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January 12, 2023

Milford Honors Veterans With Wreaths



King's Highway Cemetery in Milford was the location of a ceremony on Dec. 17 for Wreaths Across America, honoring local veterans who have died by placing wreaths on their graves. Photo by Robert Creigh.

Orange TPZC Approves Pot Dispensary, With Conditions

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

The Orange Town Plan & Zoning Commission at its Jan. 3 meeting gave a tentative green light for a cannabis dispensary on the Boston Post Road – provided the applicant complies with a number of stipulations.

Southern Connecticut Wellness & Healing and parent company Green Thumb Industries had been before the commission since the middle of 2022 to get approval to move their existing operation from Milford to the location of a former bank at 175 Boston Post Rd. in Orange.

The town had placed a moratorium on pot dispensaries in 2021, shortly after the state legalized the sale of recreational marijuana. Green Thumb successfully convinced the commission to adopt a narrowly-crafted regulation change that would essentially allow one dispensary in town via special permit, limited to the

area along the Boston Post Road where the company would like to relocate.

Once the regulations had been changed, the company had to come back to the TPZC for approval for their specific business. At that point, it met with vociferous opposition from many residents – especially those in the neighborhood. Over several meetings, members of the public spoke out passionately, both for and against the plan.

A group of those who opposed the plan even filed intervening petitions on environmental grounds, arguing that the dispensary would contribute to things like increased air pollution.

By the Jan. 3 meeting, the public hearings had been closed and all that was left was for the TPZC to determine among themselves how to handle it.

They began by dispensing with the

Continued on page 2

Dworkin Dental Cuts Ribbon In Milford



The Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting on Dec. 14 for Dworkin Dental's new location at 321 Boston Post Rd. in Milford. From left: Ashley (kneeling down), Dr. Kristin Helms, Dr. Jay Dworkin, Dr. Olivia Dworkin, state Rep. Kathy Kennedy, Maureen Weed and Nicole Fournaris (kneeling down). Photo by Greg Geiger.

Gender, Diversity Continue To Rankle Amity Parents

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

The culture war issues that erupted at school boards across the country in the last few years have continued to roil the Amity community, as evidenced by a number of

public comments at the Dec. 12 Amity Board of Education meeting.

In 2022, it took three rounds of voting

Continued on page 2

Milford P&Z Mulls Updates To Accessory Dwellings

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

Milford officials in September voted to opt out of a new state law that would loosen restrictions on accessory dwelling units, but now the Planning & Zoning Board is attempting to update the city's regulations on its own.

The question of how to govern ADUs, which are sometimes called "in-law apartments," was spurred by a law passed by the state legislature in 2022 that allows people to construct the dwellings – attached to a house or freestanding – as a matter of

Continued on page 2

Thank You To Our Former Columnists



PRISCILLA SEARLES



MATT GALLAGHER

Thank you to Priscilla Searles for her service as Orange's town historian and lending her expertise to this newspaper. Our condolences to her family in this time of loss.

Thank you also to Matt Gallagher for his columns about personal finances.



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Dispensary (Continued From 1)

interveners' petitions. TPZC Chair Oscar Parente pointed out that some of these, such as the air quality claims, were outside the commission's jurisdiction.

"There's points they raised that we can't deal with anyway, even if we were so inclined," he said.

Beyond that, he said, the allegations had not been demonstrated with expert evidence. The commission members unanimously agreed and voted to deny the petitions.

The commission was much more split over the decision to approve Green Thumb's site plan, though.

Commissioner Kevin Cornell – who had opposed the original regulation to allow a dispensary in town at all – said that he had come around on some of the changes that Green Thumb had made to allay concerns by the neighbors. He particularly noted that closing off an entrance onto the dead-end Lindy Street where many of the opposing residents live and rerouting traffic onto the Boston Post Road was a major concession.

Commissioner Thomas Torrenti, who was one of the two "no" votes, said he was much more concerned that there would not be enough room for cars coming into the facility from the Boston Post Road to queue up without spilling out onto the busy route.

"All I did was simple arithmetic, and the numbers are so whacked out, there's no logic to it," he said.

"You may be right," Parente responded, "but there is a process. The applicant's traffic engineer put it through the process and drew conclusions. And then our

engineer – the one that was working for us – basically reached the same conclusions."

For Vice Chair Judy Smith, the biggest issue was that closing the Lindy Street exit would lead to a cascade of site plan changes, which she didn't feel comfortable approving sight-unseen.

Town Attorney Vincent Marino tried to assure Smith that any modifications would stand or fall based on the signoffs of other department heads – as they normally do prior to a site plan approval.

At one point near the end of the meeting, Smith interrupted Marino as he tried to describe a potential way the process with the town engineer would work.

"I would be more comfortable, and I appreciate your advice and guidance, but really the five of us should be discussing this," Smith said, referring to the five-member commission. She would be the other "no" vote.

Cornell, on the other hand, said that he saw that Green Thumb had conscientiously met all the relevant standards set in town regulations and couldn't find a defensible reason to deny their application.

"You just list them out and check them out. I hate to sound like a mechanic, but if I get to the end and that rear entrance is closed and I've checked all the boxes, I have to say yes."

Cornell made the motion to approve the site plan that passed. Among other conditions, the decision requires that rear access to Lindy Street be closed, that the relevant department heads approve the modified plans, that the applicant confirm the accuracy of the dimensions of the new plan, and that they provide a dumpster enclosure and a maintenance schedule for site drainage.

Amity (Continued From 1)

to approve the Amity district budget, which only passed with support from member towns Woodbridge and Bethany, as a majority of Orange voters rejected even the third proposal.

While it's impossible to say what exactly prompted voters to reject the earlier proposal, there was open opposition to the addition of a coach for diversity, equity and inclusion in the initial budget, with some detractors claiming such a position was a front for student indoctrination.

That position was removed from the regular budget and instead funded with grant money.

Those issues have not faded, but have continued to be hammered by a group of area residents, including during the BOE meeting.

Reena Seltzer of Woodbridge attacked the district over its use of DEI, saying that the district was wrong in saying that it is only trying to increase inclusion and the involvement of people of different backgrounds.

"It specifically means that students need to think of themselves entirely by visual, eternal fixed traits like race, gender and ethnicity, and also that their identity includes whether they're either privileged oppressors or marginalized oppressed," she claimed.

Parent Misty Barnes of Orange said that she had lost trust in the Amity BOE when a friend of hers showed her a screenshot her daughter took during her ninth grade health class that displayed what she claimed were "audacious, inappropriate and intrusive" questions about gender identity.

"A minor's gender preference or sexuality is no one's business," she said, arguing that the instructor should simply have provided the state-mandated material and made clear that people were available for further discussion if a student wanted.

Even as these voices have continued unabated, other parents and community members have also pushed back, supporting the Amity district's efforts.

James Stirling of Bethany, who had four daughters go through the Amity system, pointed out that the system's bullying criteria were similarly divisive when they were being developed some 20 years ago, with a number of residents claiming that anti-bullying efforts were a misallocation of resources.

"It turned out that our kids are more successful are not bullied," he said, and urged the board to follow its best judgement on what it thought was best for the student body.

Jennifer Jacquet of Bethany also made clear that she supported Amity teachers – and particularly health teachers.

"If the point of sex education is to help educate and protect kids about sex, it is imperative that education be inclusive of information regarding gender and queer sexuality," she said.

Jacquet also wondered aloud why the question was even before the board, given that the state allows parents to opt their children out of elements of sex education.

"It seems like something a parent could easily speak to their child's teacher about, and easily voice and discuss any concerns," she said.

Amity, for its part, has continued to push back against opposition to its policies through regular communications to district members.

In his December report, Amity BOE Chair Paul Davis noted for instance that DEI "is not a program that has specific activities or curriculum, it is a part of our Core Values System."

Those values are expressed through the district's value statements, which say, "We believe the district should nurture

a community of learners who embrace individual and cultural differences, valuing how differences enrich society," We believe that all learners should have access to the resources necessary to achieve their fullest educational potential with the full support of a community of leaders" and "We believe that learners must belong to and feel supported in their learning environment for them to thrive socially, emotionally, and academically."

ADUs (Continued From 1)

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.

The state allowed municipalities to opt out of the provisions, which Milford promptly did. Even as they did, though zoning officials and Mayor Ben Blake had argued that the city's regulations on ADUs were outdated and should also be revised.

The P&Z took its first stab at that at its Jan. 3 meeting, as it reviewed recommendations from a board subcommittee on several changes to the existing regulations.

Some of the most significant updates would allow the accessory units to generate income for the owner; allow the tenant of the units to be someone not related by blood to the owner; and that the accessory unit must be attached to the main residential structure.

David Sulkis, the city planner, read an extensive list of residents who had emailed the city in support of the new rules.

Blake was the first resident to speak as the public hearing on the rules opened. He said he didn't normally speak to the P&Z about individual plans or regulations before that body, but that he thought the changes they were considering were appropriate and balanced.

Resident Bruce Barrett also spoke in favor of the updates.

"This is the homeowner's right there, and they're renting part of their home to ease the burden on the community, provide them a little rent. This is a win-win," he said. "This is trusting the people in our community who own homes to rent extra space that they have to others."

Resident Joe Simoncek, however, expressed several concerns with the draft, including that it didn't contain provisions to require enough on-site parking and to prevent people from using the units as short-term rentals, such as Airbnb.

He also objected to the idea that Milford needed to increase its density.

"We're constantly having increased density. So there's building going on. There's opportunities to live here without taking all our single-family resident areas and making them even more dense," he said.

Sulkis later confirmed that Milford does not currently restrict the length of time for rentals, and that some people do already rent rooms in the city for only days at a time.

Resident Rachel Merva came equipped with visuals, including a map that showed all the nearby communities that currently allow ADUs to be rented by people other than blood relatives.

She argued that allowing the units would increase property values and therefore property tax income. She addressed several critiques of ADUs, such as the idea that such properties could suffer from absentee landlords or undue strain on city infrastructure.

"Overly restrictive accessory apartment regulations impinge on the personal right to modify private property as needed," she said, "and these restrictions may lead to unpermitted accessory apartments and a loss of tax revenue to the town."

The board held the issue open to allow members more time to review all the emails and other input received by the speakers and writers.

Adopt A Pet: Barney



Impound 57 "Barney" is a neutered male Labrador retriever mix. He is 2 years old and friendly. Barney can be adopted from Milford Animal Control, located at 664 East Broadway in Milford. For more information, call 203-783-3279. Photo courtesy of Milford Animal Control.

For Nature's Sake

Eco-Friendly Resolutions For The New Year

For those looking to set goals or create new habits, the new year can be the start of better caring for the planet that supports us all.

The three categories for action recommended below are chosen for their frequent appearance in advice lists from expert sources, but also for their relevance to environmental challenges in Connecticut.

1. Ditch plastic. Experts agree when it comes to plastic, we should all prioritize the first of the four "Rs" in "refuse, reduce, reuse and recycle." The excess plastic in today's world has led, among other things, to contaminated soil and water, air pollution, human exposure to dangerous toxins and macroscopic pollutants, and worsening climate change (plastic has been dubbed "the new coal"). I have written about this in a previous column (The Plastic That is All Around (and Inside) Us).

In their substantive online report about plastics and microplastics, the Connecticut-based research group Environment and Human Health adds a helpful list for individuals to reduce plastic use. The list includes advice to: a) choose reusable products over single use ones; b) select alternative materials to plastics, like glass, especially for storing food and microwaving; c) encourage others to use the four Rs through your social networks; d) bring small reusable mesh bags (like those sold at the Milford Point Audubon) to the grocery to hold produce; e) choose prod-

ucts packaged in non-plastic containers, from eggs to milk to dishwasher detergent; f) do not line trash cans or wastepaper baskets with plastic bags; and g) keep a reusable metal or glass water bottle – not plastic.

2. Quit idling. If someone were to print up a flyer with a list of toxins that pour out of the tailpipes of an idling vehicle – perhaps to hand to people sitting in parked cars with their engine running – the list would include nitrous oxides, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, fine particulate matter (pm2.5), and benzene (a carcinogen). A previous column here (No Time to Be Idle(ing)) highlighted facts like: an idling vehicle emits 20 times more pollution than one traveling at 30 miles per hour, and, ten seconds of idling uses more fuel than turning off the engine and restarting it.

For the sake of human health and to fight climate change, I recommend: a) following the Connecticut law that says cars and trucks must not idle for more than three minutes (there's an exception if they are in traffic or the temperature is below 20 degrees Fahrenheit); and b) inquiring whether your local PTA has an interest in obtaining no-idling signs, free to schools, from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. Another option is to organize a group to study the



PATRICIA HOUSER



Idle Free Toolkit for a Healthy School Environment from the Environmental Protection Agency's website. Children are more sensitive to air pollution because they breathe 50 percent more air per pound of body weight than adults.

3. Reduce food waste. As reported by the New York Times in a Jan. 1 story, "the average US household wastes nearly a third of the food it buys." That translates into wasted land, water and energy used in growing the food – taking a toll on economic and environmental health. When food is sent to rot in landfills, it releases methane, a greenhouse gas that is at least 28 times as potent at carbon dioxide. In fact, the excess air pollution (emissions) created at every stage by food ultimately discarded in the trash contributes more greenhouse gases to the atmosphere than even all the emissions caused by the airline industry, according to the Washington Post.

Among organizations encouraging individuals to pay attention to the issue, the US Food and Drug Administration has an article, "How to Cut Food Waste and Maintain Food Safety," which starts with advice to: a) be aware of how much food you throw away; b) don't buy more food than can be used before it spoils; and c) plan meals and use shopping lists.

Other experts emphasize the importance, for ending emissions from rotting food, of composting banana peels and coffee grounds, for instance, rather than sending them to landfills. The state DEEP website offers resources for any individual or school or community group willing to compost, including a factsheet titled, "Compost Has A-PEEL," and instructional videos and links to businesses and state programs that support composting.

