

# Milford-Orange Times

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September 22, 2022

## Orange Country Fair Caps Summer Of Celebration



Families came out to the High Plains Community Center fairgrounds for the annual Orange Country Fair during the weekend of Sept. 17 and 18, with activities that included tractor pulls, games and animal encounters. Additional photos on page 23. *Photo by Lexi Crocco.*

## Milford Opts Out Of Accessory Dwelling Law

*By Brandon T. Bisceglia*

The Milford Board of Aldermen voted at its Sept. 12 meeting to opt out of a new state law that would have allowed greater flexibility for residents to add accessory dwelling units on their properties.

The vote, which passed 11-2 with one abstention, followed a contentious debate over whether the BOA needed to make a decision so quickly.

The question of how to govern ADUs,

which are sometimes called “in-law apartments,” was spurred by a law passed by the state legislature earlier this year that allows people to construct the dwellings – attached to a house or freestanding – as a matter of right. The law is part of an ongoing attempt by some to increase the stock of affordable housing in Connecticut, which is facing a housing shortage.

*Continued on page 2*

## Mediterranean Restaurant In Milford Cuts Ribbon



The Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting for the grand opening of Il Capriccio Restaurant on Sept. 13th in Milford. The event included free samples of food and drink. The restaurant's head chef is File Gjeka, who specializes in a menu of Mediterranean cuisine. Il Capriccio is available for private parties and offers a full catering menu. The restaurant is located at 1015 Bridgeport Ave. From left: MRCC Membership Director Simon McDonald, state Rep. Frank Smith, Mayor Ben Blake, state Rep. Kathy Kennedy, Linda Gjeka, Alex Gjeka, File Gjeka and Frankie Gjeka. *Photo by Robert Creigh.*

## Milford Cannabis Retailer Wants To Move To Orange

*By Brandon T. Bisceglia*

Southern Connecticut Wellness & Healing would like to move its business from Milford to Orange. There's just one problem: current zoning regulations won't allow it.

That's because the company sells medicinal cannabis products, and Orange placed a moratorium on such establishments in 2021.

Representatives from Green Thumb Industries, which owns Southern Connecticut

Wellness, came before the Town Plan & Zoning Commission on Sept. 6 to request a change to the zoning regulations to allow for retail cannabis sales by special permit in the commercial C-1 district that runs along the Boston Post Road.

Green Thumb has 77 dispensaries in 15 states, and wants to occupy the location of a

*Continued on page 2*

## Colombian Restaurant Cuts Ribbon In Orange



The Orange Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting on Sept. 17 for La Fonda Colombiana, a Colombian restaurant located at 200 Boston Post Rd. in Orange. From left: assistant chef Rafael Nohpal, Orange Chamber of Commerce members Steve Hechtman, Carol Hechtman and Rob Craft, Kathy Converse-Charbonneau, manager Alejandra Gutierrez, assistant manager Jose Atencia, waitress Sarah Berio, an Orange resident, waitress Valeria Amezcua, and chef Asdrobal Alparo. *Photo by Steve Cooper.*

## Milford, Orange Farms Grapple With Drought

*By Brandon T. Bisceglia*

As Connecticut simmers through a long summer drought, farms in Milford and Orange have been taking measures to handle the lack of precipitation.

The US Drought Monitor has listed most of the state as being in moderate to severe drought for the last few months, including the area that encompasses Milford and Orange. A small portion of the eastern side of the state is in “exceptional” drought.

In July, Gov. Ned Lamont declared a stage 2 drought for the whole state, and on Aug. 18 moved Windham and New London counties to stage 3, following recommendations from the Connecticut Interagency Drought Workgroup. The state has five drought levels, with 5 being the most severe.

Some local farms fared the conditions

without too much trouble, turning to their own water stores when the weather didn't cooperate.

“Thankfully we have incredible wells and have had no problem irrigating our

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**New  
 Columnist  
 Page 13**



JENNIFER PARADIS



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# A Look Back By Priscilla Searles



The 1972 time capsule being removed from its hiding place. Items that survived were displayed at the Orange Country Fair. Photo courtesy of Priscilla Searles.

In celebrating Orange's sesquicentennial celebration 50 years ago, a time capsule was buried in a secret location. A few days before this year's Orange Country Fair, the capsule (in reality, a child's burial vault), was dug up and transported to the Orange Country Fair grounds. Concerned about the condition of the contents, the capsule was opened privately, without fanfare.

There's good news and bad news. Kevin Margenau, who opened the old capsule and is chair of the new capsule that will be buried sometime after the fair, was faced with four inches of water in the bottom of the capsule. The next two days were spent spreading out soggy papers in an attempt to save as much as possible.

The happy news is that items at the top of the capsule are in good condition.

The contents included lots of letters and newspaper clippings, letters and drawings from the children of Orange, an unopened letter from a

son serving in Vietnam to his mother, a box from a mother to her children containing matchbox cars, letters to both her children, lots of photos and seeds for planting. Happily, the son of the mother who placed the box in the time capsule 50 years ago, who is also an Orange resident, has taken possession of the contents. As to the sender of the letter from Vietnam, sadly the war claimed him in 1974.

The contents of the capsule were displayed at the Orange Country Fair.

If you wish to contribute something to the 2022 time capsule, please contact Priscilla Searles at 203-397-1465 or drop your contribution off at the first selectman's office. Every effort will be made to place all contributions in the capsule as space permits. Time is of the essence, so don't wait too long.

*Priscilla Searles is the Orange Town Historian.*

# Opt Out (Continued From 1)

The state allowed municipalities to opt out of the provisions. The Planning and Zoning Board earlier in the summer voted to opt out, leaving the final decision to the BOA. However, zoning officials and Mayor Ben Blake had argued that the city's laws on ADUs were outdated and should also be updated.

That admission – and the fact that towns have until the end of the year to opt out – was part of what led some members of the BOA to suggest that it postpone the decision until a later meeting.

"I have spent time familiarizing myself with the state statute, and certainly I think there are considerations why we want to maintain as the mayor has said our ownership over this," said alderwoman Michelle Parente. "I'm so happy that the Planning and Zoning committee is actively working on this, but I would love to see this get further along in the process so that we can then take this vote up at that time."

Alderman Matt Arciuolo, who was also in favor of postponing, pointed out that if the BOA voted to opt out now it would remove the threat of the January deadline when the state regulations would automatically go into effect, and Planning and Zoning might be less motivated to act.

"My concern about opting out immediately is that this eliminates any sort of timetable for the Planning and Zoning Board to actually alter these regulations. Because as they stand right now, most of the points...mentioned about ADUs are currently, in my opinion, unacceptable. And I'd just like to see a timeline for which we can actually make these revisions."

Other members of the board, however, didn't think there was any point in waiting – especially given that most members had

already voiced their inclination to maintain local control. Anthony Giannattasio pointed out that the state law wouldn't change.

"Let the Planning and Zoning Board do their job, and have faith in what they do, and I'm sure that everything will work itself out. But for right now we have to focus on the state's regulations," he said.

Blake himself weighed in on the issue, reading from a list of multiple surrounding municipalities that had already opted out of the law, including Stratford, Derby, Fairfield and even Bridgeport. Others, he said, were in the process of doing so.

"I see an optic forming here, which I'm not really happy to be part of, where we're using this as a negotiation so that P&Z gives us something perhaps that we want between now and the end of the year," said alderman Gregory Harla. "If we say, 'You know what, we don't want this. We want to opt out,' then let's opt out. Let's move on, and let's do what we need to do with the board of planning and zoning to move forward – to say what can we do as a city that's the best for everyone."

Ultimately Giannattasio and Harla won out, with the motion to opt out passing overwhelmingly, and Parente abstaining.

# Dispensary (Continued From 1)

former bank at 175 Boston Post Rd.




"Our experience with siting facilities shows that this location checks all the boxes," said Anne Marie Zsamba, an attorney for Green Thumb. She explained that the Orange location would allow for drive-through and curbside service, which are not possible at the dispensary's current location.

"Our Milford location is an inline unit of a retail plaza. It is space-constrained and doesn't

*Continued on page 3*



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Facing Ourselves

# Not Everyone Has Access To Bounty Of The Harvest

A golden slant of light glitters through branches freshly discharged of their fiery foliage. The air has turned brisk, carrying with it the faint fragrance of fallen apples. Autumn is here: the harvest season, a time for us to gather and enjoy the fruits of our labor. It is perhaps both apropos and ironic that September is Hunger Action Month, highlighting how so many have so little during a season in which one would hope abundance abounds.

First established in 2008 by Feeding America, a national network of food banks, Hunger Action Month aims to raise awareness about as well as ameliorate chronic food insecurity and hunger in the US.

But how aware are we of food insecurity in our country, and how effective have we been in mitigating the factors which contribute to it?

First, let us understand what food insecurity means. Frequent food insecurity scenarios include limited and/or uncertain access to sufficient amounts of food, resulting in skipped meals (sometimes for an entire day) in order to ration food, meals with poor nutritional value and not having enough to eat at each meal, often accompanied by hunger.

Many do not realize how prevalent food insecurity is in America, the "land of plenty." According to the RTS Food Waste guide, in 2020 40 percent of the US food supply was

wasted, and 80 billion pounds of food was thrown away yearly.

However, millions of households report food insecurity. Surveys also show roughly 10 percent of households with children from birth to 17 years old report food insecurity. Race is one of the factors identified as contributing to disparities in food insecurity, with recent surveys showing the percentage of Hispanic and non-Hispanic Black children living in food-insecure households to be at least double that of non-Hispanic White children.

Food insecurity has many negative ramifications on health, including a higher risk of developmental problems in children. According to Linda Wilbrecht, a UC Berkeley professor of psychology, "We show that irregular access to food in the late juvenile and early adolescent period affects learning, decision-making and dopamine neurons in adulthood. I think that we have to understand that even transient food insecurity matters, the brain doesn't just catch up later. Food insecurity can have long-term impacts on how someone's brain functions."

Children facing food insecurity are also at increased risk of mental health issues. Despite the importance of adequate nutrition for grow-



JENNIFER JU

ing minds and bodies, access to food programs for children are disrupted during the weekends and other breaks from school, mimicking a feast and famine cycle. In adults, food insecurity leads to increased rates of chronic disease.

Although access to food may be inadequate, both children and adults who struggle with food insecurity are at higher risk of obesity due to the frequently poor nutritional content of the foods they can afford to buy. Obesity in and of itself elevates one's risk of numerous health conditions, including, but not limited to, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, joint disease and cancers. The impact of food insecurity as a negative social determinant of health should not be underestimated.

In order to address food insecurity and hunger, food assistance programs, such as the Women, Infants and Children program, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and the National School Lunch Program, as well as measures mitigating financial hardship, such as the child tax credit, have been implemented. More work is needed, however. The Centers for Disease Control has announced it will work with the White House in its initiative to end hunger and food insecurity. On

Sept. 28, for the first time in over 50 years, the White House will host a conference with public and private sectors to coordinate strategies to address hunger, nutrition and health, as well as the systemic disparities seen in these areas.

We too can do our part to address hunger and food insecurity. As Mother Teresa said, "If you can't feed 100 people, just feed one."

We can volunteer with and donate to food banks and organizations that work with these at-risk members of our community. We can advocate for food assistance programs and work to destigmatize participation in them. We can act with kindness, realizing how little we actually know of the silent suffering of our neighbors. Coupled with compassion, our actions can feed both body and spirit, and reap the benefits of peace and prosperity, a precious harvest for all.

*Jennifer Ju, MD is a physician who is a graduate of the Brown University family medicine residency program. She is also an actor and writer who has performed in various theatres across the state and whose plays have been produced locally. Ju has also presented numerous online and in-person workshops on mindfulness, health and wellness for parents and children, as well as for pre-K-12 educators in New Haven and Fairfield counties.*

## Dispensary (Continued From 2)

fully accommodate patients presenting with limited modalities. We have found that it's difficult to operate there," she said.

Green Thumb Vice President Tim Gorman said that his team had already met with Police Chief Robert Gagne, and stressed the high level of security that would be in place, including over 50 cameras and use of the

former bank's vault to store product.

The basic structure of the regulation change Green Thumb is seeking was actually prepared by town council Vincent Marino. Attorney Marjorie Shansky, representing the applicant, said that Green Thumb had then refined the proposal based on Marino's draft.

"It (the regulation) would be so narrowly prepared that you could avoid imagining a proliferation of uses," Shansky said. "And if you were to apply the various distance ratios that are provided in this regulation, as we

have, you would find that you have essentially one."

Selectman Mitch Goldblatt also spoke to the commission in favor of the proposal. He noted that allowing dispensaries by special permit will give the commission a lot of control over what comes into town.

"They've run a successfully facility in Milford for several years, without - at least that I know of, maybe you know of - any incidents. The checks and balances that they're planning on putting into their security

plan in Orange sound like they would be more than as secure as they can possibly be," he said.

Even if the regulation is approved, Green Thumb would need to come back before the TPZC and other town officials to gain approval for their specific plans under a special permit.

Commission Chair Oscar Parente said that he wanted to keep the discussion open to the following meeting to allow for other people to weigh in - including Vice Chair Judy Smith, who was absent.



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# Opinion & Editorial

## Ponder This

### Kazakhstan And The Hope For A Better World

The international media have reported on the papal visit this September to Kazakhstan, the immense country in central Asia, to participate in an interreligious congress in the capital city of Nur-Sultan, just recently renamed to its original title, Astana.

Pope Francis has written three encyclicals, addressed specifically to the Catholic community but containing views of the pontiff that can resonate for all, with such statements as "No to war and globalized indifference." During his Kazakhstan stay, the pope drew from these previous letters, with themes of universal peace and hope for human kind.

"The good of humanity should be taken into consideration ahead of strategic and economic objectives, national, energy and military interests, and in advance of crucial decisions," the pontiff said.

Appropriate to the purpose of this particular meeting, the 7th Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, the pope set a purpose and helpful role for all people, institutions and religions. He reiterated that human beings are weakened by the pandemic, worn out by

war, wounded by indifference.

"Human beings, frail and marvelous creatures, left in darkness and apart from others cannot survive," he said.

Francis refers often to human fraternity, but the concept addresses inclusive social concern. Critics may interpret fraternity to be too narrow, as brotherhood, but one can discern a call for gender equity within the pope's message. Based on his namesake and Franciscan spirituality, Francis begs people to care tenderly for one another. Kindness is essential to help one another become free of anxiety in the frantic pace of the modern world.

Why did this papal visit and interreligious congress resonate in Kazakhstan? It was the last Soviet Republic to declare independence in 1991, a large central Asian country with Russia to the north and bordered by China. Kazakhstan has a large economy with a robust future based on rich resources. Kazakhstan has people of many languages, ethnicities and cultures:



ELLEN RUSSELL  
BEATTY

German, Polish, French, Russian, Slovak. An overwhelming majority (70 percent) are Muslim, with only a tiny percentage (1 percent) Catholic and approximately 25 percent orthodox Christian.

Yet there was great enthusiasm for the papal visit. Kazaks of all faiths welcomed Francis as a world and spiritual leader bringing a message of hope, concern, renewal and peace. For many this was experienced not only as a religious message but a suggestion for improved humanity. "Social friendship," as the universal scope of the pontiff's message, rang true in the far reaches of Kazakhstan.

These people have known long suffering. Soviet policies moved approximately 2 million non-Russian populations to Kazakhstan. People learned to coexist in this large landlocked country. Their message of living together in peace while striving to work together may be a lesson for us all.

