



Milford-Orange Times

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May 4, 2023

Rotary Awards



Regional Rotary clubs came together for the Norman K. Parsells Fellowship Luncheon on April 28 at the Milford Yacht Club in Milford. The luncheon was held in honor of a former Connecticut Rotarian who served as an elected official in Fairfield and the state legislature, and was meant to recognize Rotarians who personified the same dedication to their community as Parsells did in his lifetime. From left: Paul Tavaras of Stratford, Joe Kobza of Monroe, Ernestine Luise of Derby-Shelton, Stephen Archer of Trumbull, Carolyn Vermont of Bridgeport, event planner Jessica Hall of Devon, Scott G. Moulton of Devon, Stephen Hechtman of Orange, Erika Shea of Devon, Philip Ucci of Milford and Ginny Greatsigner of Fairfield. Photo by Steve Cooper.

Orange Budget Called 'Responsible' At Hearing

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

Orange's Board of Finance held its annual budget hearing on April 20 at High Plains Community Center to lay out the details of a budget that is expected to reduce the tax rate for residents by 1.2 percent.

Members of the Board of Finance presented the overall numbers, as well detail on the town side of the budget. The superintendents

of Orange Public Schools and the Amity Regional School District also presented their individual sections of the budget.

"The budget before you this evening was a 6-0 vote from our board," said BOF chair Kevin Houlihan as he opened the meeting,

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Board of Aldermen Mulls Milford Ed Budget

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

Milford's education budget has arrived at its final destination: the Board of Aldermen.

The city's spending plan is set each year in a process that begins with requests from various departments to the mayor and Board of Education, respectively. The mayor puts together a budget proposal for city services; the Board of Education does the same for its services. Both go to the Board of Finance, which then makes its own adjustments and forwards that to the Board of Aldermen.

The Board of Aldermen typically spend much of April and early May holding hearings

on the budget. The board can and do make alterations, often based on conversations with department personnel and comments from the general public.

This year, the loudest debate has been over a \$1.8 million reduction to the Board of Education budget that was imposed by the Board of Finance. Although the education budget would rise, it would do so by much less than half of the \$3.5 million the BOE had recommended.

To complicate matters further, Milford's

Continued on page 4

Chip's Opens New Outdoor Patio



The Orange Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting ceremony at Chip's Family Restaurant in Orange on April 24 to celebrate the opening of its new outdoor patio. Photo by Robert Creigh.

Kerri Rowland Launches Milford Mayoral Campaign

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

Milford Democratic Registrar of Voters Kerry Rowland has announced that she is running for the city's top job in November.

Rowland is the first candidate to make her intent to run for the mayor's office known since Ben Blake, who ran the city for the past 12 years, announced in February that he would be stepping down as mayor to fill the post of Administrative Law Judge for Connecticut's Workers' Compensation

Commission.

Milford has already just gotten a new mayor. Blake's departure triggered a selection process for an interim mayor to serve until the next election. The Board of Aldermen voted on April 27 to approve Police Commission Chair Richard Smith for the position; he was sworn in on May 1.

Rowland made her announcement on April 17 on the steps of City Hall, shortly

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Orange Budget (Continued From 1)

stressing its unanimous, bipartisan support. “That’s very important.”

If the budget as drafted is passed, the current 32.71 mill rate will drop to 32.31 mills.

The \$80,249,651 proposal is an increase by just under \$2 million from last year. However, that increase was offset by growth in the town’s grand list from the previous year by \$63.74 million, or 2.83 percent.

The largest percentage increase in the grand list came from business personal property tax revenues, which rose by more than \$33 million from the prior year. That was driven largely by utility company United Illuminating, which has its headquarters in Orange.

“Mark Branchesi, our tax assessor, said to me this was a strong grand list improvement, and it was led by UI’s business personal property,” said BOF Vice Chair Jim Leahy. UI is also Orange’s largest taxpayer, followed by Southern Connecticut Gas.

As is the case with most Connecticut municipalities, the largest share of Orange’s revenue – 92.3 percent – comes from property taxes.

Although the grand list growth is allowing for a tax decrease, spending overall will go up in most areas. The town side of the budget contains a 5.5 percent increase, along with a 5.18 percent increase in debt service and capital costs. The Orange Public Schools budget will increase by 3.37 percent.

The Amity budget would increase as well, by 2.25 percent. However, the three member towns split Amity funding proportionally based on student enrollment, which went down for Orange this year. That means taxpayers will see a 1 percent decrease in their portion of the payment for Amity.

When it was his turn to present the Orange Public Schools budget, Superintendent Dr. Vince Scarpetti opened with a reminder that

the years of disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic were still very much lingering in the school system.

“It’s great to be back, and great to be in school, and the way I think we should be,” he said, but added, “these are some of the impacts that you’ll see in our budget.”

Major drivers of the public schools budget included salaries, support staff and technology. The schools also had to pay more for gasoline and utilities.

Some costs did go down, including for special education and health insurance.

Scarpetti singled out increases that came from paying for security officers in the schools, an initiative that has been in the works over the last few years.

“Quite frankly, whenever there was a shooting, there were calls immediately: ‘Are there police present at the school?’” he said.

Amity Superintendent Dr. Jennifer Byars echoed Scarpetti in many of the cost drivers for her district, with salaries, services and technology among the top items.

Byars shared a slide that compared year-by-year budget increase requests with contractual cost increases, pointing out that any time the budget side dipped below the contractual increase, it meant that the school system was making reductions in other areas. She noted that such was the case this year.

“This year it’s particularly remarkable that we were able to do that given the inflation that we’re seeing in our commodities and our utilities,” she said.

The three-town vote for the Amity budget occurred on May 2; vote totals were not available as of press time. The referendum on the Orange town and Orange Public Schools budgets will take place on May 17.

During public comment, Selectman Mitch Goldblatt spoke in favor of increasing

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Adopt A Pet: Elijah



Elijah is a sweet, energetic boy. He’s one of the favorites down at the shelter, but he is not recommended for families with small children or other animals because of his size and lack of information about his prior history. He can be seen at the Milford Animal Shelter, located at 664 East Broadway in Milford. Call 203-783-3279 for more information. Photo courtesy of the Milford Animal Shelter.

Fashion Show Coming To Downtown Milford

The Downtown Milford Business Association will present its annual Mother’s Day Fashion Show on Sunday, May 7 at 11:45 a.m. on the Milford Green. Local models will be dressed and styled by Kate Burton Salon. The fashion show’s featured retailers include The Lovet Shop, La Unique Boutique and Whispers from Lady Olga’s Lingerie. There will be

more than 40 additional vendors who will display select items for sale from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., including women’s clothing and lingerie, jewelry, accessories and imported cotton linens. There will also be mocktails, a photo booth, free temporary tattoos, makeup refreshes, mini massages and more. Admission is free. Learn more at downtownmilfordct.com.



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Milford Ed (Continued From 1)

tax rate would rise even under the version of budget containing lower education spending.

Educators, parents, children and other community members flooded some of the Board of Aldermen meetings throughout April – almost uniformly urging the board to preserve education funding.

At the April 25 budget hearing, BOE chair Susan Glennon made what might be the final plea to restore the funding as her board made its case before the aldermen.

“We thought we clearly spelled out the circumstances that explained and justified our budgetary needs this year: inflationary times, contractual costs, obligations and wage increases, and mandates,” she said, “which made the disconnect we felt by the Board of Finance and the inaccurate information that seems to have contributed to that vote very frustrating.”

Glennon told the aldermen that if the education cuts remain, it is highly likely the BOE would opt to close a school to make up the difference. The most likely target for closure would be Harborside School.

“I do not believe we should be closing schools,” she said. “But if forced into it because of a \$1.8 million reduction to what we need to maintain what we currently have in place, we would choose closing a school over throwing away the millions of dollars in investments that we’ve made – again with your support – to implement transformative programs for the benefit of our young people.”

Alderman John Moffitt at one point asked how many of the people who might be included in the budget were “student-facing.” To that, Glennon argued that all personnel are there in the interest of the students and therefore have some effect on them.

“I see everybody here, and I know what everybody’s for,” Moffitt replied,

acknowledging the contingent of education supporters in the audience. “But the city’s only got this sized pie, and you guys get a slice. It’s not as big as you want, but you get a slice. The Fire Department, by the way, wants a bigger slice too. So does the Police Department. Meanwhile we have thousands of citizens out there already saying, ‘Now that’s a pretty big pie. I’m not sure I can afford that.’”

“We have a move forward budget in a way. I’m just asking, can we continue to do business as we have in the past,” Superintendent Dr. Anna Cutaia explained. “These little bits: \$177,000 in system improvements. You want us to do nothing new? All right. Cut the \$177,000. We won’t do anything new. We won’t go into fifth grade Spanish. That’s not what I want to do, but if we’re looking for something to cut....”

Alderman Matt Arciuolo asked whether the school counselor positions would be a permanent fixture. The counselors were formerly paid for with grant money and have been coming into the regular budget through a multi-year phase-in process.

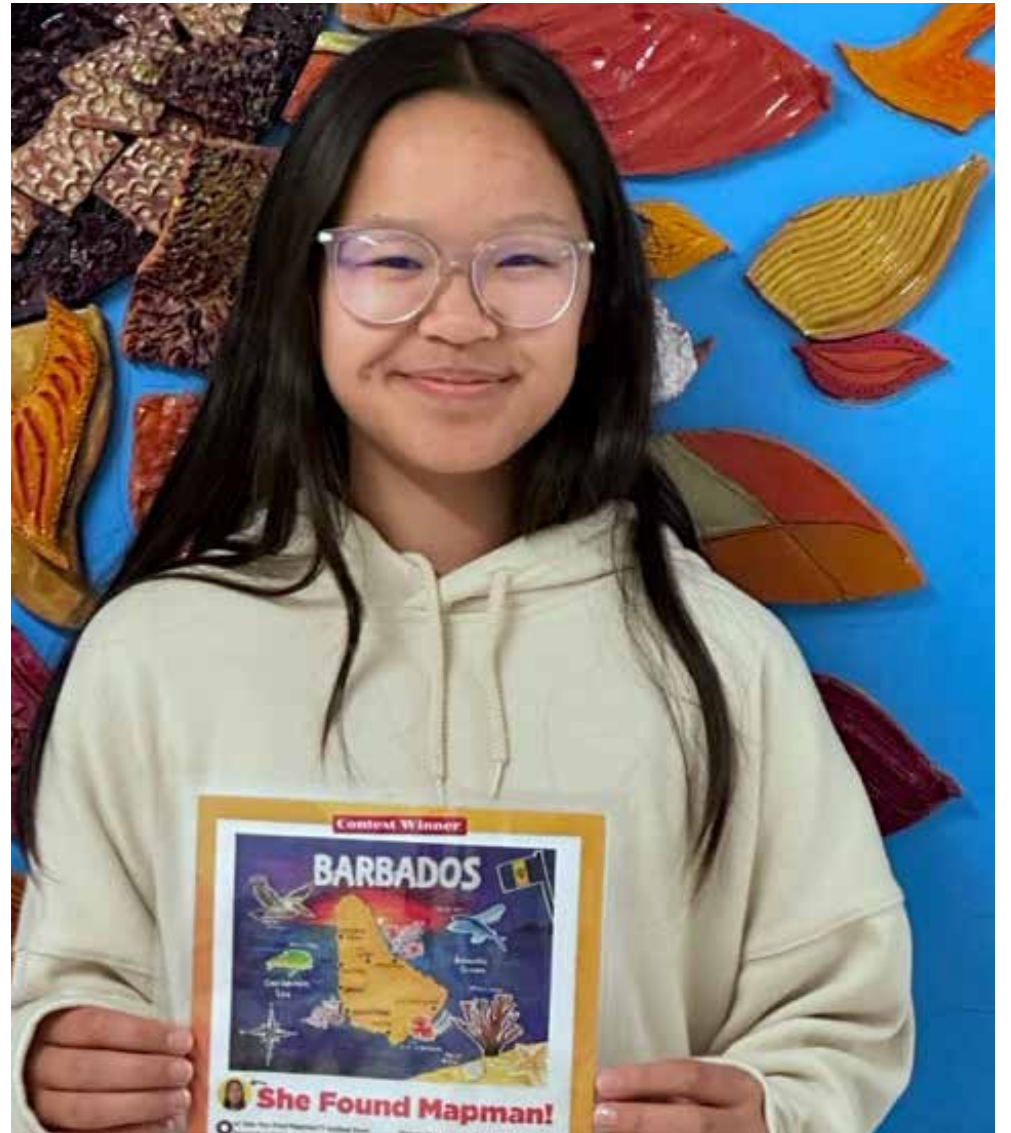
Glennon and Cutaia both pointed out that the hires were made in response to a state mandate, so they would be permanent unless state law changed.

Orange Budget (Continued From 3)

funding for road paving, and addressed what he considered an unnecessarily acrimonious attitude toward Amity by some Board of Finance members.

“I hope that you will take into consideration my requests for the town budget, but in any case, I will support it and ask others to do so, because it is a reasonable and responsible budget that recognizes the needs of our community,” he said.

AMSO Student Wins National Map Contest



Eighth-grade Amity Middle School Orange student Monica Chen has been named the grand prize winner in Junior Scholastic’s “Can you Find Mapman?” contest. There were approximately 2,000 entries in the contest. Chen was runner-up last year and was encouraged by family and teachers to enter again this year. She participated in this yearly contest by figuring out Mapman’s destination, which was Barbados. She then had to create a map of the Caribbean nation. Each year a different location is chosen, then submitted to Junior Scholastic in New York City. Chen and her social studies teacher, Jennifer Marganski, will each receive \$250. Photo courtesy of Amity Middle School Orange.



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Your Health

Assessing The Status Of Our Population's Health

When someone asks me what the functions of a local public health department are, I inform them that we are responsible for providing 10 essential public health services, also known as EPHS.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the EPHS is a well-recognized framework, released in 1994, for carrying out the mission of public health.

This EPHS framework was revised on Sept. 9, 2020 after a collaborative effort between the Public Health National Center for Innovations and the de Beaumont Foundation, which convened a task force of public health experts, leaders and practitioners as well as experts from federal agencies, including the CDC.

The 10 essential public health services provide a framework for public health to protect and promote the health of all people in all communities. They are:

1. Assess and monitor population health

status, factors that influence health and community needs and assets.

2. Investigate, diagnose and address health problems and hazards affecting the population.

3. Communicate effectively to inform and educate people about health, factors that influence it and how to improve it.

4. Strengthen, support and mobilize communities and partnerships to improve health.

5. Create, champion and implement policies, plans and laws that impact health.

6. Utilize legal and regulatory actions designed to improve and protect the public's health.

7. Assure an effective system that enables equitable access to the individual services and care needed to be healthy.

8. Build and support a diverse and skilled



DR. AMIR MOHAMMAD

public health workforce.

9. Improve and innovate public health functions through ongoing evaluation, research and continuous quality improvement.

10. Build and maintain a strong organizational infrastructure for public health.

In this column, I want to explain the first item and inform our residents how we assess and monitor population health status, factors that influence health and community needs and assets.

We routinely get notification from the Connecticut Department of Public Health about all the reportable diseases and illnesses that involves demographic information so we can conduct our disease surveillance. This is important to ensure that our residents are receiving appropriate and timely care.

