



# Milford-Orange Times

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## Milford Goes Green



Milford residents came out decked in green for the city's annual St. Patrick's Day parade on March 9. Additional photos on page 10. Photo by Robert Creigh.

## Irish Dance School Opens In Orange



The Orange Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting on Feb. 27 for the Brennan-Lucey Irish Dance Academy. The academy is located at 518 Boston Post Rd. in Orange. Photo by Sarah McGovern.

## Orange, Amity Schools Present Budget Requests

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

Orange Public Schools Superintendent Vincent Scarpetti requested a budget of \$24,268,493 from the town during a budget presentation before the Board of Finance on March 4.

The request represents an increase over last year's budget of \$821,308, or 3.5 percent.

The three areas in the budget that increased the most are for administrative

and certified teacher salaries, representing an increase of \$210,001; special education, which goes up \$246,420; and insurance/compensation, which rises \$591,584.

According to the superintendent, the cost of health insurance has increased from \$2,740,000 in 2023-2024 to \$3,320,024 in 2024-2025 because of a rise in the number

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## Milford Mayor's Budget Flat, But Ed Costs Rise

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

Milford Mayor Anthony Giannattasio's first budget proposal, for the 2024-2025 fiscal year, would mostly hold the line on cost increases to city taxpayers. Nevertheless, taxes could go up for residents if his proposal and that adopted by the Board of Education to fund city schools pass as proposed.

The mayor is proposing a \$147,842,037 city budget, which is an increase of

only about \$500,000 over last year, and about \$1.5 million less than what city departments had requested.

However, the Board of Education has put forward a \$111.3 budget, representing a 4.7 percent increase over the previous year's amount. Together the city and education totals reach just over \$259.1 million – about 1 percent more than last

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## Collins To Run For State Rep. In 117th



Collins

Residents in Milford, Orange and West Haven will have a new choice to make this election on who will serve them in the 117th General Assembly seat. With state Rep. Charles Ferraro's recent announcement that he will retire at the end of his term, fellow Republican Ray Collins III has kicked off his campaign to succeed him in the General Assembly.

He is following in the footsteps of his father, Ray Collins Jr, who served the district for two decades.

"Charlie Ferraro did a tremendous job representing the district for ten years, his leadership and dedication to our district have made a lasting impact," said Collins. "I am committed to building on his and my father's legacy and continuing the tradition of strong representation for the people of the 117th District."

*Continued on page 2*

## Welander Seeking Third Term In 114th



Welander

State Rep. Mary Welander, D-114, has announced that she plans to run for a third term representing the district that includes parts of Orange, Woodbridge and Derby.

"It has been my absolute honor to serve as the state representative for the 114th District for the past two terms, and to have your support. Today, I am asking for it again," Welander said in a release.

"These last few years have often brought the unexpected. As we moved out of the worst of the pandemic and into the recovery period, our state saw tremendous progress across many sectors including economic growth in businesses and the largest tax cut for residents in state history. The continued reduction in our overall debt and the rebuilding of our contingency fund (aka our 'rainy day' fund) ensures that if an emergency comes up, we won't

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## Send Us Your Poem

In celebration of National Poetry Month in April, the Milford-Orange Times will run selected poems from area residents in the April 11 issue. Submit your poem no later than Monday, April 1 to [editor@theorangetimes.com](mailto:editor@theorangetimes.com). Include your full name and address (only the name and town will be printed).

## Orange FD Adds To Team



Orange Volunteer Fire Department Chief Vaughan Dumas, left, swears in Cole Tennant and Vincent Orfini on Feb. 15 as probationary firefighters. Tennant and Orfini, both from New York, are fire science students at the University of New Haven. They will serve a probationary period with the fire department becoming full members. Photo by Doug Fenichel.

## Adopt A Pet: Bella



Bella is an Anatolian shepherd. She is a large dog and is friendly, affectionate, gentle, quiet and independent. Bella is house-trained, up to date on her shots and is spayed. She is good in a home with children. She 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.

## Collins (Continued From 1)

Ferraro offered his enthusiastic support for Collins' candidacy, saying, "Ray is a proven leader who has dedicated himself to serving our communities. His commitment to bettering public safety and our education system makes him the ideal candidate to represent the 117th District. I am proud to endorse Ray and look forward to working with him to make positive changes for the district."

Collins is the current chairman of the Police Commission in West Haven and serves as vice chair of the West Haven Emergency Response Services Commission, overseeing the 911 dispatchers for the police and fire departments. He had an eight-year tenure on the Board of

Education. "Having served in various capacities in our community, I understand the issues that matter most to residents," Collins said. "I am committed to being a voice for all constituents and working tirelessly to address their needs in Hartford."

Beyond his official roles, Collins has been actively involved in the community for many years, helping coach youth sports and serving as a trustee at the West Haven City Point Yacht Club. In addition, he works full-time at Brescome Barton as a sales representative and shop steward in UFCW local 2D.

Collins lives in the West Shore section of West Haven with his wife Mara. He is the father of Raymond Collins IV, his two stepdaughters Marina Amorim and Raquel Matias and grandfather of five.

## Welander (Continued From 1)

need to raise taxes to address it. These actions secure a better economic outlook for future generations," she said, adding that "We have made historic investments in education, nonprofits and our children's

mental and behavioral health." "These are all important steps but they aren't enough if we truly want a state where our kids can become successful adults, where an idea can become a thriving business, where all of our communities are safe and our residents are supported," Welander said.

## Korean School In Orange Turns 25

The Connecticut Korean School in Orange has entered its 25th year of bringing Korean culture and language to Connecticut.

This school reached this milestone just before the start of their spring semester. The CTKS offers the following classes: in-person language and culture for children ages 4 and up; in-person language and culture for teens and adults; in person K-pop for junior high schoolers and up; and online language classes for ages 8 and up.

In recent years CTKS has seen an influx of non-Koreans applying to the school.

"With the rise in K-culture thanks to K-pop stars like BTS, K-dramas being found on Netflix, and K-beauty being the standard, many people are now curious about Korean culture and want to learn the language to understand their favorite idol and not have to read subtitles," said Binna Yoon, office manager at school. "What I think is so wonderful about CTKS is that CTKS welcomes everyone. You don't have to be of Korean heritage to join the classes."

To learn more about CTKS, go to [ctkoreanschool.org](http://ctkoreanschool.org).

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## Orange Dems To Honor Smith



Smith

“Humbled brilliance” are the words many use to describe this year’s O’Sullivan Award honoree, Phil Smith. This annual award given by the Orange Democratic Town Committee is in recognition of an Orange resident for outstanding community service through their involvement in local, state or national government.

Smith and his wife, Loretta, have been Orange residents for more than 50 years. A few years after moving to Orange, Smith was elected to the ODTTC. He remained an active member until 2012, serving for 35 years. During that time, Smith was the campaign treasurer for both Mitch Goldblatt when running for first selectman and for Paul Davis while a state representative.

Smith’s involvement in Orange politics inspired him to run for office. He served on the Orange Board of Finance for 20 years, and as its chair from 2000 to 2004.

Like many people who are involved with the ODTTC, Smith’s commitment to serve continues beyond politics. He is a longtime member of the Orange Rotary Club, serving as its president twice. He also has been the treasurer of New Haven’s Community Soup Kitchen for nearly 20 years as well as being on the board of the Elm Shakespeare Company and the Southern Connecticut State University Foundation.

Smith’s background is in mathematics. He received his bachelor of arts degree in mathematics from Dartmouth University, his master of science degree from Stanford University and his PhD from Columbia University, where he currently serves as a visiting professor at the Teachers College.

Smith spent many years at Southern Connecticut State University as a faculty member of the Mathematics Department. He also served as the department chair, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences,

academic vice president and acting president. He retired from SCSU in 2005.

Mathematics has taken Smith around the globe. He has taught mathematics in Chile, China and Gambia. In addition, he has had many articles published on the topic.

Phil and Loretta Smith are members of the Church of the Good Shepherd. They have two children, Deborah and Andrew. Deborah, her husband Stuart, and their three children, Alexander (8 years old), and twins Penelope and Theodore (6 years old) live in England. Andrew, his wife Linda, and their son Wilson (turning 13 soon), live in Brooklyn.

Smith will be honored by the ODTTC on Thursday, April 4 at 5:30 p.m. at Birchwoods at Oak Lane. For information on attending or taking out a congratulatory ad in the commemorative program, reach out to Jody Dietch at 203-314-9975.

## Milford Budget (Continued From 1)

year.

Those numbers are likely to change. The Board of Finance is currently holding discussions on all aspects of the budget, with the next meeting scheduled for March 20. Once the BOF makes its recommendation, the Board of Aldermen will have a chance to consider the whole thing again over several weeks starting in April, before their vote puts a final number into effect.

Giannattasio, a Republican who was elected to the city’s top spot in November after more than a decade of Democrats holding the office, said in his budget address that his administration conducted hours

of research, meetings and due diligence before coming to its recommendation.

“All departments requested increases, and some difficult decisions had to be made. As we continue to weather the economic realities of the nation, some upgrades and requests for additional city personnel will be deferred.”

Giannattasio singled out the effects of inflation as impacting every section of the budget.

Much of the savings came in small slices from each department. For instance, a request from Community Development to upgrade a part-time clerk to a full-time economic development specialist was denied, saving \$24,716. An assistant city planner position in Permitting and Land Use was zeroed out, saving another

\$87,041. A request from the library to hire a marketing and communication specialist was also removed, saving \$51,422.

Several departments will be getting increases for capital outlays. The police department had requested \$390,000 for cruisers; the mayor recommended \$290,000. They’ll also get \$40,000 for drones, \$103,000 for computers and modems and \$20,000 for radar speed signs – all items that were not budgeted or funded significantly lower last year. The fire department will get \$40,000 for vehicles and equipment (up from \$25,000 in the previous budget), plus \$100,000 for vehicle equipment repair (up from \$50,000).

The schools budget adopted by the Board of Education earlier in February was

also passed after cutting about \$460,578 in what Superintendent Anna Cutaia called “found efficiencies.” Members of that board also said they were deferring millions of dollars in repairs to school buildings.

Contractual salaries and benefits make up the largest portion – \$3.1 million – of the increase on the education side. These items make up more than three quarters of the overall budget, as is typically the case.

Last year’s education budget ask of \$106.48 million was initially reduced by \$1.8 million by the Board of Finance. Cutaia predicted dire impacts from such a cut, including the possibility of closing a school or gutting popular programs to make ends meet. The Board of Aldermen ultimately restored the funding.

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Opinion & Editorial

Ponder This

# Community Gardens And Transparency

The Benn Crump Community Garden in Milford is operated by volunteers with a part time, community garden manager paid as an employee of the city. The Milford community is fortunate to have had the open space, suitable land, resources and the vision to take on such a worthwhile project. The publicly shared parcel is designated for growing produce for non-commercial use and enjoyment of the volunteer members.

It requires hard work and dedication to successfully run a community garden, along with ongoing governmental support. The garden has already celebrated its 50th anniversary of operation. The volunteers who participate, the longstanding support of Milford city government and administration and the collective vision of all involved have contributed to this ongoing successful community project.

One aim of all variations of community gardens is to build community and create social ties among participants. Such gardens in other, denser municipalities have been credited with the unintended consequences of decreasing crime and creating a heightened feeling of safety among residents.

Many municipalities are providing opportunities for residents to become involved in community gardens. The much-touted benefits in the literature include nutritional awareness, physical activity, community engagement and cultivation of fruits and vegetables for healthier eating habits. People often donate their harvested products to local food banks or soup kitchens that address food insecurity.

A public good is a commodity or service made available to all members of a society, typically administered by government and paid collectively through taxation. Such a public good is normally delivered without profit. Community gardens must be gated and protected from non-members and potential vandalism. In this way, the gardens are not accessible to all, but still can be considered a public good due to the broader benefits to the community.

The Milford Plan of Conservation and Development, passed in 2023, states that community gardens are a catalyst for neighborhood and community improvement, stimulate social interaction, beautify neighborhoods and create opportunities for recreation, exercise, therapy and education. The POCD reiterates the goal of expanding Milford's community garden program in the city's more populated areas, which can benefit from additional green space.

The current community gardens not only benefit the 120 plot holders but also all the people who participate. Many others, who are not plot tenants or lessees, participate as a form of therapy and leisure activity on occasion. The Milford nonprofit Bridges Healthcare has had clients who have gained from participation in the gardens. Scouting organizations have also participated through the years, thus benefitting from and aiding the community garden.

A map of Milford contained within the POCD identifies a few potential sites for the establishment of additional community gardens. A further stated goal of the POCD is to coordinate with Milford schools to involve students in conservation efforts and identify locations for future community gardens. All the city's boards and commissions should consider the POCD as a resource when enacting policies shaping the community.

Most communities require reasonable fees from participants in order to keep the gardens operational. Such is the case in Milford, where participant members pay a fee to enjoy community gardening. Some towns defray costs through donations of seed, tools, fencing and other supplies, since participants have additional costs associated with gardening. Milford provides services to the community gardens in the way of public works support, as outlined in individual letters of agreement.

Recently, there was quite a community



ELLEN RUSSELL BEATTY

uproar due to an unexpected increase in fees. Eventually, the issue was resolved by rescinding of the increase by the mayor after significant public input and aldermanic concern.

There seems to be an acceptable resolution to the community garden fee increase problem, at least for the moment. However, an excellent opportunity exists to contemplate how the situation could be handled with less conflict and strife. This applies across political lines and can improve the interaction of the public with elected officials and thereby improve governing.

Transparency is a much-banded about term that requires planning and effort to enact and accomplish. Transparency just does not just happen; it requires effort and hard work fueled by a vision. Certainly, all elected officials in Milford lay claim to a shared value of transparency.

Transparency must be a verb, not an adjective. Transparency requires action to create scaffolding and structure that allows for honesty and scrutiny in operations. It is important to periodically examine any patterns or barriers that interfere with operationalizing this shared value of being transparent.

A stakeholder is a person or party with a vested interest or stake in an enterprise, organization or project. Stakeholders may be people, organizations or groups with a legitimate interest. Good stake-holding requires good citizenship. A simple, dynamic, living organizational chart can reside in a leader's mind, leading to clear, strategic thinking.

Engaging stakeholders can easily become a quick, effective practice, providing a game plan to improve communication. Answers emerge to simple, internal questions aimed at identifying relevant people as stakeholders. A review of previous projects can identify stakeholders from similar circumstances. Brainstorming can bring to mind those who can contribute or help ensure success of the

operation.

