



Milford-Orange Times

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August 7, 2025

Fireman's Carnival Heats Up In Orange



The Orange Volunteer Fire Department held its annual Fireman's Carnival from July 31 to Aug. 3 at the High Plains Community Center fairgrounds in Orange. Additional photos on page 12. Photos by Lexi Crocco.

RumRunners Rock Out In Milford



Local band the RumRunners performed a concert on the lawn at Laurelton Hall in Milford on July 17. Photo by Robert Creigh.

Milford Aldermen Search For Sewer Smell Solutions

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

Something stinks in Milford. That was the message several residents around the Caswell Cove condominiums delivered to the Milford Board of Aldermen at their July 7 meeting, during which they were set to discuss spending unallocated reserve funds for the city's wastewater infrastructure.

Caswell Cove is situated along the Housatonic River, directly next to the Housatonic Wastewater Treatment Facility.

"My first thought as I open the sliders on my deck on a morning like this morning is, 'Will I face the noxious odor when I take my first breath?'" said Julian DiDonato, the newly elected president of the condo

association. He said the odor has been a problem since people started moving into the condos in 1992.

"I don't think that we're treated as a priority," DiDonato said, after acknowledging that the city has periodically looked at problems with hydrogen sulfide emissions from the sewer system over the decades. He pointed out that a similar problem had existed near the Gulf Pond pumping station, where monitoring revealed high levels of hydrogen sulfide, a noxious gas. The city invested in oxygen pumping to alleviate the issue at that site.

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Orange Selectmen Condemn Hate Group Activity

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

The Orange Board of Selectmen at its July 9 meeting unanimously condemned the distribution of flyers by a hate group called the National Organization for Vital Action during the town's Independence Day fireworks celebration.

NOVA, which espouses pro-White European national identity and takes various anti-immigrant stances, has been labeled as a white supremacist group by the Anti-Defamation League and the Southern Poverty Law Center, two prominent organizations that track hate groups nationwide.

"They deliberately targeted a family-friendly event to spread fear and division

in our town," said resident Justin Kidder, who asked the board for a public statement against the group. "If we say nothing we send a message to the most vulnerable members of our community that they are on their own. We also invite these extremists to come back again and again."

First Selectman Jim Zeoli said that the group has been active in Orange in the past.

"They were here Memorial Day," Zeoli said, adding that he didn't see them but heard about them later. He also recalled a distribution of postcards at High Plains Community Center similarly promoting

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Amity Limiting Cell Phone Use In Schools

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

The Amity Regional School District will limit students' cell phone use during the school day starting in the fall.

According to the new policy, students at the two middle schools in Orange and Bethany will keep phones powered off or silent and stored away for the entire school day.

High school students will only be allowed to use their phones during lunch, between classes and during study hall, with the phones expected to be turned off or silenced the rest of the time. There will

be exceptions if a teacher specifically asks them to use their phones as part of a class activity.

The district cited a 2023 US Surgeon General advisory that argued unrestricted phone use can negatively impact teens' focus and mental health as a reason for the decision.

"Teachers will still integrate technology when it enhances instruction, and we ask families to help by encouraging healthy phone habits and avoiding non-emergency

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Milford Chamber Honors 'Best Of' For 2025

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

The Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce honored businesses in the area with its annual "Best of the Milford Region" awards at a July 14 celebration at Stonebridge restaurant in Milford.

The annual awards are given out based on votes from members of the communities in which the chamber operates – primarily Milford and West Haven. They honor local businesses for their quality in a variety of categories, including eating and drinking, services, health and fitness and shopping.

According to the chamber, the Best

Of awards "shines a spotlight on the incredible local businesses, organizations and individuals that make our region so special."

The Milford-Orange Times was among the awardees, winning first place in the newspaper category – a spot it has now earned for the third time.

"This community is built on so many great small family businesses, medium-sized businesses and big corporations," Milford Mayor Tony Giannattasio said at

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Fitzmaurice Unveils Democratic Priorities For Orange

At the Orange Democratic caucus on July 15, Dan Fitzmaurice, Democratic candidate for first selectman, introduced a platform aimed at strengthening the town's commercial development, enhancing services for residents, increasing government efficiency and preserving the quality of local schools.

"Our plan delivers on what residents have told us matters most: lowering the tax burden, protecting home values, maintaining our high educational standards, and creating a stronger, more responsive town government," Fitzmaurice said. "Together, we can make Orange not just the town we love – but one that's more proactive, connected and efficient."

The four first priorities include: creating a full-time, accountable economic development department within Town Hall that provides focused, dedicated support for local businesses and farms along with securing state and regional grants to lower the tax burden on homeowners; smart local planning, fighting for adequate state funding and applying for grants; fixing Fred Wolfe Park in a way that enables future upgrades for the community and helps Orange remain a community of choice; and creating an "Orange Connect" system that offers residents a single, trackable place to report

issues and get answers quickly.

The priority platform goes into specific detail about what each initiative will take to accomplish, how it will be incorporated into Orange's budget without adding an additional burden on residents, and how the improvements will make a meaningful difference to people in town. It also includes links to resources about similar successful programs in nearby and comparable communities.

In a speech to the caucus outlining the priorities, Fitzmaurice said, "I'm not a career politician. My work has involved leading organizations and solving tough problems. And I can tell you this: solutions that matter don't happen by accident. They come from a real plan – and one we build together."

"These are not our campaign's only priorities," said Jody Deitch, chair of the Orange Democratic Town Committee. "They are the issues that our team feels are important to focus on from the start to make our town stronger, more accessible, and work better for everyone. All our Democratic candidates are focused on these priorities in some way – whether it's related to our Town Plan & Zoning efforts, our boards of education, or boards that support our town's budget, like the Board of Finance and Board of Selectmen."

Smith Gets Mayoral Nomination From Milford Democrats

Former Milford Mayor Rich Smith accepted the Democratic Party's unanimous nomination on July 17 at City Hall to return to the mayor's office this fall.

"I am humbled by your support," Smith told the assembled delegates. "I accept your nomination because Milford deserves a mayor who knows how to lead. And with your help – and the help of the outstanding team you have nominated here tonight – I know we can accomplish great things for the people of Milford."

Smith previously served as Milford's 11th mayor, succeeding Benjamin Blake in 2023. He has held executive positions at organizations including Dun & Bradstreet, The Hartford, MassMutual, Connecticut Mutual, PepsiCo and AT&T, where he learned how to implement process improvements, apply technology and introduce efficiencies to drive down operating costs. He is currently chairman of the Milford Police Commission.

Smith said incumbent Republican Mayor Tony Giannattasio had failed to control rising costs for Milford residents.

"For more than a decade, Democrats kept

local taxes flat – or even lowered taxes. But in just his first term, Mayor Giannattasio has raised taxes on every resident and business in this city by 9 percent – more than twice the rate of inflation. He raised fees from the recreation department to the transfer station to the senior center. We're in a cost-of-living crisis in this country. For our mayor to add to that burden is unconscionable. And I know it's possible to do better because – with Democrats on the boards and in City Hall – we've done it," he said.

Smith added that his previous stint as mayor was "the best job I've ever had."

"I was honored to serve as your mayor. In that office I felt the urgent responsibility to keep working – to continue the project of building a better Milford for our families, businesses, and future generations. Every day as mayor is a chance to help people," he said.

Democrats also nominated incumbent City Clerk Pete Smith to run for that office as well as a full slate of candidates for the Board of Aldermen, Board of Education, Planning & Zoning Board and constable.

OVFD Hosting Convention, Parade

The Orange Volunteer Fire Association will be hosting the 2025 Connecticut State Firefighters Association Convention and Parade in conjunction with the department's

100th anniversary celebration. The series of events will take place from Sept. 12-14, culminating with the parade on Sunday, Sept. 14 starting at noon.

Folks On Spokes Coming Back To Milford

Bridges Healthcare's Folks on Spokes & Step Forward Ride/Walk fundraising event will be held on Sunday, Sept. 14 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Fowler Field in downtown Milford.

For 34 years, cyclists and walkers have come to this event to raise funds and awareness for mental health and addiction recovery in support of Bridges Healthcare's services.

Participants of all ages can choose from several scenic Connecticut coastline routes including 5, 10, 20 or 40-mile routes for

cyclists and a 5K for walkers. This family-friendly event includes activities for kids, music, lunch and a remembrance ceremony to honor lives lost to suicide and overdose.

Early bird registration discounts are available through Aug. 17. After that, advanced registration fees are \$50 per cyclist, \$35 per walker, \$15 for kids under 18 (including a free t-shirt). Children 6 and under are free.

Event sponsorships are available. For more information or to register, visit <https://bit.ly/BridgesRideWalk2025>.

Orange Republicans Endorse Zeoli, Other Candidates

Orange Republicans at their July 16 caucus endorsed incumbent James Zeoli for first selectman along with a full slate of candidates who will share the Republican ticket in November.

In his remarks, Zeoli made observations about the platform of his Democratic first selectman opponent, Dan Fitzmaurice.

"If you go on the Democrats' website, you'll see 'Ready to Keep Orange Strong.' They are acknowledging that Orange is a strong place. My opponent also stated that the Orange school system was great. Thank you very much for acknowledging that the school system is already great," Zeoli said.

"My opponent wants to create an economic development office in Town Hall, but he doesn't seem to know that we have had the Orange Economic Development Corporation in place since the mid-1990s. We have a full-time economic development director, and her office is fully staffed," he continued.

"Since I've been first selectman, I've learned a lot. You need to understand the

departments that are in the town and how things work. This is not the type of job you can just walk into cold," Zeoli added. "We work hard, we all love this town, and we do what's right for this town and will continue to do what's right for this town."

Zeoli served Orange as a selectman prior to being elected first selectman, a role he has held for 10 two-year terms.

The rest of the Republican slate includes John Carangelo, William Kraut and Judy Smith for the Board of Selectmen; Ajeet Jain and Joseph Nuzzo for the Board of Finance; Oscar Parente, Kevin Cornell and Jay McGuire for the Town Plan & Zoning Commission; Mary Shaw for town clerk; Tom Hurley for tax collector; Jeff Cap, Ronnette James, Tatiana Messina Mullen and Amanda Zapata for the Orange Board of Education; Donald Farnen, Megan Rabuse and Christian Young for the Amity Board of Education; and Jody Daymon, Mike Donadeo, Gary Palermo and Glen Papelo for constable.

Election Day is Nov. 4.

Students Get Case Memorial Scholarship



The Friends of the Case Memorial Library in Orange recently awarded its Lucy Scillia Scholarship to two graduating high school seniors from Orange. Maya Quaranta, left, the valedictorian of her class at Sacred Heart Academy, will be attending Yale University where she will be majoring in economics and political science and has committed to Division 1 track and field. Gabriela Restrepo, right, is from Amity Regional High School, a high honors student who will be attending Vassar College majoring in psychology with a minor in music. Photo courtesy of the Friends of the Case Memorial Library.

Milford Meals On Wheels Program Rolls Out New Van

The Milford Senior Center has acquired a new delivery van for its Meals on Wheels program, purchased through fundraising and community support.

"We are deeply grateful to everyone who contributed – generous donors, passionate volunteers and enthusiastic event participants," said Leonora C. Rodriguez, the center's executive director. "This van is more than transportation – it's a lifeline that ensures our Milford neighbors continue to receive the vital services they depend on."

The van will replace a previously

damaged vehicle involved in an accident earlier this year.

"We have grown in the number of people that we deliver to – it really is a lifeline for many that live alone or need substantial medical or physical help. It's one less thing that they have to worry about," Rosie Rose, the Meals on Wheels coordinator.

A crucial piece of the funding came via an anonymous donation made through the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, according to the Milford Senior Center.

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Friends Of The Milford Library Honor Local Students

The Friends of the Milford Library have announced the recipients of the 2025 High School Book Awards and Senior Scholarships, celebrating the achievements of Milford's students.

Each year, the FOML present the High School Book Award to one member of the junior class from each of Milford's five high schools. The award recognizes students who have demonstrated outstanding personal character, made a positive impact on their school or community and shown a strong, ongoing love for reading.

The winners of this year's Junior Book Awards are Isabella Lau of Joseph A. Foran High School; Abigail Jenkins of Jonathan Law High School; Ryan Knapp of The Academy; Jyair Hill of Platt Technical High

School; and Eve Mena of Lauralton Hall.

Each recipient is awarded a personally inscribed copy of "Only in Milford" by DeForest Smith. In addition, the FOML make a donation in honor of each awardee, contributing a book chosen by the student to their school library. A bookplate inside the donated book commemorates the student's achievement and serves as a lasting reminder of their contribution to their school community.

These Senior Scholarships are awarded annually to one graduating senior from both Foran and Jonathan Law high schools with plans for furthering their education.

The 2025 Senior Scholarship winners are Dabi Lee of Foran and Xiomara Esquivel of Jonathan Law.

Lamont, State Officials Speak At Amity Chamber Expo



The Amity Chamber of Commerce held a Business Symposium and Expo on July 30 at the Yale West Campus Conference Center in West Haven. Gov. Ned Lamont gave the keynote address and was joined by other state and local officials as well as representatives from the business community. From left: Ryan Parent, managing partner of Beers, Hamerman, Cohen & Burger, Mark Dupont, partner and president of Coastal Bridge Advisors; Lamont; Barry Lee Cohen, Amity Chamber CEO; Frank Reynolds, president and CEO of Avangrid companies Ul, Connecticut Natural Gas and Southern CT Gas; and Jorge Santiago, president and CEO of The Milford Bank. Photo by Steve Cooper.

Local Youth Theatre To Perform 'The Addams Family'

Pantochino Teen Theatre will present the Broadway musical, "The Addams Family," based on the characters created by Charles Addams, on Aug. 9 and 10 at The Little Theatre, located at One Lincoln St. in New Haven. Co-producers Bert Bernardi and Jimmy Johansmeyer have announced four performances at 2 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. on those dates.

"The Addams Family" features book by Marshall Brickman and Rick Elice with music and lyrics by Andrew Lippa. Wednesday Addams, the ultimate princess of darkness, has grown up and fallen in love with a sweet, smart young man from a respectable family – a man her parents have never met. Wednesday confides in her father and begs him not to tell her mother. Now, Gomez Addams must do something he's never done before – keep a secret from

his beloved wife, Morticia. Everything will change for the whole family on the fateful night they host a dinner for Wednesday's "normal" boyfriend and his parents.

"We're delighted to give these young actors the opportunity work in an immersive two-week rehearsal process – it's fun and exciting and provides an amazing learning experience," said Bernardi.

The cast includes 35 young actors from Milford, Orange, Stratford, Trumbull, Killingworth, West Haven, Seymour, Shelton and Beacon Falls.

