs.

Food insecurity had been one of those

fighters we were winning, albeit by very slim margins. Nationally, we have seen a decline in food insecurity since 2011. However, Connecticut has struggled to reduce food insecurity, particularly among women and children, over the past several years.

Today, it feels like we have gone back in time. The impact of COVID-19 on food insecurity is startling. In Connecticut, rates of insecurity have increased from 12 percent in 2019 to 16 percent in 2020. The impact on children is even more significant, up from 16 percent in 2019 to 23 percent in 2020. The Beth-El Center Soup Kitchen continues to experience significant increases in food demand, with usage above 70 percent for several months and with an overall increase of 40 percent as compared to 2019.

At a time where our needs feel overwhelmingly diverse, we must treat root issues like food insecurity as the cross-sectional tide to raise all boats. Fortunately, we know what solutions work



JENNIFER PARADIS

– a combination of coordinating local nonprofits and government interventions partnering together to respond to individual community needs.

Increasing access to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, commonly known as food stamps, provides immediate relief as well as drives economic development. As of Jan. 18, the 213,590 Connecticut households who receive SNAP benefits received a 15 percent increase to their monthly benefit. About 50 percent of those households also received an increase in their monthly allocation to ensure families receive the maximum benefit allowed by their family size.

It is important to know that this is a hand up for communities, not a handout. In fact, every dollar spent in SNAP benefits is \$1.70 in local economic stimulus. The purchasing power of the household drives food demand and employment in all communities while positively impacting the health outcomes for vulnerable populations including families, Black and indigenous people of

color and those who are living in poverty. Other successful interventions include the National School Lunch Program and the prevalence and accessibility of local food banks.

We can continue to support the growth of these programs through advocacy efforts. In these efforts, I implore us to also keep in mind that there are a number of households (39 percent of food insecure households in Connecticut) who do not meet the economic threshold to qualify for SNAP and remain highly vulnerable.

With COVID-19 lighting up the dark corners of this fragile system, we cannot accept a return to the status quo. When we know better, we do better, together.

Jennifer Paradis has served as the executive director of the Beth-El Center, Inc. since June 2018. She previously served as the Director of Programs and Facilities at Beth-El Center, Inc. since 2015. She serves on the Board of Directors for the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness and as co-chair of the Greater New Haven Regional Alliance to End Homelessness.

Orange Seeking COVID-19 Vaccine Enrollments

The Orange Health Department has developed a COVID-19 vaccine survey to allocate the COVID-19 vaccine supply according to the phases established by the Connecticut Department of Health. The Orange Health Department will be updating the eligibility criteria based on the guidelines. The location and times

of the clinic sites will be posted once the COVID-19 vaccines have been received.

Fill out the form here to register with the Vaccine Administration Management System. You will need to enter your full name, date of birth, eligible occupation (including "retired") and email address. The information you enter will only be

used for purposes of scheduling your vaccination and will be kept private.

Once registered, VAMS will email you to guide you through the appointment process for receiving the COVID-19 vaccine.

At this time, only people eligible under Phase 1a or who are age 75 and over may register. Fill out the form only if you are an

Orange resident and eligible to receive the vaccine.

Each individual who completes the survey must have their own unique email to be entered in and vaccinated through VAMS. No duplicate emails can be used. Complete the survey only one time with one email per person.

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Letters

(Continued From 6)

Orange residents in the past few weeks, in a rushed attempt to push this through. This is just not appropriate, and will lead to potential misrepresentations, a lack of understanding, and frankly a rushed and reckless decision process. I am the CEO of private, fast-growing technology company, and for an investment of this magnitude, I would never rush this decision through my own board of directors and shareholders.

This precedent would put the town at risk for other future business bailouts. The owner of every single parcel on the Boston Post Road could conceivably make a comparable development threat to put the town in an untenable position. In government, precedence does really matter.

I urge all Orange voters to reject this proposal at the Feb. 16 referendum, and at least force our government leaders to act in a more measured and responsible manner.

Albert Subbloie
Orange
President and CEO, Budderfly, Inc.

Race Brook Could Be Costly For Town

To the Editor:

I have been in the golf industry for 70 years and would like to share my insights and experience with the residents of Orange as they contemplate purchasing Race Brook Country Club for 8.6 million dollars.

For the last 15 years, golf has been on the decline in the state of Connecticut. We do not have to look too far to see this as we have had two local private golf courses, each in existence for over 40 years, not survive as private courses. Woodbridge Country Club could not stay in business and was purchased by the town of Woodbridge and run as a municipal course until the residents voted to close it as the expense of operating it with a management company was costing hundreds of thousands of dollars annually. Eventually the residents voted to close the course and now it is fallow land. Oaklane Country Club closed after 40 years and was subsequently purchased by a family that owns another public course in Wallingford, and has been open to the public. Now Race Brook Country Club has financial difficulties and is in need of a bailout, and the voters of Orange are being asked to bond for \$8.6 million.

I do not think the purchase is the best investment for the town, based on the downward spiral of the golf industry and the number of courses closing throughout the country. I have concerns that the RBCC will be able to honor the 40-year lease. A resource available to see the recent years' golf trends and rounds played is the National Golf Foundation. If RBCC cannot pay the lease, what happens to the land? The first selectman has stated publicly that two management companies have reached out to him. If that becomes the fate of RBCC, then we could potentially be in the same costly situation as Woodbridge, where the taxpayers were subsidizing the operations of the golf course with costs in the hundreds of thousands of dollars each year.

The Orange voters have been told that auditors analyzed RBCC's financials and have determined they can pay the lease. However, I am curious as to their credentials in the golf industry. I would have confidence in their opinion if we had been told about their expertise in the golf industry. Did the Orange elected leaders commission a feasibility study on the health of the golf industry in Connecticut? Did they do their homework? Another important question is why can't the voters see the lease agreement between the town and RBCC? The Orange voters deserve that so they can make an informed vote.

In short, I do not feel that purchasing a financially troubled business that is in a

challenged industry is the right business decision for our town.

Walter "Bud" Smith
Orange

Excited To Buy Race Brook

To the Editor:

Being a born and bred Orange town resident, I am intrigued, and quite honestly excited, by the prospect of having the Town of Orange purchase the property that is the Race Brook Country Club. As I'm sure is being mentioned by others, the concerns of all or even part of a such a large tract of land being sold and ultimately developed would have potential far reaching negative effects on both the town and the club itself. Of greater concern, if the club sold a portion of its land as has been proposed, would be the potential domino effect of diminishing its current desirability for membership. This could cause a downward spiral and the need to sell off the remaining acreage, prompting further large-scale development.

This particular large parcel of land being turned into more residential homes would certainly, in my opinion, greatly increase strain to our school system. More specifically, it will present an immediate challenge to the Race Brook Elementary School which is already carrying a roster of nearly 400 students.

I see this purchase as a fantastic way for the town to maintain both its focus on providing the much sought-after open spaces we all desire, as well as assisting in preserving a both historic and well-known facility that is a true draw for Orange. Race Brook Country Club has a storied history dating back well over 100 years. Having had members such as President William Howard Taft and playing host to professional golfers and entertainers the likes of Ben Hogan, Walter Hagen, Bob Hope and Bing Crosby, the club itself is a true historical asset. I see the saving of this beautiful tract of land as the primary value of this purchase, and the assistance to a business a fantastic secondary result of this endeavor.

I applaud the Board of Selectmen's decision to move this project forward to a referendum. I am excited at the prospect of preserving the land, first and foremost, and for the assistance it will offer a historic business that has truly become an integral part of our landscape.

Kevin Weirsman
Orange
Co-owner of Total Realty Services, LLC

Race Brook Purchase Unwise

To the Editor:

There are many serious financial questions to be answered about Jim Zeoli's proposal to borrow \$8.5 million to buy the Race Brook Country Club.

First, is it wise to have the current management of Race Brook continue managing the business if it's the same management that brought it to the point where it needs the town to buy it?

Second, is it wise to increase the town's debt at a time when almost every municipality in Connecticut is dealing with a shrinking grand list?

To follow-up: is it wise to intentionally shrink the grand list in Orange by removing this private property from taxpaying rolls and making it tax-exempt? Is that lost tax revenue built into the financial prospectus residents have been provided?

Is a projected \$300,000 revenue surplus, over 20 years, sufficient on an \$8.5 million investment? How will the debt service on this new loan impact necessary spending on education, public works, and emergency services?

If 12,000 residents are being asked to pay for this property, what provisions are in place to provide property access to them?

