

# Milford-Orange Times

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August 24, 2023

## Fireman's Carnival Lights Up In Orange



The Orange Volunteer Fireman's Carnival came to the High Plains Community Center fairgrounds during the first weekend of August. The yearly event is the fire department's largest fundraising event. Additional photos on page 12. *Photo by Lexi Crocco.*

## Oyster Fest Brings Visitors To Milford



Milford held its 49th annual Oyster Festival on Aug. 19 in downtown. The event, which is regularly one of the largest food festivals in Connecticut, featured numerous vendors, music, and 30,000 oyster harvested from Milford's waters. *Photo by Robert Creigh.*

## Milford Residents Continue Push For Noise Ordinance

By **Brandon T. Bisceglia**

A group of Milford residents continued at the Aug. 7 meeting of the Board of Aldermen to call for a noise ordinance or some other action to tamp down on what they say are loud, private pool parties in their residential neighborhood.

Their frustration stems from a party at a Haystack Road home on June 24, when police were called to investigate a noise complaint. Although police issued several parking violations, they did not shut the party down because it was going on during the day and there is no local restriction on noise levels.

The owners of the home, Mauricio and Blanca Tabares, were later issued a notice

of a zoning violation by the city's Planning and Zoning Office – not because of the noise, but because tickets were sold to the party in online advertisements.

The party in question was not thrown by the homeowners, but rather by someone who had rented out the pool through a pool-sharing app called Swimply.

The app works similarly to Airbnb, allowing property owners to rent space out for short periods of time to other users.

The neighbors say that the parties have continued since then, and that the situation has not gotten better.

*Continued on page 6*

## Pickleball Courts For Fred Wolfe Park?

By **Brandon T. Bisceglia**

First Selectman Jim Zeoli pitched the possibility of installing pickleball courts at Fred Wolfe Park during the Aug. 9 meeting of the Board of Selectmen in Town Hall.

"There's a tremendous amount of demand for it," Zeoli said.

The plan would be to use Small Town Economic Assistance Program funds from the state to build four 60-foot-by-120-foot courts somewhere in the park.

"They haven't gotten back to me about

a price, but they will before the 18th of this month," Zeoli said. He estimated that with land clearing and construction the project would run somewhere between \$250,000 and \$300,000.

"We need to apply for the money now so that it may be there next year as they formulate this, because they will end up there somewhere," Zeoli said.

Other work continues at the park. The Fred Wolfe Park Committee, which

*Continued on page 3*

## Milford Aldermen Question Cost Increases

By **Brandon T. Bisceglia**

It's relatively routine for Milford's Board of Aldermen to address budget memo transfers – shifting money from one section of the budget to cover costs in another.

But when asked to approve two such transfers during the board's Aug. 7 meeting at City Hall, some aldermen questioned why it was happening so soon after the city finalized its budget for this year.

The two transfers were in the categories of secretarial fees and solid waste.

"The justification here is shortfall, shortfall, shortfall," said alderman

*Continued on page 10*

### Thank you to our former columnists



Raymond Vitale.  
 ANNAMARIE AMORE



KATHY CONVERSE  
 CHARBONNEAU

## Orange Chamber Announces New Executive Director

By **Brandon T. Bisceglia**

The Orange Chamber of Commerce has announced that Liam Ohlmann will serve as its new executive director.

Ohlmann is concurrently serving as executive director for an Orange-based not-for-profit called the Connecticut Grounds Keepers Association.

Chamber President Ted Novicki said, "I personally believe Liam's proven track record as an executive director of a not-for-profit will help the Orange Chamber

*Continued on page 3*



Ohlmann

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## Adopt A Pet: Reggie



Reggie is a young, male, American Staffordshire terrier mix who is up for adoption. He is housebroken and has had all of his shots. Reggie can be adopted from Milford Animal Control, located at 664 East Broadway in Milford. For more information, call 203-783-3279. Photo courtesy of Milford Animal Control.

## Milford Library Party In The Stacks Coming

The Friends of the Milford Library will be hosting their annual fundraiser, Party in the Stacks, on the evening of Saturday, Oct. 21 at the Milford Public Library. This year's theme, "Where Mystery and Romance Meet," features the romantic mystery genre which includes a wide variety of books, movies and authors. Classics include The Great Gatsby, Phantom of the Opera and Murder on the Orient Express.

Guests attending the fundraiser will experience romantic mystery themed decor,

music, dancing, themed hors d'oeuvres, a signature drink, beer and wine, and an array of silent auction and raffle items. Costumes are optional but encouraged.

Tickets for this year's party are available for sale online at [tinyurl.com/FOMLPITS](https://tinyurl.com/FOMLPITS) or at the Milford Public Library, located at 57 New Haven Ave. Individual tickets will be \$50 through Sept. 30 and \$60 starting Oct. 1.

For questions or for donation/sponsor opportunities, email [partyinthestacks.milfordlib@gmail.com](mailto:partyinthestacks.milfordlib@gmail.com).

## Orange DTC Get New Chair



Marulli

Joe Marulli was recently elected chairman of the Orange Democratic Town Committee.

For the past 18 months he held the position of vice chairman. Marulli moved

to Orange in 1992 and has been politically active in town since 1999. He served on the Orange Board of Education from 1999-2007, holding the position of chairman for two of those years. He has participated in many local political campaigns and elections.

Marulli was also active in many of the town's sports programs. Besides managing and coaching as a volunteer in multiple sports, he served as president and treasurer of Orange Little League; he was on the board of the Orange Soccer Association for many years; and he was active in Orange Park & Rec basketball.

Marulli and his wife raised three children in Orange, all of whom graduated from the Orange and Amity school systems. His business career has spanned both large corporate organizations and entrepreneurial ventures.

## Plane Pull At Tweed To Benefit Special Olympics

Avelo Airlines is joining forces with Special Olympics Connecticut to host a first-of-its-kind plane pull at Tweed-New Haven Airport on Tuesday, Sept. 12 to benefit Special Olympics athletes.

Registration is now open for teams to participate in the plane pull. All registration fee proceeds will be devoted to supporting Special Olympics Connecticut athletes.

Participants will pull an Avelo Airlines Boeing Next-Generation 737 jetliner 20

feet. Each member of the winning team that pulls the 90,000-pound aircraft 20 feet the fastest will receive a free Avelo roundtrip ticket.

Tweed-New Haven Airport is located at 155 Burr St. in New Haven, and the event will take place from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

To find out more or to register a team, go to [www.soct.org/planepull](https://www.soct.org/planepull). For questions, email [specialolympicsct@soct.org](mailto:specialolympicsct@soct.org) or call 203-230-1201.

## Orange First Selectman Debates Set

Debates between the candidates for Orange first selectman have been set for October.

Democrat Mark Moyher is challenging Republican Jim Zeoli, who is running for a 10th two-year term in the town's top position.

The Milford-Orange Times will host one

debate on Wednesday, Oct. 18 at 7 p.m. at the High Plains Community Center gym.

Congregation Or Shalom Men's Club will host another debate on Sunday, Oct. 29 at 7 p.m. at the synagogue. Both events are free and open to the public.



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## Chamber (Continued From 1)

of Commerce continue to build on its successes and benefit our businesses and community.”

“I love Orange and specifically its people,” Ohlmann said. “Some of my earliest memories were playing fall baseball at the Old Tavern Road sports complex, and I have a great appreciation for the wonderful businesses, golf and recreation this town has to offer. I am excited to collaborate with Orange’s businesses to work and grow together.”

Ohlmann was selected from a pool of candidates after former director Kathy Converse Charbonneau decided to step down earlier this summer. Converse Charbonneau has been credited with successfully navigating the chamber through the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I will continue to bring Kathy’s passion and dedication to this community and this role,” Ohlmann said of his predecessor in an email to the community. “The Board of Directors and I are working on building events and member benefits which will directly benefit Orange’s businesses and residents.”

Ohlmann can be reached at director@orangectchamber.com.

## Fred Wolfe (Continued From 1)

was created by the Board of Selectmen to begin working through some of the ideas for the park, at its July 18 meeting discussed with BL Companies of Meriden the scope of an upcoming traffic and safety study that the company has been asked to do for the area.

During that meeting, BL was asked to do a count of vehicles coming in and out of the park, as a previous study had only counted vehicles coming in. There was also discussion of doing drone flights over the park to capture more information.

BL told the Fred Wolfe Park committee that it would likely take four to six months to complete their study, since it will also include public input meetings and other factors.

Additionally, Tom Pisano, who leads the Orange Soccer Association and has butted heads with Zeoli over the park in the past, said at the Board of Selectmen meeting that he is planning to submit a petition to add a referendum on the Nov. 7 ballot regarding access to the cornfields on the park property.

A license agreement allows Field View Farm to use a 14.4-acre portion of the northern section of the park to be used for growing hay or crops. Field View pays \$375 to use the land.

Earlier in the year, the Board of Selectmen contemplated ending the agreement, but the farm exercised its right to a one-time automatic renewal that was part of the agreement.

## Milford Trick Or Trot Approaching

The 12th Annual Milford Trick or Trot 5K Run/Walk will take place on Saturday, Oct. 28, beginning at 9 a.m. at Lisman Landing, located at 37 Helwig St. in Milford. Run or walk a 3.2-mile scenic route through

Milford. Costumes are encouraged. The event raises funds for the Beth-El Center to support those experiencing hunger and homelessness.

Learn more at milfordtrickortrot.com.



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For Nature's Sake

# Five Ways To Limit Babies' Exposure To PFAS

The states of California, Colorado and Maine recently passed laws that would ban the use of toxic PFAS chemicals in children's products including pajamas, playmats and infant car seats.

For decades, manufacturers have been adding per and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS, to a range of consumer products, frequently to give them waterproof or stain resistant qualities. Manufacturers, it turns out, have known about the health risks caused by these same substances over most of those decades, and today the Centers for Disease Control's website warns that babies' exposure to PFAS can have long-term effects on a child's immune system, affect growth and learning and increase the risk of cancer.

Connecticut, like many other states, is lagging in this category of consumer protection, which leaves new parents and caregivers to navigate a marketplace where even the choice of a baby's bib can have health implications. Fortunately, certain research groups and public health organizations, including those cited below, are providing help in the form of online product ratings and steps for reducing chemical exposures in homes and workplaces.

The most frequent categories of expert advice for protecting children from PFAS, summarized in the following list, reflect the fact that babies can absorb dangerous chemicals through their skin, inhale it through dust and even ingest it.

**Filter your water.** The American Academy of Pediatrics lists drinking water first in their list of strategies for protecting babies from PFAS. No amount of PFAS in water is

safe to consume, the EPA now says. Meanwhile, the USGS has found that 45 percent of the nation's tap water is contaminated with one or more PFAS chemicals. And this will not change soon enough to ensure that the water for mixing with a child's infant formula, for instance, is free of toxins.

The Environmental Working Group offers an online Guide to PFAS Water Filters at ewg.org.

**Keep dust to a minimum.** A Consumer Reports May 2022 article titled "How to Avoid PFAS" notes it is possible to limit chemical exposure from dust by using HEPA filters while vacuuming, changing filters on your heating and cooling units as recommended and dusting with wet cloths and a mop.

**Cut back on carry-out meals and consider toxin levels in food packaging and cookware.** A significant source of PFAS in people's diets, studies show, is food packaging, take-out food and meals prepared with non-stick cookware. One place to compare grocery chains is the website retailerreportcard.com, which assigns grades (from A to F) to retail shops based on the companies' efforts to eliminate toxics in their products. That scoring shows Whole Foods with a solid A, for instance, and Trader Joes with a lower grade than Costco.

A Consumer Reports article titled "Dangerous PFAS chemicals are in your food packaging" names eight fast food companies with items whose wrappers were measured



PATRICIA HOUSER



to have toxicity levels now illegal in California; among other things it shows that, at least until 2025, there's an extra dose of PFAS that comes with those fries.