Bernardi directs the show with Justin Rugg as musical director and Becki Arena, choreographer. Lighting and sound for the production is by Seth Harris and costume design is by Johansmeyer.

Information and tickets are available at pantochino.com.

Orange Holds 'Community Safety Day' Event

Orange Youth Services, in collaboration with the Orange Police Department's school resource officers and with support from the Orange Foundation, hosted a Community Safety Day to bring families together and promote safety awareness on July 21 at High Plains Community Center in Orange.

The event, made possible through a grant from the Orange Foundation, drew over 300 attendees. They explored emergency and public safety vehicles and met first responders from the Orange Police Department, Fire Department, Town Highway Department, American Medical Response, the military, the Community Emergency Response Team and more.

A highlight of the day was the landing of the New Milford helicopter.

The Orange Youth Services Teen Representatives provided free face painting, as well as a waterslide and free ice cream, coordinated by Orange school resource officers Carolyn Bailey and Chris Atarbane and Orange Youth Services Coordinator Chantelle Bunnell.

"This event was all about bringing our community together in a positive, safe and educational environment," said Bunnell. "We're proud to have worked so closely with the Orange Police Department's school resource officers and are deeply grateful to the Orange Foundation for helping make this event such a success."



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Opinion & Editorial

Digital Workplace Opportunities Available In CT

By NaCyla Wiley

The global digital workplace market is so large that not even AI can give you a straight answer as to its size, with quoted estimates between \$30 billion and \$832 billion. Jobs are aplenty for interested techies. While unemployment among youth is traditionally high, there are great opportunities for tech-savvy young people with the right skillset.

To develop IT skillsets, many people are choosing more accessible alternatives to college as paths to technical careers. Fortunately, many entry-level tech jobs do not require a degree if you have the relevant skills. Examples include roles in programming, web development, cybersecurity, network engineering and systems analysis.

In Connecticut those jobs are now in range for young adults or anyone interested because of the Workforce Alliance's Growing Equitable Training in Information Technology, or GET IT, program. The no-cost pro-

gram provides students a stipend for as much as \$600 to those who complete a course. The initiative includes immersive technology experiences focused on hardware assembly and coding.

The program works backwards from understanding the student's goals and then providing the IT path to meet those digital goals. Among the available tracks are web development, electronics, video game coding, AI or even custom curriculums.

The one-year-old program has begun to graduate future IT workers such as 23-year-old Caleb Johnson, who said, "I want to work in cybersecurity, and I see the fundamental skills I've learned here helping me with that. I'm learning something new every day."

"I'm looking forward to learning more scripting, programming and coding," said student Zora Martindale. "Software is my biggest interest, and I want to work in software development. I see the skills I've

learned here helping me with that. I would recommend this course to anyone who has an interest in computers, whether it's hardware or software."

Jonathan Deleon said he most appreciates the hardware training. "I loved the disassembly and reassembly of the computer – the hardware aspect was fascinating to me. The career advancement day was particularly exciting because we got to hear different perspectives from the industry. I want to work in software development, and I believe the skills I learned here will help me with that."

At the end of the three-week hardware course, students build their first tech product and share it with their peers while also presenting the steps they'll be taking next to move their career in tech forward. When all the program participants complete training and are certified they can access resources for resume building and internship connections.

Beyond the core technical skills in things like programming, networking and databases, the students are also taught soft skills such as time management, communications and problem solving.

Most importantly, certified participants take a large stride toward their first tech job, further studies and the independence and confidence that comes from having a valuable and marketable skill set. The greater New Haven-based program provides other support services for participants.

NaCyla Wiley is the GET IT project manager for the Workforce Alliance, which provides a number of services to job seekers and employers free of charge in south central Connecticut. Those interested in the GET IT Program should call 203-867-4030 x 245 or go to workforcealliance.biz/growing-educational-training-in-information-technology/.

Letters to the Editor:

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

A More Efficient Town Hall

To the Editor:

The 2025 Orange elections are rapidly approaching. As you decide how to vote this Nov. 4, one item on the Democratic agenda is especially worth reading: "Orange Connect" provides a direct link for residents to reach out to their Town Hall officials and gain assistance for all non-emergency questions or concerns, from reporting fresh potholes to getting answers to weighing in on new town initiatives.

This new solution, provided to us by Click-Fix311, will be an add-on to our current Orange town website. Gone will be the days of bouncing around between departments when you call, tracking down somebody with answers, and scouring websites and social media forums to find the information you are looking for. This simple, modern and proven solution will enable our Town Hall to work better for our residents and town employees alike.

The service itself requires no additional support staff, and annual service costs are covered by the existing technology budget. All this means a more effective, efficient Town Hall with no additional increases in your residential taxes or expenses. Nearby towns and cities such as New Haven, Glastonbury and Derby have already implemented similar centralized platforms to Orange Connect with proven success.

We understand that any time communication between town officials and the residents can be streamlined, you will receive faster service, more accountability, and – let's not forget – less frustration. When Town Hall works smarter, everyone benefits.

Mark Moyher
Orange Tax Collector Candidate
James Carcano
Orange Town Clerk Candidate

Leadership More Than Title

To the Editor:

A few months ago, I noticed that American flags that once hung in every room prior to the updating at the High Plains Community Center were not put back up. So I pulled out my phone, and our Cub Scouts said the Pledge of Allegiance to a virtual flag instead.

The rooms had been painted and looked beautiful after the much-needed updating years ago, but the flags had not been replaced. I emailed elected officials and department heads, following up multiple times. After personally spending hours on this issue, they finally purchased and installed new flags in every room and there is no need to pull one up on a cell phone again.

Do not get me wrong – I was thrilled to see them go up. But I was disappointed by how hard it was to get even a small issue addressed.

This experience is not unique. Over my 15 years in Orange, I have raised concerns about things that affect all of us, from unsafe conditions at the pool to infrastructure planning at Fred Wolfe Park. I know our town leaders care deeply about Orange, but even with the best intentions, residents are often left feeling unheard. And that is something we can fix together.

Public service should never be about politics or personality. It should be about listening, following through and working together to get things done. Leadership means treating every resident with respect, no matter how long they have lived here, what party they belong to or whether their concerns are going viral on social media.

I love this community and believe Orange is a wonderful place to live. I am running for the Board of Selectmen to help make our Town Hall more responsive, more transparent and even more connected to the people it serves. I am proud to be running alongside Daniel Fitzmaurice for first selectman, and a team committed to doing this work with care and integrity.

We are not just running to get fancy titles and attend monthly meetings in Town Hall. We are running to earn your trust and get things done for Orange.

Erika Higgins
Orange Board of Selectmen Candidate

Public Education Shapes Strong Communities

To the Editor:

I'm proud to be running for the Orange Board of Education. I believe in the power of public education to shape strong communities and bright futures.

My son starts kindergarten at Mary L. Tracy this fall, and I'm excited for all three of our kids to grow up in the Orange school system. Like many families, we chose Orange for the schools. I want to help ensure they remain a source of pride and excellence for years to come.

But even if you don't have children in our schools, strong public education still matters. The quality of our schools impacts everyone, especially when it comes to property values, attracting new families and maintaining a vibrant, connected town.

I'm a mom, a longtime volunteer and a communications professional. In every role I've held, I've seen how important it is to listen, collaborate and stay informed. That's the approach I'll bring to the Board of Education.

If elected, I'll focus on maintaining our high standards and supporting the incredible educators who make a difference every day. I'll also advocate for and ensure more open communication with families and greater transparency about how decisions are made.

Finally, I'm committed to keeping national politics out of our local classrooms. Our children's education should be grounded in academic excellence, critical thinking and community values.

I'm running because I care deeply about our children, our schools and the future of Orange. When our schools thrive, our whole community thrives.

I'd love to hear your ideas and priorities. Please visit OrangeCTDems.org to connect and learn more. Don't forget early voting starts Oct. 20. Save the date.

Lauren Gray
Orange Board of Education Candidate

Time for Full-Time Leadership

To the Editor:

Orange deserves a first selectman who shows up every day ready to deliver, not someone with divided attention or other jobs on the side.

For nearly two decades, I've been called on to lead local and national organizations through tough challenges and deliver measurable results. I've secured millions of dollars in funding for critical programs, strengthened their financial stability and made sure they served their communities effectively. Today, I lead state and federal public policy strategies at United Way of Connecticut, working with Democrats and Republicans alike to lower costs for working families.

I'm prepared to leave those roles behind and bring that experience home to Town Hall. I'm not coming in cold – my career has given me the exact skills Orange needs in its next first selectman.

When our current first selectman took office more than 20 years ago, the job was part-time, and he continued working elsewhere.

Today, it's a full-time position with a salary of \$115,000. Taxpayers deserve a leader whose only focus is serving Orange – 100 percent commitment, 100 percent availability, and 100 percent accountability.

Orange faces big decisions that can't wait: investing in parks and public facilities, modernizing town services, growing our economy and protecting our schools from outside political agendas. These are not part-time issues – they require hands-on, full-time leadership.

That's why our team has put forward four clear priorities we're ready to act on right away. You can read our full plan at OrangeCTDems.org/2025 and decide for yourself who's ready to lead when early voting begins Oct. 20.

This is how I've always led: clear expectations, honest work, and accountability to the people I serve. It's what your boss expects from you – and it's what you should expect from your first selectman.

Dan Fitzmaurice
Orange First Selectman Candidate

A Helping Hand with Taxes

To the Editor:

After exploring nearby towns, my wife and I chose Orange as our home. Its inviting neighborhoods, open spaces, excellent schools and small-town charm made it the right community for us. That was 27 years ago, and we've proudly been part of the fabric of Orange ever since.

Over the years, I've found ways to give back to the community – and have had a longstanding goal to serve in public office. Therefore, I'm excited to announce my candidacy for tax collector in this year's local election. Early voting begins Oct. 20.

I'll bring more than 40 years of experience in the financial industry, and I'm confident that my background will help me serve our town effectively and professionally. But more than just experience, I bring a deep commitment to service. I'm an active member of the Orange Recycling Committee, the Democratic Town Committee, the Orange Players and the Orange Lions Club. Through these roles, I've had the opportunity to meet neighbors, build lasting friendships and help people navigate local resources.

Let's face it: taxes are a part of life, but they don't have to be confusing or intimidating. I want to make the process clearer, friendlier and more accessible. As your tax collector, I'll be here to help, not hassle.

Mark Moyher
Orange Tax Collector Candidate

Opinion & Editorial

Say Goodbye To Driving High



STATE REP. (R-119)
KATHY KENNEDY

It's no secret: Connecticut roads are notorious for speeding and intoxicated driving, sadly leading to unnecessary fatalities and accidents for the past five years. As the ranking member of the Transportation Committee, I want to share what I have done to crack down on reckless, distracted and intoxicated driving by collaborating with law enforcement to prioritize safety on our roadways.

This year included many positive bills that will pave safer roadways across our state. But I believe that Public Act 25-19 is one of the most significant. This recently-signed law officially allows a police officer to conduct a motor vehicle stop if they presume the driver or passenger is consuming marijuana.

This means that before this law, our police were unable to carry out their duties in protecting our travelers from drivers under the influence of cannabis. So why didn't we do this earlier?

Well, we tried. Last year, my House Republican colleagues and I proposed an amendment to House Bill 5550 (Public Act 24-137) that would have only allowed police to pull over drivers possibly consuming marijuana if there was a passenger under the age of 18 in the vehicle. Sadly, a majority of Democrats voted against this amendment, despite its safety benefits.

Thankfully, after several bipartisan conversations this legislative session we passed this proposal which not only deters marijuana use while driving but also restores a law enforcement officer's ability to carry out their investigative duties and keep us safe. This is a win-win for safer roads and support for the work of our police.

Apart from intoxicated driving, this bill also creates new penalties for speeding over 100 miles per hour and decreases the standard for what constitutes certain license plate, headlight or windshield equipment violations, first issuing warnings to drivers before infractions.

Passing this bill is a huge step toward a safer Connecticut. Back in 2020, when majority Democrats proposed and passed the police accountability bill, we wrongly placed limits on our police officers that continue to have negative ripple effects in 2025. Whether it's with defending against intoxicated driving, or against "street takeovers," when our police get the support they deserve in Hartford, our communities get the safety they deserve in return.

As someone with family in law enforcement, I will continue to preserve the rights of our police officers who put their lives on the line for us every day. The success of this bill is a testament to changing times in our state where we are hopefully once again respecting our law enforcement and prioritizing public safety.

If you are a constituent with a public safety concern or question about state government, sharing your voice matters. I encourage you to please contact me at Kathy.Kennedy@housegop.ct.gov or at 860-240-8700 so that together we can put your safety and values first. Don't forget to visit RepKennedy.com to subscribe to my brief email updates and to follow me on Facebook.

Protecting Youth Health Care



STATE REP. (D-117)
MJ SHANNON

It was confirmed earlier this month that both Connecticut Children's and Yale New Haven Health are phasing out gender-affirming care for minors. For years, these institutions have been trusted places for transgender youth and their families, offering essential, evidence-based care in a supportive environment. Now that care is being pulled back, and many families across our state are left unsure about where to turn next.

Let's be clear: gender-affirming care is not new or experimental. It's supported by every major medical organization in the country, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Medical Association and the Endocrine Society. When delivered thoughtfully and in an age-appropriate way, gender-affirming care can be life-saving.

For many young people, this care involves things like counseling, support during a social transition, and in some cases, puberty blockers under the supervision of medical professionals. These decisions are never made quickly or lightly. They come after careful conversations between doctors, families and the young person involved.

The decision to phase out this care at two of our most respected health systems sends the wrong message. It tells transgender youth that their health and well-being are up for debate. It leaves families without the support they've relied on. And it puts providers in an impossible position, forcing them to choose between doing what's right for their patients and navigating growing external pressures.

I don't bring this up to cast blame or stir outrage. I bring it up because it's real, and it's affecting people right here in our community. I've spoken with young people who are scared about what comes next. I've heard from parents who are doing everything they can to support their children, only to be left with fewer and fewer options.

Connecticut has always taken pride in being a leader on LGBTQ+ rights. We've passed strong laws to protect people from discrimination. We've banned conversion therapy. And we've worked to create safe, inclusive communities. But protecting those values means more than passing laws – it means making sure that everyone, especially kids, can actually access the care and support they need.

We should be expanding access to this care, not phasing it out. We should be backing up our health care providers and making it easier for them to do their jobs. Most importantly, we should be listening to the voices of the young people and families most affected by these decisions.

I'll keep pushing for policies that ensure every child in Connecticut can get the care they need without fear, stigma or delay. That's how we protect our values. That's how we protect our kids.

If you have questions, concerns or just want to talk, please don't hesitate to reach out. You can email me at mj.shannon@cga.ct.gov or call my office at 860-240-8585.