Personally, I can't imagine these questions will be answered satisfactorily, if at all, by an administration that seems hell-bent on steering our town off this financial cliff.

I'll be voting no on Feb. 16.

Dave Parmelee
Orange

Golf Course Not For Everyone

To the Editor:

As a "senior" resident of Orange, and a long-time resident besides, I strongly oppose the proposition from Jim Zeoli that we borrow \$8.5 million and purchase the Race Brook golf course.

At this time in my life, I have had to trim my sails considerably, not just because I live on a more modest income with no job prospects, but because I would like to pass along a little something to my children, so they have an easier time raising their children.

These are uncertain – some would say perilous – economic times, and I don't believe going out on a limb to the tune of \$8.5 million is prudent while there's still so much upheaval and unpredictability at every turn.

Furthermore, this proposition – should it be approved – would not ever even benefit me or the vast majority of other Orange residents. Borrowing such a whopping sum would simply perpetuate a teetering business that does not open to retail customers. It is and would remain only available to those who golf.

I would much sooner see town leaders trim their sails and let the rest of us decide how to spend our money – hard-earned money they want us to pony up to buy this golf course.

Walter S. Hine
Orange

Race Brook Plan Doesn't Add Up

To the Editor:

The proposed Race Brook Country Club bailout is an unadvisable idea for Orange and I hope that voters not only reject this referendum on Feb. 16, but do so in overwhelming fashion to send a message that all facts must be considered in such large financial decisions. Several things brought up during the referendum town hall simply do not add up.

The town has moved forward in this referendum as they feel it is the town's best interest to be a landlord for this specific failing property, however their reasoning just does not add up. It has been presented that the impact in taxes will be about \$65 a year increase to each homeowner, varying on one's property value. This cost will be yearly for the 20 years of the bond. In the end this bond is expected to cost the town about \$10.3 million and if the club does not go under in the 40 year lease period, then at 40 years the town would finally be paid back \$10.6 million which would be full bond plus a puny little extra cash. That said, what the town keeps ignoring is that currently the town receives about \$139,000 a year in property taxes from the Race Brook Country Club which we will never see again if we buy this property. Even if that club goes under, the owner is still responsible for those property taxes. So, in the end if you add that to the calculus of being paid back it will actually take closer to 60 years before we break even and that is assuming the country club does not go under. I realize we would also own the property which will be worth more in 40 years, but that also means the taxes on the property would be significantly more as well, which we could be collecting on the entire time if the town did not own it.

One rationale provided by the town committee during the referendum discussion was that the club was indeed successful. If the

club is so successful and the facilities are so great then why do they need a bailout? If they made better financing decisions than in past and are better now for it, as was mentioned during that discussion, then they do not need the bailout. The fact is that without the bailout, they will go under. Many businesses in town and around country are suffering with pandemic. Why isn't the town in bailing out all those businesses? It is sad when something that has been part of town goes out of business, but the choice of picking this failing business over another seems irrational at best from a financial viability standpoint.

The town has argued it is not a bailout as at the end of lease we would own the property. But owning a property that has a 40-year lease is useless, especially when we are not making any money on it. If we make the club pay back the bond in 20 years perhaps it would be better for our town, but that is not financially viable for this club, revealing that this is indeed a de facto bailout.

The town has argued that we are getting land at a great deal and this would prevent us from needing to buy land from a developer should we need it for a new schools or other building infrastructure, but again if the land is under a 40-year lease, we cannot touch it until the club goes under. So, in effect, we would still have to buy land for schools or other infrastructure in Orange if we need to build these before we can touch this lease. So what is the real issue behind this decision?

The unspoken real issue appears to be that irrational fear of change. If we do not bail out the club, and the club goes under they will sell the land to the highest bidder. What we do not know is what the developer will build. Will they build another Fieldstone? Will they build higher end homes which would have higher tax income for town, but have more students to go to our already overwhelmed schools? Will it be multi-family residences? I am willing to roll the dice, as I think the benefits of doing so have a higher upside than not. We are no longer a farm town, nor have been for several decades and I think having new blood in town is great for our town, no matter in what form the new development comes in. I think we should celebrate our town history with farming but move on.

I have heard many who say that I would be for this deal and against any possible development if it were in my back yard. That's a gross misassumption. The more developed, the better chance we all have that just for once, our property taxes would not go up without additional services being offered for that raise. That's a win for every homeowner in a town that offers very few public services in proportion to the taxes paid.

I also hear that it is a "school issue." I am aware that the schools need redistricting, which for some reason Orange always refuses to do, whereas almost every other town in the state does this when it is needed. Many are already complaining our schools are bursting at the seams so any possible new development would not create what is already a preexisting problem.

Orange needs to move in a fiscally responsible direction and not buy land that will raise our taxes for a very poor chance of any benefit. Orange does not need more open space, especially a space no one in town can use. I encourage and implore everyone to vote against this referendum. If you want taxes to be raised, then let's raise it for those new schools, or to move forward on the Wolfe Park development plan approved years ago, but certainly let's not raise our taxes for a private country club.

Elliot Dubin
Orange

MOT

Milford-Orange Times





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Getting To Know You

2020 Brought No Bikes

I've spent the month of January trying to put a bow on the year 2020. Now we're a month into 2021 and I still can't say I know just what to say about it.

In one respect I found it to be like that year I didn't get the bike I wanted for the holidays. I was told to be good and behave myself and I would get what I wanted, so I spent that year eating up, washing up, cleaning up and doing well in school. I did what was asked of me and didn't gripe about it (much). I made sure to stay out of trouble. The people around me were impressed. They encouraged my efforts and I stuck at it. Finally, the holidays came and I could hardly wait for the big payoff.

But no bike.

In 2020 we were all told to behave ourselves and we would get rewarded, and for the most part we did our best. We stayed home, didn't go out to eat or to the movies, didn't gripe about it (much) and stayed away from our

family and friends as we had been requested to do. We did it for nearly a year. People complimented us on our patience and tenacity. Then the holidays came.

But no bike.

In another respect I found it to be like the year I went to college. I had worked hard to get into college and sent out my applications diligently. My mother took me shopping for the proper appointments for a dormitory room and I spent the summer saying proper goodbyes to my friends and family. Finally, the day came and my parents dropped me off at my dormitory at the University of Connecticut with two Navy sea bags full of clothes and appointments for my door room. My mother kissed my cheek, gave me \$20 and a jar of peanut butter, and I was there at college just like I planned all along.



DAVID CROW

Yet as I watched my parents drive away all I could think about was how great home had been, how much I missed the family and friends I'd left behind.

In 2020 we all went home from work and school, logged onto our computers and did work and school over the internet. We bought the proper accoutrements for home office and studies, then said goodbye to our family and friends at the office and at school. We learned to use Teams and Webex and Zoom to keep in touch from our homes. We learned that a Bluetooth mic and a webcam were our new windows to the world.

Yet even though we still see and talk to these people, we remember how great it was to go into the office, shake their hands and throw our arms around their shoulders.

Yeah, there was a lot to be thankful for in 2020. Some of us had the option to work and go to school from home. Modern science did a miracle in the form of a vaccine, which hopefully we'll all be able to get pretty soon. Yet 2020 just didn't work out like we hoped it would. That leaves us all feeling a little muddled inside as we forge into 2021.

Here's hoping in 2021 we all get to see each other in person again and shake hands, even if we use some hand sanitizer afterwards.

Until next time, y'all come out!

David Crow lives in Orange with his wife and three children. He practices law and he asks everyone to call him "Dave." Only his mother and his wife call him "David," and only when they're mad at him. You can contact Dave at Sit.a.Spell.and.Visit@gmail.com. He'll always find a half hour for a good chat.

Milford Partners With Yale To Expand COVID Vaccines

The Milford Health Department is partnering with the state Department of Public Health to provide COVID-19 vaccines as they are available in accordance with state guidelines.

The MHD has held seven COVID-19 vaccination clinics at the Parsons Government Complex gymnasium since December when vaccine distribution began in Connecticut. MHD vaccine clinics operate on Wednesdays all day and Friday afternoons with registration through the Vaccine Administration Management System.

To increase access to COVID-19 vaccine

locally, the Yale New Haven Health System will use the gymnasium on days when the MHD is not operating its clinic.

"The supply of vaccine at this time does not meet the demand, so it will take time for everyone to be vaccinated," said Milford Mayor Ben Blake. "As the state expands eligibility for individuals, particularly seniors and other vulnerable populations, the City of Milford wants to make sure that those most at risk for serious complications from COVID-19 do not have to travel far to get access to the vaccine as it becomes available."