Some critics have used the message to care

for each other as an ideological affront to globalism, commerce and restricted immigration. Of course, the pontiff writes from a Christian perspective, but the message can be universal and immediate, met with joyful hope across an immense area of central Asia.

The pontiff spoke of diverting the enormous expense of war to support people and populations, calling on our collective strength as shared members of the human community to join together to make a better future.

*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:

### Personal Property Tax And Orange Businesses

Have a home business in town? Store front in the business district? Large corporation? Sole proprietorship? LLC? LLP?

Then you have something in common. You have personal property to declare. The assessor has mailed out the 2022 declaration of personal property, and you should have yours by now.

Did you not get the form, or are you a new business in town? Call the assessor's office at 203-891-4722 and request the forms. They are due by Nov. 1, so you have plenty of time to get them in. This form must be filled out by any business entity in town annually. It determines your personal property tax, so it is important that you turn one in, even for an inactive business. A 25 percent penalty is automatically tacked on to your bill if you miss the filing deadline.

Personal property tax assessments do not care

about the state of your business; you must file.

Have you inherited a business in town? Congratulations on joining the ranks of entrepreneurs. You are now subject to the personal property assessments and the filing requirements with the assessor's office. Past due bills must still be paid. The assets on the personal property tax form may be seized for payments, so if the business will be shut down, you must close it out properly with the assessor's office. You probably have state closeout requirements as well.

Do not get surprised by a deceased spouse's business taxes. As with anything involving taxes, finances and legal matters, you should con-



THOMAS P.  
HURLEY

sult proper legal and financial services specialists. Some businesses use life insurance to cover these expenses and inheritance taxes.

If you haven't figured it out yet, personal property taxes are an important component of the town's revenues, roughly equivalent to the motor vehicle taxes. The tax collector aggressively pursues payment of outstanding personal property taxes. This may include authorizing a town constable or state marshal to collect the bill with an additional 15 percent plus expenses tacked on to your bill.

Going out of business will require a jeopardy tax assessment with full payment of your tax bill due immediately. If you plan to close your busi-

ness, you need to make a stop at both the tax collector's office and the assessor's office before disposing of assets.

Begin by filing your declaration of personal property forms with the assessor to close out your business and then to the tax collector's office to pay outstanding tax liabilities as well. If you are buying a business, you will be liable for any outstanding taxes owed by the seller. Make sure you consider this in your purchase decision.

Personal property taxes were due July 1, payable with the first installment by Aug. 1. If you missed this payment, you are now in a past due status and full payment of all open assessments will be collected, including any outstanding interest with an 18 percent APR on the bill.

*Thomas P. Hurley is the tax collector for Orange.*

## Letters to the Editor:

Send us your letters to the editor with no more than 350 words to [editor@theorangetimes.com](mailto:editor@theorangetimes.com). Include your name and full address; only your name and town will be published.

### Good Samaritans In Milford

#### To the Editor:

I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to the three people who picked me up after I made unexpected close contact with the sidewalk in Milford, near Scratch Bakery, on Friday, Aug. 19. The gentleman and the young girl with him applied Band-Aids while the lady obtained ice from the bakery; and all three sat with me on a low wall and comforted me. Never had I been given such good care. Wonderful people in Milford. And finally, I did pick up my birthday cake at Scratch Bakery.

Edith Evangeliste  
Orange

### Maroney On Top Of Internet Protections

#### To the Editor:

I can remember the birth of the internet (1993) and when email (1996) was viewed as an innovation. I've been hacked several times and I worry about how safe my personal information is on the web. I suspect I am not alone. So I reached out to James Maroney, my state senator in the 14th District, to see what can be done to ensure my data is protected. As usual, Maroney was already on it. Actually, Maroney had been working on this

problem for over three years. In talking with him he explained that during this time he worked with several industry leaders and legislators in a bipartisan fashion to find a way to protect our data without hurting Connecticut businesses. His legislation passed and was signed into law this past May.

This law establishes significant consumer rights that allows all Connecticut residents to see what data is being collected, to correct, delete, extract their data and most importantly creates an opt-out for our data to be sold or tracked for advertising. This was great news, but it gets better. It also establishes responsibilities for companies to be good stewards of our data. Specifically, they must minimize the data they collect and only use the data for the reason it was collected. Additionally, companies must protect our data and store it securely. Lastly, they need to get our permission to use our sensitive data, provide us a privacy policy and most importantly give us a chance to opt out.

Creating a balanced law is not easy work, especially in these polarizing political times, but that's what Maroney does. He builds strong connections across the legislature that results in broad bipartisan support. The proof is in the votes. The Act Concerning Personal Data Privacy and Online Monitoring (SB-6) passed unanimously in the Senate and with overwhelming bipartisan support in the House with 97 percent voting yea. The 14th District and all of Connecticut needs the type of leadership and results that Maroney gets year after year. This is why we need to reelect James Maroney in November.

Joe Honcz  
Milford

### Attack On Maroney Unwarranted

#### To the Editor:

As a former columnist for this newspaper and someone who has written often, it was surprising for me to see a recent article of the Republican state Senate candidate blasting Sen. James Maroney, and yet Senator Maroney was never contacted for his comment. This was something constantly stressed to me when I wrote for this paper or submitted a letter...I was always told they had to get comment from the other person. I

guess that is very subjective.

Let me address what was in the article. The Republican candidate tried attacking Maroney for his voting record. That's a tough call because Maroney has always voted in support of families and with the best interests of all Connecticut residents. Her attack focused on two recent incidents that both happened right near our Orange police station. Her claim that the police accountability bill somehow caused these two incidents shows her complete lack of understanding of what the bill actually is. Additionally, it shows her complete lack of knowledge of crime and policing.

*Continued on page 5*

## Milford-Orange Times

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Senator's Seat: Sen. James Maroney

Columnists:  
Annamarie Amore, Flooring  
Carolina Amore, Personal Experiences  
Ellen Russell Beatty, Ponder This  
Cathy Bradley, Running  
Kathy Charbonneau, Orange Chamber  
Steve Cooper, Food  
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PJ Shanley, Life Insurance  
Loretta Smith, Recycling  
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# Opinion & Editorial

## Past, Present, Future, And Unity



STATE REP. (D-114)  
MARY WELANDER

This past Sept. 11 I participated in the memorial service held in Derby, joined by my older daughter who is in eighth grade at Amity Middle School Orange. Her social studies class was doing a unit on 9/11 and I thought this would be a good way for her to gain a better understanding of the impact of that day, especially on first responders.

As we listened to the speakers there was a consistent theme behind all of their words: service, sacrifice, unity. The stories and history shared all pointed to thinking and acting beyond yourself in both times of crisis and in everyday actions.

We are incredibly fortunate in our community to have dedicated and skilled heroes who serve as first responders. The dangers and challenges they frequently face continue to demonstrate service, sacrifice and unity. The majority of those making sacrifices in our communities are volunteers. I encourage anyone who would like more information on how to be part of the Orange Volunteer Fire Department to visit [orangevfd.org/join/](http://orangevfd.org/join/).

Now that the weather is beginning to change, many of us are preparing for winter. Knowing that the past couple of years have been hard on many residents, Connecticut has expanded its fuel assistance program to ensure that people can be safe and warm. You can find more information on this program, and others, at

[portal.ct.gov/heatinghelp/Connecticut-Energy-Assistance-Program-CEAP?language=en\\_US](http://portal.ct.gov/heatinghelp/Connecticut-Energy-Assistance-Program-CEAP?language=en_US).

If you have any trouble with the forms or questions about the process, please reach out to me at [mary.welander@cga.ct.gov](mailto:mary.welander@cga.ct.gov) or call 860-240-8354. I would be happy to help.

Another concern for many residents is food security. It may come as a surprise to some, but according to the 2020 report from the United Way, 23 percent of Orange residents are living at or below the ALICE threshold. ALICE stands for asset limited, income constrained, employed; households that earn more than the federal poverty level but less than the cost of living for the area, and that are struggling to afford basic needs.

Knowing this, and that our winter months are often more challenging, I will be organizing an event to support our local food bank before Thanksgiving. I will share the details and the items most needed as we get closer. My weekly newsletter will have the most up to date information. Sign up at [houseofdemocrats.com/Welander](http://houseofdemocrats.com/Welander).

Finally, I hope you will join me and many others on Oct. 1 (rain date Oct. 2), at 4 p.m. on the baseball field at High Plains Community Center for a good-natured Republican versus Democrat kickball game. Both town committees are coming together to raise money for a great cause: the Orange Community Assistance Fund fuel bank. The event costs \$10 per spectator; food and drink will be provided. We will also be collecting non-perishable food items for the Orange Food Bank. Come for a great time and support our community. It is up to us to continue these unified community-led efforts to offer assistance and resources to those who need it most.

## Food Insecurity Happens Here



STATE SEN. (D-14)  
JAMES MARONEY

September is Hunger Awareness Month. It's a month to spread the word and take action against the hunger crisis.

While this may seem like a distant problem, it actually impacts many of our friends and neighbors. In Connecticut, more than 490,000 residents struggle with hunger; more than 131,000 children are food insecure. Many of these children and their families who are struggling with food insecurity live right here in Milford, Orange, West Haven and Woodbridge.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, unemployment and food insecurity soared. According to FeedingAmerica.org, 53 million people turned to food banks and community programs for help putting food on the table in 2021, and according to the US Department of Agriculture, more than 34 million people in the US, including 9 million children, are food insecure. Every community in the country is home to families who face hunger. Many households that experience food insecurity do not qualify for federal nutrition programs and visit their local food banks and other food programs for extra support.

Unfortunately, many struggle to meet their basic needs. Layoffs at work, unexpected car maintenance or an accident on the job can suddenly force a family to choose between buying food and paying the bills.

What can you do to help? Join the fight to end hunger, advocate, give to people in need or volunteer your time. Five cans of food or a couple hours of your time can make a difference.

We are fortunate that we have a number of local groups that are trying to fight this crisis. The Purple Pantry, composed of family, friends and community members, is hosting a number of food drives for folks to contribute. The nonprofit has a group of volunteers who distribute food, maintain pantry boxes and work on creating food drives. They distribute 10,000 pieces of food per month. During September, they are holding school food drives at Live Oaks Elementary, Foran High School and East Shore Middle School. If you or someone you know attends these schools, you can bring a non-perishable food item there the entire month.

For other food drive donation locations hosted by the Purple Pantry, visit their website at [purplepantryboxes.com/events](http://purplepantryboxes.com/events). To see where their usual Purple Pantry Box locations are, you can visit [purplepantryboxes.com/locations](http://purplepantryboxes.com/locations).

Food 2 Kids is another great local initiative that attends to the needs of children who have little or no food resources during the weekend away from school. Milford Food 2 Kids and Orange Food 2 Kids supply each child in their programs with several items of nutritious, non-perishable, prepackaged, precooked food that can be eaten hot or cold. These are foods that kids can prepare with little assistance.

Donations are always welcome and greatly appreciated. To learn more, you can visit [milfordfood2kids.org](http://milfordfood2kids.org) or [orangefood2kids.org](http://orangefood2kids.org).

Consider supporting these or many of the other great local organizations who are combating food insecurity.

## Amending The State Constitution



STATE REP. (R-119)  
KATHY KENNEDY

As we look ahead to the start of fall, there are so many things to prepare for: cooler weather, pumpkins, colorful leaves. But the most significant of all is how we prepare for the 2022 general election on Nov. 8. Relying on ourselves for Election Day by reading candidate profiles and knowing district and state issues is important.

This year, there is a question on the ballot being asked of voters: "Shall the Constitution of the State be amended to permit the General Assembly to provide for early voting?"

Let me give you some background so you can better understand what you are being asked. During the 2019-2020 legislative session, the state legislature considered ways to implement early voting measures. The required 75 percent supermajority was not reached in the initial bill; therefore, a similar amendment was introduced in the 2021-2022 session for an additional vote. The House and Senate approved the measures; however, our constitution requires Connecticut voters to grant the legislature authority to begin the lawmaking process for early voting measures.

It is essential to know what you are voting for when answering this question. A vote "no" means that you do not think state lawmakers should have the open-ended ability to define early voting in Connecticut. On the other hand, a vote "yes" declares that you authorize state lawmakers to determine what they believe early voting should look like.

Therefore, what this question determines isn't whether you are in favor of early voting, but rather decides if our legislators can have complete control over how we cast our future votes.

If voters approve this amendment, our state could see a mixture of three early voting styles. The first is "in-person," which means voters can cast their ballot prior to Election Day. The second is "no-excuse absentee," permitting voters to apply for an absentee ballot without a common out-of-state excuse. The third style would allow the state to reinstate mailing absentee ballot applications to households, despite voters participating at the polls or via absentee, which many experienced at the height of COVID-19. For these methods, more specifically the third, the pandemic was a catalyst for engineering new ways to access voting.

It's our responsibility to instill voter confidence, making sure there are checks and balances to protect the integrity of our election process. By giving authority to the state legislature, the definition of early voting will be unpredictable without a clear outline on intentions and, ultimately, interpretation.

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@housegop.ct.gov or at 800-842-1423.

## Turning Up The Heat



STATE REP. (R-117)  
CHARLES FERRARO

I have heard from many residents and families who have expressed their concerns over the rising cost of energy and heating their homes. During the summer, when many traditionally fill their oil tanks in preparation for colder months, many have decided to postpone buying oil due to the increased financial burden. Over the past one year, the cost for home heating oil has risen 80 percent.

With the cold seasons approaching, we are witnessing an unacceptable level of home heating insecurity, especially among working-class and low-income residents. My Republican colleagues in the legislature and I continue to share concerns for our constituents on this topic and have been working hard in Hartford to find relief for you and your families.

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program is a federal program which many people throughout the state, and our district, rely on to keep the heat on throughout the cold Connecticut winters. This year, federal funds for the program were reduced by 40 percent (or \$50 million). The majority party failed to act. We proposed allocating unspent federal funds from the Invest Connecticut fund to replace cuts to LIHEAP, but our amendment fell on deaf ears.

As the ranking member on the Energy & Technology Committee, I have been working directly toward ensuring that Connecticut residents and families will have access to necessary home heating without the increased financial burden. I was extremely disappointed by the objection of the Democrats which left \$79.2 million towards reducing energy costs for low-income residents.

With participation in LIHEAP seeing a 5 percent increase since last year, it is concerning that we are sitting idly by to fill the short fall that our most vulnerable families will be facing this winter. It is unfortunately ironic that we are not using our "Invest Connecticut" dollars into doing just that. House and Senate Republicans have been united in calling for a special session to address this urgent issue. We are committed to strengthening this assistance that will prove to be vital for thousands of Connecticut residents in 2022 and beyond.

Please continue to reach out to me at [Charles.Ferraro@housegop.ct.gov](mailto:Charles.Ferraro@housegop.ct.gov) with your questions and concerns regarding state issues.

## Letters

### (Continued From 4)

She goes on to say that she will make our community safer but offers absolutely no proposals on how to do this. She attacked one of the finest representatives in our state with no substance and, worse, no suggestions of her own.

It's very easy to sit back and criticize. What are you offering besides a lot of hot air?

Jody Dietch  
Orange



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Recovering

# Finding Alternate Routes To Recovery

The traditional thought is that mental health therapy, clinical attention and some sort of recovery program (AA, NA or SMART) are the only modes for people trying to lead a recovered life can use. Yet further scientific study has proven there are many more avenues.

Some increasingly used modalities are breathing technique training, yoga disciplines and massage therapy for people with mental health/addictive disorders. Many people do not realize the anxiety that is brimming through people with addiction ailments along with their concurrent mental health issues. Hampered by anxiety disorder, abandonment disorders, PTSD and depression, people carry a huge degree of stress within their body, both mentally and physically. There is a solution.

