



Milford-Orange Times

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April 11, 2024

Hunt For Eggs On In Orange



The Orange Lions Club held an Easter egg hunt for area children on March 30 at the High Plains Farigrounds in Orange. Photo by Lexi Crocco.

Event Venue Opens In Milford



The Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting on April 5 at event venue Tyde at Walnut Beach, located at 72 Broadway, directly on the water in Milford. "We look forward to many weddings confirmations and other celebrations of joy," Mayor Anthony Giannattasio said during the ceremony. Photo by Greg Geiger.

Milford Board Of Finance Cuts Schools Budget

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

For the second year in a row, the Milford Board of Finance has voted to significantly reduce the budget passed by the city's Board of Education for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

The Board of Education has put forward a \$111.3 million budget, representing a 4.7 percent increase over the previous year's amount.

The finance board instead approved

a 3.44 percent increase during their March 20, putting the education budget at \$109.9 million. The vote was split 3-2.

The Board of Finance did not significantly alter the Mayor Anthony Giannattasio's proposed municipal budget. Under the BOF's plan, together the city and education totals reach just

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Mill Rate Down, But Taxes Up For Many In Orange

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

The mill rate in Orange is likely to drop once the town's budget for fiscal year 2024-2025 passes, but that might not matter to many residents who will be paying more in taxes.

That's thanks to a recently-completed revaluation which found that the value of residential property in town has risen significantly.

Because of the revaluation, which all Connecticut municipalities are required to conduct every five years, the town's grand list rose sharply – by 26 percent overall. Residential property went up the most by far – over 30 percent.

Having a larger grand list would allow the town to drop the mill rate from its

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Shannon Runs For State Rep. In 117th



Shannon

Community leader and advocate Michael "MJ" Shannon Jr. has announced his candidacy as a state representative for the 117th Assembly District, covering parts of Milford, Orange and West Haven, in November's elections.

The district is currently held by retiring Republican Charles Ferraro. Shannon is a Democrat.

"I am not just running for office; I am running to serve the people," Shannon said in a release. "My campaign is built on the principle of community empowerment. Together, we can bring about positive change. Our district deserves a representative who is dedicated, accessible and ready to make a difference."

Born and raised in Milford, Shannon has made a name for himself on environmental issues, working with the Sierra Club,

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Hirsch Running For State Rep. in 119th



Hirsch

Etan Hirsch of Milford has announced that he will run as a candidate for the state House of Representatives for the 119th District. Hirsch, a Democrat, will face incumbent Republican Kathy Kennedy, who recently announced she will seek her fourth term. The 119th District encompasses a large section of Milford and part of Orange.

Hirsch has represented Milford's First District on the city's Planning and Zoning Board since being elected in 2021. Prior to that election, he served for four years as a commissioner on the Milford Zoning Board of Appeals.

Hirsch is a partner at the personal injury and medical malpractice law firm of Hirsch Andrade, with offices in Bridgeport and Danbury.

"I am excited to be running for state

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OLT Awards Scholarship To UNH Student



The Orange Land Trust recently issued its Fred Kendrick \$1,000 scholarship to UNH environmental studies student Alexa Garbiel. Standing with Garbiel from left to right are OLT board members George Lesko, Dr. Lawrence Messina, Suzanne Anderson, Jim Leahy and Allen Grealish. Not in the photo are Ann Whitman and Tara Gorvine from the UNH Office of Advancement. Photo courtesy of the Orange Land Trust.

Mental Health Fair Coming To Milford

There will be a mental health fair at Jonathan Law High School in Milford on May 25 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. It is a free event and is open to the public.

There will be numerous practitioners, therapists, nonprofits, vendors, and self-help groups in attendance. Visitors can see demonstrations of various practices for improving one's well-being as well as a

children's corner.

The fair is free to attend, but donations of clothing, toys, books (especially self-help books) and/or dry or canned goods will be accepted for local charities.

Vendors wishing to participate and anyone looking for more information can contact Cat Mortimer at milfordmentalhealth@gmail.com or visit milfordctmentalhealthfair.com.

Milford Environmental Group To Host Earth Day Celebration

The Milford Environmental Concerns Coalition (ECC) will host an Earth Day 2024 celebration on Saturday, April 20 from 10 am to 3 pm at the Milford Public Library and Fowler Pavilion.

This family-oriented event is free to the public, and will feature numerous how-to exhibits on subjects including recycling, composting and nature. There will also be numerous activities for children, including The Therapy mini horses. Learn about foraging for wild, natural and organic food from The 3 Foragers in the library program room from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., plus many more events throughout the day. The mini horses will be on site all day.

The ECC welcomes nonprofit environmental groups, musicians, artists,

educators, civic organizations and businesses to set up a table. No fee is required to participate, but each group must supply and set up its own table. Organizers are encouraging groups that will feature activities and/or displays to inform and engage the public on environmental issues. To reserve space, go to milfordearthday.org and complete the online exhibitor application.

According to ECC Chairperson Ann Berman, a number of environmental groups and agencies have already signed on, including the UCONN Extension Gardeners, Alice's Re-loved Workshop, the Milford Arts Council, the Connecticut Audubon Society Coastal Center at Milford Point, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Milford Lab and the Milford Garden Club.

Phil Smith Honored By Orange Dems



Smith

The Orange Democratic Town Committee honored town resident Phil Smith with

its O'Sullivan Award on April 4. This annual award given by the ODTCC 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. Smith served on the ODTCC for 35 years. He was the campaign treasurer for both Mitch Goldblatt when running for first selectman and for Paul Davis while a state representative. He served on the Orange Board of Finance for 20 years, and as its chair from 2000 to 2004.

Smith has also been active in other areas of the community, including leadership roles with the Rotary Club of Orange, New Haven's Community Soup Kitchen, the Elm Shakespeare Company and the Southern Connecticut State University Foundation.

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For Nature's Sake

Digging In To Reveal Lead Water Pipes

Residents and business owners in Milford and Orange will notice a few discrete digging projects in certain neighborhoods over the next several months – small ditches near the curb that will be excavated and, on the same day, refilled by contractors working for the water company, all to get a glimpse at what the below-ground pipes are made of.

It's part of a federal campaign to lower the risk of human exposure to lead in public water supplies with local inventories/digging, mandated by the US Environmental Protection Agency and carried out in our area by the Regional Water Authority. The campaign is aimed at locating and eventually replacing our remaining water pipes made from lead.

Like other public water suppliers around the nation, the RWA is working toward an EPA deadline of Oct. 16 for completing their initial inventory and sharing those results with the public. By late October, according to RWA spokesperson Kevin Watsey, an on-line map of our towns, showing the composition of water service lines going to each address, will be available on the RWA website. For those interested in seeing examples of such maps for other places, two cities that have finished their preliminary inventories ahead of the deadline and have their interactive maps online are Ann Arbor and Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Lead does not belong in drinking water, in any amount, according to public health experts. Children especially should not be exposed to lead from any source. But the Flint, Michigan water crisis, which began 10 years ago, reminded Americans of the particular risks from older lead pipes still present in places throughout the country – beneath the ground and out of sight.

The EPA estimates that there are 146,574 lead service lines still in use across the state

of Connecticut, comprising 1.6 percent of all our in-state water pipes. That may be less alarming than statistics from the state of Florida, where more than one million lead service lines in use comprise nearly 13 percent of the total. Still, whether in Florida or Illinois (where 11 percent of service lines are made from lead) or Connecticut, each of those leaded water lines presents ongoing danger of exposure for entire households, schools or businesses where people spend much of their day.

Though the water company sends safe water through large non-leaded mains that run down the middle of our streets, the pipes branching off to connect those mains to our homes – so-called service lines with diameters of two inches or less – can be made from lead, which is fraught. Some have likened it to drinking clean water through a lead straw.

For more details consider the following questions and answers:

1. True/False: The installation of lead pipes and lead solder to connect copper pipes were banned in the US in 1986.
2. Which of the following cities has replaced all its lead service lines?
 - a. Newark, New Jersey
 - b. Lansing, Michigan
 - c. Madison, Wisconsin
 - d. All of the above
3. True/False: The EPA estimates that drinking water can make up 20 percent or more of a person's total exposure to lead.
4. Even low levels of lead exposure in children, according to the CDC, can cause
 - a. Behavior and learning problems
 - b. Lower IQ and hyperactivity
 - c. Slowed growth



PATRICIA HOUSER



- d. Hearing problems
- e. Anemia
- f. All of the above
5. The cost of removing lead pipes from public water systems across the US will be close to \$50 billion, but the savings to government from the health benefits will be _____ dollars.
 - a. \$20 billion
 - b. Also \$50 billion
 - c. Hundreds of billions
6. True/False: High school water supplies must be sampled at least once every year for lead.

Answers:

1. True. Medical experts were warning of the health risks from lead exposure in the first decades of the 20th century, and many places around the US stopped installing lead pipes in the 1930s and 40s. However, that triggered a major campaign by the Lead Industries Association and others to obscure those dangers – even to the extent of delaying major federal action to limit the use of lead for decades. For a short summary of that history, see the Guardian's September 2022 online article titled, "Profiting from Poison."
2. d. All of the above
3. True. An EPA website adds, "Infants who consume mostly mixed formula can receive 40 percent to 60 percent of their exposure to lead from drinking water."
4. f. Among the effects of lead poisoning on adults are reproductive difficulties for both men and women, problems with memory and concentration and high blood pressure.
5. c. A recent study by the Harvard Chan School of Public Health confirms that the benefits from the absence of lead pipes will yield hundreds of billions of dollars in

government savings in health costs. That includes people who will be free of certain cardiac or kidney or other problems, and thus not filing medical claims because they will not have been exposed to lead in water.

6. False. There is no federal requirement for testing for lead in water at secondary schools today. Even well water, it should be noted, can be contaminated with lead when it travels through lead or galvanized pipes or copper pipes with lead solder. Public health officials say private well owners should, at some point, test their water for lead, with different timetables for testing depending on the presence of an expectant mother or small child in the home.

Explanations for well owners can be found at the state Department of Public Health webpage titled "Educational Materials on Testing Recommendations for Private Wells and Semipublic Wells."

Meanwhile, as the Regional Water Authority carries out its program of mapping service lines, Watsey notes that the RWA offers significant advance warning of any digging adjacent to a particular property as well as explanations at every step of their findings. Their website also invites input from the property owner on what they might know about parts of the service line within their buildings with an option to follow step-by-step instructions online for identifying the composition of the pipes in their building. A helpful resource is RWA's webpage titled, "Lead and Drinking Water."

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

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Opinion & Editorial

Ponder This

Charging A Committee For Effective Work

During the early part of my professional life, a wise mentor emphasized the importance of effectively charging committees. The charge provided by leadership matters and can make a crucial difference in accomplishing the work of any established committee. Providing an effective charge should be the critical first step when gathering members to work together to perform organizational or board tasks.

Committees are developed to assist leadership, whether governmental or private, with the decision-making process within the organization or enterprise. This is generally done by committees providing information that is helpful to decision making. The leadership charge outlines the scope of responsibility, the specific policies regarding structure and membership and the authority of the committee. In congressional circles, committees and/or commissions gather information and make recommendations for policy formation and legislation.

The leadership charge can be skillfully developed to enhance the work of the committee by serving as a roadmap to success. Importantly, the charge must indicate the degree of autonomy and also limits to authority. Is this a recommending body or a more definitive decision-making board? Provision of a committee charge based on best practices should also provide clear instructions of

expected outcomes within a specified time frame.

Why is such a valuable tool often not fully operationalized, thus diminishing the overall contribution of the committee? In political circles, the lack of an effective charge can muddle the work of committees, thus diminishing the overall contribution to problem solving. All aspects of the committee's function – information gathering, analysis and recommendation – aim to serve the mission of the organization. A committee exists for one purpose: to assist the organization in the conduct of its work. A clear and effective charge helps to keep the mission of the organization in the foreground.

A national narrative has emerged that major reform consisting of cuts in benefits is necessary to preserve Social Security and protect the deficit. The concept of whether we need, want or can benefit from a systematic Social Security program need not be debated – at least not by the commission or committee for purposes of review. This does not mean that the outcome is directed to certain recommendations. One leadership charge directs members to find workable solutions while another focuses on reform that may hinder rather than help the program



ELLEN RUSSELL BEATTY

under review. These are two very different charges that may encourage very different outcomes.

There are many possible solutions, including cuts to benefits, increase in payroll taxes, reduction in benefits and/or some combination of these actions. New data has emerged about the changing demographic of future beneficiaries, making the program a civil rights issue concerning disability rights and equity issues for people of color. Decreases in Social Security benefits are a potential harm for those who are not yet eligible.

Documented drivers of need such as lower employment status, higher unemployment rates, lower earnings levels and diminished educational opportunities of future recipients make advocacy for the program quite critical. A goal to increase the revenue stream for Social Security is gaining in some policy circles.

The message that should be spread about Social Security is that it has been an outstanding success. Established in 1935 as a federal program to protect seniors from the death of wage-earning spouse, parents or the onset of disability, all workers contribute to the program via the federal insurance contribution deducted from payroll. There are

about 50 million recipients, and the money is not paid out of taxes. The funds are held in separate accounts in trust and administered federally. Women represent approximately 57 percent of all Social Security beneficiaries age 62 years and older and approximately 69 percent of all beneficiaries 85 years and older.

Now is the time to come together across generational lines and political party divides to advocate for Social Security on behalf of current and future Americans. It is up to effective leadership to correctly charge any commission or committee with this significant responsibility.

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.