To receive a COVID-19 vaccine through

the MHD, individuals must make an appointment by registering in the Vaccine Administration Management System. To find out more information about how to use VAMS go to <https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/COVID-19-Vaccinations>—VAMS-Support or visit the MHD website. To make an appointment through the Yale New Haven Health System, visit <https://covidvaccine.ynhh.org/>.

"The Health Department already transformed the gym into a clinic with the help of the Department of Public Works, so it seems like a natural partnership for the hospital to use the existing set-up to

expand access," said Deepa Joseph, MHD's director of health. "We are thrilled to be part of this valuable strategy to conquer this pandemic by delivering these vital vaccines to Milford residents and those in surrounding communities."

Joseph added that the MHD is prepared to vaccinate more residents as the vaccine rollout progresses.

According to state guidelines for vaccine distribution, while Phase 1b opened on Jan. 18 for individuals age 75 and older. The next group that will be eligible is individuals between the ages of 65 and 74; that date has not been determined.

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Lifestyle

Here's To Your Health

What's Your Eating Pattern?

When working with my clients on exercise and nutrition, many ask me what the best way to eat is: eating five or more small meals a day or fasting for 12 to 15 hours a day.

The answer is yes. There are many myths about the way we should eat and the timing of when we eat. One example is eating smaller meals as a means to increase your metabolism. While it is true that you increase your metabolic rate in doing so, the rate is only slightly increased.

Another example would be intermittent fasting. This term is used to describe several eating patterns where no or few calories are consumed for certain time periods that can go from 12 hours or several days on a regular basis. While fasting has proven to be a successful method for overweight adults,

there are potential impacts on gut hormones and reported risks of extended fasting such as nausea, dizziness, decreased bone density and thiamin deficiencies.

Yet another eating pattern may be timing nutrient intake. This may be a great way for professional athletes to eat to support muscle recovery; however, for the average person who just wants to look and feel better it's not a realistic lifestyle.

My clients also will ask me about protein shakes and the like. My response is to investigate what the ingredients of those powders are because quality counts.



MICHELE
TENNEY

I believe food is medicine and make my shakes out of exactly that: food. I'll throw whatever I have in the fridge in the way of veggies first, one piece of fruit, some ginger, maybe even a half a lemon with the skin, water and some almond milk, then start my blender up. My preference for protein is plant-based to avoid the potential for hormones in milk.

There is no one Holy Grail. Every person has their own DNA which makes them unique

in every way. What works for one may not necessarily work for another. What is important is that you eat healthy more often than you don't. Get the proper amount of sleep every night. Stay hydrated and lower

your stress levels.

Let this be your year for optimal health. The Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce Chamber Health and Wellness Committee will be hosting a Zoom meeting to discuss ways to stay healthy over the winter. I and two others will be speaking on this subject and we really hope you can join in for the discussion.

Here's to your health.

Michele Tenney is a Certified Personal Trainer and Nutritionist & Wellness Coach. She is the Chair of the Healthy Lifestyles Committee for the Orange Elementary School System and is a member of the Orange Board of Health. She can be reached at 203 668 2969 or email of Hmgbrd3@gmail.com.

On Your Mind

Stop Dieting And Become Trimmer

Which is the best diet? Which diet works? They all work...if you want to spend your life on a diet.

Diets set you up for failure. You go on and then you go off because they are unsustainable. For those of you who have dieted your whole life, you know I'm right. In fact, when you went off that diet you gained back the weight plus extra pounds.

The reason you gain extra weight is obvious. When you go off the diet, your body goes a little overboard trying to recover if it was a calorie-limited diet. If it was a diet that eliminated carbs, your body craves the sugar once it's reintroduced. Sugar and white flour create cravings for more sugar. Many people diet for a particular occasion and then go back to poor eating habits after that event.

The secret to successfully becoming trimmer is simply to change your relationship with food and, more importantly, change

your relationship with your body.

Many people who come to me for weight issues say unkind things to their body. They put stuff into their body that they call "junk." That is, they deliberately eat stuff that they know has no nutritional value except to provide more fat. Then they say mean things to their bodies for being fat.

Most people's bodies have been very good to them. Their body has allowed them to play, work and enjoy life. Your body requires nutrition, rest, exercise and lots of water. If you give your body what it needs, the excess fat will be used for energy and you will feel healthier and happier.

I know it sounds simple; that's because it is. When you change your relationship with food you recognize that food is for nourishment. The food you choose should



FERN
TAUSIG

be chosen by the quality of the nourishment it provides, not the way it makes you feel while you are eating it.

Unconsciously, when you eat "junk" you actually get a high. People use food as a drug, and that's why there are cravings and feelings of being out of control around it. It's why you eat the whole bag of chips, the whole pizza or the whole box of cookies.

Why did I add pizza to the junk category? Most pizza is made from white flour and water. That is the recipe for paste that you used for paper mache. On top of the pizza is some sauce and cheese. Cheese is mostly fat. If you have extra fat, eating more fat is counterproductive. It's not that you can't ever eat fat again, but your body doesn't need more while you have too much. If you

want pizza, it should be a small part of a balanced meal, not the whole meal. That's how to manage the amount of weight you want to have.

I always distinguish with my clients the difference between food and edible substances. Processed and packaged foods are edible, but most of them aren't food because they don't supply enough nutrition to qualify. If you are mindful of what you put into your body and you love, honor and respect your body, you will notice a difference in the way you look and feel.

If you eat until you are satisfied, not full, and eat for nourishment and only when you're hungry, you will never need to diet again. Stop dieting and become trimmer.

Fern is a certified hypnotist, lifecoach and health educator. She can be reached at www.myhealinghypnosis.com.

Personal Experiences

Together We Thrive

Yoko Ono once said, "A dream you dream alone is only a dream. A dream you dream together is reality." There repeatedly comes a time in history where we are faced with a choice: to stand together as one or diminish as individuals. People frequently underestimate the value of unity, whether it is as vast as our communities or as familiar as our families.

The chaos in the surrounding world means one thing, and one thing alone: we are here together, and together is how we thrive. Due to the severity of our current global crisis, people cannot physically come together. Still, technology allows us to communicate, see each other and help one another through hardships.

It is relatively easy to let the hardships in life get the best of you. It is easy to stay disconnected and unbothered by the

outside world when you are already struggling. But that is not what life is about. Life should resemble unity, kindness and love. Those three things have not been taken from us the way that so many others have. We may have to endure a long-winded and scary worldwide crisis, but we do not have to go through it alone.

Almost as quickly as COVID-19 has spread, so have lingering issues with our mental wellness. People are forced to isolate themselves with limited social interaction. Work has changed for many, and school has changed for all who attend. The world is no longer as we once knew it, and the consequences of this mass shift



CAROLINA
AMORE

have changed the way people live their day-to-day lives.

Emotional and mental decline due to isolation and widespread fear is especially harmful to those who already suffer from mental ailments like depression and anxiety. For those who already battle depression, getting out of bed in the morning could be more difficult than ever before. For those who suffer from anxiety, leaving the house for any mental task can be additionally terrifying.

Mandatory isolation can be quite problematic. Events, get-togethers and many forms of social outings have been canceled. But what hasn't been canceled is kindness. While the world is ever-changing and constantly evolving (sometimes not for the better), so is technology. The

widespread use of technology now allows us to stay connected during times of crisis.

Nevertheless, the extra time spent alone can be even more detrimental to those already struggling. So reach out to a friend. Make sure to check in on your loved ones during this difficult time. Humans need one other more than ever.

To all who struggle, no matter what the battle, we must remember we have each other to lean on during difficult times. As a community, as families and as people, we are trying to pave our way to a better tomorrow. Stay connected, stay kind. Never forget that there will always be love, there will always be light and there will always be another sun waiting to rise.

Carolina Amore is a resident of Orange.

Recycling Tip

By Loretta Smith

Do you know the origin of the phrase "blue Monday"? A bluing agent was used to whiten laundry before bleach came along, and laundry was often done on Mondays. Hence Blue Monday. Bluing is still available, and there are other products that should be used instead of bleach: borax, baking soda, enzyme pre-soaks, white vinegar. Bleach is terribly toxic to our environment: it will

travel through our septic tanks, into our leaching fields, then to the water table and out to Long Island Sound.

According to the sustainability website Treehugger, "When released to waterways, chlorine bleach can create organochlorines that contaminate drinking water. Organochlorines, which are suspected carcinogens as well as reproductive, neurological and immune-system toxins, have also been known to cause

developmental disorders, and are some of the most enduring compounds. Once introduced into the environment it can take years, or even decades, for them to break down to less damaging forms."