My team is currently working to develop a community health assessment tool to identify key health needs and issues through systematic, comprehensive data collection and analysis.

These findings will help us understand the community's health status, their needs based on the response to the questionnaires, and to develop strategies.

By collecting this information, we would be able to determine the root causes of health disparities. We plan to use innovative technologies, tools and forum to engage our community members and subject matter experts so we can share this information with our key stakeholders.

Stay tuned, as my team will be reaching out to you to collect this valuable information.

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

We're Never Too Old To Learn Something New

By Trish O'Leary Treat

For over 10 years, Rabbi Alvin Wainhaus of Or Shalom Synagogue in Orange has spent an hour each spring and fall sharing with members of the Institute for Learning in Retirement of Greater New Haven myths, truths and misconceptions about Judaism in a way that is both entertaining and educational. His enthusiasm for his subject is obvious, and he warmly welcomes questions, making everyone feel at home. It comes as no surprise to learn that "rabbi" means "teacher."

Over the years, his topics have included common misconceptions about Passover traditions, the significance of symbols in a Jewish sanctuary, myths and misunderstandings about

Judaism, the richness of Jewish expressions, the meanings of the story of the Tower of Babel, a celebration of Yiddish wisdom and "a really quick history of the Jewish people."

ILR, a nonprofit group of about 300 people from greater New Haven, was started in 1989 at Albertus Magnus College in New Haven. Its purpose was to offer those over 55 a chance to continue learning by developing their own courses with no prerequisites, exams or term papers required, but questions and discussion welcome.

In ILR's early years, 12 classes were offered each semester. Today that number has swelled to around 40 classes covering a wide swath of topics including art, science, history, mu-

sic, literature, current events, bridge, birding, mahjong and cooking. Volunteers find talented study group leaders to conduct the classes, and both professors from neighboring universities and ardent amateurs have generously volunteered their time and talents for the cause.

Today, about half the classes are held on Zoom and half in person at sites such as the Woodbridge Library, ACES Access, Daniel Sullivan Education Center, Congregation B'nai Jacob and the Jewish Community Center.

From the start, field trips have been popular. For a number of years, thanks to Marcia Jamron's skills in exploring possibilities, there have been virtual trips via Zoom learning about

little-known areas in New York's boroughs.

For the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic, ILR will again hold its annual member lunch in June. Those interested in joining ILR can find instructions on how to do so at ilralbertus.org. Annual membership is \$40, and each course costs from \$5 to \$15, depending on the number of sessions it includes. For more information, call 973-769-0688 or email doug.fenichel@gmail.com.

Orange resident Trish O'Leary is a former Milford-Orange Times columnist, and a former president of ILR who has enjoyed taking many of its courses and helping to develop new ones on the Curriculum Committee.

Rowland

(Continued From 1)

prior to a Board of Aldermen meeting at which the elements of the city's budget, including education, were scheduled to be

discussed.

Milford's funding for education has become a contentious issue this year after the Board of Finance reduced the Board of Education's recommended budget increase by \$1.8 million. Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Anna Cutaia has stressed that failing to keep that money for education could lead to the closure of a school or the elimination of major school programs.

Rowland's campaign announced that she would argue for more funding for education as well as services like the Milford Fire Department, Public Works and other city departments.

Rowland, who was born and raised in Milford, has had her own experience with school closures – the city's Point Beach School closed when she was a sixth grader there. During the public testimony portion of the Board of Aldermen meeting, she recalled the effect that school closure had on her.

"It bothered me. It was difficult. I lost a lot of friends – I lost touch with a lot of friends," she said. "I was a really good

student and a really good athlete, and I got my first D in seventh grade English that first marking period that I attended Orchard Hills School. These things are real. These anxieties are real. These difficulties are real."

She added that it was a particularly bad time to add more anxiety to the students and families on top of the anxieties brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rowland graduated from Boston College with both an English and secondary education degree, according to her campaign website. After college, she was worked as a seminar coordinator for training and consulting company New Standard Institute.

Rowland has been involved in Milford politics since 2005, when she began serving on the Board of Aldermen. She ran unsuccessfully for mayor once before in 2007. She took on the registrar of voters role in 2014 after previously serving as deputy registrar. She also currently serves on the Milford Park, Beach, and Recreation Commission.

Milford Historical Society Wants Your Wedding Photos

The Milford Historical Society wants to feature local residents' wedding photos during the grand opening of the it's summer presentation, "A Century of Bridal Gowns," the weekend of June 10 and 11 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at its three historic houses at 34 High St.

Email your wedding photos so that they can be uploaded into a digital picture frame that will run continuously. It can be your photo or a family member's – the older the photos the better.

Photos must be sent to info@milfordhistoricalsociety.org. Questions may also be answered by leaving a message at 203-874-2664 or emailing the question to info@milfordhistoricalsociety.org.

There will be more than 20 gowns on display, some from as early as the late 1800s and all worn by Milford brides. There will be free docent-led tours of the houses with just a few gowns on display.

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Opinion & Editorial

Unpacking Budget Talk



STATE REP. (D-114)
MARY WELANDER

As we head into the home stretch of the 2023 session and begin to filter focus to the budget, I want to try and break down the budget process and explain how a very precise document can be so fluid.

To start, the governor presents their budget proposal within the opening days of the session. It is then the job of the legislature to rework, approve or reject that version in order to curate and pass a final budget. The governor's priorities, as well as House and Senate leadership priorities, will have some influence on the allocation of funds, but the bulk of the responsibility lies in the legislature's committees. Each committee hears bill proposals to see if and where there are gaps, inconsistencies or excesses in state actions and spending.

After passing out of committee, the non-partisan Office of Fiscal Analysis will publish whether a proposal headed to the floor for a vote has a cost or not, and what that cost may be over the next two fiscal years.

That information all gets sent to the Finance, Bonding and Revenue, and Appropriations committees; they each create separate budget proposals to bring to the table for negotiations.

You may be saying to yourself, "Why are there any negotiations needed at all? We have a healthy 'rainy day' fund that is referenced as a 'record budget surplus.'"

Here is the part that, in my opinion, is not talked about enough. Yes, the state's fiscal outlook is much better than it has been in the past, but that surplus can only run the state for roughly two weeks in an emergency situation. It's better than nothing, but not an infinite amount of money. Additionally, there are legal provisions in place – often called guardrails – that prevent us from using most of this "extra" money even if we had the worthiest of causes.

I also think the term "rainy day" fund is misleading; I prefer to think of it as a contingency fund in case of emergencies. These funds allow us to pay for unexpected costs, like repairs to bridges or natural disasters, without having to entirely borrow the money and thereby risking potential tax hikes. These funds cannot be used frivolously.

The other main guardrail is the spending cap. Negotiated in 2017, and reaffirmed by unanimous vote this year, this cap only allows the legislature to allocate a relatively small amount of money outside of our set expenses. Using these funds in a way that best serves Connecticut residents is a daunting task where, unfortunately, we will not be able to do everything we wish we could and still present a legally viable, fiscally responsible and ideally bipartisan budget.

Responsible spending and paying down decades of debt is vital to the continued economic success of our state; where we spend that money is not an easy decision. Your feedback is key to how I can better advocate on behalf of the district and our town. Please share your thoughts with me by emailing mary.welander@cga.ct.gov.

A Budget Breakdown



STATE REP. (R-119)
KATHY KENNEDY

Every two years, the General Assembly collaborates with the governor's office on the Connecticut state budget. The process begins with the governor's budget proposal in January and invites both public insight and legislative oversight to ultimately agree on a completed version in the early summer.

Following the governor's proposed version, legislative committees are tasked with studying and agreeing upon a version of their own to then present to legislators on the House and Senate floors. Committees such as the Appropriations Committee and Finance Committee are responsible for incorporating quality concerns and insight from public hearings in the versions they conclusively submit.

In the committee stage, specific budget ingredients, known as line items, can be removed, replaced or expanded based on a committee's collective interest. What may be budgeted for in today's proposal could be an afterthought tomorrow. Any form of the proposed budget at any stage in the process can and will change.

The governor's proposed budget from January has already experienced some changes. In April, my role on the Appropriations Committee was to vote on what we believe is the best version of the budget. My work in putting Milford and Orange first can be seen in my outline below of what funding may be a part of the finalized budget.

Concerning education and children, we could see funding for both school readiness programs and workforce development at the Milford Boys and Girls Club. For our seniors, we could expect general funding for senior centers throughout the state, specifically for the Orange Senior Center and local Meals on Wheels groups.

As a strong advocate for victims' rights, I am hopeful that funding for domestic violence victims and shelters will be a part of the final budget. Other medical funding could go toward breast/cervical cancer treatment and detection, as well as local and district health department development.

We're also hoping to see funding for our local fire departments, for the fire training school, and for the Firefighter's Fund which supports families displaced by fires and fire safety awareness programs within our community. Other safety initiatives that may receive funding could include mosquito and tick disease prevention programs and our local e-cigarette and marijuana safety pilot program.

Another institution that could see possible funding includes Platt Technical High School for their Women in Manufacturing program. Additionally, I am holding out hope for funding toward our nonprofits, especially for Milford's Beth-El Center, which houses, feeds and serves homeless residents and families in our community.

Although these budget ingredients will support various programs in our community, we must remember that some of this potential funding can and will change. This month, be sure to look out for our House Republican budget proposal, which will be considered by the General Assembly and will be posted on my website at RepKennedy.com.

I look forward to your questions about this, or any other state issue. Please never hesitate to reach out to me at Kathy.Kennedy@housegop.ct.gov or at 800-240-8700 with your questions, ideas, and concerns.

Getting Serious About Safety



STATE REP. (R-117)
CHARLES FERRARO

Many of us have seen recent footage online or in the news of a middle-aged man fighting off four masked juveniles attempting to steal a car out of his driveway in Rocky Hill.

The broad daylight attack was shocking, if not infuriating.

Many are asking if this latest brazen act is enough to motivate majority legislators writing our laws to admit that their "smart on crime" approach to public safety has gone off course.

Residents want, and deserve, something different.

Earlier this month, two tragedies that occurred on the same day garnered headlines statewide but were met with silence from lawmakers. A 17-year-old drowned in Waterbury after fleeing police who were responding to a stolen car case. And in New York state, investigators there say a 49-year-old military veteran was killed in a crash involving a vehicle driven by a 14-year-old after it was stolen from a northwest Connecticut community.

The two cases, police say, could be linked.

As you likely know, those cases came on the heels of a crime closer to our home – five teens in a stolen car hit several police cars in East Haven in late March.

Following the driveway crime in Rocky Hill last week, the refrain from the governor's office and majority legislators was that Connecticut is among the safest states in the nation. They contend that their "smart on crime" approach is working.

Tell that to the elderly woman who was victimized in an afternoon carjacking outside of her apartment building in Wethersfield last month.

This session, Republicans offered a package of public safety proposals that included expanding the circumstances under which juveniles charged with certain violent crimes are automatically transferred to the adult criminal docket and adding another two years to the mandatory minimum sentence for carjacking when a firearm or deadly weapon is involved.

Unfortunately, our proposals aimed at installing more accountability into Connecticut's criminal justice system have been received coolly by our majority party colleagues.

Last month, Waterbury's mayor, a prominent figure in Democratic party politics, expressed his frustration with the Democrat-controlled General Assembly, telling a packed house of community leaders during his state of the city address that criminals have more rights than everyone in the room.

Though experience tells me otherwise, I'm hopeful that with less than a month left in the legislative session my colleagues will feel compelled to act.

If the legislature doesn't take a stand now, sending a message to obviously emboldened criminals, I fear we'll see more and more of these types of crimes this summer.

Please continue to reach out to me at Charles.Ferraro@housegop.ct.gov with your questions and concerns regarding state issues.

Updates To Tax Payment System



THOMAS P.
HURLEY

We have a winner: Sturgis a Catalis Company won a tough source selection for the Next Generation Front End Contract (that's the system that takes credit, debit cards and e-checks at the Orange tax office).

You asked and we listened. Here are some of the things coming for the January tax cycle. A selection on the request for proposals 12373 has been announced. At the April 12 Board of Selectmen meeting, the Sturgis proposal was approved. The new front end is scheduled for implementation before Dec. 1 and is expected to be available for use for the supplemental motor vehicle and second part real estate and personal property payments in January 2024.

The project will include convenience fee-based options for mobile payment. It will offer retail cash solutions, especially for those unbanked or underbanked, via Sturgis's affiliation with InComm's VanillaDirect Pay option, which will also be available at over 70,000 retail outlets nationwide for taxpayer payments. Debit cards, credit cards and professional cards (such as Diner's Club and Carte Blanche) will also be accepted provided they are branded by Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express. Payments from digital wallets will also be accepted: Google, Apple, Samsung and more. PayPal (including crypto currency payments), Venmo and ACH/e-check payments will also be accepted – including from savings accounts (your own bank's restrictions may apply). Credit card payments will also be accepted at the town's tax windows.

You will be able to set up optional individual accounts that will allow for reminder notices, providing phone numbers and email addresses so that we may contact you via these methods, provide your tax bill information in a convenient manner and generally improve the Tax Office's ability to serve you. Watch for more details as we roll out this project.

Unfortunately, due to the scale of this upgrade and its implementation time it will not be available for the upcoming July tax season. Further information will be provided when available.

On the gee-whiz side of things: Are you or do you know of a family veteran of the Armed Forces? Then you need to be aware of Connecticut General Statutes 1-129, regarding veterans' military records. Basically, you need to have the honorably discharged veteran provide their DD-214 or other valid discharge paper with the town clerk. If you or they need this information, stop rummaging around your records. Once filed, you can get this information from the Town Clerk's Office when needed. This information is also available to your conservators and estate conservators.

Many veteran town benefits require this filing as well. CGS 1-129 states that discharge information necessary to establish or aid in the eligibility of establishment of a benefit is also available to the public. Basically, anyone determining public benefits requiring this information, the State Librarian and genealogical societies incorporated or authorized by the state and members of such societies may see your filed record.

Thomas P. Hurley is the tax collector for Orange.

Senior Life

Living With Arthritis

Arthritis is so common that we all have some experience with it, either personally or with loved ones. As a result, we tend to assume we know what arthritis is. But unless you have really delved into the subject, chances are you are only superficially informed or misinformed about the depth and breadth of this disease category.

Arthritis is not a single disease or condition. It can happen to young people, older adults and everyone in between. It can be the result of injuries, wear and tear or a disease process.

Because we think of arthritis as a part of normal aging (and it is), that does not mean you should ignore symptoms or fail to talk with your doctor about changes in your arthritis. Nor should you just self-diagnose your arthritis.

Arthritis can be just wear and tear from aging (osteoarthritis). But that is not the

only cause. There are several diseases resulting from autoimmune inflammatory arthritis, such as rheumatoid or juvenile arthritis. There is even infectious arthritis, where a viral or fungal infection can travel to a joint or joints in the body and cause inflammation and pain. Finally, there is metabolic arthritis or gout, where the body has difficulty breaking down purines, resulting in painful uric crystals building up in joints – usually the big toe.