Commentary

New York Legal System Overreached On Trump Bond

Regardless of what side you are on in the Donald Trump prosecutions, New York's recent bond requirement that Donald Trump come up with \$494 million in order to appeal a state court verdict is an egregious violation of the Eighth Amendment of the US Constitution. Letitia James, the New York state attorney general, and Judge Arthur F. Engoron are playing with fire.

The Eighth Amendment states, "Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted." The New York state legal system requires a large bond payment in its cases before allowing an appeal to an appellate court, in effect assuming that the party is guilty and trying to make sure assets are available to pay the lower court's verdict.

In a requirement as large as the one expressly derived in the Trump prosecution, it would require divestment of illiquid real estate assets like Trump Tower, Trump's golf courses and other assets like Mar-a-Lago to meet the requirement. Liquidating Trump's illiquid assets would effectively cause great harm to the former president as seizure of these type of assets cannot be easily reversed. These are not considered liquid assets like cash, and if the verdict is reversed by higher courts, how will the taxpayers of New York make restitution?

In this unprecedented case with an unprecedented penalty, the defendant cannot easily



THOMAS P. HURLEY

recover from a prosecutorial injustice. This judgement likely violates the Eighth Amendment, not to mention the severely biased prosecutor and judge and foregone conclusions of guilt by someone who is not even a licensed appraiser.

The New York appellate court in the name of justice should put an immediate stay on any collection efforts until the full set of appeals are resolved. After all, it is not likely Trump Tower will be moved out of the country anytime soon. New York law is being abused big time for one purpose – to prevent Donald Trump from attaining the presidency again.

It is time for the adults in the New York

court system to put an end to this travesty. Businesses are already shying away from the state for fear of this novel prosecution tactic.

Things like this were done in the Soviet Union and Russia to subvert democracy by "legally" eliminating candidates and their ability to run for office. New York is going to regret this overstretch to "get" a particular individual.

Most of us don't have the resources to appeal all the way to the US Supreme Court to redress a grievance. Don't vote for zealot prosecutors. It does matter.

Thomas P. Hurley is the tax collector for Orange.

Letters to the Editor:

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

Transit-Oriented Development Right Way to Go

To the Editor:

I wish to respond to a column published in the March 14 edition covering the influx of transit-oriented development in Connecticut ("Are Apartments The Right Strategy For Economic Growth?" by Kevin McNabola). While I appreciate a growing recognition of the housing crisis in Connecticut and the need for solutions, especially around TODs, the author got more wrong than right.

McNabola's first mistake is to confuse signs of development around transit as an overwhelming boom bound to cause problems. The data proves the opposite – we are still building at historically low-levels in Connecticut. We're missing hundreds of

thousands of affordable homes and aren't building to fulfill demand, which is why we're in this crisis.

His next mistake is to assume that sprawl is what people want. Why, when the demand for walkable urban spaces is so clear among young professionals, does McNabola claim we will just "move out and buy a home in the suburbs?" As a young person, I can attest to how people in my generation do not want to live in sprawl (and can't afford to even if we wanted to). That's why roughly eight out of 10 voters in Connecticut want to see more transit oriented communities, according to Growing Together CT.

McNabola then seems to confuse the challenge of providing public services. Study after study shows that sprawl zoning is fiscally unsustainable. Multi-family and mixed-use developments, particularly in more dense areas around transit, are significantly more productive land uses that earn higher property tax revenues for towns with much less demand for services. If you want to keep property taxes low, build more mixed-use, multi-family transit-oriented communities in your town and stop defending sprawl – a sinking fiscal

ship.

That's why I support HB 5390, or Work Live Ride. The bill works to create an inter-agency framework under the existing Office of Responsible Growth to support towns that want to grow sustainable, equitable transit-oriented communities – how,

where and when they want. It's better for my bottom line, a municipality's bottom line and the state's bottom line.

Sydney Elkhay is an organizer with DesegregateCT and a recent graduate of UCONN who lives in Manchester.

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Stephen Hechtman, Publisher: publisher@theorangetimes.com
 Brandon T. Bisceglia, Editor: editorinchief@theorangetimes.com
 Photographers: Steve Cooper • Lexi Crocco • Robert Creigh

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

Senator's Seat: Sen. James Maroney

Columnists:

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Opinion & Editorial

Making Sense Of The State Budget



STATE REP. (R-119)
KATHY KENNEDY

Adjusting the state budget affects the money in your wallet. Current bipartisan fiscal guardrails are at risk of being eliminated, making it easier for our government to spend too much money and easily fall into debt.

When I was young, I was taught the value of a dollar, and back then a dollar went a long way. To this day I still make a budget when shopping for essentials. Now, a dollar's value reflects an economy defined by inflation, taxes, skyrocketing costs and high interest rates. This prompts Connecticut organizations and agencies to desire more funding.

To wisely tackle our financial needs, the General Assembly inserted what's known as "fiscal guardrails" into their 2017 bipartisan budget. Today, they continue to serve as a "spending cap" that encourages us to fund statewide programs while also paying down long-term debt. Since then, Connecticut has applied these guardrails to recent budgets, helping us build our rainy-day fund, obtain a surplus, reduce our deficit and confidently navigate the pandemic.

Recently, majority party leaders have called for a retreat from these guardrails despite their success in implementing smarter spending habits for our state. This year alone, proposed spending increases total over \$500 million, and now, patterns of requesting more money without any spending caps scarily dominates our budget talks.

This year, 26 legislative committees have heard testimony from hundreds of organizations competing for funding. For example, higher education officials threatened raising tuition and fees while cutting faculty jobs if their requests weren't met. Another example, promoted by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, calls for more funding for student nutrition programs for middle- and low-income families.

While I support the nature of these proposals, they irresponsibly request more funding before exhausting existing funds or reevaluating their spending habits to reflect their needs. In the case of the higher education officials who wanted millions more, maybe they could shift their own million-dollar salaries to reduce overall education prices and curb student debt. For those who wish to increase student nutrition funding, maybe they should recognize that most school districts still have millions in American Rescue Plan Act money to support their cause.

My childhood taught me that to build a stable budget, you can't spend money you don't have. But many of these organizations haven't done their homework. It's critical to demand more fiscal transparency so that we can ensure money is well spent before we ask for more. That's why elected officials have respected our fiscal guardrails for almost a decade: although it requires making sacrifices, it protects us from overspending and allows us to spend responsibly – just as my parents taught me.

Looking ahead, I am calling on my colleagues to take a step back and think about the vital services our state needs instead of pushing their individual agendas. Priorities such as public safety, health, education, nonprofits and affordability need to replace risky budget increases so that we can support our nonprofits, first responders, students, teachers and the middle-class residents who make up the backbone of Connecticut.

As we move forward with budget adjustments, I encourage you to reach out to me with your questions, ideas and concerns at Kathy.Kennedy@housegop.ct.gov or at 860-240-8700. I also suggest following me on Facebook and subscribing to my brief email updates at RepKennedy.com.

April Is Distracted Driving Month



STATE REP. (R-117)
CHARLES FERRARO

Connecticut has a serious problem with safety on its roadways. Fatalities among drivers, passengers and pedestrians have been steadily climbing since 2021, peaking in 2022 and expected to set another record in 2024.

This is extremely troubling. Something must be done in order to secure the safety of our roadways.

The state capitol is rife with debate on how Connecticut can best protect its drivers and also improve its critical transportation infrastructure.

Fittingly, April is Distracted Driving Month. This initiative highlights the dangers of distracted driving – primarily cell phone usage – and emphasizes the immense costs to this risky behavior.

Local and state law enforcement in Connecticut are adamantly promoting increased fines and penalties for distracted driving, with tickets costing offenders up to \$625. But the real cost can be the loss of a life, which is unfortunately common as a result of unsafe driving.

Roadway deaths in Connecticut began steadily increasing in 2021, when our state was at a crossroads and made two key legislative decisions that have been much more impactful in endangering drivers, passengers and pedestrians.

In 2020, majority lawmakers called a summer special session to rush through a controversial police accountability bill which hamstrung local and state police departments from pursuing violent criminals and spurred a significant drop in traffic stops and highway enforcement.

Immediately, when drivers learned of the decrease in enforcement, speed on the roadways increased. Therein lies the growing problem of fatal accidents.

Higher speed causes more death, and less enforcement causes more speeding.

One year later, the legislature returned to session and passed another controversial policy legalizing cannabis and creating a state-sanctioned recreational marketplace.

As the plan rolled out and the market grew, so did concerns of cannabis-induced impaired driving plaguing Connecticut roads. My Republican colleagues and I in Hartford were strongly concerned with the effects of adding another dangerous variable to a troubling case of rising roadway fatalities but continue to face resistance from Democrat policy leaders.

For many of us, this is no coincidence. For my colleagues in the majority, it remains a mystery.

Proposed legislation has circulated throughout the 2024 session, including to further crack down on impaired driving. This includes a bill that passed the Transportation Committee – SB 424 – which proposes to lower the legal blood alcohol limit for drivers from 0.08 to 0.05.

This is a noble pursuit and a meaningful attempt at saving lives. But it badly misses the mark on how Connecticut can make an impact on decreasing impaired driving.

My priority will continue to be making Connecticut safer. To do so on our roadways will require commonsense provisions, like allowing law enforcement to pursue traffic violations without the fear of legal recourse.

For updates on community events, highlighted legislation, state funding for Orange and Milford 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.

Holding Steady... For Now



STATE REP. (D-114)
MARY WELANDER

This past week it was announced that the legislature would not be bringing a new budget up for a vote. As we vote for a biennium budget at the beginning of each term that is supposed to apply for both years, this action would seem typical. But in reality, outside of the 2020 session that ended abruptly due to the pandemic, this is the first time since 2008 that this has happened.

Why would this be the seen as the best course of action?

To start, we need to look back at the fiscal guardrails that were extended last year for an additional five years. While it was a prudent action to take to ensure that financial responsibility defines the near future, it also strictly limits the amount of surplus funds that can be spent, no matter how worthy the cause. Additionally, federal emergency American Rescue Plan Act funds that came into the state during the pandemic are set to expire this year. Combine those points with the potential for lower sales tax receipts and the existing spending cap and there are few realistic options.

So where does this leave the state? That, it turns out, is not entirely clear.

I am in line with many of my colleagues who recognize that if we want to ensure a healthy financial outlook for future generations in Connecticut we need to take care of our debt obligations and be prudent with our spending. I also recognize that if we are going to ensure that future generations want to stay in Connecticut we need to create a state that supports its residents. That could look like focusing just on debt reduction. It could also look like strategic investments in infrastructure and programs that show results further down the road.

I won't pretend to be a global economic expert or know the mindset of a Fortune 500 executive, but I do know that in the business world a quick return on investment is a constant goal. Here's the problem: people aren't a business and neither is good government. I know that many of us are seeing tighter budgets month after month, despite many having higher salaries than ever before. This isn't sustainable as a state and it's not healthy for communities.

There is the potential for some flexibility in this budget as it stands. As we move into the final part of this session I will continue to press leadership for a budget that is both responsible in the big picture, but also reflects the needs of our town and this district. To support our schools and small businesses. To create pathways for middle class families to thrive and see potential for economic growth, and provide opportunities for those in poverty to rise up into the security of the middle class.

I won't promise anything that I can't deliver, but I will always promise to do my best for Orange and the district.

AI Legislation As A Seatbelt



STATE SEN. (D-14)
JAMES MARONEY

As a state legislator, I am always committed to finding the right solutions and opportunities to best benefit our state. Having worked alongside my colleagues in that time, I've learned a lot about the best ways to support and advance bills and laws – and I've also gained some perspective in how they work.

Currently, in the General Law Committee, where I'm the Senate chair, we are discussing serious advances in how our state considers and uses artificial intelligence. AI systems have been used in technology for decades, but new advances in its development have led to incredible – and concerning – new functions.

For instance, the next evolution of Photoshopped images is here – "deep fake" AI photos and videos can be created, showing anyone from powerful world leaders to everyday people doing things they never did in reality. These could have terrible uses, and are already being exploited, in ways ranging from misinformation to cruel attacks on others' reputations.

While this issue is certainly problematic, it isn't the only one we need to be concerned about. A less immediately noticeable but similarly concerning issue is that of unconscious discrimination in using AI systems.

A good tool is only useful if its operator uses it the right way. AI is the same way. In many uses, including health care, AI offers us leaps and bounds in technological advances. In others, such as judiciary uses, inherent bias in a system can lead to improper findings. If the person implementing AI uses their own biases when putting data into a system, the system can be weighed against or toward certain outcomes.

In this legislative session, where I will soon introduce our new AI regulations that include both limitations on some uses of AI and training systems for others, I am viewing our approach like putting on a seatbelt. How does a new law work like a seatbelt? When you get into a car or on a plane, you can technically sit wherever you want and drive how you want. That's all well and good until reckless driving causes a crash or accident. Without that seatbelt, you'll end up hurting yourself, others in your vehicle or others on the road.

When you put on your seatbelt, you're not impeding your ability to drive, but simply using a tool developed for safety. These regulations on AI are similar. They allow us to continue using AI in industries and do not constrain its further advancement, but they also give us additional tools we can use to rein in its use in problematic or offensive ways. Political misinformation and deep-fake photos and videos violating individuals' privacy are glimpses of the potential downsides of the "Wild West" of AI.

As time passes and I gain more experience as a state legislator, I will continue to see legislation as a seatbelt – a tool we can use as we continue to make our lives better without compromising safety or security. It's an importance balance that I hope will help my colleagues and me view the potential advances we can make in a valuable light.