To dispose of any bleach you have, put it in a safe place for now, then take it to HazWaste Central at the Regional Water Authority, located at 90 Sargent Dr. in New Haven. It is open from May through October.

Quiz time: According to Defenders of

Wildlife, what are the five deadliest kinds of trash in the ocean?

January quiz answer: Cardboard recycling is swelling because of home deliveries during the pandemic. Pizza boxes with no food are recyclable. About how many pizza boxes are produced in the U.S. each year? a) 1 billion b) 2 billion c) 3 billion d) 4 billion. Answer: 3 billion.

For more on what can be recycled, visit orangerecycles.com.

For Nature's Sake

A Plastic-Less Lent

Around this time of year two years ago, an item popped up in my Facebook feed about a UK-based group called "Plastic-less Lent."

Like many Catholics with a yearly practice of Lenten observance, I've seen people give up everything from chocolate to TV and social media for 40 days. But this was new. I found myself intrigued by this Anglican group, including their moral conviction to withdraw from an activity that was "harming our environment, harming the natural world, harming our seas and harming people." The group was nonjudgmental; the organizer emphasized they were going plastic-less, not plastic free.

The plastic-less Lent group was part of a larger movement that started a few months after the last episode of Blue Planet II, a nature show about the world's oceans that was also the most-watched TV program in England. That program, narrated by Richard Attenborough, was typically stunning in its cinematography and depiction of the natural world. It also showed plastic pollution on the shores and beneath the water of the world's oceans, and included "shocking scenes," in the words of British reviewers, of the damages of trash in the natural world,

including the memorable sight of an albatross chick that had died from a stomach punctured by an ingested piece of plastic.

Many across the UK were moved by the Blue Planet II episodes, and the public seemed receptive a few months later when Prime Minister Theresa May announced a campaign against plastic waste, with policies including plastic-free aisles in supermarkets and a tax on take-out containers. Plastic-free Lent was endorsed by the Church of England and joined by 44 conservative members of parliament who pledged to give up plastic for Lent. In 2019, the year I came across the Facebook group, the BBC launched a show called "Our War on Plastic," with an accompanying explanation that said, "The 'Blue Planet effect' is not going back in the plastic bottle. Now people want to know what they can do to help, to make our lives better, and to make the Earth a better place to live."

Multiple faith communities engaged in environmental programs in the wake of the of



PATRICIA HOUSER

the "Blue Planet effect," including several UK mosques that observed a plastic-less Ramadan in 2019. Harun Khan, secretary general of the Muslim Council of Britain, told the Metro news outlet, "As Muslims fast in Ramadan to be closer to God, it is important to be mindful of his creation and care for the environment."

The Lenten Facebook group was also generating policy changes in their local grocery stores. Some grocers were providing large dispensers for things like shampoo where people could come and refill their old bottles. That is what amazed me most – the people who were able to abstain from so-called single-use plastic, the kind that is only used once before being thrown away or recycled.

In the US where a few groups have picked up on the idea of plastic-less Lent, it would seem a natural fit for Catholics. Pope Francis has said that, "living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience."

In Jewish teaching there are several texts connected to environmental stewardship including the concept of Shomrei Adamah (being guardians of the earth) and the Mishnah, which explores the concept of Tikkun Olam (Repair of the Earth). The best-named plastic reduction proposal, sent to me by a friend from the site myjewishlearning.com in a column titled "Plastover: An Exodus from Jewish Waste," which invites the reader to "Join us for 'Plastover' on the journey to a more sane, responsible use of plastic by committing to 'Let My Plastic Go!'"

The plastic-less pledge might well interest one of my friends who observes a secular version of Lent as an exercise in "mindfulness." But for those who want a different kickoff theme to a February plastic-less program, there is also the idea from the UN environment program of using Valentine's Day as an occasion to "break up with plastic."

Patricia Houser, PhD, AICP, shares her exploration of local and regional environmental issues in this column on behalf of the nonpartisan Milford Environmental Concerns Coalition.

AMSO Students Honored With Superintendents Award



Amity Middle School Orange student Colin Spoerndle accepts a Certificate of Excellence from the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents given by Amity superintendent Dr. Jennifer Byars. Photo by Kathy Burke.

Amity Middle School Orange students Maya Quaranta and Colin Spoerndle received the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents Award of Excellence and were recognized at the January Board of Education meeting for their community service and service to others, as well as their academic progress and leadership service to the school community.

Quaranta is an active member of the AMSO school community, serving as the student representative on the School Climate Committee. Her teachers note that she has distinguished herself among

her peers with her diligence, ability to collaborate and her outstanding effort. Outside of school, Quaranta volunteers at a local church baking treats for Orange residents. She also works at a farm stand.

Colin Spoerndle also serves on the AMSO School Climate Committee. Spoerndle's teachers praised him for his positive attitude and work ethic that make him a leader among his peers. Outside of school, he swims with the Amity Regional Aquatic Club. Spoerndle has also been active in the Orange Little League helping out clinics for the younger children.

Milford Chamber Adds New Members

The Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce added the following new members in January and early February: Justice of the Peace, Eileen Cavanaugh, 203-795-1410; Touchdown Nutrition, Jennifer Langlois, 203-874-1883; SkinAct Aesthetics LLC, Carolyn Rojo, 203-399-9949; Solace Massage LLC,

Tina Quatroni, 347-738-1431; The Julia Seraphine Agency, 203-927-3948, Julia Seraphine; Walnut Beach Beauty Bar, Melissa Wasik, 203-770-9034; Drazen Rubin Law LLC, Franklin Drazen and Steven Rubin, 203-877-7511; and the Rotary Club of Devon, Albert May, President.

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Orange Selectman's Daughter Makes President's List

Orange native Shayna Goldblatt has been named to the President's List for the 2020 fall semester at Elon University. The President's List is composed of students with no grade below an A-minus in a minimum of 12 semester hours.

Goldblatt is the daughter of Mitch Goldblatt, a former first selectman and current member of the Board of Selectmen, and Abby Goldblatt of Orange.

Elon is ranked among the top-100 National Universities by U.S. News & World Report.



Shayna Goldblatt. Photo courtesy of Mitch Goldblatt.

The Garden Spot

Caring For Your Gardening Tools

Last month we reviewed the tools every gardener needs. Now that everyone has their tools, let's spend some time making sure that those tools are properly maintained.

Proper maintenance is important not just to make sure your tools last but also to ensure healthy plants.

There are two main areas for tool maintenance: cleaning and sharpening. Clean, sharp tools work more effectively, are easier to use and last longer.

All tools receive a quick cleaning between uses. This prevents spreading plant diseases and insects from one plant to another. Just like humans, plants can catch viral, fungal and bacterial diseases and become hosts for insects. A good example of this is with fungal diseases. Mold spores can live multiple years in the soil, so using

a "dirty" spade to dig up a plant will only spread the spores to the next plant.

Good environmental practices, such as making sure plants are planted properly, will help maintain plant health and increase disease and pest resistance, but why have your hard work go to waste by spreading diseases with your tools?

I'm going to repeat myself here: all of your tools should be cleaned and sanitized after every use to remove any soil and disease-carrying residue. Once you remove any loose soil, follow with a quick pre-rinse to make sure all soil is removed. This is a good time to inspect your tools so that you identify any needed sharpening or



PAT DRAY

repair before their next use.

Tools can be sanitized by wiping them down with rubbing alcohol or bleach. You may notice some rust on your shovels and spades; remove that with a hard scrub or gently with a wire brush, and treat them with a very light coat of machine oil. You should also give any moving parts a light rubdown with the machine oil to prolong

their lives.

If your tools have wooden handles, a quick once-over with sandpaper will help maintain them. If a handle is split or broken, a replacement can be purchased at most hardware stores and easily installed.

All your tools should be sharpened before they're put away for the season.

For shovels and spades, a quick run over with a hand file should do. For lawn mower blades, it's best to take them in for sharpening since this is usually done with a high speed grinder. Your pruners and loppers can be sharpened by any available specialty tool. No matter what type of sharpening tool you use, be sure to follow directions carefully and wear eye protection.

Once your tools are cleaned and sharpened, hang them in the garage or shed off the floor to help prevent any rusting. You'll be happy you tackled this project in the winter so that come spring you can get off to a great, green start.

Pat Dray is a past president of the Orange Garden Club and a master gardener.

Insuring Your Future

Vaccines And Insurance Being Made Available

The good news is that we have moved from needing testing centers to vaccine centers.