Case Memorial Library Events

The Case Memorial Library is located at 176 Tyler City Rd. in Orange. The library is open Mondays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Programs are free (except as noted for materials charges) and open to the public. Registration is recommended for all programs, unless otherwise noted. Visit casmemoriamlibrary.org for more information.

Summer Baby Playtime

Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.; for babies up to 24 months.

Babies can play with the toy collection in the meeting room for some baby-safe toy fun and social interaction. This program is designed for children and engaged adults. Drop offs will not be permitted.

Family Storytime

Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.; for children from birth to five years.

This program is primarily for children birth to 5 years, but siblings are welcome. This program is designed for children and engaged adults. Drop offs will not be permitted.

Preschool Playtime

Saturday, August 23, 10:30 a.m.; for children 18 months to 5 years.

The library has an obstacle course designed just for preschoolers. They'll build with blocks, go through tunnels and jump in and out of hula hoops while going around and around. Registration is recommended.

Perler Beads

Thursday, Aug. 7, 3:30 p.m.; for children in grades 3-6.

Make artwork with these fusible beads. Registration is required.

Drawing Class with Cartoonist Cara Bean

Saturday, Aug. 9, 10:30 a.m.; for children grades 3-6.

Do you love comics and graphic novels? Would you like to learn to draw your own cartoons? Join this workshop with professional cartoonist Cara Bean.

Teen Summer Movie Series: Dungeons & Dragons: Honor Among Thieves

Thursday, Aug. 7, 2 p.m.; for teens entering grades 7-12 in the fall.

A charming thief and a band of unlikely adventurers embark on a quest to retrieve a lost relic, but things go dangerously awry when they run afoul of the wrong people. Snacks and drinks will be provided. Registration is recommended. Drop-ins are welcome if space permits. PG-13. Two hours 14 minutes.

High School Volunteer Club

Tuesday, Aug. 12, 2 p.m.; for high school students entering grades 9-12 in the fall.

Earn community service hours at the high school volunteer club. Volunteers can work on special projects or train to become a volunteer shelf reader. Registration is recommended. Drop-ins are welcome if space permits.

Teen Summer Reading Finale: Video Game Club & Mini-Bookshelf Craft

Friday, Aug. 15, 4:30 p.m.; for teens entering grades 7-12 in the fall.

An after-hours summer reading finale

event of casual gaming and #booktok crafts with friends. Try out some classic game systems, battle it out in Smash Bros, or explore with the Meta Quest VR headsets in the meeting room. Create a pocket-sized bookshelf complete with mini books and miniatures in the teen space. Snacks and drinks will be provided. Registration is required.

Teen Book Box

Pickup dates: Aug. 18-23; for students entering grades 7-12 in the fall.

Each month that you register you will pick up a box containing two books selected by the librarians based on your reading preferences for you to borrow as well as some treats and other surprises for you to keep. Space is limited. Register and complete a form each month you wish to participate.

Adult Book Boxes

Pickup dates: Aug. 18-23

Each month that you register you will pick up a box containing two books selected by the librarians based on your reading preferences for you to borrow as well as some treats and other surprises for you to keep. Space is limited. Register and complete a form each month you wish to participate.

Ban This Book Club: Me and Earl and the Dying Girl

Monday, Aug. 11, 7 p.m.

Me and Earl and the Dying Girl was the sixth most-challenged book of 2024, according to the American Library Association, with 30 formal challenges. It was one of the most banned books in schools in the 2023-2024 school year, with 42 bans across 10 states. Join the discussion of this as a work of literature as well as an object of censorship. Discussion led by Librarian Rebecca Harlow. Copies are available at the circulation desk. Registration is recommended. Drop-ins are welcome if space permits.

Wednesday Book Group

Wednesday, Aug. 13, 1 p.m.

The next book is Garden Spells by Sarah Addison Allen. It's a tale about the Waverly sisters, who have inherited a magical garden. All is not well between the sisters, and they must find a way to come together and preserve their family legacy. Books are available to borrow at the circulation desk. In-person discussion is facilitated by Librarian Ellen Miller. Registration is recommended. Drop-ins are welcome if space permits.

Pop-Up Book Sale

Thursday, Aug. 14, 4 p.m.

The Friends of the Case Memorial Library will hold a pop-up book sale in the basement. Fill a bag with books for \$15. Bags will be provided by the Friends. No outside bags.

Oscar Film: Dune Part 2

Monday, Aug. 18, 6 p.m. and Wednesday, Aug. 20, 1 p.m.

Paul Atreides unites with the Fremen while on a warpath of revenge against the conspirators who destroyed his family. Facing a choice between the love of his life and the fate of the universe, he endeavors to prevent a terrible future. PG-13. Two hours 46 minutes. Registration is recommended. Drop-ins are welcome if space permits.

We Regret The Error

A column on page 15 in the July 10, 2025 issue about individual coverage health reimbursement accounts incorrectly implied that only business with fewer than 50 employees were eligible. Businesses of all sizes can participate.

Orange Democratic Town Committee

What Does Orange Strong Mean?

If you are on social media, you may have seen some banter about the slogan we, the Orange Democrats, are saying about keeping Orange strong. No one will argue that Orange is a great place to live. That's why we are all here. I would venture to say our great schools brought most of us to Orange. Some of us are now empty nesters, but still have a vested interest in what happens not only in town but in our schools. Everyone knows the quality of our school system is what drives our property values.

But what does "keep Orange strong" mean? Democratic First Selectman Candidate Dan Fitzmaurice has clearly stated that we have a vision for not only keeping Orange strong but making it stronger and better for everyone. We have yet to hear a plan from the Republicans.

One thing that is telling of the differenc-

es in the vision for Orange is by looking at the candidates. Our diverse group of candidates is looking to the future, not the past. The former chair of the Orange Republican Town Committee would list the names of new members to the ORTC in his column in this newspaper. Check them out. The ORTC has lost many moderate members and aligns more and more with the MAGA agenda.

We are looking to protect our town from the Washington, DC agenda. Many of the Republican candidates align with the MAGA agenda including controlling our schools and banning books. I urge you to do your research. Meet all our candidates on our website (OrangeCTDems.org) or by following our social media on



JODY DIETCH

Facebook, Instagram and TikTok.

One issue we hear a lot about is Fred Wolfe Park. Did you know that the town paid thousands of dollars in 2013 (Jim Zeoli was first elected first selectman in 2005) to a Manchester firm to create a plan for Fred Wolfe Park? What happened to that plan? It was never implemented. We just spent thousands of dollars more on a new consulting plan. This is a plan Dan Fitzmaurice and the Democratic team are ready to implement in 2026.

Progress and leadership take vision, and the Democratic slate has the vision and is willing to share it with you. It's available on our website.

Elections are important – even local municipal elections, which affect your daily life more directly than other elections. Now is the time to learn about the difference between the candidates running. You have the power with your vote to decide this election and the direction our town will take. Will you vote to align our town with the Washington, DC agenda or will you vote to take the path to keep Orange strong and make it stronger?

Now is the time to send in your absentee ballot application, especially for students heading off to college (give them a stamp to mail their ballot back). The application is available via our website, the secretary of state's website or from the Orange town clerk's office in Town Hall. Early voting starts Oct. 20.

Jody Dietch is the chair of the Orange Democratic Town Committee.

Rotary Club of Orange

Summer FUNdraising

Orange has a busy summer schedule on the fairgrounds adjacent to High Plains Community Center. A weekly farmers' market and Thursday evening concerts provide regular opportunities to meet neighbors and friends, and monthly big events draw visitors from across the region.

The summer celebrations start off in June with the Strawberry Festival and wrap up in late September with the Country Fair. In between are the July 4 fireworks extravaganza, August's fireman's carnival supplying rides for all, and early September's Rotary Summerfest. They all help reinforce the character of the town.

All are intended to be enjoyable activities and fun for all ages. Many of these also serve as important fundraisers for their sponsoring charitable organizations. The Strawberry Festival raises funds for the Orange Congregational Church and the carnival and accompanying raffle is the volunteer fire department's main fundraiser. Net revenue from the Country Fair helps the Fair Board maintain the town fairgrounds and buildings, and Summerfest

income supports a variety of local charities and organizations that Rotary assists.

Summerfest is the newest community event and was launched two years ago to attract families with younger children and acquaint them with the mission of the Rotary Club of Orange – service above self. This year Summerfest will be held from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the High Plains fairgrounds on Saturday, Sept. 6.

Children's games and crafts and inflatables are designed with pre-teens in mind, and a cornhole tournament is organized for older kids and the young-at-heart of all ages. There is no fee to come, and net revenue from onsite raffles, food trucks and beer/wine sales support Rotary's projects with Orange youth and other community groups. Pre-registration is recommended to participate in the juried cornhole tournament for cash prizes at rotarycluboforange.org.

Rotary fundraising provides the income



DAN MAY

to support scholarships for college-bound students from the town, leadership development camps for high school and middle school students, literacy programs in elementary schools, special projects and support of school-based service clubs that are managed by students themselves. All of the supported actions reinforce the notion of service to others, and it's never too young to start. It is also very rewarding to learn to work with and for others.

Rotary clubs across southern Connecticut are collectively focusing on two service needs this year – literacy and food insecurity. Literacy is well addressed in Milford and Orange, but access to wholesome food remains a challenge for many. Food pantries are comparatively well-stocked locally, but a new challenge has arisen – those most in need do not have transportation to get to the pantries and funds to deliver food are increasingly hard to obtain.

A related transportation issue is the challenge that many face to get to medical appointments. Specialty centers for dialysis, chemotherapy, physical therapy, etc., provide state-of-the-art care for recurrent needs, but they can be difficult to access for those who no longer drive or have their own cars. Funds for ride-share and ride-provider services have been especially hard-hit in the current focus on social services austerity at the federal level. Rotary has recently received multiple requests to assist other organizations with transportation needs, either with funds or volunteer drivers.

I encourage you to stop by with the whole family at Summerfest to learn about Orange Rotary and community needs, try your skill at cornhole or your luck with the raffles, and eat, drink and be merry knowing that the proceeds help those all around us.

Dan May is a local geologist and president of the Rotary Club of Orange. He can be contacted at capemay2013@gmail.com.

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

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For Nature's Sake

The Flooding That Affects Us All

Flooding is the most frequent and widespread natural hazard impacting Connecticut, according to the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. It's also becoming more complicated today as patterns of rain and wind continue to shift with climate change. That's all the more reason, say experts, to encourage more local residents to help community resilience by equipping themselves with some basic facts on flooding.

A first step for residents beginning to explore the topic of flooding is to look up their home address, workplace or school in the online, searchable map at fema.gov created by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. A look at the FEMA maps for Orange and Milford show several districts within those places outlined in blue and labeled as high risk or prone to a one-in-100-year flood. That seemingly modest likelihood translates to a 26 percent chance of flood over a 30-year period, which is serious enough to make flood insurance a requirement in those areas.

At the same time, residents should know that areas outside of the high-risk zones on those maps are not necessarily risk free. FEMA's website makes it clear that flooding can happen anywhere. By way of example,

roughly 90 percent of damages from deadly rainstorms in southwestern Connecticut last August occurred in areas that were not designated as flood zones.

The National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration defines flooding, most simply, as an overflowing of water onto land that is normally dry. The three most common types of flooding are coastal flooding; fluvial flooding, which is associated with overflow of rivers and streams; and pluvial flooding, which happens when rainfall falls on a surface that can be overwhelmed by the amount or intensity of what is falling. Pluvial flooding can be a source of flash floods, according to experts, especially in times of increasing and concentrated "dumps" of rain falling on extensive impervious, paved surfaces at volumes that can overwhelm outdated stormwater infrastructure.

The quiz below reveals more facts about flooding:

Questions:

1. True/False: Creating greenways, or leaving open space with trees and other natural foliage, next to a river can protect property and save lives during heavy rain events.

2. True/False: According to FEMA maps, close to one third of the property in Milford is categorized as a flood zone.

3. True/False: Flooding only happens when it rains.

4. True/False: It takes just 12 inches of

rushing water to carry away most cars.

5. True/False: One third of the flood insurance claims received by the National Flood Insurance Program are for damages occurring outside of high-risk flood areas.

6. Choose the right word: Between 1996 and 2014, extreme precipitation events (increased/decreased) by 50 percent, according to research out of Dartmouth.

7. True/False: High tide flooding is twice as frequent as it was 20 years ago.

8. True/False: Across the US, the few states that do not experience floods are mountainous and more arid, like Wyoming and Utah.

Answers:

1. True. Research shows a series of benefits to creating green spaces next to streams and rivers as conservation or "riparian" buffers. Among other things, such spaces can become urban amenities and recreation places.

2. True, according to Milford's city website.

3. False. Tidal flooding, sometimes referred to as nuisance flooding, sunny-day flooding or king tide flooding, according to NOAA, can in the absence of rain inundate roads or flood the basements of shoreline residences, depending on the timing of the local tides and coincidence of a new moon or full moon. Some local residents check the height and timing of tides the way most of us check the weather forecast.

4. True, according to a recommended NOAA webpage titled, "Turn around don't drown." In addition, according to that research, only 6 inches of rushing water can carry away an adult trying to cross a flood and 2 feet of rushing water can carry away an SUV or truck. The key is to stay out of floodwaters, whether walking or driving.



PATRICIA HOUSER



Tidal flooding near Milford Point. Photo by Steven Johnson.

5. True, according to floodsmart.gov. And those claims are only based on people who already have flood insurance; the actual percentage of damaged properties in the non-flood zones is certainly higher.

6. Increased. That 2021 research also definitively tied the increases to climate change.

7. True, according to NOAA. Factors contributing to tidal flooding include sea level rise due to global warming, land subsidence and loss of natural barriers like wetlands.

8. False, according to NOAA and others. Every state experiences flooding. It turns out 99 percent of counties in the US have experienced a flood in the past 20 years, according to floodsmart.gov.

For essentials in preparing for floods and more, recommended sites include: Milford's webpage on floods and hurricanes (milfordct.us/428/Floods-Hurricanes), offering disaster preparedness kits, emergency preparedness plans and protecting property from flood damage; the Trumbull's, "Flood Response for Homeowners" (trumbull-ct.gov/1042/Flood-Response-for-Homeowners) a slight variation with a user-friendly layout; Consumer Reports's "Plan Now for Potential Flooding" (consumerreports.org/home-garden/emergency-preparedness/plan-now-for-potential-flooding-a4375325168/) and the CDC's "Preparing for Floods" (cdc.gov/floods/safety/index.html).

Three local officials, also flood experts, who informed this column are acknowledged with thanks: Emmeline Harrigan, Fairfield Plan and Zoning director; Steven Johnson, Milford's assistant public works director; and Mary Rose Palumbo, Milford inland wetlands officer.