In the particular instance of the Milford community gardens, a number of stakeholders were available and not engaged to make effective decisions. The Park, Beach and Recreation Commission is chartered with the duties of operation and management of the city's parks, playgrounds, recreational facilities and activities. The commission surely is a stakeholder for decisions surrounding the community gardens. On previous occasions involving recreational activities in Milford, stakeholders were not fully appreciated and thus underutilized. The Pickleball Association and the Little League ball playing community come to mind as recent examples of stakeholders that may have contributed positively to decisions affecting their interests.

The Board of Aldermen is a significant stakeholder investing considerable time and energy in the enterprise of municipal governing. The Board of Alderman can be a rich source of knowledge, support and experience.

It seems unnecessary and potentially counterproductive to ignore stakeholders, especially if they bear some legitimate authority in decision-making. A well-managed enterprise should consider the opinions and concerns of stakeholders when deciding mission, strategies and vision, even if there is difference of opinion as to the point of actual decision-making about small fees.

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

## Letters to the Editor:

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

## Milford Mayor Tone-Deaf on Taxes

To the Editor:

Does it come across as tone-deaf when our new mayor, Tony Giannattasio, orders himself a new luxury, six-figure city vehicle to drive around in and outfits his office with new furniture upholstered in full grain leather and then proposes a massive tax increase on city taxpayers?

Rather than showering himself with personal mayoral extravagances, Tony G's time would be better spent drilling down to find

savings and new forms of revenue to support his bloated city budget proposal. Instead of focusing on the material trappings of his office, Tony G might consider dialing back his recommended 6 percent property tax surge, which will increase every resident's taxes. As an alternative to his across-the-board increase on local fees, such as the doubling the transfer station charges for residential dump runs, as well as the cost to participate in the community gardens program, among many others, Tony G should spend his time working to identify new non-taxpayer sources of revenue that won't burden all of us who are already struggling to make ends meet.

While imposing new taxes on residents may help fund Tony G's caviar tastes in trucks and furniture, it places incredible financial stress on all of us at a time we cannot afford it.

Frank R Giustino  
Milford



## Milford-Orange Times

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Cyndi Consoli, Arts	Patricia Houser, Environment	Susan Oderwald, Senior Care
Steve Cooper, Food	Thomas P. Hurley, Commentary	Jennifer Paradis, Homelessness
Rob Craft, Recovery	Jennifer Ju, Facing Ourselves	Trish Pearson, Insurance
David Crow, Conversations	Barbara Lehrer, Real Estate	Karen Quinn Panzer, Travel
Theresa Rose DeGray, Bankruptcy	Dan May, Rotary	PJ Shanley, Financial Planning
Carmela DeVito, Book Reviews	Kevin McNabola, Orange Finances	Raymond Spaziani, Wine
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Opinion & Editorial

The Drive-Only License Issue



STATE REP. (R-119)  
KATHY KENNEDY

What are drive-only licenses and why are they so controversial?

In a recent Transportation Committee public hearing, members heard testimony both in support and opposition to HB 5057, An Act Standardizing Drive-Only Licenses. If passed, this bill would require the Department of Motor Vehicles to issue two types of licenses: one to simply drive, and the other to drive and to use for general identification purposes.

The supporting argument: drive-only licenses currently allow undocumented immigrants to operate vehicles with the security of having insurance. This helps immigrants find work opportunities while also managing their citizenship process.

The opposing argument: there will be no differentiation between these two types of driver's licenses. This invites individuals with drive-only licenses to also use them for general identification purposes – most alarmingly for voter registration.

As a daughter of immigrants, I am empathetic to residents who are legally making a living on their road to citizenship. That's why I agree that this bill has a positive intent in helping legal immigrants in their transition.

But as a state legislator, it's my responsibility to protect election integrity. That's why I stand with my Republican colleagues who have demanded the DMV mark all drive-only licenses clearly to reduce confusion at the polls.

The problem comes with same-day registration. Currently, non-registered voters can register on election day and cast their ballot if they prove residency by presenting a driver's license. If an undocumented immigrant presents their identical drive-only license, how can we ensure a volunteer poll worker (who is not trained to determine the difference in licenses) could tell the difference and refuse same-day registration?

Drive-only licenses need to have a special design or mark that clearly shows it can only be used for driving. This distinction is necessary to preserve voter integrity, especially after the recent election fraud issues in Bridgeport.

Adopting this simple solution can support our legal immigrants and support our legally registered voters simultaneously. I urge my colleagues in the General Assembly, my friends at the DMV and the governor to recognize this concern and effectively amend this proposal.

New bills and ideas are being discussed every day in Hartford. If you have any questions, ideas or concerns about this or any state issue, never hesitate to contact me at Kathy.Kennedy@housegop.ct.gov or at 860-240-8700.

2024 Session In Full Swing



STATE REP. (R-117)  
CHARLES FERRARO

Lawmakers up at the State Capitol are putting finishing touches on legislation in committee meetings and holding public hearings, working hard to hear the voices of residents across the state.

The proposed electric vehicle mandate continues to be a hot topic of discussion in Hartford – and in every corner of Connecticut. It is with the utmost importance that the voices of our residents are heard, and this week there was a hearing in the Transportation Committee on a bill that would create a “roadmap” to a ban on gas-powered cars.

Many of you have expressed your serious concerns with this proposed mandate and the effect it may have on residents, business owners, and our critical infrastructure. This was another chance for people to make their voices heard and “pump the brakes” on the majority Democrats’ gas car ban.

The House and Senate Republicans recently held press conferences to stand up for our state’s law enforcement, proudly supporting those who put their lives on the line to protect ours. Of many proposals which have been supported by House Republicans to protect public safety, SB 337 will take a step towards strengthening penalties for street takeovers – a dangerous trend that manifested in Milford just last year.

Our proposal is to increase the penalty for organizing or promoting one of these events to be a Class D felony on first offense, and every offense afterward to be categorized as a Class C felony – which carries a maximum sentence of 10 years, a minimum sentence of one year, and a fine up to \$10,000.

I was honored to attend the ribbon-cutting ceremony on March 6 at the McDonald’s located at 57 Boston Post Rd. in Orange. Sixty-five years ago, a son and his father walked up to a rather small, but not inconspicuous, building with two giant golden arches and a walk-up order window. I was six. On Wednesday, I revisited that same McDonald’s but as a state representative, proudly serving the residents of Milford and Orange.

Congratulations to the McDonald’s corporation for the successful launch of its renovated Orange location. This is a testament to the strong business culture that has been fostered in Milford and Orange, and to the great economic benefits of public-private partnerships.

For updates on community events, highlighted legislation, state funding for Milford and Orange, and much more, you can visit my website at RepFerraro.com or follow my legislative Facebook page at facebook.com/RepFerraro. Please continue to reach out to me at Charles.Ferraro@housegop.ct.gov with your questions and concerns regarding state issues.

Making Progress



STATE REP. (D-114)  
MARY WELANDER

With such a short time to get things done in the even-year “short” legislative session, we are moving quickly to prepare for each bill that comes through our committees and to be aware of important legislation from other committees.

At the same time many legislators, including myself, are tracking our individual proposals. All bills are required to be directly related to the budget in the short session; this brings in an additional challenge.

The unanimously approved continuation of the “fiscal guardrails” requires that any funds above the rainy day fund cap are directly used on paying down debt, which limits the amount able to be spent outside that. I understand and agree that it is important to continue to reduce state debt and have emergency/contingency funds, but will confess it is frustrating to not be able to access those funds to do the work that needs to happen to support middle class families or support our schools, or many other worthy concerns.

Understanding that right now we have to take small steps, I have three modest proposals that are making their way through the committee process.

The first has been sent directly to appropriations. HB 5136, AAC Funding for the Office of the Child Advocate, proposes increased funding for additional personnel to ensure greater safety of the children in the care of the Department of Children and Families. Increased oversight may also be helpful in identifying ways to better support DCF staff in hopes of preventing any repeat of the recently reported tragedies and lapses in safety and management.

The second, HB 5093, AA Increasing Funding for the Artist Fellowship Program, just had a public hearing in the Commerce Committee. This program run by the state Office of the Arts provides small-dollar grants for artists across the state who are not supported by established organizations. Art-based events, such as the Arts & Ideas festival, support not just the artists, but the whole community. The 12-day event in 2023 brought \$2.66 million in economic impact to New Haven with increased foot traffic to local shops and restaurants as well as the festival itself. When we support the arts, we support the state.

Finally, I have once again put forward the proposal to recognize skills gained during military service when someone wants to enter the trades. HB 5184, AAC Reimbursement Of Certain Fees For Veterans Or Sponsors Of Veterans In Apprenticeship Programs, is slightly different this year to fit the required bill parameters.

This is the fourth time I have proposed this legislation, and I will continue to until we can make some progress. To me this is a win-win situation. The trades offer immediate and lucrative careers (with little to no student debt), and there is a dire need for skilled tradespeople across all industries. Veterans are often highly trained in specific, but transferable, skillsets. We should make it easier for veterans to enter these careers, not harder.

If you have thoughts about these concepts you would like to share, please reach out to me at mary.welander@cga.ct.gov.

Misconceptions On Vehicle Taxes



THOMAS P. HURLEY

Everyone who owns a motor vehicle is subject to motor vehicle taxes payable to their town or city. These can be paid in multiple installments in towns that passed resolutions to split their payments. Orange is not one of those towns.

Orange motor vehicle taxes are due on July 1 every year. Some folks assume they are due just before the end of the grace period. The grace period is a state-mandated period granting residents time to pay these bills without additional interest being imposed. Some individuals think that being only one day late shouldn't be too expensive. The interest charge for being one second late outside the grace period incurs a 3 percent additional interest charge for July and August.


Some motor vehicle owners believe if they don't get a bill they don't owe the tax. Connecticut general statutes are clear on this issue: if you don't get a bill, it is the motor vehicle owner's responsibility to ask for one from the tax office.

Some people think that if the state has a motor vehicle registration hold on their vehicle that they don't need to pay the tax until the next registration period (maybe three years away). But the town operates on a fiscal year basis. Failure to pay your motor vehicle tax when it is due means town and school budgets cannot be fully funded. What would you like to us give up, a book for the school children? A teacher? Not snowplowing your street? Senior citizen activities at High Plains Community Center? Please make sure you let the selectmen or Board of Finance know so that we can defund the program.

The tax office gives you three opportunities to pay your motor vehicle bills – the original bill, a delinquency notice and a final demand notice – before we send a constable or state marshal to collect your tax debt (fourth notice alias tax warrant). Do you think we in the tax office aren't serious when we send you these notices? This costs the town money to collect. The tax collector's office has a statutory responsibility to collect these taxes.

Some people think they can take the plates off their car in the garage, turn them in and avoid a tax responsibility. All this does is change the tax type from motor vehicle to personal property. After all, you still own the asset, and it is taxable. You need to tell the assessor's office when you intend to do this so appropriate paperwork can be completed to get your bill.

Thomas P. Hurley is the tax collector for Orange.



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Here’s To Your Health

Spring Forward

Now that we’ve turned the clocks ahead, hope abounds in my spirit for gardening, outdoor exercise and warmer weather. I love watching what looks to be dead come back to life with vibrancy and smell the aromas of spring fill the air.

I’m sure I’m not alone in the way spring makes me feel. However, I am wondering if the excitement for spring also brings excitement for exercise and lifestyle changes. Sometimes the shorter days and dreary weather can beat us down and make us less motivated to exercise and eat healthy. In addition, we may be more tempted to eat “comfort” foods during the winter. Winter is very hard on our bodies, especially if we’ve fought off illnesses. Spring is the perfect time of year – more than Jan. 1 – to begin again.

Seasonal eating is a healthy way to consume foods. Spring brings an array of lettuces, kale, arugula and chard because they

are hardy plants that can grow despite the possibility of frost. While spring brings other fruits and vegetables to choose from, the majority are fresh greens. Fresh greens are chock full of antioxidants and minerals that your body craves. These greens will help detoxify your body and help boost your immune system. But here is the kicker: fresh greens will also help you lose weight. Most of us have added a couple of pounds over the winter months, so this is good news.

As far as exercise goes, I encourage you to get outside. I know many people who bundle up and head out the door during the winter, but I have never been one of them. A 10-degree upswing on the thermometer makes a world of difference to me. So if you’re like me, make a plan to get outside for a brisk



MICHELE TENNEY

walk or a hike. Make a date with a friend or your calendar and shoot for twice a week to start. Before you know it, another 10 degree rise will be in the forecast.

If you’ve been in an exercise rut, I encourage you to start something new and perhaps do it with a friend. The buddy system really does work. Biking is a great form of outdoor exercise. You don’t need to go far or fast, just enjoy your scenery. Sunrise yoga or a Pilates class is also an option.

If you don’t have an exercise device, such as an Apple Watch or Fitbit, I highly recommend you get one. My Fitbit reminds me of how many steps I have left to complete in an hour based upon my 10,000 steps a day goal. It also tracks my food and sleep. I find it beneficial in holding me accountable, but also in motivating me with weekly reports

on my progress.

Sleep patterns may change when Daylight Saving Time begins, so perhaps taking some melatonin or magnesium before bedtime would be a good plan. Of course, drinking plenty of water and lowering stress levels will be an additional aid to good sleep.

I believe in you, but it’s more important for you to believe in yourself. You got this. Keep up the good work. Yes, gardening does count as exercise. So happy planting. I’m excited for spring and I am sure you are too.

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).

Getting To Know You

A Gift Of Time

My dad gave me a gift the other day. It’s a gold, open-faced pocket watch on a long chain, and it’s special. It belonged to my dad’s Uncle Henry. Uncle Henry’s initials are inscribed on the back. When my grandfather passed, my father found uncle Henry’s watch in my grandfather’s dresser drawer under a pile of loose change. Who knows how long it sat there before it was accidentally uncovered by random chance. Dad wound it up; it went “tick-tick-tick” and kept perfect time just like it was supposed to. My dad held onto it for almost 20 years, and then gave it to me. It’s still in perfect working order and keeps accurate time, which is amazing as it’s over 100 years old.

I can’t say my family is too big on heirlooms. I’m sure there are various reasons for that. Things break, wear out, become obsolete or just get lost over time. The details of day-to-day life can erode away a lifetime, and maybe my family just never got around to it. Passing items like this pocket watch from generation to generation takes either some forethought or some tremendous luck.

It’s not my first pocket watch. The day be-

fore I got married, my wife gave it to me as a wedding gift. It has our anniversary inscribed on it. I get it out a couple of times a year, wind it up and wear it around. It’s got a nice big face and bold Roman numerals on it, so I can read it without my reading glasses.

My pocket watch isn’t 100 years old yet, but thanks to the date inscribed on it, I can tell it’s rapidly gaining up on the century mark. When I wind it up it makes a very satisfying “tick-tick-tick,” and it too keeps perfect time.