For cooking, health experts suggest avoiding frying pans and cookie sheets made with Teflon or other chemically engineered, non-stick, surfaces. The safest bet, they say, is to opt for stainless steel or cast-iron options; a Consumer Reports article from October 2022 lists safe cookware choices tested

in their labs. **Choose PFAS-free furniture and carpets.** Research shows that choosing healthy, PFAS-free furnishings, including carpets and sofas, greatly reduces PFAS in the air, including the dust.

To their credit, as of January 2020 Home Depot and Lowe's sell only PFAS-free carpeting. The blog, My Chemical-Free House, has a feature on specific toxin-free carpet brands as well as an article on sofas. Notably, as a matter of company policy, Ikea doesn't allow PFAS in any of its textiles, including sofas and throw pillows.

**Choose bibs, child car seats, clothing, baby mats, etc. that are PFAS-free.** For a look at which brands of various baby products were found to have the highest levels of PFAS, including one bib model with alarming toxicity, parents and caregivers can check out the Environmental Working Group's 2022 report on measurements of PFAS in baby textile products. One go-to site for healthy alternatives is Mamavation.

com; check, for instance, their ratings of safe children's clothing without PFAS.

The Ecology Center's 2022 Car Seat Report is also a key resource, including a report card comparing infant car seats with the highest and lowest PFAS content.

Those able to tackle only one or two of the above strategies in the short run will still reduce the overall exposure and bodily accumulation, the so-called "body burden," of these chemicals in a child. Every bit helps. And for those who simply want fewer things to think about, experts suggest a general rule for reducing PFAS in purchases is to reject anything that guarantees stainproof or water-resistant qualities if you can't otherwise be sure of the content of a product.

That's not to ignore the more widespread use of this menacing group of substances; TIME recently put out an article titled "All the Stuff in Your Home that Might Contain PFAS Chemicals." Concerned for this long-term public health threat, 67 leading US scientists with an expertise in PFAS research sent a letter to the EPA in 2021 urging a ban on all use of this class of chemicals except essential uses.

Perhaps it's time for Connecticut to follow Maine's example. That state's ban on PFAS, although it will only take effect in 2030, will actually go beyond children's products to ban their unnecessary use in all products.

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

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\*Rain date Sun, September 24th





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## Milford Brewery First To Use RWA Discount Rate Program

Athletic Brewing Company can't make its craft non-alcoholic beer without water, which mainly comes from the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority.

Athletic Brewing, which became an RWA customer after relocating its Connecticut brewing operations from Stratford to Milford last year, recently became the first company to qualify for the RWA's economic development rate.

The economic development rate is a special water rate offered to help attract and retain businesses in the 15 communities the RWA serves. It provides a temporary discount of up to 20 percent to large commercial and industrial consumers of water that move to the RWA's service territory or expand within it. The discounted rate is also available to some distressed businesses in the region that are in danger of closing.

To qualify, customers must use at least 500,000 gallons of water per year. The special rate expires after five years, after which it increases over three years to the regular applicable rate.

Athletic Brewing's Milford brewery, a sprawling 150,000-square-foot production facility that may be the world's largest dedicated non-alcoholic brewery, can produce nearly 14 million gallons of non-alcoholic beer annually. Athletic Brewing produces a wide selection, including IPAs, goldens, darks and light brews, which can be found on retail shelves in all 50 states. The company also owns and operates a second brewery in San Diego and makes a hop-infused sparkling water called DayPack.

"As the primary ingredient in our brews,

water is a core focus at Athletic," said John Walker, the co-founder and chief product officer of the company. "The water we receive from the RWA is pristine and requires almost no adjustments, nor the need to purchase expensive filtration equipment. And thanks to the RWA's economic development rate, we've been able to reinvest savings into water conservation and efficiency projects, which will have a lasting positive impact on our facility and the environment."

Water is of critical importance to many industries that are vital to Connecticut's economy, including advanced manufacturing, pharmaceuticals and food and beverage production, according to Larry L. Bingaman, the RWA's president and CEO.

"While parts of the country struggle to meet growing demand for water in the face of threatened supply, the RWA manages a bountiful system of water sources protected by more than 27,000 acres of pristine watershed land," Bingaman said. "We believe that our water system's abundance of good, clean water from well-protected sources is just one of the regional assets that make the New Haven area such a great place to do business."

The economic development rate is part of a broader initiative by the RWA, in partnership with the Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce, to promote business retention and expansion in the region. That effort includes the RWA funding a full-time business development position with the chamber dedicated to working with entrepreneurs and business leaders to retain and create jobs, and support inclusive economic growth.

## Fraud Alert Program Available In Milford

With a recent property fraud allegation in Fairfield, Milford City Clerk Karen Fortunati is reminding Milford property owners of a free tool to help protect one of their most valuable assets.

The online fraud alert program allows Milford property owners to sign up to receive alerts whenever a document, such as a deed, mortgage or lien, is recorded in their name. The document can be viewed online or at the Milford City Clerk's Office.

"We've been getting an increasing number of calls from owners concerned about fraudulent transfers or liens filed without notification," Fortunati said. "This alert system will provide peace of mind.

It's easy – all you need to do is register your name and an email address. If a document is recorded in our office, you will get a notification and can call us for more information."

The Fairfield case involved a rare instance in which a scammer sold a property to a developer, who proceeded to build a house on the land before the property's rightful owner discovered it. Though the case is unusual, various types of property scams have been on the rise in recent years.

Call the Milford City Clerk's Office at 203-783-3210 for more information. You can find the registration form at <https://searchiqs.com/fraudalert/?CC=CTMILF>.

## Pearce Involved In Two Orange Commercial Transactions

Carl G. Russell of Pearce Real Estate played a role in two recent transactions in Orange.

Russell represented the buyer in the sale in July of a retail building at 401 Boston Post Rd., a 29,750-square-foot building on 3.06 acres of land that was sold to Tessa Marie Holdings by seller OSJ of Orange.

Half of the building will serve as the new home of The Grind Baseball and Softball Training Facility, while the remaining space will be available for lease. The Grind is moving from its current location in Orange. It offers baseball and softball instruction, rental areas for teams and individuals, as well as camps and coaches' clinics. The training facility's instruction ranges from

hitting, pitching, and catching, to functional strength and conditioning.

On its Facebook page, The Grind's owner and head instructor, Michael Moras, an Orange native, anticipates an early fall move-in date to the new space, which will more than double The Grind's current facility.

Russell also represented the landlord, New Post Properties, in the lease of a 5,250-square-foot retail building at 507 Boston Post Rd.

The new tenant will be Metro Mattress, which has a network of more than 50 showrooms and warehouses in five Northeast states, including Connecticut and Massachusetts. The Orange location will be their eighth retail store in the state.

[milford-orangetimes.com](http://milford-orangetimes.com)



### KMW Leisure Presents...

Lancaster, 2023 | October 4-6

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**There will be German Folk Dancers, German Music too!**  
**Your trip includes all foods, entertainment, transportation, escort and tips!**  
**Bus departs Milford Senior Center at 7:45am. Please park in the rear of the lot. We should return at approx 7:30pm.**  
**Reach out to Kathy for more information!!!**

#### KMW Leisure Trip Ideas for 2024

April 26th - May 5, 2024 - Shades of Ireland  
 10 days & 13 meals

Approx Rate: \$3,859pp twin  
 Includes air out of NYC (possibly BDL depending on availability), air taxes, fees, hotel transfers, grp transportation to/from airport and gratuities for tour manager and motorcoach driver.

#### Late May - early June- Alaska Cruise

Back by popular demand! Still working out details but if interested please contact me for itinerary and more details.

#### Mid to Late June 2024 - Mackinac Island

9 days, 12 meals  
 Approx. Rate \$4,109pp twin

#### Sept 21- Oct 5, 2024 Kenya & Tanzania

15 days, 38 meals  
 Includes air out of NYC, taxes/fees. hotel transfers, grp transportation to/from airport, and gratuities for Tour Manager and Drivers.

#### Late Oct- Manitoba to see the Polar Bears!!!

Call Kathy for more details, flers and registration forms at 203 891-9400

### 3-Day 'Moses' Includes:

- Roundtrip Motor-coach
- 2-Nights, The Fulton Steamboat Hotel
- 5 Meals: 2 Breakfasts | 1 Lunch | 2 Dinners
- Kitchen Kettle Village Hands on Experience
- Reserved Orchestra Tickets for 'Moses' at Sight & Sound Theatre
- Chalk Talk Artistry Show
- Guided Amish Farmlands Tour
- Visit to Lancaster Central Market
- Roundtrip Baggage Handling
- Tours of Distinction Tour Director
- Gratuities for the Tour Director, Bus Driver and Local Guide

Tour Deposit:	\$100 pp with reservation
Final Payment:	August 4, 2023
Trip Protection:	Optional Travel Protection is offered through Traveler. The cost is \$75.00 based on single, double, or triple occupancy. We suggest it is purchased at time of reservation.
Cancellations:	Individual cancellations from reservation to 60 days ahead will be loss of deposit. Individual cancellations 59-36 days ahead will forfeit 50% of tour price. There will be no refunds for individual cancellations 35 days-day of departure. ** If cancelling for a medical reason, you must see your doctor prior to cancelling from the tour in order to file a claim **
Gratuities:	Gratuities for the Tour Director and Bus Driver are included in the cost of your tour.
** INDIVIDUAL TOUR RESERVATIONS ARE NOT TRANSFERABLE FROM ONE PERSON TO ANOTHER WITHIN 35 DAYS OF TRAVEL **	

\$715 pp Double | \$670 pp Triple | \$895 Single



None to little walking. Travelers are able to get on/off a bus and walk into/out of attractions.

### FOR INFORMATION & RESERVATIONS CONTACT:

KMW Leisure, Kathy Wachter

Checks Payable: Tours of Distinction (for Lancaster Tour Only)

Mail to: Tours of Distinction | P.O. Box 577 | Simsbury CT 06070





# Opinion & Editorial

## Seizing Orange's Opportunities

By Mark Moyher

The New Haven Register recently exposed a major problem facing residents of Orange – the dramatic changes in the retail market that have left many stores and shops empty, sometimes for years, and the lack of leadership to find innovative solutions.

The photograph of an empty store and the headline, “Orange working to fill vacant retail locations” with a giant red question mark at the end accurately conveys the truth about what has and continues to happen.

Yet, the man responsible for this crisis – First Selectman James Zeoli, who has been a virtual one-man show for nearly two decades – was given full reign to explain away why warehouses and truckers have taken over much of our town’s greatest commercial asset, the Boston Post Road, which was once proudly called Orange’s “Miracle Mile.”

I am among the many business and community leaders who believe it’s time for a change,

time to bring the wide array of experiences and expertise of town residents to the task of securing Orange’s future as a vibrant and healthy community.

In challenging Zeoli, who is seeking a 10th term as first selectman, I am bringing together the talents of people in business, finance, education, the arts and other fields to set an agenda for the future, not the past.

So much of the problem is that the public has so little information about what is going on at Town Hall, where Zeoli and people close to him keep a tight lid on decisions.

I intend to create an Office of Public Information to use modern tools available online to keep residents up to date on the facts and issues we’re confronting before decisions are made.

A lot of the problems are the town’s fiscal management policies, where the emphasis is to maintain a political advantage for Zeoli by tiny reductions in the mill rate while maintaining a massive reserve fund far beyond what other

towns are doing.

This is vital money that could be used to solve the problems of the business community, seeking smart solutions to the empty building crisis and promoting the enormous assets of Orange as a wonderful town with terrific schools, safe neighborhoods and open spaces. The Boston Post Road needs a facelift, which could include streetscape plantings, attractive banners and expansion of the lighting program that was begun by the Boston Post Road Committee.

From its origins 200 years ago, Orange has been known for its farms. That’s still true today when there are six working farms where freshly harvested produce is being sold at stands.

Yet very little is done to promote our farmers outside Orange. We need to have a weekend public marketplace on Boston Post Road and get the word out to neighboring communities just a few minutes away.

Orange has an extraordinary array of restaurants and has long been known for its many fur-

niture stores. So much more can be done with smart efforts to sell Orange as the great place it is. One idea is to create an adult recreation complex in the now mostly vacant Christmas Tree Shops plaza. An indoor pickleball facility would be a great addition to the indoor golf lounge and the ax throwing center already located in that plaza.