Those who would like a slightly longer list of options for sustainable living will find an excellent resource on the website from Columbia University's Climate School titled "The 35 Easiest Ways to Reduce Your Carbon Footprint." A popular graphic presentation on the subject is "100 Things You Can Do to Help in the Climate Crisis: In Case You Need Help Getting Started," created by artist Sarah Lazarovich for YES Magazine. That depiction of a climate-friendly "to-do" list is available online but also displayed in poster form in the Milford City Hall, sponsored by the Milford Environmental Concerns Coalition.

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.

by Joseph Cole

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to handle or even address the situation

location on February 20.

In 1958, Lung-chu Chen... Dr. Peter Branden said. He will be one of several doctors working out of the 10,000 square foot space. He estimates between the group's rotating list of doctors and part and full-time support staff that the location

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Opinion & Editorial

Ponder This

Looking Upward And Beyond For The New Year

The mayhem that we all recently witnessed in our nation's capital, while the House of Representatives attempts to choose a majority leader, is disturbing and unsettling. That this spectacle is televised and transmitted in images for all the world to see should bring shame to decent people watching.

Those who are in agreement with the staged obstruction will sneer and that in itself seems a tragedy. The unbridled arrogance of moving an unendorsed leader into a former speaker's office prior to securing a vote of support on repetitive ballots is difficult to witness. The disrespect for the institutions that we all love and the potential harm to the sacred notion of democratic governance is appalling.

I have been sad, but have begun to see the worst of the 20 obstructionists not as villains but as ignoramuses. This realistic view has helped cushion my sadness. No thinking adult would act in such a toxic, disruptive manner seemingly without regard for outcome or collateral damage. Wasting collective resources of time, energy and goodwill

while recklessly in pursuit of personal gain seems disgraceful. I trust that others from all political persuasions share my concerns and I remain hopeful that reason will be reestablished.

Much has been written about House Speaker Kevin McCarthy's appeasement of the extremist members of the party in order to initiate a functioning government. These destructive members cannot be satisfied and should not be indulged. The very essence and existence of a functioning federal government are at stake.

And so I look elsewhere for peace and satisfaction in the New Year. Despite my admiration and appreciation of astrophysicists and the science of space, I have only a fundamental understanding of the basics. I was a youngster when JFK pointed our gaze and collective mission toward science and the stars. My education has served me well, but a generosity of religious studies in my prima-



ELLEN RUSSELL BEATTY

ry years may have compromised examination of earth science and astronomy. I consider myself a scientist by profession, but I lack a theoretical base about space, astronomy and the solar system.

"You mean galaxy, not solar system," my 6-year old grandson stated firmly but with kindness as he corrected his grandmother. In November 2022, images from NASA's James Webb Space Telescope discovered super planets

10 times the size of earth. Such super planets are not familiar to our solar system but apparently are not uncommon in the galaxy. Other discoveries from giant telescopes provide spectacular mages of millions of miles away from earth.

I will have to consult once again with my grandson as I learn more about extraordinary black holes and examine the beautiful, stunning photos of Neptune's rings. I also look forward to additional mind-expanding tours of astronomical science courtesy of Neil De-

Graw Tyson.

My plans for 2023 are to look outward, upward and onward. A recently published calendar of celestial events provides ample opportunity to gaze at eclipses, full moons and meteor showers with an unaided eye or simple telescope. The astronomical cycle brings an upcoming full or snow moon on Feb. 5. I will keep you posted as we all hope for peace and harmony in our troubled world.

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.

Letters to the Editor:

Send us your letters to the editor with no more than 350 words to editor@theorangetimes.com. Include your name and full address; only your name and town will be published. Letters may be edited for space and clarity.

A Child Is Born

To the Editor:

During advent season, more than any other time in the Christian calendar, the focus is on the coming birth of a baby that will change the world. "For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given" (Isaiah 9:6). Jesus willingly emptied himself of his glory and took on all the frailties and vulnerabilities of being born a human baby. In doing so our creator has placed a value on the unborn child that cannot be erased or denied no

matter how others try to redefine or marginalize what or who is human or legislate the right to kill our unborn children. Abortion is murder of the most helpless and innocent of his creation.

Pro-choice sounds so democratic, but it's really pro-death on all levels. During this season of great expectations I pray that Holy Spirit convict each of us on the value of each life whether born or unborn and deserves our protection. "And the government shall be upon His shoulder. His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end" (Isaiah 9:6-7).

Bonnie Pelaccia
Orange

Kindergarten Registration
Town of Orange

If your child is turning five on or before January 1, 2024 it is time to register for kindergarten!

Please register by February 28, 2023 on our website: www.oess.org - there may be multiple pop-ups so please click on the pop-up for "Kindergarten Registration"

ORANGE RESIDENTS NEED OUR HELP!

PLEASE DONATE TO THE ORANGE FUEL BANK

The Congregations of Orange Collaborative (COC) is seeking donations from their congregants to help Orange residents who are fuel insecure this winter. Please donate to the Orange Fuel Bank. Checks may be written to Treasurer, Town of Orange (in memo line put: fuel bank) and may be delivered or mailed to:

Community Services
525 Orange Center Road
Orange, CT 06477

Thanks from the COC:

Church of The Good Shepard Congregation Or Shalom Holy Infant Roman Catholic Church Orange Congregational Church	St. Barbara Greek Orthodox Church St. Joseph of Arimathea ANC Church Temple Emanuel Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
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For more information about the Fuel Bank or other community services, please call Community Services at (203) 891-4788

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Opinion & Editorial

A Personal Note



STATE REP. (D-114)
MARY WELANDER

I had prepared a regular column discussing the new session and the process of how an idea can become legislation, but in light of recent events I am changing it to share more personal information.

On Wednesday, Jan. 4, just a few hours after I stood to take the oath of office for my second term, I sat next to my beloved mother, Martha “Marti” Barrett, as she passed away after many years of health struggles. She was 71. She and my father, Steve, were together for almost 50 years. They raised four children and have 14 grandchildren. Mom was a teacher, principal and superintendent of a regional school district in Massachusetts. She served on the local board of education, was my Girl Scout leader, Sunday school teacher and my biggest fan. Mom was an excellent cook who hardly ever wrote any recipes down, loved to garden and always looked at the bright side.

My mom taught me that “Those to whom much is given, much is expected” and to “Always leave a room better than you found it.” She also taught me the importance of family, hard work and kindness.

Those principles guide me every day in my life, my family and my work. We were extremely close and I will miss her terribly.

Tragically, on Thursday, Jan. 5, I woke up to the news that my good friend and mentor, Rep. Quentin “Q” Williams, had died in a car crash just before 1 a.m. after his vehicle was struck by another traveling in the wrong direction. He was 39, an amazing person and legislator who was committed to making a difference in our state. I will miss his smile, his amazing hugs and the joy and optimism he carried. My heart goes out to his family as they struggle with this loss.

This time of year can be hard for so many already, and grief shows up in different ways. There are resources available; you can call 211 to find a counselor to speak with or bereavement support. If you need more immediate assistance, please call 988 to speak with someone who will help. If you know someone who is struggling, consider offering to help them find support. Often it is easier to accept help that is offered than asking for it directly.

Thank you for taking the time to read about my mom and my friend. They were gifts in my life and I will work to continue their legacies of making our communities better places.

Resolutions And Solutions



STATE REP. (R-119)
KATHY KENNEDY

Happy New Year! I hope that all your holiday celebrations encompassed the same peace and joy that I experienced with my children and family. Ringing in the new year comes with new ideas, new goals and sometimes new responsibilities. This year, as we prepare for the 2023 legislative session, it's time to maintain the right resolutions for more effective political solutions.

In the fall of 2022 my campaign goals reflected aspects of the “Contract with Connecticut” initiative, led by House Republican candidates across the state. At our pledge signing, I agreed to propose policies which would assure a more affordable way of life for our residents, safer communities and an emphasis on family values and local control. Now, following your appreciated and continued support, I look forward to having my legislative focus emphasize the foundational principles of our Contract with Connecticut.

The first tier is the most significant: the Affordable Connecticut Act. Between reducing the income tax rate on the middle class as well as fighting back against the unnecessarily high sales tax, gas tax, insurance premiums and utility costs, we can once again develop an economically viable and attractive state for new residents and small businesses. With the Highway Use Fee now in effect since Jan. 1, a focus on reducing costs across the board is essential for the future of our state.

The second aspect concerns better protection for our communities, extending from stricter penalties on specific crimes and felonies to active driver's education training on the effects of marijuana use while behind the wheel. Now more than ever, it is imperative to support our law enforcement and return respect to the investigation process, which ultimately secures victim's rights.

In association with community safety comes an increased legislative focus on the hardworking and supportive families and parents in our communities. Through our Families First initiative, we look forward to expanding parental influence in town boards of education and curriculum committees, as well as promoting more state scholarship opportunities and incentivizing residents with tax credits after donating to certain nonprofits that serve to make education more affordable in all parts of Connecticut.

Other pieces to our plan will include ways to make state government more accessible and the legislative process more transparent, as I believe every one of my constituents deserves to know how I am best upholding their interests. Additionally, rearranging authority to provide more local control concerning state curriculum, affordable housing and zoning issues is critical to permit more access to decisions at the state level.

I am excited to lead as ranking member of the Transportation Committee and in my duty to best represent your interests and concerns. The 2023 legislative session convened on Jan. 4 and can be viewed throughout the legislative cycle on YouTube via CT-N at youtube.com/watch?v=nSHbDCECKQM.

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

A New Legislative Year



STATE REP. (R-117)
CHARLES FERRARO

The 2023 legislative session began on Jan. 3 with opening day ceremonies at the state Capitol in Hartford. This was another checkpoint in the state government's return from stringent pandemic protocols, marking the first fully in-person opening day in three years.

I have heard from many friends and neighbors about growing cost-of-living concerns, especially regarding electricity and home heating, gas and groceries, as well as worries of public safety and general quality of life.

With the session underway, we are hard at work in legislative committees putting these issues on the front burner, organizing to make your voices heard in public hearings, and addressing your concerns head-on.

For the 2023-24 legislative term, I am proud to serve on the legislature's Energy & Technology, Human Services, and Veterans committees. Through our committee work, legislators are able to gain public input, expert analysis, rigorous debate and strict focus on important bills before they are voted on and become law.

On Jan. 1, a set of new laws took effect in Connecticut. I want to highlight some of those which I believe will be relevant to you and your families. While I did not support each of these proposals, it is important to stay informed on how Connecticut is shifting.

An Act Concerning A Highway Use Fee, or the “truck tax,” imposes a highway use tax on every “carrier” for operating on any highway (i.e., public road) in the state (Public Act No. 21-117).

An Act Concerning Solid Waste Management, or the “bottle bill,” expands the list of eligible containers and increases the bottle deposit rate from \$0.05 to \$0.10 (Public Act No. 21-58 [Sec 1]).

An Act Concerning Required Health Insurance Coverage for Breast and Ovarian Cancer Susceptibility Screening expands coverage requirements under certain commercial health insurance policies for specified procedures used to treat or prevent breast cancer or ovarian cancer (Public Act No. 22-90).

An Act Concerning Responsible and Equitable Regulation of Adult-Use Cannabis (Criminal Record Erasure) establishes a process to erase records of certain criminal convictions after a specified period following the person's most recent conviction. This provides for automatic erasure of certain convictions for possession of less than four ounces of cannabis or any quantity of non-narcotic or non-hallucinogenic drugs. Certain misdemeanors are subject to erasure seven years after the first conviction and certain felonies are subject to erasure 10 years after the first conviction. This law excludes both family violence crimes and nonviolent or violent sexual offenses requiring sex offender registration (Public Act No. 21-1 [Sec 9-10]).

New laws are typically effective on Jan. 1, July 1 and Oct. 1 throughout the calendar year. For a full list of laws effective Jan. 1 and to read more about how these will impact you, your families, your business or your community, visit: cga.ct.gov/asp/content/aeauto.asp.

Together, we can ensure that our community enjoys a safe, healthy and prosperous winter and holiday season. Please continue to reach out to me at Charles.Ferraro@housegop.ct.gov with your questions and concerns regarding state issues.

Taxes And Spending In 2023



THOMAS P.
HURLEY

Please welcome Fran Haigh, our new part-time tax clerk, to the office. Haigh comes to us from the Milford tax office with 15 years of experience and her Connecticut Municipal Tax Collector Committee tax certification rating. She is well qualified and will be a welcome addition to the Tax Collector's Office.

For the month of January only, the tax office windows will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. for cash and check payments. Avoid standing in line. For check payments, only use the express lane mail slot. If you want a receipt, supply a self-addressed stamped envelope along with Part B and Part C of your July tax bill.

We are working with the state Department of Aging and Disability's Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind in preparing braille bills for those needing this service. Individuals must contact the Tax Office to participate in the trial program at 203-891-4736. A special setup will be required in our office, so we are looking for candidates to try out this new service. We expect it to be available for the July 1 billing cycle.

Supplemental motor vehicle taxes went out in December. For those of you who didn't get a motor vehicle bill in July, you should have gotten one now. If your vehicle did not get a bill for 2021, there is a problem and you should contact the Tax Office and Assessor's Office. Please check your registration and make sure the DMV has the vehicle as active and currently registered. We have seen vehicles being driven with expired registrations.

The budget surplus issue will again be discussed by the Amity Board of Education on Jan. 9 at their next meeting. Hopefully, they will consider a different option for handling unexpected expenses for special needs students. Instead of budgeting a large dollar amount for a just-in-case expenditure, they should consider a cheaper alternative, such as putting aside \$50,000 for a referendum to cover costs not identified in the budget. This is preferable to the way the Amity budget has been constructed. The voters I am sure will approve funding to make up for any significant shortfall due to these unidentified special education students when the costs become known. This would immediately reduce the Amity budget request for 2023 and return requested funding to a more reasonable level.

A zero-based budget review should also be considered to identify areas that may have had incremental budget bloat sneak in over the last 20 years since it was last done. This will instill confidence in the Amity budget process. This process will allow a comparison to the current superintendent's budget due in January. I suspect that the results may surprise you on how well most of the current Amity budget is prepared.

But the most important reason for doing so is to assure the Amity community that what we are spending money on is what the district voters think we should be spending money on.

Thomas P. Hurley is the tax collector for Orange.