Arthritis symptoms range from mild to debilitating pain. It can be chronic, or people can experience flareups. Keep in mind that you may experience different types of arthritis at the same time, so talking with a doctor about treatments, medications and therapies to manage your arthritis can be multi-tiered.



SUSAN ODERWALD

Most of us will develop some type of arthritis during our lifetimes. It starts to become more common as we edge into our 50s but can start earlier or later in life. There are many ways that arthritis can be managed, from simple exercise to medications to full joint replacements. Getting treatment can make a huge difference in the quality of your day-to-day life.

One problem with arthritis (osteoarthritis in particular) is that the very thing that tends to help – movement – is the thing we tend to do less of when we are experiencing pain and stiffness. I heard one physical therapist describe this as “motion is lotion,” meaning that as we move, our body produces fluids to lubricate the joints and smooth things out. It is why you may be stiff

getting up in the morning but feel better as the day wears on.

Finally, because arthritis is a basket of diseases with varying root causes, it is important not to ignore pain or inflammation. This may especially be true if you are “too young” for arthritis, or it comes and goes. Talk with your doctor so you specifically understand the arthritis you are experiencing and develop a tailored plan that addresses your specific needs.

Most of us will have to live with arthritis at some point, so learning as much as we can and adopting lifestyle changes that help is key to feeling better. For more information, visit the Arthritis Foundation at arthritis.org.

Susan Oderwald is care director at the Always Best Care Senior Services Milford Office. She can be reached at Soderwald@abc-seniors.com or 203-877-1377.

Milford Artisan Market Approaching

The Milford Artisan Market will take place on Mother’s Day weekend, Saturday May 13 and Sunday, May 14 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the Milford Green at 168-176 Broad St. Admission is free.

“Shop for a gift for mom or bring her and the family to the market during Mother’s Day weekend to browse all of the unique, handmade products for sale,” said event organizer Alison Kosakowski, owner of Artisan Events by Ally.

The bi-annual event will feature 80 local artisans and makers who will be offering items including jewelry, paintings, macramé, floral arrangements and metal works as well as specialty foods. The event will also feature

Mother’s Day photo opportunities and kids’ activities.

The market will have two music areas featuring live music from The Sawtelles, Earth Passenger, Professor B’s Dub Club and Milford’s own Elana Zabari. Street food will be offered from vendors including Nate’s Plates, Khemis Vegan and Colossal Kielbasa along with homemade baked treats from various artisan vendors.

The event is organized by Artisan Events by Ally. The Milford Artisan Market is held every October and May on the Milford Green to promote local handcrafted wares and artists. Learn more at facebook.com/milfordartisanmarket.

Say You Love Them With Roses!



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Don’t Delay. Order Ahead.

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Saturday* May 13th 10am - 2pm
DipTop & Transfer Station

*while supplies last



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www.rotarycluboforange.org
or contact any Orange Rotarian

Stop by Locations Listed Above

Roses will be available for walk-ups
At High Plains Community Center on
May 12

Proceeds from this sale will support projects in our community, focusing on food insecurity needs, seniors and education.

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Ellen Russell Beatty, Ponder This	Ben Gettinger, Probate	Michael Moses, Milford Chamber
Cathy Bradley, Running	Patricia Houser, Environment	Susan Oderwald, Senior Care
Kathy Charbonneau, Orange Chamber	Thomas P. Hurley, Commentary	Jennifer Paradis, Homelessness
Steve Cooper, Food	Jennifer Ju, Bias	Trish Pearson, Insurance
Rob Craft, Recovery	Barbara Lehrer, Real Estate	Karen Quinn Panzer, Travel
David Crow, Conversations	Dan May, Earth Science	PJ Shanley, Life Insurance
Theresa Rose DeGray, Bankruptcy	Marilyn May, Milford History	Raymond Spaziani, Wine
Carmela DeVito, Book Reviews	Kevin McNabola, Orange Finances	Roger Tausig, Rotary
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	Nick Mirto, Sports	

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Getting To Know You

The Power Of Place

I believe that there are places in this world that have strange power.

Before you get that look on your face, just hear me out. I'm not talking about hocus pocus. I'm talking about real power; a power that can move a person internally and externally.

I've been to one of those places just last week.

When I was young, I went to this place many times, although lately I had not been in many years. If I was to be poetic about it, I could measure the time since I had been to this place in many different ways. I could say it has been almost half my life since I saw it. I could say it has been three lifetimes – my children's lives – since I saw this place. I could measure it by the three generations that lived in that space since I saw it. Or I could simply say it had been far too long, by any reckoning, since I saw this place.

My recent trip was something of a pilgrimage. I had to go and feel it under my feet again and make my respects. It was also something of a trip back in time. I had to make a strange jaunt back into the younger me I was when I last visited this place. My trip was also a celebration of what was and what is now. It was a trip that I took with equal measures of anticipation and anxiousness, and it was both restorative and bittersweet. I gained a lot back and

left a piece behind.

Last week I flew to Missouri with my brother to visit this place: the Crow family farm in Pomona, Missouri.

You would probably struggle to find Pomona on a map. It's smack in the middle of the Ozarks in southern Missouri, about half an hour outside of what my grandparents called "town," which is West Plains, Missouri. My grandparents started their married lives on the farm in Pomona in a little frame house with no electricity or plumbing before they moved their young family to West Plains a few years later. My father and my uncle were born there and lived the first few years of their life there. Those two generations passed through some hard times on the farm.

My grandparents might have moved to town, but they kept the farm because my grandfather always said he knew he could make a living on his farm. My grandparents were children of the Great Depression and therefore believed in three things: religion, family and soil. They prayed for good fortune, they called on family for help and they canned and preserved what they earned from the soil. Those three things



DAVID CROW

sustained them as they passed through those hard times, and as a result the roots they put down on that farm ran deep. It is those roots that give this place its power.

My grandparent's farm was originally 80 acres, but my grandparents, who were farmers, referred to it as "the two forties in Pomona." My grandparents and my uncle bought more land around it to enlarge it to the current size, but those two forties remain exactly as they were when my grandparents bought them, minus a few stumps and boulders. The house, now with electricity and running water, the barn and the stockyard still stand where my grandparents built them all those years ago.

When I was younger my parents would send my brother and me to Missouri every summer to visit my grandparents. While we were there we worked on the farm so we would understand what an honest, hard day's work meant. On the farm that meant dirt and barbed wire and cattle that required effort and blisters and sweat from the time the sun came up over the trees at the east end of the field until it slipped behind the trees at the west end of the field. Some of those days I thought would never end,

but in the end they all went by too fast.

I went back to this place, and I got out of the truck and felt the soil under my feet. I walked through the stockyard. Then I stood in the barn at sunset, and I swear to you that I was 17, covered in chaff and dust and stinking of diesel and sweat. I heard my grandfather call, "We're done for the day, Dave! Done!"

But I when I turned around, I was 53 and he wasn't there.

At least not physically.

Yea, brothers and sisters, I believe that there are places in this world that have strange power; a power that can move a person internally and externally. Maybe you believe that too, and maybe you too know one of those places. If so, may I humbly suggest you get yourself back there.

And that right soon.

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.

The Garden Spot

Wait, Wait, Don't Clean Up Yet

Now that the days are warmer, we all want to start cleaning up our yard. But wait: it's still early spring and still cool at night. If you remove dead material too early, you risk destroying many of the ground nesting pollinators.

A good rule of thumb is to not to remove material until temperatures are consistently about 50 degrees Fahrenheit so that the soil temperature will also be about 50 degrees. This will help protect habitat in the spring and ensure you have a robust and healthy pollinator population and overall garden ecosystem.

Removing the leaf and plant litter too early means that you have just destroyed the nests of many pollinators. Leaving these nesting resources means that the pollinators will stay in your yard instead of just passing through. Although pollinators need nectar when mature, they need nesting ar-

reas throughout their life cycle. About 70 percent of bees are ground nesters, while most butterflies and moths nest on trees and shrubs, referred to as host plants.

Another reason for leaving the beds and turf alone is that chemical reactions responsible for plant growth occur under specific temperatures. For planting lawn, remember that seeds that are exposed to temperatures below 59 degrees Fahrenheit will not germinate. This is because the enzymes responsible for breaking down the seed coat and starting the growth process are inactive at lower temperatures. A single warm day does not mean it's warm enough to seed, or even feed, the lawn. The soil temperature will still be too low. Grass seed should not be put



PAT DRAY

down until no frost is expected for a minimum of six weeks so that the seed germinates and the grass has time to grow roots prior to freezing.

Temperatures below 60-70 degrees Fahrenheit are also too cold to fertilize your lawn. At these temperatures, your lawn is still in a dormant state to protect itself from the cold. If you fertilize your lawn below these temperatures,

you'll feed the weeds instead and the root growth of your lawn will be stunted. Your lawn may look healthy and green for a few weeks, but will die off as soon as the warmer weather comes since the roots will be too shallow.

And just to make things fun, you shouldn't apply fertilizer when it's over 70 degrees either, since it will burn the lawn. Likewise,

for preemergence herbicides to be effective, they need to be applied before the soils reach this optimum temperature range.

The best way to know the soil temperature is to use a soil thermometer. The soil temperature needs to be measured at 3 inches deep, which is why people shouldn't assume a few warm or hot days mean the soil temperature is the same as the air temperature. The soil temperature will be significantly lower than air temperature in the spring, and warmer than air temperature in the fall.

For more gardening tips, please join the Garden Club of Orange for our May Market Plant Sale on May 13, starting at 9 a.m. at High Plains Community Center in Orange.

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

Orange Board of Finance

CT's Fiscal Guardrails Putting State On Path To Stability

Having spent close to 20 years within corporate and public finance, where fiscal discipline and delivering bottom line results are the expected on an annual basis, we are finally starting to see positive financial results and the state of Connecticut taking the necessary steps to ensure fiscal stability. It is important that the gains that have been made over the last five years are not compromised going forward with budget gimmicks and financial maneuvers that could place \$400 million of spending outside the state spending cap.

The latest projection on the 2024 state budget is for continued growth; revenues are currently outperforming expenditures with a \$1.4 billion projected surplus for the fiscal year ending in 2023. Revenue for the current year is already ahead by \$893 million, largely due to continued growth within the sales and use tax based on the high demand for goods and services on top of historically high inflation. Another key area of growth within state revenues has been within investment income, again based on rising interest rates.

The governor and state comptroller have done an excellent job of using the surplus and paying down Connecticut's \$86.8 billion in long-term liabilities, which includes

paying down pension debt. The governor and comptroller are on the same page with respect to ensuring that Connecticut stays on the right path to fiscal stability and sustainability.

The state legislature also recently took the right steps by renewing the budgetary controls put in place in 2017 by increasing the budget reserve fund cap for the general fund from 15 percent to 18 percent. They also renewed the bond lock for the next 10 years.

The following fiscal guardrails, enacted in 2017, are leading to positive financial results and continued fiscal sustainability:

- The volatility cap requires that all revenue from the estimates and final portion of the personal income tax and pass-through entity tax are deposited into the budget reserve fund, and if the reserve fund is maxed out, revenue is used to pay down pension debt.

- The revenue cap limits general fund and Special Transportation Fund appropriations to a certain percentage of estimated revenues; 98.75 percent in fiscal year 2023, 98.5 percent in fiscal year 2024, 98.25 percent in fiscal 2025, then 98 percent in fiscal 2026



KEVIN MCNABOLA

and each year after.

- The spending cap limits general budget expenditures to the level of spending in the previous year plus a percent increase based on either average income growth in the last five years or the consumer price index over the last year – whichever is greater.

- The bond cap limits the issuance of general obligation or credit revenue bonds in excess of \$1.9 billion per fiscal year, which grows as indexed to the Consumer Price Index.

Governor Ned Lamont's budget plan includes an across-the-board cut in the state income tax designed to help the middle class, which at both the state and federal level has proven results. The plan would save taxpayers more money at multiple income levels. For example, for single filers earning \$50,000 per year, the governor's plan would save \$270 per year. Couples earning between \$175,000 and \$275,000 per year would receive the same tax break under the governor's plan at \$500 per year.

The tax savings would be even larger for those who qualify for the earned income

tax credit, which is designed to help working families with children. The governor is pushing to boost the state credit to 40 percent of the federal credit, while Democrats within the legislature want to raise it to 45 percent. The amount of the credit varies, depending on the family's income and number of children.

There has also been a lot of discussion within the state legislature on potentially allocating funds outside the spending cap, which would go against the fiscal controls that were instituted in 2017.

The governor has taken the right steps to move Connecticut forward and I would recommend that the state legislature work with the governor to stay within the spending cap, adhering to the fiscal controls that they instituted. Going back to the old way of doing business in Connecticut is not an option. The governor's proposed tax plan and fiscal discipline demonstrates to residents and the rating agencies that Connecticut is serious and committed to fiscal reform, which is long overdue.

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

Facing Ourselves

Weighing Both Sides In The Transgender Athlete Debate

A federal appeals court in December dismissed a lawsuit brought forth by four cisgender high school girls in Connecticut who asserted their civil rights were violated by the state's trans-inclusive sports policy. The lawsuit was one of many initiatives to ban participation of transgender athletes from competing in a division that matches their chosen gender identity.

In its 29-page ruling, the Second Circuit Court of Appeals noted that there were numerous events when the cisgender plaintiffs came in first, even in competitions with transgender athletes. However, the plaintiffs countered that Connecticut's trans-inclusive sports policy creates an environment in which "boys displacing girls in competitive track events in Connecticut" will occur, thus violating Title IX, which broadly prohibits discrimination in educational settings on the basis of sex.

However, the defendants argued that no such violation had occurred, contending that prohibiting discrimination based on transgender status falls within the scope of Title IX.

The dispute continues. The Supreme Court ruled this year that a transgender girl in West Virginia could continue to compete in her middle school cross country and track teams during her ongoing appeal. Congressional House Republicans recently passed a bill that would amend federal legislation and allow the barring of transgender female athletes from competing in sports with cisgender females.

The Biden administration also proposed a ruling this year which gives schools the authority to place some restrictions on transgender athletes, particularly at the high school and college levels, including the ability to keep transgender athletes from participating on certain teams. However, the ruling prohibits K-12 schools and colleges from enacting a comprehensive ban preventing all transgender athletes from participating in any sport as their chosen gender identity, contrary to laws already enacted in several states.

The Biden administration ruling has been met with a mixed response. It permits schools to exclude some transgender athletes, acknowledging critics' concerns that transgender females competing in women's sports gives them an unfair advantage as well as creates the potential for sports-related injuries. However, it also gives protection to transgender students by including them under federal anti-discrimination laws. It is expected that both supporters and opponents of transgender athletes will challenge portions of this recent ruling.

Some states argue that including transgender students under federal anti-discrimination laws is a violation of states' rights. More than 20 states have already enacted their own laws preventing transgender athletes from competing as their chosen gender identity. Many have voiced concerns that the significant variations in these laws between states have caused confusion and added to more controversy, particularly when competitions occur across state lines.

Others argue that these laws prohibiting transgender athletes' participation in certain scenarios are needed to protect cisgender females, with some congressional Republicans advocating to limit Title IX's definition of sex to solely what one's reproductive biology and genetics are designated at birth. Some wonder what protections cisgender females may need when it comes to competing against transgender athletes. What is currently being done to level the playing field, aside from banning transgender athletes from competing as their affirmed gender?