Here's To Your Health

The Passion Of My Heart

About three years ago, I published a book called *The Passion of My Heart*. It is a heartfelt book generally about my own journey to a lifestyle of wellness from a spiritual point of view.

I think it's important for people to know that I wasn't always as healthy as I am now and that I can relate to being overweight, a smoker and fast food eater. I chose a picture of the Sun coming up over a mountain because I understand to many it may look like a very high climb, but it's not as hard as you may think.

My own journey to finding a healthy lifestyle has given me insight into the many challenges people encounter. This enables me to bring a high level of empathy, respect and understanding to teach and inspire from a three-dimensional approach, spirit, soul and body. I have said it many times in my column that you are a spirit that has a soul that lives in a body. Your exercise, food and wellness are as individual as your own thumbprint, so it's important when you're

starting your journey to remember that. We really can't afford to look at it any other way and need to be more intentional now more than ever.

What I hoped people would get out of my book was for the reader to discover their self-worth through God's lenses and to understand how valuable they are. We all have a story. We all have wounds from our past, our childhood and more. That is why it's important for us to take care of all parts of ourselves –not just our outer self, but our inner self as well.

Eating healthy will not undo what stress does to the body. Nor will keeping your body in good shape undo the effects of processed foods. If you were an avid runner and broke your ankle, unable to run for 12 weeks, your spirit would be in a not-so-positive state, therefore affecting your body and your soul. They are all related to one another.



MICHELE TENNEY

Good nutrition, a variety of exercises, massage, meditation, proper amounts of sleep and water equal three-dimensional wellness. No one is immune to the stresses of this world or getting hit with curveballs; it's life. No one was ever promised a perfect one, always feeling happy and content. We must be intentional about it.

Surround yourself with good friends and those who lift your spirit up and make you smile. People who support you in times of trials or sorrows are essential to your well-being. Make plans with them just to talk on the phone or have a cup of coffee rather than isolating yourself.

If you're battling weight gain, make sure you're being intentional about eating out with people who eat on the healthier side rather than those who don't. Get rid of the foods in your home that don't help you but hurt you. Add more veggies to your refriger-

ator. Put your sneakers on and go for a walk – or better yet, put your boots on and go for a hike. Being in the outdoors helps lift our spirits and gives us a sense of peace. Choose a specific time of day to meditate, pray or listen to soothing music. Make this year your best year to live your life to its fullest potential.

I believe a desire to live a healthy life lives within everyone. I also believe in each and every one of you. You can do it, one day at a time, one choice at a time. Healthy choices become healthy habits that eventually become healthy lifestyles. Here's to your health.

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

Insuring Your Future

Are Dental And Vision Insurance Plans Worth The Cost?

As with most insurance plans, the answer to whether dental and vision plans are worth the cost is "it depends." Factors to consider include your dental and vision needs, how many people need coverage and what kind of medical insurance you have.

Group dental insurance is much less expensive than individual plans because the risk is spread over all the company's enrolled members. Medicare Advantage plans often include some dental and vision coverage at no additional cost.

Individual insurance plans do not include dental or vision coverage, but it can be purchased separately. Most dental plans cover preventative care at no additional cost. However, any other procedure is covered on a cost share basis. For instance fillings might be 60-80 percent covered and root canals or crowns at 50 percent. Also, all dental plans have an annual maximum coverage amount. This means once they have paid that specific

amount, any additional out-of-pocket cost is the patient's responsibility.

How often do you go to the dentist? If dental needs are limited to cleanings and preventive care twice a year, consider the cost of cleanings versus the premium. Most plans cover cleaning completely, but the annual premium could equal the cost of cleanings.

Does the dentist accept the plan? Not all dentists accept every insurance plan. Check to find out if he/she is in network or will process the claim for you. Also, check whether the dental plan is a PPO, which will allow for coverage out of network, or an HMO plan, which will not.

Many stand-alone dental plans have waiting periods. This means you must pay the premium for a specific number of months



TRISH PEARSON

before they will cover expensive procedures such as root canals, crowns or extractions. The dental coverage that is part of Medicare Advantage plans does not have waiting periods.

Is the employer contributing to the premium or is it part of a voluntary benefit package? If covering a family, it is generally worth purchasing the group dental insurance, especially if there are dependents who need orthodontia care.

Eye exams are covered under most health insurance plans. Generally, it is considered a specialist visit with the corresponding copay. In some cases, the vision provider will also bill for specific items such as contact lens fitting or refraction (glasses prescription).

Stand-alone vision plans include some ad-

ditional coverage for the annual exam, thereby reducing the net out-of-pocket cost. A vision plan will also cover a portion of the cost of glasses (lenses/frames) or contact lenses.

As with dental insurance, check to see if you need to go to a specific provider or vendor to purchase eyewear. Medicare Advantage plans generally offer a nominal amount toward the cost of frames/lenses either on a reimbursement basis or at the point of sale depending on the benefit plan.

While the premium for vision plans is generally nominal, it is a monthly expense, which when totaled up might equal the cost for a pair of glasses.

In both cases it is important to do the math before purchasing.

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

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Your Health

Rising Number Of Measles Cases

I recently became aware of a health advisory issued by the Centers for Disease Control urging vaccination against measles, especially among children and international travelers. This advisory comes in response to a significant rise in measles cases this year. Notably, many reported cases involve children aged 12 months and older who were not vaccinated with the measles-mumps-rubella vaccine.

American Medical Association president Dr. Jesse Ehrenfeld noted that “the rate of vaccinations against measles in the US has declined since 2019 – putting more people at risk of illness, disability and death.”

Measles, a highly contagious viral infection, can lead to serious complications, particularly in young children and adults who are not immune. The outbreak has been attributed to a decline in vaccination rates and pockets of unvaccinated individuals, allowing the virus to spread more easily within

communities.

Measles is a serious viral disease that causes fever, congestion, cough, red eyes (conjunctivitis) and an itchy, widespread rash. It is extremely infectious and spread through the air and contact with contaminated surfaces. Measles complications can lead to hospitalization due to pneumonia and brain infection, also known as encephalitis. Measles can also weaken the immune system, making individuals more susceptible to secondary infections such as bacterial pneumonia, bronchitis, keratitis, otitis media or sinusitis.

The measles vaccination schedule typically involves two doses of the measles, mumps, and rubella vaccine, administered at specific intervals. The recommended schedule for measles vaccination in the US is as follows:



DR. AMIR MOHAMMAD

First dose: The first dose of the MMR vaccine is typically administered at 12 to 15 months of age.

Second dose: The second dose of the MMR vaccine is usually given at 4 to 6 years of age, before the child enters kindergarten or elementary school.

One of the key factors contributing to the outbreak is vaccine hesitancy, fueled by misinformation and skepticism about the safety and efficacy of vaccines. The rise in vaccine hesitancy in the US has led to declines in the vaccination rates of young children. For instance, vaccine coverage of US kindergarten children has fallen from 95.2 percent in 2019-2020 to 93.1 percent in 2022-2023, according to the CDC. A number of states have rates below 90 percent.

Despite overwhelming scientific evidence

supporting the safety and importance of vaccines, some individuals and communities remain hesitant to vaccinate themselves or their children. This hesitancy has led to sub-optimal vaccination coverage in certain areas, creating vulnerabilities to outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases like measles.

The recent outbreak has prompted public health authorities to implement various strategies to control the spread of the virus. These efforts include increasing vaccination outreach and education, enhancing surveillance and monitoring of cases, and implementing measures to isolate and quarantine individuals who may have been exposed to the virus. Additionally, there have been calls for policymakers to enact stricter vaccination laws and regulations to improve vaccination rates and prevent future outbreaks.

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

Book Reviews

The Eyes And The Impossible By Dave Eggers

I absolutely, completely and totally fell in love with this gem by Dave Eggers from the first sentence.

The eyes belong to Johannes, a dog who lives in a park. His job is to observe all the goings on in the park and meet with other park creatures nightly to give his report and learn from them as well.

There are two things Johannes prides himself on: his speed, which he believes makes him a blur in the eyes of park visitors, and that he's a free dog unencumbered by leash, license or human.

Captured by a trouble traveler (a human who creates all sorts of mischief in the park), Johannes is rescued by his various animal friends who create a major disturbance to his captors (which is quite funny). Following his release, Johannes begins to formulate an idea to release his bison friends so they can live free and roam to their hearts' content.

Johannes becomes a celebrity of sorts when he rescues an infant from



CARMELA DEVITO

drowning. Fearful that he would be turned over to animal control, he runs away. In order for him to continue to be the eyes of the group and knowing he will be recognized immediately, his friends procure for him a doggie sweater and collar. In that way he can continue his journeys through the park and report back to the others on everything he sees.

With the help of his friends, Johannes orchestrates a plan to free the bison.

For the most part they succeed....but things happened.

There is so much to love in this. It's funny, warm and I think we can see ourselves a little bit in the animals and their various personalities. I don't have enough superlatives to say how wonderful and charming this book is. Move it to the top of your to be read list – you won't be disappointed.

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

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Real Talk: You Ask, A Pro Answers

What Does Your Real Estate Commission Pay For?

The profession of real estate is a unique one, as the agent tends to become part of one's family when dedicating seven days a week and all the responsibilities of this large legal transaction into a contractual agreement. Bringing the best terms and financial gain to the table is the ultimate goal of the agent. The process to get there means listening to the individual needs of each client. The beginning of the transaction is coming to a mutual understanding, meeting each new family and getting to the core of what their needs are and what they are trying to accomplish. At this stage of the game the realtor can earn the client's trust in this new relationship, knowing that the process will have many curves to get to completion.

There is great pride in representing the completion of a home sale. The duties beyond working accurately to secure pricing and new possibilities to purchase are only

chapters in the all-crucial elements needed to complete the deal. Negotiating, inspections, evaluations, compiling data, deadlines, lenders, explanations of the law and its procedures are all part of an even longer list that justifies why everyone on both sides of a transaction need representation. This process, mandated by state laws, is in place right up to the doorstep of the closing attorney.

When a purchase and sales offer is initially written up it is designed to satisfy the seller's and the buyer's needs, while keeping up with the market competition. This presentation in today's market can be a "battle to buy" so intense that it is imperative that the realtor have a strong consultation sit-down with the clients they represent in order to



BARBARA
LEHRER

set up strengths and advantages using the professional strategies compiled over years of experience as an agent.

As the overall real estate game goes, sometimes the buyer goes for the emotional buy, such as loving the décor more than the location. At times the agent's job is to play advocate for the long haul. Will this home have good resale value? Experience is the

backbone to helping clients assess what makes the home the right one.

Working with sellers starts before we even meet. The address and the comparable sales drive the entire appointment as we recognize the top reasons why they bought in the first place and review candidly any shortcomings that are still in play in this current home. Honesty is the greatest asset of an agent.

There is great importance in creating trust as we move forward working together constantly to complete the plan.

This profession is like no other. It is not like that of a doctor or a lawyer, but it is being a teacher, an educator and a marketing specialist. Keeping these hats on is true dedication. Huge amounts of money are on the line. A business mind, not emotions, needs to be in play.

Compassion and fortitude morning noon and night to get the best job done is the realtor's plan. I would not give it up for the world. I, like other full-time, seasoned agents, are helping families complete their dream. Do not let anyone tell you it is not necessary. Why would anyone chance giving up all these services?

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

Recycling Tip: Recycling Updates In Orange

By Susan Wineland

Orange Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day will now be on Saturday, April 13 from 9 a.m. to noon behind High Plains Community Center at 525 Orange Center Rd. Keeping toxic chemicals out of landfills, roadsides and waterways by disposing of hazardous waste is crucial for protecting the environment and the health of every living creature. For more information and to pre-register, the HazWaste website is rwater.com/hazwaste/. If you have specific questions about what you can or cannot bring, HazWaste Central may be addressed by emailing ask.hazwaste@rwater.com or calling 203-401-2712.

Shredding Day, along with other events at High Plains, is coming up on Saturday, April 27.

Bring confidential personal documents, including tax papers, bank statements, medical records and other sensitive papers for secure on-site shredding. 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.

Recycle old mattresses and box springs through the services of the Mattress Recycling Council's "Bye Bye Mattress" team. Residents can 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 at \$15 per mattress or box spring).

Securely dispose of electronic devices 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, i-pads, laptops and personal computer hard drives will be accepted with a suggested price of \$5 to \$20 per item.

The Orange Community Women will be collecting 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. They will be under the pavilion.

Buy Nothing Orange will be having a swap for items, also under the pavilion. Bring any household items you wish to give away and take something that others have brought for

ultimate recycling. They will also be collecting non-perishable food items for the Orange Food Bank and Orange Food2Kids.

Prescription drugs will be collected by Orange police and members of the Bethany Orange Woodbridge Drug and Alcohol Action Committee. Bring unused and/or expired medications to the front of High Plains Community Center for a secure take back event.

Bay State Textile recycling bins are located at the transfer station near Goodwill, at High Plains next to the pavilion and at the entrance area to the Public Works Department at 308 Lambert Rd. Clean and dry clothing, linens, shoes, and more are accepted. Go to baystatetextiles.com/ for more information and to see what can and cannot be donated.

Green bin food composting is also available at the transfer station. This is a great opportunity to not only significantly cut down on the weight and the methane emitted from food in a landfill, but also reduce the costs and the carbon emissions it takes to haul and process those materials.

There is also the plastic bag shed at the transfer station that only accepts thin, stretchy plastic bags, such as packaging film around vegetables, zip-lock type bags, bread

and muffin bags, store produce bags, dry cleaning bags and plastic newspaper wrapping. Not acceptable are mulch or fertilizer bags, candy or snack bags, foil lined bags, dog food/bird food bags or any that have webbing or weaving. Black plastic bags of any kind are not recyclable or accepted.