Suzi and Ian Smolinsky are the owners and practitioners at Stillwater Wellness in Orange, and their business offers these other modalities. Their story is both inspiring and relevant. Both come from first responder backgrounds: Ian is an active, full-time paramedic and Suzi is a volunteer EMT. Both focus heavily on the first responder community, and Suzi knows the struggles of addiction disorder deeply.

Suzi Smolinsky has lived a recovered life from addiction since she was 20 years old. She came from a hard childhood of abuse, uncertainty and fear.

“As a child I found that when I was in distress, highly over-emotionally stimulated,

I found myself moderating my breathing, just by coincidence. It soothed me, calmed me and brought centeredness back to me,” she said.

What Smolinsky did not know at her early age was that those self-soothing techniques would pave a way for her occupational passion. Whether it be first responders suffering PTSD or people with mental health issues suffering from symptoms, there was an opportunity to learn how to self-regulate anxiety and emotions.

“When I ran into personal health issues that ultimately confined me to a wheelchair and forced me to medically retire from being a 911 dispatcher nine years ago, I was depressed,” Smolinsky said. “My purpose was uprooted. I fell into a depression and my recovery became difficult. My life changed with my hobbies; my hiking and camping I could no longer do anymore. My sobriety was being challenged. I was not worried about drinking, but my insanity and emotional and spiritual calmness was deeply disrupted.”

She reflected on what had always calmed her in times of distress. She started taking gentle yoga classes as a form of strength building and mediation. She found this centered her, calmed her. Her yoga teacher was also in re-



ROB CRAFT

covery. Suzi found she needed this perspective.

“My life changed as I realized I needed to be in the moment,” she said.

Smolinsky went from a wheelchair to a walker as she gained strength and perspective. She had doctors asking her why she didn’t teach these techniques herself, to inspire and help others.

She went and got certified. She immersed herself in various educational and certification classes for

yoga and breathing techniques, then became licensed in massage therapy. She learned a breathing technique that is called Tonglen, and realized that it was what she had been doing since she was 5 without knowing what it was.

She had found her deeper calling. She started helping people with chronic illness, beginner yoga classes and people needing immediate emotional/physical stress release.

Smolinsky then learned how massage has been proven to reduce the signs and symptoms of anxiety and depression. She looked at Thai massage as an expression of this. She went back to school, initially looking to exclusively learn Thai massage, but found table massage combined all the modalities – breathing, meditation and massage. It combined all her abilities to provide a holistic experience of stress

release, comfort and serenity.

“When someone walks in there is little difference, perhaps little change upon first appointment – yet, through habitual self-care I watch nervous energy dissipate, foot tapping, being spacey, unsettled with inactivity start to dissipate,” she said. “People have no understanding of being still or just being. After a one-hour session the world has slowed down for them; they can live in calm to tackle objectives. They can be present.”

Meditation, massage and yoga puts you in a space to be here now. Everything will be here for you later.

Smolinsky’s work at Stillwater Wellness is a tremendous benefit for all people. My daughter was a client of hers, and I saw the centeredness, focus of presence and relaxation through the experience of an 8-year-old. Treating your body and mind well through self-care is one of the greatest gifts we can bestow upon ourselves, and we all deserve it.

*Robert A. Craft, CIMA is an investment advisor representative at Sentinel Asset Management. His passion outside of work is helping the recovery community, people suffering from mental illness and helping children/families who are effected by the totality of these concurrent diseases. He can be reached at 973-809-9716 or racraft44@msn.com.*

## Milford Artisan Market Coming

The Milford Artisan Market will take place on Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 15 and 16 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the Milford Green at 168-176 Broad St. Admission is free.

Over 60 local artisans will be showcasing and selling their handcrafted items, including jewelry, candles, soap, organic products, apparel and wood designs.

The event will have food vendors and artist demonstrations and will feature entertainment, including dance, tai chi performances and live jazz, folk and rock music. Former American Idol and The Voice contestant Kayla Rae will also perform.

Learn more at [facebook.com/milfordartisanmarket](https://facebook.com/milfordartisanmarket).

## Rotary Collecting Diapers At Shred Day

Rotary will be collecting diaper donations during the next Shred Day on Oct. 8 at High Plains Community Center.

The Rotary Club of Orange has partnered with the Diaper Bank of Connecticut. The Diaper Bank is a nonprofit in North Haven providing basic health needs – including 75,000 diapers each week – to low-income

individuals in the state who are struggling to make ends meet. Prior to the pandemic, one in three Connecticut families couldn’t afford enough diapers for their infants and toddlers, and the need has increased over the past year.

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Just Floored

# Lighting In Your Home: Pendants

I am always asked about lighting in a space. Lighting is a great way to bring a space to life. I love pendants more for the kitchen island, grand bathroom designs and custom closets.

Lighting is the ultimate weapon in design; it is an element that makes or breaks the way a kitchen looks and functions. Lighting can act as the perfect accessory to a design.

When statement lighting is called for, there are many styles to pick from. The advent of LEDs has given rise to a new wave of shapes that add impact and has also delivered long-lasting life at optimum energy efficiency.

Pendant lighting is now available in a range of sizes to accommodate larger islands and provide illumination for prep tasks below. LEDs are leading the way, with color adjustments and client control making them more usable than ever before. Pendants are all about color, as designers use lighting to add pops of bold tones to even the most neutral-hued designs.

Materials run the gamut, from paper and rope to leather and wood being used to add

a definitive style. Wood linear pendants take inspiration from the simplicity of nature. Mixed material inspired by classic Scandinavian design, the Nordic lighting from Maxim Lighting is metal spun pendants of black, white and brushed platinum. Opal white glass and natural elements like walnut finished wood and leather straps are featured in their designs.

Cascading pendant lighting showcases an array of organic-styled clean glass elements with iridescent accents that deliver a dozen points of light. The 36-inch-wide pendant delivers heights of each decorative element from 72 inches to 174 inches as the black cords and aircraft cables can be adjusted in the factory to meet specific needs.

Linear lighting designer Mick De Giulio's new lighting introductions for Visual Comfort & Co.'s Tech Lighting Modern Collection include the Stagger collection, which features variations on a simple straight line.



ANNAMARIE AMORE

All of the pendants provide both uplighting and downlighting. Dual Linear Chandelier, which combines two straight lines that are offset, creates more visual texture and energy without adding mass.

Some lighting has an angular sculptural look, and when turned on provides warm illumination with dramatic lines and shadows. The Hatton fixture is available as a pendant and wall light in various sizes.

The nautilus chandelier is an elegant piece of functional sculpture that emits a candlelit glow. The main structure is fabricated from brass, then wrapped in gracefully spiraling satin opal blown glass globes. It is shown in a natural brass finish and is available in six in-house metal finishes or 36 in-house enamel colors.

According to Anita Shaw of Kitchen and Bath Design News, "Progress Lighting has debuted its extensive summer 2022 collection of lighting, which includes thought-

fully designed, trend-forward lighting for the home. Included in the line is Singleton, which pays homage to industrial styling with oversized, clear glass warehouse shades and vintage-inspired metal fittings."

Artful LEDs has contemporary, minimalist pieces that offer dramatic style, distinctive designs and a modern statement to rooms. From clean and straight to delicately curved, from abstract patterns to asymmetry, each piece in the collection is a modern sculpture.

Jestin lighting features open frames and overlapping rectangles illuminated from the inside. The 38-inch linear chandelier, which draws inspiration from the Bauhaus movement, is available in matte black, champagne gold and white finishes.

These are a few of the options. I always suggest seeing them in person before you make a final decision on which direction you are going.

*Annamarie Amore is founder/owner of A.A.I. Flooring Specialist. She can be reached at amoreinteriorsllc@gmail.com.*

## Folks On Spokes Aims To Raise \$50K

Bridges Healthcare's annual Folks on Spokes & Step Forward ride and walk for mental health is scheduled for Sunday, Oct. 2 at 8 a.m. at Fowler Field in Milford. For over 30 years, hundreds of cyclists and walkers have come together to raise funds and awareness for local mental health and addiction recovery services.

There are two ways to participate: Ride one of the event's 5, 10, 20 or 40 mile routes or walk the 5K - all along the Connecticut coastline. Participants can honor the lives of loved ones lost to addiction, overdose, suicide

or other mental health related issues and uplift those in recovery by taking part in the event's remembrance ceremony.

Pre-event registration fees are \$50 per cyclist, \$35 per walker and \$15 for kids under 18. Registration includes a free t-shirt. Children 5 and under are free. Day-of fees are \$55 per cyclist and \$45 per walker. Lunch from Subway will be provided to all participants at the end of the routes.

"As we continue to deal with the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic, Bridges'

mental health and addiction services have provided support to local children, adults and families who are struggling and turn to us for assistance," said Jennifer Fiorillo, Bridges Healthcare's CEO and president. "As our biggest fundraiser of the year, we're extremely grateful to the greater Milford community for continuing to participate and support Bridges' vital programs."

Participants can ride or walk individually or join as a team. Fundraising is encouraged and free registration is offered to each attendee

who commits to raising \$100 by Sept. 30. More than 300 riders, walkers, and volunteers are expected to attend and raise a goal of \$50,000 for Bridges' community health programs and services.

Proceeds from the event go directly to help local children, families, teens, young adults and adults who need mental and behavioral health, substance abuse and primary care services.

To register, sponsor, volunteer or learn more, visit folksonspokes.bridgesct.org.

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# MILFORD REGIONAL RESTAURANT WEEK

SEP 30 - OCT 9, 2022

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**La Catrina**  
**Silver Sands**  
**Strada Gastrobar**



## Foodie Foursome

# Post Road Plays Host To A New Gastrobar

Strada Gastrobar opened in June, adding to the ever-growing restaurant scene in the Milford/Orange area. Over the years I have visited this restaurant location, across from PC Richards, many times under many different incarnations. The first time I noticed that the location was reopening I had to stick my head in. That was back in late May/early June. The entry and dining room was completely torn up and I was greeted by the gentleman who was doing all of the construction (painting, flooring and room design).

It turned out to be the owner, chef Giuseppe Cinque. He was engaging and stopped what he was doing to tell me of his plans. If you too have been there before, you will now notice a more open floor plan, with nicely spaced tables, well decorated and a casual elegance.

Cindy and I were joined for dinner by friends Tom and Karen. We started off with appetizers and signature cocktails. People throw terms out there and are not always aware of the real history behind them. One of them is gastro bar. Gastronomy is the relationship between food and culture, and serving gourmet comfort food featuring styles of countries or particular regions.

The term gastropub is about 30 years old and combines gastronomy and mixology – hence a bar or pub.

Our group started off with a fresh and creatively designed charcuterie and artisanal cheese board. It was arranged with incredible fresh sliced seasonal meats (capocollo, soppressata and prosciutto) and assorted cheeses, olives, fresh fruit, giardiniera and crostini. It was a perfect pairing with the cocktails. This was followed by polpettini, tender veal meatballs smothered in a subtle San Marzano tomato and basil sauce with melted mozzarella and the fiori di zucca, a most delightful and delicate fried zucchini flower cake. The last appetizer, melanzane, was a classic. The multiple eggplant rolls baked in a tomato basil sauce and topped with mozzarella was tender and tasty.

The plating of each dish was true artistry. Nothing manifested that more than the next two plates. The carpaccio di polpo, thin marinated slices of large Spanish octopus, fanned out all around the plate and tossed in lemon juice, extra virgin olive oil,



STEVE COOPER

diced potato and Gaeta olives. It was elegant with a complexity of fresh flavors. Cinque's menu reflects the true authenticity and regional cuisine of his Italian homeland.

It is said you eat with your eyes first. Our next plate was a perfectly shaped column of rice encased in a wrapping of wafer-thin, sliced-by-the-length cucumber. It was topped with salmon tartar, wild mushrooms, a cognac lobster sauce and olives. This was enhanced visually by the random swirls of a balsamic glaze.

In keeping with authenticity was the house-made pasta, cooked to perfection, for the bucatini alla carbonara. This authentic carbonara, made with durum semolina, was nested with pancetta, eggs and pecorino. It had the perfect bite and a smooth, silky texture that was delicious. The braised pork ossobuco was extremely tender and further enhanced by the addition of diced tomato, cooked down, for a simple sauce and served over saffron arborio risotto.

Continuing with our tasting was the pac-

cheri con porcini e tartufo. The large fresh paccheri (pasta), with wild mixed mushrooms, sausage, peas and truffle cream sauce, was a magical execution of flavors. Our last selection was scarpariello al balsamico. The chicken breast pieces were the ideal size and extremely tender. They were served over saffron risotto and accompanied by sweet sausage, diced potatoes, cherry peppers and smothered with a balsamic reduction sauce that was a scrumptious fusion of tastes.

The pistachio cake, our first dessert, was delicious. We completed the dinner with one of the best tiramisu desserts I have ever sampled. It was a "piece of art on a plate," moist with great texture and served with house-made dollops of sweet whipped cream. The lattes and cappuccinos were a perfect end to a perfect evening.

Strada Gastrobar is open Monday through Saturday for dinner from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. and is located at 1573 Boston Post Rd. in Milford. For reservations, call 203.283-3720.

*Steve Cooper is a photographer and event promoter. He runs the Milford Performance Center.*

## Travel Matters

# Lands Of The Midnight Sun, Fire And Ice

As I am writing this, I am onboard the Norwegian Star on a new itinerary that combines some bucket list destinations for me and many others: Norway, Iceland plus Ireland. The trip goes for 12 nights from Southampton, England. We've already planned a similar group sailing next July due to popularity.

This column focuses on Norway and Iceland. With so much to say about just one of these countries, I will attempt to give some highlights of both.

Norway has been a dream of mine for a couple of years, and I have had a desire to go to Iceland ever since I took Icelandair to London a few years ago with a short layover in the Reykjavik airport.

Our first port of call in Norway was Eidfjord, a beautiful town in a stunning fjord on the Southern coast of Norway. We work up to stunning views of mountains sur-

rounding our ship everywhere we looked. It was truly amazing. Now I know why Norway is one of the world's happiest countries (the World Happiness Report is published in Denmark). Many of us rode on the world-famous Flam Railway traveling over 12 miles through 20 tunnels and down a steep and twisting descent into the Flam Valley. We saw beautiful snow-capped mountains and farms clinging to the hillsides at every turn.

Alesund, Norway was one of the most scenic cities I have ever seen, renowned for its art nouveau architecture – rebuilt after the town was burned down in 1904. We went up to the Mount Aksla viewpoint, which can be reached on foot with 418 steps for an incredible view. We preferred



KAREN QUINN-PANZER

to take the hop-on, hop-off bus to the top. We also took a lovely fjord cruise in the Hjordundfjord – the Queen of Norway's favorite. Multiple excursions are offered at every port, from easy to active, including kayaking and off-road adventures.

Did you know that Norway falls in the middle of the "aurora zone"? Beautiful views of the northern lights were found on the way from Norway to Iceland after midnight, and many of us viewed the lights in Iceland as well.

Our first stop in the Land of Fire and Ice was Akureyri, 40 miles south of the Arctic Circle. We visited the furthest north botanic garden in the world, made possible by the microclimate they enjoy. The Godafoss Waterfalls, or "waterfalls of the gods," was

like no other waterfall I have ever seen. You look down into the waterfall instead of looking up.

In Reykjavik, the northernmost European capital, population 131,000, we took an excursion into the geothermal fields, with bubbling lava and steam in an otherworldly topography that might as well be the Moon, followed by the Viking World Museum where you can get on board a replica of the famous Viking ship Icelander.