Sports organizations have set different thresholds for participation. The National Collegiate Athletic Association requires one year of hormone therapy. The International Olympic Committee has selected a guideline in which transgender women could compete after one year of having testosterone levels below 10 nanomoles per liter.



JENNIFER
JU

Recent studies show that with hormone treatment over 90 percent of transgender women achieve a low testosterone level equal to that of cisgender women. The drop in testosterone level is accompanied by a drop in levels of hemoglobin, which are red blood cells whose functions include oxygen delivery. Hemoglobin is strongly linked to physiologic endurance and is found in higher levels in males. However, within approximately three to four months of hormone therapy, hemoglobin levels in transgender females equal that of their cisgender counterparts.

Although the differences in testosterone and hemoglobin levels can be minimized with hormone therapy, many point out that differences in lean body mass and muscle strength remain. (There is some decline in both of these factors in the first 12 months of hormone therapy, with possible further decline in the subsequent months.) Others point out that the height of transgender athletes is not affected by hormone therapy, which is more meaningful in sports in which height is considered an advantage. Many raise safety concerns stemming from these residual differences between cisgender and transgender athletes, particularly in contact and collision sports.

Most sporting organizations, including the IOC, state that many of these advantages are significantly minimized in transgender females who have not gone through male puberty.

Interestingly, there is some research that transgender women athletes may actually face some disadvantages due to the mismatch between the reduction in muscle mass and hemoglobin triggered by hormone therapy and their generally larger body frames. This mismatch can negatively impact factors such as endurance and speed.

Considering these points, sports physicist Joanna Harper suggests that perhaps shifting the focus to "meaningful competition" may

be more helpful, pointing out this is possible even in sports where certain players have other inherent advantages. For instance, in baseball the configuration of the field favors left-handed players.

At the heart of this ongoing debate are questions concerning issues of fairness, equity and equality. Many may agree with US Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona's statement that "Every student should be able to have the full experience of attending school in America, including participating in athletics, free from discrimination."

The problem is that there is disagreement about whether it is cisgender or transgender athletes who are facing discrimination and unfair treatment. If both parties are being afflicted, then whose rights are more important and trumps that of others?

How can we approach this issue with sensitivity and openness? Do we look at both sides' arguments and evaluate them in the context of how consistent they are in applying their purported values, including the claim of protecting the rights of women? Have we objectively analyzed the science that is presented to us instead of only relying on emotional arguments? Can we support mental health for all, including for transgender youth, in whom data shows an even higher prevalence of mental health issues than the general population?

Although it is easy to consider those with opposing viewpoints as the enemy, we may do well to try to find ways to work together and heed Mother Teresa's reminder: "If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other."

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

Recycling Tip: Recycling Plastic Properly

By Susan Wineland

Plastic began to be mass produced during the late 1950s, and production quickly took off. The benefits have been great, but excessive use has caused huge environmental and health costs.

Plastics are made of fossil fuels which don't break down. Instead, they clog our land, rivers, oceans and seas. They are in the air we all breathe, the water we drink, the foods we eat.

Global markets were severely impacted in

2018 when China banned the import of plastics for recycling, which had accounted for 70 percent of global recycling. This turned a revenue stream into an added cost for many recycling countries around the globe.

This impact has caused a lot of pessimism among recyclers. Nevertheless, it offers an opportunity to develop better solutions for a throwaway culture.

Plastic bags, bubble wrap and plastic film, can be recycled as long as you make sure they are clean. These can go into the plastic bag shed at the Orange Transfer Station,

the collection bins at grocery stores or local stores like Target or Home Depot. They cannot go into the blue bin or any recycling container.

You can also recycle clean plastics containers, glass, cans and bottles into the blue bin or the plastic recycling container at the Transfer Station.

Don't recycle oatmeal-type containers, black plastic bags, snack bags or a thick composite material bag like bird seed, dog food, frozen food or mulch bags. All of these things have to go into the trash.

Wherever you choose to recycle, please don't contaminate the container with items that don't belong there. Remember, no black plastic products or polystyrene are recyclable; those have to go into trash. Orange gets charged for contaminated loads, and the entire mess has to be thrown out.

To find out if specific items are recyclable, go to recyclect.com, type in the item and you'll know immediately. Otherwise, when in doubt, throw it out. For more info about recycling in Orange, visit orangerecycles.com or [facebook.com/ORCinCT](https://www.facebook.com/ORCinCT).

Colonial Toyota Presents:

The 2023 Milford Regional Trust Golf Classic

Monday, July 31, 2023

Registration: 8:30 am; Shotgun start: 10:30 am

Includes breakfast to start your day, then delicious barbecue, a Happy Hour with open bar, raffles, 50/50 and so much more!

All proceeds go to providing scholarships and educational opportunities to local youth!

SCAN ME!



Colonial
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2023 Golf Classic



Providing Scholarships and Educational Opportunities

Real Talk: You Ask, A Pro Answers

Energy Audit Information Is Available

Several years ago I had Eversource send a technician to check my home's efficiency for heat and air. It was fascinating to see how they covered the front door with a large red rubber seal containing a fan. This mechanism pulled air from all over the building.

The results were great: the home was pretty airtight, except for some pipes under the sink near an outside wall where air was coming up from the basement. The company immediately sealed off a few holes, and I was appreciative. Today these tests are even more sophisticated, giving homeowners an education on everything from having your home breathe better to newly designed hot water heater technology with heat pumps and electricity. Your attic may also hold the key to greater air circulation and more economical energy bills.

I recently attended a class given by en-

ergy specialists, including United Illuminating and Eversource. There was much discussion about electric heat and mini splits that provide heat and air throughout a home, eliminating the need for forced air furnaces, natural gas and oil heat.

These mini heating stations are much more affordable and efficient with today's standards. This information is available online at places such as projectgreenenergy.org. It explains that if you order an energy audit – which is virtually free right now – you may become a candidate for all sorts of rebates. Heat, air, hot water heat pumps and insulation, specifically closed cell spray foam, are all connected to huge deductions. Connecticut wants to help homeowners become more



BARBARA LEHRER

efficient.

The electric companies also claim that they are going to be lowering their rates, which will make a huge difference if and when you switch over to electric fuel. They explain that the air flow in your home becomes part of the energy that balances the home's temperature.

The rebate process includes windows as well. Your home can be weatherized to reach the best guidelines of energy efficiency. The Energize CT website will assess and service your home, giving you information and assistance toward maximum efficiency. The site claims this will reduce noise, pollen, humidity, drafts and roof aging. There are smart e-loans to get you set up with major changes if you

chose. New construction homes will all be electric heat in the near future.

Whether you need this service or just want to invest in these initiatives for energy, the Connecticut Green Bank can sell you a liberty note, like a stock, to help the environment and invest in your children's future. We are all concerned about the years to come and Connecticut has become a forerunner in the study, approval, action and commitment to helping families improve their costs to live.

You can research quality trained appraisers who can help you learn about your own home and reach out further to get aid with upgrading the efficiency of your property. Happy spring.

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

Orange Historical Society Participating In The Great Give

The Orange Historical Society is participating in The Great Give in early May to raise funds for its programs.

The Great Give is a 36-hour online fundraising event created by The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven in 2010. It unites donors with nonprofits serving greater New Haven, raising money and awareness for causes in the region. The event includes matching funds and prizes from The Community Foundation, the Valley Community Foundation and other sponsors.

In 2022, more than \$3.46 million was

raised for over 500 nonprofits.

The Orange Historical Society's fundraising efforts have been down in the past three years due to COVID-19. Historical cooking lessons and dining events at the Bryan-Andrew House are beginning once again, as well as other revenue-generating events such as the Historical House Tours, The Academy Tag Sales, Antique Doll Sale and the Country Fair.

To donate, visit thegreatgive.org before 8 p.m. on May 4 and choose one or more charitable organizations. You can also help nonprofits through peer-to-peer fundraising.

Beth-El Center To Hold Annual Gala Fundraiser

Beth-El Center is hosting its annual spring gala on Saturday, June 17 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Grassy Hill Country Club in Orange. Every year, corporate and civic leaders join the gala to raise funds that will support the center's shelter, food and outreach programs to alleviate poverty, hunger and homelessness in the greater Milford area, shoreline communities and the lower Naugatuck Valley.

The event will feature a 1960s Summer of Love theme and includes a signature cocktail hour, sit-down dinner, live music from The Elwoods, dancing, a live auction and an

awards ceremony. The Beth-El Individual Community Star award will be given to Kelly Fitzgerald of United Way of Greater New Haven. The Business Community Star award will be given to TEAM Inc., one of the Center's housing assistance partners. The Honorary Community Star will be awarded to Milford Mayor Benjamin Blake in honor of his service to Beth-El and the Milford community at large.

Tickets for the gala are \$100 per person. To sponsor the event or to secure tickets, visit bethelmilford.org/gala or call Troy Gonda at 203-876-0747.

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The Rotary Club of Orange

Rotary Receives Volunteer Award

As I have written in this column over the years, Rotary Club of Orange – and Rotary International as a whole – takes great pride in providing services to those in need locally, regionally and globally. We do this because we are people who recognize that we are blessed with health, financial security and the ability to readily access the things that we need and want in our lives. At the same time, however, we are also aware that there are people who are challenged in various ways, through no fault of their own, and are not similarly blessed.

To deliver on our mission of “Service Above Self,” we seek out organizations with which we can partner to provide assistance in several forms. One such form is financial aid to support charitable organizations that rely on philanthropic sources to fund their efforts to provide service to communities in need. The second form that our efforts involve is to provide hands-on assistance by rolling up our sleeves and working at

events that these organizations hold.

One such organization with which our club has partnered is Marrakech of New Haven. Founded in 1971, Marrakech provides a broad array of programming for children and adults with and without disabilities throughout Connecticut. They assist individuals who face barriers in securing employment, connecting to necessary supportive systems, accessing housing and participating fully as contributing members of the community. The individuals we serve are encouraged to strive for long-term goals such as higher levels of self-sufficiency and greater acceptance by the communities in which they live.

Over the years, our club has participated in several service projects in support of Marrakech



ROGER TAUSIG

ch clients, a number of whom live with significant physical and intellectual challenges. This past December, members of our club worked at Marrakech’s annual holiday party, held at Holy Infant Church in Orange. Marrakech needed outside help to serve food and provide other assistance to hundreds of attendees and asked our club if we could help.

Rotarians Sharon Ewen and Elizabeth Burns organized a group of our members to step in and provide the needed assistance. I, along with eight other Orange Rotarians, served food from a buffet and got to personally interact with the client population – a most moving experience.

In addition to the opportunity to reflect on my comparatively good fortune, I was struck by the incredible work that Marrakech does for people with a wide variety of profound physical and in-

tellectual challenges. Seeing these people firsthand gave me an appreciation for the fact that a place like Marrakech exists and cares for people in need, in many cases for years and years.

As a result of our volunteer efforts that night, Marrakech selected our club to receive the Suzanne N. Jovin Volunteer of the Year award at Marrakech’s 33rd annual Founders’ Award Ceremony. Marrakech’s Founders’ Award Ceremony recognizes people and groups that exemplify the principles and philosophy of those who founded Marrakech over 52 years ago. Those qualities include commitment, dedication, a “can-do” attitude and involvement in projects aimed at creating positive change in the community.

We are honored and extremely proud to have been selected to receive this award, as it validates the fact that we are executing on our mission by serving others in accordance with our mission to provide “Service above Self.”

Just Floored

The Joy Of Sunporch Rooms

There is something special about a sunporch room that makes you feel like day-dreaming or relaxing. Sunrooms in the summer are a great place to lounge around and look at nature.

Sunrooms can take on unusual shapes, making it tough to design the space that suits your needs. Area rugs can be the focal point to pull the room together, whether you decide to use one large rug with playful patterns or multiple small rugs to add interest and depth to the space.

A pop of greenery can go a long way in enhancing the welcoming vibe of the space. I enjoy using large topiaries and oversized potted trees, mostly tropical plants.

Creating multiple hangout points is always fun, from a sitting area to table and chairs. Focus on a neutral palette and plenty of wooden touches.

Wicker was always a mainstay in sunrooms, but the design element has evolved to multiple vibes. Furniture pieces with rattan, metal and wood have become more popular design features in a sunroom. Adorable coffee tables with unique shapes, exciting drops of color in pillows and wall paint are also used. It is a great space to design for a fun and whimsical feel.



ANNAMARIE AMORE

Even though sunporch rooms are normally small spaces in your home, they also present a unique opportunity to have a bit more fun in design. Don’t be afraid to use bold colors, wallpaper or flooring with pattern designs.

Sunporch rooms are also a great place to put your home office. An extravagant desk, with a designer chair along with well-placed accessories can transform this space into a creative oasis.

Sunrooms normally get cheated on stunning lighting. Don’t forgo this: fixtures, extraordinary fans and sconces that work with

your theme. It will give the space more dimension.

Make the most of whatever you have to work with; arrange your furniture to take advantage of whatever your views may be. From the pool to outdoor landscaping to mountains, with cozy furniture positioned to take in all the scenery and a side table for whatever you’re eating or drinking, you don’t need much for a relaxing space.

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

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Travel Matters

Venice In 72 Hours

We recently spent three exciting days in Venice. This city of canals is a unique destination in Italy, and having traveled to 67 countries, one of my favorite cities in the world. From the Doge's Palace, the veritable symbol of Venice from 1340, to the romance of Gondola rides to Cichetti wine bars, Venice is truly magical.

The Doge's Palace is recognized as a Gothic masterpiece. For history buffs, 120 doges – magistrates – governed the city of Venice from this building for nearly 1,000 years. It features great masterpieces of Titian and Tintoretto artwork and has been beautifully restored. To enjoy it fully you should get a guided skip-the-line tour, or a Venetian museum pass at minimum. The tour ends with a walk on the infamous Bridge of Sighs. There is also a "Secret Itineraries of the Doge's Palace" tour available for those who have been before.

Gondola rides are uniquely Venetian, and can be taken all over the city's canals for a great authentic experience. Cichetti is the name for Venice's version of tapas, bite-sized appetizers that are served in many wine bars all over the city. Bar All'Arco is one of the most famous near the Rialto fish market.

This was our third trip here, so we went off the beaten path a bit. We attended a concert with orchestra and opera singers garbed in baroque costume in a 17th century theater, featuring Rossini and Verdi operatic arias, including the Barber of Seville. We visited the Accademia with its amazing 14th to 18th century art, by vaporetto, the water taxi which makes travel through Venice so easy. And we "got lost" intentionally in the alley-



KAREN QUINN-PANZER

ways behind our hotel on the left bank of Rialto Bridge, a neighborhood we had not experienced before. We stayed at the H10 Palazzo Canova, a modernized four-star hotel in a former palace with a rooftop bar – with five-star views.

We also did a few "must-dos" when in Venice. Most notably, we had cocktails at Cafe Florian, outdoors in San Marco square with the beautifully restored St Mark's cathedral in full view. The orchestra played classical and jazz tunes. Aperol spritzes (and other drinks) are served on a silver tray with potato chips and a bowl of olives.