Getting To Know You

When In Doubt, Throw It Out

At the beginning of December, I cleaned out my office space. With that came a need to move furniture and files and office supplies out to somewhere else.

Moving is always stressful, for two main reasons. The first is always the sheer volume. You don't know how much stuff you've accumulated in one spot until you've got to pack it in boxes, stoop over and pick it all up. It is truly amazing what a person can squirrel away into a confined space over a long, uninterrupted span of time. I managed to amass an astounding pile of stuff in my office over the past 13 years, and moving it all meant picking it all up.

That leads to the second reason moving is stressful. With the realization that there is an enormous mountain of stuff to move comes an inevitable question: Is all of it worth picking up and moving to the new place? Once you allow yourself to ask that question, then the winnowing process has begun – whether you meant for it to begin or not.

In the beginning this winnowing process is pretty easy. The most obvious “don't move” items are easy to spot. For example, if it's been in a drawer for a decade, it's probably not necessary to pack it up, pick it up and move it. This

also applies to the “What the heck is that?” and the “Why did I keep that?” items found in all the nooks and crannies of the space you're leaving. These items are easily relegated to the landfill pile and don't really require a lot of thought.

Juxtaposed to that is the “must have it” pile. These are items that simply cannot be discarded and must be boxed up, picked up and moved to the new location. Again, this isn't a hard decision to make. These items are promptly sorted out to the side for the moving van.

The truly hard calls come with the items in between those two poles. For instance, what are you going to do with those coffee cups? You don't really need them at the new place, but they aren't damaged and still do the job of holding coffee very well. That leads to a consideration of the coffee maker and then the coffee filters and the sugar packets. Before you know it, you're so far down a rabbit hole that you can't see the light of day.

Then you run into the sentimental value objects. Just what will you do with the pile of



DAVID
CROW

birthday and holiday and thank you cards you have accumulated from your family, friends and clients over the years? It seems a shame to pitch them, as they are little reminders that people care about you. But exactly when was the last time you got them out and read them? Did you simply not read them because you might remember who it was that wished you a happy birthday and you failed to return the sentiment on their birthday? To

heave or to move? Which will it be?

These decisions can quickly become paralyzing, and if you add another person to the mix it can spiral into weird moments where one person is taking things out of the “landfill” pile and putting them in the “move” pile while the other is taking things out of the “move” pile and putting them in the “landfill” pile. Sentimental value, it seems, is a subjective measurement.

The only solution I have found (and the solution I recommend) is a piece of wisdom my uncle bestowed on me when I helped him clean out a shed once. He took everything out

of the shed and set aside a few items he definitely wanted. Then he went and got a bucket loader and unceremoniously piled the rest into the back of a dump truck, drove to the landfill and dumped it out without a second thought.

After that was done, he gave a firm nod and said, “When it doubt, throw it out.”

Words to move by.

I've decided to take a more, shall we say, affirmative approach to all the cards I receive from here on out. It is my newly considered and adopted policy that all cards of any kind will be promptly opened, admired, appreciated and then deposited in the recycle bin. I encourage you all to do the same. We'll put that one down as a lesson learned.

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.

Wine Talk

Josh Cellars Wines For The New Year

One of the most popular and recognizable lines of wines are those produced by Josh Cellars.

The winemaker is Joseph Carr, and he made wine as a tribute to his dad, Josh. His winery is located in Hopland, California. What started his great success is his Cabernet Sauvignon. It is a juicy wine that is easy drinking and has lots of blackberry flavor. It matches well with a variety of foods. It was initially marketed to restaurants and is now available in stores. The wine is modestly priced at around \$15 and sometimes less. It is a great match with beef, lasagna, burgers and anything blue cheese.

In the Josh line there are two wines that are aged in bourbon barrels for two months. Carr does this with his Cabernet and a Zinfandel, and he calls them reserve wines. They are both bold and full-bodied wines. The Cabernet has notes of cedar and caramel. It is supposed to have a subtle hint of bourbon, which I did not get from the wine. The Zinfandel is rich and spicy, with big blackberry

and vanilla flavors. Both wines have big noses with aromas of dark chocolate and vanilla. The Zinfandel has more tannins, but it finishes smoothly. Either of these big, full reds would do very well with barbecue and beef dishes.

Josh Cellars also produces a nicely balanced Pinot Noir. It is imbued with lots of cherry and strawberry flavors and aromas and a hint of toasted oak. This is a great wine to pair with roasted turkey. It is the ultimate wine when serving brie or other soft cheeses. It is supposed to go well with sautéed mushrooms.

Josh Cellars has what is referred to as the North Coast Collection. This includes a reserve Cabernet and a Chardonnay. The grapes come from the north coast of California, which includes Sonoma, Lake and Mendocino counties. The cool coastal climate brings out finesse and lots of acidity. The North Coast Cabernet is fruit forward with



RAYMOND
SPAZIANI

dark cherry and hazelnut flavors. The Chardonnay is clean with lots of crispness. This is a single fermentation wine without the butter of the secondary fermented Chards. It is light and lemony with some peach and vanilla. The vanilla comes from oak, so even though it is not a secondary fermented wine there is some oak aging.

Carr makes Sauvignon Blanc that is a light, bright, crisp wine with a nice clean finish. There are hints of lemon and kiwi, and the nose has some green apple scents. This is what I call a great deck wine. They claim it is especially well suited for summertime sipping in the sun. They call it sunshine in a glass. I think that is great marketing. It goes well with light and simple foods, seafood and grilled chicken.

Josh Cellars also makes a nice Cabernet from the Paso Robles region. This is an

area where cool morning fog and afternoon sun combine to make a richly textured and well-balanced wine. This wine is a big wine with rich tannins and a long smooth finish. It's a great combination when serving lamb.

In general, the Josh Cellars wines are well made and moderately priced. They are all easy drinking wines and not too complex. In this new year, try some of the different varieties and different locations of wine made by Josh Cellars. It is not just Cabernet Sauvignon anymore.

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.

On Our Land

Seeking Out The Ice

I enjoy winter. It is not my favorite season, but I like the cold and snow, including shoveling. The silhouettes of leafless trees provide new vantages of Orange's hilly landscape, and with the growing season behind us, the levels of creeks, rivers and ponds all start to rise again.

The only things I dislike are the short days and the sun not rising very high in the sky. The low sun angle makes driving a challenge in the morning or evening; not to mention that it highlights the dust on surfaces in the house and neglected window washing. It also means that snow and ice will linger on the shady side of the house for days to weeks after the rest of the yard has thawed.

Low sun angles play a big part in NASA's ongoing efforts to again land men and women on the Moon. The main goal of the Artemis/Orion missions is to establish a habitable operating station on the Moon. This station is almost certainly to be sited near the Moon's south pole, close to features cryptically identified as permanently shaded regions, or PSRs. The PSRs are thought to contain the essential resource needed to support a long-term lunar station – ice.

We always see the same side of the Moon

from Earth because it has an asymmetric structure, with the denser nearside gravitationally locked to face Earth. The lunar far side is also exposed to sunlight as the Moon orbits each month around Earth, but the Moon's poles only ever receive sunlight at glancing low angles.

PSRs are deep meteorite impact craters near the poles where sunlight never reaches. They are also extremely cold, with temperatures of about -400 degrees Fahrenheit. Even in the absence of any significant atmosphere, this is frigid compared to a temperature of about 250 degrees Fahrenheit near the Moon's equator when it is sunlit. The Apollo landing sites were all near the sunny lunar “tropics,” but the Artemis missions will explore some of the coldest parts of the Moon in search of ice.

Temperature in the vacuum of space is hard to comprehend for those of us who are Earthbound, but water ice and other ices of gases like ammonia and methane have accumulated in PSRs because they are so



DAN
MAY

incredibly cold and permanently dark. The ices were delivered by impacts of meteorites and comets that struck the Moon, and their presence was confirmed by lunar satellite observations in the past decade. Among other scientific curiosities, ices in PSRs may be billions of years old and contain a record of the early solar system.

Water ice is a valuable resource for a habitable lunar station. In addition to consumption and cleaning needs, water is a component in materials required to construct shelters to protect life-supporting habitats from radiation and micrometeorites. It also can be broken down through the process of electrolysis to produce hydrogen and oxygen gas, both of which are fuel or energy sources. Ammonia would be useful to capture as well, as it could yield essential nitrogen fertilizer to grow crops in lunar greenhouses.

The first Artemis mission was completed successfully in December, with the unmanned Orion spacecraft splashing down in the Pacific after a test flight orbiting the Moon. The next mission will send astro-

nauts into lunar orbit, with the goal of the third mission to land on the surface near the Moon's south pole. This next generation of lunar astronauts is charged with finding, mining, analyzing and processing ices from the PSRs to begin the process of building a permanent station.

I am a geologist by training and started out in mining, so the challenge is personally fascinating. But even though I like winter, prospecting in the dark in a spacesuit at -400 degrees gives pause to 66-year-old me. These will be some of NASA's most challenging tasks, but as the adage goes, “if we can do it there, we can do it anywhere.”

NASA's overall mission is to push technology and creative ingenuity beyond convention. Having people establish artificial living environments on the Moon will highlight perceptions of Earth's natural environments and perhaps provide improved approaches to manage Earthly resources.

Dan May is a geologist and professor of environmental science at the University of New Haven. He can be contacted at dmay@newhaven.edu.

Homelessness

Good Fortune, Paid Forward To Relieve Misfortune

The holiday season highlights the immense gratitude we all have for our blessings and good fortunes. It is endearing, really. As the nights grow long and we gather inside, we all see the humanity in one another a little more easily. With that, we are more likely to give, share and offer more to the social causes that touch us the most.

The Beth-El Center is a humble beneficiary of these efforts, with hundreds of donors working to raise the materials and funds necessary to feed and shelter hundreds of community members in the greater Milford area. The good fortune of some, paid forward to relieve this misfortune of others.

Without these philanthropic relationships, many of the nonprofits relied upon in our communities would fall short, facing dire issues such as the inability to make payroll for essential frontline staff, the unavailability of funds to make much-needed repairs to their facilities and ultimately the failure to meet their mis-

sions with dignity and respect.

According to Giving USA 2022: The Annual Report on Philanthropy, charitable giving in the US has increased annually, starting at approximately \$25 billion in 1973 (nearly \$125 billion today adjusted for inflation) and totaling \$484.85 billion in 2021, which represented an approximately 4 percent increase from 2020.

The sheer scope of these gifts is overwhelming, while also bringing many questions to light. How can we continue to face many of the same social issues as we did nearly four decades ago when private support toward solutions has nearly quadrupled? Should it be up to the philanthropic community to support and drive the social safety net?

It continues to be a misconception that government dollars meet the needs of nonprofits,



JENNIFER PARADIS

particularly those in emergency response such as the Beth-El Center. Although the federal government spent nearly \$51 billion in response to homelessness in 2021, as this trickles into communities the gap becomes clearer. Less than 50 percent of funding for the Beth-El Center is connected to state or federal support, leaving a gap of nearly \$700,000 in critical funds needed to serve our community to be filled by the generous support of individuals – those with good fortune and thoughtful hearts.

Rightsizing government support of social services – funding the operations of core programs at 100 percent – would allow philanthropic contributions to act with their original intentions. Focused on innovation, these gifts could stretch beyond maintaining the status quo and focus on ending homelessness and hunger. This realignment of funding alloca-

tions and societal values would pay off exponentially the more consistently we would be able to maintain these critical investments year over year.

A Denver study found that ending homelessness saves about \$15,000 per person of taxpayer dollars, mostly due to the financial impact these vulnerable individuals have on our health care systems. Simply put, ending homelessness saves money.

As our holidays gift exchanges lead into our New Year’s resolutions, let us think about how we can ensure our important gifts to nonprofits can realize their greatest potential. In addition to giving, understand how you can also help advocate for system funding that is not reliant on, but rather supportive of, the innovation your good fortune can create.

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

Case Memorial To Feature Talk On British Aristocracy

The Friends of the Case Memorial Library will feature a program for the consummate anglophile on Monday, Jan. 30 at 7 p.m. via Zoom. Claire Evans will present “From Uptown Girls to Downton Abbey: How American Gilded Age Heiresses Saved the British Aristocracy.”

The end of the 19th century saw many British aristocratic families struggling to maintain their lifestyle. They never considered getting a job, so they looked for another solution. That’s when American heiresses crossed the pond.

Evans will recount the tales of some of the famously loaded young Americans who infused bank accounts of many stately homes, including close relatives

of Winston Churchill and Princess Diana.

Evans became interested in all things British when she and her mother watched British shows on PBS. She studied in London, met her future Brit husband in Peoria, Illinois, worked for a large cultural training company as a cultural and relocation consultant for people moving between the US and the UK, primarily, and continues to educate Americans about UK history and culture with her talks.

Reservations are required and may be made online at casememoriallibrary.org or by phone at 203-891-2170. The Zoom link will be sent via email the afternoon of the program.

Orange Community Women Presenting Bubble Show

Orange Community Women will present “Casey Carle’s Bubble Mania” on Saturday, Jan. 14, at 1 p.m. at High Plains Community Center.

Bubble Mania is a highly-acclaimed show combining the science of bubbles with theatrical showmanship and comedy. Its website describes the show as an “extremely unique program combining high energy entertainment with artistic achievement. Bubble Mania is loaded with visual comedy, quick wit, big band swing music and the untamed, often unbelievable qualities and beauty of spherical liquids.”

Tickets are \$5 in advance or \$7 at the door, children under 1 are free. Contact Michelle Bailey for tickets at fbailey1@optonline.net

or 203-605-4383, or any OCW member.

Proceeds from the show will be used to fund various OCW projects, including awarding scholarships to Amity students, donating children’s books to the Case Memorial library, collecting for veterans, organizing activities for the Tracy Bunch (a group of special needs adults sponsored by Orange Community Services), visiting and working with the seniors at Silverbrook Estates, donating holiday food baskets and gift cards to Orange Community Services, as well as contributing to the Orange Volunteer Fire Department, Food2Kids Orange, CT Food Bank and Days for Girls Orange.

For more information on OCW, contact Orangecommunityw@gmail.com.