In order to recycle plastic nags effectively so that they can be recycled, all materials should be clean and dry. Don't just give them a quick rinse – if your bags are not completely clean of food or other residue, they will contaminate the entire batch. Many local stores such as The Home Depot, Target, Lowes and Walmart, and many grocery stores, have plastic bag collection bins. Plastic bags cannot go in the blue recycling bins because it can be hard, if not impossible, to process, as they often get caught in the center's machinery. Bubble envelopes can be reused. Just make sure that you have crossed out all markings and labels to ensure that it gets to the right destination. Or you can separate the bubble wrap from the outer wrapping or recycle it in a large box store plastic bag recycling bin.

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

Orange Board of Finance

Revaluation Major Factor For 2024-2025 Budget

The Orange Board of Finance recently concluded its budget deliberations for fiscal year 2024-2025 and has sent the budget package forward to a town meeting on April 25. This year's budget deliberations had to factor in the increase of residential property values, which increased on average 38 percent from the prior valuation conducted back in 2017.

The increase in residential home values is based on many factors and parameters but seems to be more about economics, based on a high demand and short supply of residential homes in Orange. In fact, Orange is similar to other towns and cities throughout Connecticut with residential values up 30-45 percent. Commercial property values have increased between 10 and 15 percent, well below home values.

In Orange, 92 percent of total town revenues are from taxes collected from residential and commercial properties. The percentage split of that amount is 65 percent residential, 35 percent commercial and 2 percent other. The 38 percent increase in residential and 16 percent increase in commercial values equates to an average tax shift of just over 5.9 percent increase for residents even

if there was no increase within the total operating budget.

What I found really interesting about the impact of revaluation is that many economists had forecasted the US economy to slide into a recession, dropping home values. However, between 2022 and 2023 home values continued to rise even though inflation was at a 40-year high of 9.1 percent and mortgage rates were at a 30-year high of 7.25 percent. These two economic factors alone would have historically driven an otherwise strong US economy into recession.

But residential home values continued to rise throughout this same period based on strong demand and short supply. For example, in Orange home values exceeded expectations throughout 2022 into 2023, increasing 6.5 percent year-over-year.

What does this mean for Orange residents? Take my house, for example. The assessed value, which is calculated based on the assessment value of 70 percent of market value is now \$415,900 – up 33.3 percent from the prior \$312,000 revaluation back in 2017.



KEVIN
MCNABOLA

Based on my new assessment value, I will likely be paying an additional \$836 more in taxes for the upcoming year.

The Board of Finance factored in a 4.5 percent increase for the 2024-2025 operating budget, which includes a town budget increase of 4.5 percent, a 5.3 percent increase for Amity and an increase to the Board of Education at 3.5 percent. The main budgetary drivers of the increases within all three components

are contractual labor increases along with health insurance.

The town budget contains an increase of \$1.4 million, driven mainly by increases within salaried contractual increases, health insurance, worker's compensation and town and police pension increases.

The Amity School District contains a shift in student enrollment for the upcoming year, with Orange seeing an increase. The student enrollment on its own increases the Orange share of the Amity Budget by \$438,853 before a single dollar of additional funding is approved by the Amity Board of Education.

The Amity School District also ratified their teacher's contract last fall, which contains a 13.5 percent increase over the three-year term of the contract (4.5 percent average per year, which includes both general wage increase and step increase). This increase is commensurate with the current labor market within Connecticut and the current standard of 12.9 percent based on recent negotiations of other school districts throughout the state.

The good news within the Amity budget is that debt service continues to decrease, so there will be somewhat of an offset to the wage increases within the teacher's contract.

In order to conclude the budget process, the Board of Finance will take two actions. The first will be a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen that any tax increase for residents be phased in rather than being paid all at once. This will mitigate the total tax burden for residents. The second and final action of the Board of Finance will be to lower the mill rate from 32.31, likely down to the 25 to 26 range.

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

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The Garden Spot

Early Spring Favorites For Your Woodland Border

It's always a thrill to see the early spring bloomers popping up. One of my favorite early spring perennials is the hellebore (Helleborus), commonly known as the Christmas or Lenten rose due to its early bloom. But don't let the name fool you, it's not in the rose family — it's in the same family as anemones and delphiniums.

Even though they are not native to our area, they are very useful in the woodland or shade garden as long as they get some shelter and winter sun. During the summer months they will need partial shade, so they are ideal for under deciduous trees since these will allow for winter and early spring sun but provide shade in the summer.

Hellebores have glossy green leaves with flowers that are white, pink, purple or yellow.

You can grow them from seed, although you typically get a color mix from seed packets. They are low growing and generally between one or two feet tall with about the same spread, making them a nice border plant. If your plants are looking a bit straggly, you can prune them before new growth appears.

Hellebores will self-seed and spread. They can be easily split in the early spring before they bloom. It's best to dig up the entire plant, rinse off the soil, and divide the crown where you see at least two buds. Plant them with an organic-rich fertilizer, such as compost, and water in.



PAT DRAY

Another early woodland bloomer is Solomon's plume (Maianthemum racemosum). It is native to North America and spreads slowly by underground rhizomes, so you will want to manage it over time. It will get to be a bit taller than the hellebores and will also tolerate a bit of full sun in summer. Its white, star-like flowers will attract pollinators. The berries that appear in the fall are also bird favorites. They really need little care to keep blooming and are easily split into multiple plants once established.

Although these early spring bloomers are wonderful to look at, the leaves of the hellebores are toxic to dogs and the berries of the

Solomon's plume are toxic to humans. Most dogs will not eat enough of a hellebore's leaves due to the bitter taste, but puppies may and can develop vomiting, drooling and lethargy.

One gentle reminder — if you didn't clean, sharpen and sterilize your tools last fall, now would be the perfect time to do this. You'll have cleaner cuts when pruning and you won't spread bacterial and fungal diseases from last year. Please leave the leaf debris on your beds until we are past the danger of frost. Your plants and pollinators will thank you.

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

Foodie Foursome

Chimichurri Brings Argentinean Authenticity To Milford

Located in Milford directly across from Lisman's Landing and the boat docks is a unique restaurant that destination areas like Santa Barbara, Fort Lauderdale or South Beach would be proud to have. The atmosphere of Chimichurri is wonderful for a couple, group or family. The bistro and casual feel of the interior is enhanced by the al fresco dining area outside, on an elevated patio above street level for privacy and water views.

Dinner guests on this night were long-time friends and fellow foodies John and Christine. What followed was a fun evening that encompassed excellent food, BYOB/wine and a mini-tour of some Argentinean culture and foods. The service was excellent, and the food as well. The restaurant is managed by Diego Goldstein, who was our host this evening while Daiana, his wife, worked the kitchen with head chef Marcelo Pachero. They work hard to create a unique experience, as there are no other Argentinean restaurants in the area. When you come in to their family casual restaurant, they work to make you feel like you're at home.

We started with a selection of three em-

panadas. These savory pastries were filled with: ground beef, red pepper, onion, garlic and olives; chicken, red pepper and onion; and asiago, mozzarella, Swiss cheese and caramelized onion. These appetizers are a tradition in Argentina but usually differ from other countries, being baked instead of fried. The 10-plus combinations are also based on original house recipes. They were flaky and tasty, and when drizzled with the chimichurri sauce they're a wonderful treat.

The sauce is a typical part of Argentinean cuisine. This piquant sauce, or marinade, is traditionally used on grilled meat or veggies, containing parsley, garlic, vinegar, olive oil and flakes of chili pepper. We found it good on the salad too instead of a normal dressing.

We had a grilled chicken salad with mixed greens, slices of tomato, shredded carrot and red onion slices. Our second salad was the gourmet salad, with mixed greens, hard-boiled egg, tomato, cucumber, avocado and red onion. These were hearty, fresh and almost a meal in themselves. I decided to try



STEVE COOPER

their organic soda, Galvanina, which was refreshing. The gingerale that I had was hands-down one of the best sodas I've had.

Our entrée selections were all reflective of a true Argentinean culinary experience. Our first was the traditional chicken milanesa — a thin slice of chicken, dipped in egg and bread crumbs, seasoned and gently pan fried. Although tasty by itself, we also enjoyed a drizzle of the chimichurri sauce. The entrées were served with a side of a signature potato salad (a unique and delectable combination of cooked potato chunks, carrot, green peas and mayo) and some of the best, and addictive, home (French) fries I have had in quite a while.

Our next two selections arrived together in a captivating presentation as you would see in Argentina: on a flame-heated grill.

The parrillada features a variety of meats cooked on a unique parrilla grill, known for its parallel metal bars that cooks over an open flame. The parrillada originated in Argentina, where it's considered one of the national dishes. Ours was adorned by two lengths of short ribs on either side with flank steak, chorizo and skirt steak in the center. The meats were so flavorful with just the right amount of char. The levels of flavors from the spices was amazing. The characteristic flavor of dishes from Northwestern Argentina comes from its spices: cloves, nutmeg, cardamom, cumin, juniper, ginger, saffron, turmeric and, of course, paprika. While I am not sure which flavor profile was used from those spices, it worked perfectly.

The second parrilla was loaded with grilled veggies. They were perfectly and gently spiced, just enough to enhance the grill char and

branded lines on the sliced veggies. They were the perfect side to any entrée and stayed warm on the grill/platter. What amazed me was how they all maintained their structural integrity, and the red onion sections stayed together even as they softened and sweetened with a superb sear.

Next was one of their classic wraps. I chose one I knew my daughter Ashley would like as a vegetarian, and asked for her expert opinion. The falafel wrap was chock-full of mixed greens, diced tomatoes, red onion, cucumber and homemade hummus.

"The falafel was nice and light, and it went well with the chimichurri sauce, which was a fun twist on how most places serve it — really tasty," she told me after I brought it home for her.

We completed our culinary tour with dessert and a good espresso. Diego Goldstein recommended the panqueque, a traditional sweet crepe filled with a decadent dulce de leche filling. It was like a cross between a thin pancake and a crepe. The delicate cake was rolled and folded around an ooey-goey center.

There are so many things I look forward to trying on their menu. It's family and cost friendly, with great quality and service. If you have dietary restrictions or are a vegetarian, their menu is very accommodating. They work hard to create a unique experience, as there are no other Argentinean restaurants in the area. When you come to this family casual restaurant, the staff makes you feel at home.

The Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce and the staff of Chimichurri will have a grand opening and ribbon cutting on Friday, April 19 at 4 p.m. Chimichurri is open 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday and closed on Mondays. They're located at 2 Schooner Ln. 2-118 in Milford. For reservations or takeout, call 203-390-1725.

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

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Orange Living Treasure Recipients Named

The Orange Senior Center has named the recipients of its 2024 Living Treasure awards. This year's awardees are Sharon Ewen, Lynn Plaskowitz and Judy Wright Williams.

Each year the Orange Senior Center recognizes three Orange senior residents who have given much of themselves and their time to the Orange community.

The awardees are chosen from nominations made by the community. They will be honored at Pasta Festa on May 16 at High Plains Community Center in Orange.

Tickets for Pasta Festa can be purchased for \$25 at the Orange Senior Center at High Plains Community Center. Call 203-891-4788 with questions.

Local Poets Share Their Musings

In celebration of National Poetry Month in April, the Milford-Orange Times invited area residents to submit their poetry for publication. A selection of those submissions is printed here.

Perfect Day

Elizabeth Auwarter
Milford

She stretches her arms and sighs contentedly as she hears footsteps in the kitchen and the sizzle of anticipated breakfast, the smell of eggs, cheese, hashbrowns, and sausage.

Small eyes stare in awe at white lights strung on a tree.

Little hands punch wrapping paper as his entire body becomes an extension of his smile.

A bright yellow block peeks out from the wrapping and lets out a cheerful jingle.

The hum and glow of the TV lulls a tired mamma to sleep in warm, strong arms as the click clack of the baby swing accompanies the contented coos of a sleeping little boy.

A New Englander, I Be

Barbara Welker Griggs
Orange

To taste the ocean salt spray in wonder of it's primality
To walk the deck of a whaling ship and sense her tragedy
To gingerly dig clams getting squirted in the eye naturally
A New Englander, I be

To climb Mt. Washington
To breathe the summer Cape air
To hold an autumn leaf
A New Englander, I be

To trace the ivy rhythm on the tower
To sit lazily by an apple log fire
To track a mossy stone wall
A New Englander, I be

To sit on a slope scouting the vista to the sea
To bargain for a hurricane lamp expecting a storm northeasterly
To enter, in freedom, a clapboard church giving thanks upon my knee
A New Englander, I shall always be

My Friend from the Sea

Tom Kobak
Orange

It was an early May morning, the sky brilliantly clear,
A gentle breeze, all peaceful, nothing to fear.
A walk by the water, on a Milford empty calm beach,
Peaceful stroll of a few miles, an easy smooth reach.
The tide high on rock walls, the waves lapping calmly,
Then suddenly, a movement of something just hiding.
What was it I wondered, as I moved carefully close,
More movement, I thought, blending into the rock coast.

An octopus I thought, maybe here enjoying our cove,
Half-submerged, tentacles hidden, and head just below.

Now carefully, I stared, searching the water's rocky space,
Looking for any sign, any bubble, any life trace.