Both Orange and Milford are sponsoring clinics weekly. Consult their respective town websites for specific information. Orange residents should go to Orange-Ct.gov and click on the vaccine circle. Milford residents should go to ci.milford.ct.us and click on the Departments tab, then select Health Department.

If you do not have online access, Orange residents can call the Orange Senior Center

at 203-891-4784 and they will assist you in completing the application.

You must provide an email address when applying. If you use a friend's or relative's address, that individual will not be able to use it when they register for the vaccine. A possible workaround is to create an email and give access to the person who will check the inbox. Some ask why they request



TRISH PEARSON

health insurance information when registering, as there is no copay for the vaccine. This is strictly for administrative and tracking purposes. It is important that there is follow-up for the second shot and to know who has been vaccinated.

President Joe Biden has extended the open enrollment period for individual health insurance purchased on the federal health exchanges. The

special enrollment period will be open from Feb. 15 to May 15. Since Connecticut has its own exchange, it remains to be seen if they will choose to extend as well. As of press time it is still under consideration. If and when a decision is made I will post on my website at InsurewithTrish.com.

Trish Pearson is a licensed independent insurance agent and certified long term care specialist. Contact her at 203-640-5969 or trishpearson281@gmail.com.

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Barbara is your guide through this difficult time. Whatever the repair or service that has to be performed, she knows who to call on, from the smallest to the biggest jobs. What will facilitate your sale? Electrical work, septic information, roof, paint, window issues, the list goes on! Again, she knows someone. Even if your needs are a complete cleaning to impress the buyers, she has the incredible professionals on speed dial!

And, in addition to all those skills, she has the heart and empathy to help you through what could be one of the hardest passages in life's journey. Thank you for everything, Barbara. My money is always on you to get the transaction done."

- Clayton Curtis



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Travel Matters

Wide Open Spaces For 2021

“Oh, give me a home where the buffalo roam, and the deer and the antelope play.” This might be a possible vacation mantra for travel during 2021 while we work out the vaccine issue. There are more options available these days to places like the Rockies and Red Rocks, as well as luxury ranches in Wyoming and Montana where social distancing is truly built into the vacation.

Let's start with Brush Creek Lodge in the Wyoming Platte River Valley, a family-friendly all-inclusive destination with authentic ranch culture, adventure and panoramic landscapes. It includes access to more than 40 activities on a 30,000-acre cattle ranch, luxurious accommodations and world-class cuisine at The Farm, a seed-to-table “culinary adventure.”

The The Lodge & Spa at Brush Creek Ranch was voted the number one resort in the USA by Travel and Leisure magazine

readers.

The Magee Homestead, on the other hand, is adults only: 12 log cabins with a wellness program and French Creek sportsman club in Saratoga, New York. It's perfect for a 4-8 person retreat.

Next, we have the Paws Up Resort: 37,000 acres on a working cattle ranch in western Montana. Paws Up includes 28 homes with one to four bedrooms, glamping in safari-style tents, and the Lodge at Salmon Lake. Billed as an American safari, Paws Up offers whitewater rafting, fly fishing, all-inclusive meals, open fire cooking, horseback riding and jet skiing on Salmon Lake.

Next, let's look at a luxury train trip from Denver to Moab, Utah on the famous Rocky Mountaineer – known for their exclusive train cars with panoramic windows, as well



**KAREN
QUINN-
PANZER**

as all-inclusive gourmet cuisine and beverages in the Canadian Rockies. In 2021, the Rocky Mountaineer is starting a preview season from August through October in the US. It offers many a la carte packages, including just the train ride and a hotel night in Glenwood Springs along the way or up to five-to-seven-night itineraries that can include any or all of the big five national parks in Utah.

Here's the trip we are going on:

Day 1: Arrive in Salt Lake City, hotel and dinner at the Lion House (Brigham Young's former home).

Day 2: Travel to Sundance Resort to view Robert Redford's private art collection while enjoying lunch, then a stop along the way to Moab at the Prehistoric Museum in Price.

Day 3: Private tour of Arches National

Park in the morning and an afternoon visit to Dead Horse Point (a Thelma and Louis locale). Here we enjoy a jet boat ride through the Red Rocks Canyons, then a barbecue dinner served on the banks of the Colorado River.

Day 4: A free morning in Moab, then we board the Rocky Mountaineer for a once-in-a-lifetime train ride into the Rockies. We'll ride in the SilverLeaf Plus car, with an outside viewing platform and a special dining car with gourmet meals and craft cocktails. We spend the night at a hotel in Glenwood Springs.

Day 5: We board our luxury train again for the trip across the Continental Divide and on to Denver where we will spend the day exploring the mile-high city.

Karen Quinn-Panzer is the owner of Dream Vacations Quinn Panzer Travel. She can be reached at kpanzer@dreamvacations.com

MAC, Beth-El Partner For Online Exhibit

The Milford Arts Council has announced a collaboration with the Beth-El Center for its latest online exhibit called “Home.” This exhibit shines a spotlight on MAC member artists, challenging them to explore the theme of “home” by expressing what home means to them – as a place or object, a person or memory, a personal reflection or general observation. The theme was specifically created to bring awareness to the issue of housing and food insecurity in the community.

Twenty-four local artists submitted their work to this exhibit, and the online exhibit will be available to view for a \$5 fee on the MAC website milfordarts.org at 6 p.m.

on Thursday, Jan. 21. The exhibit will run through March 18.

A portion of the proceeds from exhibit sales will be donated to the Beth-El Center so that they can continue to fulfill their mission to extend dignity and respect to all individuals and families while connecting them to housing, food and services within their communities. The donations will go toward a diversion program that seeks to keep people in their homes, securing housing stability for them. The proceeds will be matched by an anonymous donor. The goal is to keep at least one family in their own home through the winter. The Milford-Orange Times is among the event's sponsors.

“The pandemic has shed light on many societal issues here and across the country,” said MAC Executive Director Paige Miglio. “We knew that housing and food insecurity is a major issue and we love the work of the Beth-El Center located just down the road from us. Beth-El director Jennifer Paradis and I decided this was the perfect partnership at the perfect time.”

The Milford Arts Council is also focused on its own mission to support artists and help the community to thrive. The organization is offering a \$100 award for best in show and a \$50 people's choice award. The best in show award will be announced at the opening of the exhibit, and the people's choice award

will be announced at the end of exhibit. Voting for the people's choice award opens on Jan. 21 and closes at noon on March 18.

“We hope that this special exhibit helps people on multiple levels – supporting the artist community, helping Beth-El get one more step towards their vision to create a community where everyone is home and all are fed, and bringing a bit of joy to our patrons and community,” said Lorie Lewis, the MAC's marketing director.

The MAC and Beth-El have been closely aligned for years, as the location of the MAC at the repurposed Milford train station is primed as a pass-through for individuals experiencing housing insecurity.



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We're expanding in 2021!

We are excited to tell you that we have merged Floman DePaola, LLC (FD) with the law firm Wiley, Etter & Doyon (WED). The merger is effective January 1, 2021. The principals in WED are Matthew Wiley, Bryan Etter, and Trevor Doyon. We have known each other for many years, have brainstormed ideas about legal issues and business planning, and have learned that our cultures, processes, and commitments to our clients have much in common.

As you know, we intentionally have limited our practice areas to estate planning, long-term care planning, asset protection/Medicaid planning, and estate administration. WED's practice areas cover these same topics, but they also include business transactions and litigation. This will allow us to expand the scope of our services, and add skilled, talented and young members to our team.

You will continue to find us accessible, available, welcoming and warm. You also can continue to count on us for carefully drawn legal documents that protect what's important to you, plenty of plain language translations of what they say, and easy to understand explanations of complicated legal issues.

We will have two office locations. We will keep our office in Orange. Some of you know that Steve has been practicing in Orange since 1977 and Allison has been practicing in Orange since 2009. Staying in Orange is important to all of us. WED's office is located in North Haven. We hope you will feel comfortable meeting with us at either location, but if you prefer to meet with us in Orange, we will be here!

We have not decided on the final name of the merged law firm. For convenience, we will use Wiley, Etter & Doyon (we hope you'd agree that Wiley, Etter, Doyon, Floman, Depaola-Droz is a mouthful). We are working on developing a more generic firm name that describes the legal services we provide, instead of who we are; one that would be flexible as we plan to add more attorneys in the future.

We look forward to continuing to write to you and seeing many of you in 2021. Feel free to reach out to either Steve or Allison if you have questions about our merger.

Steven P. Floman, Allison M. DePaola-Droz, and Nicole M. Camporeale of the law firm Floman DePaola, LLC are the authors of this advertisement.