My first pocket watch is a nice reminder of a day that doesn’t seem all that long ago, when time stood still for a little bit and a few memories got etched in my brain. Every time I look at my pocket watch, I get to enjoy those memories all over again. There are a few photographs of that day. Some guy with a waistline and a hairline that aren’t punchlines danced with my wife that day. If you squint at the pictures just right, that guy kind of looks like me, but I can’t



DAVID CROW

be too sure because the pictures are prints and the focus on those old disposable cameras was a little wonky. He looks pretty happy.

I wore that watch to my wedding. I wore it when we closed on our first house. I wore it when my kids were christened. And I wore it when we closed on our house in Orange. Over those years it’s been to birthday parties and anniversaries and business meetings, and a few funerals. It’s never missed a Christmas. Pretty much every big event in my life since I got married, which means pretty much every big event in my life, my pocket watch has been there as a witness.

The strange part is that when I wear it, time seems to stop, or at least slow down enough to allow a few more memories to get etched in my brain.

Now, thanks to uncle Henry and my dad, I have two pocket watches, and as I sit here and look at my two pocket watches, I have to wonder.

When I look at uncle Henry’s watch, I wonder about the past. I wonder what uncle Henry’s watch witnessed as it ticked away more than a century. What memories does it carry? What big events did it attend and, if it could say anything except “tick-tick-tick,” what stories would it tell?

Then I look at my pocket watch and I wonder about the future. Will it still be around in 100 years? Will it still work? Will someone distantly related to me, perhaps a great grandchild of mine, sit at their desk and listen to its century old “tick-tick-tick” and wonder the same thing that I wonder when I look at uncle Henry’s watch?

Only time will tell, I guess.

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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Insuring Your Future

What Is A Special Enrollment Period?

In the insurance world, a special enrollment period means the time when someone can enroll or change insurance plans outside of the open enrollment period. To qualify for a SEP, you must meet certain conditions – the insurance industry defines those as “life-changing events.”

These events fall into five basic categories: loss of group (employer) benefits, moving from one state to another, death of a spouse, marriage or birth of a child. There are certain additional instances when someone qualifies for a SEP if they are on Medicare or Medicaid (HUSKY in Connecticut).

When one of these life-changing events occurs, an individual has 60 days to choose an insurance plan through Access Health CT. The application can be completed online through AHCT.org, over the phone or

by calling a certified broker who can assist with the application as well as advise on plan choice.

People who are on Medicare can also qualify for a SEP if they have a hospital stay and are then released or are in a rehab or a nursing facility. Also, when someone turns 65 they have an initial enrollment period of seven months to enroll in Medicare A and B as well as a prescription drug plan.

Many people think they must enroll in Medicare when they turn 65; this is not the case. If you have health insurance through an employer you can remain on that plan until retirement. It is recommended that you enroll in Medicare Part A as it will be



TRISH PEARSON

a secondary insurance if you are in the hospital. There is no cost for Part A, and it will shorten the application process when you apply for full Medicare. People on Medicare also have a three-month period – January through March – of each year to make a change from one Medicare Advantage plan to a different one, or to go back to traditional Medicare with a supplement and standalone prescription drug plan.

Another SEP opportunity is for Medicaid members who no longer qualify because their income has increased. People who are no longer eligible for HUSKY have 120 days to enroll in a plan through Access

Health CT. The next step is to contact Access Health or a certified broker who can assist with the application process. Note – even if their income has not changed, those who are receiving HUSKY benefits must renew their coverage by confirming their income with Access Health when they receive a renewal notice. This can be done online or on the phone. Failure to respond to the renewal request could result in cancellation of HUSKY.

Pregnancy also creates a SEP to cover the mother and the baby. Usually the child qualifies for HUSKY automatically, as does the mother for a period of time.

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

Your Health

Avoiding Ultra-Processed Foods For A Healthy Heart

Adopting healthy habits such as eating a balanced diet, staying physically active, managing stress and avoiding tobacco can help to maintain heart health and reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease.

In a study recently published in the British Medical Journal, researchers analyzed data from “45 pooled meta-analyses” across 14 review articles, encompassing nearly 10 million individuals. The findings revealed “convincing evidence” linking higher consumption of ultra-processed foods to a 50 percent increased risk of death from cardiovascular disease, a 48 to 53 percent higher risk of anxiety and common mental disorders, and a 12 percent greater likelihood of developing

type 2 diabetes. Furthermore, the study indicated “highly suggestive evidence” associating diets rich in ultra-processed foods with a 21 percent higher risk of death from any cause.

Some examples of ultra-processed foods are common household items like sugary breakfast cereals; packaged snacks like chips, crackers and cookies; instant noodles and flavored pasta dishes; microwaveable meals and frozen dinners; fast food items like hamburgers, French fries and chicken nuggets; sugary beverages such as soda, energy drinks and sweetened fruit juice;



DR. AMIR MOHAMMAD

es; and processed meats like hot dogs, sausages and deli meats.

These foods are highly addictive and often high in calories, unhealthy fats, added sugars and sodium, while being low in essential nutrients like vitamins, minerals and fiber.

Diets high in ultra-processed foods can have several harmful health effects, including but not limited to weight gain and obesity, as well as increased risk of chronic diseases, such as heart disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol level, type 2 diabetes and certain cancers. Poor digestive

health issues such as bloating, constipation and diarrhea can also result from daily consumption of these foods. Some research suggests that diets high in ultra-processed foods may be associated with an increased risk of depression, anxiety and other mental health disorders.

Overall, reducing the intake of ultra-processed foods and opting for whole, minimally processed foods can help promote better health and reduce the risk of chronic disease.

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

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Real Talk: You Ask, A Pro Answers

Is It Time To Downsize?

Do you have it in you to change up your lifestyle? You can lighten the load by selling your larger-than-needed home in the country and join the cozy communities of condos, smaller homes or apartment living.

They say closer communication with neighbors is not only satisfying, but great for your health. Social studies prove that you can live longer sharing relationships with a variety of people, both family and friends. To have more downtime with fewer responsibilities can easily become habit forming.

All of this is actually easier than you think. Just pick through and pack the things you really love, committing to what will fit in your

new space. You'd be surprised at how uplifting it can be to redecorate, letting go of old items you no longer need and doing away with all those expenses like roof repairs, heating fuel and property taxes.

You can make arrangements for the rest of your contents to be emptied and donated. Think about the extra time and freedom you will have to travel or get a hobby.

This market is so hot that selling and getting a good price for your property is guar-



BARBARA LEHRER

anteed. What an opportunity. Your current property did you well. Your children grew up and moved on and now it is your turn to do the same. Whether owning or renting, once you start looking around at the possibilities out there your current home will be in the rear-view mirror.

After 40 years of helping families go through a similar scenario, I can definitely say this is the best and easiest time ever to make it happen.

Whether contemplating a smaller home or a set community, the real estate process is

like a puzzle. Finding that perfect fit is probably a month or two away, as the inventory is finally growing after four years of scant selections. In other words, those valuable new listings coming on the market become available to you, the buyer.

Will you be one of the sellers willing to find a new place and put it all into play? The job of your real estate agent is to show you how to make it happen by rehearsing each step toward the goal. This end result can be a huge savings in the bank, relaxation and socialization. Get ready.

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

Recycling Tip: Orange Gears Up For Shredding Day Activities

By Susan Wineland

Residents of Orange are eagerly anticipating the upcoming Shredding Day, which has become a much larger event on Saturday, April 27 (during Earth Day week) from 9 a.m. to noon at High Plains Community Center on Orange Center Road.

Organized by the Orange Recycling Committee, this event offers residents a convenient and responsible way to dispose of various household items while promoting sustainability and environmental consciousness. In addition, to show support for the community, residents may bring non-perishable food items for donation to local food pantries.

Held twice yearly for the last several years, this major recycling event is a highlight on the community calendar, offering a range of services aimed at facilitating responsible waste disposal. Residents are encouraged to gather their confidential personal documents, including tax papers, bank statements, medical records and other sensitive papers, for secure on-site shredding. This invaluable service, provided by Affordable Solutions of Orange, ensures that documents are disposed of securely, offering peace of mind to residents.

As this free service is generously funded by the Rotary Club of Orange, residents may show their appreciation by donating to the Orange Rotary Club Scholarship Fund. Rotarians will be on hand to collect donations.

This year, the Orange Recycling Committee is proud to introduce a secure method of disposing of electronic devices. Recognizing the importance of responsible e-waste management, the committee has partnered with a local firm that wipes hard drives clean and breaks down electronic devices for their scrap metal value while ensuring landfill disposal of the remaining waste. Old cell phones, tablets, laptops and personal computer hard drives will be accepted with a suggested price of \$5-\$20 per item.

The event will also provide an opportunity for residents to part with old mattresses and box springs through the services of the Mattress Recycling Council's "Bye Bye Mattress" team. Whether residents choose to bring their items to the event or opt for the convenient pickup service offered by volunteers from the Orange Lions Club (call Ken or Marianne at 203-795-3906 to arrange pickup), the disposal process is easy and accessible. This important service keeps our landfills and incinerators less crowded, as every part of each old mattress is recycled into new and useful products. Note that certain exclusions apply, including mattresses from futons, sofa beds or waterbeds; those with bed bugs; wet, damaged or excessively soiled mattresses; and sleeping bags or mattress pads/toppers.

In addition to these essential services, the Orange Community Women will be on hand (until 11:45 a.m.) to collect clothing and household goods, including used clothing, shoes, accessories, blankets, curtains, sheets, towels, stuffed animals, housewares, dishes, small appliances, home decor, toys, sporting goods, DVDs, CDs, tapes and knick-knacks. Residents are encouraged to bag or box their items appropriately for collection. These items will be sold to a local thrift shop and proceeds will be used to fund the group's charitable work.

The Buy Nothing Orange group will host a "swap meet" where people can bring and take items for exchange at no cost. They will be under the pavilion from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. and will also be collecting non-perishable food for the Orange Food Bank and Orange Food2Kids.

Finally, April 27 is National Drug Take-Back Day. Members of the Orange

Police Department and the Bethany Orange Woodbridge Drug & Alcohol Action Committee will be in front of High Plains Community Center from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to discreetly accept any unused or expired medications and vape devices for proper disposal.

To ensure a smooth and organized experience for all participants, the Orange Recycling Committee emphasizes the importance of following signs and directions upon entering Tribute Way. Paper shredding and electronics collection will be located in the front parking lot; prescription drug collecting and mattress/box spring collection in the front of the community center; and food, clothing and household items collection at the upper pavilion.

Due to a conflict, the residential Hazardous Waste disposal originally scheduled for the same date has been postponed and a new date was not available at press time.

With its focus on sustainability, community engagement, and responsible waste management, the Orange Recycling Committee's Shredding Day promises to be a rewarding experience for residents. For more information and updates, residents are encouraged to visit [orangerecycles.com](http://orangerecycles.com) or follow the event on Facebook at [facebook.com/ORCinCT](https://facebook.com/ORCinCT).

The Garden Spot

The Domestic Cat As An Invasive Species

So much is said about invasive plants that I sometimes forget to think about invasive species more broadly. An invasive species is an organism that is not indigenous, or native, to a particular area. Since they typically have few or no native predators and reproduce quickly, invasive species can cause great economic and environmental harm to the new area. According to the National Wildlife Federation, about 42 percent of endangered species are at risk due to invasive species.

Surprisingly, one of the most invasive species is the domestic cat. So many of us love the domestic cat, but it does not occur in "the wild" and it's a major threat to birds. Introduced to the US with European colonists in the 1700s, the number of domestic cats has tripled in the past 40 years.

Although pet cats that are kept indoors do not cause problems, many cats are allowed

to roam freely outdoors or are abandoned every year and wind up creating colonies of feral cats. These "free-ranging cats" may look like your pet cat, but they may scratch or bite if approached.

Free-ranging cats have significant impacts on natural environments. They have been shown to reduce native small mammal, reptile and invertebrate populations, and are a major contributor to the decline of bird populations. In fact, cats have been a major contributor to the extinction of several mammal, reptile and bird species.

Today, more than 100 million feral and outdoor cats exist as an invasive species with enormous impacts. Every year in the US, cats kill well over 1 billion birds. The



PAT DRAY

American Bird Conservancy has identified already-declining species like the least tern and wood thrush that are severely impacted by cat predators. It's estimated that a single feral cat will also kill more than 200 mammals a year – in our suburban area, that's mainly native mice, shrews, voles, squirrels and rabbits.

Birds are one of a cat's top meal choices. As pure carnivores they require meat and are always on the prowl for prey. It's their nature to hunt and this is not going to change. According to a new study published by Nature Communications, more than 2,000 species have been victim to feral cats, with 350 of these species of conservation concern and several already extinct. Free roaming cats also have a tremendous impact on reptiles and amphibians and have

even preyed on green sea turtles and cattle.

So, simple solution: keep your cats indoors. If you are aware of feral cats, reach out to your local animal care group such as the New Haven Cat Project ([gnhpc.org](http://gnhpc.org)) for assistance with trap-neuter/spay-release. Place your bird feeders in a somewhat open area so that cats do not have a place to hide and stalk the birds. You can hang the feeder but aim for it to be about five feet off the ground. Ground-feeding birds, like sparrows and doves, can be an easier target for the cat. So instead of spreading food on the ground, spread it on a raised platform that forces a cat to jump up to attack, giving birds a fraction of a second to make their escape.

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

Aquarion Seeks Nominations For Environmental Champion Awards

Aquarion Water Company has opened nominations for the 2024 Aquarion Environmental Champion Awards. Now in its 14th year, this program honors the efforts of individuals, businesses and organizations across Connecticut who are committed to preserving the environment.

"This year marks the 14th anniversary of the Environmental Champion Awards, a testament to the strong public support for environmental stewardship," said Donald Morrissey, president of Aquarion. "We

are thrilled to recognize the extraordinary achievements of those who go above and beyond in their efforts to protect Connecticut's natural resources."

Since its inception in 2010, the awards have shone a spotlight on the dedication and hard work of Connecticut's environmental volunteers.

The 2024 awards will recognize outstanding environmental contributions in the adult, nonprofit organization, business and student (grades 9-12) categories.

Winners in the adult, nonprofit organization and business categories will have the opportunity to choose an environmental nonprofit to receive a \$5,000 grant in their honor. The winner of the student category will be awarded a \$1,000 prize.

The deadline for nominations is May 3. The 2024 winners will be celebrated at a ceremony on June 1, at Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo in Bridgeport.

"The passion and dedication of Connecticut's environmental volunteers

inspire us all and underscore the importance of collective action in safeguarding our environment," Morrissey said. "We look forward to celebrating these remarkable individuals, companies, nonprofit organizations and students for their contributions to our state's environment."