Then suddenly, a burst of movement from off to the side,
In a second, underwater there was a jump and a glide ...
... and then it was gone.
I sat there and wondered for a long time and just wanted to stay,
Thinking of him in the water for the rest of that day.
I have read about octopus and how crafty they can be,
Called curious, remarkable, adaptable, and free.
They can squeeze their bodies through the tiniest of holes,
Are solitary entities yet also curiously unusually bold.
Changing colors to bend some do with incredible ease,
With long tentacles that can taste as well as strong squeeze.
Sadly, I've learned they may live only a year or just a bit more,
But it seems in that time they do gracefully soar.
And so, though I saw him for only a second, or two, maybe three,
Often I think of him gently, my friend from the sea.

Nature

Robin Covino
Milford

Waking to the daylight
to the music of the birds
brings a smile of hope
that needs no words.
Before all the noise
of the hours that lie ahead,
the positivity of the chirping
is all that need be said.
Take a moment to listen
to the message being sent.
Reflect and keep in your heart
the simplicity of what it meant.

Floor Stuff

Blayze Markoya
Orange

You wash the slice and pass it back to the pan where it settles in with its intended neighbors, simmering quietly and content

Wouldn't it have been a waste?
It only fell
It wasn't even on the floor that long

One

Maybe two seconds

Ah,
It will be alright
Humans are tough
We've survived plagues,
generations of food laced with growth hormones,
war, famine, modern news...

a little floor stuff won't kill you

...right?

Untitled

Weston Ulbrich
Milford

Oh when, oh when, will the state,
Finish the New Haven Avenue bridge?
Milford submits!
Our pleasure is yours but,
There comes a time for an end,
And happy one is best.
When the job is done,
When the crow calls it quits,
The bun is out the oven.
It's ready. Ratatouille.
The people in charge,
Can take credit at large.
Do so, but end it.
Make it so my dear friends,
And our foes.

Untitled

Robin M. Anderson
Orange

The most perfect Sunday,
Shared together just after the dawn of a clear, brisk, springtime morning.
Huddled in blankets against the cool air,
The steam from our mugs warming our faces
as the sun barely dapples the deck as we sit.

We are witness to and share in the early morning stirrings of the day
when it appears the whole rest of the world still slumbers
and the splendor and wonder belong to us alone.

The voices start out quietly
then crescendo into a soft hum.
The music of the morning,
the overture of the day,
the song of optimism and hope.

Against the backdrop of the symphony of awakening
We relish our time to reflect,
to share,
to plan and to dream.
A perfect morning, a perfect Sunday.

ORTC Selects Lombardi As Chair



Lombardi

history of the Orange Republican Party and the youngest in the state's current political landscape.

The party also has a new executive board. Alongside Lombardi's appointment, the party has voted Jude Toohey as vice chairwoman, Debbie Esposito as treasurer, Annie Gloria as recording Secretary and Debbie Esposito as correspondence secretary.

"I am honored to accept the role of chairman of the Orange Republican Party," Lombardi said. "I am committed to leading our party with integrity, energy and a focus on the values that unite us. We will work tirelessly to advance our shared goals and ensure a bright future for our community and our party."

Lombardi unveiled his vision and agenda for the future of the ORTC at an induction ceremony on April 10 (after press time). He said his ambitious plans promise to invigorate the party and position it for success in upcoming elections.

The Orange Republican Town Committee has announced Dominick Lombardi as its new chairman at its recent caucus meeting. At 21, Lombardi becomes the youngest chairman in the

Dietch Returns As ODTc Chair



Dietch

awarded scholarships for Milford children to attend preschool. She served for 13 years on their board, eventually becoming secretary and then president.

After Dietch was elected as a member of the ODTc in 2016, she quickly became treasurer and then secretary. She was elected chair later in 2016.

Dietch grew up on Avon Drive in Orange, attending Racebrook School and the Amity Regional schools, and is an Amity graduate. She and her husband, Jeff, raised their sons, Howie and Mike, in Orange and are the proud grandparents of Noah. Howie and Mike also attended Racebrook School and are Amity graduates.

Dietch said one of her goals as chair is to foster a strong connection between Orange residents and the Democratic Party. She wants to encourage the next generation of ODTc members to take on leadership roles, as well as to grow the membership with the younger residents of Orange.

"The Orange Democrats are an energized group who see the future of Orange through the lens of the families of Orange and what their needs and wants are for their children," she said. "That means strong, diverse schools and inviting recreational facilities. We encourage diversity in our membership. We also have a wide range of members in different age demographics, allowing us to have a pulse on the needs and wants of all Orange residents."

Melissa Johnston will serve as vice-chair, Pat Romano as treasurer and Mara Saccente as secretary. Dietch can be reached via the ODTc website at orangectdems.org.

The Orange Democratic Town Committee unanimously elected Jody Dietch as chair at their March meeting. Dietch had previously served as chair from March 2016 to February 2022.

Dietch served eight years on the Orange Board of Education after also serving as PTA president at Racebrook School. She was instrumental in the implementation of the track at the school. On the Board of Education, Dietch chaired the Personnel, Policy & Transportation Committee as well as the Finance Committee. She also served as board secretary and board vice-chair.

While the co-owner of the Little White House Learning Center in Milford, Dietch joined the board of Kids Count of Milford. Kids Count is a nonprofit organization that

Orange Lions To Host Dinner Dance

The Orange Lions Club is hosting a casual dinner dance on Sunday, May 19 from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the West River Hall, located at 37 Orlando St. in West Haven. The event is titled "Groovy Tunes and Pasta," with all proceeds going to Lions' charities.

Doors open at 4 p.m. for a social hour. A dinner buffet including baked ziti, meatballs, salad, rolls, dessert and soft drinks will be served beginning at 5 p.m. Guests may choose to come dressed in attire from the eras of rock 'n roll, hippie or disco and may bring their own alcoholic beverages if desired. Around 6 p.m. DJ Jazzy Kat will start playing "groovy tunes" dating anywhere from the 1960s to the

present, depending on what people want to dance to, and she'll bring other activities like party dances and trivia. There will also be raffle prizes and gifts. The evening's event wraps up at 9 p.m.

Tickets are \$40 per person, which must be purchased in advance. They are available from any Orange Lions Club member or by calling Marianne or Ken at 203-795-3906.

Proceeds will benefit Lions charities for blindness aid, prevention and eye research. The Orange Lions Club also awards community mini-grants supporting more than a dozen local groups, including services to youths, the Case Memorial Library, the volunteer fire department, police programs and senior services.

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



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Orange Town Budget 2024-2025


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Town of Orange, Connecticut



FINANCE DIRECTOR'S BUDGET MESSAGE

April 2024

On behalf of the Honorable James M. Zeoli - First Selectman, and the Orange Board of Finance, I submit our recommended Town of Orange General Fund Budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025. This document is the result of many hours of careful consideration by the Board of Finance, Department Heads, Town Boards, Commissions, Management and Staff. The focus of the 2025 budget is to continue to offer the level of services to which our citizens have become accustomed, tempered by the ability of our taxpayers to pay for those services.

Federal pass-through funds and State initiated funding have remained level. In the past, the State Legislature and Governor have proposed many pieces of tax legislation that if passed could have a very significant impact on the Town of Orange. The October 1, 2023 Grand List reflects an increase of 31.92% when compared to the 2022 net grand list due to revaluation. However, in the past, increases in interest investment earnings, licenses, permits and fines and other revenue has helped to offset some of the budget increases and state funding losses. We have carefully designed this financial plan to balance the growing request for municipal services, the needs of the Town's infrastructure, public safety, recreation and community health and welfare while maintaining our commitment to the education of our children: the leaders of tomorrow.

The Budget Process
The budget process begins in late September when each department prepares and then reviews with their Board or Commission, the department budget request for the new fiscal year. After Board or Commission approval, the department submits their budget to the Director of Finance. Each departmental request is reviewed and evaluated together with the First Selectman for submission of a recommended budget to the Board of Finance. The Board of Finance then spends a day in town hall to conduct individual hearings and discussions with department management as required. The Town has employees covered by six union contracts which expire either on June 30, 2024, or June 30, 2025. The contracts for two of the unions (Public Works, Nurses) remain under negotiations. Salary budget lines carry the last wage contract salary for those union positions. The town will enter into negotiations for new contracts with the Police, Dispatchers, Supervisors and Clerical unions during the next year. There are inevitably unanticipated costs that occur when projecting expenditures

eighteen months into the future. Toward that end, it is incumbent on the administration of any municipality to maintain a sufficient undesignated fund balance to provide for such unforeseen events and circumstances.

Fund Balance
The Town's Fund Balance is a measure of its capacity to withstand financial emergencies or to provide for unforeseen emergent projects and expenditures. I am projecting the undesignated portion of the fund balance at July 1, 2024 to be approximately 14.1 million dollars, or 16.93% of the 2024-2025 operating budget, which may be used to offset any revenue loss or unexpected expenses.

Revenue
The net taxable grand list for October 1, 2023 equaled \$2,914,623,642 which is compared to the October 1, 2022 net taxable grand list as below:

Category	2023 Net Grand List	2022 Net Grand List	\$ Change	% Change
Real Estate	\$2,460,663,905	1,865,207,910	595,455,995	31.92
Motor Vehicles	197,559,220	205,518,650	-7,959,430	-3.87
Business Personal Property	256,400,517	242,450,395	13,950,122	5.75
	\$2,914,623,642	\$2,313,176,955	601,446,687	26.00

Departmental Operating Expenditure:
The budget for general town operations has increased by 6.14% or \$1,662,904. Debt service contribution decreased by 2.74% or \$93,387 while our share of the Amity budget increased by \$1,375,300 or 5.27%. The Orange Board of Education costs increased by 3.50%, or \$821,298. The aggregate increase in the budget for the fiscal year ended 6/30/2025 is \$3,566,115 or 4.44%. At this time of publication of the budget The Board of Finance has not decided on a mill rate. The Board is looking at ways to lessen the tax burden on residents caused by the revaluation.

Capital Replacements and Expenditure:
Several years ago at the recommendation of the Town's auditors, the Board of Finance developed a Capital Fund Account to pay for future capital expenditures. The auditors recommended this fund for future capital purchases to avoid bonding and borrowing cost on some items. The funded items for the 2024-2025 fiscal year include \$114,940 for the Orange Board of Education for bathroom renovations and updates at all the schools. The Town side includes \$55,879 funding for computer hardware replacement for the Police Department and \$400,000 to replace the roof at the Police Station. In the Capital Account the Board of Finance has included \$40,592 for the first-year payment on a five year lease to purchase a new bucket truck. The Board of Finance also allocated \$1,200,000 for this current season paving program from the Capital Fund. The Board may allocate funds for further Capital outlays in the coming months.

The annual budget development is an intensive task that requires a concerted and coordinated effort on the part of all. I want to express my personal gratitude for the support and cooperation from all of our professional department managers and their dedicated staff. I would also like to thank my staff in the Town's Finance Department, specifically Karin Lewis, Sylvie Napoli, and Arthur Williams. At this time, I would also like to acknowledge Audrey Geer who retired as my Assistant Finance Director in December. Audrey worked for the town for 30 years starting as the business manager at The Orange Visiting Nurses. She was a great help to me when I started my job as Finance Director for the town. Please join me in wishing her well in her retirement.

It takes a team effort to compile this budget. On behalf of First Selectman Zeoli, and the Board of Finance, I want to acknowledge the many committed professionals who selflessly serve on our Boards and Commissions without compensation. It is that kind of public spirit that makes Orange a unique and special community in which to live.

Respectfully Submitted,


John M. Cifarelli
 Director of Finance and Administration


Karin Lewis
 Assistant Finance Director

Members of the Orange Board of Finance


Kevin Houlihan, CPA – Chairman James Leahy - Vice Chairman
 Dr. Ajeet Jain, Dr. Anna Mahon, Kevin McNabola, Joseph Nuzzo,
 Deborah Satonick (Recording Secretary)

**TOWN OF ORANGE
NOTICE OF HEARING
TOWN BUDGET**

Notice is hereby given that in accordance with the statutes in such cases provided, the Orange Board of Finance will hold a Public Hearing on Thursday, April 25, 2024 at 7:00pm In High Plains Community Center Cafeteria, 525 Orange Center Rd., Orange, CT 06477 relative to the expenditures and proposed budget of the Town for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025. Citizens may present oral and/or written comments. The proposed budget will be available for examination in the Office of the Town Clerk in the Orange Town Hall on Wednesday, April 17, 2024.

Dated at Orange CT this 1st day of April 2024.

Orange Board of Finance


Kevin Houlihan
 Chairman

Mental Health

The Impact Of Chronic Stress On The Body And Brain

Living with the pressures of our day-to-day and meeting the expectations of people and things can stretch us thin and can become overwhelming. We exist in a culture where high demands and high stress are considered the norm, and we have become accustomed to being in a constant state of motion. Couple this pace with the challenges of life such as illness, financial hardship, loss of loved ones and external events that put us on high alert, and we can very well find ourselves in a chronic state of stress.

While stress at times can help us avoid potentially life-threatening situations through the fight-or-flight response, its long-term impact on our body and mind can be damaging. It is well understood that chronic stress can lead to or contribute to a number of health-related issues.

The American Institute of Stress outlines the many ways that too much stress impacts

the body, including increasing blood pressure, producing extra blood sugar that can increase risk for type 2 diabetes, causing headaches, body aches and back and shoulder pain from the tightening of muscles, and weakening of the immune system when the stress hormone, cortisol, stays high.