As I speak with Orange residents I hear that it’s time for a change, for new ways of thinking, for the public to be brought into the conversation, for new leadership.

Orange’s future is slipping away and should not be left up to someone not up to the task or just too disinterested to care. We are seemingly stuck in neutral. It doesn’t have to be that way. We will provide new leadership in order to propel Orange forward. Come November, the people of Orange can seize the opportunity.

*Mark Moyher is the Democratic candidate for first selectman in Orange.*

## What Is Impacting Your Insurance Rates?

By Kevin Piscitelli

Are you experiencing an increase in your insurance rates? It seems like everything today is increasing – property taxes, gas, electricity, food and now insurance.

Insurance for your auto and home policies are pooled risk in each state. Carriers collect enough money to pay the claims and liability exposures for their policy holders. Most carriers are currently experiencing what is known as a “hard insurance market,” causing insurance carriers to re-evaluate their current underwriting and premium guidelines. New business for carriers may be restricted or reduced in certain states. Many online quoting portals have been disabled and you are required to call an agent. Current policies may

face increased premiums or non-renewal.

Many factors go into auto insurance premiums, including the driver’s credit, location, year, make, model, claim history, tickets, driving habits, miles driven, age and gender. These factors also include the cost to repair vehicles and the bodily injury caused by certain vehicles.

During COVID in 2020 many carriers re-funded premiums back to customers because of reduced driving that resulted in reduced auto accidents and claims. In 2021 and 2022 driving and accidents increased. In Connecticut there has been an increase in the severity of accidents as well as fatalities. Speeding, distracted driving and driving under the influence are prime causes of accidents.

In addition, the supply chain issues caused by COVID created higher labor and material costs in the state, compounded by the fact that parts might be delayed or not available at all. Carriers are being forced to total vehicles that could normally be repaired.

Connecticut has one of the highest theft rates of catalytic converters. Each claim costs between \$1,500 and \$3,000.

It is easy to see why we are paying more. Many carriers expect this market to last through mid to late 2024.

Homeowners insurance in Connecticut is seeing similar issues with labor and material costs. There has also been an increase in the number of catastrophic events in the state since 2017.

States like Florida and California are seeing direct action by carriers. Some carriers have pulled out of those states and/or are limiting the type of new business they are accepting. Carrier review of current risks also causes non-renewals for policyholders. The recent fire in Lahaina, Hawaii is expected to cause losses in excess of \$3 billion, in addition to the loss of over 100 lives.

Talk to your agent or broker to help manage these premiums. Check for bundled discounts, review deductibles and add a telematics discount if available.

*Kevin Piscitelli is an insurance agent with State Farm Insurance.*

## Letters to the Editor:

### A Perfect Fit for City Clerk

To the Editor:

I am thrilled to be running for a third term as Milford’s city clerk this November. My office serves as both the information hub of city government and repository of our records. The position is a perfect fit for me, drawing extensively from my experience as a lawyer, author and public programs manager. Since taking office in 2019, I have made services more accessible to the busy parent and working professional by creating online applications for certificates and licenses. And if you aren’t comfortable on the computer, we’re happy to assist in person in our office or by mail. We welcome any and

all questions. My motto: If we don’t have the answer, we’ll help you find it.

I’m seeking another term because I love serving Milford; it’s my mission to continually improve customer service so that every interaction with the City Clerk’s Office is efficient, easy and enjoyable.

Thank you for the honor of serving these past two terms and I humbly ask for your consideration in November.

**Karen Fortunati**  
Milford City Clerk

### Fortunati for City Clerk

To the Editor:

almost over, and then you can enjoy yourself.” Richard Stephen, who lives in a different part of town, spoke generally in favor of adopting a noise ordinance, citing health and safety benefits for the whole city.

“The police normally can’t do anything about it if it happens between 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. no matter how loud the noise might be,” he said. Stephen mentioned that some car owners had altered their vehicles to make them backfire more often – a loud noise that can be mistaken for gunshots.

“There are 68 municipalities in Connecticut that care about their citizens enough to have a noise ordinance,” he added.

James Ballas came before the board looking for a response to his and his neighbors’ complaints.

“People want a noise ordinance,” he said, also suggesting that the use of short-term piecemeal rentals like Swimplly be stopped.

“I’m asking you all to do your job. I’ve asked to get a response. I’ve emailed most of

When I met Karen Fortunati, she was my representative on the Board of Aldermen. The first thing I noticed about her was that she was passionately dedicated to her work representing the Fifth District. Whether she was spearheading a tax reduction for families of fallen first responders, creating an initiative to help increase recycling efforts in the city or coordinating with the Milford Police Department to address traffic and safety concerns, Fortunati worked tirelessly to ensure that everyone who reached out to her got the assistance or answer that they needed.

When Fortunati became city clerk in 2019, she brought that same level of commitment and passion to her new role and has transformed the City Clerk’s Office into an efficient and effec-

tive hub of city services. She performs her job in a manner that transcends politics – she works in a collaborative and bipartisan manner and holds herself to the highest standards of integrity, transparency and accountability.

As our city clerk, I have the privilege of working with Fortunati on a daily basis and not only is she an invaluable member of the City Hall team, I’m proud to call her a friend.

I strongly support her reelection as our city clerk and hope that Milford residents will join me in voting for Karen Fortunati for city clerk on Tuesday, November 7, 2023.

**Justin M. Rosen**  
Former Chair, Milford Democratic Town Committee

you,” he said. “I’d like to know what’s going on. I’d like a response. The neighbors of

Cornfield and Haystack need a response. What are you going to do?”

## Milford-Orange Times

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In The House: Rep. Mary Welander (D-114) Rep. Charles Ferraro (R-117) Kathy Kennedy (R-119)

Senator’s Seat: Sen. James Maroney

Columnists:

Ellen Russell Beatty, Ponder This  
Cathy Bradley, Running  
Steve Cooper, Food  
Rob Craft, Recovery  
David Crow, Conversations  
Theresa Rose DeGray, Bankruptcy  
Carmela DeVito, Book Reviews  
Pat Dray, Gardening  
Jennifer Fiorillo, Mental Health

Ben Gettinger, Probate  
Patricia Houser, Environment  
Thomas P. Hurley, Commentary  
Jennifer Ju, Bias  
Barbara Lehrer, Real Estate  
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## Pool Parties

### (Continued From 1)

“They are running a commercial business out of 20 Haystack,” said Tory Vienneau, whose property abuts the Tabaras’. “There’s no quiet enjoyment of my property. I cannot go outside and have a meal on my deck on the weekend.”

Vienneau said she didn’t want to feel like she had to leave her property when her neighbors were hosting parties, and asked the Board of Aldermen to look into the matter.

Bradley Sanchez, whose property is also next to 20 Haystack Rd., said that the police had to be called to break up a more recent party on Aug. 1 – a Tuesday night – because of “yelling and screaming” going on.

“What are our rights? What is the solution here?” he asked. “I would like to go out in my backyard and just sit back there and have dinner. I don’t want to be told that summer’s



# Opinion & Editorial

## Family GPA



STATE REP. (D-114)  
MARY WELANDER

Like many families, we are saying goodbye to summer and hello to the new school year. Our family is in a period of transition as two of our kids are starting at new schools in the Amity District. At the same time, our oldest will be able to drive independently in the near future.

With these considerable changes looming in our family, and many other facing similar adjustments, I wanted to share some thoughts and resources that may help all of us make this school year a great one. Like a student's grade point average, a "family GPA" starts with preparation, attention to details and follow-through.

Gameplan: Some students may be able to navigate the start of a new grade or a new school with ease, but for many it can be overwhelming and sometimes unsettling. Creating a gameplan with your student addressing their comfort with new situations and new people may reduce some of that anxiety before the start of the school year. Teachers and school counselors can also be part of that process so your student knows they have someone to turn to if they need support.

You can also work on a gameplan for at-home preparation and habits. The New York Times article by Jessica Lahey, "How to Help Your Child Succeed at School," may have some ideas that can help.

Privacy: With an increasingly tech-based society, we have all become more accustomed to using social media platforms to keep in touch with friends and family, especially on big days like the first day of school. Unfortunately, we need to be more aware of how to protect our online data privacy.

As more bad actors are using online information to gain access to personal information or even to contact our children, security experts are cautioning against posting photos that share specific information such as your child's height or weight, interests or teacher's name. Instead, it's recommended that you protect your family's privacy by only using general captions or not sharing photos with personal information online. Talking with older children who have their own devices about sharing personal information is also important for their safety.

Aware: The start of the school year means busier roads with many new, young and inexperienced drivers. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, in 2021 young drivers between the ages of 15-20 made up 11.7 percent of traffic fatalities in Connecticut. Aggressive driving patterns, high speeds and distracted driving have all increased over the past few years. Ensuring your new driver is aware of those dangers and reminding them of the updated guidelines can help keep our kids and our roads safer.

Having a new driver in the house is making me much more aware of my own driving tendencies and pushing me to make safer choices when behind the wheel. You can find information and tips about new drivers at [portal.ct.gov/TeenDriving](http://portal.ct.gov/TeenDriving).

Wishing all of the Orange and Amity families, students and educators the very best in this new school year.

## Ready ToHead Back To School?



STATE REP. (R-119)  
KATHY KENNEDY

As students return to school, let's take a look at one last piece of summer reading, highlighting significant education bills passed this year.

Beginning with the bipartisan 2023 budget agreement, there is an overall \$163.7 million increase in the Education Cost Sharing grant, which equalizes support for elementary and secondary education throughout Connecticut. The budget also approved a \$50 million increase to the excess cost grants that will relieve families of the high costs of special education.

Although the increase was scheduled, additional funds were provided to protect towns from potential funding reductions. The breakdown of the supplemental increases can be outlined as follows: ECS, \$68.5 million; magnet schools, \$53.4 million; state charter schools, \$9.4 million; vocational/agricultural programs, \$7.2 million; and the open-choice program, \$11.4 million.

We can't talk about legislative changes to education without mentioning the new law that raises the starting age for kindergarten from age 5 by January to age 5 by September of each school year. Now, a child younger than age 5 on Sept. 1 can be admitted to kindergarten if the parent or guardian submits a request to the school principal to conduct a formal learning assessment.

Another legislative change addresses transition services for students who receive special education and early intervention services under Connecticut's birth to three program, before entering public school. The law now requires the State Department of Education to employ a transition services coordinator to assist in the student's transition to their local public school, while also filling positions in the Developmental Services and Aging and Disability Services to ensure resources for all relevant families.

Two other significant achievements this session concern requirements for high school graduation and debt-free community college. Public Act 23-204 expands the eligibility of the state's debt-free community college program by removing the need to be a first-time enrollee and requiring awards be applied during the first 48 months of enrollment, extending benefits to returning students. Regarding high school graduation, Public Act 23-21 now requires a half-credit of personal financial management, responding to the desire to promote youth financial literacy.

Getting back to school can be stressful. However, following this session, I look forward to experiencing the benefits of this historic investment in statewide education. Don't forget to take advantage of some great benefits right now during 2023 wax free week, from Aug. 20 to 26.

Finally, please join me at my family legislative update event from noon to 1 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 27 at the Fowler Field pavilion, located at 1 Shipyard Ln. in Milford. I look forward to highlighting other legislative concerns, important bills from this session and donating some of my favorite children's books, making it a great event for residents of all ages.

The legislative session may be over, but I am always looking to hear from you. I encourage you to reach out to me with your questions, ideas and concerns by contacting me at [Kathy.Kennedy@housegop.ct.gov](mailto:Kathy.Kennedy@housegop.ct.gov) or 860-240-8700. Don't forget to visit [RepKennedy.com](http://RepKennedy.com) or my Facebook Page for more frequent updates on events and more.

## Gas Car Ban Not Sustainable



STATE REP. (R-117)  
CHARLES FERRARO

Last month, the governor and his administration sent a clear message to Connecticut residents by mandating a full transition to electric vehicles in our state by 2035. My House and Senate Republican colleagues are calling for an immediate pause to these aggressive policy changes.