The ultimate indulgence was the famous Blue Lagoon thermal baths, a personal bucket list item for years. It exceeded my expectations.

*Karen Quinn-Panzer is the owner of Dream Vacations Quinn Panzer Travel. She can be reached at kpanzer@dreamvacations.com or 203-647-3107.*

## Orange Chamber of Commerce

# Chamber Involved In Local Events

"Community is about doing something together that makes belonging matter." – Brian Solis

The Orange Chamber of Commerce is excited to highlight some local events, collaborative partnerships and new resources to give you a snapshot of our activities this month. All play an important role in bringing people together to strengthen the fabric of our community.

**Bicentennial Brick Installation:** We are going into the home stretch of the chamber's Bicentennial Brick project with Sept. 30 being the last day to order bricks for phase one. The bricks are planned to be installed sometime in October, and there will be a dedication in November. Stay tuned for details. There's still time to order your brick at [bricksrus.com/donorsite/orangechamberbricks](http://bricksrus.com/donorsite/orangechamberbricks).

**Fairs, Ribbon Cuttings, Networking and More:** The 19th annual Orange Senior Health and Wellness Fair will take place on Friday, Sept. 23 from 9:30 a.m. to noon at High Plains Community Center. This a fun and informative event for seniors and residents of all ages. It is sponsored by Orange Community Services, the Orange

Visiting Nurse Association, Coldwell Bankers, Maplewood at Orange and Orange Health Care. The chamber will have a table where we will be selling bicentennial bricks, ornaments and "Peace, Love, Orange, CT" tees. Stop by to say hello and enter the fair raffle for a chance to win some great prizes.

There will be a ribbon-cutting for the Fred Astaire Dance Studio on Monday, Sept. 26 at noon. The premier dance studio, located at 547 Post Rd., serves the New Haven County towns of Orange, Milford, West Haven and Woodbridge.

There will be a ribbon-cutting for the reopened Subway restaurant on Tuesday, Sept. 27 at 11:30 a.m. Come see this beautiful Subway, located at 292 Post Rd., which is better than ever. New owner Nadin Rana invites you to try some of the latest sandwich creations and other tasty menu items.

On Wednesday, Sept. 28, the Orange Chamber of Commerce will hold a busi-



KATHY CONVERSE CHARBONNEAU

ness after hours at the Bryan-Andrew House, located at 131 Old Tavern Rd., from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Advance registration is required at [orangechamber.shop](http://orangechamber.shop). Take a trip back in time and experience Orange history while networking with other businesses, nonprofits and community members. Hearth-cooked treats, appetizers, desserts and beverages will be available. Special thanks to event sponsor Trinity-Point Wealth and our host, The Orange Historical Society.

**Get Orange-Branded Merchandise:** Did you know that the chamber online store is your one-stop shop to purchase bicentennial ornaments and unique, Orange-branded items, tickets for chamber events and more? Check it out at [orangechamber.shop](http://orangechamber.shop). You never know what new items we'll be adding so you can show your Orange town pride.

**Welcome New Chamber Members:** The chamber welcomes three new members this month. One is Halcyon Travel Company, where you get personalized

service from travel professional Sarah McGovern, who makes planning a vacation easy and fun without the stress. Email her at [sarah@halcyontravel.co](mailto:sarah@halcyontravel.co) or call 917-865-3451. Another is Subway, which is under new ownership with a beautiful state-of-the-art store that even has a sitting area with a fireplace. It also has a take-out window to save you time. The third is Midnight Creations USA, your hometown source for screen printing and embroidery. Owner Nicole Papadopoulos works with many of our local businesses and organizations to create personalized apparel, home goods, drinkware and laser engraved wood projects. Email [midnightcreationsusa@gmail.com](mailto:midnightcreationsusa@gmail.com) or call 203-479-0515.

Email [director@orangechamber.com](mailto:director@orangechamber.com) to learn more about chamber membership or the activities and programs presented in this column.

*Kathy Converse Charbonneau is the executive director for the Orange Chamber of Commerce. Contact her at 203-795-3328 or [director@orangechamber.com](mailto:director@orangechamber.com).*

The Rotary Club of Orange

# Orange Rotary To Serve The Community

By Roger Tausig



From time to time I have written in this column about Orange Rotary's various service projects, which are one of the primary reasons for our existence. Since March

2020, we have been somewhat constrained from taking on direct service projects, but with the COVID-19 pandemic largely behind us, we can again undertake more hands-on projects than we were able to during the past several years.

In keeping with our motto "Service Above Self," our club has committed to resuming a robust and ambitious set of projects that provide real and significant benefits to the underserved people in our area. We are aiming to implement 12 service projects – one per month – this year.

Here is a rundown of some of the service

projects that we have on our drawing board:

**Purple Pantry Boxes:** This unique and innovative method for providing food to those in need employs purple pickup boxes located in several points around Milford and West Haven. Rotary Club of Orange will collect food and place it in these boxes. Food insecure people can simply take what they need from the boxes without having to identify themselves or be qualified, as is often the case with food distribution services. Our club will continue to collect and replenish the supply of food in the boxes as needed.

**Shred Day/Diaper Collection:** In what has become a popular event here in Orange, Orange Rotary in cooperation with the Orange Recycling Committee will take part on Oct. 8 in the town's annual Shred Day. Orange residents are welcome to bring paper for secure disposal. In addition, we will be doing a diaper collection to benefit the Diaper Bank of Connecticut, an outstanding not-for-profit organization that provides diapers and other sanitary products to people throughout the state. We

will also be accepting donations for our scholarship fund, the proceeds of which are awarded annually to three outstanding recent high school graduates from our area.

**Elmer & Andy Storybook and Dictionary Distribution Project:** Each year, Orange Rotary has delivered on its commitment to education and literacy by distributing storybooks to second graders in our elementary schools that espouse the lessons of the core philosophies of Rotary. These have to do with the values of fairness to others and compassion for our fellow humans. We also distribute age-appropriate dictionaries to all the third graders in the same schools. I have participated in this effort several times. I'm not sure who enjoys it more: the kids or the Rotarians.

**FISH of Greater New Haven Food Deliveries:** To support the efforts of this long-time, well established charitable organization, Orange Rotarians will deliver pre-staged food to the homes of the needy in the New Haven area during the month of November.

**Sock it to Me/Change from the Bottom Up:**

Orange Rotary will be collecting new socks and underwear, two of the items most needed by the homeless population and delivering them directly to the agencies that deliver them to those in need.

**Operation WARM:** Winter will be upon us shortly and hundreds of school kids in the greater New Haven area do not have an overcoat. Orange Rotary, in concert with New Haven and West Haven Rotary Clubs, will source and deliver winter coats to anyone who wants one to get through the winter.

These projects demonstrate Rotary Club of Orange's commitment to service, education and helping to serve those who rely on organizations like ours to meet their basic needs and survive in a difficult time for them and their families.

Many thanks to Trish Pearson for planning, organizing and executing these critical service projects. Her leadership, which is driven by her passion for service and Rotary's role in making a difference in peoples' lives, has been truly inspiring.

## Storybook-Themed Menu Named For "Party in the Stacks"

Christopher Martin's Restaurant in New Haven will return to the Milford Public Library with a storybook-themed menu for this year's Party in the Stacks fundraiser to benefit the Friends of the Milford Library.

The event will be held on Saturday, Oct. 22, from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. at the Milford Public Library, located at 57 New Haven Ave. This year's event features a storybook theme. In addition to the appetizers from Christopher Martin's, the adult-only event will feature specialty drinks and adult beverages from The Crushed Grape in Milford, music, dancing, raffle/auction prizes and costume and trivia contests.

"We are pleased that The Crushed Grape will return," said Jennipher Israelite, FOML vice president for fundraising. "The liquor store will stock our bar, bringing a selection of wines, beers and a signature themed cocktail."

The appetizer menu from Christopher Martin's includes items that are gluten-free and dairy-free to appeal to vegetarians, pescatarians and carnivores. The items include: Stone Soup, Italian wedding meatball soup "shooters"; Wicked Witch's Broom, spicy Thai sirloin skewered with scallion whisk; Three Little Pigs, pastry puffs with three-sausage filling; Chicken Little, little acorn puffs filled with chicken

and pine nut salad; Ali Baba Ghanoush, pita bread toasts served with baba ghanoush and hummus; Humpty Dumpty, lobster deviled eggs; Cinderella's Carriage, fried pumpkin ravioli; Kiss the Frog, smoked salmon with dill and cornichon on brioche rounds; Snow White Shrimp, jumbo Gulf shrimp served with cocktail sauce; Jack's Beanstalk, pea greens top with grilled chicken, Monterey Jack cheese and cilantro pesto bruschetta; and cold antipasti platters, assorted cheeses, charcuterie and Mediterranean specialties with a variety of crackers and breads.

Desserts will include: Ugly Ducklings, sculpted swan creampuffs; Gingerbread Man,

gingerbread man cookies; and Little Red Riding Hoods, red velvet mini cupcakes.

Tickets are now on sale and can be purchased online via credit, debit or PayPal at the Milford Public Library's website at [ci.milford.ct.us/milford-public-library](http://ci.milford.ct.us/milford-public-library) or at [biddingowl.com/FriendsofMilfordLibr](http://biddingowl.com/FriendsofMilfordLibr). Tickets also can be purchased in-person at the library circulation desk for cash or check only.

Tickets are \$45 per person through Sept. 30. Beginning Oct. 1, prices will be \$55 per person. Tickets will also be available at the door. For questions or sponsor opportunities, email [partyinstacks.milfordlib@gmail.com](mailto:partyinstacks.milfordlib@gmail.com) or call 203 783-3291.


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## Wine Talk

## Cabernet Franc Stands On Its Own

Labor Day has come and gone. Fall is here. It is time to try some new red wines that you may not be familiar with.

One of my favorites is a cousin to Cabernet Sauvignon called Cabernet Franc. Cabernet Franc is very similar to Cabernet Sauvignon, but it ripens about a week earlier. As a result, it tends to thrive in slightly cooler climates than Cabernet Sauvignon, such as the Loire Valley in France. It was established in that area during the 17th century. It is said that Cardinal Richelieu had cuttings of the vines brought to an abbey in the region. He charged an abbot named Breton to tend the grapes and they flourished. Breton became associated with the grapes.

There was quite a bit of controversy concerning the two types of grapes, especially as Cabernet Sauvignon became so popular in the 18th and 19th centuries. In 1997, a DNA test found that Cabernet Franc had crossed with Sauvignon Blanc, and this is how Cabernet Sauvignon was born.

Cabernet Franc became a sort of insurance policy to Cabernet Sauvignon in the Bordeaux region of France as part of the famous

Bordeaux blend. This blend consists of Cabernet, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and, to a lesser degree, Petite Verdox and Malbec. (Some small amounts of Carmenere are used by some producers occasionally.)

Cabernet Franc shares many of the same flavors and aromas as Cabernet Sauvignon, but Cabernet Franc is a lighter wine. Cabernet Franc tends to have a big nose with lots of perfume and lots of fruit – most notably raspberries and black currants. It also exhibits hints of violets and graphite. It produces a wine with a smooth mouth feel without all the tannins of Cabernet Sauvignon. It was known for many years, as a result, as a perfect blending wine. This was considered its primary use for some years.

Cabernet Franc has ascended in popularity over the past 20 years and is now produced all over the world. In the Bordeaux region alone, over 25,000 acres of Cabernet is produced for the great blend. However, in Loire it has gained great popularity as a sin-



RAYMOND  
SPAZIANI

gle variety. In Italy over 20,000 acres are being produced. The Italians blend it with Cabernet Sauvignon and call it Cabernet. Hungary has difficulty growing Cabernet Sauvignon; however, Cabernet Franc does just fine. Due to the climate and the nutrients in the soil it exhibits more tannins than in other areas.

Cabernet Franc is also becoming more popular in Canada, where it is planted along Lake Erie and in the Okanagan Valley in British Columbia. It has been planted extensively in Ontario along the Niagara Peninsula. California winemakers who wanted to make a Bordeaux blend started planting Cabernet Franc. They market their wine as Meritage.

More recently it has caught the attention of wine growers in cooler regions. Cabernet Franc is grown on Long Island and the around the Finger Lakes in New York. It is also grown in Pennsylvania, Ohio and Wash-

ington state. In Washington, Chateau St. Michelle, Cold Creek Vineyard and Chinook Winery have all won gold medals with their Cabernet Franc.

Argentina plants Cabernet Franc second only to its favorite Malbec. Its popularity as a single varietal has grown by leaps and bounds. It is no longer considered just a blending grape.

So with cool nights approaching, find a bottle of Cabernet Franc and round up some friends. Enjoy this wonder wine variety and see if you agree with me that it stands up very well on its own.

*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.*

## Orange Shred Day Coming In October

The Orange Recycling Committee will hold another Shred Day on Saturday, Oct. 8 from 9 a.m. to noon at High Plains Community Center in Orange. The event will include document shredding, mattresses and box spring collection, and clothing and household goods collection, all at the same location.

Paper and personal document shredding will be conducted by Orange business Affordable Solutions. It is for residential files only and is not intended

for businesses. This service is funded by the Rotary Club of Orange. Residents may show their appreciation by donating to the Orange Rotary Scholarship Fund, where Rotarians will be on hand to collect donations.

Mattresses and box springs will be collected by the Mattress Recycling Council's "Bye Bye Mattress" team. Residents may bring items to the event and workers will load them into the collection truck. Alternatively,

volunteers from the Orange Lions Club will pick up items from residential homes for a donation of \$10 per item. Anyone interested in this service should contact Ken Lenz at 203-795-3906. Items must be outside and dry or in a garage for easy access, as volunteers will not enter homes. Mattresses from futons, sofas or waterbeds; mattresses with bed bugs; wet, damaged or excessively soiled mattresses; and sleeping bags or mattress pads/toppers will not be accepted.

The Orange Community Women will be collecting clothing and household goods under the upper pavilion. Clothing, shoes, accessories, sheets, blankets, towels, stuffed animals and other household textiles should be bagged. Toys, dishes, small appliances, sporting goods, household décor, DVDs, CDs, tapes and knick-knacks should be boxed, with books boxed separately.

HPCC is located at 525 Orange Center Rd. in Orange.

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The Garden Spot

# Dim The Lights For Birds At Night

September and October are months during which many pollinators are migrating to their winter breeding grounds. Unfortunately, it's also the time of year when many homeowners begin turning their outdoor lights on and leaving them on overnight, not realizing that light pollution has wide effects on wildlife and ecosystems.

October 8 is World Migratory Bird Day. The theme for this year is "Dim the Lights for Birds at Night," encouraging everyone to participate in reducing the impact of light pollution. Most species migrate at night and many studies have shown the attraction of white and or red non-blinking lights.

Plants and animals depend on the circadian cycle of light and dark to govern many essential functions, with artificial light at night having negative and sometime deadly

consequences for amphibians, birds, mammals, insects and plants. For example, frogs and toads croak at night as part of their breeding ritual. Artificial light interrupts their rituals.

Artificial light is harmful to birds, since they are often attracted to lighting which can cause confusion and disorientation and finally exhaustion, to the point where migration is negatively impacted. Although outdoor lighting is the biggest issue, indoor lights from buildings will still attract birds, causing them to crash into windows. According to the US Fish and Wildlife Service, nearly a billion birds die of window collisions annually, with most occurring from buildings of



PAT DRAY

less than four stories. Migration patterns can be disrupted, causing either too early or too late migration, leading them to miss the ideal climate conditions needed for nesting and reproduction.