The fight-or-flight response is your brain's reaction to an acute stressor that begins in the amygdala of the brain. The amygdala sends a signal to the hypothalamus, which regulates body functions such as heart rate. When the sympathetic nervous system kicks in, adrenaline is released to prepare someone to respond to the stressor, which also results in the release of cortisol. Cortisol's role is to help a person manage a stressful situation, but with prolonged and chronic stress, cor-



JENNIFER
FIORILLO

tisol levels stay high and can cause the brain's hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis to not function properly. The HPA axis helps to keep the sympathetic nervous system working in acute stress.

Research has shown that brain size, emotional regulation and memory can be impacted by prolonged stress. Sonya J. Lupien in 2018 pointed out a number of studies

and research around the ways that brain function is negatively affected by stress in her review in *Frontiers of Neuroendocrinology*. Chronic stress can make you more prone to mental health disorders, such as anxiety and depression, and it has been shown to impact problem-solving, decision making and the ability to retain information.

There is also evidence that chronic stress can be linked to a higher likelihood of developing Alzheimer's disease.

There are many strategies that can be used to reduce the effects of chronic stress on our body and brain. Some of these include mindfulness-based stress reduction to increase mindfulness through yoga and meditation, breathing exercises, a proper sleep schedule, social connectedness and using laughter/humor. Understanding areas of one's life that can be organized at work or home is helpful to feel more in control when the uncontrollable occurs. Doing this helps to balance out the stressful impact of what may be out of our hands and left to the universe to manage.

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

Orange Chamber of Commerce

Orange Chamber Celebrates Orange Businesses

The Orange Chamber of Commerce and the Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce combined for a packed Business After Hours on March 13 at chamber member Orange Ale House. The food was delicious, and the beverages were cold. Thank you to owner Jim Hassenmayer from Orange Ale House for his amazing hospitality and support.

We are excited to celebrate with a ribbon-cutting for Connection Plumbing and Heating, located at 367 Boston Post Rd. at 2 p.m. on Friday, April 19. The Orange Chamber of Commerce will also be celebrating with Senior Helpers, located at 109 Boston Post Rd. Suite 204 on Wednesday, May 8 at 2 p.m. You are welcome to attend these ribbon cuttings and join us to celebrate our local businesses.

Recently we celebrated the grand reopening of McDonalds after a beautiful renovation of

their building. It was an honor to be joined by our elected officials and a band comprised of students from our local schools.

Ribbon cuttings are a staple for the Orange Chamber of Commerce. Ribbon cuttings are run jointly in Orange with the Orange Economic Development Corporation. If you would like to celebrate a grand opening or celebrate an anniversary with a ribbon cutting, email Director@orangetchamber.com.

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. Each month we have received



LIAM
OHLMANN

a larger turnout for this event with energetic local professionals. Information regarding these meetings can be found by liking and following our Facebook page.

The chamber is proud to announce that we are working with Avangrid on programs and incentives for Orange-based businesses on energy efficiency. More details and information will be forthcoming from the chamber.

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

initiatives possible. If you are interested in becoming a corporate partner for the Orange Chamber of Commerce, email Director@orangetchamber.com.

Please give the Orange Chamber of Commerce a like and a follow on Facebook and Instagram to stay informed of the latest happenings with the chamber. To schedule a time to meet with the chamber and discuss membership or sponsorship, email Director@orangetchamber.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@orangetchamber.com.

Wine Talk

The Growth Of Zinfandel

This time of year we have to clean off the grills and get ready for warmer weather. My favorite wine to match with almost anything grilled is Zinfandel. It is a big hearty, jammy red that matches well with grilled foods.

Zin is grown all across the US and mostly in California. There are several styles of Zinfandel produced in the US, but my favorite is a big jammy wine with high alcohol content.

This wine is largely dependent on the climate and the technology of the winemaker. Zinfandel was long considered to be America's wine.

However, when University of California professor Austin Goheen visited Italy in the

late 1960s he noticed how similar the wine appeared. The vines were brought to California, and Primitivo reminded them of Zinfandel. The wines made from these two varieties were considered very similar. However, after great research it was determined both wines were from a Croatian variety called Plavac Malt.

As of 2000, there are 40,000 acres planted of Zinfandel in California alone. The top 10 have grown 85 percent of the Zinfandel. Lots of Zinfandel is produced to blend

into jug wines to give these wines the char-



RAYMOND
SPAZIANI

acter of strength needed to be popular. However, Zinfandel has become a popular variety on its own.

Historically, California Zinfandel vines were planted as a field blend. The vines would be placed with Petite Syrah and Grenache, Mourvedre and several other grapes used for blending. Currently Zinfandel accounts for over 11 percent of California wines and has been standing on its own more and more as it gets exposure. Zinfandel is no longer a field blend wine.

So clean off the grill, get some great steaks and chops and open up a bottle of Zinfandel. You will be glad you did.

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.

Orange (Continued From 1)

current level of 32.31 down into the 20s, according to the Board of Finance. But since many homes will be recognized as being worth so much more money, they would be paying more even though the percentage being charged decreased.

The difference any individual taxpayer sees will depend on the change in value of their individual property. Some could pay much more, while others might end up paying less in taxes.

The Board of Finance at a March 25 special meeting heard from town attorney Vincent Marino about the possibility of "phasing in" the revaluation increase

so that the shock to taxpayers would be muted.

"This town does have the ability to phase in the incremental increase realized from the Oct. 21, 2023 revaluation," Marino said, adding that officials could designate a period of up to five years for the phase-in.

Because the Board of Selectmen must approve the proposed phase-in, the Board of Finance could not determine exactly where the mill rate for the coming year would land. The Board of Finance has forwarded a recommendation to the selectmen that the town adopt the maximum five-year phase-in term, which would raise taxes the least.

The board did unanimously vote

to approve the \$83,815,766 budget, representing a 4.44 percent increase in spending over the previous year.

That spending includes a 3.5 percent increase for the Orange Public Schools at \$24,246,483 and a 5.27 percent increase for the Amity system at \$27,479,044. Orange's contribution to Amity was boosted further this year because the town's proportion of student enrollment increased. The Amity budget is split between member towns Orange, Bethany and Woodbridge based on each town's enrollment numbers.

The board also voted to transfer \$1.8 million from the fund balance to the capital fund to further blunt the impact of rising costs.

There will be a public hearing on the budget on Thursday, April 25 at 7 p.m. in the High Plains Community Center cafeteria. Residents will have the opportunity to vote on the Amity budget on May 7. They will be able to vote on the town budget on May 15.

MOT
Milford-Orange Times

The Rotary Club of Orange

Rotary And The United Nations

The president-elect for Rotary International, Stephanie Urchick, met in New Haven with members from Rotary clubs from across New England last month. She discussed initiatives for RI peace-building programs, and joined a speaker's panel that included a Peace Fellow completing an RI-funded master's degree at Oxford University as well as Rotary's current liaison with the United Nations.

Although I have been affiliated with local clubs for nearly two decades, I was not aware how extensive Rotary's links to the UN extend. In the tumultuous 1930s, Rotary clubs in Tennessee and Texas started to advocate for "institutes of understanding" to promote international awareness and peace. Rotary's expanding global club structure helped spread these institute ideals worldwide.

When US President Franklin Roosevelt and the UK's Winston Churchill agreed in the darkness of World War II to convene meetings to establish the UN, Rotary was invited to provide international delegates and chair several of the founding subcommittees. Overall, 49 Rotarians from around the world participated in the 1945 UN charter meetings in San Francisco, and the first draft of the UN charter was written by a Rotarian from South Africa. Thus, the humanitarian goals of RI and the UN are similar. New York City Rotarians also played a key role in negotiating the land deal to establish UN head-

quarters along the East River.

RI annually hosts a convention for club members from around the world to discuss activities, policies and platforms. The 1940 convention was held in Havana, Cuba, and that meeting's statement on "respect for human rights" ultimately evolved in 1948 into the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights. And the 1942 London convention laid out a framework that helped formulate the specialized United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Most media coverage of the UN focusses on politically fraught Security Council votes and/or peace-keeping activities. Rotary is not involved in such actions but does join in humanitarian initiatives in conflict-troubled regions where possible. One UN entity that Rotary regularly works with is UNICEF – the United Nations children's fund. UNICEF is coordinating aid provisions for women and children in Gaza, south Saharan Africa and elsewhere.

Another UN agency that RI works closely with is UNESCO. UNESCO fosters international collaborations in education, natural sciences, social and human sciences, culture and communication. In particular, RI shares UNESCO literacy and education objectives and



DAN MAY

collaborates on a range of technical projects, particularly with regard to water supply and rural development.

In recent years, the Orange club has donated funds raised in the local community to support projects in Kenya to expand a multilingual community library, enhance water supply in both rural Kenya and Nepal, and subsidize pediatric heart surgeries in the Dominican Republic. These are collaborative global grant projects where groups of local Rotary clubs in our area band together with clubs in the receiving countries to design, fund and execute humanitarian projects. RI itself provides matching funds, technical and administrative guidance and access to potential support groups, including those that are UN-affiliated.

One of the understated roles of UNESCO (and the UN in general) is that it serves as a clearinghouse and hub for hundreds of international non-governmental organizations. Rotary is one, but so are organizations such as the International Federation of Libraries, International Police Association, World Association of Newspapers or World Federation of Engineering Organizations. These professional guilds share information, volunteer technical

expertise and collaborate globally. The collective diffusion of knowledge and skills by these networked NGOs since World War II has been immense.

As an example, each year the UN organizes Conference of Parties meetings focused on climate change or biodiversity. The most famous of these is likely the COP 21 climate change meeting that met in Paris in 2015. It yielded the international treaty seeking to limit average global temperatures below two degrees Celsius from pre-industrial levels. COP meeting attendees include official delegates from the nearly 200 member states of the UN, but also representatives from the hundreds of NGOs (including Rotary) and corporations that collaborate to address environmental concerns at all levels.

Treaties are rare, but the networking and sharing of best and emerging practices is the real goal of these COP meetings. The most recent climate change conference met last December in Dubai, and the next biodiversity conference will meet in Columbia this October. Rotary International was and will be there, and will bring back emerging global perspectives for sustainability to inform its own environmental and development initiatives.

Dan May can be contacted at dmay@newhaven.edu.

Travel Matters

New Cruise Line Review – Explora Journeys

We were lucky enough to sail last month on the fabulous Explora Journeys. Forgive me for raving, but I love this ship – including all the dining venues, the four pools including two infinity pools and a lap pool, and most of all the crew members, who Explora aptly calls "hosts."

Explora Journeys, owned by the Italian shipping magnate who owns MSC, found talented people from five-star hotels all over the world. These include the salon technician from The Edition Hotel in Abu Dhabi and the whiskey bar bartender from Dubai Waldorf Astoria. They also seem to hire the most personable and engaging people I've experienced anywhere – over 400 hosts from 58 nationalities.

The staterooms are all veranda suites, and "ocean residences" offer up to 3,014 square feet with the owner's suite. While the entry level suite was roomy, at 377 square feet, the

upgraded suites were more than spacious. Our suite had two bookcases filled with books to enjoy – some in English, others in various other languages – and a walk-in closet.

Food was some of the best we have had on a cruise. Other guests with luxury experience said the same. Explora offers a new concept in gourmet dining: Anthology, a 200-euro-per-guest dining experience with a traveling Michelin star chef. The food was so excellent at the included restaurants (Asian fusion, French, steakhouse, Mediterranean) that we did not find the time to try it. Wine and bar service was excellent. While seated in the various lounges, servers regularly checked on you. Wine/water glasses were never empty in restaurants.



KAREN QUINN-PANZER

For nightly entertainment, we loved the smaller cabaret-style shows including jazz and Broadway by candlelight. There were four guest artists on our eight-night cruise and an amazing resident show band. During the day, they offered luminary talks by experts on topics relevant to the itinerary (the history of Colombia and the Panama Canal) and environmental/scientific talks on the ocean and the wildlife and flora. The ship's captain held an informal Q&A session.

We enjoyed the sauna, steam room, shower experience and salt cave in the thermal suite (included in every fare), and the oversized whirlpools that were located on multiple decks.

Explora is very much an all-inclu-

sive cruise line. Everyone gets unlimited WiFi, gratuities and unlimited drinks, the above-mentioned thermal suite, a bottle of champagne waiting in your suite and two selected bottles for your in-suite bar. The only exception is shore excursions, which were not included. The quality of those experiences was outstanding (if not a bit pricey).

For us, the only comparison between MSC and Explora Journeys is the beauty of the ships. Strong investments have been made throughout the ship, including a \$300,000 Steinway piano (per the pianist), a gyroscopic self-leveling pool table and a Dyson hair dryer in every suite. I believe anyone who enjoys the luxury cruise experience would very much enjoy Explora.

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



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New Age Store Opens In Milford



The Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting on March 19 for the opening of new age superstore Scorp Zone, located at 1602 Boston Post Rd. in Milford. The store carries thousands of crystals. From left: Krista Blakeslee, Meadow Blakeslee, Katelyn Blakeslee, John Blakeslee, Milford Mayor Anthony Giannattasio and MRCC Director of Membership and Marketing Simon McDonald. Photo by Greg Geiger.

Sharp Elevated To Counsel At Milford Office



Sharp

Milford law firm Hurwitz Sagarin Slossberg & Knuff has announced the promotion of Sara Sharp to counsel, recognizing her contributions to the firm's land use practice.

With more than a decade of law practice, Sharp combines her experience in environmental science and litigation to craft innovative solutions that benefit her clients and their communities. Her recent successes

include navigating complex entitlement processes, securing approvals for mixed-use developments and spearheading initiatives in green energy.

"Sara's promotion to counsel reflects her outstanding leadership and dedication to excellence," said John Knuff, one of the firm's partners. "Her passion for innovation and unwavering commitment to client success make her an invaluable asset to our firm and the communities we serve."