This ban on gas-powered cars in the next decade is not a viable or sustainable goal and fails to uphold the standards for energy policy which I have prioritized as state representative: a commitment to energy sources that are sustainable, reliable and affordable.

Lawmakers are hearing from constituents constantly over their concerns about whether they can manage a total ban on their gas-powered cars and afford to purchase a new electric vehicle in short order. An average electric vehicle costs \$53,000, while Connecticut's average median income is \$40,000. That does not add up for residents and families already struggling with rising costs across the board.

This set of lofty goals is part of a larger initiative which Connecticut began in 2022 when it passed a law to bind itself to California's renewable energy standards, alongside New York and other New England states. As a Connecticut state lawmaker, I reject the premise that California, a state with 10 times the population of Connecticut and the geographic opposite of us, is best suited to design our plan for sustainable energy.

There are numerous concerns over this complicated plan for a statewide mandate of electric vehicles for private residents and businesses. I am worried about the negative effect this will have on our electric grid, which already struggles with rolling blackouts. I question access to charging stations, both in the cost to acquire them and the logistics of their availability. For those living in urban centers or in affordable housing, will they have the same access to charge their vehicles?

These electric vehicles are also heavily reliant on lithium batteries, which have serious safety concerns. Even the smallest lithium battery can be devastating when ignited, as they cannot be extinguished by water alone. The intense fires are left to burn out, like we saw last summer in Hamden when a lithium battery in an electric bus caught fire, leading to the total incineration of the vehicle.

On the roads, electric vehicles are on average 1,500 to 2,000 pounds heavier than their gas-powered counterparts. This places an additional stress on our roads, particulate pollution from tire wear leads to accidents involving electric vehicles being more often fatal.

Current owners of gas-powered vehicles are wondering how this mandate will affect the cost and value of those vehicles, in addition to how the resale market will be affected in a decade as this is implemented.

We will continue to work hard to find common-ground solutions that positively impact these policy goals, which I am concerned will have negative lasting effects on residents, families and businesses.

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

## Lab Leak Plausible Scenario



THOMAS P.  
HURLEY

One person in the right place at the right time with means is all it takes to destroy our lives.

The Chinese Communist Party has finally come to regret its one-child policies of the past as the realization of the aging Chinese demographics has resulted in a severe lack of workers to support this aging population. Indeed, one of their adversaries, India, is forecast to surpass the Chinese population in the not-too-distant future.

The party is trying to move to a three-child policy to make up for this growing labor shortage that is also affecting their military. But this solution is at least 20 years off, even assuming Chinese families want three children and start now.

Enter the scenario in which an aging population of "unproductive elderly residents" with high demand needs and the need labor, which is in short supply, to take care of this need. A pogrom that would eliminate the elderly would not be a solution in the current world environment, and the face China wants displayed to the world. It also might lose critical knowledge and skills that the productive elderly perform.

The Great Leap Forward, Stalin's banishment of "undesireables" to Siberia and Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, was a hard lesson that indiscriminate terminations of the educated senior class does not move societies forward.

Now, put yourself into the shoes of an enterprising party member who thinks he has the solution. The lab he works in has developed a virus that affects elderly and sick mice while leaving the young and healthy mice relatively unaffected. A solution to the problem shows itself.

Release the virus into the local market and let it spread. The unhealthy elderly become sick and die.

No ugly recriminations against the party leaders fomenting rebellion in the populace, because obviously, it's the virus's fault, not the party's. Problem solved. The demographics begin switching faster as fewer elderly are now in the mix and in the short run the country has dealt with its demographics resource problems.

COVID-19 is most virulent among the elderly population and those with health problems. It doesn't require a widespread conspiracy to explain the possibility of a COVID release in Wuhan.

As with most things, it would be the resulting coverup that causes the conspiracy after the fact. Unflattering information begins to leak eventually as the disaster spreads. The usual bureaucratic bungling makes things worse in the coverup attempt.

Chinese virologist Dr. Li-Meng Yan alleges that not only did COVID-19 originate from a lab, but that the leak "was not an accident" (her claims are highly disputed in the scientific community).

The truth is out there, but it sure seems to take a long time to get to the forum.

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



Your Health

# Lead Poisoning Is Entirely Preventable

Recently I received a notification from the state Department of Public Health's Lead Poisoning Prevention and Control Program that the local health departments will soon be receiving limited funding from the American Rescue Plan Act to support the response to lead poisoning among children.

According to their website, the mission of the CT DPH Lead Poisoning Prevention and Control Program is to protect the health and safety of the people of Connecticut by promoting wellness through education and various of program activities specifically related to childhood lead poisoning prevention.

Childhood lead poisoning is a very common pediatric public health problem, yet it

is entirely preventable. Let's not forget that in the Flint, Michigan tragedy in which so many children had lead poisoning was due to a contaminated water supply.

Lead poisoning in children can lead to irreversible damage by impacting the nervous system and subsequently leading to reduced IQ, behavioral problems and learning disabilities, among other health outcomes.

While lead paint in homes built before 1978 continues to be the most common source of lead exposure, there are other sources of lead that can poison a child or



DR. AMIR MOHAMMAD

adult. Lead paint can be on any painted surface in your home, like doors, windows and porches. It can also cause lead dust from painted surfaces that are chipping and peeling. Sanding and scraping old paint when repainting or remodeling can also cause a lead dust problem.

Old paint that has fallen off the outside of your house onto the ground may leave lead in the soil. Lead can also be found in ceramic dishes, crystal, food cans from outside the US, water pipes, solder and fittings and some cosmetics and home remedies.

Finally, some jobs and hobbies can expose both children and adults to lead. Some examples are painters, house remodelers, plumbers, mechanics, bridge workers and jewelers.

Universal blood lead screening is mandated in Connecticut for all children between the ages of 9 months and 35 months.

Remember, no amount of lead is safe for the body. Those households in Orange that are receiving well water should get their water tested. If you have any questions, please refer to state's DPH website or call the Orange Health Department.

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

The Garden Spot

# All About Rain Gardens

Most of us who follow the news regarding landscapes and gardens are familiar with the trend of converting large parts of lawns into natural habitats. This allows the homeowner to reduce their carbon footprint through less mowing, weed whacking and leaf blowing, while increasing the diversity of plants and insects.

Although lawns are non-native monocultures that thrive only with heavy feeding, watering, herbicides and pesticides, they can still have a place in the landscape when designated for a specific purpose such as a play area.

One way to create a natural habitat on your property is to incorporate a rain garden. According to Groundwater.org, rain gardens allow 30 percent more water to soak into the ground than conventional lawns do, and

they remove up to 90 percent of chemicals and nutrients in the runoff. That's great news for those of us with well water.

Rain gardens are simple in concept: pick an area on your property that is lower than its surroundings where rainwater collects as it runs off the roof and driveway. It's best to shape the garden as a rectangle perpendicular to the slope to garner the maximum runoff. Plan your garden at a minimum of ten feet away from the home's foundation.

Once you've identified the location, if your soil is compacted or clay you will need to take some steps to increase the water filtration. If your soil is hard to dig, it's com-



PAT DRAY

acted. If your soil clumps together in your hand, it's clay. Typically removing the top six to twelve inches of soil and adding compost and sand will do the trick. It's fine for the garden to have standing water immediately after a rain event, but for no longer than 12-48 hours so that mosquitoes don't breed.

Your plant selection should be guided first by the amount of sun the rain garden gets and second by what native plants will thrive with those wet feet. It's best to avoid planting any trees in the rain garden, since they are thirsty and will compete with your perennials for water.

If you want to attract butterflies to your rain garden, several milkweeds love wet

feet--Asclepias incarnata (swamp milkweed) and Asclepias tuberosa (butterfly milkweed). Some other great choices are Aquilegia canadensis (red columbine) and Caltha palustris (marsh marigold).

Note that plants with the word "marsh" or swamp" can go in the deepest part of the garden with others planted slightly uphill.

Once the rain garden is established it should need little to no maintenance - all you need to do is enjoy it. For additional regional natives that like wet feet you can download a fact sheet at extension.unh.edu/resource/native-plants-new-england-rain-gardens-fact-sheet.

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

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## Wine Talk

# Some Great Italian White Wines

Summer is a great time to have some white wines. The first significant difference between red and white wine is the acidity of the whites. White grapes are picked earlier than those for red wine. This causes the acid to come through to a greater degree and gives the wine a more refreshing character.

Most Italian whites have a tropical fruit characteristic. Many contain an apple, orange or lemon flavor and contain a general citrusy quality that makes summer fun.

Italy has over 500 red wines that they produce, so the white wines get overshadowed. But Italian whites are wonderful, varied and flavorful. So tell grandma to put away that bottle of Pino Grigio and try some of the wines I'm going to list.

One of my favorite wines is made in Marche, Italy. It is called Verdicchio. It has almond, lemon and peach flavors running through the wine and the alcohol content

usually runs from 11.5 percent to about 13.5 percent. It is refreshing.

Sardinia is known for making Vermentino. This wine has characteristics of lime, grape-fruit and green apple flavors with a touch of almond. The alcohol content runs about the same as Verdicchio.

Viognier is produced in the Piedmont region of Italy. The alcohol packs a little more punch and goes up to 15 percent. The flavors include honeysuckle, tangerine and mango. This wine will help any summer afternoon.

Arneis is produced in Piedmont also and contains up to 13.5 percent alcohol. The flavor characteristics include peach, yellow apple, some almond and honey.

Gewürztraminer is made in Trentino. Its



RAYMOND  
SPAZIANI

alcohol content can be as high as 15 percent and the flavors include lychee, ginger, tangerine and lots of grapefruit.

Campania is known for making Falanghina. This wine has lemon and honey flavors and lots of peach. It also has up to 13.5 percent alcohol.

Verona is known for producing Soave, which generally contains 12.5 percent alcohol and is on most Italian restaurant wine lists. It is light and easy drinking. It contains a little orange zest and some honeydew melon flavors.

In Sicily, they are known for the production of Inzolia and Catarratto wines. Inzolia has a lot of citrus with some apricot. Catarratto is loaded with lemon, peach, apple, honey and dried flowers. Both run up to about 13.5 percent alcohol.

These wines are just some of my favorite whites from a country most widely known for its red wines. There are some wonderful surprises among them. Summer is a great time for white wines. Take a shot and give them a try.

*Ray Spaziani is the former chapter director for 25 years of the New Haven Chapter of the American Wine Society. He is a certified wine educator who worked for the American Wine Society, Amete de Vino and Winemaker Magazine judging wines and conducting wine judging. He is an award-winning home wine maker and has written wine articles for newspapers and magazines for the past 20 years. Spaziani teaches wine classes for the Milford Board of Education at Citrus Restaurant in Milford. Look for his classes this fall on the Milford adult education website. Email Ray with wine questions and anything wine at realstatepro1000@gmail.com.*

## Foodie Foursome

# Al Fresco Dining With A View Of Lisman Landing

If you are from the area I am sure you have been asked or seen on social media questions like "Where is a good restaurant with water views?"

Flipside Burger and Bar is located in Milford's downtown just off the green and overlooking the harbor at Lisman Landing. The name, however, does not tell the whole story. Previously the location had a Mexican establishment and another called Indigo. Flipside serves upscale American bar food, designed by owner Michael Baffa. It has a great bar and indoor dining area, but the outdoor deck is outstanding. It is designed for any season, and is spacious with great views.

Their menu features over 20 creative burger specialty combinations as well as a design-your-own burger feature. They also have many more food options.

Cindy and I were there for dinner with friends Tom and Karen. We sat outside to enjoy the breeze off the water and Milford waterfront scenes.

We started with a few cocktails. Their margaritas were refreshing, unique combinations and fresh squeezed juices. Their espresso martini was delicious and topped with shaved cocoa.

After perusing the menu we chose several starters. The first two were a unique version of classics. The glazed calamari was delicately fried and drizzled with a blackberry-jalapeno glaze with chopped

banana peppers. Their take on the glaze was different from what we have tried at any other local restaurants and a nice departure from the norm. The street corn dip was fresh sweet corn off the cob, first grilled and then chilled, in a corn tortilla bowl with chipotle aioli, cotija cheese, fresh pico, chili powder and served with corn chips. The creativity and levels of flavor elevated it to my personal favorite appetizer list. It was a favorite of our party.