PEACE OF MIND



“We had just put together a two-year plan for our future when we both ended up in the hospital. From the hospital, I went into rehab and Earle went to stay with our son. We never went back home – Maplewood was already top on our list so we moved into Vistas. Our children took care of everything for us – they sold our house, moved our furniture and made the whole process so easy. We have always been proud of our kids but this proved to us that we had the best kids in the world. It was a big change, leaving friends and our house of 66 years but the residents and staff made sure we got involved and helped us meet new friends. Now, it is home to us. We love that the community is nestled in the woods, away from the main road. The garden has been a lifesaver for Earle. During the summer he was tending to it several times a day. We both love the outdoor concerts and live entertainment. As an avid reader, I love the book club. We suggest you give a community a try. We were apprehensive at first but this has proved to be a great choice for us.”

— *Jeanne*, on behalf of herself and husband, *Earle*, Residents

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The Rotary Club of Orange

Rotary And The Kindness Business

I was watching television the other night, and when the program ended, it was immediately followed by a show on CBS called "The Gift: Kindness Goes Viral with Steve Harman." I was intrigued by the title, so I kept watching.

In this show, Harman opens with a monologue about acts of kindness and the way one gesture can have a profound effect on a single individual or have a rippling effect that touches the lives of dozens, hundreds and even thousands of lives. Some of the good deeds covered in the program were done by people who themselves had been the beneficiaries of a single act of kindness by a stranger. These people were so inspired by what had been done for them, purely out of the goodness of someone's heart, that they decided to build on that one act and pay it forward to as many people as they could.

One young woman, a hair stylist, had fallen very ill as a young child and was hospitalized for an extended period of time, connected to various machines that kept her alive as a cure was worked on. An extended stay in a hospital can take a toll on one's appearance, which can lead to depression. A hair stylist who knew of the little girl's situation went to the hospital and gave her the best haircut she had ever had, lifting her spirits and helping her to maintain an upbeat attitude as she endured her treatments.

That little girl was cured. Inspired by this one act, she learned the profession of hair-dressing and soon made it her mission to go



ROGER TAUSIG

out onto the streets of her city with a chair and all of her tools to provide free haircuts to homeless and underprivileged people wherever she found them. She touches many lives in a unique and beautiful way by giving of herself.

There are several more stories covered in the program, but this column is about Rotary, so in the space I have left I must share why I am writing about this show.

I have belonged to the Rotary Club of Orange for about eight years. Over that time I have witnessed or been a part of many events and projects that demonstrate a key characteristic of Rotary: kindness. At all levels – local, regional, national and international – Rotarians demonstrate the desire and drive to perform acts of kindness for people

in need everywhere, with no expectation of a reward other than the satisfaction of having fed the hungry, educated children, cured the sick and served those less fortunate than ourselves.

At a time when there is so much suffering and need everywhere, it has been extremely gratifying to be part of an organization that tackles small, medium and large projects, all with a singular motivation: to perform acts of kindness.

If you feel motivated to roll up your sleeves and join us in the kindness business, please feel free to visit our website at rotarycluboforange.org and select the "Join Rotary" tab, where you will find the electronic version of our membership application which can be submitted online once completed.

To learn more about Rotary, please give me a call at 203-605-5151.

Your Health

New Year's Resolutions

Happy New Year! I hope you enjoyed your holidays and now feel rejuvenated for the upcoming year.

This is a time when we reflect on what we have accomplished in the past year and plan our journey for the next. My new year's resolution is continuing to focus on physical, mental and spiritual well-being. We need to be better than the previous year.

Several studies that have been published in reputable journals indicate that physical activity and eating healthy during daily life are all associated with lower mortality. For those who don't hit the gym regularly, small amounts of physical activity are beneficial in our daily routines. These intense bursts of everyday activity can include climbing stairs

or brisk walking.

The US Department of Health and Human Services recommends at least 2.5 hours a week of moderate-intensity activity like brisk walking. One report noted that in 2020 about three quarters of adults aged 18 or older weren't active enough.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, mental health includes our emotional, psychological and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others and make healthy choices.

Mental health is important at every stage



DR. AMIR MOHAMMAD

of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood. According to the National Health Service in the UK, you can take the following steps to improve your mental well-being:

1. Connect with other people by sharing positive experiences and supporting others.
2. Learn new skill sets.
3. Incorporate acts of giving and kindness.

Finally, let's focus on spiritual well-being. Spiritual well-being relates to our sense of life-meaning and purpose. It can include our connection to culture, community, spirituality and/or religiosity and includes beliefs,

values, mental models and ethics.

According to the Australian National University, finding and maintaining purpose and meaning is an essential human endeavor. One can achieve this by indulging in some deep thinking, prayer or meditation. Be kind and respectful.

I find helping others in need to be the most rewarding. My goal will be to read more about world history, different religions and learn conversational Spanish and Arabic.

Wishing you all a safe, healthy and happy 2023.

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



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Travel Matters

A Trip Around Southern South America

Live from Chile: we are traveling with an intrepid group on a Patagonia cruise that has been highly anticipated – even more so because it has been rescheduled three times since the start of the pandemic.

Around the New Year, we arrived in Santiago, the capital of Chile, on New Year's Eve. We celebrated in style at the W Hotel Santiago where we enjoyed complimentary champagne and breathtaking views of the Andes from the rooftop bar and pool. Santiago being located south of the equator, this is the start of their summer months, so it was swimming weather in the low 80s.

We took a funicular to the top of Mt. San Cristobal on New Year's Day and feasted on enchiladas and mate – a peach and barley flavored drink popular in both Chile and Argentina.

We drove to the Valparaiso cruise port via the Casablanca Valley, famous for their

white wines, where we stopped at Casas del Bosques, a small winery with annual production of 2 million bottles of wine. Our tasting of four wines produced two favorites among our group: Sauvignon Blanc and Syrah. Chile is also famous for Carmenere – a unique red grape that is blended with the Merlot grape. We highly recommend their restaurant for lunch at this winery, called Tannino (tannin in Spanish).

Our sail away on our Celebrity ship was beautiful as we departed from Valparaiso – a city built into the hills – and the more modern Vina Del Mar with its glittery lights.

First stop on our cruise: Puerto Montt, Chile. Gateway to northern Patagonia and the Chilean Lake District.



KAREN QUINN-PANZER

Dominated by the beautiful Osorno Volcano – which looks rather like Mt. Fuji – you can see this snow-capped volcano from miles around Lake Llanquihue. It has a commanding presence. There are many different active excursions in this area, including hiking and rafting.

We took a tour of Parque Nacional Vicente Pérez Rosales, where we enjoyed a walk through one of the major parks in northern Patagonia. With the blue glacial waters of Petrihue Rapids, the most perfect views of two major volcanos, and then a stop for lunch at a German-owned restaurant near Puerto Varas, this was truly a perfect day. There are also seven temperate rainforests in this area that tourists can hike. Or you can climb the summit of Osorno Volcano, though

this is recommended only for very advanced hikers.

This area was settled by Germans in the 1880s, and the town is charming with its chalet style architecture.

Today we are sailing through the Chilean fjords and then the Strait of Magellan tomorrow. Next stop is Punta Arenas, the southernmost stop in Chile on our way to Ushuaia, Argentina. Our journey then continues on to Montevideo, Uruguay and ends in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Cruises in this area are restricted to January through March due to the wind and weather conditions in the Straits of Magellan and Cape Horn.

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

Recovering

The Solution Lies In Awareness

As we begin a new year, many people (including myself) make resolutions about behaviors and actions to reconcile, start, stop or modify. It's as if our linear concept of time will, with a new year upon us, make us more resolute, disciplined or self-aware. In most cases, we have been well aware of these aspirations to modified behavior. Yet there grows a comfort in herd mentality: if we all march to behavioral modification, maybe this year it will stick.

Sadly, most self-will and good intentions go flat after time, and we repeat our modeled behavior again.

The alcoholic/addict, I can tell you, makes these types of resolutions possibly 300 times a year. Intentions to stop, manifested through pain, shame, guilt or sadness are as sincere in effort 298 as they were in effort one. The problem is the rigorous self-honesty and awareness of exactly what I am and how I behave. The problem is thinking our self-will alone will change a trajectory of

inertia in behavior that has been reinforced via dopamine release as pain aversion. In total transparency, we lie to ourselves, to the extent of our illness, our fears that drive us to self-soothe in survival mode and what we really let the world see or know of us.

In a terrible recent turn of events, I have witnessed how families also are affected by this conundrum of self-honesty and awareness. The addict/alcoholic is a great manipulator of expression. How can we not be manipulative in hiding our rampant abusive ways and mental health ailments while we drug our reality away? Yet it comes as a shock to many family members who love the addict/alcoholic when the extent of the abuse is revealed.

We blind ourselves to the romanticism that things are not as bad as we may think for those we love who show consistent de-



ROB CRAFT

structive behavior via their drug/alcohol abuse. We hope to not believe that a loved one is suffering from an ailment that causes such a destructive pattern. We bind ourselves to hope that things are not as bad as they are. The disease takes hostages (being the family/friends of the sick individual) in ways many cannot articulate, unless you are one of those hostages.

The reality, if we are rigorously honest, is we saw the behaviors, omissions of truth, and deception well before the catastrophic event took place for the sick person. We just did not want to accept the truth in fear of what it meant.

The solution for us all is a self awareness of what we are. We are people who have joy, pain, excitement, abandonment, elation, depression, anxiety, love and a spectrum of other emotions. How we process these emotions – or do not – is the determinant in many

ways of our course of maladaptive behavior.

Be observant of those you love, most specifically yourself. Be observant of our loved ones, friends, family, colleagues and strangers. The signals are all around us; we just need to be aware. How do we become more acutely aware? Be vulnerable and share what is going on in your life and, for God's sake, listen to those who need to share the most.

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.



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Real Talk: You Ask, A Pro Answers

A Look Back, A Look Forward

It has been a long couple of years, but thankfully the market is steadily mending itself. The real estate buyer pool has been traumatized by a panicking, uphill market. The seller pool feels the pressure of where to go if they sell. Both sides are eager to get back on track this year.

We know one thing for sure: Milford and Orange are always ripe. But now, more than ever, there is a deep appreciation for our location. For one, the traffic through our state is busy, and families want to spend as much time together as they can. If they cannot work from home, then the destinations to and from work need to be limited. Convenience is key, and it not just employment transportation. Shopping, doctors and even vacations are all

around us. We are a thriving corner of Connecticut.

The people of this state are finally bragging about staying here. As they look back on those who were leaving our state in the past and see the new statistics of businesses and buyers relocating our way, there is a true appreciation for Connecticut. The government response to issues, great education and a general love for Connecticut pave the way for 2023.

I predict home sales as stable and thriving this year. We offer a beautiful country and shoreline combination, with access to the train or plane within minutes of our major



BARBARA LEHRER

highways.

We took a backseat to New York in the past, but the reality is that jobs, family, open land and opportunities for friends and services with like ideas has our state shining at the top.

We have an obligation to be aware of what is available to us in the future. Grants for home repairs are available. Anyone in need of supplemental income in order to maintain their property has only to reach out, and there is a process for assistance at the state level. Maintaining your property is so vital for your future, as it is the foundation of most homeowners' wealth.

Not only is your own property's value at stake, but so is your neighbors' around you, as price support is instrumental in determining your home's worth.

Make this year the time to finish those projects and invest in your property's value. Whether it is a variety of small upgrades and repairs or a large investment, be aware that we warrant special attention in our area. Thank goodness we live in such an exceptional location in an outstanding state where our property values will live on for years to come.

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

Milford-Orange Probate Court

Review Your Estate Plan In The New Year

The New Year is a good time to review your estate plan or to start thinking about putting one in place. If you have a will, you should review it periodically to make sure it still makes sense and still matches your wishes. For example, an old will may leave money or assets to someone you no longer want to receive it. It may appoint an executor (the person or entity who manages the estate) who has passed away, moved out of state or is otherwise no longer the best person for the role.

There are generally two ways to change your will. You can revoke your current will and make another one if you want to start over. If you only want to change parts of your will, you can modify your will by properly executing a codicil. A codicil is a written document that supplements or modifies

an existing will.

If you do not have a will or estate plan, the new year is a good time to determine if a will or other estate planning tool, such as a trust, is appropriate. If you die without a will, your assets get distributed in accordance with state statute. Therefore, a will may give you more flexibility to distribute your assets.

A will may also provide other benefits. A will allows you to appoint an executor of your choosing, waive bond and bypass court approval for certain transactions.

Below is a list of events that may necessitate a change to your current estate plan:

- the birth of child



BEN GETTINGER

- a child, heir or beneficiary reaching the age of majority
- receiving a large sum of money
- incurring a large debt or liability
- a death in the family
- a divorce in the family
- a falling out with a family member, heir or beneficiary
- the marriage of an adult child, heir or beneficiary
- the expectation of the need for state or federal financial assistance or programs by you, a child, heir or beneficiary

Below is a list of how your current estate plan may need to be changed:

- your remarriage.

Below is a list of how your current estate plan may need to be changed:

- making your first will
- revoking your current will
- modifying your current will
- establishing a trust
- adding, deleting or changing the beneficiaries to your will or trust that has yet to take effect
- changing your executor or naming a successor executor.
- adding, deleting or changing trustees to a trust that has yet to take effect
- checking in with your estate planning professional to provide any updates and review your estate planning documents for potential changes.

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

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The Garden Spot

To Feed Or Not To Feed

Now that the black bears are hibernating (or should be), it's time to put our bird feeders back out. According to the US Fish and Wildlife Service, feeding wild birds (or any wild animals) is a double-edged sword. Although I just love to see our common winter birds at my feeders and berried shrubs, we need to be aware of "the big three" negatives related to feeders: disease, predation and collision.

Shared surfaces on the feeders may expose birds to bacteria such as E. coli or salmonella. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology suggests cleaning your feeder at least once every two weeks to reduce disease risk. Newer models that come apart easily can be cleaned in the dishwasher. Older ones can be cleaned by pouring a weak bleach solution of no more than one part bleach to nine parts water through them. Sweep up any old, moldy and discarded seeds under your feeders.

Keep an eye on the birds at your feeder. If any look sickly, remove your feeder until those birds no longer visit.