Patricia Houser, PhD, AICP is a freelance writer and researcher focused on environment and sustainability.

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Bankruptcy

The Bankruptcy Gambit

In my imagination it's the summer of '51. The King and I is playing on Broadway, fighting continues in Korea, President Truman is in the White House and the New Jersey Turnpike is set to open in the fall.

The first families to gather at the Paugusset Club in Orange are just starting to make memories and set inaugural swim and dive records. It's the year the club was established. Little is known about those first few years. I envision little vignettes of summer romances between the teenage lifeguards, all the mothers swapping recipes for their best dips and desserts and the fathers grilling hot dogs and flipping burgers.

Then my kid yells "Mom!" and I am snapped out of my reverie and brought back to reality.

My family had been to Paugy, as it is affectionately called, twice. Once was last year for "Float Night," and the second time was this year as guests for Memorial Day. My initial impression of the club was that it appeared to be a Dirty Dancing-esque time capsule: a very family-oriented, good old-fashioned place, filled with hot summer fun, swimming in a cool crystal blue pool, melting popsicles in tiny sticky hands, a pop-up wiffle ball game out back, and... tennis, anyone?

Our hosts asked us if we would like to join the club. Then our close friends and neighbors joined. We considered it.

Right around the time of our second visit, I made my last car payment. Freedom! We thus had a little room in the budget. The club would be a good place for my kid to keep busy in the summer. The club also has

Wi-Fi, so I could work from the patio and not miss a beat while my son had the time of his life. We realized we knew lots of the families who were members through Little League. I kept hearing my sister in my mind saying, "you only get 18 summers."

After some hemming and hawing, weighing the pros and cons and researching tablecloths, I signed us up.

I was reminded of a quote from my all-time favorite book, *The Great Gatsby*: "And so with the sunshine and the great bursts of leaves growing on the trees, just as things grow in fast movies, I had that familiar conviction that life was beginning over again with the summer."

In addition to the pool, the tennis courts and the ga-ga-ball pit, there is a clubhouse at Paugusset. One of the amenities inside is a "free library" – take a book, give a book. It's located on a cart outside the restrooms. Every time I would powder my nose in my early days as a member, my eyes would roll over the books and I would long for a moment when I could sit and read. However, it's never quite the right time. Either I am swimming with the neighbors or running food back and forth from the kitchen to the grill or talking on my cellphone with clients.

One day there was a book that seemed to have been tossed upon the pile haphazardly. It was a vibrant emerald-green color, like the light at the end of Daisy's dock in



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THERESA
ROSE DEGRAY

the *Great Gatsby*, and it immediately caught my eye. I stopped in my tracks. As I approached the book, I noticed it said, "The Gatsby Gambit." I just had to take it. I later returned the gesture and dropped off a Danielle Steel novel.

In *The Gatsby Gambit*, author Claire Anderson-Wheeler reimagines the roaring 20s and brings back, Jay, Tom, Nick, Jordan and Daisy. She also introduces a new character into the mix named Greta Gatsby, in a Clue-like murder mystery novel. In stolen moments between mommying and lawyering, I started to read snippets of the novel. As I read the opening scene, I had a bit of an epiphany when Jay Gatsby explains to his little sister, Greta, that a gambit is a tactic.

"In chess it means sacrifice: you lose something to gain something." Just like bankruptcy.

People often ask me if filing for bankruptcy will "ruin" their credit. I always reply that it will not ruin it; it will actually destroy it. After bankruptcy, the filer must rebuild their credit from scratch as if having been born again. But I also make it a point to explain that rebuilding credit from nothing after erasing all of their debt is always much better than struggling to pay back debt while simultaneously trying to bolster their credit from a damaged base. Sometimes you have to lose something to gain something.

I filed my own personal bankruptcy in

May 2009. In the last 16 years, I have rebuilt my credit, saved money, opened a business, gotten married, bought a house and had a kid. I had lost my credit, discharged my debts and started over. Through the process I gained knowledge about how to manage money correctly.

During the bankruptcy process itself, filers are required to take two courses. These are classes offered either online or over the phone. The first class is a pre-counseling course to allow filers to understand what they are getting into, administered by an objective third party. The second class is a financial management or debtor reeducation course. It teaches filers exact action steps to take to start rebuilding their credit immediately after receiving a discharge.

I do not tell the story about joining Paugusset to impress anyone. It took a lot of hard work to get where I am today. To me, it is not a privilege to be a member; rather, it is a hard-earned reward.

I do tell the story to impress upon folks that there is hope; there is life after bankruptcy. You can rise from the ashes, change your circumstances, learn from your mistakes and get a second chance.

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

Here's To Your Health

Wellness For Women

Let's face it, ladies: it's hard enough to a balanced life in general, but adding hormones to the mix can be even more challenging.

Hormonal health is the missing link to our aging bodies. Hormones regulate energy, mood, metabolism and more. For most women, we seem to normalize symptoms that are hormonal imbalances. I often hear my clients say, "Well, I've been up since 3 a.m." or "I've probably had too much coffee because I'm really irritable today."

These are warning signs to pay more attention to your body. There are major hormonal shifts that take place in our unique bodies starting when we are very young. The shifts include puberty, menstrual cycles, pregnancy/postpartum, perimenopause and finally menopause. I like to refer to these stages as "the changing of the tides" especially because the waves are different for each one of us. Everyday stressors such as poor sleep, high stress and processed foods can worsen imbalances. I never gave

food too much credit with my hormones. However, in my mid-40s I quickly learned how eating poorly most definitely does affect them.

It's important to know that we as women have been handed the short end of the stick when it comes to our health. The Food and Drug Administration made a policy in 1977 which recommended excluding women of childbearing years from certain drug trials.

This policy unfortunately led to a shortage of data in women's health. In 1986, the National Institutes of Health created a policy that encouraged researchers to use women in studies. Researchers have only been pushed to use women to study women's bodies since then. You can read more about it in the NIH guide for grants and contracts.

I fully support holistic health and recommend trying a more natural way to stay



.....
MICHELE
TENNEY

healthy before taking prescription drugs. However, that does not mean I am opposed to prescription drugs. I believe we should understand fully what side effects medicines can have on our bodies and weigh the risks associated with them. I recently read an article regarding hormone replacement therapy and the benefits of taking such medications. One of the main takeaways I got from this article was how HRT has been given such a bad rap due to the warning

label regarding the potential risk of breast cancer. I would encourage everyone who is reading this (including men, because you may know someone who could benefit) to do your own research on this with doctors who support longevity. It was surely an eye opener for me and gave me an entirely different vantage point on how I look at HRT.

I always ask my clients who complain about getting "old," what's the alternative? When we get creaky and are feeling pain, it's not okay to just chalk it up as getting old. We aren't supposed to live in pain. Our bodies are created to heal, restore and rejuvenate. Ladies, I'm speaking to you. You are worth every bit of effort you put into yourself. Don't find the time; make the time. Be intentional about living your most amazing life and living it whole, well and healthy. Remember you are a spirit that has a soul that lives inside a body. Here's to your health. You got this.

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

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Time Management

Certainty, Control And Confidence In Uncertain Times

We are living in uncertain times. The world seems to be spinning out of control, leaving many people feeling anxious about their present lives and uncertain about their futures. When that happens, our quality of life suffers – and so does our personal productivity.

But uncertainty doesn't have to define your experience. While we may not be able to control many external events, we can control how we respond – particularly in how we choose to spend our time in a planned and intentional manner.

Those who navigate uncertainty with a sense of certainty, control and confidence do so through effective planning. This means going far beyond a simple "to-do" list. It involves building a comprehensive short- and long-term roadmap for your life.

One of the most stressful places to be is in the dark – unsure of what's coming next. Interestingly, research has shown that people

under regular threat, such as frequent wartime attacks, sometimes experience less stress than those who are attacked only occasionally. Why? Because constant exposure forces preparedness. When you're ready to act, you're in control – even in difficult circumstances.

No one enjoys being under attack, of course. But when you know what steps to take and you're prepared to act, you'll begin to see the light at the end of the tunnel. That's when confidence starts to return.

As the saying goes, "The darkest hour is just before the dawn." A brighter future is not something that happens by accident – it's something you create on purpose.

Start with vision. Begin by imagining where you want to be one year from now – and five years from now – in each of your seven vital areas of life: health, family, finan-



DON WETMORE

cial, intellectual, social, professional and spiritual.

This exercise is not about predicting what external events might bring. It's about envisioning, without limitations, where you want to be – as if you could wave a magic wand and design the ideal version of each area of your life.

Once you have that vision, work backward. Ask yourself:

- What must happen in the next year to move toward that

vision?

- What needs to happen this month? This week?
- What can I do tomorrow to start making it real?

At that point, the choices around how to spend your time become much clearer.

Plan with purpose. Each evening, take a

few minutes to plan the next day. Your list will include the things you have to do – but just as important, include the things you want to do. These should be the steps that move you forward in your seven vital areas. This daily alignment of tasks with purpose is how you build momentum.

Even in times of boom and bust, people who live with targeted goals and daily plans experience far less anxiety. They are not immobilized by uncertainty. They live by design, not by default.

As you execute your daily plan and move steadily toward your desired future, you'll discover that you're no longer reacting to life – you're creating it. And with that comes what so many crave in uncertain times. Certainty. Control. Confidence.

Don Wetmore is a certified business coach and the author of "The Productivity Handbook" and "Organizing Your Life." Contact him at 203-394-8216 or ctsem@msn.com.

Book Reviews

The Night I Met Katherine Center

I have been fortunate to meet several of my favorite authors at various book signings.

I am extremely grateful to have met Chris Bohjalian (Hour of the Witch, The Jackal's Mistress) on three separate occasions; on each occasion he was charming and gracious. Bianca Marais (The Witches of Moonshyne Manor, A Most Puzzling Murder), being Canadian via South Africa was deeply appreciative of reaching an American audience. Stephen Kiernan (The Glass Chateau, The Hummingbird) is perhaps the most charming of all, with a ready smile and giant hugs.

Yet for all the kindnesses these authors have shown me, I had yet to meet Katherine Center. I despaired at never meeting her.

I follow Center on social media, primarily on Facebook and Instagram. Through the years we have developed a mutually supportive relationship, and each year I keep my fingers crossed that she has an East Coast book signing (she lives in Houston and quite a number of her book signings take place in Texas). Each year is a "sorry, not this time" – until June 2025, when I saw a book signing

at Martin House Books in Westerly, Rhode Island a mere hour and 30 minutes away from Milford.

I could barely contain my excitement the day of the event. Martin House Books is directly across the street from the venue, and of course I had to pay a visit and support an independent bookstore.

I swear I really didn't plan this: I saw Center exit a vehicle and she turned around when I squealed her name. She squealed as well, and we exchanged a big ole Texas-sized hug. I was fortunate enough to spend a few minutes with her privately. As we talked about how great it was to finally meet each other, her husband Gordon walked in with a bouquet of flowers for me. I was flabbergasted, discombobulated and overwhelmed at their kindness.

I was seated in the first row when Center began her talk. She was quite humorous in describing the research she needed to do for her latest novel. She talked about the importance of romantic comedies and romance in general. She went on to talk about writing



CARMELA DEVITO

and reading with joy, and how joy is such a big factor in her writing. All her novels have happy endings, and they focus on contemporary women facing real-life problems.

It wouldn't be a book review without mention of Center's books. I'm going to start from the oldest to the newest with a brief synopsis of each.

- Get Lucky: Sarah is looking for happiness and gets lucky as a side benefit.

- The Lost Husband: This is the novel that inspired me to begin communicating with Center. After the unexpected death of her husband, Libby accepts an invitation from her aunt to live on her ranch in the Texas hill country.

- The Bright Side of Disaster: New mom Jenny is abandoned by her boyfriend and faces single motherhood.

- Happiness for Beginners: Newly-divorced Helen searches for career fulfillment and getting her life back on track.

- How to Walk Away: A night begins romantically but ends disastrously (there is a happy ending).

- What You Wish For: Librarian Samantha leads a happy life until her nemesis becomes her school's principal.

- The Bodyguard: Executive protection agent Hannah is assigned to protect actor Jack from a stalker.

- Hello Stranger: Losing the ability to recognize faces impacts a portrait artist's ability to participate in an art contest and exhibition.

- The Rom-Comers: Struggling screenwriter Emma faces a major challenge when asked to revise a script with a well-seasoned writer.

- The Love Haters: I haven't gotten to this one yet, but I have no doubt it will be as wonderful as her others.

Center's books are like warm comfy blankets that hug you tight.

Carmela DeVito, a voracious reader with a journalism degree from Marquette University, is a retired social worker and a member of the Friends of the Milford Library.

Best Of

(Continued From 1)

the event. "I just want to congratulate all of our winners."

Some notable winners who received special mention during the celebration included Bin 100 restaurant in the eating and drinking category; RumRunners in the best local band category; Mathnasium in the

family and education category; YouTherapy in best physical therapy category; and Purple Pantry in the best local cause category.

Several businesses helmed by Milford-Orange Times contributors also won awards, including Dream Vacations, Prindle Hill Construction and SM Cooper Photography.

The full list of awards is available on the Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce website at milfordct.com/best-of-milford/.



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Wine Talk

Summer Red Wines

Generally, when we think of summer wines we think of some crisp white wines and perhaps a rosé or a sparkling wine. How about some reds? Some reds will match well with outdoor parties and those nice, long summer days. Here are some fruity and fresh summer reds that will go with a barbecue or a pizza night.

One of my favorites is Santa Julia Reserva Malbec 2022. At around \$20 it is a great buy. It has a nice mocha smell and a great vanilla finish. It has lots of dark fruit and a little pepper on the end. It goes great with barbecue.

Several red blends are great choices as well. They are generally easy drinking and inexpensive. You can chill these wines slightly, and they are easy to share. I like

blends that feature Cabernet and Merlot. You have to experiment and find your favorite.

Valpolicella is a great summer choice. Tommasi Raphael Valpolicella is a famous brand, and they make a great classico as well. It has lots of fruit and big cherries and a little black pepper as well, with some earthy characteristics on the finish. You can get it at \$18 or \$19.

Decoy is a very popular Merlot, seen on several restaurant wine lists these days. This wine has a nice balance and is easy to drink. Lots of berry flavors with some vanilla on the finish make this one



RAYMOND SPAZIANI

very popular. It retails for about \$25.

If sparkling wine is your choice, Prosecco has become popular in the past few years. This wine is Italy's answer to Champagne. It is made in the Veneto region in northern Italy and it ranges from dry to semi-sweet. It has flavors of honeysuckle, pear and melon, and the wine is relatively reasonably priced.