We had lunch on the canal in the Cannaregio district with a wonderful burrata salad and bruschetta. We strolled through the al-

leyways of Venice shopping for handmade Venetian masks (incomparable to any other mask in the worlds) and Venetian leather bags.

Other favorites include a boat trip to Murano and Burano islands. The islands are home to Murano glass sculptures and Burano lace and populated by pastel-colored houses. The Peggy Guggenheim Museum in the Dorsaduro area, only two vaporetto stops from San Marco, is a veritable treasure trove of modern art, a private collection in a villa open to the public, and highly recommended. Different festivities are available depending on when you go. Arrividerci Venezia.

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

Wine Talk

Lighter Wines For Spring

Spring is here. It is the time of year we consider some lighter, easier drinking wines to go with some warmer weather.

Changing the wine we drink with the seasons gives us a chance to experience different varietals and different food pairings. When the weather gets warmer, we can try some wines that are clean and light.

The acid associated with white wines are great choices in warmer weather. The refreshing, crisp qualities of many whites make them great warmer weather companions. Dry whites with lots of acidity are refreshing. Choose some unbaked wines, which would include Albariño, Sauvignon Blanc, and Pinot Gris. They all pair well with seafood and chicken dishes. They have a light, fresh taste. These are meant to be drunk young, when they are the most fresh and fruity.

Unoaked chards are a great choice also. Many refer to this wine as Chablis. The wine

has no butter and no oak; it is light and crisp and a great choice in warmer weather.

Rose wines have been out of favor for some time, but they are making a comeback. They have some characteristics of both red and white wines and are quite versatile. I don't think it should be reserved exclusively for summertime. It pairs well with fish and lighter meats. Many have a nice citrus aftertaste with lots of red berries. Roses are made of all different grapes and in a variety of regions. Light-colored rose tends to be dryer and more refreshing. The darker roses have more weight.

Sparkling wines are a possibility also. Many sparkling wines are crisp and light. They go well with green salads and fresh



RAYMOND SPAZIANI

fruits. The bubbles can be quite refreshing. Many are less expensive than Champagnes. Try some Cava from Spain and Franciacorta from Italy. Both wines are generally well made. My favorite is Prosecco from Italy. It is light, bright and refreshing and relatively inexpensive.

Lighter bodied red wines work in the spring as well. Red wines with lower tannins and more acid can work. Grenache and Pinot Noir come to mind. Many of the experts recommend Tempranillo also. I haven't found one that is light enough for my spring tastes, however. On warmer days reds should be served at cool room temperature. A slightly chilled red can make a big difference, especially in the nose of the wines. Save the Cabernet for the fall.

Temperature is important when serving wine. Americans drink their reds too warm and their whites too cold. Try taking the whites out of the fridge 15 to 30 minutes before serving. Put the reds in the fridge 15 to 30 minutes beforehand. Experiment with your wine temperatures. You should find a warmer white more flavorful. The reds should have a greater bouquet and be more floral when you chill them for a short time.

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.

St. Lawrence School Holding Shred Event

St. Lawrence School will have a truck from The Shredding Source in the school parking lot at 231 Main St. West Haven, on Saturday, June 3 from 9 a.m. to noon. Anyone who has excess paper is welcome, whether it's to declutter a home or business or protect themselves or others from identity theft. The cost is \$10 per box, or \$25 for three boxes.

Households regularly receive mail and have boxes of documents stored that can't simply be thrown away without risk of troubles down the road. As a result, paper can easily pile up to a level that becomes a

problem. A shred event makes it easy to get rid of the boxes of paper that have accumulated. "Simply bring them in your trunk to the St. Lawrence parking lot. A volunteer will be there to help put it in the shredding truck, so there's no heavy lifting and you leave knowing your information has been securely shredded," said Frank Arnone, principal of St. Lawrence School. "We're looking forward to seeing the public and helping them protect themselves, their businesses and their customers against identity theft and fraud."

Orange Senior Center Trips Coming

The Orange Senior Center is planning three trips in June and July.

June 20, 2023: St Clement's Castle Luncheon & Show: Singing impressionist Eric Kearns pays tribute to some of the greatest vocalists in music from the 50s to the 80s. The show includes a family style dinner: garden salad, pasta, roast pork loin and salmon with maple glaze, vegetable, potato, rolls, dessert and beverage. The cost is \$116 per person with transportation. There is minimal walking.

June 25, 2023: S.I.N. (Spending It Now) Foundation at the Newport Playhouse: A wealthy widow living in an upscale retirement community is tired of handing out money to her unappreciative children, so she starts the

S.I.N. (Spending It Now) Foundation. The trip includes a buffet style dinner: oven roasted chicken, mussels, corn on the cob, roasted bliss potatoes, choice of New England clam chowder or garden salad with dessert and beverage. The cost is \$179 per person with transportation. There is minimal walking.

July 18, 2023: Lobster and Great Show at the Log Cabin: Michael D'Amore will perform. Enjoy a lunch of lobster or prime rib, potato salad and coleslaw, lobster and crab cakes, barbeque chicken, with dessert and coffee. The cost is \$132 per person with transportation. There is minimal walking.

For more information, visit orange-ct.gov/782/Community-Services.

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Here's To Your Health

Stress Kills

There is no escaping the fact that stress can kill you. It's not the stressful situations that can kill you; it's how you handle those situations that is the culprit. The American Institute of Stress as well as the Mayo Clinic report the stress hormone cortisol gets released, wreaking havoc on immune and digestive systems. Chronic stress can trigger heart attacks or strokes.

While some people can simply move past the stress, others may become overwhelmed and unable to cope. However, in my industry I am finding that many of my clients have "normalized" their stress rather than dealing with it. The fight-or-flight mode can be helpful if you're in a dangerous situation, but our bodies weren't meant to live there. We are supposed to return to homeostasis.

In my profession I've noticed since 2020 that my clients are more just "living with it," and it's normal for them to be in a constant state of stress. I'm scratching my head, asking why? Recently our family suffered an unexpected loss, so it's not that I can't em-

pathize. I'm not talking about tragedy. I'm speaking about going to bed at 1:30 a.m. because you're watching a TV show knowing full well your alarm is going off at 5:30 a.m. to begin your workday. I'm talking about retired people overscheduling themselves for board meetings and volunteer work. I'm talking about working a job where you are being emotionally abused by your boss yet you aren't looking to find another job.

We need to be intentional about combatting stress, now more so than ever. The American Psychological Association reports that "Americans have been profoundly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and that the external factors Americans have listed in previous years as significant sources of stress remain present and problematic. These compounding stressors are having real consequences on our minds and bodies."



MICHELE TENNEY

You are a spirit that has a soul that lives in a body, and stress will inhibit all three dimensions and make you sick if not kill you altogether.

One of the best ways to combat stress is to exercise. However, what I'm seeing in my gym is that people are showing up with little energy to bust into their stress. This leads me to ask my clients what else they are going to do to combat their stress.

Massage therapy is a great way to reduce stress. I am going for a "float" session this week. But those are temporary stress relievers. It's important to recognize yourself as worthy of happiness. Sometimes making difficult decisions like cutting yourself down from eight commitments to four, finding a job that is enjoyable or simply lowering the number of hours a week your work may be helpful. You need to take charge and make solid choices and changes. Maybe it's as simple as being mindful and

having spirituality in your life.

You are worth every bit of effort you put into yourself. You are worth living your best life to its fullest potential. We were created to live long, healthy lives – body, soul and spirit. Start today. It's never too late. Set an alarm to go to bed and stick to it. Drink your daily requirement of water. Eat more veggies and fruit. Take a bubble bath. Give someone a hug or ask for one for yourself. Stay connected to positive people who will lift you up, not tear you down. I believe in you. As Lao Tzu wrote, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."

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.

Milford Library To Host Talk With Subversive Comedian

The Milford Public Library will host a virtual talk on Wednesday, May 10 with Academy Award-nominated comedian Jena Friedman to discuss her debut collection, Not Funny. The book takes on the third rails of modern life in her bold and subversive style, with essays that explore cancel culture, sexism, work, celebrity worship and dead baby jokes.

Growing up, Friedman didn't care about being likable. And she never wanted to be a comedian, either. A child of the 90s, she wouldn't discover her knack for the funny business until research for her college

thesis led her to take an improv class in Chicago.

That anthropology paper, written on race, class and gender in the city's comedy scene, was, in Friedman's own words, "just as funny as it sounds." But it did lay the groundwork for a career that has seen her write and produce for The Daily Show with Jon Stewart, the Late Show with David Letterman and the Oscar-nominated Borat Subsequent Moviefilm.

In a moment where women's rights are being rolled back, fascism is on the rise

and so many of us could use a breather as we struggle to get by, Friedman applies her unique gifts to pull a laugh from things deemed too raw, too precious and too scary to joke about. She shares her stories of taking on those who told her she was too brash, too edgy and too "unlikable" to make it. She dissects how we get coerced into silence on the issues that matter most, until they've gone too far afield to be turned back around again.

Friedman is a comedian, filmmaker, and creator of AMC's Indefensible and Soft Focus with Jena Friedman on Adult

Swim. She has worked on The Daily Show with Jon Stewart, Late Show with David Letterman and her writing has appeared in The New Yorker, ARTNET and The Guardian. She was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay and won a Writer's Guild of America award for her work on Borat Subsequent Moviefilm. She splits her time between Los Angeles and New York.

The event runs from 8 p.m. to 9 p.m. Registration is required. Register at <https://libraryc.org/milfordpubliclibrary/26231/register>.

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Bankruptcy

Discharging Student Loans In Bankruptcy...Maybe

The first student loans per se were given by Harvard University to its own students in 1840. At that time, Harvard was a private single-sex educational institution, and its students were all male.

Over 100 years later came the GI Bill in 1944. This gave World War II veterans access to free education.

Sparked by the launch of the Sputnik satellite, the 1958 National Defense Education Act provided student loans only to those majoring in math, science and engineering to compete with the Soviet Union, as some believed the United States as a nation had lacked in the areas of science and technology overall.

Equal access to education for men and women in all fields eventually came to fruition. On Nov. 8, 1965 at 12:30 p.m. in the Strahan Gymnasium at his alma mater, Southwest Texas State College in San Marcos, Texas, President Lyndon B. Johnson unlocked the “door to education,” as he put it, by signing the Higher Education Act. Right before he signed the legislation into law, the president said in a rousing speech that “education is no longer a luxury.”

That act created student loans as we know them today.

By the early 1970s, many young adults

were filing for bankruptcy and discharging student loans right after graduating from college and graduate school, before embarking on their careers and making significant amounts of money.

Federal regulations were put in place in 1976 to stop the discharge of student loans, with some exceptions for the ill-defined “undue hardship.” In the 1978 Bankruptcy Reform Act, the bankruptcy code was amended to reflect the same effect of those federal regulations.

The Eighth Circuit established a “totality of the circumstances” test for student loan discharge in the early 1980s in the case of *Andrews v. South Dakota Student Loan Assistance Corp.*

But the big change came in the 1987 case of *Brunner v. New York Higher Education Services Corp.*, which created a highly specified three-prong test for undue hardship: (1) that the debtor cannot maintain, based on current income and expenses, a “minimal” standard of living for herself and her dependents if forced to repay the loans; (2) that additional circumstances exist indicating that this state of affairs is likely to persist for a significant



THERESA ROSE DEGRAY

portion of the repayment period of the student loans; and (3) that the debtor has made good faith efforts to repay the loans.

This made student loan discharge nearly impossible for most. It remains the law in the majority of circuits.

Thirty-five years later, the Department of Justice on Nov. 17, 2022 issued guidance for its attorneys handling cases seeking discharge of student loan debt in coordination with the Department of Education. The purpose of the guidance is to “enhance consistency and equity in the handling of these cases.” The guidance pertains to all bankruptcy cases filed in all circuits.

Let’s take a step back and examine the procedure of seeking discharge of student loan debt. To begin, one must file for bankruptcy. Inside that bankruptcy case, the debtor must then file an adversary proceeding, which is, for all intents and purposes, a lawsuit against the student loan company.

Prior to 2022, the debtor would have to pass all three prongs of the Brunner test or the totality of the circumstances test, depending on the circuit. But now, before they get

to the tests, the debtor has to fill out and submit an attestation form to the Department of Justice. The DOJ can recommend to the court full or partial discharge, and the case can then be settled outside of court. Alternatively, the DOJ can refuse discharge, and the case then goes to the judge for trial. In that case, the Brunner test or the totality of the circumstances test is applied.

At first blush, this doesn’t seem like a significant change. But it is quite remarkable, as the DOJ relies on these three conditions: (1) the debtor presently lacks an ability to repay the loan; (2) the debtor’s inability to pay the loan is likely to persist in the future; and (3) the debtor has acted in good faith in the past in attempting to repay the loan.

These factors are different than Brunner or the totality of the circumstances, and dare I say, more lenient.

Attorney Theresa Rose DeGray is the owner of Consumer Legal Services, LLC, a debt relief agency in Orange helping people file for bankruptcy relief under the bankruptcy code, among other legal services. She can be reached at TRD@ConsumerLegalServicesLLC.com or 203-713-8877.

Rotary To Host “Pancakes Under The Pavilion” For Seniors

The Orange and Woodbridge Rotary clubs are sponsoring a pancake breakfast for seniors residing in Woodbridge and Orange on Saturday, May 20 from 9 a.m. to noon. There is no cost for the event, but guests are asked to bring a nonperishable food donation for the club’s Purple Pantry food assistance program. Breakfast will be served

in the pavilion at High Plains Community Center in Orange and will include pancakes, bacon, juice and coffee or tea. The event is part of the Rotary Day of Service in which over 12,000 Rotarians from four states and two countries will participate in a variety of service projects. Contact Orange Community Services at 203-891-4784 to register.

Ocean State Job Lot Hiring For Orange Relocation

Discount retail chain Ocean State Job Lot is currently hiring for its store relocation in Orange, which will open this spring. The company offers a competitive pay and benefits package, including flexible hours; medical, vision and dental insurance, if eligible; profit participation; service awards; paid time off; 401K; and a 30 percent

store discount. It also offers an associate bonus referral program for associates to refer their friends and family. Associates and their referrals receive the option of a \$300 cash bonus or \$500 OSJL gift card. Applicants who are interested in part-time, full-time and seasonal positions may visit oceanstatejoblot.com/careers to apply.

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Orange Chamber of Commerce

Cornhole And So Much More

“Community is much more than belonging to something; it’s about doing something together that makes belonging matter.” – Brian Solis

What do community, cornhole, kid and family friendly activities, firefighters, dogs, burgers, ice cream, a balloon arch and a beautiful country club all have in common? See for yourself at the Orange Chamber Cornhole Tournament & Family Fun Day this Saturday, May 6 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Paugusset Club, located at 837 Dentree Dr. in Orange.

This is a free event open to the public with something for everyone. It’s an opportunity to connect with local businesses and organizations in fun and positive ways to create great family memories.

The Cornhole Tournament is for adults of all ages and offers a \$500 prize to the first-place team. If you don’t play cornhole, there’s a lot going on at the Shop Local Village with children’s happenings like facepainting, arts and crafts, a balloon arch for photos, games, children’s cornhole and more. Check out the Orange Chamber’s Facebook page to see the local

businesses and organizations that will be there to greet you. There’s also a raffle with prizes donated by many area businesses and organizations. Purchase tickets at the event for a chance to win some great items.