Projects Sharp is working on include the development of Connecticut's first 200-megawatt battery storage unit in Milford, the development of a national warehouse store in Connecticut and the new neuroscience building at Yale New Haven Hospital.

Sharp also serves on the Regional Advisory Council for the Women's Business Development Council and as vice chair of the Connecticut Bar Association Women in the Law section. She also mentors the firm's junior attorneys.

Hilton Garden Inn Reopens In Milford



After a construction process interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Hilton Garden Inn in Milford has reopened its doors to a new interior with new modern lighting, new furniture and a new layout. The Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting on March 19 to celebrate the inn's grand reopening. From left: Milford Mayor Anthony Giannattasio, Hilton General Manager Nicole Harris, Hilton Sales Manager Natalie Calabrese and MRCC Director of Membership and Marketing Simon McDonald. Photo by Greg Geiger.

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 harley@rapecrisiscenterofmilford.org

Shannon (Continued From 1)

cleaning up area beaches and voicing concerns of the community at public events. He is a seasoned advocate for social justice and community development.

Shannon has a bachelor's degree in political science and government from Plymouth State University in New Hampshire and is a graduate of Foran High School in Milford. He said he knows how important it is to support local educators and school districts.

"We've got to support the lifeblood of our community – our teachers – in whatever way we can. I know firsthand the positive impact our schools can have on kids' lives, so I stand behind our schools, and all who work there, proudly and firmly," he said.

Shannon currently works as the clerk of the General Law Committee in the General Assembly, giving him experience with the legislative process.

Hirsch (Continued From 1)

representative and look forward to improving the economic standing of the Milford and Orange communities and the State of Connecticut. My entire professional career has been devoted to fighting for my clients' rights, including against billion-dollar corporations. This experience will translate well in my legislative service in Hartford," he said.

Hirsch's campaign will focus on issues of economic development, small business needs, environmental sustainability, women's rights, education and insurance.

"A stable, regulated free-market system is essential to improving our lives and those of our families," he said. "The majority of issues that we face revolve around economic and fiscal policy. I look forward to working with all stakeholders towards tackling the difficult matters facing my district and our state."

Aquarian Giving Awards To 'Environmental Champions'

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

"We are thrilled to recognize the extraordinary achievements of those who go above and beyond in their efforts to protect Connecticut's natural resources, said Aquarion President Donald Morrissey.

The 2024 awards will recognize outstanding environmental contributions in the Adult, Non-Profit Organization, Business and

Student (grades 9-12) categories. Winners in the Adult, Non-Profit 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 special ceremony on June 1 at Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo.

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.

Orange Taekwondo Students Compete



Four students from Cho's Elite Taekwondo School in Orange traveled to Basking Ridge, New Jersey in March to compete in the International KTL Taekwondo Championship. The students competed in front of thousands of Taekwondo practitioners, coaches, referees and supporters, some coming from as far as South Korea to participate. Orange residents Duncan Theiss, age 13; Aiden Ku, age 7; Caleb Woodard, age 8; and Letian Li, age 8 each returned from the event with medals from every event they competed in. The won a total of eight gold medals, three silver medals and one bronze medal between them. Top: Gold medalists Theiss, Woodard and Ku pictured with Grandmaster Youngkuk Cho. Bottom: 7-8 Year Old Division competitors Woodard, Li and Ku with Cho. Photos courtesy of Cho's Elite Taekwondo School.

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Orange Native Co-Owner Of New West Haven Pizza Restaurant



Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce members and West Haven officials gathered on April 3 to celebrate the grand opening of West Haven's newest pizza restaurant: Papa Dough's, located at 845 Jones Hill Rd. above the duckpin bowling alley. Orange native Pasquale Vilano, along with Mike DelVecchio and Josh Wexler, own the pizza restaurant. From left: MRCC Director of Membership and Marketing Simon McDonald, Delvecchio, Villano, Wechsler, West Haven councilman Christopher E. Vargo Jr., Mayor Dorinda Borer, councilman Gary Donovan and state Rep. Bill Heffernan. Photo by Greg Geiger.

Orange Library To Host 'Queen'

The Friends of the Case Memorial Library will host a visit of "Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II" on Saturday, May 18 at 2 p.m. as Sheryl Faye will portray the late English Queen.

Before the program the Friends will hold their annual meeting at 1 p.m., when there will be a brief business report, election of board members and the awarding of the Lucy Scillia Scholarship to a graduating Orange senior.

Faye graduated from Emerson College with a BFA in acting. She has received many awards for both stage and film and has performed across the US. She has performed other historical presentations for the Friends over the years. She becomes the character she is portraying in looks, words, actions

and costumes.

Queen Elizabeth II was the longest reigning monarch of the UK. She began her reign at age 25 and ruled through the many challenges to her kingdom before she died at age 96 in 2022. Like all mothers, she experienced the happiness, tragedies and disappointments of family members as well. Through it all, she was a loving wife, mother and grandmother, a lover of horses and corgis, a dedicated head of the commonwealth and a popular working queen.

The queen can be joined for tea after the performance and asks that you RSVP. Call 203-891-2170 or visit casememoriallibrary.org. Guests are asked to dress to meet the queen. A curtsy is optional.

Expert To Discuss Tips For Brain Health

Nationally-recognized stress expert Dr. Wendy Hurwitz will give a presentation at the Milford Public Library on Wednesday, April 17 in which she will discuss tips to optimize brain health.

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?

She will explain easy, simple, drug-free things you can do that may help prevent, reduce or reverse cognitive decline, and strategies to optimize brain health.

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/11883565.

State Boating Courses In Milford Set For Saturdays In 2024

Boating classes are set on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to approximately 4:30 p.m. for May 4, June 1, June 29, August 3 and September 7 at the US Coast Guard Auxiliary Milford Flotilla's training center, located at 1 Helwig St. in Milford.

Weekday evening boating classes are set for May 14, 15 and 16, from 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. All three sessions must be attended. There are no make-up sessions.

Navigation and GPS charting classes are

set for April 20 and July 20, from 8 a.m. to approximately 4:30 p.m.

For additional information about US Coast Guard Auxiliary courses, call Dennis Belanger, public education officer, at 203-494-5219, email him at milfordflot073inc@gmail.com or visit <http://a0142403.uscgaux.info/>. For more information on US Coast Guard Auxiliary safe boating classes, visit cgaux.org/boatinged/.

Milford Artisan Market Comes To Milford On Mother's Day

The Milford Artisan Market will take place on Saturday and Sunday, May 11 and 12, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the Milford Green at 168-176 Broad Street in downtown Milford.

Over 100 local artisans will be selling their handmade items including pottery, woodwork, jewelry, natural products and paintings. The event will also feature

Mother's Day photo opportunities, kids' activities, a free yoga class, live music, food vendors and artist demonstrations. Admission is free. The event is sponsored by LeafFilter and Renewal by Andersen.

The event is organized by Artisan Events by Ally. Learn more at facebook.com/milfordartisanmarket.

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May 11th- Brooklyn Bridge

June 8th - Lords of 52nd Street

Tickets at MilfordPerformanceCenter.org



Milford

(Continued From 1)

over \$257.8 million.

The mill rate under their plan would rise from 27.17 to 28.72.

In their budget message, the BOF noted that even the reduced amount they were recommending for education represents "one of the larger increases in BOE funding both in terms of dollar amounts and percentages over the last decade."

BOF member Scott Moulton said he was worried about the impact of the increase on city residents.

"It's got to be a total city budget," he said. "I have to be, as a steward of the city's dollars here, mindful of that lowest common denominator – people that have a challenge meeting their day-to-day expenses, have a challenge determining where their next meal is going to come from. Even a 1 percent, 2 percent increase in an overall budget is a make or break for some of these people."

"I don't believe in the full increase that is requested," said BOF member Ray Arnold. "I would like to see also going

forward some metrics on what those 12 counselors are doing," he added, referring to counselors who were brought in using American Rescue Plan Act funds and have since been moved into the regular budget.

Arnold, a Democrat, was joined by fellow Democrat Meghan Smith and Moulton, a Republican, in approving the reduction. Democrat Brian Lema and Republican Lauren Ranges opposed the measure.

After the vote, there was immediate pushback from city education advocates.

"I was surprised by last week's Board of Finance budget vote," said Kara Flannery of Milford Ed Advocates. "And like many people this week I was disappointed, frustrated and angry with these three individuals on the appointed Board of Finance who once again wielded another significant reduction."

Bridget Krauss, president of the Milford Council of PTAs, specifically called out Arnold's remarks regarding counselors.

"After all of the opportunities the Board of Finance had for questions, and the public comment provided, mental health

and social emotional supports in the form of school counselors were inaccurately described as not vetted," she said.

A similar drama played out last year, when the education budget ask of \$106.48 million was initially reduced by \$1.8 million by the Board of Finance. Superintendent Anna Cutaiia 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.

This year's reduction is sure to be challenged again in the coming weeks as the Board of Aldermen holds public hearings and deliberations to finalize the city's budget.

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

**Job Opening
Town of Orange
Youth Services and Local Prevention
Coordinator**

F/T union position w/benefits; 30 hours, \$28.74 hr., Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 3 p.m. Evening meetings and events as needed.

Under the supervision of the Director of Community Services, the Youth Services and Local Prevention Coordinator plans, administers, and coordinates services and programs for Orange Youth Services and the local prevention council. Successful candidates must be able to plan, coordinate, organize, and implement activities and programs appropriate for youth. Minimum required qualifications include a bachelor's degree in human services, public health, social work, counseling, or related field; master's degree preferred. At least two years' experience working with youth and a proficiency in administration and planning of programs. Strong knowledge base in substance abuse prevention and mental health. Excellent interpersonal, written, and oral communication skills, and presentation skills. Must have a valid CT driver's license. EOE

Interested applicants, please send a cover letter and resume to First Selectman James M. Zeoli c/o Town Hall, 617 Orange Center Road, Orange, CT 06477 or by email to jzeoli@orange-ct.gov by 4 p.m. on April 16, 2024

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The Arts

Spring Into Sights And Sounds With The Arts

With spring upon us, we look forward to the sights and sounds of the season, awakening our senses to both the new and the familiar. We are fortunate to be minutes away from so many unique cultural, musical, artistic and theatrical offerings. Take a lovely spring drive to see a spectacular visual and musical performance of Chinese history. Take the back roads to enjoy the shoreline views on your way to see an all-abilities musical. Visit your local gallery for an exhibit featuring local artists. Listen to orchestras and choirs, some offering audience participation. Immerse yourself in classic dramatic works on a local stage. Take time to treat yourself to a fresh start in this new and beautiful season.

The **Milford Arts Council** presents "Local Color: Flora & Fauna," through May 6. This is its sixth biennial art quilt exhibit that consists of 32 pieces of fiber art created by 26 members of the Connecticut Region of the Studio Art Quilt Associates. The pieces on display range from realistic to abstract and depict real and imagined plants and animals. Some use plants to create the images; others are created by piecing fabrics together as a form of collage or through more traditional methods. Some use dyes, paints, and/or stitching to create or enhance the image. Each work was selected, or juried into the exhibit, by Owen Sea Luckey, a Branford artist and entrepreneur with a BFA from Rhode Island School of Design. The artists range from internationally known fiber artists to first-time exhibitors and include works from local artists. The exhibit can be seen Tuesday through Friday from noon to 4 p.m. at the Milford Arts Council gallery, located at 40 Railroad Ave. in Milford. The gallery is free and open to the public.

The **Bushnell Center of Performing Arts** presents "Wicked," part of the Bushnell Broadway Series from April 24 through May 12 in Hartford. This dynamic musical tells the untold true story of the witches of Oz. Long before Dorothy arrives, there is another young woman, born with emerald-green skin – smart, fiery, misunderstood and possessing an extraordinary talent. When she meets a bubbly blonde who is exceptionally popular, their initial rivalry turns into the unlikelyst of friendships until the world decides to call one "good" and the other one "wicked." Matinee and evening performances are available, with American Sign Language interpretation provided at the April 25, 2 p.m. and April 28, 6:30 p.m. performances. The show is at the William H. Mortensen Hall, located at 166 Capitol Ave. Tickets start at \$76 and can be purchased at bushnell.org or by calling 860-987-5900.

Hartford Stage presents "All My Sons" by Arthur Miller, a timely revival that weighs the cost of the American dream. This story brings us into the Kellers' backyard, where a neighborhood is forced to reckon with buried truths, leading to the unraveling of a family.

More than 75 years later, this classic still packs a strong emotional punch and reveals as much about today's America as it did when it first premiered. Matinee and evening performances run April 11 through May 5 at Hartford Stage, located at 50 Church St. in Hartford. Tickets start at \$20 and can be purchased at hartfordstage.org or by calling 860-527-5151.

MTC Music Theatre of Connecticut presents "Ghost The Musical," adapted from the hit film, "Ghost." Book and lyrics are by Bruce Joel Rubin and music and lyrics by Dave Stewart and Glen Ballard. This musical follows Sam and Molly, a young couple whose connection takes a shocking turn after Sam's untimely death. The bond of love transcends the boundaries of life itself to grow stronger and more fully realized. Trapped between two worlds, Sam refuses to leave Molly when he learns she is in grave danger. Desperate to communicate with her, he turns to a storefront psychic, Oda Mae Brown, who helps him protect Molly and avenge his death. The show is a poignant romance that builds comedy, suspense and deeply felt emotion to an ethereal climax that audiences will never forget. Matinee and evening performances can be seen from April 12 through April 28 at 509 Westport Ave. in Norwalk. Tickets are \$45 to \$60 plus a \$5 service fee and can be purchased at musictheatreofct.com or by calling 203-454-3883.