Biologists at the University of Cincinnati have studied the effect of nighttime light on monarch butterflies. They found that roosting at night near artificial light interferes with the circadian rhythm of the monarch, in turn affecting the molecular processes responsible for the monarch's navigational ability. Artificial light may also cause them to take flight when they should be resting.

What can be done? Realizing that most people leave lights on for security purposes,

keep as many lights off as possible, including those indoors. Make sure that outdoor lights don't point up to the sky. Instead, shield outdoor fixtures to direct the light downwards. If possible, switch to motion detector lighting to limit the amount of time the lights are on. Try to avoid bright white lights – especially bright white LEDs – and use as few as necessary to light the needed areas.

Reducing the amount of lighting will not only help protect our pollinators but will help your wallet. So, please, channel your inner Donna Summer and "dim all the lights."

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

Mental Health

# Addressing Back To School Anxiety

The start of a new school year can be a welcome time for both children and parents. For many kids, going back to school provokes anxiety that will often fade after a short period of time as they adjust to a new schedule and their surroundings. For some children, the start of the school year brings a more significant amount of stress and anxiety that could have a serious impact on how the rest of the year plays out.

Parents and caregivers can take several steps to prepare kids for the transition before school actually starts. These may include visiting the school before the first day, practicing walking in and out of classrooms, spending time inside the classroom if the building is open and arranging play dates with peers or classmates. These steps can help to reduce some of the anxiety related to adjusting to new surroundings and people. Parents should also take the time to listen and acknowledge concerns their children might express before starting school and help their

children to navigate strategies that will help alleviate stress.

How do you know when anxiety from school becomes problematic? There may be cause for concern if a child begins to display difficulty getting along with others, avoids activities in and out of school, experiences headaches, stomachaches or throws tantrums when separating from parents to attend school. If the situation escalates to a level where the child is refusing to attend school, it's important to gauge how strongly they resist, how much of the distress is associated with what's happening in the school and the impact that refusing to attend school is having on the child.

Extreme refusal to attend school can eventually lead to a lag in learning and make it harder to adjust. Compound this lag with the delays that resulted from remote learning and social isolation from the COVID pan-



JENNIFER FIORILLO

dem, and we may be faced with much more serious mental health concerns. If you're seeing signs of anxiety in your child, be sure to communicate with your child's teacher or the school psychologist about the behaviors you are seeing at home so that you can all work together to find ways to help your child adjust.

There are some children who might be more likely to experience a higher level of stress and prolonged anxiety when it's time to go back to school. These include children who already have separation anxiety and are afraid to leave their parents, children who have experienced bullying and children with an undiagnosed learning disability. In situations like these and those described earlier, it might be a time to consult with a mental health professional for an evaluation and

consultation to work with the family to understand and resolve symptoms or possibly discuss medication as an option if necessary.

While going back to school can be an exciting time for many parents and kids, it can also be a stressful one for others who struggle with deeper issues requiring a higher level of intervention. The good news is that parents and caregivers aren't alone in trying to resolve these issues. With the increasing presence of clinical support in school systems and acceptance that mental health is a key component of one's overall health, it is becoming easier to start the conversation and access necessary resources.

*Jennifer Fiorillo, MBA, MPH is the president and CEO of Bridges Healthcare in Milford, and may be reached at Jfiorillo@bridgesmilford.org.*

Homelessness

# Is Homelessness Getting Worse?

For the past 40 years, Beth-El Center has led the conversation on homelessness in the greater Milford community. For eight of those years, I have had the honor of serving as a leader within this organization, addressing these complex social issues through our ever-changing economic, social and political landscape.

The number one question I get in nearly every conversation is: Is homelessness getting worse?

I am not always sure what drives people to ask this question, and I assume people arrive at it in different ways. Some folks perceive an increase in homelessness due to the optics of panhandling. Are these the same thing? No, but they are correlated. Panhandling is often

the most visible representation of the economic issues happening within our communities.

Others understand that overall everyone is paying more for their basic needs. They want to understand if that is creating more homelessness, perceiving that as the worst-case scenario for those they know and possibly themselves.

There are many more reasons that bring folks to ask this question, and each time I struggle to share my perspective honestly, in fear of being too honest or not honest enough. The truth is that yes, homelessness is increasing and we are not



JENNIFER PARADIS

philosophically or financially prepared to address it.

Many of us, including myself, want to blame this on the COVID-19 pandemic. But that would be an unhelpful and extremely shortsighted scapegoat. In many ways, homelessness has been beneficial to our capitalistic goals. As a byproduct of big business, homelessness becomes functional in the social hierarchy. We also continue to perpetuate the notion that homelessness is punishment of personal choice; the inability to maintain "normal" productivity results in the fate of social exile.

The reality is that for generations, we have failed to invest in the resources that would prevent homelessness for those most at risk.

An ancient anthropological understanding of the purpose of shelter precedes the homelessness of today. In order to hunt and gather, we as a people decided that homes were a fluid concept; we moved as needed to meet other basic needs. In modern day America, homelessness becomes bound with the names we gave those with portable lifestyles: "vagrants" and "beggars" were the antithe-

ses to the idealism of the industrial revolution.

As our society and political systems have aged, we have built our systems to mitigate systemic programs with short-term solutions. Although some administrations have done better than others, no president has provided enough resources to effectively end homelessness with the one tool we know works: housing.

In 2020, an estimated 580,466 people experienced homelessness in America. Nearly 3,000 of those were in Connecticut. Although we have seen sheltered homelessness decrease, particularly among families, unsheltered homelessness has increased. The National Alliance to End Homelessness report, State of Homelessness: 2021, highlights that the unsheltered population as surged by 30 percent, almost wiping out nearly a decade of previous gains.

We are driven to do something, not out of empathy but out of necessity. In the words of Jeff Olivet of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, "Homelessness is a life-and-death crisis, and we need to bring it the same urgency and focus we bring to other disasters – hurricanes, wildfires, tornadoes and, yes, pandemics....We will end homelessness by fixing systems – not blaming the people bring failed by them."

*Jennifer Paradis is the executive director of the Beth-El Center in Milford.*

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Your Finances

# Understanding The Planned Student Debt Relief

The Biden administration in conjunction with the Department of Education recently announced a program of student loan forgiveness, as well as a final extension of the loan repayment pause that began under the Trump administration. The loan forgiveness program is an attempt to address the staggering \$17 trillion in student debt held by over 45 million borrowers.

Economists generally agree that student debt is a drag on the economy as it prohibits many younger workers from starting businesses, buying homes or even participating in their workplace retirement plans. The basics of the plan make borrowers eligible for up to \$10,000 in loan forgiveness if they did not receive a Pell grant, which is a type of aid available to low-income undergraduate students, and up to \$20,000 if they did. To qualify borrowers must have an adjusted gross income below \$125,000 (for individuals or married but filing separately) or \$250,000

(for those married filing jointly or heads of households).

The premise of student loan forgiveness or modification is based on the HEROES Act, which was first enacted in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks. It gave the Secretary of Education broad discretion to modify student debt in time of war or national emergency, such as a pandemic.

Critics of the program voice serious concerns about the fairness of the program and its effect on short term inflation and the national debt. The program also does not address the underlying problem relating to the cost of higher education. Some estimate that the cost of college has tripled since 1980, even when adjusted for inflation.

Regardless of one's opinion on the effi-



MATT GALLAGHER

cacy of this program, everyone should be aware of its features. For instance, the loan forgiveness program offers additional benefits for those working in specific fields.

Teacher loan forgiveness is for any educator who has worked more than five consecutive years and is serving low-income families and has met all qualifications. Teachers may be eligible for forgiveness of up to a combined total of \$17,500 on eligible federal student loans.

Public service loan forgiveness is offered to people who work full-time for a government or not-for-profit organization and have made 120 consecutive monthly payments on time and in full. These people may qualify for forgiveness of the entire remaining balance.

Military members are being offered forgiveness programs unique to each branch of the military – soldiers and service members should contact their loan servicer to learn more.

Medical personnel, including many nurses, doctors and others, may be eligible for loan forgiveness based on the length of employment and loan type.

If you do not qualify for student loan forgiveness in your current role, there are still lots of options available to you. You may want to contact your loan servicer to see what is available.

*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.*

Your Health

# On The Track To Recovery

COVID-19 cases have been falling nationwide for two consecutive months. Based on projections for the week ending Sept. 17, the Centers for Disease Control estimates the omicron subvariant BA.5 accounts for 85 percent of US COVID-19 cases, while BA.4 variant accounts for 12 percent. Other omicron subvariants make up the rest.

The Food and Drug Administration has issued an emergency use authorization on the usage of the Moderna COVID-19 bivalent vaccine targeting original and omicron BA.4/BA.5 variants. This booster dose is approved for those 18 and older.

We continue to receive important communication from the Connecticut Department

of Public Health. As of July 1, state law mandates vaccinating health care providers report electronically to CT WiZ all vaccine doses administered for all ages.

CT WiZ, the statewide immunization information system, is a secure web-based system that maintains complete and accurate immunization records for all Connecticut residents. The system began as a statewide childhood registry in 1998 and later expanded to include the entire lifespan. Since December 2020, all COVID-19 vaccinations administered have been reported to CT WiZ.



DR. AMIR MOHAMMAD

According to the state health commissioner, CT WiZ can be relied upon to guide patient care, improve vaccination rates and reduce vaccine-preventable disease for Connecticut's population.

In terms of monkeypox, 90 cases have been reported as of Aug. 30 in Connecticut. Case data are updated weekly on Tuesdays on the DPH dashboard.

Our school systems, day care centers, and other organizations have resumed after the summer break. Though positive COVID

cases have declined, we continue to provide ongoing support and guidance.

Recently, I read an interesting article that emphasized the importance of being involved in the community so we can support each other. Community is where we find the relationships that keep us grounded. We plan to partner with DPH's effort to ensure our residents are well-informed, supported and are provided easy access to all the immunization programs. Let's stay focused on the track to recovery.

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

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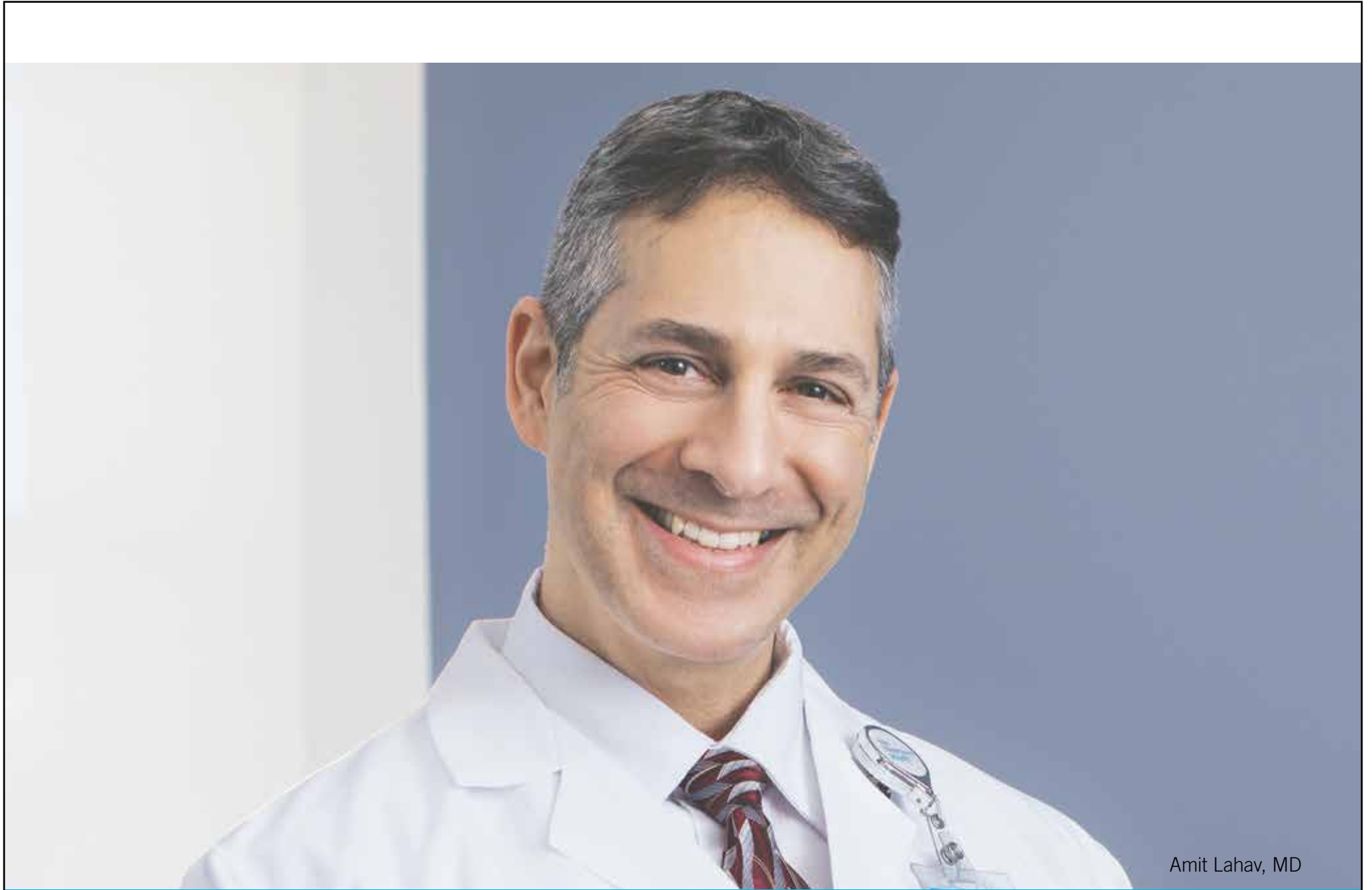
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## Orange Board of Finance

# How Will Federal Economic Policy Impact Connecticut?

Moody's Investor Services recently announced that state debt, pensions and other post-employment benefits liabilities all increased within the this past year in Illinois, Connecticut, New Jersey and Kentucky. However, there is some good news to report with respect to surging revenues in New Jersey and Connecticut, which now has over a \$3.1 billion budgetary reserve. Connecticut has taken the right steps to manage its long-term financial obligations and prepare for the approaching economic storm that is sure to be rough based on the current economic policies of the Federal Reserve.

Connecticut's budgetary reserve is attributed to a strong stock market and surging state income and business tax receipts, which contributed to Connecticut's first credit rating upgrade in over two decades. The general obligation bond credit rating rose from A1 to Aa3. Due to the cap and size of our budgetary reserve, the state was able to pay down \$1.6 billion of its long-term unfunded pension liabilities to help put the state on a more sustainable course.

However, it is worth mentioning that the economic policies of both the Federal

Reserve and Treasury within the past 18 months have put Connecticut's recent successes and financial sustainability at risk.

Based on the current economic headwinds facing Connecticut today with rising interest rates, inflation and wage pressures, the Fed should have taken steps to follow the economic policies of President John F. Kennedy, the first supply sider president. Kennedy implemented sweeping tax rate cuts across the board in 1962, leading to gross domestic product growth of 6.1 percent in year one and averaging 4.9 percent for the remainder of the 1960s.

President Ronald Reagan implemented similar policies in 1982, which included the free market principles of limited government, deregulation, lower taxes and a strong dollar. Reagan's actions in 1982 led to tax cuts and long-term economic growth (4.4 percent growth from 1983-1990 and continued growth into the 1990s).