The Orange Volunteer Fire Department will be selling hotdogs, hamburgers and beverages, and the Mister Softee truck will be there selling ice cream. The OVFD will also have vehicles on site for the Touch-a-Truck along with JDog Junk Removal and Hauling.

A huge thank you to main sponsor, AVANGRID SCG UI, venue sponsor The Paugusset Club and media sponsor the Milford-Orange Times. This event is made possible by their generous contributions. Special thanks to Matt’s Homestead Foundation, The CT Healing Center and Keystone House for organizing and running the adult cornhole tournament.

May Lunch Talk and Money Manage-



**KATHY
CONVERSE
CHARBONNEAU**

ment Presentations at the Orange Senior Center: The chamber continues to partner with the Orange Senior Center to provide presenters for the Lunch Talk and Money Management series. The next Lunch Talk on Wednesday, May 17 from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. features chamber member Attorney Theresa Rose DeGray of Consumer Legal Services. DeGray will provide “Estate Planning Tips for Seniors” with valuable information.

On Thursday, May 18 from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m., join JR Romano and Matt Couterer from TrinityPoint Wealth for their money management presentation. Get answers to important questions such as: Am I maximizing my retirement income? Am I asking my financial advisor the right questions? And why are banks failing recently and what does it mean for me? The Lunch Talk and Money Management series provides information and resources specifically designed for seniors and their families. The public is invited to attend. If you are

not a member of the Senior Center, email director@orangectchamber.com to register.

Welcome to New Chamber Members: The chamber is thrilled to welcome our newest members, including Good Child Transitional Center located at 380 Boston Post Rd., Suite 5 in Orange. This bright and beautiful new child care center serves children 2-6 years old, providing full-day, full-year toddler and preschool child care for all families as an opportunity to learn, rather than just be supervised. For more information, call 203-800-4511. Local event planning business Greenery and Champagne has also joined the chamber. Owner Jessica Tarducci specializes in beautiful greenery and champagne walls, balloon arches and more. Check it out on Facebook and Instagram at [@greeneryandchampagne](https://www.instagram.com/greeneryandchampagne) or email jess@greeneryandchampagne.com for all your event planning needs.

Kathy Converse Charbonneau is the executive director for the Orange Chamber of Commerce. Contact her at 203-795-3328 or director@orangectchamber.com.

Town of Orange Notice of Annual Town Meeting

Notice is hereby given to the legal voters and those persons qualified to vote in Town Meetings of the Town of Orange, that the Annual Town Meeting of said Town will be held on Wednesday, May 10, 2023, at 7:30 p.m. in the gymnasium of the High Plains Community Center, 525 Orange Center Road, Orange, CT for the purpose of taking action at that time upon the following matters:

1. To authorize the Board of Selectmen to sell and convey land acquired by the Town through foreclosure of tax liens or by deed in lieu of foreclosure of tax liens.
2. To determine in accordance with Sections 12-142 and 12-144(a) of the Connecticut General Statutes the installment due dates for all property tax including the property tax on motor vehicles.
3. To receive and discuss the report of the budget prepared by the Board of Finance for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023.

By virtue of Town Charter, Section 2.6(c)1., Item 3 shall be voted on by machine ballot at an adjourned Town Meeting-Referendum to be held on Wednesday, May 17, 2023, between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. (E.D.T.) at the High Plains Community Center, 525 Orange Center Road, Orange, CT 06477.

Dated at Orange, Connecticut this 21st day of April 2023.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

TOWN OF ORANGE

ATTEST: Mary Shaw

Town Clerk

Milford Education Foundation To Showcase Foran Planetarium

The Milford Education Foundation will be hosting their fourth Evening Under the Stars event on May 5 from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Joseph A. Foran High School.

Foran has a newly renovated planetarium which the foundation will showcase, as well as promote other education outreach initiatives that they conduct for the local community throughout the year.

Tickets are \$10 per person. There will be four 40-minute planetarium shows, conducted

at 5:30 p.m., 6:20 p.m., 7:10 p.m. and at 8 p.m. Musical entertainment, as well as games and activities for kids, are included in the ticket price. Food trucks will be at hand for those who wish to purchase food at the event.

Foran is located at 80 Foran Rd. in Milford. Space is limited for this event. Tickets are available by going to milfordedfoundation.org/events-1/2023-an-evening-under-the-stars. To learn more, go to milfordedfoundation.org.

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Book Reviews

The Book Of Top 10 Beatles Lists By Charles F. Rosenay

As a woman of a certain age, I grew up listening to and loving the Beatles. I remember coming home from our weekly Sunday trip to a Long Island beach and hearing the fans screaming as we passed Shea Stadium. I remember eating a peanut butter and jelly sandwich as I watched them on the Ed Sullivan Show. My parents were very tolerant when I asked them to turn the car radio's volume up whenever a Beatles song came on. I remember trying to figure out which radio personality I liked better: Murray the K on WMCA or Cousin Brucie on WABC.

Of course I had my favorite: Paul. He was the cute Beatle.

This book helped me revisit my Beatles memories. It is a compilation of lists from musicians, actors, athletes, radio and television personalities and the author himself. Each list highlights a particular area of interest for the list-maker's field of expertise.

Legendary disc jockey Cousin Brucie identifies his top 10 favorite songs. Roag Best (brother of the group's original drummer, Pete Best) writes about his favorite items in the Liverpool Beatles museum.

This volume, however, is not limited to performers and entertainers. British horror writer Ramsey Campbell has a list as well. His list begins with his recollections of seeing the Beatles perform in concert when he was a teenager. Favorite songs, movies and performances by other artists with their interpretations of Beatles songs also made his list.

An interesting list was penned by former television talk show host Dick Cavett. He describes interviewing John Lennon and Yoko Ono on their two appearances on his



CARMELA DEVITO

show. He relates his experience interviewing George Harrison and his reaction to sitting in the seat once occupied by Yoko Ono. He concludes his list by recollecting personal encounters with Paul and Ringo.

There are a lot of interesting facts in this book. For example, who knew that the Knickerbockers song Lies was theirs and not a rendering by the Beatles? The group covered many Beatles songs and were often mistaken for them because of their stylistic similarities and encounters with fans while the world was in the grip of Beatlemania.

Comedians also get their opportunity to share. Tommy Chong, of comedy duo Cheech and Chong, offered his reflections on what crosses his mind when he thinks about

the Beatles.

One of the more interesting lists has to do with the band members' personal lives: various relationships for each Beatle and the reasons for their eventual demise were reported.

Overall, this is a varied and multilayered look at how the Beatles music affected lives then and, more than 50 years after their breakup, now.

In keeping with the spirit of the book, here are my top 10 favorite Beatles songs: Yesterday, Eleanor Rigby, And I Love Her, If I Fell, All My Loving, Do You Want To Know a Secret, Grow Old with Me, The Long and Winding Road and Photograph.

Carmela DeVito, a voracious reader, is a retired social worker and a member of the Friends of the Milford Library.

Package Store Opens In West Haven



Package store Ye Olde Spirits held a ribbon cutting to celebrate its opening at 174 Main St. in West Haven. From left: Manager Arie Signore, manager Greg Purcell, Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce Director of Membership and Marketing Simon McDonald, owner Nick Conti, West Haven Mayor Nancy Rossi, Tax Collector Dorthy Chambrelli, City Clerk Patty Horveth, City Council member Colleen O'Connor and City Council member Greg Donovan. Photo by Greg Geiger.

Milford Library To Host Harmonica Show

The Milford Public Library will hold a live music and discussion event to get participants immersed in the world of harmonica, a versatile instrument that spans generations and musical genres. Using storytelling, historical facts and playing the instrument in a variety of styles, Bob

Hennessy will tell the story and share the music of the harmonica.

His fast-paced program is entertaining and educational. The all-ages show runs on Wednesday, May 17 in the library program room from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. No registration is required.

Milford Library To Show 3D Printing

The Milford Public Library is presenting a 3D printing demonstration on Wednesday, May 24 at 7 p.m. in the children's program room. The demonstration will include discussion

of the history of 3D printing, its future and techniques. Watch a 3D print being made. For questions, email fdanowski@milfordct.gov. No registration is required.



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Running

Prestigious Boston Run Gets Black Eye

As I sit here, I reflect on running the Boston Marathon 10 years ago. It was a year when a senseless act – a bombing – hurt innocent bystanders.

This year many who ran in 2013, came back to support “Boston strong,” proudly wearing their 2013 garb. It was an emotional year for many. There were many sharing stories of where they were, the confusion and the sadness. We came back to say nothing will kill the spirit of “Boston strong.”

Boston did not shine. Under new leadership, the focus seemed to have turned away from the true spirit of the event. Yes, Boston is an elite event, but we forgot about the thousands who run for other reasons.

Some run for personal reasons, some spiritual, and many to support the city of Boston. These runners contribute millions of dollars, representing all kinds of causes. They work tirelessly to train while working and raising millions to support many worthy organi-

zations. These runners bring in thousands of spectators and millions of dollars to the city. They are not elite, but they are a class of their own. They are the heart of the marathon and Boston on that day.

Under the new leadership we have lost sight of the spirit and the heart of the marathon. This year, support seemed to be focused on the elite. Support was pulled from the course early; timers were shut off and pulled from the streets right under runners’ feet. People were blowing off sidewalks, blowing garbage. And runners still persevered.

Water, Gatorade, and support was taken down. And at the end of the day the BAA ran out of medals.

I write on behalf of all those runners who followed me to the finish line to find their



CATHY BRADLEY

dream of being adorned with the coveted Boston Marathon Finishers Medal was just that – a dream. It truly broke my heart, watching from the sidelines on Boylston Street, which I had just run down, to see these runners. Many were there for the first and only time. They had run for six or more hours. They made their way to the finish line, receiving only a disappointment. They got a sheet of mylar with the BAA logo to confirm their completion of the prestigious Boston Marathon.

You have to run in their shoes to truly understand that the biggest part of the experience is when the medal is proudly worn in the company of other finishers, all acknowledging one other on the accomplishments of those 26.2 miles. That moment on that Monday cannot be reenacted. For many it’s their

one and only shot.

Boston is a very controlled race. The BAA knows exactly how many will run and the average time people are running. The time clocks are usually set for six hours. The BAA ran out of medals at 5:15.

There are people who travel from all over the world to get the experience of Boston. As a runner, there is nothing like that run down Boylston and being adorned with your medal. Many didn’t get it 10 years ago. And many didn’t have the experience again this year.

It is a shame that the spirit of Boston and “Boston strong” is lost on the BAA. But that’s not so for the runners.

We can only hope it will be better next year.

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

Amity High To Host STEAM Day For Fifth Graders

Amity Regional High School will be holding its annual STEAM Day event on Wednesday, May 31. All Bethany, Orange and Woodbridge fifth grade students are

invited to attend this and actively engage in science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics activities led by the ARHS students and staff.

Amity Students Finalists In CT Science And Engineering Fair

Throughout the second half of March, 18 of our Amity Regional High School science research students competed virtually in the Connecticut Science and Engineering Fair, the most prestigious science fair that

Connecticut has. Ten of the Amity students became finalists, which is a near-record high for the school. They were awarded more than \$95,000 in scholarships for their work.

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- Community Champions Network – face painting
- Good Child Transitional Center – items for children
- Greenery and Champagne – balloon arch for fun photos and selfies
- JDog Junk Removal & Hauling – touch-a-truck
- MerchantICS – merchant services sponsor
- Milestones Behavioral Services – children’s games
- Mister Softee Ice Cream Truck – ice cream treats
- Orange Chamber of Commerce – Bicentennial bricks
- Orange Historical Society – children’s games
- Orange Land Trust – conservation
- Orange Visiting Nurse Association – children’s crafts
- Orange Volunteer Fire Dept. – touch-a-truck
- Rubino Family Chiropractic – chiropractic services
- Saray Bakery & Ice Cream Shop – baked goods
- Sentinel Asset Management – financial planning
- SM Cooper Photographic Artist – children’s activity






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Foodie Foursome

Authentic Mexican Cuisine In Orange Shopping Plaza

How many times have you driven up or down the post Road between Orange and West Haven? Tucked away inconspicuously between Town Fair Tire and a party store is one of the most legitimate Mexican restaurants in the area: Baja Mexican Restaurant. The menu boasts their take on authentic Southern California-style Mexican cuisine. If you have been to Mexico or Cali, then you know that it is not about glitz and glamor, the atmosphere or ambiance – just really great food.

I hosted a guys' night out with Dan, Mike, Kevin and Dan's son Joey joining us for an 18th birthday treat. Yes, I know that is five instead of four. As we entered, there was a half-wall corridor that led into the dining area. When we accessed the room there was plenty of seating and a full-service bar.

One of my favorite features that sets Baja apart from other Mexican restaurants is the open salsa bar. After we were seated, our hostess, Nicolle, brought a bowl of freshly made chips, but no salsa. You get to go up to the unlimited salsa bar and choose from red or salsa verde, hot, mild or pico de gallo. We tried several. I made a combo of the hot pico and smooth mild red salsa. The salsa bar is an absolute favorite of our little group and the families and friends that were there dining that evening.

We started our feast, by chef Nemerio, with a couple of their special apps. The ceviche tostada was created in a style known from the tip of Baja in Mazatlán, Sinaloa.

The shrimp was marinated in lime juice, minced, and served with fresh salsa and salsa blanco. The ceviche was different than other great preparations in our area. It had a nice texture, incredible taste and the salsa blanco was a delicate sauce that tied it all together perfectly. Their next signature app was the nachos Mexicana. It was constructed with a huge mound of freshly made corn chips with melted cheeses with refried beans (which we had on the side), sour cream and a blend of sour cream and avocado whipped together along with thinly sliced steak (carne asada), sliced carrots and jalapeno and guacamole on the side. This was a huge serving. However, since it was a tasting for five, it disappeared with ease.

Our last appetizers were the shrimp Baja as well as a selection of tacos. The shrimp Baja was delicately prepared extra-large shrimp, salsa, olive oil and seasonings, sautéed and served over rice with sliced avocado and a touch of salsa blanca. The dish was well balanced and delicious. The tacos (a beef, a chicken and a fish) were all loaded with protein and tastefully prepared in fresh tortillas and served with shredded lettuce and cheese – and of course some salsa from the bar. We also had to try a margarita and sangria. Both were tasty, fresh with a balanced fruity flavor.

We started off our entrees with a fla-



STEVE COOPER

vorful chicken fajita plate. The grilled chicken was served with rice, beans, guacamole and grilled vegetables and two huge burrito-sized tortillas. While it does not come sizzling on cast iron, it is like everything else we had that evening – well balanced with the perfect seasoning. The veggies were plentiful, and the chicken was tender and tasty. And I am picky about my fajitas.

Staying with the classics, we chose the chicken enchiladas. We had two, each extremely large, one with rojo (red) and verde (green) salsa. Both salsas topped the enchiladas, one on each, and was more like a savory, mild and creamy, sauce. They were packed full, served with rice and beans, and incredibly delicious. Next was the Rafael's especial: a huge burrito served with your choice of protein or grilled vegetables. It was filled to the brink with protein, beans, rice and guacamole and covered with mole sauce and melted cheeses.