One nice entry-level Prosecco is Zardetto's brut. It is light, clean and very crisp, and makes a great start to any summer affair. At \$12 it is a great buy. Kirklund has Prosecco for \$8.99 that is of surpris-

ing quality.

Try some of these great red wines or one of these summer sparklers. 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.

Real Talk: You Ask, A Pro Answers

Realtors And Resources

The resource component of the real estate profession is both significant and ever-changing. Homes require constant repair of some kind, and upgrades are never-ending, as they increase the value of your property.

Price support is what it is all about. So where do you go when you need help and education? How do you know what is the best price for work to be done? These answers are most often found when you call your local agent and then take the time to research with experienced service people.

Today many companies are starting out or hiring part-timers. You want references, generations of skilled individuals who have spent time being the best they can be. A realtor knows these workers. Keep in mind that the issues you are having are common and the professionals who sell homes go

through these dilemmas with all their clients over the years.

You can meet great architects, masons, surveyors, flooring specialists, etc. Budgeting for work to be done is always the top question, so why waste time and money trying to call someone on your own? Every year you should complete a few small projects; you will reap the profits down the line.

Many times, the work to be done is something you cannot see with the naked eye. This is why you call your resource – the agent – to make sure you can trust those who give you a great estimate. An active realtor knows the good and not so good "home specialists." Make that one phone call.

Never sell yourself short. From the land-



BARBARA LEHRER

scape to the basement, if you are not sure how to handle a problem, you can also contact a home inspector to give you another perspective. This individual is good at preventative advice. In my business, this week's advice was to power wash your air conditioning compressor outside if it is dirty. Also check its wiring and add moth balls around the wires, as the mice like to chew there and do major damage that can be costly.

Another new idea is an accessory dwelling unit, a freestanding unit on your grounds for multigenerational families – or even for income. All towns are unique in their rules, but this new idea is really taking off. It is driven by a need for affordable housing, and

builders are jumping in to assist along with the realtor to get financing and zoning approvals.

These beautiful two-bedroom, two-bath with two-car garages are sold for under \$300,000. You can find out in an hour if your property qualifies for the space, but to add 1,000 square feet of living space, even attached, is now what some towns are approving. These long-overdue homes are custom-made and budgets come in at an even lower cost.

Here is a realtor's information. ADUs could be the answer to where mom and dad should be, or your young newlywed children who cannot afford today's prices yet.

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

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Foodie Foursome

A Classic Irish Pub In West Haven

The history of Irish pubs in America began in the 1800s as waves of Irish immigrants arrived in the US seeking opportunity and refuge from famine and political unrest. They came with their music and food. Their passion for a shared space became a second home and a vital hub to connect with friends and family for comfort in this new world.

Irish pubs are common in the US – most cities have one.

Irish pubs were simple establishments that offered a familiarity of tradition, hospitality and heritage. These pubs and taverns were often family-run institutions that were passed down through generations.

In 1983, the Walsh family took what was previously a dive bar and transformed it into a truly magical space, Duffy's Tavern. The themed décor features a warm Irish atmosphere adorned with rich, authentic antiques, sports memorabilia and globally inspired comfort foods with a focus on traditional Irish fare. Chris Walsh is the second-generation owner. His general manager is longtime friend Michelle Tafuto, and his head chef, Hector Perales, has been with the restaurant for 30 years. This tavern truly runs as a family and treats its patrons as extensions of their family.

Friends Kevin, Mike and Nancy joined me for our "Foodie Foursome" night out at Duffy's. We entered the restaurant and were greeted by the warm, rich tones of the wood bar, furniture and lighting. It was obvious

that the staff was friendly and attentive.

Our evening began with a selection of unique apps, starting with their signature stuffed clams, which has been on the menu for 40 years. These were very large shells stuffed with their own mix of chopped clams, scallops, red and green peppers, bacon bits and Swiss cheese combined with a moist bread stuffing. This was a perfect beginning to the evening.

Next, we sampled a couple of unique and tasty cocktails: the lemon meringue pie and the pear martini. They were both tasty and refreshing. The petite filet mignon crostini followed these. The pan-seared and delicately seasoned filet mignon was tender, with ample slices over seasoned toasted French bread with horseradish cream and chopped scallions. They were the ying to the yang of the next appetizer – Irish nachos.

The deep-fried potato wedges were not over-fried like most bar versions. They had plentiful potato filling and were smothered in melted cheddar-jack cheese, chopped scallions and smoked bacon, served with sour cream. If I was just meeting friends for a drink at their incredible bar, or with family for dinner, this would be the perfect starter.

We followed our apps with the steakhouse salad. The flatiron steaks were large slices of medium slices of over mixed greens. The



STEVE COOPER

salad was abundant and adorned with sliced red onions, glazed walnuts, grape tomatoes, crumbled Gorgonzola and a balsamic vinaigrette. This was a wonderful salad, fresh and chilled.

The first two entrees that arrived at the table were two Irish classics and some of my favorite comfort foods. The shepherd's pie was served in a large hot vessel straight from the oven containing layers of seasoned ground beef, corn, carrots and celery topped with house-made mashed potatoes. It was finished with savory brown gravy. The combination was perfectly melded together for that classic taste without drying out or being overly saturated and fatty.

Next up was the grilled corned beef Reuben. This time-honored sandwich of rye bread was filled with ample layers of incredibly fresh house-made, and tender, corned beef. The meat was topped with melted Swiss, sauerkraut and thousand island dressing, with fries on the side. I have had many Reubens through the years, and this was one I would definitely order again.

Next up was a culinary composition of tender boneless chicken breast sautéed in a white wine reduction with sautéed red bell peppers, onions, capers and garlic. It was served with rice and green beans. The chicken Clarita, named after a past employee, was

a beautifully constructed dish that is regularly rotated into their menu.

Last was the "gotta order" fish and chips, with a twist. This was a huge, thick piece of fresh and flakey cod encased and hand battered. This batter, with Smithwick's Irish Ale, provided for a tasty and unique crust, deep-fried and served with the previously mentioned twist. That same batter was used to make some of the best onion rings found anywhere.

We finished our culinary trip to this wonderful tavern with a house-made rice pudding stacked with a mound of fresh whipped cream that was the perfect way to end the evening.

If you enjoy Irish pubs or just want to try a different restaurant, this will become a regular in your rotation. Duffy's Tavern is located in West Haven at 305 Captain Thomas Blvd. They are open Tuesday through Saturday from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. and on Sunday from 11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. They have a great brunch menu on Sundays from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. For reservations, call 203-933-9721.

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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Fireman's Carnival Heats Up In Orange



The Orange Volunteer Fire Department held its annual Fireman's Carnival from July 31 to Aug. 3 at the High Plains Community Center fairgrounds in Orange. Photos by Lexi Crocco.

Latin Jazz Band To Perform At Case Memorial

Latin jazz band Goza will perform a variety of Latin dance rhythms at Case Memorial Library on Saturday, Aug. 23 at 2 p.m. "Goza" is the Spanish word for joy, and that is exactly what this vibrant musical group aims to bring to their audiences. They deliver music from Latin America, Brazil and Spain with such instruments as guitar, violin, horns and percussion – all

accompanied by rich vocals. Goza's repertoire covers samba, salsa, bachata, rumba, cha-cha, cumbia, flamenco, tango and bolero. Much Latin music blends with other different influences. For example, cumbia is a music-and-dance genre with roots going back to Colombia, but it pulses with African, indigenous and European musical

elements as well. Goza performs both standards and original songs, but the audience will also hear a wide array of music from well-known groups with distinct Latin overtones such as Tito Puente, Gipsy Kings, Buena Vista, Selena, Santana but also the Beatles, Stevie Wonder, Van Morrison and Guns & Roses. Their rock

music playlist can go from something soulfully lyrical such as "Hotel California" to something irresistibly upbeat such as "La Bamba." The event is sponsored by the Friends of Case Memorial Library. It is free and open to the public, but registration is required. Register at <https://casememoriallibrary.org> or call 203-891-2170.

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Orange Rotary Honors Locals



The Rotary Club of Orange held its annual meeting in July. Top photo: Steve Cooper presented the Paul Harris Foundation award to Cindy and Ashley Vassilowitch. Bottom photo: New Rotary officers were sworn in for the year. From left: Dan May, Trish Pearson, C Robert Sigler, Michael Lanza and Rotary District Governor Stephanie Phillips administering the oath. Photos by Steve Cooper.

Orange Synagogue Welcomes New Rabbi



Congregation Or Shalom's incoming Rabbi Lindsey Healy-Pollack and Rabbi Emeritus Alvin Wainhaus, who served the congregation for 44 years, examining the congregation's Holocaust Memorial Torah scroll. The scroll, which is approximately 225 years old, was rescued from Czechoslovakia after World War II. Photo by Steve Cooper.

Congregation Or Shalom in Orange has announced the appointment of Rabbi Lindsey Healy-Pollack as its new rabbi. She assumed the pulpit on Aug. 1, replacing longtime rabbi Alvin Wainhaus.

"Jewish community and tradition should be accessible to all. With curiosity and creativity, I hope to help everyone to discover their unique personal connection to Judaism, regardless of their background or abilities," Healy-Pollack said.

"Our congregation appreciates Rabbi Lindsey's warmth, intelligence and her capacity to connect with individuals across various ages and backgrounds, as well as her strong commitment to Judaism and Torah," said Bob Spaulding, president of Congregation Or Shalom. "Additionally, Rabbi Lindsey upholds our tradition of fostering a welcoming, diverse, innovative, and dynamic conservative community in Orange and the surrounding areas."

Healy-Pollack previously served as rabbi of Congregation Kol HaNeshamah in Englewood, New Jersey. She also was an educator and program coordinator for

the introduction to Judaism program at Town and Village Synagogue in New York, where she taught and guided students through the process of joining the Jewish people.

Healy-Pollack was ordained in 2018 at the Jewish Theological Seminary, where she also earned a master of arts degree in Talmud and rabbinic literature. She grew up in Houston, Texas and spent five years of her childhood living in Cairo. Healy-Pollack developed her passion for Jewish living and learning as an undergraduate at Scripps College in Claremont, California, where she studied anthropology and philosophy. After college, she moved to New York and earned a masters in museum studies from New York University.

Healy-Pollack includes meditation as part of her spiritual practice and can often be found outdoors, seeking inspiration and connection in nature. In her free time, she says she enjoys writing poetry, dabbling in a variety of arts and crafts, "nerding out" about history or whatever topic sparks her interest and practicing yoga.



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The Garden Spot

Canna Lilies, The Sunny Border Queens

Most gardeners think of plants that are grown from a lumpy looking underground clump as bulbs, mainly spring bloomers that we plant in the fall like tulips and daffodils. When a friend gave me canna lily "bulbs," I had a lot to learn about these sunny border queens.

Canna lilies (genus *Canna*) aren't lilies, but they've earned their name because of their flamboyant flowers and lush, tropical foliage. Nor are they bulbs, but rhizomes.

Rhizomes are those lumpy looking stem-like structures that grow horizontally, forming roots from the bottom and sending shoots upwards. They often appear as nothing more than roots and are basically underground storage systems for the plant. The buds form at different parts along the rhizome, not just the tip as would be the case with a bulb. One thing I found interesting is

that because they aren't bulbs, my favorite bulb wholesalers, such as Colorblends in Bridgeport, don't carry them. But no worries: some of the big box store have cannas available in containers which you can either plant in the ground or leave in the container for the growing season.

Their flowers come in a variety of colors, usually in the red and orange range. They have large green and/or red leaves.

Cannas are native to tropical and subtropical regions of the Americas and were grown by indigenous peoples who used its starchy rhizomes as food and medicine. When Spanish explorers brought cannas to Europe in the 16th century, they quickly became all the



PAT DRAY

rage by the mid-1800s in Victorian gardens for their exotic appearance. They were so popular that massive displays of cannas were a centerpiece at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair.

Here in the Northeast, canna bulbs would be planted in late April through early June after the danger of the last frost and when nighttime temperatures stay above 50 degrees. I know this was quite a challenge this year as we didn't have consistent 50-degree nights until late May.

Plant them in a sunny location, as they do best with six to eight hours of direct sunlight daily. They should be planted between 5-8 inches deep in a rich, well-draining soil with a neutral to slightly acidic pH (6-7). Do you remember soil pH from the previ-

ous Garden Spot? If you already had your soil tested, you would know if you need to add any amendments. You should also feed them mid-summer with a balanced fertilizer such as a 10-10-10. Since these are tropical plants, the soil should be kept moist and not allowed to dry out.

Here in Connecticut, you'll need to dig up rhizomes after the first frost. Let them dry out for a few days, then store them in peat moss or vermiculite in a cool, dry place (40-55° Fahrenheit) until next spring. Your cannas should be striking in the back of a sunny border – remember some of them get as tall as five feet – so definitely worth the extra step.

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

Travel Matters

Exploring Alaska? Choices Abound

We just returned from an 11-night cruise on Cunard's Queen Elizabeth.

The last time we cruised Alaska was 10 years ago, and the choices were so much different than today. We took a seven-night cruise from Vancouver to Whittier combined with a three-night land tour to Denali and Fairbanks. That cruise-tour still exists, but the land portions have expanded to include more nights, including a seven-night version to more obscure areas and the Yukon.

What attracted us to this particular adventure was the three days of scenic cruising of fjords and glaciers that can only be seen from a ship or small plane. The scenic cruising included Glacier Bay National Park (which should be on everyone's hit list for Alaska), the Hoonah-Angoon Fjords and Misty Fjords, including Rudyard Bay. The bay really wowed us as we came so close

to these huge vertical walls of fjords and forest.

We also stopped at Sitka, Ketchikan, Juneau, Haines and Victoria, where we stayed for 12 hours on this island with a strong British influence. We toured the beautiful Butchart Gardens, which is celebrating its 100th year of operation.

In Sitka, we visited the Fortress of the Bear, a home for orphaned bear cubs who have lost their mothers. Sitka is the only place on earth where you will find a mix of brown bear and polar bear, since polar bears migrated from Russia to Sitka, creating this hybrid mix.

In Ketchikan, we enjoyed a special complimentary excursion, courtesy of our Travel Leaders Network affiliation, to George



KAREN QUINN-PANZER

Inlet Lodge on Revillagigedo Island, where we had an unlimited crab and mimosa brunch. This was followed by a private visit to Saxman Village, where the Tlingit tribe has preserved their community and cultural activities. We were invited to participate in their tribal dances after their performance in the village.

In Haines, we explored the area with a photographic expert who coached us on getting the best photos from her favorite spots among the mountains and lakes in the Chilkoot and Chilkat areas.

Ours was just one example of an expanded discovery of Alaska. Other options include luxury ships and smaller expedition ships that have expanded their Alaska offerings. UnCruise offered a trip for only 36

people in the Aleutian Islands this year, and Lindblad National Geographic held excursions for up to 100 guests.