Predation, especially by cats, is the largest anthropogenic (human-related) cause of bird death. Cats kill more than 2.5 billion birds a year in the US and Canada. So if cats visit your yard, rethink having a feeder. You'll want to have shrubs or grasses near the feeder for the birds to nestle in to, but it should be far enough and high enough from the ground that cats can't reach the feeder from the sheltered area. Also remember to do that sweeping up of old seed, since the remnants will attract predators.

For birds, glass windows are worse than invisible. By reflecting foliage or sky, they look like places to fly into. Up to about 1



PAT DRAY

billion birds die from window strikes in the US each year.

There are two main types of window collisions: daytime and nighttime. In daylight, birds crash into windows because they see reflections of vegetation or see through the glass to potted plants or vegetation on the other side. At night, nocturnal migrants (including most songbirds) crash because they fly into lighted windows.

As counterintuitive as it seems, move your feeder to within three feet of reflective windows to reduce or eliminate reflection. Windows 15 to 30 feet from a feeder pose the greatest hazard to birds. Covering those windows with decals or screening does work, but you need to put down a grid no larger than two inches by four inches for it to be effective.

If you must leave floodlights on at night, point the bulbs downward. Leave blinds slanted open during the day so that they create a grid – and close them at night.

Remember that the birds will also need a readily available source of fresh water. You can purchase a heater for your birdbath so that the water doesn't freeze. Or you can just replenish the water on a daily basis. Never, ever put antifreeze in the water to keep it from freezing.

If you follow these simple tips you should be enjoying birds all winter long.

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

Here's To Your Health

New Year, New Level

The new year has been ushered in and we have been given a clean slate.

I am not a believer in New Year's resolutions, as most throw in the towel by February if not sooner. I suggest people set a goal and only one goal. Certainly, there may be variables that go along with that particular goal. However, if you keep things simple you are more likely to achieve your goal.

Goals like getting healthier, losing 10 pounds, starting a new hobby, being on time or drinking more water are simple, rather than get buff for the beach, running a half marathon, losing 50 pounds or quitting sweets all together. The key to success is starting small, staying steady and taking things one day at a time. Exercise, good nutrition, hydration, proper sleep and stress management should be your foundation. If you find one of those is an area that you struggle with, start there.

Get some type of exercise in every day, whether it be walking, a bike ride, 10 minutes of stretching or core training. It all counts, but I would strongly encourage you to keep your workouts diversified. Different types of workouts provide different benefits. Cardio has benefits to your heart, whereas Pilates benefits your core and spine. Yoga strengthens muscles and reduces stress, whereas weight training adds lean muscle

mass to your body. All of these are important, so try not to get in a rut of doing the same exercise routine over and over.

For example, I do high intensity interval training Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday I do full body weight training. And on Sunday I take yoga. However, it's not necessary to workout seven days a week. You would greatly benefit from a three-day exercise routine as well. Starting small, slow and steady, again wins the race.

I would also suggest that you find something you enjoy doing regarding your workouts – maybe taking some dance classes or a spin class. If you're not enjoying your workouts, you won't be motivated to continue them. Exercise does not need to be excruciating, elaborative or super intense to be effective. Less can be more, despite popular belief. So be creative.

As we age, our foundation of exercise, nutrition, hydration and sleep need to change with us. What you do in your 20s is not necessarily going to be the same as what you do in your 30s, 40s and 50s. Adaptation is



MICHELE TENNEY

definitely required. Knowing your weakness is actually a strength in helping you reach your fitness goals.

As a nutritionist, I will always emphasize healthy eating first and foremost as your main goal. However, I do realize there are other ways of eating to help you reach your fitness goals. I have always told my clients to ask themselves one question before putting food into their mouths: Is it going to help me or hurt me? It's a valid question

that will help jumpstart thinking about food rather than just consuming food out of boredom, stress or hunger pangs.

I will say this to the \$97 billion year industry: diets have the word "die" in them. They are not sustainable. They may work temporarily with a boomerang effect of weight loss with weight gain and potentially add more than you lost. Avoid them at all costs. They do not have your health in mind.

I do support healthy carb cycling and high protein, low fat meal plans that are created by a nutritionist or dietician who has taken your health history and given you a physical assessment.

These last two years have been challeng-

ing on so many levels, physically, emotionally, financially and spiritually. Our stress levels have been on overdrive because of it. The best thing any of us can do is reduce our stress. Stress will add weight to your body without changing your eating habits. It causes so much damage to our bodies mentally and physically. We need to be intentional about listening to our bodies, but also combating stress that fatigues us and keeps us from pursuing wellness.

Let this year be your best year ever. Agree with yourself that you are worth every bit of effort you put into living a healthy life, not just for those who love you but because you love yourself. We all have setbacks, and life can certainly give us blows to the gut. But the key is to never surrender to them. Sometimes we get derailed, but never lay down and be defeated. We are stronger in numbers, so reach out if you're feeling isolated and alone. Love is the greatest gift we have been given. 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 Hmgbrd3@gmail.com.

Kennedy Attends Swearing In, Receives Committee Assignments

State Rep. Kathy Kennedy (R-119) was officially sworn in at the opening-day ceremonies of the 2023 legislative session on Jan. 4, when she also received her legislative committee assignments and ranking member appointments.

Kennedy was appointed ranking member on the Transportation Committee and will also be serving on the Appropriations Committee, Education Committee and Public Health Committee. The role of a ranking member is to serve as the leader of the minority party in committee meetings and collaborate with committee leadership in proposing bills and legislation.

"I am so happy to see so many new and familiar faces in-person at for the

first day of session," Kennedy said. "My goals for this term include taking on the challenges of being ranking member of the Transportation Committee and fostering relationships with the new members on both sides of the aisle. With this, I look forward to being an example representative for the hardworking residents and families of Milford and Orange, while emphasizing policy that provides the long-term infrastructure and transportation solutions we deserve."

The 2023 legislative session runs until June 7. Resources for how to track bills, follow the legislative process and mark vote tallies can be found at the General Assembly's website, cga.ct.gov.



State Rep. Kathy Kennedy, center in red, attends the Jan. 4 opening day ceremonies at the state Capitol in Hartford. Contributed photo.

Programs Coming To Milford Public Library

Decluttering to Start Your New Year: Online Author Talk with Dana K. White

Start your new year by learning to become better organized and clutter-free with Dana K. White, creator of the podcast and blog, A Slob Comes Clean, as she imparts tips from her books *Organizing for the Rest of Us* and *Decluttering at the Speed of Life*. White is a bestselling author and a decluttering expert. Tuesday, Jan. 17 at 2 p.m. Register at libraryc.org/milfordpubliclibrary/21874.

Shoreline Jazz Quintet: A Tribute to Thelonious Monk

Hear live music and learn the history of the improvisational jazz great Thelonious Monk. The Shoreline Jazz Quintet features Mike Bimonte on drums, Deepak Cyril D'Souza on saxophone, Rich Meyers on vibraphone, Steve Roane on acoustic base and Steve Wood on electric guitar. Saturday, Jan. 21 at 2 p.m.

Tax-Efficient Retirement Class

Michael Mezheritskiy of Milestone Asset

Management Group will host an event for pre-retirees and retirees who are transitioning from accumulation to distribution of assets and have accumulated at least \$300,000 in tax-deferred assets. To pre-register with Milestone AMG, there is an optional sign-up page at <http://bit.ly/RetClass>. For questions, email Diana Preece at dprece@milfordct.gov. Wednesday, Jan. 25 at 6:30 p.m.

The Ruby and Calvin Fletcher African American History Museum

This is the first museum in Connecticut dedicated solely to telling of the struggles and triumphs of African Americans throughout history. In honor of Black History Month, Jeffrey Fletcher will bring the museum to the library. Museum artifacts will be on hand for audience members to view. This program is intended for those in grade six through adult. For questions, email Danielle Valenzano at dvalenzano@milfordct.gov. Thursday, Feb. 2 at 7 p.m.

Foodie Foursome

Latin Cuisine And Mojito Bar Livens Things In Orange

Have you been looking for a lively atmosphere and a sophisticated restaurant experience, a world-class Latino cuisine? Brothers Melvin and Wagner Lopez have been the hands-on owners of Ola Restaurant in Orange since 2007. They have mastered nuevo Latino cuisine – a splashy, exuberant culinary form of celebrating the Latin heritage and spirit.

Ola Restaurant features a variety of Latin cuisines reflecting Cuban, Columbian, Puerto Rican, Mexican and Spanish dishes.

The strip mall exterior on Route 1 may fool you. However, just drive around back and find an inviting entrance, private outdoor patio area, and a Miami-style dining room with two separate areas, a full wrap-around bar, and a private back room for groups and occasions.

There was a great feeling of family and welcoming demeanor from the staff. Attentive service, a tempting menu, absolutely delicious food and libations was a welcome treat for me, Cindy and friends John and Christine. Every bite and sip was an eruption of flavor – all with balanced compositions of flavors.

We began our gastronomic adventure with several signature cocktails. Their drinks feature fresh squeezed and blended fruits and creative takes on classic Latin flavors. We had four different samplings of drinks, including the mango passion sunrise (with mango and dark rum, amaretto, fresh lime, passion fruit and pomegranate juice), a classic margarita and Ola's incredible rose sangria (with red

wine, brandy, orange juice, peach schnapps, pineapple juice, apples and oranges). Our last tasting from the bar was a mojito made with light rum, cachaca rum, fresh mint, lime juice and mango. Each drink was artfully crafted and, as Christine put it, "exploding with flavor."

This was a culinary journey that reminded me of some of the world-class Latin restaurants I have been to in Florida and California. They offer a collection of tapas and entrees, placing their personal twists on traditional dishes. Ola's attention to the decor is reflected in the dramatic presentation of the food.

We started off with their tableside prepared guacamole. Made with a classic mixing tool, a molcajete (mortar and pestle), it was delectable and a great combination of smooth and chunky textures. It was served with fresh-made garlic plantain and corn chips. Next up were the chicken empanadas. They were crispy on the shell and full of flavor inside. They were topped with a drizzle of cilantro crème fraiche and served with a mango slaw.

Their version of a Caesar salad was a refreshing change. The chopped romaine was where the similarities ended to the traditional dish. The addition of cubes of fresh farmer's cheese, diced sweet plantain and a country style Caesar dressing made this a wonderful setup for one of our favorites on the menu: the ceviche de camaron. Served in a deep margarita glass was an abundance of perfect-



STEVE COOPER

ly cooked and chilled shrimp with a tasty, finely diced, citrus-tomato-cilantro-lime-red onion salsa. The ceviche is worth the price of admission.

Instead of a classic paella to start our entrée excursion, we asked for a vegetarian version. It was a culinary vision and taste experience. A center beam of caramelized red onion on top of sautéed mushrooms and other veggies was constructed to support a volcanic shaped structure built using roasted red peppers, asparagus, roasted carrots and drizzled with a balsamic style vinaigrette. It was topped off with a beautiful fresh iris.

Next up was the tierra skirt steak, grilled and served with coconut, maduros-scallion, rice and a sun-dried tomato, rosemary and roasted garlic chimichurri. The beef was tender and juicy and the rice and chimichurri the perfect accompaniment.

Our third choice was the campo – an achiote marinated (slightly smoky with hints of cinnamon and nutmeg) free-range chicken charbroiled with Caribbean coconut rice and beans, grilled cebolines (chives or green onion) and charred tomato salsa. The chicken was spatchcocked for a perfectly even cooking. After grilling, the pieces were separated, providing the perfect chicken that was moist and flavorful along with the perfect accompaniments.

Our final selection was the ahi ahi, a grilled tuna steak that was moist and flaky. It was

plated over a compilation of artichoke hearts, asparagus, cherry tomatoes and white beans with an albariño and saffron reduction.

The evening concluded with three classic desserts, all reflecting Latin culture and full of texture, flavor and luxuriousness. The churros, in their simplicity, were some of the best I have ever had. They were served with ice cream, fresh whipped cream, fresh strawberries and blackberries with dulce de leche, which literally means "candy made from milk." They were followed by the guava tres leches cake with a layer of guava flavor topped with fresh whipped cream, sliced strawberries, a sprinkling of coconut and mounds of fruit compote on the sides. Last was a beautifully plated flan with a tasty sauce, red wine reduction and dried figs and topped with a sliced strawberry.

The quality of this restaurant is right there at the top for the Milford-Orange area. The restaurant is also vegan friendly, with items available that are not on the menu. Be sure to ask.

Ola Restaurant is located at 350 Boston Post Rd. For reservations call 203-795-0561. They are open Tuesday through Sunday for lunch and dinner.

Steve Cooper is a local, national and international award-winning photographer, culinary influencer and executive director of the Milford Performance Center. Contact him at 203-723-3672.

Orange Board of Finance

Connecticut, Local Budgets Face A Challenging 2023

As we put 2022 in the rear view mirror, Connecticut is in the best fiscal shape in over two decades. But is it sustainable?

Connecticut finished fiscal year 2021 with a \$4.3 billion surplus and with a projected surplus of \$1.3 billion in fiscal year 2022 driven by a strong stock market, surging state income and business tax receipts. The state has positioned itself to finally be on strong financial footing.

Connecticut has also taken the right steps to manage its long-term financial obligations, including paying down close to \$6 billion in pension debt and at the same time building up the rainy day fund to \$3.3 billion.

Based on market performance in 2022, the question becomes: is it enough? This past year saw some of the worst financial results since 2008 with the S&P 500 down 19 percent and the Dow Jones down 8.8 percent. The 10-year treasury, which influences everything from mortgage rates to student debt, hit a high of 4.25 percent in late October (the highest since 1991) from a low of 1.5 percent in 2021. The Federal Reserve increased rates seven times from 0.25 percent to 4.5 percent, with another expected rate increase of 0.25 basis points in late January.

As the market volatility continues into 2023, Connecticut now prepares to face a new challenge preparing for the impact of major losses within stocks, state income and tax receipts. These are major revenue components within the budget, and Connecticut is already projecting budget deficits in 2024 and 2025.