To complete our entrees and tour of the classics we had a chicken quesadilla. It was extremely large, with nice-sized pieces of chicken and melted cheese in every bite. It came with their fresh guacamole and sour cream, and of course some salsa from the salsa bar. All of our choices were as authentic as you would hope for. The portion portions were all generous.

We ended our evening with three dif-

ferent desserts. The creativity and visual presentation of the apple cinnamon chimichanga was spectacular and tasted as good as it looked. The apple slices were sautéed in butter, brown sugar and cinnamon and wrapped in a large flour tortilla. It was then deep fried and rolled in confectionary sugar, sliced in half, and served with vanilla ice cream, butterscotch, whipped cream and walnuts. Don't pass this one up; it's as good as it sounds.

The banana flautas had the bananas sautéed in Jamaican rum and wrapped in a large flour tortilla. It was then deep fried and rolled in confectionary sugar, sliced in half, and served with vanilla ice cream and chocolate syrup. Last up was the true classic: flan. It was definitely one of the best we had ever tried. It was a smooth traditional Mexican custard with caramelized sugar on top.

Baja is an unpretentious yet scrumptious, home-style prepared, California-style Mexican restaurant, elegant in its simplicity. It is located at 63 Boston Post Rd. in Orange, in the Plaza next to Town Fair Tire. For reservations call 203-799-2252. They are open at noon Wednesday through Sunday.

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.

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Mental Health

Mental Health Awareness Month: Recent Milestones

The recognition of May as Mental Health Awareness Month dates back to 1949, when advocates began working to make mental health a priority through outreach, education and action toward acceptance and parity.

There are many reasons to celebrate the milestones and accomplishments in the field of behavioral health in both policy and practice. These milestones have helped to propel a shift in public perception and how we address mental health and substance use needs at national, state and local levels.

The last few years have proven to be a challenge for everyone, but it also resulted in a long overdue recognition that caring for one's mental health is just as vital as addressing physical health needs. National efforts and priorities over the last few years have strengthened the mental health system and opened access in a number of ways.

One of the most impactful and accelerated changes to care delivery that we experienced in 2020 was the conversion to telehealth services to provide mental health and substance use treatment to individuals throughout the pandemic. Until that point, Husky/Medicaid in Connecticut did not allow for the use of telehealth for behavioral health services. Mental health providers swiftly shifted to platforms to accommodate needs in our communities, anticipating that it would be a lifeline for individuals impacted by loneliness and isolation during the pandemic.

The integration of telehealth into standard practice has opened access and reduced barriers to care for those who may be unable to receive services in an office setting.

In the summer of 2022, the Substance



JENNIFER FIORILLO

Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration awarded \$180 million from the American Rescue Plan to strengthen our existing national crisis and suicide response system. The launch of the new three-digit number to access the National Suicide Prevention Hotline (9-8-8) was supported with an expansion in call center capacity and centralized response. On a state level, funding was also

invested to enhance the crisis response system, including expanding call center and mobile crisis response capacity. A number of other initiatives have been coordinated to offer alternative settings for short-term crisis stabilization outside of the emergency room and inpatient settings.

Opioid and substance related overdoses and deaths continue to be a mounting concern in the US. The Substance Abuse and

Mental Health Services Administration announced \$30 million in funding in 2022 to increase access to a number of community harm reduction services to lower the risks associated with drug use. This funding is also being used to link individuals to treatment and other community resources.

These initiatives, in addition to a number of others supported by federal and state funders, help to elevate our behavioral health system and increase access to more adequate levels given the rise in demand for treatment that is widely apparent. We must continue to push forward with the idea that mental health is a top priority that significantly impacts the health and well-being of our communities.

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

Insuring Your Future

It's Vacation Time

The trees are blooming, the grass is growing, the peepers are chirping and the promise of summer is in the air. The vacation season has officially begun. I missed the last issue of the paper because I too was on vacation. Everyone needs a break to regroup and reenergize.

As part of your vacation planning, be sure to include travel insurance, especially if you are going out of the country. While most health insurance plans will cover medical expenses outside of the US, it is not a seamless process. The main challenge is that providers and medical facilities cannot easily process payments through American insurance companies. As a result, many health providers require that the patient pay the bill upfront and then apply for reimbursement upon their return home.

There is a way to avoid this issue if something occurs while you are out of the country that requires immediate medical attention. Travel insurance will cover the

cost of medical care at a hospital or other facility as well as emergency evacuation. The cost is based on the length of the trip and the traveler's age. If the trip includes some "risky" activities such as hang gliding, mountain climbing or repelling, you can add extra coverage. Most policies also include cancellation or interruption due to unexpected illness such as COVID. This can be important if you are delayed in your return because of a COVID diagnosis and subsequent quarantine. Some or all the cost associated with the extended stay (hotel, meals, transport) are covered under most policies.

There are a variety of options available, including deductibles ranging from \$0 to \$500 and coverage maximums from \$50,000 to \$1 million per person. You can also cover unexpected incidents such as lost luggage, missed flight connections



TRISH PEARSON

and cancellations.

Accidents or illnesses that require medical attention can occur at any age. I recommend purchasing travel insurance regardless of age or destination. The challenge is not the level of medical care, but the complications to the provider to process a claim through the American insurance system.

Travel insurance is available through travel agents who offer trip protection which might include medical coverage. Health insurance agents offer plans that cover both. To quote a client who recently purchased insurance for a trip to Italy, "I now have peace of mind that if anything unexpected happens, we are covered and at such a reasonable cost."

So, whether you are planning a trip to Paris or Peru, happy and safe travels in the months ahead. Bon voyage.

One important reminder: people who are covered under HUSKY are receiving information about renewal options. The guidelines have been updated and some people will find that they are no longer eligible due to income. All individuals who are losing HUSKY will have a special election period of 60 days in which to enroll in a plan through the health exchange. Most will be eligible for an advanced premium tax credit or the Covered CT program, which limits premiums and covers most out of pocket costs. Do not ignore the notices. Contact Access Health CT or an agent who is certified on the exchange who can assist with enrolling in a new plan.

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

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Seaside Restaurant Opens In Milford



Seaside restaurant Nautilus held a ribbon-cutting on April 26 to celebrate its grand opening in Milford. Owners Crystal Ardito-Myer and Nick Amoratis offer 30 percent off all food for veterans, active-duty military, active-duty police, firefighters and health care workers. The menu spans from seafood and steaks to New Haven-style pizza. Nautilus is located at 54 Naugatuck Ave. Photo by Robert Creigh.

Amity Special Ed Records Available To Former Students

Amity Regional School District #5, as per state guidelines, is properly disposing of student special education records. The records of any student who has received special services are maintained for six years after their class graduates.

Former Amity students who were born between 1998-2000 and/or graduated in 2017 who have received special services at the Amity Middle School Orange; Amity Middle School Bethany; or Amity

Regional High School may obtain their special education records.

You must call prior to claiming records in order to allow sufficient time to retrieve your records from the archives and schedule a time for pickup.

If you wish to obtain records, call 203-397-4820 and leave a detailed message with student name, date of birth and a phone number.

If records are not claimed by June 30, they will be destroyed.

Orange Pre-K Hosts Recycled Fashion Show



The Goddard School of Orange recently hosted its Pre-K Recycled Runway Fashion Show to celebrate Earth Day. Students upcycled different projects made from discarded materials as well as other eco-friendly projects inspired by science, technology, engineering, art and math. These projects were aimed at fostering creativity and imagination while giving children the opportunity to learn about recycling, going green and preserving the world around them. Photo courtesy of the Goddard School of Orange.

St. Mary School Basketball Champs



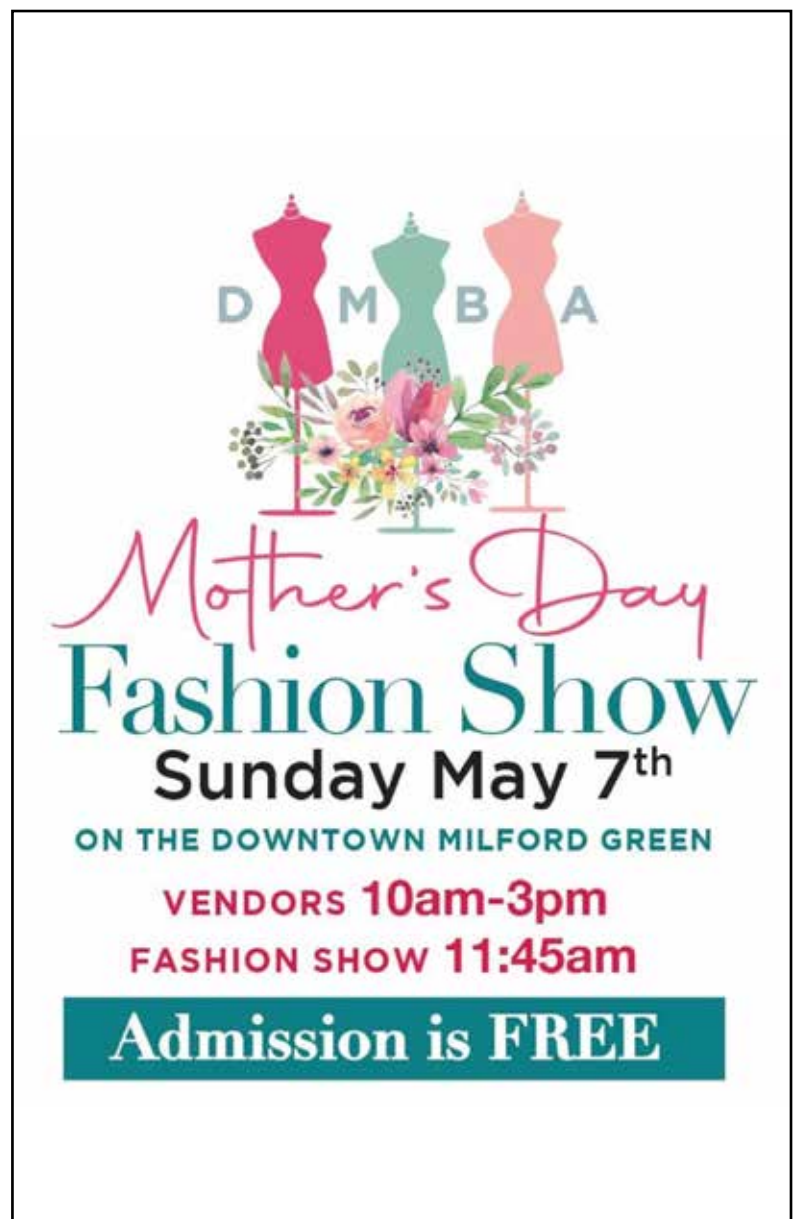
The St. Mary School JV Girls Basketball Team went undefeated this season with 24 wins. They won first place in the St. Mary School Tournament, captured first place in the Archdiocese of Hartford tournament, and most recently represented the Archdiocese of Hartford at the New England CYO Basketball Tournament on April 1, clinching a final victory over Our Lady of Mercy from East Greenwich, Rhode Island, in a 25-22 win at the championship games. Photo courtesy of St. Mary School.



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The Life And Times Of George Judson Smith

By Marilyn May

Anyone who has lived in Milford has certainly heard of George J. Smith, whose descendants have kept his name, legacy and businesses alive for more than 137 years. His son, grandsons and great granddaughter have carried on the real estate, insurance and funeral home businesses.

But who was George Judson Smith? Few men founded so many businesses, traveled so much, enjoyed so much and learned so much as this self-made man and intrepid traveler.

Smith (1863-1951) was born and raised in Milford and as a boy kept diaries and wrote stories of his childhood in the early 1860s and 1870s. In his later years, he wrote extensive diaries of his travels abroad.

His family lived at 171 Broad St., where Coldwell Banker Realty is today. The Smiths still own the land.

His boyhood pursuits were baseball, sledding, climbing trees, gathering hickory nuts and rowing to Charles Island, where he had some overnight stays. He had typical boyhood trials of falling out of trees, getting poison ivy and suffering an attack by wasps after he unknowingly disturbed their nest.

Early in the winter, the Wepawaug River behind Town Hall would begin to freeze, but it was not always safe enough for skating.

"Very few of my boyhood winter days passed without breaking through the ice and getting more or less of a ducking," he wrote.

By the end of winter, things were different. "The ice on the Wepawaug usually froze to a foot or more in thickness, and when it broke up in the spring, large cakes of ice would come floating down the river. We would run and jump from one cake to another. It was an exciting sport, but risky," he wrote.

Smith also recalled the day when a boy behind him slipped, and they both splashed into the river.

"We rolled along getting thoroughly soaked from head to foot. We scrambled out and did not linger long," he tells us.

"During certain times of the year there was good skating on the Green as there were places where the water would settle and freeze," he wrote.

"After a heavy fall of snow, it was the custom for the farmers who lived in or near Wheeler's or Bryan's farms to hitch their oxen to sleds and break open the roads to the center of town."

"This was always an occasion, enjoyed by the farmers and the townspeople. Sometimes, those who lived in the most northerly sections would be given assistance by those a little nearer to town, as in places the drifts were deep and hard to break through. After the forces had been joined they would proceed to the center, as many as 12 or 15 yokes of oxen," he wrote.

George's parents were Thaddeus Smith and Sarah DeForest Smith. When he turned 6, they decided it was time for him to go to school.

"Miss Anna Baird, whose memory I fondly cherish, kept a school for young children in a house on the corner of Broad and Center Streets, only a short distance from my home," he wrote.

"At the opening of school, a passage of scripture was read, and a prayer offered, and then Miss Baird would read us a story." Smith recalled that Baird's classes also included time for "The Commandments, and some of the psalms (that we) committed to memory."

"A few feet east of Miss Baird's house was a house belonging to a man by the name of George Washington Tibbals, a Civil War veteran, whose father served in the Revolutionary War," he wrote. "He had a large canvas picture...it must have been at least 10 feet long and 6 feet high of Washington crossing the Delaware River. On the 22nd day of Feb-

ruary (Washington's birthday), the picture was always hung on the side of the house facing the street and was admired by all the children."

Smith also recalled the Tibbals family. "Next to the Tibbals' house was a grocery on the corner of Broad and Wharf (High Street) streets, which had been kept by a member of the Tibbals family for many years."

At some point, someone got the idea to cement the barrel of a Revolutionary War cannon into the ground, muzzle-side down, on the corner in front of the Tibbals' store, (now Tony's Bikes). This relic remains in the same position, a valued memento of the war, and a real problem for some drivers.

One morning while at school, he heard the ringing of the bell at the First Church of Christ. "At that time, it was customary when death occurred to ring the bell: three for a girl, five for a boy, seven for a woman, and nine for a man."

It turned out that, "during the night, burglars had broken into the grocery and hardware store on the corner of Cherry and Prospect Street owned by Nathan Fenn. Mr. Fenn had been awakened by noise and rushed into the store, and in trying to intercept the thieves he was shot and killed."

The murderers were never apprehended. "My father worked at his trade making what was called 'turns,' a grade of fine shoes for the ladies for the Joyce Shoe Company of New Haven."

That job, however, was not to last forever, and the family fell on hard times.

"My father, having lost his eyesight, or at least it was so impaired, gave up his job as a shoemaker. My mother took in boarders for several years."