The current Fed policies have taken a strong economy without inflation and turned it into a high inflation bust in lit-



KEVIN  
MCNABOLA

tle more than a year. Federal policies on fossil fuels have driven gasoline, oil, natural gas and coal prices sky-high, not to mention food prices. Within the last year, Americans have seen an increase in taxes and the largest regulatory assault on business we have ever seen, with real wages for working class people falling steadily. Trillions of dollars in federal spending hit an economy that was already recovering strongly from the pandemic with a tight labor market. The Federal Reserve kept the money spigots open for too long, in part to finance the borrowing needed for all of the spending. Based on the Fed's actions, one can easily argue that the current US inflation rate of 8.3 percent was predictable.

Connecticut's fiscal health is stronger than it has been in decades. However, the Fed's policies will lead to weakened stock market returns and state income along with business tax receipts that will plummet over the next year. These will ultimately lead to deficits and the inability to target additional funding to pay down

long-term liabilities.

Connecticut still ranks within the top five states for long-term liabilities, due to many decades of financial mismanagement and rich defined benefit pension plans for state employees. However, Gov. Ned Lamont has done a lot to change that by working to put Connecticut on the path to fiscal sustainability. He addressed a \$3.7 billion deficit that he inherited and made investments in paying down pension obligations with budgetary surplus.

The cost of serving pension debts will continue to weigh on states like Illinois, Connecticut and New Jersey in the near future. However, Connecticut has started the process of paying down its obligations and is better positioned than most states. The fact still remains that Connecticut's greatest economic challenge in the near future will be competing with bad Fed policies which did not work in the 1970s and will not work today.

*Kevin McNabola is the chief financial officer for the city of Meriden and a member of the Orange Board of Finance.*

## Recycling Tip: We Should Kick Black Plastic

By Loretta Smith

I look around and see black plastic in my house: leaf bags, cooking utensils, takeout food containers, plastic flowerpots and trays. Maybe other stuff too. I bought the cooking utensils many, many years ago when I had Teflon-coated pots and pans. Since I don't have those anymore, I have replaced these with wooden utensils for my seasoned cast-

iron pans.

Due to black plastic's color, it is basically not recyclable because the sorting machine cannot read the numbers on the items. Worse, black plastic may contain toxic chemicals such as heavy metals and flame retardants which could be hazardous to your health.

Black leaf bags are plastic too. Some people use black plastic sheeting in vegetable garden row walkways to keep weeds down.

Here, mulch, whether wood chips or mulched leaves will do the job just as well. Also consider using this mulch in your flower gardens for the same effect. A friend of mine mulches all our leaves in the fall, and we have two huge piles for our gardens.

What can we do with unrecyclable black plastic items? First, don't put them in your recycle bin. Check with your local nursery to see if they'll take flowerpots for reuse.

I called two Home Depots and sadly they don't. They need to update their website. You should clean them thoroughly before donating them. Reuse black food containers for storage of food leftovers or other items. Take black plastic bags to the town transfer station and put them in the plastic bag container, not in the hopper. Or you can take them to Kohl's Target, Lowe's, ShopRite and Best Buy. Make sure they are clean.

## Dispensary

### (Continued From 1)

plants," Sunflower Farm of Orange said in a statement. The farm grows annuals, perennials, herbs, pumpkins and mums.

Sometimes, though, having extra water for your plants doesn't matter, as drought also affects other parts of the surrounding ecosystem.

"For the first time ever, deer ate all the green tomatoes off our plants, and chewed back the tomato vines also. Desperate for moisture," said Maria Macri of River Crest Farm in Milford. River Crest grows flowers, produce and Christmas trees.

"We used our soaker hoses way more than normal, over-taxing the well, but kept most things growing," Macri said. "The popcorn is looking very sad. Our paw-paws are tiny this year compared to last year."

Unlike many weather events, drought is a slow-moving crisis. Weeks or months of less-than-normal precipitation add up over time to a significant deficit that can take a similar amount of time to reverse. Although several inches of rain fell across much of the region in early September, for instance, it was not enough to make up for months of below-normal precipitation totals. Above-average temperatures during

much of the summer also contributed to faster evaporation – another condition that exacerbates drought.

Of course, many farms in the state have experienced drought before – the last one was in 2020. Many of them take measures to reduce the impact of dry conditions.

That was the case for Stephan and Rachel Bispuda of Cedar Hill Farm in Orange.

"One of our sustainable production methods includes rotationally grazing our cattle which improves the soil and makes the pastures more resilient during dry years. This combined with growing a diverse selection of grass and other forages including some that do well in hot dry weather has helped soften the blow of the drought," the Bispudas said.

There have nevertheless been tradeoffs for the farm, which sells farm-raised beef, chicken, pork, turkey and eggs.

"We still have had to feed our cattle more hay than usual this summer meaning expensive inputs and reduced yields due to lack of rain will make our winter feed run short and be costly to replace," they said.

Climate models predict that Connecticut will see an increase in heavy precipitation events and more rainfall overall in the coming decades, but also higher drought risk as average temperatures rise and pull more moisture out of the soil.

## Milford Trick or Trot Approaching

The 11th Annual Milford Trick or Trot 5K Run/Walk to benefit the Beth-El Center will take place on Saturday, Oct. 29 at 9 a.m. beginning at Lisman Landing, located at 37 Helwig St. in Milford. Run or walk a 3.2-mile scenic route through Milford. Costumes are encouraged. Post-race activities include

prizes, food and beer trucks and a band.

The fee is \$33 for the first 150 registrants and \$36 thereafter. For participants 18 and younger, the registration fee is \$22. Register by Oct. 15 to receive an event t-shirt. Find registration and sponsorship opportunity information at [milfordtrickortrot.com](http://milfordtrickortrot.com).

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# Urban Archeologist Talk About His Treasure Hunts

By Marilyn May

Rescuing the past one artifact at a time is the work and joy for urban archaeologist Greg Van Antwerp, who is always looking for something he knows nothing about.

"I've been visiting estate, garage, tag sales my whole life. As long as I can remember, I have always enjoyed the thrill of a unique discovery. Who doesn't?" Van Antwerp writes on his website.

Come and hear him in person as he tells "Stories from the Attic" at the Monday, Nov. 21 meeting of the Milford Historical Society. The free, public program starts at 7 p.m. at the Mary Taylor Memorial United Methodist Church at 168 Broad St. on the Green.

"I share my amazing, important, unique and often humorous discoveries," he writes, adding that he does not sell his finds. He enjoys the hunt and has built up quite a collection.

"I find greater satisfaction in finding the story behind the object and looking for its significance."

He started a blog in 2009 that drew hundreds of comments, and since 2013 he has given lectures on local history and culture. He said the public lectures turned out to be "an unexpected benefit I thoroughly enjoy."

"My goal is to keep on searching, to find forgotten history, lost items and unsung heroes, to preserve the stories, share and educate."

The Mary Taylor Memorial Church is accessible to the handicapped, and there is ample parking in the back church lot.



A print Van Antwerp found after getting permission to do a dumpster dive at an estate sale. (He doesn't recommend that but could not resist.) He found a collection of 22 prints from 1962 titled "Costume Designs for the Stratford Festival" from the old American Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford, which burned down in 2019.

For more information, call 203-874-2264 or visit [milfordhistoricalsociety.org](http://milfordhistoricalsociety.org).

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

## Real Talk: You Ask, A Pro Answers

# Make Your Equity Work For You

If you have owned your property for years, the equity is mounting.

Do you ever wonder if using it for necessities or fun things might be a better option than letting it sit there? There are numerous paths our life takes us and having a free money resource is invaluable. For example, if you have extended credit cards here is a way to pay them off without creating more debt.

An equity line of credit can be used in many ways, and since home values have increased substantially over the last few years, now is the time to capitalize on the amount you can use. First, research how much money is available for you. An appraisal is done by your lender, and you can use up to 80 percent of what the difference is between your mortgage and your equity.

An equity line sets up the availability of these funds, and there you go. Now you can renovate your home, buy a car for cash or even put a down payment on a second home. Just think: upgrading your kitchen or baths can result in your home being worth even more money. Student loans could be paid off.

Investors constantly use these funds to purchase properties, so if you are thinking of owning a condominium to rent or a three-family house for your kids, you have been sitting on the opportunity all this time.

The most popular use I see in the market is putting a large down payment on a new owner-occupied home. In other words, if you would like to move and you do not want



BARBARA LEHRER

to cash in on investments in order to write a strong offer on a new property, then set up this line of credit. Meet with your mortgage broker and design a way to buy in this competitive market. Strong down payments can pave the way to successful purchases.

Everyone knows that it is crucial to keep up with repairs on your building. If you need a new roof, for instance, that is a major expense. It is nice to know you have funds at hand when necessary.

Make your money work for you. I have clients who are buying a winter condo in Florida and one who is adding an in-law apartment for the parents. Without this program it would be pricey. Think of sending extra funds beyond your mortgage payment each month, therefore paying down more principle. Tell your children to do the same on their mortgages too. A thirty-year loan can be paid off much more quickly with this added good habit. Don't forget to earmark the check to go toward the principle only.

Last, think about a vacation. Finally, the normalcy of travel has given us this option. See the world; buy a boat. No matter what your needs, it is nice to know that owning a home comes with added security when it is needed. Check with your realtor, get a start on what your property is worth now, then check the balance on your loan, and away you go.

If you need more information on these issues, email [Barbara.Lehrer@cbmoves.com](mailto:Barbara.Lehrer@cbmoves.com).

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Here's To Your Health

# Love It And Live It

One of the hardest lessons I've had to learn in my career is that the old saying "you can lead a horse to water but you can't make them drink" is true. I take my clients' goals as seriously as I do my own, so I was frustrated because I know my advice and guidance works to help my clients achieve their goals. However, their lack of commitment and enthusiasm was baffling to me. I love what I do; it's my heart's desire to inspire people to live their best lives possible.

I needed to understand where the disconnect was happening. What I discovered was most clients knew the advice and guidance I was giving them was the "right thing to do," but they didn't love it.

In fitness, there are many different ways to achieve the same outcome. But the most important thing is continuity. When you do things consistently over time, it becomes a

habit. And habits become lifestyles. Problem is, if it's not something you enjoy or enriching your body, soul and spirit, you won't continue it.

It reminds me of the old and sure-to-fail New Year's resolution. People try to run marathons after living a month of running themselves down, overeating and drinking. The goals are usually set too high, and people are not doing things they enjoy.

The process should be slow, with slow increases in intensity. Exercise should be done in smaller increments, but daily doses are a must. Whatever you choose – yoga, running, Pilates, a strength training program, joining a sports team – the same slow and steady



MICHELE TENNEY

pace applies. This approach will help you be successful not only in reaching your goal(s), but will help you be consistent and actually love what you're doing because you are living it daily.

When you love what you do and it becomes a lifestyle, be prepared for obstacles. I was on a role with a new weight training program that I began in January when I took a new job in March with a lot more hours than I had been working before. Suddenly, I was struggling to manage my work time with home time, car-pool and sports. The transition set me back a month, but my determination to get back on track (because muscle does have memory) was the mindset behind my reset. You've got to want it and recognize the value of

how exercise makes you feel. Your mind is the battlefield, and that's the place where we have to remember how good we felt after our workouts.

Fall is almost upon us, so it's time to think about seasonal eating as well. I'm thinking of one pot wonders and stews with kale and root veggies. If you're bored with your current workout, it's a perfect time of year to change things up a bit and try something different. You can do this. I believe in you. Here's to your health.

*Michele Tenney is a Certified Personal Trainer and Nutritionist & Wellness Coach. She is a member of the Orange Board of Health. She can be reached at 203-668-2969 or email at Hmbrd3@gmail.com.*

## Milford-Orange Probate Court

# Do We Need To Go Through Probate Court?

There are three types of estates that can be opened in probate court when someone passes away.

The first type of estate is a full estate, which should be opened if the individual who passed away (also known as the decedent) had \$40,000 or more in probate assets. Probate assets are assets that were solely owned by the decedent and did not automatically pass to a beneficiary or co-owner upon the decedent's death.

For example, real estate in the decedent's name only is a probate asset (and must be distributed through the probate process), whereas real estate owned by the decedent and another individual with rights of survivorship is not a probate asset because the decedent's

ownership interest will automatically pass to the other individual upon death.

The second type of estate is a small estate, which can be opened if the decedent had less than \$40,000 in probate assets. Small estates are less formal and often faster to complete than full estates.

The third type of estate is a tax purpose only estate, which should be opened if the decedent had no probate assets. A tax purpose only estate is important because a Connecticut estate tax return must be filed whenever anyone passes away, even if there are no probate assets or state taxes due.



BEN GETTINGER

When a Connecticut resident passes away, the state automatically gets an estate tax lien on any real property owned by the decedent regardless of whether or not estate taxes are owed and regardless of whether or not the property is a probate asset. For example, if spouses own real estate together with rights of survivorship, a state lien automatically goes on the property when one of the spouses passes away, even though it is not a probate asset

and even if no estate taxes are owed. The only way for the surviving spouse to sell or transfer the property in the future is if he or she gets a release of lien and files it on the land records, which usually requires opening an estate in probate court. If estate taxes are due, the estate will get the release of the lien from the probate court after the estate taxes are paid. If no estate taxes are due, the estate will get the release of lien from the probate court after the state estate tax return showing no estate taxes are due is properly filed.

Most estates do not owe estate taxes, because the exemption is relatively high (the

state exemption will be approximately \$9.1 million in total assets in 2022). The primary purpose for filing an estate tax in most instances is to comply with Connecticut estate tax return filing requirement and to get a release of lien when necessary.

The question commonly asked by family members when a loved one passes away is "Do we need to go through probate court?" The short answer is most often yes.

The type of estate you will need to open depends on the amount of probate assets. If the decedent owned real property in Connecticut, you will need to obtain and file on the land records a release of the state lien that automatically takes effect even if no estate tax are owed or even if the property is not a probate asset, which usually requires opening an estate in probate court. You will not be able to sell or transfer the property until the lien is released.

If you have any questions about the need to open an estate, the estate tax filing or the estate tax lien, please feel free to call the Probate Court at 203-783-3205.

*Ben Gettinger is the probate judge for the Milford-Orange Probate Court.*

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## For Nature's Sake

# Whatever Happened To The Ozone Hole?

Some people might remember the public fuss in the 1970s, 80s and 90s over something called the ozone hole. Experts were fretting over a part of the stratosphere more than eight miles above the Earth's surface where a dispersed layer of ozone gas, with its three oxygen atoms per molecule, naturally exists and which, according to experts, protects us all by absorbing the most harmful rays of the sun.

Ozone up high in the sky, we learned, acts like sunblock for the planet. If anything happens to destroy the ozone there, it will lead to increased skin cancer, cataracts and, ultimately, a kind of scorching of all living things on Earth.

The big threat to this protective layer, we learned in the 70s, was a chemical called chlorofluorocarbons, used in refrigerators, air conditioners and aerosol sprays. Scientists saw proof by the mid-1980s, that CFCs were floating up through miles of atmosphere and breaking apart those ozone molecules. Environmentalists called upon the public to immediately switch away from hair sprays and spray deodorants, to save the ozone.

So what happened?

The scientists were right. The public responded. Some businesses like SC Johnson acted independently to replace CFCs. And a 1987 treaty called the Montreal Protocol helped the world start phasing out use of CFCs. In short, a planetary disaster was averted.

In the next several decades, the countries of the world continued to strengthen the treaty, and by 2020 we had eliminated 98 percent of the CFCs targeted in the Montreal Proto-

col. As a result, the ozone layer has been slowly recovering from destructive pollution, and much of the damage that would have occurred with a thinner ozone layer has been avoided.