Nominations can be submitted online through Aquarion's website. For more information or to nominate an individual, business, organization or student, visit [aquarionwater.com/awards](http://aquarionwater.com/awards).

## Design From Orange Resident Wins Blue Ribbon At CT Flower Show



Garden Club of Orange member and Milford-Orange Times columnist Pat Dray earned a blue ribbon for her petite design at the Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut annual state flower show, "Breath of Spring," in late February. Dray's design used orchids and anthurium leaves to convey the theme "Double Dutch." *Photo courtesy of the Garden Club of Orange.*

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to illustrate the best way this platform can be utilized as well as celebrate the real estate market and the goals of buyers and sellers. This LAUNCH PARTY will give guests the opportunity to experience the features and functionalities of our site firsthand which will empower users to find their dream homes or investment properties with EASE.

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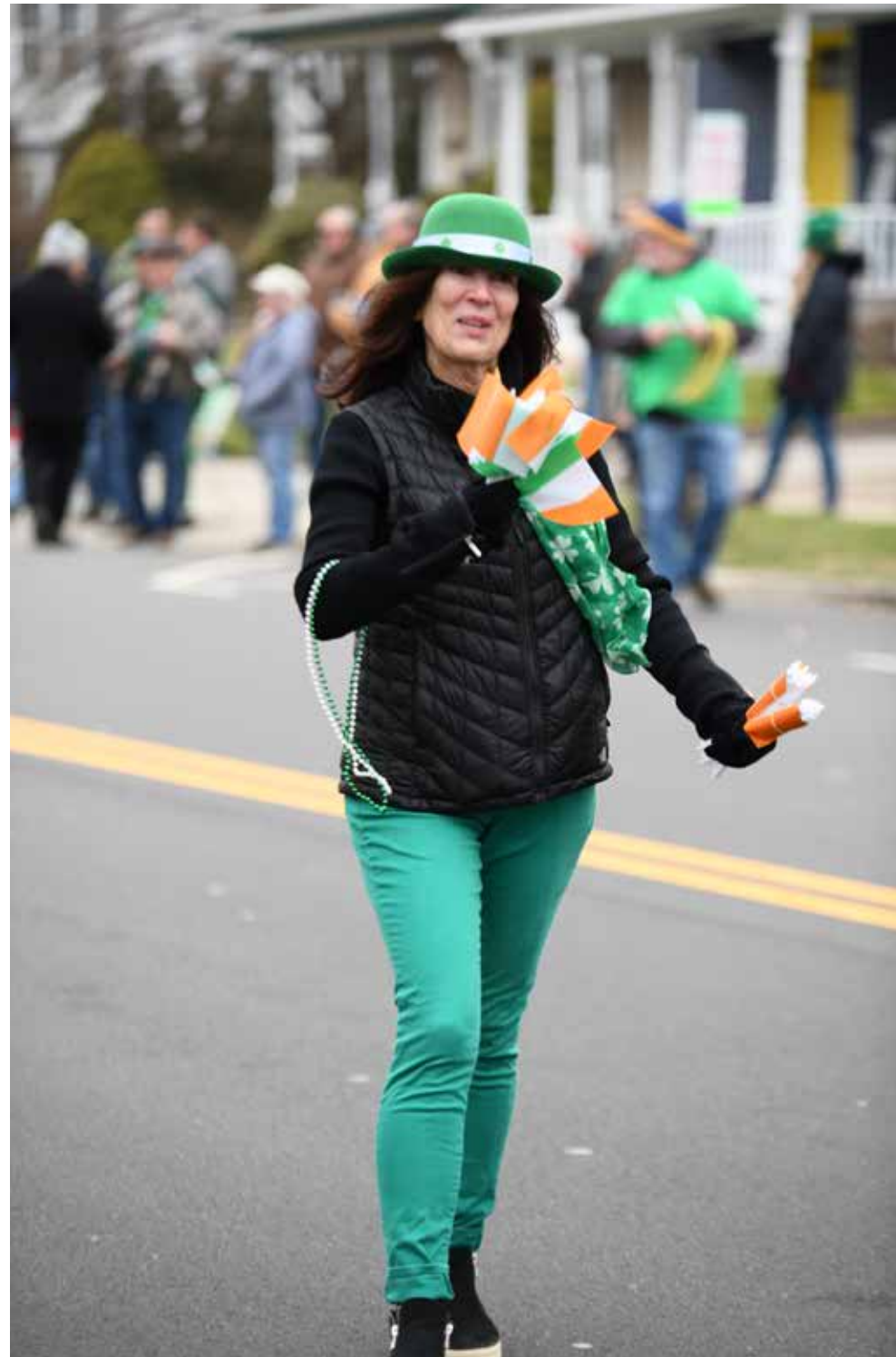


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# Milford St. Patrick's Day Parade



Milford residents came out decked in green for the city's annual St. Patrick's Day parade on March 9. Top right: Miss Connecticut Gina Carloto. Middle right: Carolyn Doyle, Miss Emerald Isle 2024. Photos by Robert Creigh.

Mental Health

The Mental Health Crisis Is Not Over

With the start of the legislative session on Feb. 7, I carefully considered how I wanted to frame our discussion and narrative to our delegation this year. I thought hard about some of the most pressing challenges that community-based mental health providers are facing, and the barriers to delivering the most accessible, responsive and supportive treatment to those we serve.

This year is not unlike any other year since 2020. Despite the many helpful bills that have been passed and recent funding to support mental health and substance use services over the last four years, I came to the stark realization that the situation will likely get worse before it gets better.

There are a number of challenges that are impacting how safety net organizations are able to meet the increasing and evolving need and demand for services. An upside is that people feel comfortable with the idea of seeking services, which is progress as we continue to work toward normalizing mental health as a vital component of one's overall health.

What's concerning is the complexity of behavioral health issues that are com-

ing through the doors – especially what we are seeing in children and adolescents. A report issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention from the 2021 Youth Risk and Behavior Survey shows that nearly one in three teen girls seriously considered suicide in 2021, an increase of 60 percent from a decade before. Social isolation, academic disruption, illness and job loss of parents throughout the pandemic has had lasting impact. Younger children are displaying higher levels of aggression and require more intensive intervention and services to manage their needs.

Adults are reporting symptoms of depression or anxiety almost three times more than in 2019. According to a study published in the JAMA Health Forum in 2023, the use of mental health services increased by 40 percent among adults with commercial insurance. One out of eight US adults now takes an antidepressant.

The mental health system is unable to accommodate these increasing and more complex needs at a time when there has



JENNIFER FIORILLO

been an unprecedented shortage in clinical staff to provide vital services. It has become increasingly difficult for community-based organizations to recruit and retain qualified clinical staff and pay them a competitive wage. Despite newly passed bills to support the development of a diverse clinical workforce in past legislative sessions, there are still periods when there is a mass exodus of therapists.

This only disrupts care and causes burnout in the clinicians who take on larger caseloads.

There are often wait lists and limited openings across many levels of care for children and adolescents. Office and school-based outpatient services are seeing high-acuity cases, requiring more than the level of care can provide.

The family needs to be supported as well as the child or adolescent receiving treatment, especially after an emergency room visit or hospitalization. Appropriate step downs from the hospital or emergency

room to intermediate levels of care such as intensive outpatient services and extended day treatment or to home-based psychiatric services for adolescents and children have become more challenging to place.

Placement becomes even more difficult when there aren't clinicians to fill vacant positions in these programs. It is a precarious combination when agencies are presented with these high-risk cases and there aren't enough available resources to put them in an appropriate level of care.

The mental health crisis is alive and well, and the ability of providers to deliver the most responsive care has been compromised for more than three years now because of these challenges. It's not likely that this situation will change any time soon as more people feel comfortable with accessing care and community-based providers are not able to meet the need. Something has to give.

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).

Running

Spring Into Spring

Sunny days are here again, and you're aching to get outside and get a taste of spring by walking a few miles, teeing up for a round of golf, jogging or playing a few sets of tennis. But before you do, you need to prepare your body for your exercise – especially if you used the cold weather as an excuse to become a couch potato.

People should put their pride in the back seat and not go out and try to run or walk 10 miles on the first day after a winter of little or physical activity. The "no pain, no gain" mentality doesn't work – you have to take it slow.

If you have taken the winter off, start your spring training by walking for 10 minutes every day or every other day for a week, and then the next week, walk for 15 minutes. From there, work your way up by five-minute intervals each week to a 30-to-40-minute walk.

This is a lot slower than most people want to go, but after about a month of conditioning, you'll have built up enough flexibility and endurance to move forward with a more strenuous exercise program.

Ready for Round One?

When you are ready to take your first walk or play your first game of the season, take it easy.

"A good starting point is to begin at a level that is manageable using common sense and underestimate your ability," says fitness trainer Roderick Smith in a 2017 issue of Virginia Woman magazine. You lose a lot over the winter if all you present to your body is a chair at work during the day, a couch at night, and a bar stool on weekends.

"If you go out and try to exercise right off the bat, you put your body at risk for some form of an overuse injury," Smith adds.

If golf is your game, start practicing at the driving range with slow and easy swings, and work your way up to a faster swing. Tennis players and pickleball players should concentrate their exercise program on the upper body, just hitting a bucket of balls the first few times out.

If you're a jogger, you should start your exercise program with a walking regimen and from there try to improve either your speed or mileage each week.

Preventing Pain and Strains

This all sounds like a lot of work before you even start the spring sports season. But without the right exercise pro-



CATHY BRADLEY

gram and plenty of preparation, you're at risk for injury.

The most common injury is muscle soreness. It's usually caused by too much activity, too fast.

If you do overdo it, rest, ice, compression and elevation will usually help lessen the soreness.

There's a lesson here: After you prepare your body for spring sports, then spend the warm-weather months healthy and active, don't let it all go to waste by hibernating next winter. Stay strong for the next warm-weather sports season, so you don't have to start that exercise program all over again.

First, you have to accept the fact that it is better to exercise on a daily basis, no matter how cold it is outside. The body can maintain a good level of conditioning year-round if you practice a reasonable level of exercise. If you really don't want to go outside during winter, a stretching program is a good idea, or try a stationary bike or some form of home equipment or join a health club.

And next spring? That exercise program will be second nature.

It's time for the Boston Marathon again. Race day is so special. The Boston Marathon is a piece of the Massachusetts fabric and becomes part of your personal fabric. It changes everyone on those 26.2 miles. The entire race feels like flowing downstream with all of your friends and family standing on the banks cheering you on.

Running for charity makes the journey more than a race. You see how truly generous people are. You meet amazing people; many become long-term friends. You know what it takes, and some days are better than others. You support each other and learn everyone has a story. They are running for a loved one, for a cause dear to their heart, for personal challenge.

Their stories inspire me to do more and to be better. I've come away with these irreplaceable connections and an understanding that the Boston Marathon is so much more than running. Every year when I am out there training in the cold, training in the rain, I say this is my last. But then I cross that finish line on Patriots Day and I say "maybe next year."

Cathy Bradley can be reached at [cathy@cbenterprises.com](mailto:cathy@cbenterprises.com).



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Orange Board of Finance

Are Apartments The Right Strategy For Economic Growth?

As you travel around Connecticut, you quickly notice the massive redevelopment and adaptive reuse opportunities taking place literally overnight within many of the state’s cities.

Many of these redevelopment projects include constructing massive market-rate apartment complexes which often include a 10 percent low-income affordable housing component.

I was recently in New Britain and noticed that the city is converting an old manufacturing plant, which back in the 1960s built electric appliances, into a new 154-unit apartment building. The redevelopment, which includes 79 one-bedroom, 59 two-bedroom and 16 three-bedroom units, targets young middle-income professionals and fixed income seniors.

Recently we have seen similar developments in New Haven, Bridgeport, Hartford, East Hartford and Meriden targeting young professionals. Most of these developments

are located within a transit oriented district, which includes a rail system and shopping centers for young professionals to commute easily to Stamford or New York while having the convenience of walking to the grocery store and restaurants.

The goal of transit-oriented development is to use transit centers to enhance economic development, job accessible housing, retail amenities and quality of life in many of Connecticut’s walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods. Responsible growth is a strategy to accommodate future development in a way that reinforces existing communities, uses resources efficiently and protects the environment.

The real question is whether this housing plan is sustainable, particularly since now many of the recent expansions include apartment complexes outside of the transit-orient-



KEVIN  
McNABOLA

ed districts. The massive, rapid expansion of market-rate apartments eventually comes with a price tag for cities and towns that house them.

What is the long-term plan for these apartment complexes? It might seem like a great plan today, since many young professionals like the apartment style living. But what happens when the young middle-income professionals move out and buy a new house in the suburbs? The reality of apartment-style complexes is that over time there is tremendous budgetary pressure put on city resources in the areas of education, police, fire, EMS, public utilities and social services when the young professionals migrate to the suburbs for the purchase of their first home and vacant apartments are then backfilled by transients.

This same exact scenario played out in real

time back in the 1980s in West Haven. The politicians in West Haven struck deals with developers and changed the zoning regulations so that developers could construct multiple apartment complexes and three-family homes throughout the center district, thus requiring huge increases in funding for city, sewer, water and education services.

Will Connecticut’s transit oriented district and apartment strategy pay off economically in the future and lead to vibrant communities? Or will the economics revert back to the basics in that the growing demand for more housing will be met with a growing supply of housing – ultimately leading to growth in city services and city funding requiring additional taxes. In the end, time will tell which scenario actually plays out.

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

Elmer F. Manley Memorial Scholarships Available

Ansantawae Masonic Lodge #89 is offering two medical scholarships for \$1,000 each to a college student studying counseling, social services, psychology, psychiatry, nursing, medicine, social work, gerontology or pharmacology. Students having completed a minimum of two semesters in the chosen field and maintaining a minimum GPA of 2.75 are encouraged to apply for this scholarship. Candidates must be from Orange.

Also being offered are two Lodge Family Scholarships for \$1,000 each. Candidates must be a daughter, son, granddaughter or grandson of a member of Ansantawae Lodge #89. Applicants must have completed a minimum of two semesters in their chosen

field and maintained a minimum GPA of 2.75. Qualified students are encouraged to apply.

Interested students should send a synopsis of their credentials and current official school transcripts sent directly from the school.

Send applications to the Lodge Scholarship Committee, Atten. Mr. Dean Manley, Ansantawae Lodge #89, 59 Broad Street, Milford, CT 06460. All requests must be received by May 17. Include full name, address, email and phone number. For more information call 203-520-1175 or email bowhunter155@hotmail.com with the subject line “Scholarship.”

AMSO Performing ‘Finding Nemo Jr.’

The Spartan Players will be performing “Finding Nemo Jr.” at Amity Middle School Orange on March 15 and 16 with a 6:30 p.m. showtime.