The current cruise schedule lists 728 Alaskan sailings for 2026, up from 643 in 2025, reflecting a surge in interest in America's last frontier. There is such a variety that whether you are an adventurous explorer, a senior with limited mobility or a family on a budget, there is definitely an option for you.

Whether you're looking for a luxury escape, a budget-friendlier option or a family vacation that everyone will talk about for years to come, wave hello to the six new ships cruising to Alaska in 2026.

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

CONGREGATION OR SHALOM

OPEN HOUSE RECEPTION WEEKEND



SEPT 5 SHABBAT AT THE GAZEBO

7:00PM-Friday Service at the Orange Gazebo: Join us for our annual outdoor Shabbat service (rain location: synagogue). Come alone, with family, friends or pets - and bring your lawn chairs.

SEPT 6 SHABBAT SERVICES

9:30AM- Saturday Shabbat Service: Experience a special service led by our new rabbi with additional programming for kids. Learn about our exciting programs and committees.

SEPT 7 MINYAN & MIMOSAS

9:00AM-Sunday Morning Service: Enjoy a brief service co-sponsored by our Men's Club and Sisterhood, followed by a special breakfast. Children's activities

INFO

You are warmly invited as our guest for a special weekend of community. Whether a current or former member, a long-time friend, or someone interested in exploring a journey with us, this is a wonderful opportunity to meet our new rabbi, Rabbi Lindsey Heeley-Pollack and members of our congregation. Please let us know which events you plan to attend by using the info below or the QR code.

TO REGISTER OR FOR MORE INFORMATION, [203.799.2341](tel:203.799.2341) or INFO@ORSHALOMCT.ORG




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Insuring Your Future

Impact Of The Big Beautiful Bill On Health Insurance

Many people are curious about how their insurance will be impacted by the recent legislation passed by Congress. There have been many reports that quote general statistics about the cumulative effect. The important question is: how will it affect you and your family?

There are two groups who will feel the greatest initial impact: people on individual plans through the Access Health CT and people who receive extra help with insurance premiums and medical expenses (Medicaid/HUSKY). We are still waiting for the insurance companies to publish final plans and premiums for 2026 and to learn what and how much of the lost federal funds will be replaced by state funds.

As of now there are some changes that we know will impact both the individual and Medicare recipients.

Individual insurance through Access Health:

The income range to qualify for advanced premium tax credits will be smaller. This means that people who qualified for a credit

that reduced their premium may find that the credit is less, which will increase the premium even if their income is the same.

It is expected that Connecticut and Anthem will still offer plans on the exchange, but there will be premium increases. The Insurance Committee and commissioner are currently holding public hearings to get feedback from constituents. Contact your state legislator to express your concern about what your insurance could cost next year.

The application process will require proof of income before the insurance is effective. Currently new enrollees have 60 days to provide this information.

Some people with refugee, asylum or temporary immigration status may no longer be eligible to apply for a plan through the exchange.

Medicare recipients:

The standard (base) premium for Medi-



TRISH PEARSON

care B is projected to increase \$21.50 per month from the current \$185 per month to \$206.50. There will also be increases for those paying an income adjusted premium of approximately 10 percent.

The maximum deductible for name-brand medications on prescription drug plans will be \$650. All the Medicare Advantage plans can apply a range up to this maximum.

Most of the current companies will continue to offer a variety of low or \$0 premium PPO and HMO plans. They will continue to include extra benefits such as dental, hearing aids, eyewear allowance and over-the-counter medications. The exact amount is still unknown. Overall, the impact on MAPD plans does not appear to be too dramatic for 2026. This is good news.

Medicaid recipients:

The income eligibility for HUSKY may change. Much of the impact depends on how

much the state will pick up from the shortfall left by federal cuts. Some people who now qualify for HUSKY will need to transition to a plan on the health exchange. They should still qualify for a generous tax credit, but they may have copays and deductibles depending on the plan they choose.

Medicare recipients who currently qualify for extra help (qualified Medicare beneficiaries) may be impacted if the income limits change. At this point we do not anticipate changes that will affect current Medicare recipients in 2026.

Changes in health insurance are a great concern for everyone. It will require effort, tenacity and a little creativity to negotiate the changing landscape. The informed insurance broker is your friend in navigating this process.

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

Recycling Tip: Summer Produce And The Benefits Of Composting

By Susan Wineland

Ahh, summertime, with its blue skies, flowering trees and shrubs, and warm temperatures. We also get to enjoy the delicious fruit and vegetables at our local farm stands.

Not only is their produce delicious and nutritious, it's a great way to support our local farms and farmers.

The Orange Community Farmer's Market is held at High Plains Community Center at 525 Orange Center Rd. every Thursday from 3:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. from the last Thursday in June through the last Thursday in September. The market features a variety of Connecticut-grown products, including bakery items, eggs, flowers, milk, meats, soaps, plants and seasonal vegetables, as well as crafts and services. There are also new vendors every week and live music on certain evenings.

It's also a great time of year to start home composting if you haven't yet. There are lots of produce scraps after cutting or trimming, so summer is a great time of year to begin. If you prefer, collect your food scraps and take them to one of the four green compost bins at the Orange Transfer

and Recycling Center, located at the top of the hill next to the textile collection bins.

Composting is a simple way to help the Earth and your garden thrive. It's easy to do, budget-friendly, and packed with benefits for our yards, our wallets and the environment. Composting is a win all around.

Composting is a major player in reducing landfill waste, which is very costly to haul because of its weight. Instead of tossing out those fruit peels, coffee grounds and other food scraps, we can turn them into rich, earthy compost. That means fewer garbage bags heading to the curb or the transfer station and less organic material rotting in landfills where it produces harmful methane gas. In fact, composting helps cut back on greenhouse gas emissions and even captures carbon from the air, storing it safely in the soil.

The perks don't stop there. Compost is nature's best fertilizer. It feeds the soil with nutrients and beneficial microbes, boosting plant health and increasing garden yields – without the need for chemical fertilizers. It also improves the structure of soil, helping it hold onto water longer and reducing the need for frequent watering. That means healthier plants, better crops and a lower

water bill.

Composting also helps fight plant diseases and pests naturally. By adding beneficial organisms to the soil, compost creates a more balanced ecosystem right in our backyards. It also supports biodiversity, helping our gardens become a safe haven for helpful bugs and microbes.

Getting started is easier than you might think. Choose a bin with good airflow; there are plenty available for purchase, or you can build your own with items like old wooden boxes, storage bins or chicken wire. To build a healthy compost pile, just layer "browns" (dry leaves, paper, cardboard) and "greens" (veggie scraps, grass clippings), keep the pile as moist as a damp sponge, and give it a good turn every so often to keep it aerated. Be sure to skip the meat, dairy, and oily leftovers – they can smell and attract pests. For those who have a home compost, all the meat, dairy, bones and shells – all those things you don't throw in your composter – can go into one of the four green compost bins at the Orange Transfer and Recycling Center. For those without a compost system at home, all food scraps can go into the town's green bins.

Removing residue from produce is im-

portant for removing pesticides and bacteria. Just make a solution of one teaspoon of baking soda with every two cups of cold water. Soak your fruits and vegetables for a minute, then rinse. For delicate fruits and berries, make the solution in a bowl and put the berries in a colander or strainer. Soak them for 10-15 minutes, then rinse the berries thoroughly.

Baking soda is a miracle ingredient in natural cleaning solutions. It's not only safe but gets the job done. Studies have shown that baking soda removes 70 percent to 99 percent of pesticides.

Whether you're growing a backyard veggie patch, sprucing up your flower beds, or simply looking to reduce your waste, composting is a smart, sustainable solution. So let's grab a bin, start saving those scraps and let nature do the rest. It's surprising how much good can grow from a little compost. Whether you shop at one of our local farmer's market stands or in a neighborhood grocery store, bring your own bags from home, and wash those fruits and vegetables.

Susan Wineland is a member of the Orange Recycling Committee.

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Adopt A Pet: Pearl



Pearl is a medium sized pit mix, 11 months old, spayed, and has all of her shots. She is friendly, affectionate, loving and gentle. She can be adopted from Milford Animal Control, located at 664 East Broadway in Milford. For more information, call 203-783-3279. Photo courtesy of Milford Animal Control.

Shooting Academy Opens In Orange



Artemis Shooting Sports & Training Academy held a ribbon-cutting to celebrate its grand opening on July 10. Located at 543-545 Boston Post Rd. in Orange, the event was held in partnership with the Amity Chamber of Commerce and featured a facility tour that was topped off with a pizza party. In addition to a broad offering of shooting products, Artemis provides training and education for all skill levels. The venue includes ten shooting lanes, a pro shop, a members lounge, instructors, and a training curriculum. Dan Paris, general manager of Artemis, and his wife, Katie, were joined by Barry Lee Cohen, CEO of the Amity Chamber of Commerce, along with family members, customers, students, and staff. Photo by Robert Creigh.

Local Students Graduate From Green STEP Program

Samuel Le of Milford and Clara Ortenzi of Orange were among more than 50 Connecticut high school students who recently graduated from the Green STEP Summer Program. The three-week paid-to-train development program aimed at careers in the energy efficiency and green building trade industries, is offered by Energize Connecticut sponsors Eversource and Avangrid subsidiaries United Illuminating, Southern Connecticut Gas and Connecticut Natural Gas.

During the awards ceremony, held July 10 at Gateway Community College, students were presented with their program completion certificates and had an opportunity to participate in a career expo as well as meet with area businesses on available internship and career opportunities.

“Helping clean energy jobs flourish in Connecticut is essential to our state’s future and underscores the growing significance of this industry,” said Eversource Vice President of Energy Efficiency and Electric Mobility Tilak Subrahmanian. “Over the past

three years, investments in this sector have supported nearly 46,000 jobs statewide. This industry is growing rapidly, and we need more trained, skilled professionals entering the workforce to support its future – which will spur increased economic development for communities across the state.”

Taught by certified industry experts, participating students had the option of selecting three educational tracks – weatherization and existing building upgrades; decarbonization and efficient building systems; and green building and new construction. In addition to the program certificates, 51 students earned the Knauf Insulation certification, and 31 students received technical certifications needed for the green building and energy efficiency industries.

Eleven students were also awarded Certificates of Excellence in their Education Track, including Le and Ortenzi.

Work-ready training courses, such as heat pumps and geothermal, resume and interview prep and decarbonization, were also available to all students.

Volunteer Training Course Open At Milford Rape Crisis Center

The Rape Crisis Center of Milford is currently accepting applications for its in-person volunteer training course for sexual assault crisis counselor state certification that begins this fall.

Our 40-hour training curriculum provides volunteers with the education and skills necessary to effectively support survivors on its hotline and during crisis responses. No previous counseling experience is required.

Volunteers must be 18 or older with a valid driver’s license and reliable transportation.

Volunteers must also live within 30 minutes of all police departments and hospitals in the crisis center’s service area, which includes Ansonia, Derby, Milford, Orange, Seymour, Shelton and West Haven.

Training begins in September. Most class meetings are held in Milford on Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

For more information or to request an application, contact stephanie@rapecrisiscenterofmilford.org, call 203-874-8712 or visit rapecrisiscenterofmilford.org/get-involved.

Health And Safety Fair Returning To Orange

The Orange Senior Center will host its 22nd Health and Safety Fair on Friday, Sept. 26 from 10 a.m. to noon at High Plains Community Center, located at 525 Orange Center Rd. in Orange.

The health fair is geared to older adults, service professionals, caregivers, family members and others concerned with aging issues. It will showcase over 50 vendors in services areas such as physical and mental health, transportation, home and personal

safety, nutrition, insurance, financial, government and other areas related to healthy, successful aging. Free screenings for diabetes, blood pressure and more will be offered.

Parking and admission is free and the location is handicapped-accessible. Maplewood of Orange will be sponsoring a complimentary bag lunch for the first 150 people to register the day of the fair.

For more information, contact the Orange Senior Center at 203-891-4788.

RealTrends Verified 2025 Award – Luxury Property Specialist A Trusted Name in Orange Real Estate for Over 40 Years By Barbara Lehrer, Special to the Orange Milford Times

Recently honored with the RealTrends Verified 2025 Award for Luxury Property Specialist, I’m proud to continue serving the Orange community with the same dedication and care that have guided my real estate career for over four decades.

In a town where community and consistency matter, it’s been my privilege to help hundreds of families navigate the real estate market—whether buying, selling, downsizing, or planning for the future. My approach has always been about more than just transactions; it’s about trust, smart guidance, and supporting clients through every stage of life.

As a longtime resident and full-time agent, I know Orange—not just the market, but the people, neighborhoods, services, and local dynamics that truly shape the experience of homeownership. And as the author of the Real Talk column for over 10 years, I’ve enjoyed keeping readers informed on market trends, real estate tips, and community updates.

What sets my service apart is a hands-on, full-service approach. I offer carefully vetted referrals for staging, repairs, clean-outs, and moving support, along with honest advice about home values, renovations, and investment decisions. Whether you’re moving across town or across the country, I’m here to help you make informed choices with confidence.

With Orange recently named the #1 most popular town in New Haven County, there’s no doubt our local market is in high demand. And in times like these, having a trusted, experienced advisor can make all the difference.



There’s never any pressure—just straightforward conversations, helpful tools, and a real commitment to this community I love so much.

If you’re thinking about making a move—or simply have questions—I’d be happy to connect. Sometimes, the best place to start is with a conversation over coffee.

Wire Fraud is Real. Before wiring any money, call the intended recipient at a number you know is valid to confirm the instructions. Additionally, please note that the sender does not have authority to bind a party to a real estate contract via written or verbal communication.

September 16, 2025

Orange Economic Development Corporation’s 19th ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT Race Brook Country Club 246 Derby Avenue, Orange

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Steeple Repaired On Historic Milford Church

By Marilyn May

Good heavens – what happened to the big white Congregational church on the hill?

It looks like the central section, from the roof line to the top of the steeple, is covered by a black shroud. Behind that covering, however, workers on scaffoldings are laboring to restore and renovate the steeple that soars 135 feet high so that the ringing of the bell can be heard from as far away as possible. The steeple is also tall enough to make

it vulnerable to all kinds of New England weather that has weakened and rotted parts of it.

The use of church steeples goes back hundreds of years. They could be seen from many miles away, and that helped people find the houses of worship. Architecturally, the steeples enhance the lines of the buildings, and by their shape and height, people just naturally look up to the top. Some say that it symbolically makes one look skyward toward heaven.

Steeple served many purposes. Early churches often had clocks at a time when many people did not have their own timepieces, and the church bells rang to call people to worship and to later sound Milford's 9 p.m. curfew. When someone died in the settlement, the bell rang nine times to announce the death of a man, seven times for a deceased woman and fewer times for a child.