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Wine Talk

Italian Specialty Wines Hit The Spot

Winter is upon us and it is time to try some appassimento. Or perhaps we should try some ripasso wines. In the region of Valpolicella north of Verona, these terms are common.

Appassimento is a process of making wine by drying out the grapes. Ripasso is refermented on the lees (deposits of dead or residual yeast) of a wine made using the appassimento process. There are two famous wines made this way: Amarone, and a sweet dessert-style wine Recioto della Valpolicella.

The grapes are dried for two to six months before being pressed. Then young Valpolicella is refermented on the lees and made into one of these two wines.

There is a third wine made using this method called sforzato. In Italian this means strained. This wine is made in the Valtellina region in Lombardy. In the Sforzato di Valtellina DOCG, the wine must be a minimum 90 percent nebbiolo grape and

have at least 14 percent alcohol.

These wines are pricey and difficult to make. During the drying process it is easy for the grapes to rot or acquire mold. The grapes are traditionally dried on straw mats or bamboo racks. The drying process concentrates sugar in the grapes and increases the alcohol. Invariably, using this method causes the loss of some grapes.

However, there are some inexpensive wines made using these methods. One I like is Appassimento Salento Bonari. It is from Apulia in Italy and costs around \$14. This is a smooth full-bodied Italian red blend. It has lots of red fruit, spice and some light tobacco. It is a great introduction to appassimento.

Italians love their wines so much that they eat it. Red wine pasta has many variations



RAYMOND SPAZIANI

and can make a great meal for Valentine's Day. One I came across a few weeks ago contains pancetta and chestnuts. The chef recommended a smooth cabernet, but I would try some appassimento.

The ingredients you'll need are: two tablespoons of extra-virgin olive oil; six ounces of pancetta sliced 1/4 inch thick and 1/2 inch long; two cloves of garlic sliced thin; a 12-ounce jar of peeled chestnuts cut in half; four leaves of sage, chopped; one bottle of red wine; one pound of fettuccine; one tablespoon of butter; 3/4 of a cup of grated parmesan; and salt and ground black pepper.

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. While the water is warming up, heat the oil over low heat. Add the pancetta until lightly browned for about seven minutes. Then add

the garlic and sage, raise the heat to medium-high and cook it for one minute. Then toss in the chest-nuts, add the wine and bring it to a boil. Add the pasta to the boiling water and cook it halfway. Then drain it and add the pasta to the boiling wine. When the pasta is about cooked, add the but-ter and 1/4 cup of cheese. Toss it, serve it and use the rest of the cheese for the table.

Ray Spaziani is the chapter director of the New Haven Chapter of the American Wine Society. He is on the wine tasting panel of Amenti del Vino and Wine Maker Magazine. He is an award-winning home wine maker and a certified wine educator. His fall classes were sold out but have been canceled due the coronavirus. He hopes to return to them in the spring. Email Ray with wine questions and anything wine at realestatepro1000@gmail.com.

Grant To Connecticut Audubon Society Funds Science Education In Milford

The Milford Environmental Protection Initiative has provided a \$900 grant to the Connecticut Audubon Society will fund the purchase of new scientific equipment that will support online, at-home educational programming for students in the Milford community.

The new equipment – an EnviroScape 3D coastal landscape model – will greatly enhance the delivery of science programs to students learning at home due to the coronavirus pandemic. The EnviroScape demonstrates coastal pollution sources and prevention and allows users to explore the 3D coastal landscape with

hands-on activities.

As part of its Science in Nature educational programming, CAS educators will create videos and lesson plans using the model to teach about the pollutants impacting the local environment and how pollutants can be reduced and remediated.

“Connecticut Audubon Society prides itself on its award-winning, field-based educational programs offered to the students and residents of Milford and surrounding towns,” said Shari Greenblatt, CAS Southwest Regional Director. “However, due to COVID-19, we were forced to transform our in-

person school programs to online distance learning. This 3-D environmental educational model will allow us to create engaging learning opportunities for both the classroom and for students learning from home.”

Presentations featuring the EnviroScape while COVID-19 restrictions are in place will be conducted remotely via live video and recorded classroom lessons. Once public health conditions allow, the EnviroScape will continue to be used as an in-person, hands-on interactive tool at the CAS Coastal Center at Milford Point, in area schools and throughout the

community.

CAS's mission is to conserve Connecticut's environment through science-based education and advocacy focused on the state's bird populations and their habitats. Connecticut Audubon Society established Science in Nature in 2012 to help introduce Connecticut students to basic concepts in outdoor conservation science. It is based on current state and national science standards.

MEPI's mission is to support environmental protection efforts in the City of Milford.

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Orange Garden Club Wins Decorating Awards

The Garden Club of Orange received notification on Jan. 8 from the Kellogg Environmental Center and Osborne Homestead Museum in Debray that the club had been declared winners in four design categories in the decorating of the museum during the 2016-2019 Christmas holiday season displays.

The club garnered the following awards: first place in the category of Favorite Whimsical Decoration for "Hummingbirds in Nature's Friends Holiday" in 2019; second place in the category of Favorite Decorated Dining Room for "Snow White & 7 Dwarfs in Storybook Holiday" in 2018; second place

in the category of Favorite Decorated Front Bathtub for "Hummingbirds in Nature's Friends Holiday" in 2019; and third place in the category of Favorite Solarium Tree for "Aquamarine/March in a Sparking Holiday" in 2016.

The giveaway prizes were the 2020 Connecticut's Historic Gardens Day Poster, Connecticut's Historic Gardens notecards and Osborne Homestead Museum postcards. The display case at the High Plains Community Center will showcase throughout February some of the designs, pictures of the rooms and the awards given to the Garden Club of Orange.

Pet Daycares (Continued From 1)

The facility offers a menu of treats if owners wish for their pets to receive them. They also offer specialized services for those who need a more personalized approach to daycare.

Similar services are on offer at Dogtopia, which opened in December and is also in Milford. There, owner Owen Botting has implemented more than just the usual daycare and boarding options.

"Right now, we are doing a puppy preschool in which there are classes of eight," Botting says. "We have our canine coaches teach them basic commands, which helps the fundamentals of the puppy for when it grows. Once we get our full-time rainer on board, we plan to do these classes one-on-one with the adult dogs."

If that weren't enough, Botting has implemented web cams so that owners can see that their dogs are being cared for at any time. Owners can also schedule a pickup and/or dropoff for their pet on the Dogtopia app in case they don't feel comfortable coming inside.

Some places even offer adoption services. Stark says she is proud of the fact that since Bark Avenue's opening, they've rescued over 2,000 dogs and counting.

"It brings me so much joy to provide a second home for dogs who already have loving families while simultaneously finding homes for ones that do not," she says.

The business has evolved. Once upon a time, you'd drop off your pet at a kennel service and it wouldn't get any interaction with other dogs. Today, extra care must be taken to look after the pets, and it is a lot more involving and demanding.

"It all boils down to having a staff that can really read the dogs in their care," Stark says. "It isn't as simple as throwing a bunch of dogs together and expecting them all to play. The handlers working with the dogs must be knowledgeable enough to know good play from bad play as well as how to tell when the animals in our care need space and rest. In our nine-plus years of operating, we have found ways to make our facility a home to dogs of all walks of life."

Kindergarten Signup Open In Milford

The Milford Public School district is delighted to welcome its newest students! Kindergarten registration will open on Tuesday, Feb. 16 for children entering the Milford public school system in the fall. Children who are at least 5 years old on or before Dec. 31 and are Milford residents can enroll in kindergarten for the 2021-22 school year.

The registration process will be conducted exclusively online this year. Starting Feb. 16, parents will be able to access the registration link on the district's website home page at milforded.org to begin the process.

It will take approximately 30 minutes to complete the online materials. The following items will be needed for upload during the

registration process: a certified copy of your child's birth certificate (with raised seal; not a photocopy); for homeowners, a mortgage/deed or tax bill for the residence; for renters, a lease or rental agreement signed by the landlord, including the landlord's contact phone number; two recent utility bills in the same name to the same address (landline phone, water, electric, gas, oil or cable TV); and a copy of the student's latest physical exam (it must have occurred within the past 12 months) and immunization records.

Questions should be directed to Cass Philpott in the assistant superintendent's office at 203-783-3422 or via email at cphilpott@milforded.org.

Race Brook (Continued From 1)

of Orange and one that requires looking towards the future of our community," Goldblatt said. "We need to consider what happens beyond today and embrace this as an investment in our town for generations to come."