The next app was the grilled Mediterranean goat cheese. The panko crusted and seasoned fresh goat cheese, black olive tapenade, extra virgin olive oil, preserved lemon and hot honey drizzle was served with house-made cauliflower chips. Taking a bite with each element included was tasty and creative.

We finished the starter part of the meal with two outstanding adobo beef tacos. The soft taco shells were chock full of chunks of seasoned ground beef, lettuce, chipotle aioli, cotija cheese, fresh pico, pickled jalapeno, pickled onion and topped with tiny tortilla strips which added a nice crunch to this well-balanced taco.

Our intermezzo was one of their imaginative salads. The Flipside salad was a bountiful bowl of baby greens, candied walnuts, dried cranberries and gorgonzola



STEVE  
COOPER

with a subtle balsamic vinaigrette.

Our entrée excursion started in Flipside's wheelhouse, with burgers. Their house and hand-made sirloin burgers are among the best we have tasted. Of the multitude of choices, we started with the candy popper burger: a 10-ounce patty topped with cream cheese, candied bacon, pickled jalapeños and sweet carrots on a pretzel bun. It sounded like a crazy concoction, but it just

worked. The Milford smoke house burger was a spicy patty, cheddar cheese, bacon, coleslaw, spicy fries and smokey adobo ketchup. It was cooked to perfection and next level "burger tasty."

Our last two choices came at us from left field. The first was a lobster roll. The lobster was cooked fresh that morning and picked for the rolls. The tail, knuckle and claw meat was fresh and sweet with drawn butter on a toasted brioche bun.

The second was the Asian tuna wrap. It was made with large cuts of seared rare ahi tuna, baby greens, wasabi mayo, soy sauce, green onion, shredded carrots and encased in a wheat wrap. The tuna was fresh and seared to perfection. The added ingredients were the perfect accompaniment to the soloist of the plate: the ahi tuna.

The sides we got were outstanding, from

the house-made coleslaw to the fries, of which there were several types. We had normal salted fries old bay fries and honey mustard and sesame sweet potato fries. Our favorite was the onion rings, which were cut fresh and battered just before frying. The thin, crispy crunch before sinking your teeth into the sweet and juicy onion was special.

For dessert we had one of Flipside's signature confections. The loaded buttered popcorn was topped with caramel, chocolate drizzle, candied walnuts, toasted coconut, whipped cream and a maraschino cherry. It smelled like a carnival arriving at our table. It was unique and tasty and a great change from the norm.

I finished off with one of my weaknesses – a vanilla malted milk shake.

This conveniently-located restaurant will become one of your go-to spots once you try the food. Baffa, his general managers and our server made our evening a perfect night out. They feature happy hour specials and the kitchen is open from 11:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. seven days a week. Flipside is located at 1 Schooner Ln.

*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.*

## Travel Matters

# Cruising The Norwegian Fjords

We set off from Reykjavik, Iceland last month to cruise the Norwegian fjords, with a first stop in Akureyri – where we enjoyed the northernmost botanical garden in the world and the spectacular Godafoss Falls. Akureyri is only 40 miles from the Arctic Circle and was amazingly mild in temperature. Their microclimate allows their botanical garden to thrive.

There are a few ways to cruise the Norwegian fjords. It's a popular place to cruise since the ships pass right through fjords that can only be seen by sea or by small plane. It's the same reason Alaska is often the first cruise that many people experience – because of the unique opportunity to enjoy the raw beauty of the mountains coming down to the sea.

We chose a large ship, the Norwegian Prima, since they offered an itinerary that started in Iceland, sailed to Norway and then stopped in Amsterdam overnight

at the end of the itinerary. But there are many ships that will sail right up the coast of Norway to Tromso and beyond to the Svalbard archipelago. Many of these cruises are on smaller expedition ships, with some that reach the mountains of Lofoten, some of the most spectacular scenery in the world.

Hurtigruten is the cruise line that originated trips up the Norwegian coastline. Some of the Baltic cruises that sail to Sweden, Denmark, Estonia and Finland also stop in Norway – usually at Oslo or Bergen.

We were fortunate enough to stop in Bergen on our cruise, along with Olden and Alesund. In Bergen, you can take a funicular up to Mount Floyen where you can partake in hiking and biking trails. Or you can visit the Hardangerfjord – a



KAREN  
QUINN-  
PANZER

one-hour drive from Bergen – which is spectacular in its beauty. It's the second longest fjord in Norway and the fifth longest in the world.

The city of Bergen itself, is famous for the Bryggen section of the city, colorful wooden houses on the old wharf which housed the Hanseatic League's trading empire, which ran trade throughout Europe from the 13th to the 15th century.

The Edvard Grieg House is open to visitors. The renowned composer who wrote "In the Hall of the Mountain King" once lived there. It offers some incredible artwork as well.

From Alesund, we took a cruise into the 15 kilometer-long Geirangerfjord, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, purportedly the Queen of Norway's favorite

fjord. It looks like a painting as you view spectacular waterfalls and deep blue waters – all surrounded by tall mountains and lush vegetation. The city of Alesund is a delight as well, with the city built around the water.

From Olden, we explored Stryn where you also have many options – including the Briksdal Glacier, Tvinnefossen Waterfall and the Jostedalbreen National Park Centre where we learned about glacier formation. After finding out about the amount of rain in this area, we were absolutely blessed to have sunshine while exploring this gorgeous area of Norway.

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



## Costs

### (Continued From 1)

“Can you elaborate on the shortfalls so early into the new budget?”

Director of Finance Peter Erodici explained that the shortfalls were left over from the previous year’s budget as he attempted to close out those accounts.

“The main reason is that we were audited by the IRS in the past year, and as a result we had to revise the way we pay the secretaries,” Erodici said of the secretarial portion. “We had to change our procedure to pay them through payroll and make sure that we comply with wage and hour laws and also we looked at the union contracts as well to make sure that everything was done properly with this revision as a result of the audit.”

Erodici said that the accounts will need to be looked at in future budgets for possible increases, too.

Vitale asked why these transfer requests were only coming up now, after the previous budget year had ended. Erodici replied that the city continues to process expenditures into July and August. He added that he would likely be bringing more transfer requests to the board’s next meeting.

Alderman Dan German had a similar question about the reason for cost overruns in the solid waste account.

“We’re paying an additional \$227,000 in solid waste costs. Is that because costs have increased over the year that we didn’t anticipate, or is that it was just underfunded?” he asked Director of Public Works Christopher Saley.

“I guess you could say it’s a combination of both,” Saley responded, saying that they have been flat-funded for several years, but there has been a general

increase in costs every year.

“When I first started the trash account to tip in Bridgeport was right around \$56, \$57 per ton,” Saley explained. “Tipping” is the term used to describe payments for solid waste disposal. “Right now it’s \$68, almost \$69 a ton, and I’ve explained to the board it’s probably going to go closer to \$90 a year from now.”

“So in anticipation of this coming year, we’re really going to have to adjust that upwards quite a bit,” German said.

“It’s going to be a significant increase, yes,” Saley said.

The bulk of the money going into solid waste disposal is coming from savings in wages due to vacancies in the Public Works Department.

Alderman Tony Giannattasio asked Erodici if, given the continuing increased costs for solid waste disposal, the board would need to consider transfers to cover future shortfalls in this account.

“Yes, we would have to look at future transfers as well in the 2023-2024 budget, and definitely for the budget after that we would have to look at the account again and consider increasing it,” Erodici said.

Alderman Ellen Russell Beatty, who is also a Milford-Orange Times columnist, pointed out that there had been some discussion about covering the solid waste costs during negotiations over the most recently passed budget.

“I did not understand that the reserve account was quite so dependent on those vacancies,” she said. “What would have happened had those vacancies been filled? Would we have enough in reserve, and where would we transfer from?”

“Hypothetically, if those positions had been filled, you are correct we would have less surplus,” Erodici replied. “That would be a challenge for us to find the available dollars to transfer.”

## Orange Town Clerk Urges Students To Register To Vote

Orange Town Clerk Mary Shaw is urging all students to register to vote prior to leaving for school or college and to apply online for an absentee ballot.

“One of the greatest ways we can demonstrate our commitment to our democracy is to exercise our right to a free and secret vote,” Shaw said. “When you look at other countries you immediately recognize it is not something we should take for granted.”

Any US citizen, age 17 or older may apply for admission as an elector by pre-registering and will become an elector on the day of their 18th birthday.

The voter registration application and all related details can be found on the Town of Orange website at orange-ct.gov. Once

on the website, visit the Registrar of Voters page.

Voters can find information regarding absentee ballots by visiting the Town Clerk’s department page on the website. Once there, click the Voting and Election Information link, which leads directly to the Secretary of the State Election and Voting home page.

Shaw recommended using the “Requesting an Absentee Ballot Online” option. This new online option is meant to simplify the application process and eliminates the need to fill out a paper application form that would be either mailed or dropped off at the Town Clerk’s Office.

Those with questions can email mshaw@orange-ct.gov.

## Milford Announces Fall Bulk Waste Pickup Schedule

Milford’s Fall Bulk Waste Pickup Program is scheduled to begin in September.

The service requires the homeowner to prepare and separate the bulky waste. Similar items should be placed together in bags and containers. Small items must be bagged or boxed. Compostable yard waste must be placed in disposable paper bags only (no plastic bags). Brush and wood must be cut, tied, and bundled in lengths of four feet or less. Passenger car tires (four tires maximum) must be separated from other waste. Metal must be no longer than four feet long and separated from other waste. Electronics and white goods must be separated from other waste.

Bulk waste must be placed away from regular trash/recycling containers and be set out for collection no sooner than the Saturday

prior to the scheduled pickup. All acceptable items placed at the curb will be taken, including containers.

The following materials are prohibited: hazardous waste; any liquid waste, including oil-based paint; propane tanks; grass clippings, logs and stumps; and sheetrock, concrete/cement, bricks, porcelain tubs, sinks or toilets and other demolition material.

If your garbage day is Monday, bulk pickup day will be Monday, Sept. 11. If your garbage day is Tuesday, bulk pickup day will be Monday, Sept. 18. If your garbage day is Thursday, bulk pickup day will be Monday, Sept. 25. If your garbage day is Friday, bulk pickup day will be Monday, Oct. 2.

Questions should be directed to the Public Works Office at 203-783-3265.

## Walnut Beach Bootcamp

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If you’re looking for a good sweat, this class is for you! Cardio Circuit Training involves strength training with resistance bands or weights and adds intervals of heart rate increasing exercises. This class will burn more calories than just strength training and increase your endurance. This class is held every Tuesday and Friday. Registration is required.

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Real Talk: You Ask, A Pro Answers

# Making It Easy To Downsize

Thinking about listing your home with all the mental and material complications the process presents? For the professionals, like me, in reality it is not all that bad. The most important part is figuring out the finances.

As I always say, work out a way to buy without involving your current property because you have a better chance of winning the bid. The market still is full of buyers, but not listings. So you set the financing up, which is a temporary expense, and then you buy.

What do you buy? Visit the current inventory in the area you are drawn to. Only when you see a property you can picture yourself in will it feel new and exciting. Once this happens – and it happens fast – you need to be ready. I mean, really ready, that night, to write up a complete offer with your ducks and heart and soul all in a row.

It sounds intense. However, what happens next is all so cool. Maybe it is the waterfront you always wanted, in a condo or a home. Perhaps it is still in town and just down the street. There are many options; with a little homework, surrounding location and proper price to pay, the right buy happens every day and the clients are thrilled when it does.

The next step is figuring out what to take to the new place. Once you have a closing date prior to selling, you can simply “stage,” as they say, the new place. All the favorite pieces from your current home are now going to be beautifully appreciated as they are positioned in the new space.

I am speaking from experience – the experi-



BARBARA LEHRER

ence of watching hundreds of families, over the years, change it up. We all know that now is the time to sell; we are guaranteed the sale on our home. As long as you price your home fairly, you know that you will sell right away.