The iconic First United Church of Christ, Congregational has a long history of steeples collapsing, or almost collapsing. And replacing or restoring steeples is extremely expensive.

When the church and town were founded in 1639, the first worship services were held in a common house that was built in one day with pre-cut lumber on the site where Milford's first English settlers landed on the west side of the harbor, just below the

cascades of water. The common house was their first shelter, their first place to discuss the layout of the village and their first place to worship in the wilderness where most of them would likely spend the rest of their lives.

Settlers wanted a proper church early in 1640-1641, so a building 30 feet by 30 feet (some say 40 feet by 40 feet) was constructed and called a meeting house, because it served as a place of worship and a place for town meetings. It was located a little south of the current church.

The meeting house had a peaked roof topped by a turret where, before there was a bell, a drummer beat a lively rhythm signaling that church services would be starting soon. Sometimes a sentry was stationed there to look for any trouble from the indigenous Native Americans.

In time, the building was too small to accommodate all the settlers wanting to worship or gather for town meetings. It was demolished in 1728.

Then, with perhaps a little too much enthusiasm, they built a second meeting house in 1728. It was an enormous structure, 84 feet long, 54 feet wide and three stories high with a church steeple that was 95 feet high. There was, however, a new problem. The building was rickety, and in the sanctuary the walls and timbers creaked and shook and scared everyone. As news of that spread, it was difficult to get substitute pastors. It is clearly stated in church records that visiting pastors preached much shorter sermons and then left the church immediately, hoping to get out before the whole building cracked open. "O ye of little faith."

Building inspectors were called to check the soundness of the construction. Surprisingly, they reported that the building was

safe, and it was not going to collapse and crush everyone.

Meanwhile, steeples in this second "safe" building collapsed twice, once in the 1700s and again during a hurricane in 1821.

Finally, church leaders said the swaying of the building and the loss of two steeples was enough. Steeples were costly to replace, and New England weather was not going to change. Finally in December 1822 the second building was demolished. During the dismantling of this meeting house, it was discovered that the mortices were cracked and not much wood could be salvaged for the next building.

The third, current church was built in 1824 exactly on the site of the second church, and in 2024 the congregation celebrated this building's 200th anniversary. The story continues, however, because it has been only 22 years since some steeple repairs were done. Today's work uses new materials and modern engineering practices. The steeple stands 135 feet tall, meaning the current renovation will take years, and the cost will run up to six figures.

One can only hope, wonder and pray that the steeple will last for a very long time. Judging by the work and devotion shown to three of Milford's meeting houses since 1640, it is hoped that generations to come will have the same dedication as the earliest settlers had 386 years ago.

A large sign was just put up on the church building site, and it says it all: "History and renewal."

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



The steeple on the historic First United Church of Christ in Milford is undergoing renovations. Photo by Marilyn May.

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Hate Group (Continued From 1)

a hate group during the 2023 municipal election.

“We did have the police come, and I said, ‘These guys need to be moved to the curb,’” Zeoli said of that earlier encounter.

Among its stated principles, NOVA calls for the “end to the replacement of White Americans,” harkening to the “Great Replacement” conspiracy theory that has become popular in white supremacist groups around the country which suggests that immigrants, Black people and other groups are deliberately undermining the hegemony of European Americans. NOVA is one of several hate groups known to be active in New England.

The First Amendment limits the ways in which government officials can restrict the freedom of such groups to speak and assemble, making the board’s position largely symbolic.

The latest hate group incident is not the only recent instance in which the issue of intolerance has reared up in Orange. In June, the town for the first time flew the Pride flag, only to have it stolen shortly after being raised. Although it is not clear who stole the flag or what their motivations were, some residents took it as an affront to the town’s inclusivity efforts.

Selectman Mitch Goldblatt tied the stolen flag and the hate literature together in remarks condemning both.

“Our small town includes over a dozen places of worship. Our school system consists of a student body that speaks two dozen languages. We have always welcomed everyone to these festivities, regardless of where they were born, where they currently live, where they worship, or who they love,” Goldblatt said. “Perhaps we can’t stop some people from being narrow-minded, bigoted and full of hate for their fellow neighbors. However, as a board and leaders of this town, we should stand united and condemn the action that took place this past weekend. We need to

be loud and clear that we reject any forms of hate and discrimination in the town of Orange. I am proud to live in an inclusive and welcoming community, and we should do everything in our power to make sure it remains that way.”

“We are a welcoming community of many, many different types of people from many places around the world, and many life choices across this world, but Orange has no room for that type of hate or racism here,” Zeoli said.

Cell Phones (Continued From 1)

calls or texts during school hours,” the district said in a release. “Together, we are creating calmer classrooms and stronger learning environments.”

There has been a growing movement toward restricting cell phone use in the classroom around the country and in Connecticut. Gov. Ned Lamont has come out in favor of measures to limit cell phone usage in schools, backing guidance from the State Board of Education in 2024. The state legislature this past session considered requiring all districts to adopt a policy on personal technology use in schools, but the bill died at the end of the session.

Nevertheless, Amity is hardly alone among local school districts to adopt limitations. Stratford adopted a new policy in June; Derby moved over the spring to ban cell phone use during class and lunch periods. New Haven banned cell phones in classes for elementary and middle school students in January, and plans to do the same in September for high schools.

Smell (Continued From 1)

Patty Shine, another Caswell Cove resident, said a number of people in the neighborhood have tried to engage city officials about the odor, to no avail. “In the past couple of years, it has become

extremely intolerable. It’s so much worse than it used to be,” she said.

Christina Darcangelo said that the fumes have triggered asthma attacks and migraines.

“It’s not just dealing with the smell. It’s also health concerns that we’re all worried about,” she said.

The Board of Aldermen was there that evening to discuss the allocation of the unreserved sewer fund balance to address rising electricity costs and the cost of burning the city’s sludge, which is done in Waterbury. That relatively uncontroversial budget transfer was approved unanimously. The public comments, however, steered the board toward asking whether some of the funding could be used to address the Caswell Cove problem.

The unassigned fund balance stands at \$3.8 million, according to Finance Director Peter Erodici. He said money from the fund has historically been used for emergency purposes, but that it could theoretically be put toward addressing the concerns of the Caswell Cove residents. He noted it would require further discussion between city officials.

“It is possible, but we would have to discuss that as an administration, as a board, in consultation with the wastewater department, the public works director, and I believe the sewer commission should be in the loop as well,” Erodici said.

The Housatonic treatment plant, along with the Beaverbrook treatment plant,

both discharge treated wastewater into the Housatonic River. Both are in need of major upgrades, according to city officials, to increase capacity, remove more pollutants and make the system more reliable.

Public Works Director Chris Saley said the Housatonic plant serves an average of 8 million gallons of water per day. He explained that increasing periods of drought followed by torrential rains in Connecticut have caused sediment collection that can contribute to the smell. He said the city was taking steps to mitigate the smell, but that there were limitations to what could be done.

“There is an odor. There’s always going to be an odor around the plant,” he said. “You bought a condo next to a treatment plant. It is going to smell.”

Saley said that the treatment plants had suffered from a significant lack of funding over recent years, and that his department would be making requests for significant investment in the plants in coming budget cycles.

Saley added that the employees at the plant are regularly testing the area around their workspace and that it is never unsafe, despite the discomfort that the smell may cause. He also mentioned that other businesses in the neighborhood contribute to odors, including one that maintains composting piles.

Members of the board followed up on July 17 with a tour of the treatment plant to better understand its processes.



The Caswell Cove condominiums are situated next to the Housatonic Wastewater Treatment Facility in Milford. Photo by Brandon T. Bisceglia.

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For more information and to purchase tickets, contact Bett at
203.770.4811 or romagirl@yahoo.com

The Arts

Wrap Up Your Summer With The Arts

Before the summer season comes to an end, take the opportunity to participate in some unique family-friendly and outdoor arts and multi-cultural festivities sure to be some of your most memorable moments of the season. Take in the many different cultural and artistic activities, outdoor art walks and spectacular performances.

Take a journey through six decades of iconic Long Wharf Theatre as displayed by the New Haven Museum. See a play written by a local New Haven playwright along with a variety of original one-act plays performed by your local community theater. Listen to the mesmerizing sounds of the handpan in a unique concert. Enjoy a Bollywood-inspired performance of Shakespeare in the park. Attend a comedy night fundraiser to support local charities. It is a great time to enjoy artists of all genres with an impressive array of arts and culture.

Playhouse On Park presents *Singin' In The Rain*, screenplay by Betty Comden and Adolph Green with songs by Nacio Herb Brown and Arthur Freed. The show is based on the classic Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer film, by special arrangement with Warner Bros. Performances run July 16-Aug. 17 at Playhouse On Park, located at 244 Park Rd. in West Hartford. This is a wildly inventive reimagining of "the greatest movie musical of all time" set at a screening of the iconic film that goes horribly wrong, until super fans swoop in and save the day. This performance has all the makings of a Tinseltown tabloid headline – the starlet, the leading man and a love affair that could change lives and make or break careers. In silent movies, Don Lockwood and Lina Lamont are a hot item but, behind the scenes, things aren't always as they appear on the big screen. Meanwhile, Lina's squeaky voice might be the end of her career in "talking pictures" without the help of a talented young actress to do the talking and singing for her. Filled with unforgettable scenes, snappy dialogue and a hit-parade score of Hollywood standards including "Make 'Em Laugh," "Good Morning," and of course, the title song, this show is perfect entertainment for any fan of golden age movie musicals – but with a twist. Tickets start at \$28 and can be purchased by visiting playhouseonpark.org or calling the box office at 860-523-5900 x 10.

Orange Players presents *Acting Up! 2025: A Performance of One Acts* with matinee and evening performances on Aug. 22 and 23 at High Plains Community Center, 525 Orange Center Rd. in Orange. "Acting Up!" is a performance of 10, 10-minute original, unpublished one-act plays by local and out-of-state playwrights paired with local directors. This is the 10th season for this annual one-act festival, and it continues to be an audience favorite. This season, they welcome the work of New Haven playwright Keona Marie Gomes, who makes her debut from actor to playwright with the Orange Players. This collaborative effort features 10 playwrights, eight directors 30 cast members, and an experienced production team to bring these works to life on the stage. This production has a variety of comedies, dramas and a thriller, exploring themes that will make you think, make you feel, laugh and cry, and everything in between. Performances are cabaret-style seating. Bring your own adult beverages and food, grab your friends and family and come enjoy this annual tradition. Always a smash success, this event promises to become one of your annual theater traditions. Pre-show entertainment Friday and Saturday evening will be provided by The Rich Moran Quartet featuring Orange native Rich Moran on vocals, as well as drawings for 50/50 prizes and more. The Aug. 22 performance is at 7:30 p.m., and Aug. 23 has two shows at 3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$22 and can be purchased online by visiting orangeplayers.org and orangeplayers.ludus.com, or at the door

with cash or check. For more information email TheOrangePlayers@gmail.com or call the box office at 475-227-7547. Visit orangeplayers.org for a list of all the plays, actors and synopses.

Legacy Theatre presents *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* with music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and book by Hugh Wheeler. Based on an adaptation by Christopher Bond, matinee and evening performances run now through Aug. 24 at the Legacy Theatre, 128 Thimble Island Rd. in Branford. This gruesome and bloody musical thriller tells the tale of Benjamin Barker, a barber in 19th century London who seeks revenge against the men who unjustly imprisoned him for 15 years. Now known as Sweeney Todd, he reopens his barbershop above Mrs. Lovett's struggling pie shop only to find his life has again been upended. He expands his need for revenge by slitting the throats of his clients, and Mrs. Lovett helps dispose of the bodies by baking them in her now-famous meat pies. This dark comedy thriller is recommended for ages 12 and up. Tickets range from \$31.50 to \$56.50 and can be purchased by visiting legacytheatre.org or calling 203-315-1901.

TheatreWorks Hartford presents *Richard Thomas in Mark Twain Tonight*, the first stop in a national tour, written and originally performed by Hal Holbrook. Matinee and evening performances run Aug. 12-24 at TheatreWorks Hartford, 233 Pearl St. in Hartford. Most recently seen on Broadway in *Our Town*, on tour as *Atticus Finch in To Kill a Mockingbird*, on Netflix's *Ozark*, and beloved for generations as *John-Boy Walton*, Thomas is the first and only actor authorized to perform the play since the original. Tickets are \$65 and can be purchased by visiting twhartford.org or calling 860-527-7838.

Elm Shakespeare Company presents *In The Park: A Midsummer Night's Dream*, a Bollywood-inspired outdoor celebration codirected by Rebecca Goodheart and Deshik Vansadia, Aug. 14-31 (except Mondays) at 7:30 p.m. on the grounds of Edgerton Park, 840 Whitney Ave. in Hamden. Gather under the stars for a joyous, glittering, heart-opening celebration of love, laughter and transformation. Reimagined through the vibrant lens of Bollywood and brought to life by an international creative team, this free production bursts with music, movement, color and delight. Come as you are. Bring your curiosity, a blanket and some friends and come experience a unique moonlit production. Admission is free. For more information visit elmshakespeare.org or call 203-392-8882.

New Haven Museum with Long Wharf Theatre presents *Invitation to Engage: 60 Years of Long Wharf & Beyond*, a multi-gallery exhibition celebrating the theatre's rich history and bold future, now through February 2026 at the New Haven Museum, 114 Whitney Ave. in New Haven. Step inside a living history of theatrical innovation with this immersive exhibition showcasing Long Wharf Theatre's 400-plus productions, from *The Crucible* (1965) to *She Loves Me* (2024). Immerse yourself in six decades of groundbreaking storytelling, legendary performances and the bold new direction of one of America's most influential regional theatres. From iconic productions to intimate artist reflections, this multi-gallery experience brings together archival treasures, interactive rehearsal spaces and a visionary look at the theatre's evolving future. Long Wharf Theatre has enjoyed legendary artists like Al Pacino, Stockard Channing, Anna Deavere Smith, Larry



CYNDI CONSOLI

Kramer, Phylicia Rashad and John Lithgow. This experience starts in the rotunda with a grand introduction to Long Wharf Theatre's impact on American theatre. In the Gray Gallery, experience a hands-on space where visitors can step into the creative process. The Center Gallery provides a vision for the future, spotlighting the next generation of theatre-makers. Enjoy hands-on workshops, artist talks and panel discussions. See exclusive behind-the-scenes content and rare archival materials. Admission is \$4 for adults, \$3 for seniors, \$2 for students 12 and up, and free for children age 12 and under. The exhibit is open Wednesdays through Fridays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday from noon to 5 p.m. The museum is closed on major holidays. For more information visit newhavenmuseum.org or call 203-562-4183.