The 60-minute musical, designed for middle school-aged performers, is based on the 2003 Pixar film “Finding Nemo.” The Spartan Players cast includes 29 students led by director and choreographer Colby Trembley and staff coordinators Liz Tremper and Jeffrey Moffat. The performance is sponsored by the Jamie Hulley Arts Foundation.

The play contains new music by award-winning songwriting team Kristen Anderson-Lopez and Robert Lopez. In the play, Marlin, an anxious and overprotective clownfish lives in the Great Barrier Reef

with his kid Nemo, who longs to explore the world beyond their anemone home. But when Nemo is captured and taken to Sydney, Marlin faces his fears and sets off on an epic adventure across the ocean. With the help of characters such as optimistic Dory, laid-back sea turtle Crush and the supportive Tank Gang, Marlin and Nemo both overcome challenges on their journey to find each other and themselves.

The play includes songs such as “Just Keep Swimming,” “Fish Are Friends Not Food,” and “Go with the Flow.”

For information on purchasing tickets, check out forthcoming editions of the AMSO Weekly News Blast. For more information, email Liz Tremper at Elizabeth.tremper@amityregion5.org for details.

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The Arts

The Arts Celebrate Women’s History Month And More

As winter fades and the promise of a bright new season is upon us, join the arts community and celebrate the works of the many women, great artists, musicians and theatrical immersionists through song, self-expression, dance, film and stage work from theaters and venues around the state. Visit two historical houses and enjoy the performances on site. Try a new theater and make a day of it visiting local eateries and businesses along the way. Not a fan of the windy, rainy March days and evenings? This month offers stay-at-home options from local filmmakers who have created documentaries on the Connecticut Public pbs.org platform. Whatever your pre-spring plans are, be certain to include some arts and culture in your activities. You’ll be so glad you did.

**Legacy Theatre** presents the film screening and talkback of “Eva’s Promise” on March 21 in Branford. On a train to Auschwitz, fifteen-year-old Eva made a promise to her older brother Heinz. If he did not survive the camps, Eva promised to retrieve the paintings and poetry Heinz hid under the floorboards of his attic hiding place. Heinz Geiringer’s story sits in the shadow of the better-known “The Diary of Young Girl.” After the war, Eva became the posthumous stepsister of Anne Frank when her mother married Frank’s father. While the world knows Frank’s story, this film introduces Heinz, his artistry, and his sister’s efforts to find and share his remarkable legacy. A talkback with filmmaker Susan Kerner will follow the screening of the film. The show starts at 7 p.m. Legacy Theatre is located at 128 Thimble Islands Rd. Tickets are \$20 and can be purchased at legacytheatrec.org or by calling 203-315-1901.

**Seven Angels Theatre** presents “Grumpy Old Men – The Musical” through March 24. Book by Dan Remmes, music by Neil Berg, lyrics by Nick Meglin. Adapted from the Warner Bros. motion picture written by Mark Steven Johnson, this Connecticut premiere is the story of two aging men, Max and John, neighbors who have been feuding for most of their lives. Invigorated by their shared affection for their new neighbor across the street, the beautiful, eccentric and charming Ariel, they face off as romantic rivals until their hilarious shenanigans finally bring about a resolution to their long-standing differences. Based on the 1993 film, which starred Jack Lemmon, Walter Matthau and Ann-Margaret, this stage adaptation captures the lovably crotchety characters through twinkling humor, great songs and the affectionate depiction of a small town that feels like home to everyone. Complimentary pre-show treats will be available in the lobby included with your ticket on specialty nights. Matinee and evening performances are happening. Seven Angels Theatre is located at 1 Plank Rd. in Waterbury. Tickets are \$45 and can be purchased at sevenangelstheatre.org or by calling 203-757-4676.

The **Mark Twain House and Museum** presents “Mother Island: A Daughter Claims Puerto Rico,” an in-person conversation by

Jamie Figueroa with Susanne Pari. In prose that draws from Puerto Rican folklore and mythology, a literary lineage of women writers of color and narratives of identity, Jamie Figueroa presents a cultural coming-of-age story. Mother Island gets to the heart of the question: who do we become when we are no longer trying to be someone else? The journey takes her relationship to the past and to her mother’s native island, reaching beyond her own mother into a greater experience of mothering and claiming herself. Copies of Mother Island are available for purchase and will be signed by the author at the event on March 28 at 7 p.m. at 385 Farmington Ave. in Hartford. Admission is \$10 for non-members, free for members. More information can be found at marktwainhouse.org.

The **International Festival of Arts & Ideas** presents “An Evening With Sona Jobarteh” on April 4 at 6:30 p.m. at The Underground at Yale Schwarzman Center, located at 168 Grove St. in New Haven. This annual visionary and leadership event will feature Griot and kora player Sona Jobarteh, whose musical work stands on the shoulders of the west African Griot tradition; she is a living archive of the Cambian people. Born into one of the five principal Griot families in west Africa, a hereditary tradition dating back seven hundred years to the Mali Empire, Jobarteh is the first female to master the kora, a 21-string instrument that combines the qualities of a lute and a harp. Ticket prices start at \$38 and include a reception immediately following the event. For tickets, visit artidea.org or call 1-888-ART-IDEA.

**Brookfield Theatre** presents “Shakespeare in Hollywood” by Ken Ludwig from April 5-27. It’s 1934, and celebrated director Max Reinhardt is planning to film Shakespeare’s most famous comedy “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” to bring culture to Tinseltown. He must quickly learn to deal with studio bosses, blond bombshells, Hollywood stars, the press and the newly formed Hays Commission. Will he be able to complete his film before it gets shut down by high-strung actors and zealous sensors? Help is on the way from the magical realm as Oberon, the king of fairies and his trusty sidekick Puck land amid the glitz and glamor of show biz – with raucous results. The mischievous magic of moviedom sparkles in this hilarious comic romp. There will be matinee and evening performances. The theatre is located at 184 Whisconier Rd. in Brookfield. Tickets are \$25 for general audiences and \$20 for students and seniors, with a free senior preview on April 4 at 8 p.m. Visit brookfieldtheatre.org for tickets.

The **Ballet Theatre Company** presents “Snow White” with premiering artistic director Stephanie Dattellas in Hartford. The beloved fairytale originated as a story written by the Brothers Grimm in the early 19th century and has since been retold in styles ranging from a Broadway play to Disney’s first an-



CYNDI CONSOLI

imated film. Dattellas’s rendition of “Snow White” blends elements from the traditional tale with her own ballet twists, following Snow White as she experiences hardships, friendships and unexpected trials with unwavering kindness. This innovative spin on the classic tale embodies the triumph of good over evil and will leave audience members with full hearts as they depart the theater. Matinee and evening performances will happen from April 19-21, with a sensory-friendly performance on April 21 at 11 a.m. using code SENSE24 to access tickets. The Bushnell Maxwell M. and Ruth R. Belding Theater is located at 166 Capitol Ave. in Hartford. Tickets start at \$56 and can be purchased at bushnell.org or by calling 860-987-5900.

**Center Stage Theatre** presents “The Play That Goes Wrong,” written by Henry Lewis, Jonathan Sayer and Henry Shields. From Mischief, Broadway masters of comedy, comes the smash hit farce. Welcome to opening night of the Cornley University Drama Society’s newest production, The Murder at Haversham Manor, where things are quickly going from bad to utterly disastrous. This 1920s whodunnit has everything you never wanted in a show – an unconscious leading lady, a corpse that can’t play dead and an actor who trips over everything (including their lines). Nevertheless, the accident-prone thespians battle against all odds to make it through to their final curtain call, with hilarious consequences. Part Monty Python, part Sherlock Holmes, this Olivier award-winning comedy is a global phenomenon that’s guaranteed to leave you aching with laughter. Performance dates are April 19-28 at Center Stage Theatre, located at 54 Grove St. in Shelton. Tickets can be purchased by visiting centerstageshelton.org or by calling 203-225-6079.

**Escapism Productions** presents “The Crucible” by Arthur Miller in New London. With the Hempstead House historical home as the backdrop, Arthur Miller’s enduring masterpiece comes to life. An invitation to witness a world where history and the supernatural intertwine awaits. “The Crucible” is not just a play; it’s a haunting reflection of the human condition, where innocence is questioned and darkness lurks beneath the surface. Matinee and evening performances are from April 20-28. Audience members are encouraged to bring their own chairs or blankets to allow seating in the yard with the backdrop of the Hempstead House. Performances will take place at the house, located at 11 Hempstead St. Tickets are \$40 plus applicable fees at escapismproductions.ticketbud.com.

**UConn Reels on pbs.org** offers compelling documentaries produced by UConn film and video students in the University of Connecticut’s Department of Digital Media and Design and presented in cooperation with Connecticut Public. These short films delve into diverse themes such as gentrification, the power of music, the stories of underrepresent-

ed communities and the intricate intersection of family and identity. All can be viewed by visiting pbs.org.

“Say Something” by Agustina Aranda. A short experimental documentary where Katie Agustina Aranda explores her relationship with her father, Panfilo Aranda – a Paraguayan immigrant, workaholic and amateur videographer. Using material that he shot throughout the last 40 years, their story follows his journey from passionate filmmaker to distant father. With archival footage and interviews, the film is about family, immigration and a strained father-daughter relationship.

“The Ladder” by Christopher Orrico. Throughout his life, family has been something Tom Orrico cherishes. This short documentary takes a look back into his history and his perspective on his family. Multiple events lead him to being the man he is today, passing life lessons onto his own children, one being the filmmaker of this project, Christopher Orrico.

“Public Hazard: Skateboarding Interrupted” by Agustina Aranda. The largest – yet most impoverished – city in Connecticut, Bridgeport was used to being overlooked. But, to the young and growing skateboarding community, it was heaven. Until the skate parks were suddenly shut down and the skate shops moved away. The start of the gentrification of Bridgeport, this is the story of the city’s dying skating culture.

“Similar Kind: Right Here, Right Now” by Shannon Nasution. Indie-pop band Similar Kind reminisce on their adolescent years and see how far they’ve gone to this day.

“Made in Bridgeport” by Agustina Aranda. Constantly working to have a chance in the spotlight, the Bridgeport fashion scene is far from underground. A documentary about the hand-made designs, art, expression, hopes and dreams of an inner city’s fashion community. The behind-the-scenes story of a world-within-a-world from designers to models, following their process of creating and their journey to mean something.

**“Greater Bridgeport Symphony:** A Bridge To Beethoven” will be presented at The Klein Memorial Auditorium, located at 910 Fairfield Ave. in Bridgeport on April 16 at 8 p.m. Eduardo Leandro will lead the orchestra as their principal guest conductor. The season theme is “building bridges” between the many cultures in our community and between classical and new music. Their 78th season closes with Beethoven’s joyful “Symphony No. 8,” and two great 20th-century Russian composers who revered Beethoven: Prokofiev’s “Classical Symphony” and Shostakovich’s “Cello Concerto No. 1.” Soloist Dr. Nicholas Hardie, GBS’s own principal cellist – pay homage to Beethoven, a century and a half later and a thousand miles east. Tickets range from \$18 to \$65 and can be purchased at gbs.org or theklein.org.

*Cyndi Consoli is an actor/director in her seventh term as President and Producer for Orange Players. She can be reached at TheOrangePlayers@gmail.com and 475-227-7547.*

Tango Boot Camp Coming To Milford

Milford will be one of the locations in Connecticut participating in this year’s TangoFest with an intensive Argentine tango afternoon for beginners at the Milford Arts Council on Saturday, March 16.

Dale Ellison will be visiting from Charleston, South Carolina, to join Gem Duras for events throughout the weekend in Milford, Norwalk, Greenwich and Enfield.

The opening dance in Greenwich on

Friday, March 15 will start with a class focusing on dancing in tight spaces like those in Buenos Aires. It will continue with social dancing until 11 p.m., with light refreshments included.

The boot camp in Milford on Saturday will be geared towards beginners and less experienced dancers who want to review the fundamentals. During their instruction from 2:30 p.m. to 5 p.m., Ellison and Duras will present the basic figures, turns and signature patterns of Argentine tango,

such as “ochos” and “ganchos.” Singles are welcome, enrollment is limited and pre-registration recommended.

The Milford activities will continue the same night at the Milford Arts Center with a tango social – known in tango circles as “milonga” – with a performance.

Additional workshops in Enfield and Norwalk on March 16 and 17 will be geared towards beginner, intermediate and advanced level dancers covering a diverse range of tango idioms.

Ellison, known in Buenos Aires as Delia, has been dancing Argentine tango for more than 28 years, and teaching for more than 18. Duras has been dancing tango for 28 years and teaching full time since 2003.

Milford Arts Council offers weekly tango classes on Mondays with instructor Duras as part of its dance program.

The price for the Milford event is \$60 per person. The Milford Arts Council is located at 40 Railroad Ave. S. For more information, visit CTTangoFest.org.

## Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce

# Milford Businesses Have Role In Solving Homelessness

### Leading the Charge: Business Community's Vital Role in Addressing Local Homelessness and Food Insecurity

In vibrant and interconnected communities like ours, we often find that the most enduring solutions emerge when businesses take the lead. Nowhere is this truer than in the critical issues of homelessness and food insecurity that touch the lives of our neighbors. It is time for our business leaders to step forward, guided and supported by the Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce, and spearhead local initiatives that make a lasting impact.

### The Human Side of Business: A Call to Action

Beyond our conference rooms and individual initiatives lies a community connected by shared experiences, challenges and a collective responsibility for one another. The stark reality is that some of our neighbors face the hardships of homelessness and food insecurity. It is incumbent upon us, the business leaders, to recognize the human side of our endeavors and acknowledge the role we can play in fostering positive change.

### The Ripple Effect of Local Solutions

By championing local solutions, businesses have the power to create a ripple effect that resonates throughout our community. It is not merely a matter of philanthropy; it is an investment in the very fabric of our society. Addressing homelessness and food insecurity at a grassroots level ensures that the benefits are tangible, immediate and sustainable.

### The Role of the Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce

The Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce stands as a beacon, ready to guide and support businesses in this crucial endeavor. As a nexus of local commerce, the chamber is uniquely positioned to facilitate collaboration, share best practices and provide resources to amplify the impact of individual business efforts.

### Strategic Partnerships: A Force Multiplier

Businesses, when united, form a formidable



MICHAEL  
MOSES

force for change. By forging strategic partnerships with local organizations, nonprofits and government agencies, the business community can leverage its collective strength to address the root causes of the challenges we all face, directly or indirectly. These partnerships can lead to innovative solutions, streamlined services and a more cohesive approach to community well-being.