In his letter to the community, Zeoli promised that the deal would not be "the same as the debacle that the Town of Woodbridge had," referring to the neighboring town's purchase of the failed Country Club of Woodbridge.

Woodbridge spent \$7 million for that 150-acre property, golf course, pool and clubhouse in 2009. In that instance, the owners had already gone bankrupt and the town explicitly wanted to keep the property from being developed.

Woodbridge's purchase did not save the facilities, which fell into further disrepair. Ever since, the property has been a hot-button issue.

In Orange's case, the expectation is that

Race Brook Country Club would continue to operate – just not own the land under the club.

The club does have a storied history in town, having been around since 1912. According to the club's website, its most famous member was President William Howard Taft, who joined in 1913 and played regularly until he left New Haven in 1921 to become chief justice of the US Supreme Court.

The Milford-Orange Times is conducting a separate, non-scientific poll of residents' opinions on the proposal. Early results were fairly evenly split between those in favor and those against, with comments ranging from "Yes, if residents have the opportunity to contribute to its viability" to "Absolutely not...this is a horrible bailout."

The referendum on the purchase will be held in person at High Plains Community Center. Absentee are available from the Town Clerk by calling 203-891-4730 or visiting orange-ct.gov. Absentee ballots must be returned to the Town Clerk by Feb. 16. Residents may use the ballot box outside town hall to deposit ballots.

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Your Finances

Insurance Is Essential To Financial Wellness

When most people hear the term “financial wellness,” they think of things like their budget, spending habits or debt-to-savings ratio. However, there’s an important and sometimes overlooked component of financial wellness for people of all ages: risk management.

Simply put, financial risk management refers to the strategies that help you protect your income and lifestyle, both today and in the future. You’ve likely heard the term as it relates to your investments and ensuring they are appropriate based on your age and other needs. But there’s another critical element of your overall risk mitigation strategy, and that’s insurance. Insurance is essential for all individuals, because insurance can help protect you from undue risk with life, disability and long-term care; because planning for the unexpected can increase your overall peace of

mind; and because life insurance can serve many different purposes, from simple income replacement or key man insurance, to more complex strategies for estate tax planning.

Life often throws surprises our way, like an unexpected accident or a serious health diagnosis. In those times, insurance can be the difference between financial stability and insecurity. It’s important to note that your age doesn’t impact this decision. Whether you are 30 or 70, you need to consider how to best protect the assets you’ve accumulated and your future income.

Yes, it can be uncomfortable to think about the “what if” scenarios. But there is never a



MATT GALLAGHER

better time to protect yourself and your family from the unknown than right now. A financial plan helps you set a course for achieving financial security in the most predictable ways possible, and having insurance as part of that plan covers scenarios when life doesn’t go as you expect. Putting in the effort to confront uncomfortable situations before they become realities can alleviate worry and anxiety in the long run.

Simply having insurance, however, is not enough. Of the 59 percent of Americans who have life insurance, about half of them are underinsured – meaning they don’t have enough to cover their family’s expected expenses.

The reason for having life, health, or

disability insurance is really the answer to a simple question: Who do you want to protect? When you include insurance as part of your financial plan, you are not only protecting the financial interests of those closest to you, you are also shielding them from at least some of the emotional anxieties that come with the unexpected.

Ultimately, the insurance policies you choose are dependent on your unique life situation. But whichever policy type you select, the peace of mind and security that comes with an insurance policy as part of your financial plan can be priceless.

Matt Gallagher is a partner and head of business development at TrinityPoint Wealth. He can be reached at 203-693-8519 or by email mgallagher@trinitypointwealth.com.

Milford Chamber Gets New Membership, Marketing Director



Simon McDonald.

The Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce has announced Simon McDonald as the chamber’s Director of Membership & Marketing.

McDonald has over 30 years of experience in helping businesses get noticed. He has been a member of the chamber for many years, representing the sales sector as a board director, chairing the chamber’s Ambassador Committee, as well as volunteering at the

annual BIC golf tournament.

McDonald will be responsible for new membership, retention and growth, along with fostering positive relations with merchants, businesses, residents, local and state governmental agencies. Additionally, he will be coordinating and executing all grand openings and new business/member ribbon-cuttings. Finally, he will be charged with the planning, promotion and implementation of the chamber’s annual events and business programming.

“Simon understands the importance of a vibrant business community, and as a resident of our area he embraces the chamber motto of live/work/play – shopping, dining and enjoying all that is offered throughout the region,” MRCC executive director Pam Staneski said in a press release.

McDonald moved to Milford in January 2001 as a part of the startup Ticket Magic. He has raised two children from his first marriage and also has two stepchildren with his wife Tiffany Whitaker. They said they both plan on retiring to Milford in the future.

McDonald can be reached at smcdonald@milfordct.com or at 203-878-0681.

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Milford Redevelopment & Housing Partnership Important Announcement Regarding Opening of Senior/Disabled Waiting List On Thursday, February 18, 2021

The Milford Redevelopment & Housing Partnership (MRHP) hereby announces it will be accepting pre-applications **by-mail only** for its’ Senior*/Disabled public housing program which consists of efficiencies (studios) and one bed room units. The maximum household size is two people. (*Senior is defined as 62 and over, “Near Elderly” is defined as age 50 to 61.)

Applicants must be at least 50 years old or have a disability pursuant to the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). Income limits for those applying are \$54,950/yr. for one (1) person household, and \$62,800/yr. for a two (2) person household.

The pre-application will be printed in the “New Haven Register” on Thursday February 18, 2021. Pre-applications will also be available for pick-up as of that date at the MRHP office located at 75 DeMaio Drive in Milford.

Pre-applications must be mailed to the following address **ONLY**, and **postmarked no later than 12:00 midnight, Thursday, March 25, 2021.**

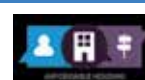
Milford Redevelopment & Housing Partnership
P.O. Box 512
Milford, CT 06460-0512

Faxed and hand delivered pre-applications will **not** be accepted. Persons with disabilities who need assistance in completing the pre-application may come to the MRHP office or may call the MRHP office at (203) 877-3223. If you have a hearing impairment, you may call 711.

A maximum of 350 pre-applications will be randomly drawn by lottery from those submitted on **April 6, 2021** and numbered sequentially. The drawn pre-applications will form the waiting list, which will be structured in accordance with the Admissions & Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP) of the MRHP. Only those applicants whose names are drawn will be notified.

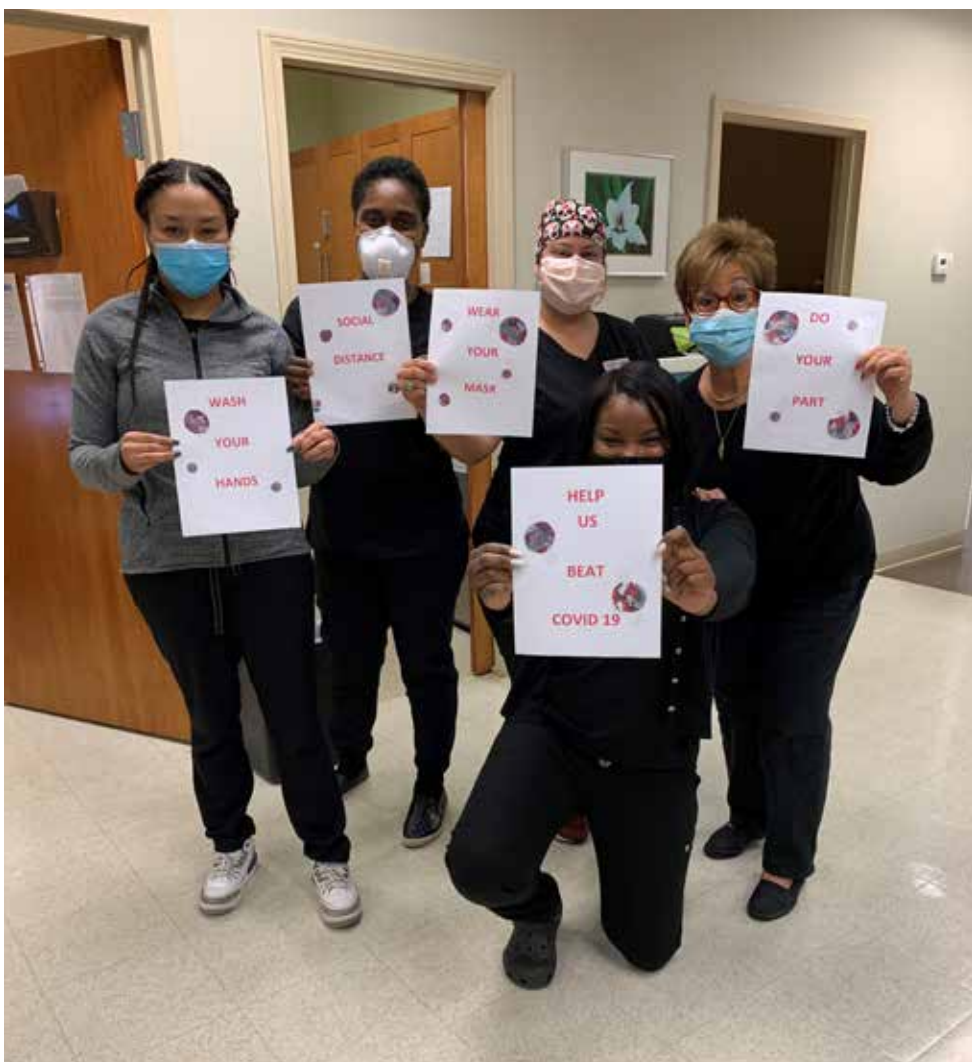
NOTICE: MRHP is smoke free. Smoking is prohibited in the apartments and common areas of all our properties. MRHP facilities are protected by a video surveillance system/ CCTV for the safety and security of our residents.