Finding that perfect place first was never easy in years past. Here we are with low inventory, so it's time to jump on the sale. The one catch is that you sell high and you probably buy high. But if you wait to buy low, your current home will be worth less also.

Interest rates are stable. I recall when they were 8 percent for 10 years. If you are ready to change properties, then appreciate this market where you do not have to stress about the rush to buy from what is out there once you know

your profit. Speak with a financial planner and a mortgage lender about a plan to jump on a purchase first.

Once you have completed the new home staging, then you are done. Plenty of companies will clear out, have an estate sale, donate and relieve you of the stuff. We all have too much, and moving clears the clutter. This airing out of your kids' or parents' stuff and your memorabilia is worth the chuckle right now.

The last part of the transition is closing on your old home and putting those previous temporary dollars spent back in the bank.

This is the basis of all the columns I have been writing here for over 10 years. Whether buying or renting, this is still the time to sell.

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

## Insuring Your Future

# August Is National Immunization Month

There are eight vaccines everyone should receive. Some are one time only, others are on a periodic basis and some are needed annually. The following is a summary of what, when and how often we should be vaccinated.

**Influenza:** Everyone over the age of 6 months should have a flu shot each year, ideally in September or October. It reduces the likelihood of getting flu. If you do get flu, you're less likely to get seriously ill. People age 65 or older have a greater chance of catching the flu and developing complications. So they should get a high-dose version. It has four times as much antigen as the regular shot.

Tetanus, diphtheria, and whooping cough:

Diphtheria is a serious bacterial infection. It can cause breathing trouble and heart failure. People usually get their first dose of Tdap at age 11 or 12. After age 19, you should have one dose of Tdap, then a Tdap or Td shot every 10 years. Also, women should get a Tdap dose during each pregnancy. Never got it? You should have it as soon as possible. This vaccine is a requirement for becoming a grandparent – just ask the parents.

**MMR:** You usually get the measles-mumps-rubella vaccine as a child. It can prevent all three of these contagious diseases.



TRISH PEARSON

es. The first dose happens at 12 to 15 months. You'll get the second dose at 4 to 6 years of age. Once you've had the full series of vaccines, there's no need to update them. Adults who've never had the MMR vaccine should get at least one shot. There are a few exceptions. For instance, pregnant women should wait until after they've given birth. Your doctor can tell you if it's right for you.

**Varicella:** You might not have heard of the Varicella zoster virus, but you've heard of what it causes – chickenpox, which is highly contagious. We now have a strong defense against it. Two doses of the varicella vaccine are about 90 percent effective. Doctors give it during childhood, usually by age 6. If you are over age 13 and have never had chickenpox or the shot, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests getting it when you can.

**Shingles:** This condition is a reactivation of the same virus that causes chickenpox. It comes with a painful rash and blisters, usually on one side of your torso. The shot can prevent shingles and complications such as long-lasting nerve pain. The newest vaccine (Shingrix) has two doses. It's given two to six months apart to adults 50 and older. After that, you're protected for life. If you got the older shingles vaccine before 2017, you're still eligible for Shingrix, which is much more effective. Keep in mind that it may have side effects. These might include body aches, fever and fatigue that last one to two days.

**Pneumococcal:** This bacterium can cause pneumonia and meningitis. These infections

can be especially harmful at older ages. That's why adults age 65 and older should get the PPSV23 vaccine. (In some cases, a doctor may also suggest a second vaccine, PCV13.) Adults under 65 should get it if they have a history of diabetes, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, lung disease, alcoholism, immunocompromising conditions (such as HIV) or chronic hepatitis.

**Meningococcal:** Kids are ages 11 to 12 when they get the first dose of this vaccine. Then they get a booster at age 16. It helps prevent meningococcal disease. Most adults don't need it, but it may be a good idea if you're traveling to a part of the world where bacterial meningitis occurs more often.

**HPV:** The human papillomavirus is a leading cause of cervical, throat and rectal cancer. The CDC recommends that anyone between the ages of 11 to 26 get a series of HPV vaccines. That's two doses for 11 to 14-year-olds and three doses starting at age 15. Recently, the CDC approved the vaccine for adults ages 27 to 45. If that's you, ask your doctor if you should get the vaccine. It may be especially important if you're dating or have multiple sexual partners.

**COVID-19:** If you haven't gotten the COVID-19 vaccine, talk to your doctor about whether you should get it. And if you need more than one vaccine, ask your doctor about the best ways to space them out. You can create a vaccination schedule together. That way you can get the biggest immune-building bang from each one.

*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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## Community Shred Day

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# Fireman's Carnival Lights Up In Orange



The Orange Volunteer Fireman's Carnival came to the High Plains Community Center fairgrounds during the first weekend of August. The yearly event is the fire department's largest fundraising event. Photos by Lexi Crocco.



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Book Reviews

# Hello Stranger By Katherine Center

Sadie is a struggling portrait artist overjoyed at being a finalist in the prestigious North American Portrait Society competition. On her way to a grocery store, she meets a really cute guy. The next thing she knows, she is waking up in a hospital clueless as to how she got there or what happened to her.

Despite calling out for her father, with whom she has a difficult relationship, the first person she sees is her evil stepmother Lucinda, who fills her in on the details. Sadie had a non-concussive seizure while crossing a busy intersection. The quick action of a good Samaritan saved her life.

An MRI shows Sadie has a malformed blood vessel in her brain – something she’s had all her life. The recommendation is for surgery as soon as possible. This conflicts with Sadie’s

plans to complete a portrait in time for the competition. A disquieting conversation with her father and a shocking announcement convinces Sadie that the surgery is necessary and needs to be done immediately.

But the side effect of the surgery devastates Sadie. She has no facial recognition ability – a skill necessary for a portrait artist.

She has no ability to discern who talks to her. Faces are unrecognizable. She only recognizes her best friend, Sue, and her parents through their voices. Interestingly, Sadie is able to recognize her beloved dog Peanut.

In every good romance story there are forces of evil conspiring to keep the protagonists



CARMELA DEVITO

from finding their happily ever after. In this case, the evil stepmother is joined by Sadie’s equally evil stepsister Parker, who quickly figures out Sadie’s problem. Parker delights in telling Sadie she moved into her building and has designs on a really cute guy (the same cute guy who saved Sadie’s life).

Then there’s Joe, Sadie’s overly helpful friend. Sadie had been relying on Sue to sit for her portrait entry. Sue excitedly tells Sadie she’s eloping and taking a two-week trans-Canadian train honeymoon. With no options left, Sadie collapses in misery. Joe, seeing her in distress, agrees to take Sue’s place.

The relationship road is fraught with roadblocks and never easy. Sadie is gobsmacked when she discovers Joe’s true identity and responds in the only possible way.

I adore Katherine Center’s books and treasure each one. She is the queen of romantic comedy novels. Her characters are real and flawed, struggling with contemporary issues easily identifiable to her readers. She writes about joy and happiness and doing good.

The book ends with the line, “the more good things you look for the more you find.” She has that right. I strongly recommend this gem of a book.

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

## Recycling Tip: Composting A Natural Type Of Recycling

By Susan Wineland

Nothing can capture the meaning of the recycling quite like composting can. It’s a great example of how small lifestyle changes can have large impacts.

In this natural process, what’s from the earth goes back to the earth. Vegetable matter, lawn and garden clippings, hay, shredded newspaper and other matter are broken down by naturally occurring bacteria and fungus in the soil to form compost.

The USDA estimates that one third of all food produced in the world goes to waste. It can spoil in the fields, during distribution or get thrown away. This food is estimated to be enough to feed every undernourished person on earth.

Such wastefulness isn’t just a social prob-

lem but an environmental one, as it wastes all the energy and water that it has taken to grow the food. When food and organic matter go to the landfill and rot, they produce the potent greenhouse gas methane. EPA data show that food waste is the single most common material landfilled and incinerated in the US.

Having a compost bin at home means that all the vegetable matter is kept out of landfills. You also reduce your overall trash and put it to use in your garden. Compost is sometimes called “brown gold” because it enriches the soil and lightens it while increasing the soil’s ability to hold moisture. It’s made from decaying plants and vegetable matter, so it contains the major elements for healthy plant growth and vital trace elements.

There are many online articles and videos about ways to compost. You can simply start

a compost pile on bare earth. Lay twigs or straw first, a few inches deep. Add compost materials in layers, alternating moist and dry vegetable matter like faded flowers, fruit peels, cornstalks, weeds, leaves, hay and shredded newspaper. Use grass clippings, but not from a lawn that’s had weed killer used on it because that compost can kill any plants you grow in it. Or dig a pit two feet deep and layer kitchen scraps down first, then sprinkle some shredded newspaper, dried leaves, twigs or hay. Cover it up with some soil that you had dug up. That system always does a good job keeping the critters at bay.

There are also many types of compost bins you can build or buy. Stationary composters get set on the ground and compostables get added to them. Tumblers have a rotating drum that you spin by cranking a handle.

Some tumbler types have two wheels, so you can easily roll it over to your garden to add finished compost to your plants and flowers. They sit slightly off the ground and have secure door latches to keep rodents out, if that is a concern.

There are also worm and countertop food waste processors, which chop and dehydrate whatever food waste you put inside, resulting in a usable fertilizer.

Choose the best composter that will fit with your lifestyle and your space. But do compost. It’s the best way to recycle kitchen scraps and garden debris that get thrown away. Your garden will thank you for the rich brown gold that will make your plants thrive.

For more info about recycling in Orange, visit [orangerecycles.com](http://orangerecycles.com) or [facebook.com/ORCinCT](https://www.facebook.com/ORCinCT).

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# The Rotary Club of Orange

## What Orange Rotary Does

Most people are somewhat aware of Rotary, as road signs bearing the Rotary wheel near the borders of most towns announce the presence of a local club. However, probably the most often-asked question of Rotary members is: what does a Rotary club actually do?

This is a bit challenging to answer, as Rotary is organized as a grassroots service organization and each club is a bit different, being geared to current members, club history and evolving community needs. For the most part though, clubs design, fundraise for and execute projects that serve the community at large and/or specific groups (such as youth or seniors).

All local clubs commit to Rotary's humanitarian goals and motto of "Service Above Self" and often collaborate on projects with each other. But the nearly 60 clubs spread out along the coast of Connecticut from New York to Rhode Island are each a bit different in membership, culture, and in what they annually do.

This column will focus on the Rotary Club of Orange, starting with typical monthly activities for club members. In future columns here, I will discuss the club's culture and member opportunities.

### Here's To Your Health

By Rotary standards, Orange has a mid-size membership (about 45 currently), mainly living and/or working in town. Orange club members are invited to weekly Friday meetings. Two of these are luncheon meetings, currently held at Orange Hills Country Club. One is a breakfast meeting at Valley Diner, and one is an evening social event at a local restaurant or pub or entertainment venue.

The luncheon meetings are the most structured, with an invited speaker giving a short 15-20 minute presentation followed by discussion. Speakers often are invited from other service organizations and provide a function of assisting members in identifying local or regional community needs and actions.

For example, a presentation by Susan Brown on the charity she founded in Milford, Purple Pantry, that helps provide food to those who are food insecure led to an ongoing collaborative project with Rotary clubs from Orange, Milford, Devon and West Haven. Clubs provide some funding to purchase food and



DAN MAY

volunteer to help distribute it to brightly painted purple pantries spread across the region from East Haven to Bridgeport.

Other speakers are more generally informative and/or address the international side of Rotary. Our Aug. 4 speaker described a driving trip in 2000 from Germany to India across Eastern Europe and the Near East. This fascinating talk dramatically highlighted how much the world has changed since Sept. 11, 2001.

The other half of lunch meetings and breakfast meetings in general focus on club business – mainly how club members are managing ongoing community and youth projects as well as upcoming events. Current activities include organizing a youth development day at Camp Hazen YMCA in September for middle school students from Saint Martin de Porres Academy; planning October projects that include shredding sensitive waste paper for Orange residents; assisting with a Special Olympics recognition event at the Yale Bowl; and identifying high school students to attend

a multi-day Rotary Youth Leadership Academy. We are also gearing up for November events, including one of our main fundraisers: the annual Thanksgiving Day 5K Turkey Trot.