### Employee Engagement and Corporate Social Responsibility

Empowerment starts from within. Businesses can engage employees in impactful ways by incorporating corporate social responsibility initiatives. Encouraging volunteerism, organizing food drives or supporting local shelters not only benefits the community but also fosters a sense of pride and purpose among employees.

### Showcasing Compassion: Beyond Profit Margins

As business leaders, we are not just stewards of profit margins; we are custodians of compassion. Our community is stronger when we

embrace our shared humanity and work together to uplift those facing adversity. By taking the lead in addressing homelessness and food insecurity, businesses can showcase a commitment to principles that transcend the balance sheet.

### Conclusion: A Community Transformed

In the spirit of collective responsibility, the business community, guided by the Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce, has the potential to lead transformative change. Let us harness our resources, creativity and influence to find local solutions that not only alleviate immediate needs but also create a community where every neighbor has the opportunity to thrive. Together, we can redefine success not only in terms of profitability but also in the positive impact we have on the lives of those who call our community home.

*Michael Moses is the president of the Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce. Contact him at 203-878-0681 or [mmoses@milfordct.com](mailto:mmoses@milfordct.com).*

## Orange Chamber of Commerce

# Orange Chamber Busy With Small Events In Community

Spring is upon us. The improving weather and longer days create a sense of renewal and optimism as we hit our stride in 2024. The Orange Chamber of Commerce has been busy with small events to help support our local businesses and the Orange community.

February's chamber member highlight, authored by Sentinel Asset Management's Matt Salem, featured Transference LLC, a business that resolves administrative red-tape issues for newly appointed executors of an estate, individuals handling the affairs of a deceased loved one, and/or powers of attorney caring for aging family members. Ed Knight can be reached at [edknight@transference.com](mailto:edknight@transference.com) if you would like to contact him with your family needs. Chamber members may email [matt@sam-ria.com](mailto:matt@sam-ria.com) to inquire about being featured.

The chamber began a new event called "Business Cards and Brews" after hours at the Orange Ale House in February. This event allows chamber members and future chamber members to network over food and beverages from Orange Ale House. We're looking

forward to a great joint event this month with the Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce at Orange Ale House, where we will celebrate St. Patrick's Day with a Business After Hours on Wednesday, March 13 at 5 p.m. Please visit our Facebook page to purchase your ticket to this fantastic event.

Ribbon cuttings are a staple for the Orange Chamber of Commerce. Ribbon cuttings are run jointly in Orange with the Orange Economic Development Corporation. Our last ribbon cutting welcomed Brennan-Lucey Dance Studio to their new location at 518 Boston Post Rd. This ribbon cutting featured a fantastic dance performance from the students.

The Orange Chamber of Commerce was proud recently to organize our first CPR and AED community training event hosted by chamber member Rubino Family Chiropractic. This training session was made possible by a generous sponsorship from The Milford Bank.



LIAM  
OHLMANN

The class was taught by chamber member Suzy Smolinsky, owner of Stillwater Wellness. Smolinsky is also the president of the Stratford Volunteer EMS Association. We are excited to work with our members again to host more of these classes for a more prepared Orange.

You are always invited to our monthly ONET series. ONET is a free networking and leads group which meets at 8:30 a.m. on the second Thursday of every month at

The Homewood Suites by Hilton, located at 99 Marsh Hill Rd. in Orange. Each month we have received a larger turnout for this event with energetic local professionals. Information regarding these meetings can be found by liking and following our Facebook page. In addition to networking, each ONET meeting has a business-specific topic. This month's meeting topic is "Tips and Tricks for Better Business Banking" with Tina Mason, assistant vice president and branch manager for The Milford

Bank.

The chamber would like to thank our corporate partners who are so generous with our chamber and with our community. Thank you to Coldwell Banker Realty, The Eagle Leasing Company, The Milford Bank and TrinityPoint Wealth for making many of our programs and initiatives possible.

Please visit and follow our Facebook page to learn more about what's going on currently with our chamber. If you are interested in becoming a corporate partner for the Orange chamber, or to schedule a time to meet with the chamber and discuss membership or sponsorship, please email [Director@orangechamber.com](mailto:Director@orangechamber.com). I am looking forward to meeting with you and discussing your business needs and how the chamber may help.

*Liam Ohlmann is the executive director of the Orange Chamber of Commerce. Contact him at 203-795-3328 or [director@orangechamber.com](mailto:director@orangechamber.com).*

## The Rotary Club of Orange

# Orange Schools And Rotary

One of the most enjoyable community Rotary events in which members participate is our annual winter visits to Orange's three elementary schools – Turkey Hill, Race Brook and Peck Place. The visits formally are identified as literacy events that promote reading to all children in the second and third grade classes at these schools.

Some of the gifted storytellers in the Rotary club – this year notably Trish O'Leary-Treat and Theresa Rose DeGray – read aloud to the second graders from a children's book authored by club members from the Rotary Club of Fairborn, Ohio. The book is titled "Andy and Elmer's Apple Dumpling Adventure" and describes how a young boy partners with an older neighbor to start a business together using the values of Rotary's four-way test: truthfulness, fairness, goodwill and reciprocal benefit. It is a 15-minute storytelling, also widely viewable on YouTube, Facebook and even PBS sites. The kids go home with a related activity guide and are often excited about both baking and entrepreneurship.

Third graders all receive a hard copy of a combined dictionary/reference guide for their personal use. Club members help them learn to use a dictionary to expand their vocabulary as well as peruse the reference guide, which includes a bit of everything from our nation's founding documents to sign language sym-

bols. They also get a chance to read aloud the longest work in English noted there – all 1909 letters long. Paper dictionaries are old school, but are still the fastest and broadest way to explore the world of words. It is a fun time for club members, as the kids are great and the teachers and staff delightful.

It was particularly enjoyable for me as my youngest child is 30 now, and it had been 20 years since I was last in an elementary school. I noted many changes across that generation. Some changes were expected, especially with regard to educational technology. Every classroom had interactive digital whiteboards and few rooms had surfaces to write on by hand. Some security-related changes were also anticipated, but two sets of locked main doors protected by a security guard and CCTV cameras and monitors subdue the mood a bit for first-time visitors. Other changes were unexpected but very welcome – especially the presence of multiple teacher aides assisting with special needs children.

Special needs are sometimes visible – including mobility, speech, hearing and vision impairment – and considerable progress has been made in assisting students with these challenges. Other cognitive learning disabili-



DAN  
MAY

ties also are much better appraised and addressed in schools today. Less well addressed, however, are varieties of acute or chronic emotional and mental health challenges that impact even our youngest community members. Social emotional learning approaches are core to teaching in Orange elementary schools, and the Orange Rotary Club will soon be supporting activities and projects to supplement current district efforts to help young children address anxiety, toxic stress and bereavement – whatever the source.

Mental health is an increasing area of focus for all of Rotary International. Concerns exist across all age and demographic groups, and increasingly are noted in the media. I watched from the sidelines in a university role as staffing for psychological services grew more than three-fold in a decade. It was sad to see how much so many college-age students were (and are) struggling.

When our club began to look at ways that Rotary might help in the Orange community, one consistent message was for early intervention and assistance. We initially thought this would mean high school or middle school activities (and there are significant needs there),

but it was evident that work with younger people was likely to be more effective. It is estimated that 10 to 15 percent of elementary school-age children and their families or caregivers would benefit from supplemental mental health services, to help children both learn more and grow interpersonally.

Meeting this need is fiscally challenging, but also operationally difficult to implement, since diagnoses and/or requests for mental health assistance are still somewhat stigmatized. And insurance coverage is often spotty.

But there is probably nowhere as supportive an environment as an Orange elementary school setting to add more assistance and foster community awareness.

The Orange school district will pilot some new programs assisting elementary-age children and families with these needs beginning this spring and continuing into next fall. Proposed activities added under Rotary club sponsorship will integrate district teaching emphasis on social emotional learning with school psychologists and social workers, parents and third-party counselors. Check in here for future updates.

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

Travel Matters

48 Hours In Cartagena

Cartagena, Columbia has become one of the top South American cities to visit, and it's also becoming a frequent stop on Caribbean and Panama Canal cruises.

Often called "the jewel of South American cities," Cartagena has shed its association with the drug cartels of the 80s and the old town is now a UNESCO World Heritage center that is safe to explore on your own. You can see its influence on New Orleans with its colorful colonial architecture, balconies and flower-filled courtyards.

Columbia is the only South American country which borders both the Caribbean and Pacific Ocean; therefore, Cartagena has been an important port in the Caribbean for over 500 years. It was founded in 1533 as a walled fort that was built to protect both shipping and the slave trade from British and

French pirates.

We started our tour of Cartagena the first day of our visit at the Convent of Santa Cruz de la Popa. Dated from 1607, the convent is located on the city's highest hill, and the cloister offers sweeping views of the city – both old and new.

The next site we visited was the San Felipe de Barajas Fort. A must-see is the tunnel system meant to facilitate the supply and evacuation of the fortress. You can also walk the walls of the old city for a free walking tour where you can relive the battles of the Europeans, the influence of Afro cultures and see the contrast between the old and modern areas of the city.



KAREN QUINN-PANZER

Las Bovedas, or "the vaults," are cells of the former 18th-century dungeons which now feature colorful artisan shops in old town – one of the top areas for shopping. A top nearby hotel is the fivestar Sofitel Legend Santa Clara, originally built as a convent in 1621 in the historic center.

The section of town with an abundance of street art and music is called Getsemani. It's filled with bars, pubs and art galleries.

It's a great place for bar-hopping and salsa lessons, but equally fun to shop for art and to enjoy cafes to sample the fine local Colombian coffee. We even survived a rum and chocolate tasting – two Colombian specialties. We tried eight different Columbi-

an rums, most of which were sipping rums, with one served in a cocktail.

Outside of the city, there are opportunities to go to indigenous villages such as Turbaco, a traditional village near Cartagena. Or you can experience Columbia's natural biodiversity at Cartagena Botanical Garden, a sanctuary above the walled city.

Yet another option is a journey to the coastal paradise of Baru, a peninsula in Cartagena only 45 minutes by boat, known for its birding. In fact, Columbia is very rich in biodiversity – second only to Brazil and the Amazon.

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

Easter 'Eggstravaganza' Coming To Downtown Milford

The Downtown Milford Business Association will hold their annual Easter Eggstravaganza on March 30 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the Milford Green.

This family event has a new feature this year: breakfast with the Easter Bunny, a special ticketed event. Other activities include story time, face-painting, vendors, music, children's activities on the green and an Easter egg hunt through participating downtown shops: La Unique Boutique, Milford Photo, Milford Pharmacy, Scratch

Bakery, Arciuolo's, Keller Williams Realty, Lovet Shop, Frosty Twist, Sunshine Ceramic Studio and School of Rock.

Breakfast with the Easter Bunny costs \$25 per person and includes Lasse's catered pancake breakfast with sausage and beverage in the Taylor Memorial Library. The Easter Bunny will also have a special treat for little ones at the end of the breakfast. Seating is at 8:30 a.m., 9:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. and tickets can be purchased at [downtownmilfordct.com](http://downtownmilfordct.com) under event tickets.

Orange Educator Releases New Book

Bonnie Feuer, a 35-year resident of Orange and an educator of children with special needs in Milford, has published a new book, "A Gathering of One."

"A Gathering of One" was written for adults and is available online at Barnes and Noble and Amazon. Its theme is that of resilience in the face of personal tragedy and highlights the way women have gathered since time began, in the name of support, protection, healing and nurturing. Written like a family saga, the book emphasizes multigenerational heroes and saviors who show up for all of the tears

and the triumphs.

Feuer has had four children's books published in the last decade, all of which have become well known and a part of school libraries.

"A unique element in the story is an incomplete letter written by a grieving 27-year-old mother to her stillborn son," Feuer said. "The mother feels that she must live her life without her child, before being ready to finish writing it. The completed letter can be found at the end of the story, having been written when the mother was 63."

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Wine Talk

Some Great European Wines

Gewürztraminer is a central European wine produced in Germany and France, as well as parts of northern Italy. It offers a combination of lychee, stone fruit, tropical fruit, spice and flower that makes each glass deeply enjoyable. What ties these wines together is the unique aromatic attribute and unforgettable spice and their ability to pair with foods that give many other wines a difficult time to blend with. It is produced in unique dry, medium and sweet flavors that many other wines cannot easily do.

Italy has at least 500 wine varieties growing today. Only a few are familiar to most consumers. Many wonderful varieties get lost in the shuffle. Malvasia is one of them. This grape is important in many of the great wines of Italy, Greece, Slovenia, California and other places. Malvasia is a very versatile wine. Excellent dry versions of the wine can be found in the US. Other sweeter styles are available in Europe, like Vin Santo and Trebbiano. Malvasia is made in several different styles and matches with many different foods.

Chenin Blanc is a white wine that can be

sweet or sparkling. It has great acidity and lots of fruit. It has become quite popular in recent years. In South Africa and California, it has become a widely planted grape. Chenin Blanc is one of those grape varieties that seems to offer something for everyone, yet it is reliably unknown. Chenin Blanc has a bright acidity that makes it great for richer foods. It is great with fish or poultry, and it works well with Thanksgiving dinners of roasted turkey and stuffing, as well as many side dishes.

Chenin Blanc has been grown in the Loire Valley of France. South Africa also grows a high percentage of Chenin Blanc. It has been grown in California for generations and has remarkable versatility and a range of styles in which it can be produced. This indicates to me that it can be produced with an appeal to a broad group of preferences. Only 10 years ago, no one had heard of Sauvignon Blanc from New Zealand. Today there is hardly a store that doesn't have at least one



RAYMOND SPAZIANI

or two rows of Sauvignon Blanc from New Zealand. It has taken off, and my prediction is Chenin Blanc is the next wine to follow this trend.

Gruner Veltliner is primarily known as an Austrian wine. However, it is grown throughout central Europe and in northern California and Oregon. Some nice examples have been coming out of Pennsylvania as well. It goes fantastically with fried foods, seafood and vegetables.

The wine has a pleasant citrus flavor with a little mineral aftertaste. If you like Sauvignon Blanc from New Zealand or Pinot Grigio you should enjoy this wine. It is generally well-made and inexpensive.

Viognier is a white wine made in the northern Rhone region. The wine is named for the areas where it is produced: Condrieu of Chateau-Grillet. It is aromatic – it has the nose of a sweet wine even when made into a dry wine. The wine can be produced from a lively wine to a creamy rich style. It takes on

oak well and those lovers a rich Chardonnay generally enjoy this wine, although the aroma and flavors are different. The wine generally stands up well to foods with rich sauces, but still does well with lighter fish and poultry dishes. It is great with smokey-flavored foods; try it with scallops.

Spring is approaching and it is time to find some different wines to enjoy with warmer weather. Try these varieties and I am sure one or two will become among your favorites.