National Geographic now reports that the Earth's ozone layer would have collapsed by 2050 without the Montreal Protocol. Not only would the UV index have skyrocketed, causing spikes in skin damage and deaths, but according to an expert from the National Center for Atmospheric Research our global climate would be 25 percent hotter today without the Montreal Protocol.

To honor the 35th anniversary of the Montreal Protocol on Sept. 16, the quiz below offers some important reminders about the ozone layer and the treaty that saved the world.

1. True or false: The 1987 Montreal Protocol is the only treaty in the history of the United Nations that has been ratified by every country on Earth – all 198 UN member states.

2. Which of the following world leaders fully supported the ratification of the Montreal Protocol in the 1980s? a) Ronald Reagan, President, US; b) Margaret Thatcher, Prime Minister, UK; c) Gro Harlem Brundtland, Prime Minister, Norway; d) All of the above.

3. When chlorine atoms break away from CFCs in the stratosphere they wind up destroying the ozone there. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, how



PATRICIA HOUSER



many ozone molecules can one chlorine atom destroy? A) 100; b) 1,000; c) 10,000; d) 100,000.

4. True or False: CFCs are the only ozone depleting substances now regulated by the Montreal Protocol and its amendments.

5.

The full name of the Montreal Protocol is . . .

a) Montreal Protocol on Substances That Deplete the Ozone Layer

b) Montreal Protocol on Global

Warming

c) Montreal Protocol on the Dangers of Hair Spray

6. Experts say that if all goes well, the ozone layer will be restored to its 1980 level of thickness by a) 2025; b) 2035; c) 2060.

Answers:

1. True: Former Secretary General of the United Nations Kofi Annan has said, "Perhaps the single most successful international agreement to date has been the Montreal Protocol."

2. D: All of the above. Margaret Thatcher, who had studied chemistry at Oxford University and worked as a research chemist before going into politics, was concerned by the research on CFCs and ozone. In 1989, Thatcher made a speech to the UN that amounted to a global call to action on the dangers of both ozone depletion and excess carbon pollution causing global warming.

Meanwhile, Ronald Reagan was hearing from advisors who both supported and opposed the Montreal Protocol, eventually

choosing to protect the ozone layer as "an insurance policy," according to then-Secretary of State George Schultz. Ultimately, Reagan would call the Montreal Protocol a "model of cooperation" and "a monumental achievement."

The Montreal Protocol was also consistent with the work and beliefs of Gro Brundtland, Norway's first female prime minister, who was at the time also chair of the UN World Commission on Environment and Development (nicknamed the Brundtland Commission). In 1987, that commission issued a document called "Our Common Future" about sustainable development.

3. D.

4. False: CFCs, sometimes known by the brand name "Freon," are not the only chemicals used in household products and industry that can damage the molecules of ozone in the stratosphere. The Montreal Protocol and its amendments have also helped phase out substances like halon used in fire extinguishers and methyl bromide, used in agriculture as well as other ozone depleting substances.

5. A.

6. C: Notwithstanding the improvements in the ozone layer, it will take a several decades, with ongoing monitoring and government programs to support corporate actions to keep lowering emissions, for former levels to be fully restored.

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

## Mullin Completes Realtor Ethics Panel Training

Republican state Senate candidate Kim-Marie Mullin has successfully completed a course of instruction on the procedures related to being a hearing panel member for the Realtor Code of Ethics of the National Association of Realtors. Members are recertified every three years.

Mullin, a licensed real estate broker

and instructor in Connecticut and New York, currently teaches the Connecticut real estate licensing/continuing education courses for salespeople and brokers. She is the principal broker and owner of Hudson + Sound Brokerage and serves as a 2022/23 director for the Mid-Fairfield County Board of Realtors.

## Upcoming Events At Chabad Of Orange/Woodbridge

Chabad of Orange/Woodbridge will hold a Rosh Hashana community lunch on Monday, Sept. 26 following service at approximately 1:30 p.m. There is a suggested donation of \$18.

On Sunday, Oct. 2, the synagogue will host family apple picking from 10 a.m. to noon at Norton Brother Farm, located at 466 Academy Rd. in Cheshire. There will be a hay ride, apple picking and a picnic lunch. The cost is \$5 per person, \$20 maximum per family.

On Thursday, Oct. 13, Chabad of Orange/

Woodbridge will host a Deli on Derby Pop Up and Sukkot Family Festival at the synagogue. There will be life-sized inflatables and live music. The event starts at 5 p.m. and is free; there will be food for sale.

On Monday, Oct. 17, there will be a Simchat Torah with Chabad, with services at 7 p.m. followed by lavish kiddush and hakafot.

Chabad of Orange/Woodbridge is located at 261 Derby Ave. in Orange. For more information, visit [chabadow.org](http://chabadow.org).

## State Farm Delivers Fire Education Materials In Orange

The National Fire Protection Association and State Farm agent Kevin Piscitelli are teaming up with the Orange Volunteer Fire Department to support fire prevention and safety education for young children.

State Farm agents are delivering Sparky Educator kits to hundreds of fire departments and schools across the country, including the OVFD. Each kit includes a Sparky stuffed animal, a large educator book, lesson plan and books to be distributed to children. The kit is designed to educate preschool through second grade students. Topics include the importance of smoke alarms, creating a home fire escape plan and more.

"These materials capture the attention of young audiences in a fun, but educational way," said Piscitelli. "Many fires are preventable, and we want to ensure our local kids know how to not only avoid starting fires, but what to do in case one does happen."

Parents and educators looking for resources online can visit the NFPA Sparky site at [sparky.org](http://sparky.org), which offers educational videos, activities, games and more.

"At State Farm, our mission is to help build safer, stronger, better educated communities," Piscitelli said. "By partnering with Orange Fire Department, we are doing just that in Orange."

## Strega Market Opens In Milford



Strega Market celebrated its grand opening Aug. 24 with a ribbon-cutting sponsored by the Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce. The store carries imports from Italy and is open for lunch with a gourmet deli counter. From left: Alderman Ellen Russell Beatty, state Rep. Kathy Kennedy, co-owner Rosanna Merenda, MRCC Director of Membership and Marketing Simon McDonald, co-owner Danilo Mongillo, Mayor Ben Blake and MRCC President Michael Moses. Photo by Gregory Geiger.

## Pack 922 Selling Popcorn

Orange Cub Scout Pack 922 will be around town selling popcorn throughout the coming September and October. They will be outside Chip's Family Restaurant at 321 Boston Post Rd. on Sept. 24, Tractor Supply at 253 Indian

River Rd. on Oct. 1 and 15, and at the High Plains Community Center during Election Day on Nov. 8. For more information, contact the cubmaster at [cubmaster@orangecubscouts.com](mailto:cubmaster@orangecubscouts.com) or visit [orangecubscouts.com](http://orangecubscouts.com).

## Kennedy Wins Independent Party Endorsement

The Independent Party of Connecticut has endorsed state Rep. Kathy Kennedy as their party's candidate for state representative in the 119th Assembly District, which includes parts of Milford and Orange, for this November's election.

The endorsement means that Kennedy will not just appear on the Republican line, but will also appear on the Independent Party line on the ballot in November.

Connecticut residents not affiliated with either major party make up the largest

percentage of voters in the state.

"People first is my mantra. As your state legislator, I have pledged to put the needs of the people of the 119th District above the wants of party leaders and special interests," Kennedy said.

The Independent Party is the third-largest political party in Connecticut with over 37,000 registered voters. It has cross-endorsed several candidates from other parties across the state this year, as well as running some of its own candidates.

The Arts Scene

# Building Community One Production At A Time

There are well over 100 groups and spaces that support and present community theater throughout Connecticut. Given that we're situated between New York and Boston, is it any wonder?

Just what is community theater? Simply put, it is not professional (paid). Most everyone involved in the physical production is a volunteer. They have day jobs and careers. Yet once or twice (or more) every year they set aside a couple of months' worth of nights and weekends to submit plays to direct, venture out for auditions to act, volunteer to run sound/lights/props, to create sets and costumes.

They do it to feed their passion, to feel part of a tight group that has one another's backs, to become a community of one.

The Milford Arts Council is home to not one but two theater groups: its own Eastbound Theatre and Pantochino Productions (a separate nonprofit, professional theater that rents the MAC). I invited both groups to speak on behalf of their perspectives of local and community theater.

"It should not be overlooked that all theater – the work of creating it and the work created – share much in common, because theater is about all of us," said Nancy Herman, chair of the MAC's Eastbound Theatre. "It is at one and the same time highly personal, providing us with unique and various perspectives and points of view, but also communal, as we share in the experiences it provides. It is intellectual and provocative, asking us to think about the human condition with all of its contradictions and ambiguity, but it is also emotional, reminding us in so many ways of our shared humanity."

"Theater – both the product and the process of creating it – can bring about all kinds of opportunities for audience members and

theater artists alike," Herman said. "It engenders self-reflection and self-improvement, and it can promote self-expression and self-confidence while teaching cooperation and collaboration."

People who love theater, love theater. They will search out local and community theater and they will plan excursions to the city to see professional theater. Either way, theater audiences are in themselves a community. They sit in their seats pouring over the program reading the director, author and actor bios, flipping through the ads and promotions. They excitedly chat about the last play they saw, and the reviews of the play they are about to see – until the lights go down. And in that moment, they are one, in the dark, waiting for the curtain to rise.

"I was 13 years old when I truly discovered theater," recalled Bert Bernardi, co-producer of Pantochino Productions. "I understood it was not only something I loved, musical theater especially, but it was an option for a career. There was little opportunity in my area for a young person to participate in or learn about theater. But when I was 16, a new community theater was formed in my town—too good to be true! I was lucky enough to be cast in a production of 'You're A Good Man Charlie Brown.' It was all adults, and me. Working with these actors and directors – I was in heaven. This was an amazing opportunity to explore and do what I loved – perform, sing, dance. This single experience in community theater solidified my desire to have a life in the theater. To be able to share my passion with young people, and give them what I so wanted."

The experience of the theatrical troupe of



PAIGE MIGLIO

cast and crew becomes a shared experience with the audience. It is an embrace, an invitation to join their intimate community. The warmth of that shared experience crosses the divide of stage and seats. The space between becomes electric.

"We couldn't think of a better way to connect with the community than creating a show about the community itself," Bernardi said. "In Milford, everyone knows Charles Island or has a

personal memory about the storied island. 'Checking in on Charles' hit all the buttons. It was filled with history, local interest and lots of laughter. Not only did the community come out to see it, but the City of Milford agreed to be lead sponsor for the production."

"Pantochino's slogan is 'ridiculously entertaining,' and that's something that sets us apart. In the cozy confines of the MAC, the entertainment value is huge. Crisp, bright productions with bold choices, fantastic sets and costumes and top-notch performances," Bernardi added. "Whether we're presenting something as silly as our Panto 'Pirate Schmirate' or something more thoughtful and moving like our recent 'As Long As We're Talking,' when audiences come to a Pantochino production, they can expect to be entertained, ridiculously."

Herman recalled a conversation with an actor in one of their recent productions who advised not to call Eastbound Theatre a "community theater," as it implied that the production was "less than" theater created by those who make a living at it.

"As someone who is intimately involved with community theater, I wonder, might community theater be 'less'?" Herman said.

"Less what? Less profitable? Certainly. Less polished? Maybe. Less...professional? Well, yes. It's not professional theater. It's theater created by those who do it for enjoyment, and not as a job. But does that make it less valuable? Less important? Less meaningful?"

"Rest assured, I love going to see professional theater and I do it as often as I can," Herman continued. "But I also love and honor community theater, which can provide opportunities to anyone who has an interest, is willing to take the chance, make the commitment and join the fun. For people young and old, community theater can be the vehicle that provides an outlet for creativity and artistic expression. And let us not overlook the social, entertainment and educational values that live theater can provide, as it motivates the participants and audience alike to engage in the world and maybe make the world a better place, one community at a time."

Eastbound Theatre offers three diverse theatrical productions that span the gamut of genres, periods and styles. They also support new works with their EastWest PlayFest with original one-acts each summer, and a new program, Plays-in-Development.

Pantochino Productions offers three original musical productions, two teen theater productions, in-school productions, and the MAC's summer theater camp.

*Paige Miglio is the executive director of the Milford Arts Council, celebrating 50 years of service in 2022 supporting and presenting all genres of art to the greater Milford community. Visit [milfordarts.org](http://milfordarts.org) for information on the MAC, and send her your events in the arts (include dates and details) to [executive-director@milfordarts.org](mailto:executive-director@milfordarts.org).*

## Turkey Hill Opens New Track



Turkey Hill School students, staff and parents joined Dr. Denise Arterbery and Dr. Vince Scarpetti to kick off the 2022-2023 school year's theme "Together Achieving Goals," with a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new THS track. USA Hockey player Strauss Mann spoke to the students about goal-setting from his experience on the US Olympic team. The new track was a long-term goal for THS that was reached through participation in Parent-Teacher Organization fundraisers within the THS community. Photo courtesy of THS PTO.

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Lynne Knobel is a Milford artist who belongs to the Westport Artists Collective & The New Haven Paint and Clay Club. Call or text her at 518 683-2169

Insuring Your Future

# Open Enrollments Are Around The Corner

Even though it still feels like summer, January is around the corner, with about 90 shopping days till Christmas.

Over the summer, Congress and the state legislature were busy introducing new laws and regulations that impact health insurance plans. There has been a lot of publicity of late regarding prescription drug costs, minimum coverage requirements and the cost of individual health insurance.

Here's what's been happening while we were enjoying summer. Spoiler alert: many of these changes will not go into effect until 2024 or later.

The Inflation Reduction Act for the first time authorizes Medicare to negotiate the prices of some high-cost prescription drugs with pharmaceutical companies. They can begin to negotiate in 2023 for prices that will go into effect in 2026. There will be tax penalties on drugmakers that increase product prices by more than the rate of inflation.

Changes that will go into effect in January 2023 include making most vaccines free under Medicare. The cost of insulin for all ages will be capped at \$35 per month and will include insulin pumps. Not only will this reduce the price at the counter; it will also keep many Medicare beneficiaries out of the "doughnut hole" or gap. The income threshold to qualify for Part D assistance (prescriptions under Medicare) will increase. We are awaiting direction from the Connecticut Department of Social Services on how this will impact their income guidelines.

The increase in the cost of prescription drugs, including drugs administered in a doctor's office, will be limited to the rate of inflation. This means that the drug company cannot raise the price overnight in response



TRISH PEARSON

to increased demand. Finally, Part D prescription drug plan premiums cannot increase more than 6 percent a year through at least 2029.

In January 2025, the law will limit the annual out-of-pocket costs for prescriptions to \$2,000 per individual.

The law authorizes the Health and Human Services secretary to begin negotiating the prices of 10 high-cost prescription drugs, which will go into effect in 2026.

In 2028, the negotiated drugs covered under Medicare Part B will be limited by the IRA. The number of drugs whose prices will be negotiated on behalf of Medicare will increase in subsequent years, and by 2029 a total of 60 drugs will be subject to negotiated prices.

For people who buy their health insurance

through the health exchanges, the bill extends through 2025 the expanded advanced premium tax credits that reduce monthly premiums. For those 50 to 64 years old, these subsidies provide an average savings of over \$950 annually, and all consumers will continue to pay no more than 8.5 percent of their income for ACA health insurance premiums. The Insurance Commission issued a decision that limited increases on individual plans to 15 percent and small group plans to 7 percent. This is good news when considering that the insurance companies requested rate increases as high as 24 percent.