The Orange club has a busy year-round calendar, and most member activity actually takes part outside of regular meetings in support of projects and events. Collective projects build and maintain comradery. However, it is a club, too, and social exchanges among members at meetings is also important.

As one example, each breakfast and lunch club meeting closes with what we call happy/sad fines. Individuals donate small amounts to share notices of important events (anniversaries, birthdays, struggles, illness, death) that impact members and their families and friends. Recognizing significant moments in each other's lives each week and sharing longer stories at our monthly club Friday night social events benefits both the speaker and the listeners.

Dan May can be contacted at [dmay@newhaven.edu](mailto:dmay@newhaven.edu).

## Don't Sell Yourself Short

I have always encouraged my clients to put how they feel at the end of their workout in the forefront of their minds. It will help inspire them to do the workouts again and put aside all those "I can't, I don't have time, I've got work to do" statements that go on in our minds prior to getting to the gym or out for a walk or jog. The battlefield is in our minds, and getting to the gym is usually the hardest part of the workout.

Recently, I noticed I was selling myself short in regard to my exercises. Prior to the birth of my youngest son, I was participating in extreme bootcamp fitness classes. I enjoyed working by doing things like flipping tractor trailer tires and running with a 35-pound bag of sand around my neck. In these workouts, I found that my body absolutely could do things I never thought it could.

Once my son was born, I was unable to continue workouts for some time. When I got back to the gym, I decided I wanted to switch

things up and began running long distance instead, which allowed me my first half marathon.

Changing up routines and types of exercise is important, especially if you're like me and want to avoid monotony at all costs. The next switch was weight training and packing on lean muscle, which is where I've been most these past few years.

However, a few weeks ago I was asked to attend a workout fundraiser at a gym supporting another personal trainer who is battling cancer. This program was much like my old bootcamp days, with 26 stations where you spent 40 seconds working and 10 seconds moving to the next station. Twice around we went. Sleds, box jumps, plank push-ups, jump squats, agility.

I felt challenged during the workout, but



MICHELE TENNEY

not in any way maxed out. It was post-workout that I realized I had been selling myself short. My son is now 16 years old, and somewhere along the line the lie that "you're getting too old for that stuff" had crept its way into my mind.

Two weeks after that I attended an outdoor bootcamp while on vacation that was just as intense. I found myself still being able to do a handstand and hold it for 45 seconds. I can still do things I did 16 years ago, and I should be more than aware of this than anyone.

I have a client of 17 years who I call the apple of my eye. If you follow me on social media, you know exactly who I'm talking about. She turned 100 this year and does exercises that some 40-year-olds struggle with. It's because she still can and she knows it. We modify things only according to what her body is

unable to do, not because of her age.

It also occurred to me post-COVID lockdown that I really missed working out in a group with others to inspire and to be inspired by. We need community; it's important. I was inspired to create an outdoor bootcamp for anyone who wants to start getting fit to anyone who's been exercising for a long time.

You are worth every bit of effort you put into yourself. Don't fall for the lie. Every morning you have another chance to begin again and live your best life possible. Let's do this.

Michele Tenney is a Certified Personal Trainer and Nutritionist & Wellness Coach. She is a member of the Orange Board of Health. Her website is [www.elevatePTW.com](http://www.elevatePTW.com). She can be reached at 203-668-2969 or email at [Hmgbrd3@gmail.com](mailto:Hmgbrd3@gmail.com).

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**Mental Health**

# The Behavioral Workforce Shortage

The ongoing shortage of behavioral health professionals has become one of the most insurmountable challenges for community-based nonprofit providers as they work to serve increasing mental health and substance use needs for those most vulnerable and underserved.

Waiting lists to access services because of increased demand has been a barrier for many over the last several years. Lack of adequate access has been compounded by the exodus of seasoned and dedicated clinicians who have chosen to go into private practice and work in settings like hospitals where they can be compensated at a higher rate than community-based nonprofits.

In the end, the shortage in the behavioral health workforce only hurts those who are seeking treatment and rely on the safety net of organizations that provide these vital services.

A survey conducted by the American Psychological Association in 2022 on the COVID-19 impact on practitioners found that

40 percent of psychologists were reporting a waiting list of more than 10 patients. Twenty percent reported an increase in demand in younger populations and people of color.

Timely access to care can be an issue for Medicaid enrollees because a number of private providers don't accept it for payment. The pronounced workforce shortages experienced in the community-based setting can limit options for those on Medicaid even further if there aren't enough clinicians to meet the increasing demand.

Progress toward properly addressing the behavioral health workforce shortage issue has been slow relative to the demand. A number of states have advocated for or adopted strategies that address the need to increase Medicaid rates so more providers would participate, develop policies to extend the workforce for behavioral health practitioners and loosen restrictions for in-person requirements



JENNIFER FIORILLO

such as approving the use of telehealth.

A newly passed law in Connecticut has allowed for the suspension of the associate licensing exam for master's level social workers until Jan. 1, 2026. Until recently, this exam has been a requirement for obtaining the associate license to practice under the supervision of a licensed clinical social worker.

It was found that the failure rate was high, thus preventing new social workers from entering the field to practice. It was also found that the failure rates disproportionately impacted social workers of color. This issue not only creates barriers to care and access but also limits opportunities to build up a diverse workforce to adequately address changing and increasing behavioral health needs.

The same bill also has a provision that gives a 120-day grace period for professional

counselors and marriage and family therapists to submit paperwork for an associate license after graduation from their master's program.

This is just an example of policy that was enacted to address the behavioral health workforce in Connecticut. Employers have also adopted strategies for recruitment to make clinical positions more appealing, such as sign-on incentives, flexible schedules and remote working options when appropriate.

There is still a substantial amount of work to be done around building the clinical workforce to support behavioral health needs in our communities. This will require ongoing commitment from policymakers and the provider community to advocate for changes that will reduce barriers to practice and make the field more appealing to new graduates.

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

## Getting To Know You

# The Soul Of A Fighter

My mother's mother was named Amy, and that made her my "Grandma Amy." Grandma Amy was the daughter of French immigrants who moved to the US just around the turn of the century. Born in 1907, Grandma Amy was the last of seven children. She grew up in West Harford and married my Grandpa Herman, a German who had immigrated to the US between the two world wars. They moved to East Hartford and raised two daughters, the oldest of which became my mother.

Grandma Amy stood about five foot nothing and she was petite, almost to the point of frailty. She tended to wear great big rings on her skinny little fingers, and she never let her purse out of sight. In pictures I have of her, she looks like a Norman Rockwell rendition of "grandma."

However, the Grandma Amy of my memories was the epitome of the expression "looks can be deceiving." Grandma Amy had the soul of a fighter and the tenacity and grit to take on all comers. When her dander was up, she fought with the ferocity of a hungry weasel and would back-sass the devil. Once she made her mind up, she was unshakeable. Woe to those who lined up against her. Grandma Amy was a pint-sized dynamo.

Her grit was hard earned. By the time she started her own family, Grandma Amy had endured the losses and privations of two world wars, survived the Depression, and carved out a life for herself in the aftermath. In my memory, she was a living callback to a world before the Wright brothers flew who would grouse "Get a horse!" at broken-down automobiles.

When Grandma Amy told us stories about "the war," she meant World War I. The first US president she could recall was William H. Taft. During the Depression she stood in line to get her money out of the bank and walked past the bread lines when she went home empty handed. She was in her mid-30s when Pearl Harbor was attacked and her 60s when Neil Armstrong walked on the moon, two months after I was born.

That tenacity made her socially bold as well. In the 20s, a young Grandma Amy wore her blonde hair in a boyish bob, dressed in the latest trends and danced enough, drank enough and smoked enough cigarettes to provoke a minor scandal. She also applied herself to her studies in school and, when she was unable to afford college, worked several office jobs in accounting.

Grandma Amy's family life also defied convention as she married a German man over the disapproval of her French family, and waited to have her two children until her 30s. After her daughters were born, Grandma Amy once again bucked the trend and continued to work and save her money in case there was another Depression.

One arena her fierce spirit always shined brightest was politics. Grandma Amy was a New Deal Democrat and seemed to view politics as something just short of a contact sport where opposing sides got together and hashed the issue out. She positively tore through every



DAVID CROW

newspaper she could get her hands on each day, and she was always on the lookout for live opponents to debate. She trained her great big eyes on her adversary, always gave them the first say and diligently listened to their opinion. Then it was her turn. After a few salvos of her informed opinions, most live opponents were cowed. When she couldn't find a live body to spar with, she would turn on PBS to watch news shows with names like "Agronsky & Co." and "Face the Nation" and vociferously agree or disagree depending on the hosts' take on the issues of the day.

She was never mean spirited or degrading to her opponents. To her, political opinions were something a person earned through experience and study, not what they heard on TV or other media. Her own politics were based on her experience and the information she collected, and she never once identified herself with any kind of "ism." As I recall she didn't have a lot of patience for what we would call "identity politics." Grandma Amy seemed to take the view that politics was an intellectual enterprise and that her opponents were either misinformed, uninformed or could be convinced.

Grandma Amy's attitude applied to her health as well. Whenever we asked how she was feeling, she would always chuckle and respond, "By this time next year, I'll be eating the dandelions from the roots!" Yet despite her protestations, she lived a long, healthy life with her legendary wits intact. In fact, she lived long

enough to see me graduate from high school, university and law school. She attended my wedding in 1996 just after her 89th birthday.

Finally, after suffering three massive strokes in two weeks, any one of which would have dropped an ox, Grandma Amy passed away in her sleep at age 92, just a few months before my first son, Joshua, was born.

Sometimes I wonder what Grandma Amy would think of the world today. What would someone like her, who lived through and recalled almost every major event of the 20th century, think of the 21st century?

On my cynical days I think she might be disappointed by our predilection to use our great access to seek out those who agree with us rather than engage in discussions with those who disagree with us. But then I think that it is more likely that she'd simply train her big eyes on us and listen to our opinions before she pointed out where we were wrong and what we failed to consider. Then she would nod and go back to her newspaper, and everyone would just keep on living.

Until next time, y'all come out!

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

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### Milford Student Wins eesmarts Contest

Milford student Hunter Clutter was recently honored as a winner in the 18th Annual eesmarts Student Contest sponsored by Energize Connecticut.

The contest invites Connecticut students in grades K-12 to showcase their energy smarts.

Participants were able to choose from a variety of project formats, based on their grade level, including poems, essays, news articles, book reviews, posters, photographs, speeches, public service announcements and community-oriented projects.

Clutter, a fourth-grade student at St. Mary's School, won first place for his letter to the principal providing ways the school could save energy. He encouraged the principal to open window shades to allow the use of natural light and turn off lights when classrooms are not in use.

Students from 18 schools in 15 Connecticut communities submitted their work for consideration. Twenty-five entries were selected as this year's winners and each finalist received a prize box with a gift card and certificate.

### Probus Club Recycling Bikes

The Greater New Haven Probus Club will hold its 7th Annual Re\*Cycle Your Bi\*Cycle and Musical Instrument Event on Sunday, Sept. 10 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Donation locations will be at the Kohl's Shopping Center in Hamden, Jimmies of Savin Rock in West Haven and Goody's Hardware in East Haven.

The Greater New Haven Probus Club was founded in 1921 to help individuals with special needs in the community and provides assistance for at-risk individuals and families, homeless shelters, veterans and incoming refugee support groups. All donations are tax deductible.

For more information, contact Roy Lukacs at 475-224-9774.

### Milford Kiwanis Club Holding Golf Tournament

The Kiwanis Club of Milford its 31st annual golf tournament on Sept. 11 at the Orange Hills Country Club.

The event includes 18 holes of golf with a cart and goody bag at \$210 per player to be paid by Sept. 4 to tee off. Registration begins at 7:30 a.m. and there is a shotgun start at 9 a.m. Breakfast will be served, including coffee, juice, bacon and eggs.