Compared to states like Illinois and New Jersey, Connecticut has been proactive in its commitment to structural budget balances and addressing the state's long-term debt. These debts include bond debt, pension and other postemployment benefit liabilities. The cost of serving pen-



KEVIN McNABOLA

sion debts will continue to weigh on Connecticut in the near future due to the size of the burdens.

However, Connecticut has started the process of paying down on its obligations and is better positioned than most states. The forecast for 2023, with continued inflationary pressure on energy prices and commodity prices, will further dampen finan-

cial performance and expectations at both the state and local levels. As the housing market cools off, we can expect to see lower conveyance tax revenues for local municipalities. An average of 18 percent lost in asset portfolios within city pensions will increase the annual required contributions, creating additional budgetary pressures.

The importance of proper budgeting for state and local finance managers will play a critical role this year because state and local revenues will most certainly have to be adjusted to reflect the fiscal realities and budgetary pressures that lie ahead in 2023 and 2024.

Here in Orange, the Board of Finance for the 2023-24 budget will also have to factor in the loss of \$700,000 in revenue from Amity High School that had been budgeted within several prior budgets based on significant surpluses within the Amity High School budget. On the expense side of the budget, we can expect to see increases in health care and pension costs, along with higher employee wage increases, which are driven primarily by short supply and higher demand for a skilled labor force.

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

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Insuring Your Future

Your ZIP Code Doesn't Matter And Other Insurance Myths

It seems like the television is filled with ads for various types of insurance. Whether it's home, auto, health or life, every ad uses misleading questions to make you pick up the phone. Once you do that, they have you and will keep you on the phone – or worse, bombard you with “follow up” calls.

Here are five of the most common myths that insurance companies employ:

1. “We save you money by bundling home and auto insurance.” Most agents know to do that and will automatically quote both insurances together. It does often, but not always, cost less. The ads that use this approach are for one insurance company. An insurance agency represents many companies and will “shop” around for the best price and coverage.

2. “You can get money back in your Social Security check – call today and give

us your ZIP code.” The reason they want your ZIP code is that the programs that provide extra help, such as covering your Medicare B premium, are administered by each state and the income eligibility guidelines will differ. To qualify for help with the Medicare B premium in Connecticut, the adjusted gross income must be below \$2,616 per month for an individual and below \$3,525 per month for a married couple. This is a great savings for those on a moderate income. However, a relatively small percentage of people qualify. Once they have you on the phone, the company will attempt to sell another type of policy. If at first they don't succeed, they will call again and again and again.



TRISH PEARSON

3. “You may be missing out on free dental coverage, glasses, gym memberships, groceries and more.” All Medicare Advantage plans in Connecticut offer these benefits. They are not all the same, but they are not unique to one company, as these ads imply. An independent agent can research plans offered by various companies that include these additional benefits. The health and drug coverage is the most important and should satisfy your needs. Added benefits are secondary.

4. “Sell your life insurance policy – even term policies and use the money to pay for your grandchildren's college.” Whole life insurance policies will build “equity” over time. If canceled, the insured will receive

some money back. Term policies do not have any value other than the death benefit. They are for a specific period, generally 15-30 years. Once that term expires, the current rate is not guaranteed and the policy has no value. Again, the goal is for you to pick up the phone and call. They will try to sell a different policy or have you purchase the policy with equity at a discounted rate.

Consider all the above as “come-ons,” as in, “Oh, come on, this has to be too good to be true.” The good news is that many of the ads will stop after March 31. Until then, hit the mute button and finish your Wordle.

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

Just Floored

Looks For The Year From Moods To Materials

The trends that are set by designers and manufacturers set the tone for how we decorate and style our homes from textures, accessories, building materials and colors. In 2023 the trends that are being set are all about new moods. Most of the moods tend to revolve around a spa-like sense of serenity, or a fun decorative pattern to boost joy. This past year has been difficult for all of us, and the trends are gearing toward a happy feeling for our homes.

We are craving a better outlook, and part of achieving that is to condition our brains to think more positively, which you can do by surrounding yourself with things that make you feel happy. There is a general move towards sophistication, but it's a more relaxed take than ever before. The feeling of luxury remains very important, but designing a space that you feel is approachable too – a space you can walk around barefoot and not feel worried about.

People still want their spaces to feel grand, but might turn the volume up in the

living room with some wow factors to the design, where the materials and textures are less formal, more edgy, more comfortable. This totally reflects what's happening generally, as people are finding they can be smart without a tie or high heels.

Top trends for design and flooring in 2023 include golden tones like shimmering sunsets, pleasantly warm and with a touch of pure luxe. This can be accomplished with a golden backplash, hardware, fabrics or wallpaper. Geometric shapes are being used in all aspect of tile, carpet and area rugs.

Furniture designers are bringing people back together again by creating convivial seating. Creating an in-person conversation, this concept is to sit separately, but with the feeling they are still next to each other. The design is set so you don't need to turn your head at all. The materials are



ANNAMARIE AMORE

gearing toward matte black lacquered frames and boldly blue upholstery.

Fabrics are turning into show pieces: curtains with contemporary trims, bold colors, tassels and finishing touches. Lighting has transformed to using only white lamps and sconces, removing color completely. Bold borders on wallpaper and decorative patterns with unexpected splashes of color and shapes are in fashion.

Gwyneth Paltrow debuted her home spa to the world earlier this year. Designers have been thinking of new ways to fold this feeling into the décor: the materials, the textures, the return of the outdoor shower for an invigorating blast first thing in the morning when you start your day. Bathroom trends are moving toward that feeling of an open-air lifestyle on the walls, inside and out.

Area rugs have taken a big change in lay-

outs and designs. The shapes were always square, oval, rectangular. Now the shapes have edges, designs, triangles and more with bold colors, curvy designs, geometric or angular. It's an out-of-the-box approach.

Cork flooring made a tremendous comeback in 2022. The forecast for 2023 will be more colors instead of the traditional orange cork tiles. Cork is eco-friendly and has natural thermal properties, which means it is great for heat insulation and can be a much cheaper alternative to underfloor heating.

These are only a few of the trends for 2023. Designers are making sure all materials have a clean, crisp, natural feel to them as well as durability for a lifetime of use in your home.

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

Health & Wellness Resolutions Fair Coming

The Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce Health and Wellness Council will be hosting a Health & Wellness Resolutions Fair on Saturday, Jan. 21 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m in the center court of the CT Post Mall in Milford.

The fair will feature practitioners and

vendors from across the Milford region, with booths featuring a variety of healthy ways to help people keep their New Year's resolutions.

The center court is located in the mall between the main entrances of Macys and Boscov's.

MPC Donates To Or Shalom Men's Club



The Milford Performance Center donated a \$600 check on Dec. 13 to the Congregation Or Shalom Men's Club. From left: Men's Club member John Kelman, MPC Executive Director Steve Cooper and Men's Club member Mitch Goldblatt. Photo courtesy of the Milford Performance Center.

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Crossing The Waters Near City Hall

By Marilyn May

In the early 1900s, the citizen-run Village Improvement Association saw to it that all the rundown mills and factories on both sides of the North Street Pond and the Duck Pond were demolished. The result was public, park-like areas. Years later, however, a lot more about the project, especially along the North Street Pond, was revealed. It seems “public” did not include everyone.

In 1986, the Park River Historic District (which extends from the back of City Hall north to the Boston Post Road) submitted a report on that area while seeking recognition on the National Register of Historic Places.

The original nomination document states: “Substandard houses on the island in the river, where many of Milford’s 16 Black families lived in the nineteenth century, were also torn down” during the VIA project.

The “land on a river” was called common land where some people lived and worked. Sometime after the French and Indian War (1754-1763), Henry Gabrielle, a Frenchman from Canada, settled in Milford. His son lived on an island in the Wepawaug River near the waterfall just before King’s Bridge (now the Maple Street Bridge). He had a sabbath-day house, also called a noon-day house. Another resident, a blacksmith, named Ezekiel Bradley, put up a one-and-a-half-story building about 1800. He had a shop on the east side of the island. As late as 1900, the land was referred to as Bradley’s Island, even though the first residents were Black families. The VIA had everything demolished, and the island later became part of the east bank of the river.

After passing under the Maple Street Bridge, the river glides by older houses, the First Baptist Church on the east side and the First Church of Christ, Congregational on the west. Along that stretch, the view is limited often by a canopy of leafy trees just before the river flows under the 1640 Meeting House Bridge.

Then the river widens into a lagoon to reveal the most iconic view in Milford. Night and day the back of City Hall is reflected in the dammed-up water of the Wepawaug. The mallard ducks and geese float along like ballet dancers, and in the early days one could hear the sounds of progress coming from the mills and factories, all competing for river-front space. In fact, the earliest settlers called it the Mill River.

In winters, the Duck Pond froze, and ice skating enthusiasts spent hours there gliding, falling, spinning, laughing and not minding at all what the thermometer read. Some nights in the 1950s, the Milford Fire Department sprayed water over the ice to make it smooth for the next day. A floodlight was also installed one winter. It was during those days that the cable across the river was installed to stop any wobbly skater from going over the falls.

Next comes what was once called the Mill Dam. Just beyond the falls, the swift waters have shaped two small islands, one reachable by a short footbridge that connects to a tranquil, mid-town oasis where the sound of falling water was the only sound heard. Sometimes on a sweltering day, the wind would lift a spray of cool and refreshing water from the falls.

There have been at least two rustic footbridges there to one of the islands, and probably more that have been washed away by floods. Today’s footbridge and background is a popular place for wedding photos.

An article in the November 1899 Connecticut Magazine adds another bit of information on what happened near the falls. “On the west side of Jefferson Bridge...the Baptists used to hold their immersions.” The Baptists had a church about where the City Hall is today. (That congregation was not part of today’s First Baptist Church.)

Next is the Jefferson Bridge that changed

over time as transportation changed. Bridges were built at that location in 1802, 1837, 1878, 1898 and 1935. The first was a wooden span built in 1802 during the administration of President Thomas Jefferson, and that name has been used for all five.

A second wooden bridge was built there in 1837, but wooden bridges did not last that long. Something else was needed.

In 1878, the King Iron Bridge Co. built the third bridge made of stone that had a brick roadway.

Time moved on, and the weight and speed of transports increased. The trolleys were coming.

In 1898, the Milford Street Railway Company wanted to lay tracks through Milford. The bridge just built 20 years earlier had to go. A wider, stronger iron bridge to accommodate trolleys was built by the Frank R. Long Co.

Eventually, trolleys were phased out. Then the heavy, faster buses were coming. The State Highway Commission proposed another new Jefferson Bridge. At a 1933 special town meeting it was agreed to have a new bridge if the citizens were allowed to have a say in its design. They asked that it be of stone construction and harmonious to its New England setting.

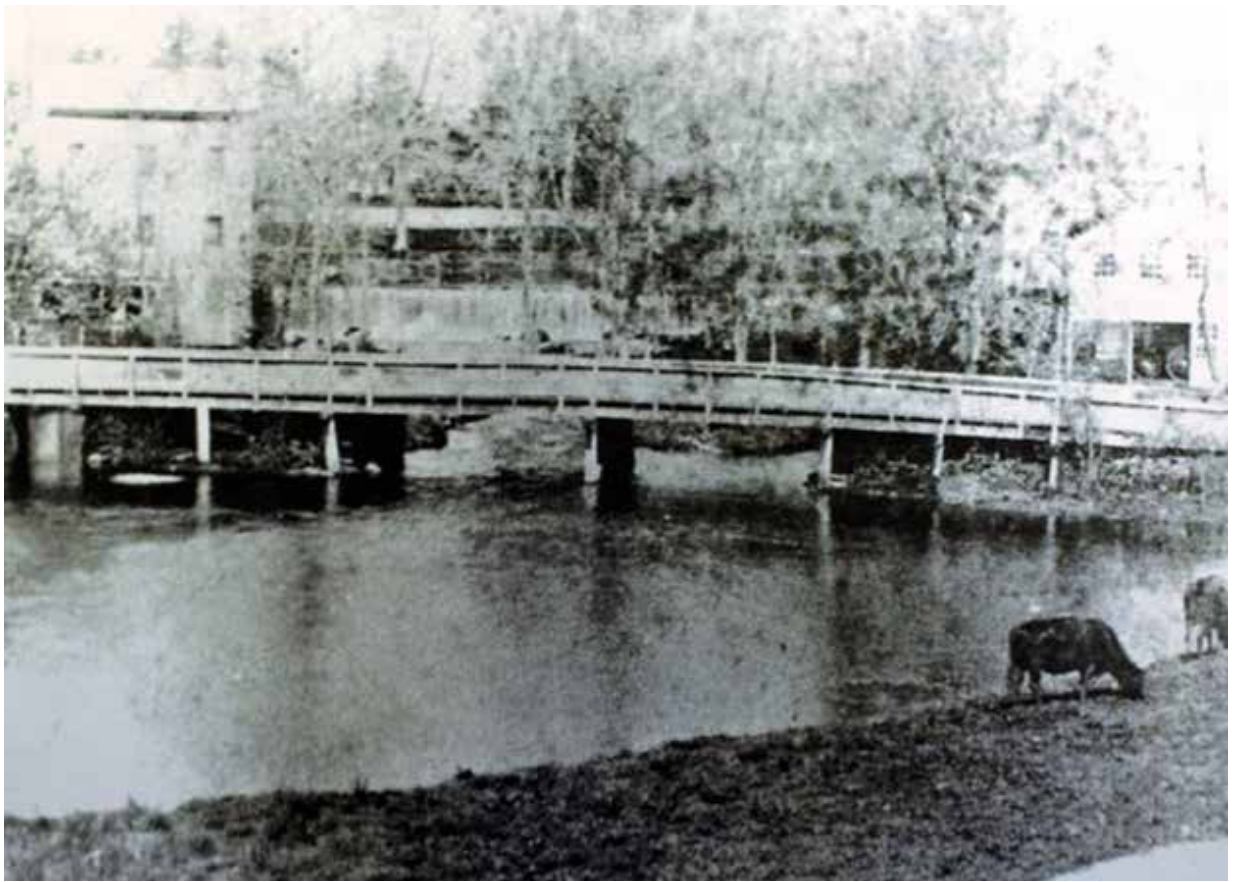
They also had in mind that it would be a fitting memorial for the 300th anniversary of Milford, even though it would be finished years before the 1939 tercentenary. A short two years after its proposal, and after dozens of meetings to pick the design, construction began in May of 1935 and was completed that August. Sometime later, plant boxes of the same stone as the bridge were added.