The outlook for health insurance options in 2023 is good – so go ahead and start your holiday shopping now.

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

## Amity BOE Elects Davis New Chair



Davis.

The Region 5 Amity Board of Education unanimously voted to elect Orange resident Paul Davis (D) to the position of board chair at its Aug. 15 meeting. Davis replaces former Chair John C. Belfonti (R), who stepped down earlier this summer. Belfonti was elected to the board in 2015; he was elected chair in December 2019.

Before Davis was elected, ABOE Vice Chair Patrick Reed presided.

The board followed its established bylaws by filling the vacancy at its next regularly scheduled meeting. According to the bylaw, Davis's role is effective immediately and will conclude in December 2023, after next year's elections.

As chair, Davis will work closely with

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Jennifer Byars on issues such as meeting agendas, topical issues, policy priorities and facilitating an open, collaborative working relationship with the superintendent. He will preside at board meetings and serve as the leader and manager of the board.

"Mr. Davis understands the need for a positive, open relationship between a regional school district and our sending towns," Byars said. "His perspective as both educator and town leader makes him well qualified, a great fit and able to take on the problem-solving necessary to support the operations of a regional school district."

Davis has an extensive background in

education and governmental education policy. He taught in West Haven for 34 years as a middle and high school science teacher, is a five-term former state representative where he worked on the Education Committee for 10 years, and followed that with four years as a member of the Orange Board of Selectmen. He has served as chair of the ABOE Policy Committee and a member of the Facilities Committee.

"It is a privilege and honor to serve in such an important position," Davis said. "I am hopeful that I can help create an environment where all members of the Amity community can work together to address our challenging education issues."

### KMW Leisure's ON THE ROAD AGAIN!!!



#### Goodspeed Opera House

42nd Street: Wednesday, September 28th, 2022 \$130.00

Departs 10:30am - Returns approximately 6:00pm.

Enjoy lunch at the Gelston House before this marvelous play. 42nd Street – the big, bright tap-dancing extravaganza – is coming to Goodspeed in a fresh, newly imagined production. This love letter to Broadway is the ultimate show biz fairy tale of the chorus kid who becomes an overnight star!

Christmas In Connecticut: Thursday, December 29th, 2022 \$130.00

Enjoy lunch at the Gelston House before this marvelous play. Based on the classic 1945 Warner Brothers. Smart Housekeeping columnist Liz Lane, a famous expert on marriage, cooking, and homemaking, is asked by her publisher to host a war hero for Christmas dinner at her renowned Connecticut farmhouse. The only problem? She can't cook, she isn't married, and she lives in a tiny New York apartment. Based on the classic 1945 Warner Brothers film, this World Premiere musical comedy is a delightfully cheerful way to celebrate the holiday season!

#### Ivoryton Playhouse

Great Gatsby: October 1st, 2022 \$130.00

Jay Gatsby, a self-made millionaire, passionately pursues the elusive Daisy Buchanan. Nicki Carraway, a young newcomer to Long Island, is drawn into their world of obsession, greed, and danger. A beautifully crafted interpretation of the 1925 novel which defined the Jazz Age, Simon Levy's play captures the breathtaking glamor and decadent excess of the 1930s. As always, lunch at the Blue Hound Cookery, is included.

#### Log Cabin Holyoke Ma - Oktoberfest with the Schnitzel Brothers

October 4th, 2022 Departs 9:30am Returns 5:00pm \$95

The Schnitzel Brothers featuring Frau Kartoffelpuffer! The Frau's welcome addition to our beloved and talented Schnitzels will make our October Fest very "unterhaltsam"!!! The Schnitzels have performed The October Fests in Germany! Enjoy all the flavors of an authentic Oktoberfest

Call Kathy at 203 891-9400 or email [KMWLeisure@gmail.com](mailto:KMWLeisure@gmail.com) for more information about our 2022 and future trips!



#### Winter Wonderettes: Thursday, November 17th, 2022 \$130.00

Departs 10:45am - Returns approximately 6:00pm

The Wonderettes are back! This seasonal celebration finds the girls entertaining at the annual Harper's Hardware Holiday Party. When Santa turns up missing, When Santa turns up missing, the girls use their talent and ingenuity to save the holiday party! Featuring 60s versions of holiday classics such as "Santa Claus is Comin' to Town", "Jingle Bell Rock" and "Winter Wonderland", the result is, of course, marvelous! This energetic and glittering holiday package is guaranteed to delight audiences of all ages. As always, lunch at the Blue Hound Cookery, is included

#### The Bushnell:

Mean Girls: Sunday, October 2nd, 2022 \$140.00

Departs 9:30am - Returns approximately 5:00pm Space limited!!!

A Musical Tribute to Frankie Valli & the Four Seasons!!!! The show consists of four young, hot Broadway veterans recreating the music and stories of the era. Delicious lunch with a family style menu: Garden Salad, Pasta, Chicken Parmesan, & Broiled Scrod Topping, Vegetable, Potato, Rolls, Dessert, Beverage.... Coffee and Donuts upon arrival!!!

In the Christmas Mood: Wednesday, December 7th, 2022 \$115.00

Departs 9:30am - Returns approximately 5:00pm Space limited, Call now!

The world-famous Glenn Miller Orchestra, the most sought-after swing band in the world. You will listen and dance to ..... Moonlight Serenade, Tuxedo Junction, String of Pearls, and Chattanooga Choo Choo and many more. Delicious lunch with family style menu: Garden Salad, Pasta, Roast Turkey and Baked Ham, Vegetable, Potato, Rolls, Dessert, Beverage

Getting To Know You

# The Lost Art Of Winking

Communication is kind of my gig. Most of our human communication is done in the written or verbal realm. However, to me the art of nonverbal communication is where true communicators earn their stripes.

Nonverbal communication is a deep and varied field. There is the handshake, for example. In spite of the recent pandemic, the handshake appears to have survived and continues to convey respectful and warm greetings to those we meet.

Another example is the wave. The wave is a bit more versatile than the handshake and conveys, among other things, greetings and good-byes depending on the context.

But I think the most subtle and most underappreciated of our nonverbal cues is the wink.

Lately it seems that winking has become a lost art. That's a shame. There is nothing like a wink to elegantly convey a personal connection between individuals. The thing that makes a wink so ingenious is the immediate and unspoken bridge it builds. It simultaneously com-

municates the message, "I know" and "me too." Truly a wink is about sharing.

As to its versatility, a wink can be used to send many messages. A wink can be friendly, sly, subtle, collegial, supportive, seductive, furtive, sympathetic, soothing or showy. A timely and well-applied wink can turn an innocuous statement into a joke, a dower frown into a smile, isolation and loneliness into support and collusion and a wary adversary into an ally. A wink produces intimacy, even between strangers.

It doesn't matter which eye you wink with, but masters can do it with either eye. That adds to the artful nature of the wink, as it allows for the message to be conveyed and received without calling attention to the gesture. Nothing is quite as intimate as a wink that no one else in the room except the winker and the recipient share; only they are aware of it.



DAVID CROW

I've met a few masters of winking. They all have a perfect sense of exactly when and where to apply a wink. They also all have an innate sense of how to shape the wink. They know when to give the long, slow, deep-eyed winks and when to shoot off the quick and stolen flutter wink. Expert winking requires intuition and empathy, and each wink has its time and place. It takes practice and intuition to know exactly where to put each wink. Truly a master of winking must be able to read the situation and those with whom they share a wink. A wink lets someone know you're right there with them in the moment. A master does it with confidence.

I remember spending time in front of a mirror learning to wink with both eyes. I only had to be on the receiving end of a few winks to know that I wanted to learn to do that. At first it was so I could wink back. But later, as I got

older, it was so I could be the one conveying the winks. I'm not a master yet, but may be one day.

I encourage you all to dust off your winks. Let's revive the lost art of winking. Practice a bit and keep them on hand for those moments when you stumble across someone, maybe a friend or maybe a stranger, who needs to know there is someone else out there who understands and is right there with them in the moment. You just might brighten someone's day, and in the process, make your own day a bit brighter.

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.*

## Orange Jehovah's Witnesses Resume Door-To-Door Ministry

Jehovah's Witnesses resumed their trademark door-to-door ministry on Sept. 1 when a two-and-a-half-year suspension of the work was officially lifted, just in time to begin a global campaign featuring a new interactive Bible study program.

The decision to resume their door-to-door ministry marks the complete restoration of all pre-pandemic in-person activities for the 1.3 million Jehovah's Witnesses in the 13,000 congregations in the US. Houses of worship were reopened April 1, witnessing in public places resumed May 31 and in-person conventions are once again being planned for 2023.

"We can't wait to knock on our first door and see how our neighbors are doing face to face," said Jim Merrifield, of North Haven, who, along with his wife Dana, is eagerly looking forward to resuming. "We have reached many people with letters and phone calls, but nothing can compare to visiting our neighbors in person."

The suspension of the public ministry was a proactive response by the organization to keep communities and congregants safe. The move was also unprecedented. Jehovah's Witnesses had been preaching from house to house without interruption for more than 100

years.

"We believe that the early decision to shut down all in-person activities for more than two years has saved many lives," said Robert Hendriks, US spokesperson for Jehovah's Witnesses. "We're now ready and eager to reconnect with our neighbors once again – person to person, face to face. It's not the only way that we preach, but it has historically been the most effective way to deliver our message of comfort and hope."

The move coincides with a global campaign to distribute a new interactive Bible study program available in hundreds

of languages at no cost. The program comes in the form of a book, online publication or as an embedded feature within the organization's free mobile application, JW Library. Released in late 2020, the interactive study platform combines text, video, illustrations and digital worksheets to help learners of all ages.

"This study program is designed to match the learning needs of the 21st century student," said Hendriks. "We're excited to begin sharing it with our neighbors as we return to making personal visits."

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# Orange Country Fair Brings Summer To A Close



Families came out to the High Plains Community Center fairgrounds for the annual Orange Country Fair during the weekend of Sept. 17 and 18, with activities that included tractor pulls, games and animal encounters. Photos by Lexi Crocco.

# Lions Club Hosts Comedy Night



The Orange Lions Club held its annual comedy night fundraiser on Aug. 27 at the pavilion outside High Plains Community Center in Orange. Photos by Lexi Crocco.



# ALEXANDRA JOY

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# PHOTOGRAPHY



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# Obituaries

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

**Frances Ellen Baye**, age 72, of Milford, life partner of James Killen, passed away on Tuesday, August 30th, 2022. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



**Josephine Brigantic**, age 90, of East Haven, beloved wife of the late Charles Brigantic, entered eternal rest on September 11, 2022. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



**Vickie Lynn Brotherton**, 50, of Milford, beloved wife of 21 years to Kyle Brotherton, passed away on August 23, 2022 after a brief illness. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Ronald Joseph Brown**, age 83, formerly of Milford and Orange, passed away September 4, 2022 in Crawfordsville, Indiana. (Sanders Funeral Care)



**Richard J. ("Dick") Burke**, 88, of Milford, beloved husband of the late Carol A. Burke, passed away peacefully on April 12, 2022. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Anthony Thomas Calendrillo**, 98, of Fairfield, beloved husband of Mabel (Swift) Calendrillo, passed away on September 5, 2022. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**David B. Casey**, 80, of Milford, passed away peacefully on Monday, September 12, 2022 with his family by his side. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Marion C. Chadderton**, 96, of Orange, beloved wife of the late Frank Chadderton, entered into eternal rest on September 10, 2022. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



On the evening of September 4th 2022, Heaven welcomed another Angel. The beautiful **Lynne Marie Connors** passed on and into the loving arms of Our Lord. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Michael Anthony Costello**, 77, of Stratford, beloved husband of Deborah Cataldo Costello, entered into eternal rest on Thursday, September 8, 2022. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Charles L. Davis Jr.**, 81, of Milford, beloved husband of Barbara Davis, passed away on September 5, 2022. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Harry Davis** of Milford, beloved husband of 50 years to Karen Carroll Davis, passed away on Wednesday, August 31, 2022, at Bridgeport Hospital. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



**Loretta Marie Paul Goldin** was born on May 19, 1967 and passed away on September 15, 2022 at age 55. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Deloris "Dee" Hurd**, age 97, went to be with her Heavenly Father on August 19, 2022, with her daughters Barbara and Sue by her side. (Riverview Funeral Home)



**Richard Jasiorkowski** was born on July 10, 1945 and passed away on September 6, 2022 at age 77. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



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# Obituaries

**Bruce S. Kuryla** of Milford, CT passed away on Sept. 1, 2022. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Robert Morgan** was born on April 20, 1934 and passed away on September 16, 2022 at age 88. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Kenneth John Pappun**, 59, of Milford, passed away on August 26, 2022 at his home. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Sharon M. Riegert**, 74, of Milford, beloved wife of Alfred Riegert, passed away on August 20, 2022 at CT Hospice. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Margaret C. (Martin) Lewis**, age 94 of Wilton, beloved wife of the late Gerard H. Lewis and Raymond J. Martin, died on Monday, September 5, 2022. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



**Dennis A. Murray**, 60, of Orange, beloved husband of Beth (Maurer) Murray, passed away on August 30, 2022. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Theodore "Ted" L. Pappas**, 73, of Milford, beloved husband of Dorcee-Ann (Smith) Pappas, passed away on August 21, 2022. (Cody-White Home)



**Bernadette Rissell**, 64, of Milford, beloved companion of Joseph Fairhurst, passed away on August 27, 2022. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Ann M. Lynch**, 67, of Milford, passed away peacefully at CT Hospice in Branford. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Ida Nicoletti**, age 91, of West Haven passed away on September 16, 2022. (West Haven Funeral Home)



Our father, **Gerard "Jerry" Patton**, 89, of Milford, passed away on Aug. 29, 2022 following a long illness. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Thomas Patrick Ryan**, 80, of Milford passed away peacefully surrounded by his family on September 11, 2022. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Joan A. McCarson**, 76, of Orange, beloved wife of the late William (Cookie) McCarson, Sr., passed away on September 12, 2022. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Mary Theresa O' Connor** passed away peacefully on September 15, 2022, she was born on November 3, 1945 in New Haven Connecticut. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Margaret "Peggy" (Neville) Perlis**, age 77 of Stratford and previously of Milford, beloved wife of the late Stanley Perlis, entered eternal rest on September 5, 2022. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



**David Anthony Samelwich**, 73, of Milford, beloved husband of Janet (Kelley) Samelwich, passed away peacefully on September 13, 2022. (Robert E. Shure Funeral Home)



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# Obituaries

**Pasquale Scirocco**, 97, left to be reunited with his late wife, Carmel, on Sept. 12, 2022. (West Haven Funeral Home)



**Wendy Wheaton**, 58, of West Haven passed away peacefully August 28th 2022. (Celantano Funeral Home)



It is with profound sadness we announce **Patricia Shanley** has entered Eternal Rest. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Bruce Edward Wiggins**, 72, formerly of Milford, Connecticut, passed away on August 18, 2022 after a long illness. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



**Lawrence J. Solkoske Jr.** was born on November 29, 1941 and passed away on September 15, 2022 at age 80. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



On Friday, September 9, 2022, **Elizabeth Frances Wilson**, of Enfield, CT, fondly known as Betsy, passed away peacefully at the age of 84.



**Paul Anthony Weiss**, known as Paulie to his family and friends, 69, of Port St. Lucie, FL passed away unexpectedly on Friday, August 26, 2022. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Doris Beck Zeid**, 93, beloved wife of the late Louis Zeid, passed away peacefully on September 5, 2022 at the Linden in Woodbridge, CT. (Robert E. Shure Funeral Home)



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