Fortunately, the Baldwin and Lamkin Shoe Factory was near young Smith's home. George Smith got an apprentice job and recalled, "My first duties were to sweep the first floor...and then assist in packing the shoes" He worked for \$3 a week for a year and then got a \$1 a week raise.

"A shoe cutter was considered as high a position as a shoe industry offered, with the exception of foreman. I learned the various stages leading up to the cutting department. It was slow work and at various times rather discouraging, but I finally succeeded in becoming a cutter. Most of the shoes manufactured were for ladies' wear, but one man, a Mr. Perry in Stratford, cut the uppers for men. He was a man over 70, and I was made his assistant and from him learned to take measurements and cut shoes for special customers.

"The working hours in those days were from 7 in the morning until noon and from 1 until 6," he said. Winter and summer were the busy times, but there was little work in the other seasons. During slow times, he dug gardens for neighbors, sawed wood, worked in a plant nursery and did anything he could to help the family.

"The year 1879 was the close of my school life, but not the end of my studies," he wrote. "I would have liked to have taken college courses but that seemed to be out of the question, so I bought some books and studied in the evenings."

Then one day, John C. North, who worked for a large insurance company in New Haven, bought a house on Broad Street.

"After a while, I asked him if I could act as his agent in Milford and see if I could get some business," he wrote.

It was slow work and did not bring much return.

"I continued to work at the shoe factory and solicited insurance in the evening...although the shoe business did not prosper," he wrote.

"Some years later, after Mr. North's death, the company gave me a full agency," and the same companies were represented for many years by what became the Smith Insurance



George J. Smith, circa 1886.

firm.

Along with his wife "Nellie," the former Ellen Rhoena Clark, they raised three sons and a daughter.

George J. Smith had four children: George J. Smith, Jr., Alvin Smith, Helen Smith, and Winthrop A. "Pink" Smith. "Pink" had three sons: Winthrop "Win" S. Smith, who ultimately ran the funeral home, Danforth "Dan" Smith who took over the insurance business and DeForest "Frosty" Smith, who headed the real estate enterprise. Today, Dan's daughter, Deirdre "Gremmy" Smith-Dey, of the fourth generation, carries on the insurance business.

However, the funeral home closed in 2021 and the property has been made into condos.

Meanwhile, back in 1917, George J. Smith and Nellie went by boat to Florida to a National Funeral Directors' meeting. The US, however, had just entered World War I and shipboard precautions had to be taken.

"At nightfall, no deck lights were shown, and curtains were drawn over the windows. At the time we were enroute, our son, Alvin, was on his way in a convoy ship to France," Smith wrote.

In 1930 Smith went to the World's Conference of Congregational Churches in Bourne, England: "To cross the Atlantic and visit Europe had been one of my ambitions." After the week-long conference, he and Nellie took an extended trip through France, Holland, Scotland, Germany, Switzerland and Austria.

Back home in 1931, Smith suffered a life-threatening medical episode. One doctor's diagnosis at New Haven Hospital was incurable cancer, but Dr. William F. Verdi at St. Raphael's Hospital also examined Smith and said it was an ulcer of the intestine that he could treat. The ulcer had spread and that meant another operation would be needed later.

"I was in critical condition and my recovery seemed doubtful," he wrote, but he was able to go home for a time to rest and gain strength.

"Three months later I was sent back to the hospital for another operation." Smith wrote he eventually had four operations.

"I was not able to take up active business duties...and on Dr. Verdi's advice, Nellie

and I went to California for several months."

Smith continued recovering and was excited to connect with Rotary Clubs in Pasadena, Los Angeles, Burbank and San Francisco.

Once back in Milford, his attention was turned to Nellie's health.

"My sickness had been a severe strain on my wife who was not in the best physical condition," he wrote. On the advice of a physician, a pleasant place was found in Vermont where Nellie could rest. She was there for six weeks and returned home a little stronger.

Meanwhile, Smith attended another National Funeral Director's convention, this time in New Orleans.

Sadly, one diary entry reads, "After my return home, Nellie gradually grew worse and the morning of Nov.12 (1934) she passed away. Her passing left a great void in life. Acute sorrow gradually eases, but the wound in my heart will never heal."

As a widower, he began traveling abroad for two or three months every winter. It was common for a friend in Milford to ask, "Well George, where are you going this year?" Some answers were Mexico, the Amazon River, Brazil, Argentina, South Africa, Egypt or whatever part of the world he wanted to see next.

His joy was traveling abroad on small cargo ships where he delighted in getting to know the other passengers, many of whom became lasting friends. First he studied the history of the country and then included much background in all his travel diaries.

Smith was never without his International Rotary Club directory of when and where clubs met – and he attended many meetings in many countries. He also found time for a Masonic lodge meeting.

Smith founded the Rotary Club of Milford in 1924, so it is fitting that on the club's 100th anniversary in 2024, his great grandson, Tad, will be the club's president. Community service and leadership seem to be in the bloodlines of the family.

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

Pack 922 Hosts Pinewood Derby Race



Cub Scout Pack 922, based in Orange, held its annual Pinewood Derby race on March 31. Over 60 custom-made cars competed for prizes ranging from fastest car to car that doesn't actually look like a car. Photo courtesy of Pack 922.

Or Shalom Celebrates 75 Years For Israel



Congregation Or Shalom in Orange recently celebrated 75 years of statehood for Israel. In 1948, David Ben-Gurion proclaimed the establishment of the state, which was supported by American President Harry S. Truman that same day. Or Shalom was presented with an original New York Times newspaper from that day. From left: Seth Hollander of the Or Shalom Men's Club, Steve Cooper of the Milford Performance Center and Temple President Bob Spaulding. Photo by Steve Cooper.

Threads Of Love Knits Over 1,000 Shawls And Blankets



Threads of Love began knitting in late 2009 and recently finished more than 1,000 shawls and lap blankets to be donated to individuals suffering with serious illnesses. Their mission is to bring comfort, warmth and hope to them, and to let them know that other people care. From left: Elaine Klein, Lillian Malkus, Judy Lampner, Leslie Wasserman, Miriam Edberg and Civanne Bloch. Photo by Steve Cooper.



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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.

George P. Allen Sr. passed away peacefully on April 17, 2023, at his home in Milford, CT. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Salvatore A. Attianese Sr., age 86, of Orange passed away on April 9, 2023. He was born in New Haven, son of the late Aniello and Anna Attianese. (West Haven Funeral Home)



Edward Patrick "Pat" Austin, 49, of Milford, tragically passed away on April 7, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Kay Brotherton was born on March 20, 1945 and passed away on April 28, 2023 at age 78. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Mary L. Brown, 94, of Orange beloved wife of the late Donald Brown, passed away peacefully surrounded by family on April 2, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



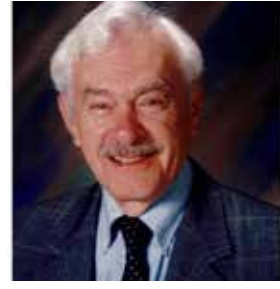
Joseph Anthony Chiarelli, age 64 of Milford, beloved husband for 40 years of Christine Steiniger Chiarelli, died on Wednesday, April 5, 2023. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Mary Rose Conklin (Slocum), 87, of Milford passed away peacefully on March 29, 2023 after a short battle with cancer. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Donald Paul Crowell, 95, passed away peacefully on April 3, 2023, at Civita Care Center at West River in Milford, CT. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Thomas "Tommy" Allen Cupole, 63, longtime resident of Milford Connecticut and the greater Hartford area passed away peacefully on April 17, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Emilia DeVita Cusanelli, 92, of Milford, formerly of North Haven, passed away peacefully on April 2, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Jean Marie DeLuca, 92, of Milford, beloved wife of David DeLuca, passed away on April 6, 2023 at home surrounded by her loving family. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Kathleen Margaret DiMaio of Milford CT passed away peacefully on April 22, 2023 at Yale New Haven Hospital while surrounded by her loving family. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Mary A. Carotenuto DiMicco, 95, entered into eternal rest on April 6, 2023. (Gilligan Funeral Home)



Debra J. (Zeek) Dubien, 66, of Milford, passed away on April 16, 2023 after a courageous battle with cancer. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Dr. Robert Moore Eldridge passed away peacefully on April 23, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



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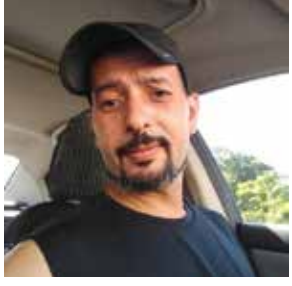
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Obituaries

Daniel Fernandez, 48, passed away after a brief illness. Mr. Fernandez was born in Milford on July 25, 1974 to the late Gamaliel and Gladys Fernandez. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Matthew A. Giorgio, 39, of Milford, beloved son of Marilyn Peluso Giorgio and Armand Giorgio passed away on April 5, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Barbara P. Henderson, age 88, of Milford, beloved wife of the late Peter Henderson, received her wings on April 26, 2023. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Julia Kaoud, age 87, of Orange, passed away peacefully at home with her family at her side on February 17, 2023. (West Haven Funeral Home)



Loretta Ann (Pepe) Frandsen, 96 of Milford, beloved wife of the late Franklin Frandsen, passed away peacefully on April 4, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Eleanor "Polly" M. Crouch Grabert, 92 of Milford, CT, beloved wife of the late Charles H. Grabert passed from this life on Sunday, April 2, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Gary Norman Hoppes was born on February 6, 1944 and passed away on April 14, 2023 at age 79. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



John C. Lorusso, 92, longtime Woodbridge resident, husband of the late Dorothy Maher Lorusso, passed away on March 25, 2023. (Beecher & Bennett Funeral Home)



Lucille Fandrella Funteral, age 94, of Milford, died on Monday April 3, 2023 in Milford. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Margaret M. Hawes, of Sherrills Ford, NC, died Friday, April 30, 2021. (Willis-Reynolds Funeral Home)



Theresa Ann Jacobs passed away peacefully on April 19, 2023 at Griffin Hospital in Derby, CT. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Michael Luther of Woodbridge, Connecticut, passed away peacefully on April 9, 2023. He was 94 years old.



Egidio "Gino" Giordano, 79, of Milford, passed away peacefully on Tuesday, April 11, 2023 with his loving family at his side. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



John J Henchy was born on April 3, 1929 and passed away on April 26, 2023 at age 94. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Susann Veronica Janes, 75, of Milford, passed away on April 14, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Patricia L. McGrath, age 80, of Shelton and formerly of Milford, passed away on Tuesday, March 28, 2023 surrounded by her loving family. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



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Obituaries

Sharon M. McNamara passed away peacefully on April 26, 2023 at Milford Hospital in Milford CT. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



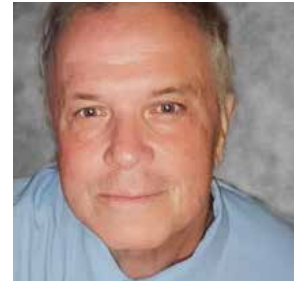
Anne Stark Pearson, 92, passed away peacefully at her home on March 31, 2023.



Nancy Myers Sennett, 92, of Milford, beloved wife of Deacon Richard M. Sennett, passed away surrounded by her family on April 24, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Peter "Pete" Frederick Tracy, 72, of Milford, beloved husband of Kathleen (Finch) Tracy, passed away suddenly on April 20, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Kristin O. Mould, 77, of Milford, beloved wife of 54 years to Peter A. Mould, Sr. passed away in her home on April 1, 2023 from Mantle Cell Lymphoma. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Susan Peck, 88, of Milford, beloved wife of the late Richard C. Peck, passed away on April 9, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Judith "Judy" Symanski, 76, of Milford, beloved wife of 56 years to Walter "Bucky" Symanski, passed away on April 11, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Gael Ulisse, age 77, of Milford, died at home on Sunday, April 23, 2023. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Deborah Gayle Murray, 74, of Milford, Connecticut, beloved wife of 57 years to Russell Charles Murray, passed away on April 22, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Peter Louis Pietrini, 72, of Milford, beloved husband of Barbara (Schilling) Pietrini for 42 years, passed away on April 25, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Angelo Tambis of Woodbridge, CT and Clearwater, FL died at 94, on March 30 in Clearwater, after a brief illness. (Celantano Funeral Home)



Joseph Frank Uva, "Sonny", 89, of Milford, beloved husband of Joan Biondino Smeland-Uva, passed away peacefully on April 5, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Nancy Lynn Onder, age 62, of Orange, CT, formerly of Fairfield, died unexpectedly in Bridgeport Hospital on Friday, April 21, 2023. (Lesko & Polke Funeral Home)



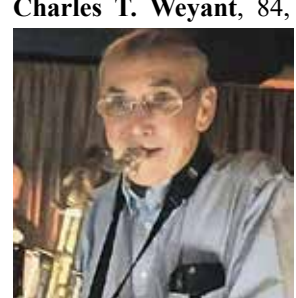
On April 19, 2023, **Amanda Pugliese** of Woodbridge went to rest after a courageous battle with Primary Sclerosing Cholangitis. (North Haven Funeral Home)



Noriko H. Tokita passed away on April 13, 2023, at her home in Woodbridge, after a brave battle with cancer. (Beecher & Bennett Funeral Home)



Charles T. Weyant, 84, of Milford, beloved husband of Judith P. Weyant, passed away peacefully on April 20th, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



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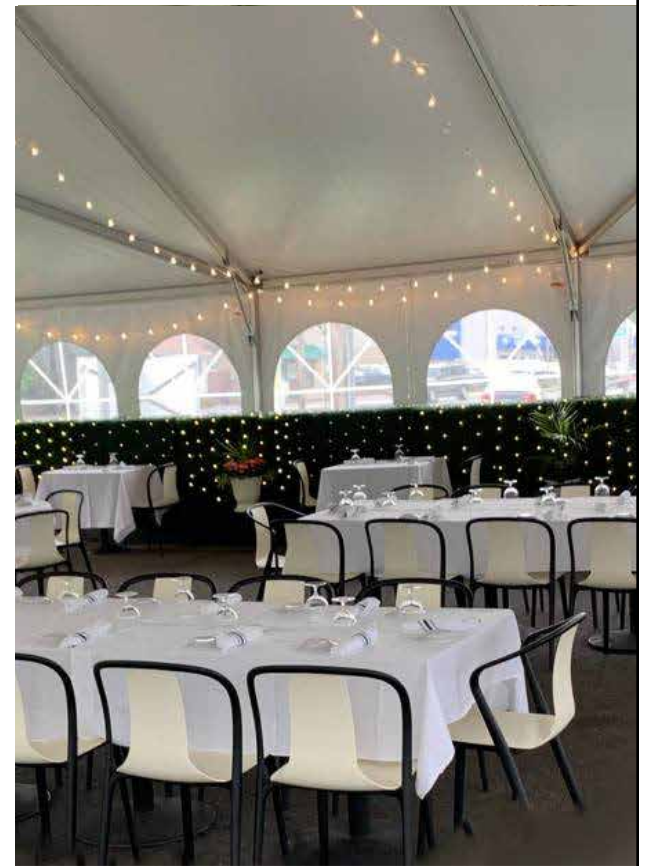
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