The MRHP is an Equal Housing provider and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ancestry, age, sex, gender identity, actual or perceived sexual orientation, disability, religion, marital status, familial status or national origin. If you have questions please call the MRHP at (203) 877-3223, X 11.



Milford Redevelopment & Housing Partnership (MRHP)

Stony Creek Promotes COVID Health



Employees of Stony Creek Urgent Care in Orange made signs to guide the public in staying safe and healthy by doing their part in the pandemic. Photo courtesy of Sue Vigorito.

Obituaries

Needed: Custodian at the Cody-White Funeral Home. Monday-Friday from 7 a.m. to 12 p.m. at \$13 an hour. Please call 203-874-0268.



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Full obituaries and pictures (if provided) of the deceased are on our website at www.milford-orangetimes.com and are published at no cost to residents of Milford and Orange.



Jeraldine A. Brown, 71, of Milford, beloved wife of 51 years to Andrew Brown, passed away on January 31, 2021. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Elene "Lee" Barbara Barszewski, 82, of Orange and formerly of Ansonia, beloved wife of the late Richard H. Barszewski, Sr., passed away peacefully surrounded by her family on January 27, 2021. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Eleanor Beatrice Carra, 96, of Milford, beloved wife of 73 years to the late Pasquale Carra Sr, passed away peacefully at home with her family by her side on February 2, 2021. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Mary Ann Beecher, age 77, of Milford and formerly of Ansonia, beloved wife of the late Robert Beecher, died on Sunday, January 24, 2021. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Bonnie (Beverly) Clark peacefully entered into eternal rest at home with her best friend by her side on January 25th, 2021. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Kevin Bradley, age 67, of Milford, beloved husband of Denise M c D e r m o t t Bradley, passed away on February 3, 2021 in Bridgeport Hospital. (Adzima Funeral Home)



Robert "Bobby" John Comer was born August 2, 1941 and died February 2, 2021 at age 79. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Margaret S. Brighina, 65, of Milford, passed away peacefully on January 18, 2021. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Mary Dalton, 59, of Orange passed away peacefully at home on January 13, 2021. (Clancy-Palumbo Funeral Home)



Fred DelPercio, 81, of Orange, entered eternal rest on Jan. 28, 2021 at home, with his loving wife Renee by his side, after a courageous battle with cancer. (Abriola Parkview Funeral Home)



Gioacchino "Nino" de Nicolò, age 90, of Milford, entered peaceful rest on Jan. 20. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Gary Michael Gold, of Orange passed away from complications of Covid 19 on January 11, 2021, at the age of 71. (Porto Funeral Homes)





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Obituaries



Muriel D. Grossfeld, 80, of Milford, passed away peacefully on January 17, 2021. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Ian Isdale was born December 3, 1927 and died February 6, 2021 at age 93. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Geraldine A. "Geri" Makower, age 71 formerly of Milford, entered peaceful rest on Jan. 29. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Katherine Adele (Clark) Novak was born September 7, 1920 and died February 6, 2021 at age 100. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Vincent C. Guccione, 64, a lifelong resident of Milford, passed away peacefully on January 17, 2021. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Catherine Ann Keane Jermain, of Milford, passed away peacefully on January 13, 2021 in her home after a long illness. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Mary Jane Marquis, 87, of Orange, beloved wife of Maynard Marquis, Sr. for 61 years, died on Jan. 26. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Richard J.P. Peters of Milford passed away on January 14, 2021 after a five-year battle with ALS.



Barbara R. Guzowski, 86, of New Haven, passed away at her home on January 10, 2021. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Shirley Ann Johnson Kennedy, age 92, of Milford, passed Sunday, January 24, 2021. (Dennis & D'Arcy Funeral Home)



Rudolph "Rudy" Joseph Martaus, Jr., 78, of Milford, beloved husband of 30 years to Arlene Martaus, passed away on Feb. 5, 2021. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Barbara Behn Piper, age 94, of Milford, beloved wife of the late Robert A. Piper, died peacefully on Thursday, January 21, 2021. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Veronica J. Harrigan was born May 16, 1926 and died February 5, 2021 at age 94. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



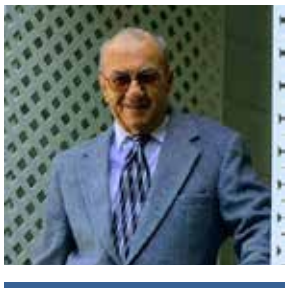
John Kos, 59, of Milford, passed away peacefully on January 16, 2021. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Jeniffer Ileana Valenzuela Moreno, 43, of Milford, beloved wife of Fernando Gutierrez, entered into rest on Jan. 29. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Joseph A. Raffone was a larger than life person. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Albert John Homa, 96, of Milford, husband of Sophie Homa for 72 years, passed away on Jan. 18. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Curtis O. Law, age 86 of Milford, Connecticut, passed away with his wife holding him on Jan. 15. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Edward Patrick Murphy, 85, of Milford, beloved husband of 54 years to Dorene (Samsel) Murphy, passed away peacefully on Thursday, January 21, 2021. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Thomas C. Raucci, 53, of Milford, entered into eternal life unexpectedly and suddenly on Sunday, January 24. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Mary Boyle Raymond, age 102, of Milford, died Jan. 22. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)

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Obituaries



Carole Louise Rennie, 72, of Milford, passed into eternal light. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



William P. Scholl, of Milford, passed away in his home, on Monday January 18, 2021. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Colleen (Kerrigan) Soldi, age 66, of Milford, beloved wife of John "Jack" Soldi, passed away Jan. 7. (William R. McDonald Funeral Home)



Trevor Van Hise, age 48, of Orange died unexpectedly on Saturday, January 23, 2021. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Michael J. Reynolds, 57, of Milford, passed away on January 9, 2021. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Richard Sheramy, age 92, formerly of Orange, CT, died on January 03, 2021.



David Hart Stevens, loving father, entrepreneur and sportsman died at his home surrounded by his loved ones. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Giovanna "Joanne" Vignola, 97, formerly of Cheshire died peacefully Jan. 25th at Maplewood of Orange Senior Living.



Stanley Peter Sajdoski Jr., age 64, born in Milford, entered eternal rest Monday February 1, 2021 at Bridgeport Hospital. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Gertrude (Trudy) Tremml Simpson, age 94, of Milford, beloved wife of the late Edward V. Simpson, died Jan. 10. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



John Thomas, age 61, beloved husband of Gladys Hughes for 40 years, entered peaceful rest on Jan. 27. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Cheryl Lynn Wadyka, age 64, beloved wife of Patrick Snyder, formerly of Milford, died peacefully January 31, 2021. (Wakelee Memorial Funeral Home)



Bj (Betty) SaNogueira, 77, of Milford, beloved wife of Gil SaNogueira, passed away February 3, 2021. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Ryan Carole Smith was born October 6, 1987 and died February 6, 2021 at age 33. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Lada Turkalo, 89, passed away peacefully from natural causes at home on Sunday, January 10, 2021. (Pistey Funeral Home)



Michael E. Wagner, 69, of Milford, passed away January 24, 2021. Michael was born on July 28, 1951 to the late Andrew L. and Ann Maher Wagner, Sr. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

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To be there when someone is in need.
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-Doug Manning

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