A 1937 paper called “Rivers and Bridges of Milford” by a Mrs. Frederick Smith notes that the river past the Jefferson Bridge and below the Prospect Street area was dredged. More than “3,000 cubic feet of silt and material have been taken out and deposited on the Broad Street Green.” Although there is no more information on that, it makes sense, because the western most end of the Green (and extending all the way to the harbor) was another town swamp area that needed fill.

Finally, on Aug. 25, 1939, during the tercentenary ceremonies the bridge and an added memorial monument were dedicated.

On the northeast end of the span, a granite pedestal designed by Walter J. Skinner, Jr. was dedicated to Connecticut’s three governors who were from Milford: Robert Treat, Jonathan Law and Charles Hobby Pond.

However, there was a no-



Cattle graze along the Wepawaug River just below the Jefferson Bridge. There was a wooden bridge here in 1802 and a second wooden bridge in 1837. At the left is the Davidson Mill just below the falls and at the right is a blacksmith shop run by Chas. J. Morgan. Photo courtesy of the Daniel E. Moger Photo Collection.

tice about the dedication in the August 1939 Milford Citizen tercentenary edition. It reads: “the ceremonies will be at the northeast end of what will be called Governors Bridge.” Another article called it the Town Hall Bridge. It sounds like not everyone got the memo on the bridge’s name.

Perhaps in this Land of Steady Habits, people thought: why change the name after 137 years? For some, continuing to use Jefferson’s name made sense, because the current Town/City Hall was patterned after

Jefferson’s Monticello home.

This fifth Jefferson Bridge has four-foot sidewalks. The views from both sides of the bridge make this a place to see a never-ending current that slowly pulls the Wepawaug to the end of its journey.

The river, however, still has more work to do.

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

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Sports

Teddy Hague: A Baseball Life

Adapt or die is a phrase made popular by Billy Beane. Beane, the general manager of the dirt-poor Oakland Athletics, did not have close to the same resources of any Major League Baseball franchises. Facing these headwinds, he had to constantly innovate and discover novel ways to compete in an unfair game. Teddy Hague, the former star outfielder for Amity and Yale, followed this mantra, constantly adapting throughout his baseball career after enduring unexpected circumstances.

Hague's first few seasons in the Amity program were unremarkable. Hague and his twin brother Andy – who later would become one of the most accomplished hitters in Amity baseball history – weren't that physical, but were only on the junior high taxi squad in seventh grade for the first few weeks of the season before being promoted to full time players.

"We both grew a little later," Hague said. "We initially only dressed for home games in our seventh grade season."

While undersized, both Teddy and Andy worked relentlessly in developing their baseball skills. They were members of the charter Connecticut Gators team.

"The Gators was at first a middle school program," Hague said. "It was very developmentally focused. We practiced every day for five weeks that first summer and went to three or four tournaments."

Hague also benefitted from having a twin who was equally obsessed with baseball and would be willing to play catch or go hit at a moment's notice. Andy, famous throughout the entire Amity campus for his laid back attitude, kept Teddy playing loose.

"Being around Andy made me a better player," Hague said. "He made me better at dealing with failure."

Hague entered high school as a two-way player, but pitcher was his primary position. As a freshman, he pitched on the junior varsity team but only hit on the freshman team. He struggled mightily for the entire season on the mound and it took a mental toll on him.

"It is a recurring theme," Hague said. "Coaches will see a left-handed kid with a decent arm and they'll think pitching. I was always a pitcher first at Amity. That's how it worked out. Coaches had vision of what they wanted but they let me pursue a career as a hitter too."

Hague made his varsity pitching debut as a sophomore and even was the winning pitcher in the SCC title game, striking out four hitters through five innings in a 14-6 win over Fairfield Prep.

"Relative to the grade I was in, I pitched well as a sophomore," Hague said. "I was the number three starter as a sophomore and junior and the number three or four starter as a senior. I really plateaued as a pitcher right away. I was 78 to 81 miles per hour as a sophomore and I never threw any harder."

Hague also developed control issues and endured many high pitch count innings, which led to very short outings. Hague was recruited to Yale as a two-way player, but Yale, like Amity, saw immense po-

tential on the mound and wanted to primarily develop Hague as a pitcher. Yale Manager John Stuper went to Rochford Field to watch Hague start against Hamden in the summer of 2017 when Hague was pitching for the Orange American Legion Baseball team. Hague couldn't make it through three innings, which led to friction with his future Yale team and Assistant Coach Tucker Frawley.

"Tucker called me after the game not happy and rightfully so," Hague said.

Hague's hitting stats were good in high school, but they were inflated by bunt hits. On the 26-1 2016 Amity team which finished in the top 25 in the country, Hague batted second after Chris Winkel broke his hamate bone and missed most of the regular season. Andy Hague often led off and got on base, and it was difficult to not bunt Hague because he wasn't only a great bunter but was incredibly fast and left-handed; he was that much closer to first base on contact. He hit 338 on the season with a 394 on base percentage. Amity would go on to beat Fairfield Warde 4-3 in the state championship, the team's fourth title in four seasons.

"I was a great bunter but I didn't really figure out hitting until my freshman year in college," Hague said. "Then, as a junior, I really figured it out."

Hague, a captain as a senior, hit 402 with a 480 on base percentage in his final season. He added two home runs and finished with a 1.044 OPS. Hague's high school offensive breakout was complete. He adapted.

"My first home run was the first ball I hit over the fence in a practice or game," Hague said.

Hague developing very late as a hitter was a welcome surprise to the Yale coaching staff, and given Hague's struggles on the mound, the breakout was a necessary adaptation to remain a contributing college athlete. When he got to the Yale campus and took batting practice, it was immediately obvious to the Yale coaching staff that Hague's future would be as a hitter.

"I took two days of batting practice and Tucker said, 'has anyone told you that you can hit a lot of home runs,'" Hague said.

Hague was taught at Yale to become an aggressive hitter and hunt fastballs. As a freshman, Hague hit 330 and had a 410 on base percentage but struck out in 35 of his 109 plate appearances. The high average on balls Hague hit into play was a testament to how much he crushed fastballs early in the count. However, Hague was hapless against off speed if he fell behind in the count. Thankfully, since Hague was batting seventh and eighth in the order, he saw a lot of fastballs.

"Velocity never intimidated me," Hague said.

The strikeouts were new to Hague, who only struck out nine times in his entire Amity career. Eventually, if he were to become a star, he'd have to adapt again.

"College offspeed pitching was different," Hague said. "College is the first lev-



NICK
MIRTO

el of baseball where I had to hit more than one pitch."

As his college career progressed, Hague drastically improved at hitting off speed pitching. The rest of his college career, Hague struck out only 23 times in 165 plate appearances. Adapt or die.

"Once you hit a good college curve by accident, you learn how to do it and adjust and then you can hit curveballs," Hague said.

On May 23, 2018, Hague tore his labrum sliding into home plate in a 15 inning 2-1 loss to Columbia at Yale Field. In the off-season, Hague would rehab for a month or two and feel good but then reinjure his shoulder. He held off on the surgery and played the following season, but was unable to throw from the outfield due to the injury. And because of the Yale offensive depth, Hague wasn't the full-time designated hitter. Hague only got 36 at bats his sophomore year. But he made the most of them, hitting 361 with a 400 on base percentage. He finally got shoulder surgery in May after the season.

Fully healthy and now a junior, Hague was primed for a breakout 2020. He could throw and play the outfield again. Through the first 10 games, he hit 364 with a 404 on base percentage and an astounding 659 slugging percentage. Hague was flashing monster power to go with his trademark 400-ish on base percentage. However, on March 11, the Ivy League suspended play due to the spread of the novel coronavirus. Yale wouldn't play another baseball game for two years. Between tearing his labrum in his last freshman game and a global pandemic, Hague's career was seemingly over.

Hague was hanging out with his housemates at the baseball house on Feb. 8, 2021 when the news broke. Yale would allow for a one-time waiver exception where athletes could return for a fifth year to the same school. At the time, this seemed like good PR in front of what people assumed would be an announcement of a second season being canceled due to coronavirus. Unfortunately, all grad school applications were due the prior month. Once again, Hague quickly adapted to more bad luck.

"I called the grad school and asked if I could apply late," Hague said. "This was a Monday, and they said that I needed all my letters of recommendations in by that Friday, which was a really quick turnaround time and I was uncomfortable to ask teachers but I did and I was eventually accepted to grad school. I would be the first Yale baseball player attending graduate school while playing."

Hague, a physics major, taught himself how to code during the COVID lockdowns. Now he'd be getting a master's degree in computer science from Yale. Throughout his college summers, Hague didn't get any competitive internships because he was either playing summer ball for the Bristol Blues or being shut out of a summer baseball spot due to timing issues. The master's

degree would make him more appealing in the job market and may have acted as a replacement for the internships that he wasn't able to receive. Once again, Hague adapted to changing circumstances.

"I definitely wouldn't have gone back to Yale for grad school had Yale not announced the one time exception," Hague said.

Entering Hague's fifth year, his personal expectations were sky high. His last season before COVID shut down the world, he had put up a 1.063 OPS and he had a career on base percentage of over 400, something that analytically inclined MLB franchises look at when arranging later picks on their draft board.

"I could hit anyone in the country my fifth year," Hague said.

Ten days before the season began, Hague was in a rundown drill on the Yale Field turf when his knee buckled in a non-contact injury. Something wasn't right, but Hague stayed positive for the entire practice. The next morning, Hague received the bad news upon visiting the team doctor: he tore his ACL and his fifth year was over.

Unless, of course, Hague adapted again.

"I got a second opinion from a team doctor who said that I can maybe try to play," Hague said. "So for the next six weeks, I spent four hours a day in the training room. Between being a student, a baseball player and doing all the extra time rehabbing, it was a very difficult time."

Hague did everything possible to get back to playing during this time. He would do range of motion exercises, stretches and knee strengthening. Basically, he was mimicking ACL rehab post-surgery without getting surgery. Hague, now exclusively at first base and designated hitter because he couldn't actually run and stop, ran a 6.6 second 60-yard dash with a torn ACL. His straight line speed was unaffected, but he had to slide into every base because he couldn't naturally slow down. After the six weeks of rehab, he was ready right in time for the Ivy League schedule.

"I had a good season," Hague said. "I batted third, fourth and fifth all year and I was pitched to like a middle of the order hitter."

Hague hit 292 with a 377 on base percentage with a fully torn ACL. Most impressively, he walked 10 times while only striking out 10 times, a massive jump from his freshman year where he struck out 35 times to 11 walks. Hague was now a complete hitter who could hit pitches that bent. He had adapted again to a weakness.

Hague now lives in New York City and works as a trading analyst at Credit Suisse.

"I miss baseball in the healthiest way possible," Hague said. "I'm happy to be in the city working. I enjoy what I'm currently doing. It was a weird, crazy, fun, beautiful path through the best game in the world."

Nick Mirto is a Milford resident involved with Orange baseball. He can be reached at 203-464-9971 or Nick.mirto@gmail.com.

Recycling Tip: Updates To Bottle Deposit Charges

By Ilene Moyher

As of Jan. 1, the state's bottle deposit program has been expanded to include more types of beverages. In addition to soda and beer bottles, there's now a \$0.05 deposit for other types of containers, including hard cider, seltzer, coffee, tea, juice, sports and energy drink bottles.

As with soda and beer bottles, these can be redeemed for cash at local grocery stores or bottle and can redemption centers (see

bit.ly/CT-Bottle-Redemption for more info and locations). Everyone is encouraged to do so as it'll feel like found money while helping items get recycled properly. Or, as always, residents can put these bottles in their blue household recycling bin or the designated dumpster at the Orange Transfer Station & Recycling Center.

If bottles are gathered in a plastic bag, they must be dumped out of the bag, since plastic bags cannot go in with any other recyclables under any circumstances. When

plastic bags get mixed in with other recyclables, the recycling company may reject the entire truckload, costing Orange extra money and resulting in tons of recyclables going into the trash. Plastic bags can be recycled separately at the transfer station or grocery stores. Bags must be completely empty and rinsed if needed (mulch bags must be free of residue; otherwise they belong in the trash).

Another recent change to bottle fees will help Orange and many towns in Connecti-

cut. Since a \$0.05 surcharge was added on miniature bottles of alcohol, often called "nips," Orange has earned over \$6,000. These bottles are not redeemable for cash because of their size. Therefore, revenue from the surcharge goes to the town in which the bottles were sold and must be used for litter control or trash reduction efforts. More on how Orange will spend this money will follow as it becomes available.

Get more info at orangerecycles.com or facebook.com/ORCinCT.