Orchestra New England presents "Two Premieres & Beethoven" on May 4 in New Haven. The show features a Beethoven overture and the premier of new works by two composers, Joe Russo (ONE's bassist) and Jan Swafford (the brilliant composer and the famed biographer of Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms and Ives) with James Sinclair as music director. This performance will take place at 7:30 p.m. at Battell Chapel, Yale Campus, located at 400 College St. Tickets are \$25 for general admission and \$50 for premium seating. To purchase tickets, visit orchestrane-wengland.org or call 203-777-4690.

Yale Institute of Sacred Music is celebrating its 50th anniversary with "All Creation Sings" on May 5 in New Haven. This spectacular ecumenical hymn festival will feature a community choir of approximately 300 voices from the greater New Haven area to lead an audience of over 1,000 in song centering around the theme "All Creation Sings," celebrating the diversity of our creation and our duty to care for it. Various genres of sacred



CYNDI
CONSOLI

music will be performed, from traditional and contemporary hymns to spirituals, gospel and more. Conducted by Dr. Felicia Barber, the choir will have as its core the Yale Camerata accompanied by a brass ensemble, gospel instrumentalists and organists Dr. Nathaniel Gumbs and Dr. Bruce Neswick. Dr. Barbara Brown Taylor and Dr. James Forbes will be the special guest preachers. The celebration includes audience participation and starts at 4 p.m. at Woolsey Hall, located at 500 College St. Admission is free. For more information, visit ism.yale.edu or call 432-5180.

Castle Craig Players presents "The 39 Steps" by Patrick Barlow, based on the novel by John Buchan and the film by Alfred Hitchcock. Mix a Hitchcock masterpiece with a juicy spy novel, add a dash of Monty Python and you have "The 39 Steps," a fast-paced whodunnit for anyone who loves the magic of theatre. This two-time Tony and Drama Desk Award-winning treat is packed with nonstop laughs, over 150 zany characters (played by a ridiculously talented cast of four), an on-stage plane crash, handcuffs, missing fingers and some good old-fashioned romance. Matinee and evening performances are from May 3 through 19 at Almira Stephan Memorial Playhouse, located at 59 West Main St. in Meriden. Tickets are \$25 for general admission and \$20 for seniors, available online at castlecraigplayers.org.

Stamford Center for the Arts presents "Shen Yun," China before communism in an extraordinary journey through China's 5,000 years of divinely inspired culture. As translated, shen yun means "the beauty of divine beings dancing." This stunning and meaningful production tells of the exquisite beauty from the heavens, profound wisdom from dynasties past, timeless legends and ethnic traditions all springing to life through classical Chinese dance, enchanting live orchestral music, authentic costumes and interactive

backdrops. Revisit a time when scholars and artists sought harmony with the Tao, or the "way" of the universe, and when divine beings walked upon the earth to inspire humanity. Matinee and evening performances run from May 9 to 12 at The Palace Theatre, located at 61 Atlantic St. in Stamford. Tickets start at \$80. Visit palacestamford.org or call 203-325-4466 for more information.

Vista Life Innovations' A Shared Stage Productions presents "Footloose the Musical" from May 17-19 in Old Saybrook. This stage adaptation for the film by Dean Pitchford and Walter Bobbie is based on the original screenplay by Dean Pitchford with music by Tom Snow and lyrics by Dean Pitchford. Additional music is by Eric Carmen, Sammy Hagar, Kenny Loggins and Jim Steinman. This is Vista's ninth all-abilities musical production presented by a unified cast and crew made up of both Vista students and members along with actors and singers from the shoreline community. Produced by Vista Life Innovations and with a production team of experienced professionals in their field, this project aims to create a fully inclusive, shared, open communication through theatre for participants of all abilities. "Footloose" tells the story of Ren McCormack, a teenager from Chicago who moves to a small town where dancing and rock music have been banned. Ren faces resistance from the conservative town leaders. Determined to bring joy back to the community, Ren rallies his peers to fight for their right to dance. Along the way, he falls in love with Ariel, the reverend's rebellious daughter. "Footloose" celebrated the exhilaration of youth, the wisdom of listening to one another and the power of forgiveness. Matinee and evening performances will happen at The Kate – Katharine Hepburn Cultural Arts Center, located at 300 Main St. For more information, visit vistalifeinnovations.org or call 860-399-8080 Ext. 269.

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.

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Obituaries

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

Robert Archambault, age 92, beloved husband for 62 years to Marilyn Ekblade Archambault of Orange, entered into eternal rest on March 14, 2024 at Branford, CT. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

Anna M. Boynton (Brienza) 91, of Milford Connecticut beloved wife of Theodore O. Boynton Jr (68 years) passed away peacefully in her home on March 15, 2024. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

Sandra Marie Bruder, lovingly known as Sandy, peacefully departed this world on March 13, 2024 at her residence in Milford, Connecticut. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)

Margaret Beauchamp Bucknall of Orange, passed away on March 30, 2024, with her loving family by her side. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

Timothy J. Casey, age 75, of Madison, husband of the late Barbara "Bonnie" (Nagle) Casey entered peaceful rest on March 9, 2024. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)

Mary Ann Cassidy, age 63, passed away on March 25, 2024 at her home in Milford, CT while surrounded by her loving family. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

Winnie Lavery Coates, 70, of Orange, wife of the late David Coates died on March 20, 2024 after a long and difficult illness. (West Haven Funeral Home)

Calvin S. Croll, devoted husband and loving father, grandfather, and great grandfather passed peacefully at home on Friday, March 22nd. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)

Emma V. Cuzzocreo, 95, widow of Joseph Cuzzocreo, Sr., passed away March 22, 2024, at the Milford Health and Rehabilitation Center in Milford, CT. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

Jesus Maria Fernandez, 78, of Milford, beloved husband of Juana Ramirez Fernandez, passed away on March 21, 2024. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

Rose Ann Volpicella Gulisano, 76, of West Haven passed away peacefully on Tuesday, March 26th, 2024, surrounded by her family. (North Haven Funeral Home)

Linda Joyce Hackenjoss of Jupiter, FL and former resident of Milford and Orange passed from this life on March 5, 2024.

Phyllis Arlene Hanson, 92, of Milford, peacefully passed away on March 10, 2024. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

Mary Healy, formerly of West Haven, entered into rest on March 27, 2024. (West Haven Funeral Home)

Sandra Hegyi, age 82, of Lancaster, New Hampshire and formerly of Milford, entered peaceful rest on March 27, 2024. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



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Obituaries

Van M. Hendrickson passed away on March 7, 2024, at Milford Hospital in Milford, CT. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



John "Pat" Lilly, 84, of Milford, beloved husband of Patricia (Harmon) Lilly, passed away on March 21, 2024 while surrounded by his loving family. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Dolores Vegliante Nastri, 94, of Orange passed away on March 28, 2024. She was the wife of the late Anthony M. Nastri. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



James J. "Jim" Patterson, a man of unwavering integrity, dry humor, and a heart filled with love, peacefully passed away on March 20, 2024. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Tracy Lynn Hollister, age 39, of West Haven passed away suddenly on March 27, 2024. (West Haven Funeral Home)



Madelyn "Mandy" Lucibello, 65, passed away on March 11, 2024. Mandy loved her family, friends, cooking, baking, physical fitness, and healthy living. (West Haven Funeral Home)



Margaret Ann Olsen, 91, entered into eternal rest at home on Saturday, March 2, 2024 surrounded by family. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Ann "Tiffany" Mosa Riling a long-time resident of Milford passed away on March 26, 2024 at home surrounded by daughters and granddaughters. She was 95 years old. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Leonora Rabuya Corvera Khu, RN, age 86 of West Haven, CT, passed away on March 19, 2024. (Keenan Funeral Home)



Edward McCarthy, 77, of West Haven entered eternal rest on March 10, 2024. (West Haven Funeral Home)



Mary "Linda" Mc Andrew Pabis, age 82, of Milford, beloved wife of the late Frank M. Pabis, entered peaceful rest on March 9, 2024. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



James Clark Rivers was born on August 22, 1949 and passed away on March 11, 2024 at age 74. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Rosemary Andreucci Leone, 77, of Orange, beloved wife of the late of Don D. Leone passed away April 4, 2024 at her home surrounded by her loving family. (Porto Funeral Home)



With heavy hearts, we announce the sudden passing of **Brian J Moger** of Milford CT, on March 24, 2024 at the age of 51. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Rose Lucille Papke, 81, of West Haven, CT, passed away peacefully on Friday, March 29th, 2024. (Keenan Funeral Home)



Mary Jane Hines Roy, 87, of West Haven, CT passed peacefully on March 8, 2024. She was predeceased by her husband, Roger O. Roy, of 60 years. (West Haven Funeral Home)



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Obituaries

Theresa Ann Ruffo was born on June 21, 1933 and passed away on March 18, 2024 at age 90. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



James "Swift" Swift was born on March 17, 1941 and passed away on April 4, 2024 at age 83. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Barbara Marie Ruotolo, 68, of Woodbridge, beloved wife of Louis Ruotolo, passed away on March 19, 2024. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Lorraine P. Utz, age 79, of Milford, beloved wife of the late Robert M. Utz Sr., passed away peacefully in her sleep on Wednesday, March 20, 2024. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Ena M. Sandberg, 99, of West Haven, died on March 19, 2024. She was born in New Haven on June 4, 1924. (West Haven Funeral Home)



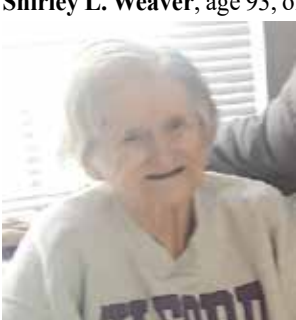
Paul Michael Vienneau, age 44, beloved fiancé of Jill Povinelli, passed away suddenly and gained his wings on Sunday, March 17, 2024. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Michael P. Saracin, also known as "the little", passed away unexpectedly on March 17, 2024, at his home in Milford, CT. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Shirley L. Weaver, age 93, of Milford, passed away peacefully on Monday, April 1st 2024. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Notice of Annual Town Meeting Town of Orange

Notice is hereby given to the legal voters and those persons qualified to vote in Town Meetings of the Town of Orange, that the Annual Town Meeting of said Town will be held on Wednesday,

May 8, 2024, at 7:30 p.m. in the gymnasium of the High Plains Community Center, 525 Orange Center Road, Orange, CT for the purpose of taking action at that time upon the following matters:

1. To authorize the Board of Selectmen to sell and convey land acquired by the Town through foreclosure of tax liens or by deed in lieu of foreclosure of tax liens.
2. To determine in accordance with Sections 12-142, 12-144 and 12-144(a) of the Connecticut General Statutes the installment due dates for all property tax including the property tax on motor vehicles.
3. To receive and discuss the report of the budget prepared by the Board of Finance for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024.

By virtue of Town Charter, Section 2.6(c)1., Item 3 shall be voted on by machine ballot at an adjourned Town Meeting-Referendum to be held on Wednesday, May 15, 2024, between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. (E.S.T.) at the High Plains Community Center, 525 Orange Center Road, Orange, CT 06477.

Dated at Orange, Connecticut this 11th day of April 2024.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TOWN OF ORANGE

ATTEST: Mary Shaw
Town Clerk

Legal Notice: Town of Orange

Pursuant to C.G.S. Sec 7-394, there is on file for public inspection in the Office of the Town Clerk, the Auditors report covering the Town of Orange for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023.

Dated at Orange, Connecticut, this the 1st day of April 2024.

Mary Shaw
Orange Town Clerk

Gregory F. Doyle

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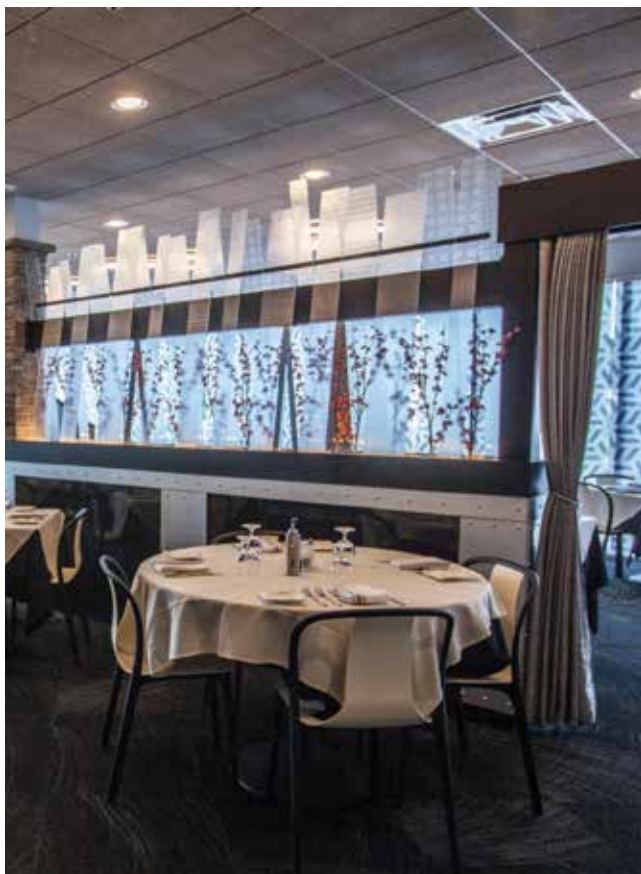
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