*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. Email Ray with wine questions and anything wine at realestatepro1000@gmail.com.*

Foodie Foursome

Third Time's The Charm In Woodmont

The Bonfire Grille sits on the Woodmont location formerly occupied by Sloppy Jose's and Oscar's Woodmont Kitchen, which was sold to restaurateur partners Frank Basile and Rob Cyr in 2018. Basile and Cyr are also known for their culinary collaborations of The Bridgehouse Restaurant and Founders House on the Milford Green.

The Bonfire Grille is across the street from Long Island Sound. The extensive renovation of the previous restaurant gave way to a nautical ambience while embracing a cozy pub feel with a New England flare. The interior of the restaurant is designed with a bar area that caters to both indoor and outdoor dining. Bonfire has two outdoor dining areas for an al fresco feel. The patio outside is street level with a wood privacy fence and rooftop dining under a canopy with views of the Sound.

Cindy and I were there, on a rainy night in March, with friends Will and Deanna as we enjoyed a casual night out for some creative drinks and eclectic selections of pub fare. We started out with the appetizers. They have a \$7 selection during happy hour. Basile, a Johnson & Wales University-trained chef, has his stamp on creative versions of classics in each of his restaurants. The menu is a mix of local Milford favorites, elevated beach fare along with great salads, burgers and sandwiches, shareable appetizers. There are great specials that allow the chefs to flex their culinary muscles.

We kicked off our evening with one of America's favorite appetizers: wings. These were not just ordinary wings. They were brined, fried and grilled, yielding a slightly

crunchy exterior, with great bite and a meaty, juicy interior with incredible taste. We tried several flavor options: Buffalo gorgonzola, barbeque dry rub, maple bourbon with bacon bits, and General Tso's. As we discussed them among the four of us, we kept changing our minds about which would take the number one spot. It was a toss-up.

This was a perfect time for some libations. Lamar Tavaris, the restaurant's manager, recommended several drinks designed by Bonfire's mixologist. Each of the drinks had a different vibe, but what was consistent was how smooth and subtle the levels of taste were. We had the blackberry mint margherita, rum punch, maple bourbon old fashioned and the winter smash (blueberry vodka, fresh blueberries and blackberries muddled with lime and a splash of club soda).

Everything we had on this night – salads and entrees included – had it's own style. There was a creative use of spice, sweetness and heat to create subtle notes of each that complemented each other for explosions of taste. This was evident with our next two choices, the trash can nachos and the short rib and beef chili. The first thing we noticed was just how crispy the tortilla chips were, probably because they were house cut and prepared. The tortillas were topped with jalapenos, black olives, fresh pico de gallo and a Monterey jack cheddar, then baked in the oven and topped with mounds of shredded chicken and sour cream. It was spectacular – even more so when we added some of their



STEVE COOPER

chili to a few bites of the nachos. The was made with both short rib and beef, along with red and white kidney beans, fire roasted tomatoes, peppers spices and topped with cheddar jack cheese. It was rich and flavorful.

Our next course was what Bonfire calls tossed greens. We chose two exquisitely composed and visually constructed "chopped salads." The first was the zesty Southwest made with chopped lettuce, roasted corn, black beans, diced tomatoes, Monterey and cheddar cheeses in a chipotle lime honey dressing and topped with tortilla strips. The second was the roasted squash rainbow salad's compilation of pieces of roasted butternut squash, julienne carrots, red cabbage, thinly sliced pears, chopped romaine, candied pecans and feta cheese tossed in a honey lemon vinaigrette.

Our entrée selections were eclectic yet worthy of any top-notch New England bistro. We started with twin lobster rolls and fish and chips. The lobster rolls were made with hand-picked lobster meat. The sizeable chunks of succulent lobster were simmered in butter, served in New England style rolls with French fried potatoes and a side salad. The fish and chips were excellent. There were three large pieces of beer-battered fresh cod also served with fried potatoes with house slaw and tartar sauce.

Our last two selections were the pad Thai noodle bowl and the street tacos. The three street tacos were chock full of shredded chicken tinga, and the others with

slow-roasted pulled pork. They were topped with purple slaw, pico de gallo, cheese, cilantro and avocado and served with Spanish rice and refried beans. The pad Thai noodle bowl was served with tender slices of beef. The Thai noodles had the perfect bite and held the coating of the sauce to perfection. The noodles were combined with shredded carrots, cabbage, scallions, sweet peppers, peanuts and cilantro tossed in a Thai peanut sauce. This was tasty as an entrée, but as I am writing this column I am eating the leftover as a snack, and it's just as good.

We ended our evening with a single dessert. Although there were many to choose from, the lemon berry mascarpone cake was recommended. It was definitely unique and a perfect choice. The vanilla crumb cake with fresh blueberries and lemon zest with a mascarpone cream filling topped with powdered sugar and a blueberry sabayon sauce was divine.

The food and service here were spot-on. Bonfire Grille is open from 11:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, and until 9:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. It is located at 186 Hillside Ave. For reservations call 203-693-2777.

*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.*

Book Reviews

The Patron Saint Of Second Chances By Christine Simon

Signor Giovannino Speranza, a plumber and unofficial mayor of Prometto, Italy, has a big problem. Unless he comes up with the money to fix the town's water pipes, the water supply will be cut off with no regard to the town's 212 residents.

Fearing a mass exodus, Speranza knows he needs to come up with a plan. When he sees a young girl gushing over a picture of Italian movie star and heartthrob Dane Rinaldi, an idea begins to germinate in his mind.

As the idea begins to take shape it esca-

lates with well-meaning assistance from family members and residents. At his Uncle Zio's birthday party, Speranza suggests that his uncle move into a retirement community so he wouldn't be alone. That conversation (along with others) is a funny scene in this book.

When Speranza casually mentions that Dante Rinaldi was considering buying a home in Prometto, the fun really starts. Rumors begin to



CARMELA DEVITO

fly that Rinaldi is really coming to town to make a movie. Speranza adds fuel to the rumors when he suggests he is going to be in the movie.

That fib begins to take on a life of its own. The entire town wants to be involved. And rather than admitting what he's done, Speranza just goes along with all the residents' requests. His assistant, Smilzo, works on a script with a plot line that focuses mostly on

Rinaldi's habit of wearing tank tops. The only person who initially suspects Speranza of not being truthful is the parish priest.

To reveal more would give away too much of the plot and possibly ruin your enjoyment of this charming, funny novel. There is so much to love in this – especially the creative ways a man takes to save the town he loves.

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

## Orange Schools (Continued From 1)

of rolling claims year-over-year.

Part of the increase would also come from adding two new teachers at Peck Place School and Race Brook School, as well as a district-wide school security officer.

More than 80 percent of the overall budget funds salaries and benefits, which Scarpetti said is where he thinks most of the money should go.

“There’s no program, there’s no computer that will ever replace a teacher or staff,” he told the board.

One area that will go down significantly from last year is building repairs, which was set at \$235,000, a drop of \$118,600 from last year.

Scarpetti noted that the budget does not include any money to purchase materials related to the state-mandated Right to Read Act, which passed the General Assembly last year. The law requires schools to follow a reading curriculum centered around the “science of reading” body of research or obtain a waiver from the state. Orange applied for a waiver and was denied.

“There’s a lot of districts fighting” against the requirement, Scarpetti said. “We are one of them. So there’s no line item increase with regard to purchasing a program in our budget. I want to make you all aware of that in case there’s a need.”

When asked how much it might cost if the town is forced to adopt a Right to Read program, Scarpetti told the board that it could be \$300,000 or more.

The Orange Public Schools budget is only half of the education puzzle in Orange. The town has a two-part education system. Elementary-aged students fall under the town’s public schools; that budget gets wrapped in with town services for a town-

wide vote. Students in middle and high school fall under the Amity budget, which is divided between Orange, Bethany and Woodbridge based on each town’s proportional enrollment numbers. It gets passed in a separate referendum in which all three towns participate.

Amity’s proposed budget calls for a total of \$56,719,464, a 3.97 percent increase over the previous year.

In 2023, Orange taxpayers saw a lowering of their contribution to the budget, thanks to a drop in their enrollment compared to the other towns. That, however, has reversed this year, meaning that Orange’s contribution to the budget will go up the most. Orange’s would pay \$27,609,700 – an increase over last year of \$1,505,956, or 5.77 percent.

The total budget was actually lowered by about \$1.5 million from Superintendent Jennifer Byars’s initial proposal after discussions with the Amity Finance Committee. It could change again after the Amity Board of Education holds a public hearing on the budget April 8.

“The primary budget drivers for 2024-2025 are contracted salaries, medical benefits, instructional technology resources, and special education services,” Byars wrote in her budget address. “With student achievement data informing strategic decision-making, the budget includes goals to improve mathematics performance, science outcomes, school attendance, and dual enrollment learning opportunities. The budget includes personnel required to address newly mandated graduation requirements and additional unfunded mandates in special education.”

Amity’s budget has been a perennial point of contention with Orange’s Board of Finance and has sometimes gone through multiple referenda before passing.

## Nominations Open For Orange Living Treasure Awards

The Orange Senior Center is currently accepting nominations for the 2024 Living Treasure Award. Each year the center recognizes three Orange senior residents who have given much of themselves and their time to the Orange community. They will be honored at Pasta Festa on May 16, at the High Plains Community Center in Orange.

Nomination forms can be picked up at High Plains Community Center, Town Hall or on the town’s website at [ct-orange.civicplus.com/782/Community-Services](http://ct-orange.civicplus.com/782/Community-Services). Call 203-891-4788 with any questions. The deadline to make a nomination is March 22.

## Milford Marine Institute Holding Summer Camps

The Milford Marine Institute will be hosting its marine science, bird identification and archaeology/native culture science camps this summer. The organization has run the camps since 1983.

The Marine Biology Science/Art Camp A runs from June 17 to 21, from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. The camp costs \$165.00 per week, which includes a wood fee.

The Marine Biology Science/Art Camp B runs from June 24 to 28, from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. The camp costs \$175.00 per week, which includes a wood fee.

Ten marine habitats and the marine animals which inhabit them will be a focus of these marine science camps. The Milford Marine Institute has the largest collection of large marine mollusks in the Northeast. Campers will handle these mollusks, learning which are herbivorous and which are carnivorous. Campers will learn specific feeding mechanisms of these mollusks. Campers will also learn how to use a field guide.

Campers will choose a favorite marine animal or two, draw the animal on a pine board and learn to sand and paint their work(s) of marine art. In Marine Biology Science/Art B, campers will also create a collection of Long Island Sound marine mollusks, learning their Latin and common names.

Bird ID Art Camp will run from July 1 to 5, from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. This camp costs \$165.00 per week and includes a wood fee. Campers will learn the many groups of bird species from mounted birds, observations of live birds, charts and field guides, where they will learn field marks. Campers will choose favorite birds, draw them on pine boards, then learn to sand and paint their works of avian art.

The Archaeology/Native Culture Camp A will run from July 8 to 12, from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. It costs \$165.00 for the week.

The Archaeology/Native Culture Camp B will run from July 15 to 19, from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. It also costs \$165.00 for the week.

Campers will choose a native name and learn to drum as they become a “clan” of local Paugussetts. Campers will learn the history of the founding of Milford as it relates to the Pequot War of 1636-1637. Campers will hold numerous ancient native artifacts and learn how archaeologists work at an ancient village.

For more information contact the Milford Marine Institute at 203-874-4000 or 203-988-0918, or go to [milfordmarineinstitute.org](http://milfordmarineinstitute.org).

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## Milford, Orange Registrars To Hold Enrollment Session For Primary

The Milford and Orange registrars of voters will conduct mandatory enrollment sessions for the purpose of registration and/or enrollment of electors entitled to vote in the presidential preference primary. Both sessions are on Friday, March 15, from noon to 2 p.m. The registrars will hear requests for adding names to the registry list by people who have been removed.

The session in Milford will be held in the Registrars of Voters office, located at the Parsons Municipal Office, 70 West River St.

The session in Orange will be held in the Registrars of Voters office, located on the second floor of Town Hall at 617 Orange Center Rd.

## Temp Position Available In Orange Community Services

Orange has a temporary position available to fill a short-term vacancy in the Community Services Office. The position is 25 hours per week at \$18 per hour with no benefits, from Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. The candidate will perform clerical and administrative duties. Excellent customer service skills are required. Knowledge of standard office equipment and computer skills are a must. Good organization, verbal and written communication skills are required. Interested applicants should send a cover letter and resume to First Selectman James M. Zeoli, 617 Orange Center Road, Orange, CT 06477 or by email to [jzeoli@orange-ct.gov](mailto:jzeoli@orange-ct.gov) by 4:30 p.m. on March 22. Orange is an equal opportunity employer.

## Duck Donuts Coming To Orange

Coffee and doughnut franchise Duck Donuts will open a location at 350 Boston Post Rd. in Orange later this year.

The company is still in the permitting stage and does not currently have a construction or opening date. The local owners and operators will be Chris Cassese and Robert ElHage.

Duck Donuts started in 2007 in North Carolina and now has more than 145 shops across 25 states, as well as several international locations.

## Mathnasium Holding Pi Day Party

Mathnasium of Milford will be celebrating the mathematical constant pi in all kinds of fun and tasty ways on Thursday, March 14 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at their location on 201 Cherry St. in Milford. March 14 is celebrated worldwide as Pi Day because the number, which represents the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter, is approximately equal to 3.14. Mathnasium will have food, games, activities, rewards, a Pi Day Champion contest and a raffle. To enter the contest, memorize the digits of pi for a prize. Everybody is invited, including parents. This is a free public event. Text 203-783-1490 to RSVP.

## Milford Students Getting Support From Optimum For Robotics Competition

Communications company Optimum will sponsor over 60 high school teams and six regional competitions throughout its service area for the 2024 FIRST Robotics Competition season, including team MOJO from the Milford Public Schools.

The funding provides students with mentor-based programs to build science, technology, engineering and math skills. Optimum will help supply resources and tools needed for FIRST teams to build and program a robot to perform this season's challenge, CRESCENDO. In CRESCENDO, teams are challenged to combine their engineering skills and creative power to explore the possibilities of their designs, building and programming of their robots for a music-themed game.

"We are proud to be supporting 39 FIRST teams across Optimum's Northeast Area, providing students with resources and opportunities to gain STEM skills and discover new ways to make a positive impact on the world," said Vic Pascarelli, vice president and general manager of Optimum Northeast. "As a company focused on technology and innovation, Optimum is honored to continue championing programs in our local communities that help inspire and educate future innovators, and our long-standing partnership with FIRST further supports the company's goals in this space."