Wadsworth Athenium Museum of Art presents *(Un)Settled: The Landscape in American Art* now through Sept. 14 at 600 Main St. in Hartford. From natural wonders to the open road, explore the landscape in American art. Through objects from the colonial era to present, this exhibition celebrates the rich, complicated and evolving topic of the landscape in American art, from its origins in 19th century painting into contemporary art. An array of diverse media and makers help to redefine whose view is considered, ultimately revealing the many ways artists turn to their surroundings to reflect on larger topics such as national identity, land preservation, the complexity of cultural landscapes and how location shapes our sense of self. Building upon noted Hudson River School paintings, featured artists include Fidelia Bridges, Marsden Hartley, Georgia O'Keeffe, Benny Andrews, William Christenberry, Ana Mendieta, Ed Ruscha, Jeffrey Gibson and Jacqueline Bishop. Through more than 40 artworks – including examples of material culture such as furniture, glass, ceramics and baskets – the exhibition highlights ongoing conversations around the landscape and its relationship to establishing cultural and national identity over the last two centuries. Tickets for adults are \$20, seniors \$15, students \$10, and free admission for members, Hartford residents, and youth age 17 and under. To purchase tickets and for more information visit thewadsworth.org or call 860-278-2670.

The Milford Arts Council presents *Spirit Voices 2 – A Handpan Concert*, Aug. 29 at 7:30 p.m. at the MAC, 40 Railroad Ave. South in Milford. Connecticut's second-ever handpan concert returns with an extraordinary lineup from the heart of the handpan community. Returning featured artists Sarah Paz Hyde, Ricky Hillson, Jim LoPresti and Dan Mulqueen will be joined by the inspiring talents of Prana Rising and Sofia Dias. This unique concert offers beautiful sounds of rhythm, resonance and musical storytelling. Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased by visiting milfordarts.org or calling 203-878-6647.

Goodspeed Opera House presents *All Shook Up*, inspired by and featuring the songs of Elvis Presley with book by Joe DiPietro. Extended by popular demand, matinee and evening performances run now through Aug. 24 at The Goodspeed, 6 Main St. in East Haddam. The legendary songs of Presley are brought to life on a stage set in the fabulous 1950s. When a guitar-playing stranger on a motorcycle roars into a sleepy town, nothing will be the same. Boy meets girl and soon everybody can't help falling in love. Mistaken identity, mismatched lovers and the magic of romance come together in a free-wheeling rock and roll comedy. Celebrate the 20th an-

niversary production of a show that began at Goodspeed. Ticket prices range from \$35 to \$86 and can be purchased by visiting goodspeed.org or calling 860-873-8668.

The Mark Twain House, in collaboration with Sea Tea Comedy Theater, presents *Get A Clue: Interactive Comedy Murder-Mystery Tours* Aug. 29 at 7 p.m. at the Mark Twain House, 351 Farmington Ave. in Hartford. Based on the original game and the characters from Mark Twain's most famous novels, this interactive murder-mystery will have you play detective and help solve the case. These timed tours will be offered on special nights at the Mark Twain House & Museum, using the various rooms (secret passageway, conservatory, billiards room and more) of the Twain house – and some of the author's favorite literary characters – as part of the game. Who killed that varmint Pap Finn? Was it Tom Sawyer in the library with the wrench? Come find out. It is different every time. Tickets are \$21 to \$31. For more information visit marktwainhouse.org or call 860-247-0998.

The Orange Lions Club will host their annual *Comedy Night Fundraiser* on Sept. 5 at 7:30 p.m. at High Plains Community Center, 525 Orange Center Rd. in Orange. Featuring four live standup comedians, this event is certain to be a crowd pleaser. There will be cabaret-style seating. Bring your own adult beverage and snacks. Tickets are \$30 and can be purchased from any Orange Lions Club member or by calling 203-795-3906. Doors open at 7 p.m. Funds raised by the Orange Lions Club support many local charitable causes including senior citizen and youth programs, the food pantry, the fuel bank, annual children's eye screenings, diabetes screenings and college scholarships for Amity High School graduates. Come have some laughs and support a great cause.

Eastbound Theatre presents *Antigone: Jean Anouilh's Modern Adaptation* by Jean Anouilh, based on the Greek tragedy by Sophocles. Matinee and evening performances run Sept. 12 to 27 at the Milford Arts Council, located at 40 Railroad Ave. South in Milford. A bold retelling of Sophocles' tragedy, this adaptation pits moral resistance against authoritarian rule in Nazi-occupied France. Tickets purchased up to two hours in advance are \$32 and \$40 at the door. Children under age 17 with a paying adult ticket are \$5 and must contact the MAC office prior to the show. To purchase tickets, visit milfordarts.org or call the box office at 203-878-6647.

World Ballet Company presents *The Great Gatsby Ballet* Sept. 18 at 7 p.m. at the Palace Stamford, 61 Atlantic St. in Stamford. Experience a sparkling new Broadway-style ballet. This visually stunning production by an all-star creative team features lavish sets and costumes, an original jazz-inspired score, a cast of 40 professional dancers, multimedia effects, acrobatics and more. Dress up, sip champagne and immerse yourself in Gatsby's world for an unforgettable evening. Recommended for ages 8 and older. A young man named Nick Carraway, now older and wiser, sifts through the sands of memory, trying to piece together a tale that once consumed him. He begins to write, unearthing a series of events that were as thrilling as they were devastating – a kaleidoscope of wealth, love, betrayal and tragedy. Tickets are \$39 to \$105 and can be purchased by visiting worldballet-company.com.

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

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

Lions Club Comedy Night Returning

The Orange Lions Club will return with its annual standup comedy evening, Lions Night of Laughter, on Friday, Sept. 5 at the High Plains Community Center auditorium.

The evening will be emceed by host Craig "Fig" Figuereido. He will be joined by comedians GL Douglas, Kenny Williams and Becky Veduccio.

Proceeds from this year's event will benefit key Lions Club initiatives: providing no-cost vision screenings for local preschool and elementary school children, support for the Fidelco Guide Dogs Foundation, the Lions Low-Vision Center, large-print and audiobooks for the Case Memorial Library, and recycling donated eyeglasses; the Lions youth scholarship programs: Empowering the next generation through educational support and mentorship opportunities; and annual mini-grants to candidates in the community conducting youth programs, services to cancer survivors and needy seniors.

In addition to the main show, guests will

have the opportunity to participate in a charity raffle with prizes donated by local businesses and private benefactors. These range from fine dining gift certificates, wine and hobby baskets to lottery ticket trees, with all proceeds going directly to the supported causes.

Doors will open at 7 p.m., with the main program commencing at 7:30 p.m. Seating is cabaret-style around tables. Patrons are invited to bring their own beverages and snacks. High Plains Community Center is located at 525 Orange Center Rd. in Orange.

Buy tickets online at zeffy.com/ticketing/lions-night-of-laughter, in person from any Orange Lions Club member, or by phone by calling Marianne Miller or Ken Lenz at 203-796-3906. A flat pricing of \$30 per ticket is in effect. The event is expected to sell out quickly, so advance booking is strongly recommended. All proceeds benefit the Orange Lions Charities, going to its charitable initiatives.

Milford Commercial Property Sells For \$2.33 Million To Electrical Contractor

Orange-based Colonial Properties recently completed the sale of a three-parcel commercial building in Milford for \$2.33 million.

Realtor Tony Vitti of Colonial represented the seller, New Castle Associates, in the sale of 180 Wampus Lane, a property consisting of a 15,758 square-foot commercial building totaling 1.54 acres. The buyer, R&P Leasing, was represented by Jerney Rosner of Levy, Miller, Maretz in Woodbridge.

The buyer will be relocating their business, electrical contractor All-Electric Construction & Communication, from

West Haven to Milford. The seller was represented by Attorney Bernard Pelligrino with The Pelligrino Law Firm in Hamden; the buyer was represented by Attorney Thomas Lynch with Lynch, Trembicki and Boynton in Milford.

"We are extremely pleased to have attained a very strong selling price for our client. This light industrial property traded at over \$147 per square foot, at the peak for the Milford market. This indicates the continued high demand for light industrial assets," said Michael Richetelli, president of Colonial.

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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 C. "Harpo" Artymowski, age 84, of Milford, died on July 13, 2025. (Pistey Funeral Home)



Amelia J. Barnes, age 85, of Milford, beloved wife of the late Charles Barnes Sr., died on Tuesday, July 22nd 2025. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Charles W. Boyle, 85, of Milford, beloved husband of Dorothy Boyle, passed away on July 8, 2025. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Robert V. Brett, Jr. age 94, of North Chesterfield, VA and formerly of Milford and Hamden, entered peaceful rest on March 31, 2023. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Satish Chandra, 93, of Orange, Connecticut, passed away peacefully on July 16, 2025 in his home. He was the loving husband of Shaila Chandra. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Marsha Grinnell Chase, age 81, of Milford, CT, passed away on July 21, 2025, in her home, after a lengthy illness. (Cyril F. Mullins Funeral Home)



Anne Birchall Cherniavsky, 100, of Milford, entered eternal rest on July 11, 2025. Anne was born and raised in Nashua, New Hampshire. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Bryan Patrick Connors of Milford, passed away unexpectedly on July 17, 2025 at his home. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



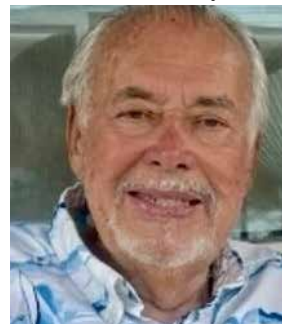
Walter J. D'Avignon, age 93, of Milford, beloved husband of Diana Boyer D'Avignon, died on Thursday, July 24, 2025. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Rose Marie C. Donahue, age 91, a lifelong resident of Milford, wife of the late Theodore M. Donahue, passed away on Sunday, July 13, 2025, peacefully at home. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



William "Bill" Doyle, 85 of Milford passed away on July 21st surrounded by his loving family after a brave, quick unexpected fight with acute myeloid leukemia. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Alice W Fredericks was born on February 25, 1935 and passed away on July 25, 2025. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Robert G. Golembeski, 74 of Milford, passed away peacefully on July 1, 2025 after a long, courageous battle with cancer. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Louis Gondolfo Sr. was born on July 25, 1945 and passed away on July 27, 2025. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Lorraine J. Hart, age 90, of Orange, died on Thursday, July 24, 2025. Lorraine was born in Bridgeport, CT on May 25, 1935 to the late Richard and Etta White Perrott. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



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Michele Tenney, Owner

Obituaries

Kenneth Bryant Hawkins, Sr., 86, passed away on July 30, 2025. He was born in Bridgeport, CT on January 7, 1939. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Jane S. Laird, age 96, of Orange entered peaceful rest on July 10, 2025 at Masonicare at Bishop Wicke Health Care Center in Shelton. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Theresa M. Lucas Mastri, age 68, beloved wife of Earl Mastri of Milford, passed away peacefully on July 16, 2025 surrounded by her loving family. (Abricola Parkview Funeral Home)



It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of **Debra A. Nicoletti** on July 29, 2025. (West Haven Funeral Home)



It is with heavy hearts and great respect that we announce the passing of **John Henry Helwig Jr.**, affectionately known to many as Big John or Big Wig. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Gerald "Jerry" LaPenna, 84, of Milford, loving husband of Elizabeth (Valeri) LaPenna, his High School sweetheart and wife of 62 years, passed away on July 17, 2025. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Judith "Judie" Lynn Miller, 80, of Milford passed away on July 20, 2025 while surrounded by her loving family. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Edward L. Nurse Jr., of Milford, beloved husband of 38 years to Cheryl Nurse, passed away on July 9, 2025 with Cheryl by his side. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Elaine Kiefner, 70, passed away peacefully on July 21, 2025 while surrounded by her loving family. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Charles J. Levesque passed away peacefully surrounded by his family on July 17, 2025. He was 95 years old. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Sandra Mrozinski, age 88, of Milford, beloved wife of the late Emil Mrozinski, died on Monday, July 14, 2025. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Ian Michael O'Neill, age 45, of Milford, entered into peaceful rest on July 3, 2025. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Isabell M. Kratochvil, 98, formerly of Milford, passed away peacefully on July 13, 2025. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Robert Jerome "Bob" Lukas, 78, of Milford, CT, passed away peacefully on Saturday, July 26, 2025, after a brief illness. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Eric Muth, 84, of Milford, beloved husband of Rachel Hubbard Muth, passed away on July 8, 2025. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Steven George Peterson 38 of Milford, Connecticut passed away unexpectedly. He was born on February 14, 1987 in Bridgeport, Connecticut.



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Obituaries

Francesco "Frank" Donato Piselli, 86, of Milford, beloved husband of the late Maureen Piselli passed away on July 28, 2025. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Norman T. Ruskowski "Stormin Norman", 57, of Milford, passed away on July 10, 2025. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Alan C. Porzelt, Sr., age 81, of Milford, died on July 17, 2025. He was predeceased by his beloved wife, Linda, on April 7, 2025. (Pistey Funeral Home)



Tania Shansky (née Pavloff) of Milford, died peacefully in her sleep on July 13, 2025 at 97 years old. She was the beloved wife for 73 years to the late Samuel Shansky. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Robert Edward Riordan, 65 of Milford, passed away peacefully on July 2, 2025. Bob was born on February 13, 1960 in New Haven. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Richard John Weston, Jr., age 76, of Milford, died suddenly on Sunday, July 20, 2025. (Pistey Funeral Home)



Gloria L Robertson, 101, of Milford, CT, passed away peacefully on June 26, 2025. She was the beloved wife of the pre-deceased William H Robertson. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



William "Skip" Thom(p)son Ziebell, aged 81, beloved husband of Marsha Ziebell, passed away on July 9, 2025, at his home in Milford. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Orange Town Clerk Urges Students To Register To Vote

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

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

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

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

website, visit the registrar of voters page.

Voters can find information regarding absentee ballots by visit the town clerk's department page on the website. Once there, click the voting and election information link which will lead directly to the secretary of the state's election and voting home page.

Shaw said she strongly suggests using the "requesting an absentee ballot online" option. This newer online option, available beginning Sept. 20, helps simplify the application process and eliminates the need to fill out a paper application form that would be either mailed or dropped off at the town clerk's office.

Questions can be directed to the town clerk via email at mshaw@orange-ct.gov.

Orange Knights Of Pythias Donates To Food Program



Mitch Goldblatt, left, and John Kelman, right, presented a \$ 1,500 check in July to Sue Lutzo of Orange Food2Kids from the 8th Annual Fidelity Lodge #78 Knights of Pythias Annual Golf Tournament, which took place in June. Photo by Steve Cooper.

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