There will also be food at the 10th hole from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., including hot dogs, burgers, beer, water and Gatorade. The raw bar will be open in the late

afternoon with shrimp, half shell clams and steamed clams. Dinner at 5 p.m. includes grilled chicken, carved London broil, lobster roll sliders, beer, water and soft drinks.

There will be raffles and golf feat prizes throughout the day.

Proceeds raised from the event will benefit the Kiwanis Club. For applications or sponsorships, visit milfordkiwanis.org. For more information, contact Tom Duggan at 203-809-7695 or sawdoctor6423@yahoo.com.

### Car Wash Opens New Milford Location



The Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting on Aug. 4 to celebrate the opening of the newest Splash Car Wash location in Milford at 1553 Boston Post Rd. This is Splash's 18th car wash in Connecticut, with 59 open in the nation. The celebration is continuing through the weekend as they will wash cars for free with a donation to the Boys and Girls Club of Milford. From left: Alderman Holly Mulrenan, Mayor Rich Smith, district manager Jason Frank, owner Mark Curtis and marketing manager Gina Colley. Photo by Greg Geiger.

### Two Orange Commercial Properties Leased

Orange-based Colonial Properties represented the landlord in the recent leasing of two commercial buildings in town.

Broker Gary Bellard represented the landlord Khiman and Vandana Pursnani in the leasing of a 4,156 square-foot retail building on 1.06 acres located at 175 Boston Post Rd. to Southern CT Wellness & Healing for a five-year lease term. The tenant, which will be the town's first and only cannabis dispensary, is occupying the

site of a former TD bank and expects to open this fall. The tenant was represented by Jon Angel with Angel Commercial.

Bellard also represented landlord Leveraged Equities in the leasing of 5,000 square feet of retail space located at 464 Boston Post Rd., formerly the location of Prime 16 restaurant, to Savori Restaurant for a five-year lease term. Savori expects to open in September. The tenant was represented by Caroline Chao with Calgagni Real Estate.

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To be there no matter the time, or the conditions.  
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To be there to give quiet guidance through the storm.  
To be there for the final tribute that honors a life.  
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*-Doug Manning*

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## MHS Program To Explore Wedding Customs

“Honoring the Traditions: A Short History of American Wedding Customs” will be discussed at a special meeting at the Milford Historical Society on Sunday, Aug. 27 at 4 p.m. at the MHS headquarters, located at 34 High St.

This program is in addition to the summer exhibit, “A Century of Bridal Gowns,” with tours every Saturday and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. until Oct. 1. On display are more than 20 wedding gowns worn by Milford brides from as early as the late 1800s. The usual weekend tours include a presentation of wedding photos sent in by the public and uploaded into a digital picture frame that will run continuously every weekend.

The speaker at the special meeting will be Sally Lorensen Conant, the executive director of the Association of Wedding Gown Specialists, a not-for-profit association of cleaners in eight countries who specialize in caring for wedding gowns. She is a member of the American Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Objects as well as the Textile Society of America, and has been featured in wedding books and magazines.

Queen Victoria’s choice of a white wedding gown for her marriage to Prince

Albert in 1840 set the style for wearing white that continues to this day. Victoria chose white specifically to highlight the work of the English lacemakers who, while they were predominantly farmers, did cottage-work at home in the winters to earn extra money.

Conant will discuss how weddings in early America were designed to display the family’s standing in the community and their adherence to inherited societal rules.

Wedding gowns were not worn once and put away, but were worn for all future special occasions. Dresses were informally handed down through the generations, and sometimes they were even mentioned in wills.

There is a suggested donation of \$15 for the program. Conant is offering her services for free, so 100 percent of the donations will go toward the ongoing work of the MHS.

The program will be in the Bryan-Downs House, which is accessible to all by a ramp. Street-side parking is suggested so that those who need to be near the house can use the small MHS parking lot.

To find out more, visit [milfordhistoricalsociety.org](http://milfordhistoricalsociety.org) or call 203-874-2664.

## Folks On Spokes Returning To Milford

Bridges Healthcare’s annual cycling and walking fundraising event, Folks on Spokes & Step Forward Ride + Walk, is planned for Sunday, Oct. 1 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Fowler Field in downtown Milford.

Each year for more than 30 years, hundreds of cyclists and walkers have joined together to raise funds and awareness for mental health and addiction recovery services for children, families and adults. Participants of all ages can choose from

a number of scenic Connecticut coastline routes, including a 5K for walkers and five, 10, 20 or 40 miles for cyclists.

Event registration fees are \$50 per cyclist, \$35 per walker and \$15 for kids under 18, including a free t-shirt. Children 5 and under are free. Day-of fees are \$55 per cyclist and \$45 per walker.

Event sponsorships are available. For more information or to register, visit <https://bridgesct.org/folks-on-spokes/>.

## Orange Soccer Association (OSA) In-house Program Registration

Orange Soccer is a weekly program designed to allow young players to develop their soccer skill in a fun and relaxed environment.

**FALL 2023 SEASON INFORMATION SUNDAYS**

**register at [orangesoccerct.org](http://orangesoccerct.org)**

September 24th through November 12th

*Please help us spread the word and share with those families especially with children entering Pre k and Kindergarten this fall.*

Every Sunday during the season, teams of approx. 6-8 players are led through ~15 minutes of skill building exercises, followed by 45-60 minutes of game time depending on the age group. Teams are coached by parent volunteers and officiated by experienced referees.

### Cancellations

Soccer is an all-weather sport and will be played in light rain conditions. Any cancellations will be communicated via group e-mail and on our Facebook page. [www.facebook.com/OrangesoccerassociationCT](http://www.facebook.com/OrangesoccerassociationCT)

### Game Day Attire

T-Shirts will be supplied on the first day of play

All players are required to bring Own Water, Own Ball with your child's name on it, and Shin Guards. Players must wear sneakers (soccer cleats are optional)

### Team Divisions, Game Time and Location

Teams are made up mostly by the Grade the child will be entering in the fall. We do it this way so that players potentially know each other from the classroom. Should you have a cohort of friends that you want your child to play with, please make a list of those players on the Special Requests “NOTES” Section of the registration page.

Children must be 4 years old by Sept 30, 2023

### Practice Clinics

In addition to the Sunday program, we offer free clinics at Fred Wolfe Park (300 Hollow Rd, Orange CT) to all In-house enrolled players. These sessions are organized by Sterling Smith, an Amity Travel Soccer tenured coach and run by him and his staff. Players must wear shin guards and sneakers (soccer cleats are optional) and bring water.

### Tuesdays - Thursdays

Girls Boys

4:30-5:30 - 5:30-6:30

5:30-6:30 - 4:30-5:30

Fees

The fee for the Fall 2023 season is \$100.00 when paid by Sept 4th

\$110 if paid between September 6th thru September 24th  
\$125 if paid After Sept 25th

Register and Pay early to avoid the late fees!!

### Special for Amity Travel Soccer Players

Amity Travel Soccer Players may participate in OSA free of charge.

Contact [amitysoccerclub@gmail.com](mailto:amitysoccerclub@gmail.com) for your individual discount code.

### Volunteers Needed

Orange Soccer is most successful due to all the great volunteers we have. Please consider coaching your child’s team. Pre-season training is available for 1st time coaches. In order to coach, please register your child and also yourself. If you are a first-time volunteer you will need to enter your birth-date and Driver’s License Number, so that the Connecticut Junior Soccer Association may run a free background check.

### Sponsorship Opportunity

Orange Soccer also greatly appreciates all of our sponsors and offers two levels of sponsorship:

Basic: 1 season - \$100.00

Deluxe: 3 seasons- \$200.00

You can sign up to sponsor your child's team by indicating so on the registration page and supplying a logo in solid black or solid white to [orangesoccerct@gmail.com](mailto:orangesoccerct@gmail.com)

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- ★ "Dance with Me" 18 months-2.5 years

#### In-Studio Registration Dates:

- Wednesday, September 6th, 2023 ● 4pm-6pm
- Saturday, September 9th, 2023 ● 10am-2pm

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# Obituaries

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

**Myrna Chelefou**, 94, passed away on August 7, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Anthony Joseph Dirsa**, 90, of Orange, beloved husband of 65 years to Caroline Dirsa, passed away on August 7, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Benedict Anthony Fraccola IV** passed away on August 13, 2023 at Milford Hospital while surrounded by his loving family. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Carl Amundsen**, 74, of Milford, beloved husband of the late Sigrid Amundsen of nearly 50 years, passed away on August 13, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**John Rusinko Costa**, beloved brother of Johanna Costa Asher, died Saturday, August 12 at his home in New Haven. He was 64. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Carmella Theresa Dziczkowski**, 88, passed away peacefully on July 22, 2023 at Carriage Green Assisted Living in Milford, CT. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Brian P. Hansen**, 63, of Orange, beloved father, brother, uncle, and friend, passed away on July 28, 2023 after a courageous battle with cancer. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Rafael Barrios**, 91, of Milford, beloved husband of the late Josefina "Fifi" (Gonzales) Barrios, passed away at home on Sunday, July 23, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Stephen R. Deer III** of West Haven CT passed away unexpectedly July 15, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



It is with profound sadness to announce that on Friday, June 16th, 2023, **Raymond Joseph Filakosky**, age 75 passed away from Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



**Joan P. Hart**, age 65, of Wallingford, entered peaceful rest on July 16, 2023 at Mid-State Medical Center in Meriden. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Matthew P. Bauby**, 48, of Milford passed away on July 16, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Leigh Dirga**, age 47, of Milford, passed away suddenly in her home on July 28, 2023. (Adzima Funeral Home)



**Linda Filanowski** grew up in Milford and was a graduate of Jonathan Law High School. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Roberta Jean Sloatman Hurlburt**, 94, formerly of Orange, passed away peacefully at home, on July 18th, 2023.



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# Obituaries

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the sudden passing of **Jeffrey P. Kent**, 73, of Orange, CT.



**Jacqueline Elizabeth Mager**, died peacefully after a brief illness, surrounded by her loving family on Saturday, July 22, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**George Peter Rahgo**, 84, of Milford, CT, passed away peacefully on July 17, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Gabrielle Ann Speier**, also known as Gabbi, peacefully passed away on July 30, 2023, in her hometown of Milford, Connecticut, at the age of 66. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



**Geraldine A. Knapik**, age 74, of Milford, entered peaceful rest on August 3, 2023, at Bridgeport Hospital, surrounded by her family.



**Jason "Pata" William Paight**, 48, of Milford, Connecticut passed away on July 26, 2023.



**Peter M. Rembetsy** was born on April 8, 1919 and passed away on August 11, 2023 at age 104. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Charles Richard "Rich" Waskiewicz**, 69, passed away after a long illness on 6 August 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Johanna K. Kurbus**, 95, of Milford, beloved wife of the late Armin J. Kurbus, passed away on August 14, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Mr. Richard Guy "Rich" Piselli, Sr.**, 68, of Milford, passed away August 13, 2023 at his home in Milford surrounded by his family. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Maxine Schwartz**, 87, of Orange, CT, passed away peacefully in Milford Hospital beside her family on Saturday, July 29th, 2023 quite suddenly. (Robert E. Shure Funeral Home)



**Grace O'Toole Willison**, 95, a resident of Milford, C.T. and former resident of Poughkeepsie, N.Y., passed away on July 17, 2023 at her home. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



**Anthony J. LaLuna Sr.** of Orange, passed peacefully into the Lord's care surrounded by family on August 8, 2023 at The Connecticut Hospice in Branford. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



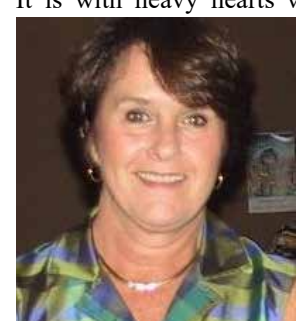
**George W. Pritchard**, a 93 year old long-time Ansonia resident currently of Orange, entered into eternal rest May 2.



**Andrew Silverman**, 45, of New York City and Milford, CT, beloved husband of Aya Silverman, passed away on July 16, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



It is with heavy hearts we announce the passing of **Judith Ann Yerxa**, 80, on August 10th, 2023. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



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