"FIRST aims to not only get students excited about STEM, but about the breadth of opportunities within the field, and to inspire interest in pursuing STEM careers," said Chris Moore, CEO of FIRST.

Following each competition season, Optimum recognizes and awards grants to local FIRST teams for their innovation and efforts in areas including community engagement, technology, inspiration, diversity and sustainability. The awarded grants help further support the winning teams' growth, creativity and innovation as they prepare for the next season of competitions and find new ways to engineer their robots.

## Grants Available For Special Ed Teachers

The Greater New Haven Probus Club is inviting special education teachers to apply for grants during its third annual grant program.

Since 1921 the club has provided funds and assistance to special needs groups and individuals in the New Haven area. For the 2024-2025 school year, the Support Special Needs Education Program offers grants of \$250 and \$500 to support the efforts of special education teachers in the greater New Haven area: Hamden, North Haven, New Haven, Cheshire, East Haven, West Haven and Wallingford.

This grant program is designed to support instruction and/or provide experiences for special needs students that school districts would otherwise be unable to finance. These funds would provide curriculum materials, educational equipment, adaptive learning materials/equipment and enrichment experiences.

The application deadline is April 16. For more information, contact Les Faiman at [GNHavenProbus@gmail.com](mailto:GNHavenProbus@gmail.com).

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## CSCU Names Local Students To Dean's List

Central Connecticut State University has announced that a number of students from Milford and Orange have been named to the university's fall 2023 dean's list.

The students from Milford were Fred Ayenu, Kyan Cazorla, Jacob Ciolkosz,

Felicia Fanning, Noah Gerstein, Alina Goorhigian, Nancy Green, Shayna Levay, Matthew McKlosky, Fernando Queiroz, Deven Rivera, Sydney Sherrick, Cole Zamora and Kyle Zarnoch.

The students from Orange were Kyle Margenau and Goncalo Rebelo.

## Or Shalom Designates 'Seat Of Hope'



Rabbi Alvin Wainhaus of Congregation Or Shalom in early 2024 designated a seat in the synagogue's sanctuary as a "Seat of Hope." The plaque on the seat, created by Or Shalom member Frank Celmer, reads: "Congregation Or Shalom has set aside this empty Seat of Hope for the hostages in Gaza. May the evil designs of their abductors come to naught. May the hostages return safely to the loving embrace of their families, please God. Am Yisrael Hai! Israel lives on." The seat is decorated with a prayer shawl, an Israeli flag and pictures of the hostages. The pictures highlight the youngest of the hostages, 1-year-old Kfir Bibas. Copies of a prayer known as "Acheinu" have been placed on the empty seat. *Photo courtesy of Congregation Or Shalom.*

**For more local coverage, go to  
milford-orangetimes.com**

**HOMES FOR THE BRAVE  
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## Two Attorneys Join Orange-Based Law Firm

Orange-based law firm Marino, Zabel & Schellberg has announced that attorneys Heather R. Spaide and Owen T. Weaver have become members of the firm.

Weaver is a graduate of Amity High School '02 and lives in Orange with his wife and three sons. He joined MZS in 2021 after spending 10 years practicing in New Jersey. Since returning to his native Orange, Weaver has become involved with the boys' Amity Youth Lacrosse program and currently serves on its board of directors. He is also the attorney for the Amity High School Athletic Booster Club. Weaver represents clients in civil litigation, real property tax appeal, municipal law and in appeals to the Connecticut Appellate and Supreme courts.

Spaide has been practicing in the areas of commercial and civil litigation and employment law since graduating UConn Law in 2006, except for a three-year sabbatical from law firm life during which she founded and ran a nonprofit dedicated to addressing the legal needs of victims and survivors of domestic violence and trafficking. Spaide currently works with businesses and individuals in the areas of commercial and civil litigation and employment law, from providing advice and guidance to representing clients before state and federal courts, in arbitrations, and before administrative agencies. Spaide lives in Monroe with her family.

MZS represents businesses and individuals in civil litigation, real estate, land use and employment law, and represents several local municipalities.

## Homes For The Brave Hosts 8th Annual Comedy Night

Homes for the Brave will present their 8th Annual "For Veterans, By Veterans" Comedy Night on April 5.

This year's event features three professional US military veteran comedians who will perform to benefit veterans experiencing homelessness in Connecticut.

The event will take place at Vazzano's Four Seasons in Stratford. Guests will have dinner, be able to win door prizes, and a 50/50 raffle starting at 6 p.m., followed by the comedy show at 8 p.m. The event is being produced by Brad Axelrod, current owner of Connecticut Comedy for Cash and former owner/operator of Treehouse Comedy.

The three comedians in the lineup will be Noah Miller, veteran of the US Coast Guard as the first act; Brad Lowery, veteran of the US Army, and Mitch Stinson, veteran of the US Navy, as co-headliners. The MC for the evening is New Haven County comedian Billy Winn, also from the US Army.

Tickets are \$75 per person, which includes a sit-down dinner, a cash bar and the comedy show. Guests can also purchase tables of 10 for \$750. Sponsorship opportunities are available, ranging from \$100 to \$3,000. To purchase tickets or a sponsorship package, visit [homesforthebrave.org/comedy](https://homesforthebrave.org/comedy). For more information, call 203-338-0669 and ask for Mea Allbert.

All proceeds raised from this event will go towards programs and services that provide housing and support for Connecticut veterans who are experiencing homelessness.

## Expert To Discuss Tips On Managing Stress

Nationally-recognized stress expert Dr. Wendy Hurwitz will give a presentation at the Milford Public Library on Wednesday, March 20 in which she will discuss 10 tips to manage stress.

Why can two people be in the same situation and respond to stress differently? Can going through stressful times without stress be a learned skill?

Everyone will learn a technique to minimize stress and maximize vitality.

Hurwitz is a graduate of Yale University School of Medicine and a former medical researcher for ABC News. She is an expert in two fields: mind/body medicine and energy medicine. She has a forthcoming book on stress.

The event runs from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. It is free and open to the public; no registration is required. The Milford Public Library is located at 57 New Haven Ave. in Milford. For more information, call the library at 203-783-3290 or go to [milford-pl.libcal.com/event/11883500](https://milford-pl.libcal.com/event/11883500).

## DMBA Hosting Small Business Seminar Series

The Downtown Milford Business Association is hosting a Small Business Seminar Series on Tuesdays throughout March. Sessions take place at 9 a.m. in the Milford Public Library, located at 57 New Haven Ave. In collaboration with the Milford Chamber of Commerce, each morning's topic welcomes guest speakers that will offer information to benefit local businesspeople.

The topics for the remaining sessions are:

March 19: The importance of good marketing and connecting with your customers.

March 26: Is your website doing its job?

Sessions are free to the public. Find more information at [downtownmilfordct.com](https://downtownmilfordct.com).

## Orange Town Clerk's Office Offers Free Alerts For Property Owners

The Orange Town Clerk's office provides a free tool to help property owners stay updated on their land records and be notified of any potentially fraudulent documents being recorded at the Orange Town Hall.

With Search IQS Fraud Alert, you can quickly and easily sign up to receive alerts whenever a document, such as a deed or a mortgage, is recorded under your name. Land record documents can be viewed online via the Town of Orange website at [orange-ct.gov](https://orange-ct.gov) or at the Town Clerk's office.

Property owners can sign up now at [searchiqs.com/fraudalert/?CC=CTORA](https://searchiqs.com/fraudalert/?CC=CTORA).

Once you sign up, you will receive notifications for any documents filed under your name, including others in town who may share the same name as you. Carefully review any notifications to ensure that they are for you and your property, and not somebody who shares your name.

If you have any questions or concerns about this free service, contact the Town Clerk's office at 203-891-4730.



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May 11th- Brooklyn Bridge

May 25th- Stones Tribute & New Rising Sun

June 8th - Lords of 52nd Street

Tickets at  
[MilfordPerformanceCenter.org](https://MilfordPerformanceCenter.org)

# 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.

**Joan Ann Vincent Attolino**, 88, of Orange, passed away peacefully on Saturday, February 17th, with family by her side. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Clement Bellegarde**, 59, of Milford, passed away unexpectedly due to complications from his cancer diagnosis on January 30, 2024. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**William Bennet** departed this earth surrounded by his loving family on Tuesday, February 27, 2024. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



**Jennifer Jo (Jen) Bernhard**, 56, of Milford, passed away on February 22, 2024 after a courageous 2 year battle with cancer. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Vincent Brazeau, III**, 28, of Milford, Connecticut passed away unexpectedly on January 16, 2024. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



**Raymond "Ray" J Brodeur, Jr.** of Orange, beloved husband and best friend of Angela (Banner) Brodeur, passed away on February 22, 2024 while surrounded by his loving family. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Maureen F. Byrne**, 72, of West Haven, passed away on February 20, 2024. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Claire M. Calderone**, 82, of Milford, beloved wife of Gaspar Calderone for 62 years, passed away at home with her loving husband by her side on February 28, 2024. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Judith E. Capes**, 83, of Milford, beloved wife of Charles W. Capes II for 60 years, passed away on February 27, 2024 at Griffin Hospital of Derby, CT. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Robert W. Carangelo** passed away peacefully on February 16, 2024, at Milford Hospital in Milford CT while surrounded by his loving family. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Eileen Patricia Daniel**, 81, of New Haven, formerly of Milford entered eternal rest peacefully surrounded by her loving family on Monday, February 5, 2024. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



**Joseph A. DeTullio**, 81, of Milford, beloved husband of Lois (Horton) DeTullio, passed away on February 1, 2024. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**John F. DiMatteo**, age 87, of Milford, beloved husband of Violet D'Amico for 58 years, entered peaceful rest on February 3, 2024. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



**Carol Farrell**, age 86, of Stratford, beloved wife of the late Charles Farrell, entered peaceful rest on February 14, 2024. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



**Thomas Chatfield Fischer** passed away peacefully at his home on Sunday, Feb. 25, 2024. (Jenkins King & Malerba Funeral Home)





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Obituaries

**Eric “Dean” Flyte**, 65, passed away on February 23, 2024. Born on July 19, 1958 in Bridgeport, he was the son of the late Henry and Georgina (Pelley)Flyte. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

**Anne Fox (Donnelly) Gray** passed away peacefully on February 7, 2024 at Bridgeport Hospital while surrounded by her loving family. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

**Erling Richard Hagfeldt, “Rick”**, passed away peacefully on March 1, 2024 at St. Mary Hospital in Waterbury CT. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of **Lisa Ann Hansen**, from Orange, 53, on March 3, 2024. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

**Barbara E. Harrington**, 80, of Milford, beloved wife of Robert J. Harrington, passed away peacefully at her home surrounded by loved ones on February 1, 2024. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

**Brayden Burwell Heery** was called back to heaven on February 16, 2024. He was born on January 30, 2024, to loving parents, Joseph and Shelley Heery. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

**Elaine Morrissey McDaniel Hoffstadt**, 73, wife of the late Kevin Hoffstadt, sadly passed away Sunday, February 25, 2024 in Wake Forest, NC.

**Jack Holmes**, 89, of Milford, CT, passed away surrounded by his loving children on February 20, 2024. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

**Joseph H. Introcaso**, born in New York City. He and his family moved to Orange, Connecticut, where he practiced general dentistry for 37 years.

**John Jankura**, 59, of Stratford, passed away unexpectedly on February 25, 2024. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

**Edward M. Kaminski**, 86, of Milford, was reunited with his late wife Sandra (Clark) Kaminski on his wedding anniversary, February 15, 2024 with his loved ones at his side. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

**Betty Lou (Wise) King**, 86, of Milford, CT, passed away on February 14, 2024, in New Haven, CT. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

**John “Jack” Larkin**, 91, of Orange, CT beloved husband of the late Mary “Marge” Larkin, passed on February 25, 2024. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

**David J. Lucas**, 63, of Milford, beloved husband of 35 years to Karen Lucas, passed away on February 13, 2024. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

**James J. Maroney, Jr.**, fondly known as Jim, peacefully departed this world on March 2, 2024, at his residence in Milford, CT. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

**Robert “Bob” Montambault**, a 60 year resident of Wildemere Beach, Milford, passed away February 14, 2024 at Bridgeport Hospital with his wife and two sons beside him. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



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<b>Thomas J. Cody</b> – Funeral Director	<b>Carly North</b> – Funeral Director
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<b>Brian Garrity</b> – Funeral Director	<b>Bethany German</b> – Funeral Director

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# Obituaries



**Denise Marie Oliver**, 65, of Milford, passed away on February 23, 2024. (Cody-White Funeral Home)




**June M. (Ardolino) Scully**, age 90, of Orange passed away peacefully at her home surrounded by her family on February 23, 2024. (Beecher & Bennett Funeral Home)




**John (Jack) Stenner**, a longtime Orange resident, died peacefully in his sleep on February 23, 2024. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Joseph Trapletti**, a beloved resident of Milford, CT, passed away suddenly on February 6, 2024, at the age of 67. (Cody-White Funeral Home)




**Ellen F. Parry**, age 96, of North Haven, beloved wife of the late William Parry, Sr. entered peaceful rest on February 26, 2024. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)




**Lois Jean Shields**, 91, of Orange, beloved wife of the late Joseph Patrick Shields, passed away peacefully on January 27, 2024, in the comfort of her home. (Cody-White Funeral Home)




**Mary Margaret Stephens**, left this world on February 19, 2024, leaving behind a legacy of warmth, kindness, and cherished memories. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Carl Edwin Wennerstrand (Ed)**, 86, of Milford, passed away on February 14, 2024. (Cody-White Funeral Home)




**James J. Sanders** 71, passed away on February 14, 2024 at Mystic Healthcare, in Mystic, CT. (Cody-White Funeral Home)




**David Peter Sikierski**, 77, of Milford, passed away peacefully on February 28, 2024, surrounded by his family. (Cody-White Funeral Home)




**Jennifer Lynn Sutherland**, age 37, of Milford passed away unexpectedly on Friday, February 9, 2024. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)




**Geraldine (Gerry) Wilkes**, age 89, of Milford, Connecticut returned to her Lord and Savior on February 4, 2024. (Cody-White Funeral Home)




**Louis V. "Lou" Savarese Jr.**, 67, of Orange, beloved husband of 37 years to Paula Tarini Savarese, passed away on Thursday, Feb. 22, 2024, with his wife by his side. (Porto Funeral Home)



**Frank Carl Somohano, Sr.**, 76, of Milford, passed away at home surrounded by his family, after a long battle with cancer on Wednesday, February 7, 2024. (Parente Funeral Home)



**William H. Thompson VII**, 69 of Milford, Connecticut, beloved husband of Elizabeth (Taft) Thompson, passed away on February 2, 2024. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Norma J. Wise**, 87, of Milford, entered into eternal rest on February 29, 2024. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

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