Obituaries

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

With heartfelt sadness, we announce the passing of **John D. Agapiou**, on December 30, 2022, at the age of 93. (West Haven Funeral Home)



Marion Jeannette Mark Ahrens, age 87, widow of the late Alfred J. Ahrens, Jr. of Milford, CT died on January 2, 2023. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Sally Anderson was born June 2, 1934 and passed away on January 4, 2023 at age 88. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Carol L. Bakunas, age 75, formerly of Milford, left us on December 27, 2022 after a battle with cancer. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Adrienne T. Baumgartner, age 82, of Milford, beloved wife of James Morris Baumgartner, entered into eternal life on December 9, 2022. (Lesko & Polk Funeral Home)



John W. Bird Jr., age 76, formerly of Milford, passed away at his home in Delray Beach, FL on December 14th, 2022, after a brief battle with lung cancer. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Oliver G. Brangman II, 98, of Milford, beloved husband of Carolyn Brangman, passed away peacefully on December 20, 2022. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Charles Brienza, 85, of Milford Connecticut beloved husband (63 years) of Eleanor (Miele) Brienza, passed away peacefully on December 29, 2022 at his home. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Diane Bocchino Caramanica, age 76, a longtime resident of Milford, passed away on Thursday, December 29, 2022 at her home. (Abriola Parkview Funeral Home)



Timothy P. Casey, age 73, of Milford, formerly of Wethersfield, passed away suddenly at his home on December 21st, 2022. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Raymond Norman Cole, age 91, of Milford, beloved husband of the late Joan Mae Smith, passed away on December 24, 2022 at Bridgeport Hospital. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Raymond De Aquino, 93, of Orange, Connecticut, beloved husband of Joan (Meni) De Aquino, passed away on December 14, 2022. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Shawn Anthony Gagain, 57, of Milford, passed away on January 3, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Ronald Gibbons, 79, of Orange, CT, passed on New Year's Day, 2023, after a battle with cancer. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Kathleen D. Golden, age 76, of Milford, beloved wife of Michael P. Madigan, passed away peacefully on Thursday, December 29, 2022. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



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Obituaries

Agnes Margaret (Murcko) Hanson passed away peacefully on December 29, 2022 at her home of 57 years in Orange, Connecticut. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Irvin Henry "Bud" Hurley passed away on Saturday, Dec. 17, 2022 at the home of his devoted daughter, Susan Tummins, in Milford, surrounded by his loving family. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Donald Jackson Lewis Sr., age 90, of Orange passed away with his family at his side on January 6, 2022 at the West Haven Veterans Administration Hospital. (West Haven Funeral Home)



Anthony Malangone, age 46 of West Haven, passed away unexpectedly on August 14, 2021. (West Haven Funeral Home)



Julianne "Julie" Hartman, 82, longtime Milford resident, beloved wife of Frederick G. Hartman, passed away peacefully at home on Dec. 16, 2022. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Linda Vivanne Iacono was born on July 24, 1952 and passed away on December 1, 2010 at age 58. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Mary T. Loch, 66, of Milford, beloved wife of the late Raymond Loch, passed away peacefully on Sunday, December 25, 2022. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Ralph J. Martone Jr., age 78, of Milford, loving husband of Marianne Colonese Martone, passed away on January 4, 2023 at Yale New Haven Hospital. (Adzima Funeral Home)



John S. Holthaus, 72, of Milford, loving husband of Patricia Sullivan Holthaus, passed away peacefully at home on December 30, 2022. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Frederick John Kirkham, 73, of Orange, beloved husband of 50 years to Maria (Cross) Kirkham, passed away peacefully at home on January 4, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



John Francis Lungi, age 57, of Milford, formerly of the Black Rock section of Bridgeport, passed away on December 27, 2022. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



James E. Matera, Jr., 88, of Milford, beloved husband of Mary (Roos) Matera, passed away on December 18, 2022. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Donna Jeanne Hrebik, 61, of Milford, passed away on December 26, 2022. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Stella Theresa Konopka, age 95, of Milford, beloved wife of the late Edward F. Konopka, entered eternal rest on December 18, 2022. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Regina Michelle (Prokoski) Machernis, 63, of Milford, beloved wife of David Machernis, went home to be with her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, on Dec. 25, 2022. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Judith Ann (Knoche) Mattson, 75, of Milford, passed away on Tuesday, December 27, 2022 in Bridgeport Hospital after a short illness. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



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Obituaries

Beatrice Monopoli was born on November 6, 1930 and passed away on January 4, 2023 at age 92. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Robert Post, 96, of Hamden, beloved husband of the late Irene Post, passed away on December 19, 2022. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Concetta Mary Rooney was born on April 1, 1934 and passed away on December 14, 2022 at age 88. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



On December 16, 2022, **Joan (Fiore) Var-go** of Orange, CT passed away to join the love of her life, her husband, Andy. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Catherine M. Payne was born on July 20, 1947 and passed away on December 29, 2022 at age 75. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Linda DeSolla Price was born in Singapore, Malaysia, in 1950. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Charlene (Yassak) Sanner, 66, of Milford, passed away Friday, December 16, 2022, surrounded by her loving husband, children and grandchildren. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Lottie (Vladymira) Way, age 85, of Milford, beloved wife of the late Harry H. Way, entered peaceful rest on December 30, 2022 at her home. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Clara Pauline Petrowski, 88, of Milford, beloved wife of the late SMSgt. Edward Steven Petrowski, Sr., passed away peacefully on December 30, 2022. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



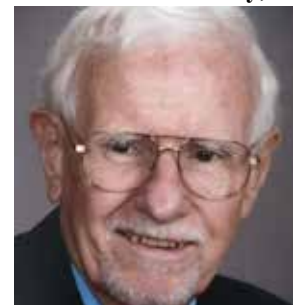
Kenneth Norman Ritchie, Sr., age 93, of Milford, beloved husband of Barbara Caroline Ritchie for 71 years, died on Tuesday, December 27, 2022. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Priscilla Searles, 83, of Orange, beloved wife of the late James C. Searles, passed away on December 30, 2022. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



W. Thurmon Whitley, 81, of Milford, beloved husband of the late Wilma Whitley, passed away on December 9, 2022. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



William Joseph Ploof, age 53, of Meriden, passed away on January 2, 2023. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



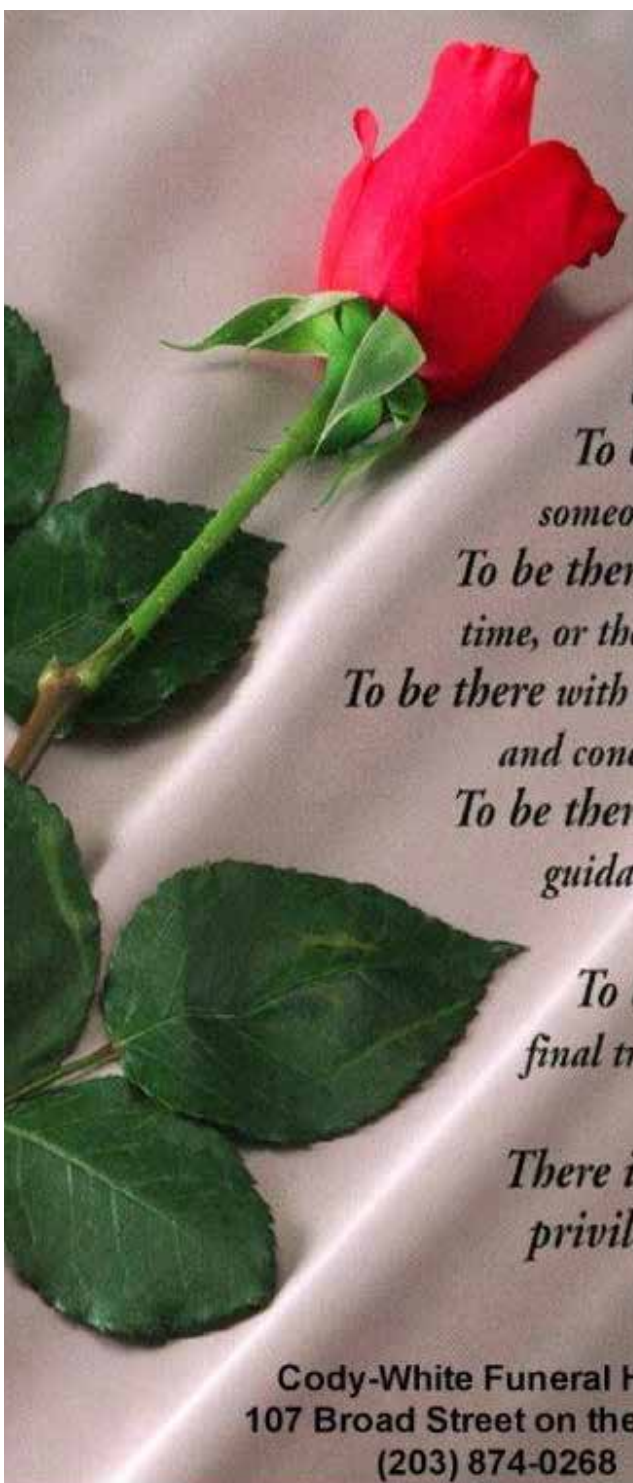
Barbara E. Romaine, age 84, of Milford, beloved mother and grandmother, entered into peaceful rest on Thursday, Jan. 5, 2023. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Elizabeth M Stahl (Betty), passed away peacefully at home in Orange, surrounded by family on December 21, 2022. (Jenkins King Funeral Home)



Harry J. Zinn, Jr. of West Haven, beloved husband of 39 years, to the late Susan (Nor-kaitis) Zinn, passed away on December 26, 2022. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)

*The calling of the funeral director is
To be there when someone is in need.
To be there no matter the time, or the conditions.
To be there with words of comfort and concern.
To be there to give quiet guidance through the storm.
To be there for the final tribute that honors a life.
There is no higher privilege.*

-Doug Manning

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Orange Firefighters Bring Holidays To Kids



Orange volunteer firefighters drop chocolate coins — Hanukkah gelt — for the children at the South Central Hebrew Academy. Photo courtesy of the Orange Volunteer Fire Department.

December is always a busy month for the Orange Volunteer Fire Department, but in addition to handling emergencies, firefighters this month delivered the spirit of the winter holidays to children in Orange.

Firefighters donated their own money to two charities helping children. They also escorted Santa Claus to 190 homes in town during the Santa's Helper program and visited a town Jewish day school to help celebrate Hannukah.

At the department's annual holiday party, firefighters and friends participated in a 50/50 to raise money for the Yale-New Haven Hospital Children's Toy Closet. When the winning ticket was pulled, the prize-winner stood up and said to give his winnings to the kids. The resulting donation was \$850.

Firefighters passed the hat during a monthly meeting for a special holiday fund by the town's Social Services Department to help families that need some extra support to get through the holidays. Firefighters took up a collection and donated \$1,457 of their own money to his charitable endeavor.

As a department, firefighters and the OVFD Auxiliary escorted Santa to the homes of about 630 children throughout the town. The annual event was the biggest holiday fundraiser in the 27 years the auxiliary has been running it.

Auxiliary President Jillian Gagel said Santa is delivering toys to a second generation of Orange residents. It's not only a good tradition, she says, it's a valuable

opportunity for firefighters to let kids know not to be afraid of firefighters in an emergency.

"Meeting firefighters in a happy situation when you want to see them is much different than when they have to respond to an emergency at your home," said Gagel. "We are very grateful to the community for supporting our Santa's Helper toy delivery program. Because of everybody's support, the program has grown into the overwhelmingly successful event it has become."

At one home, Jessica Fedor of Orange was chatting with her daughter, Ava, about the nesting dolls she received from Santa, who arrived on Engine-33.

"It's such a fun, memorable experience for them," the elder Fedor said as Ava hung on her leg.

A few days later, firefighters were back out with kids, helping to light Hanukkah candles at the Southern Connecticut Hebrew Academy in Orange.

The traditional gift for Hanukkah, referred to as the Festival of Lights, is coins, or "gelt." Firefighters raised the ladder on their truck and climbed to the top. Children watched, excited by the presence of firefighters and the ladder truck, as chocolate gelt rained down from the top of the ladder. The children took their turns, scrambling to catch or pick up the chocolate coins. Then they watched as the Hanukkah menorah was lit.

For Rabbi Sheya Hecht, the head of the Academy, there is a spiritual tie between firefighters and the flames of the Hanukkah candles.

"The firefighters' job is to put out fires," he said. "They're saving lives, giving life back. Our job is to light fires. We light fires in the spiritual sense that dispel the darkness. The light of goodness and kindness can illuminate lives and miles. We all certainly need more of that."

Fire Chief Vaughan Dumas said the community outreach is not only fun for department members, it's rewarding on several levels.

"For more than 95 years, our motto has been 'neighbors helping neighbors,'" he said. "That usually means responding to emergencies and helping people during what is usually a very bad day for them. But these activities let us interact with kids and the community in a calm environment and enjoy a positive experience with our firefighters."



Santa, played by local resident Chris Jensen, reads the label on a toy he's about to give to eager children in a home in Orange. Santa's helper is Firefighter Will Clemens. Photo courtesy of the Orange Volunteer Fire Department.

Author To Discuss Charles Island Book

Author Michael Dooling will present a program on the second edition of his 2006 book, "An Historical Account of Charles Island," on Monday, Jan. 16 at 7 p.m. at the Mary Taylor Memorial United Methodist Church, located at 168-176 S Broad St. in Milford.

His second edition is a revised and expanded version. This book includes stories about the US Navy torpedo trials, the flying machine tested one-and-a-half years before the Wright brothers'

attempts and maritime mishaps and tragedies. Dooling has added personal stories told to him since the release of the first book and added a warning regarding the fatal dangers of the rocky tombolo that connects the island to the Milford shore.

The program is free, and the public is invited. There is ample parking behind the church, and a ramp for the handicapped offers access to the meeting room. Signed copies of the book will be available.

Milford Dental Practice Hires New Orthodontist



Voldman.

Dworkin Dental and Big Smiles Pediatric Dental in Milford recently hired Dr. Rebecca Voldman as its new orthodontist.

Voldman attended Columbia Dental School and continued her education at UConn, obtaining a specialty degree in orthodontics alongside a master's degree in dental science.

Voldman is currently accepting patients of all ages.

Teens Give Back To Orange PD With Cookies 4 Cops Event



Area teens and the Orange Police Department teamed up on Dec. 14 to bake cookies for regional officers and to engage in games together. Photos courtesy of CTeen Haven.

With the theme of giving back, 20 teens throughout greater New Haven got together with members of the Orange Police Department to show appreciation to those who serve on Dec. 14 at the CTeen Haven's Cookies 4 Cops event. CTeen Haven, Chabad Centers of Greater New Haven's teen program, organized the event which was held at the new Chabad Jewish Center of Orange/Woodbridge on the Post Road.

The teens and police officers baked about 300 cookies to be delivered to the local police station. The teens also heard from the cops about what they do for the

community and what their service entails. The teens interacted with the cops through competitive races and games and chatting over refreshments.

"It was so beautiful to see an atmosphere of unity and teamwork between everyone. We are so happy to arrange this opportunity for the teens and show the officers how much we value what they do for us," said Bracha Cheruff, co-director of CTeen Haven. The program was part of CTeen's mission to provide meaningful opportunities for Jewish teens that cultivate a strong sense of mission, purpose and responsibility.

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