



# Milford-Orange Times

Vol. 15 / Issue 12

www.Milford-OrangeTimes.com

December 11, 2025

## Milford, Orange Ring In The Holidays



Santa came to the Orange Town Green on Dec. 6 as part of the town's annual holiday festivities, which also included a tree lighting and a lighted tractor parade. *Photo by Lexi Crocco.*



The Milford Concert Band performed on the Milford Green on Nov. 28 as part of that city's holiday festivities, which also included tree lightings and a visit from Santa on a city firetruck. *Photo by Robert Creigh.*

## Schick Plant In Milford To Close

By **Brandon T. Bisceglia**

The Schick manufacturing plant in Milford will close by Dec. 31, 2027, eliminating 293 jobs in the city, according to parent company Edgewell.

The company revealed the plans to close its main US manufacturing plant for the iconic razor brand in a Nov. 13 letter sent to then-mayor Tony Giannattasio and the state Department of Labor's Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification system.

The letter says the first sets of layoffs will begin in March. Individual employees will be given 60 days notice prior to termination.

"All affected employees also will be

eligible to receive severance benefits, including outplacement assistance, to help them transition successfully to other employment at the time their Edgewell employment ends," the letter promises.

There are no bumping rights for employees at the factory, and workers there are not represented by a union.

Edgewell is headquartered in Shelton and has said that it intends to remain in Connecticut.

In addition to the Milford plant, the company also announced recently that it was shutting down its other manufacturing

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## Orange Takes Aim At Illegal Vehicles, Street Takeovers

By **Brandon T. Bisceglia**

Orange joined a growing number of Connecticut towns and cities on Nov. 12 when the Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to amend the town code to crack down on illegal offroad vehicles and street takeovers.

Dirt bikes and all-terrain vehicles not meant for traditional public roads have been gaining popularity in Connecticut in recent years, leading to increased concerns about public safety. Many of these vehicles are not licensed and are illegal to drive on the roads.

At the same time, the state has seen a sharp rise in so-called street takeovers, during which crowds of dozens – sometimes

hundreds – of people converge to occupy a public street and perform tricks with both licensed and unlicensed vehicles. The unauthorized events are coordinated via social media and online chats. Takeovers in nearby towns, including Milford and East Haven, have caused traffic snarls and occasionally led to confrontations with police.

The Connecticut General Assembly overwhelmingly passed legislation signed by Gov. Ned Lamont in June that increased penalties for illegal street racing and street takeovers, including adding a two-year

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## Collins Announces Candidacy In 117th District



Collins

Republican Ray Collins III has filed his official candidacy paperwork for state representative in Connecticut's 117th District, which includes parts of Milford, Orange and West Haven.

Collins said in a release that he is entering the race because the current state Rep. MJ Shannon has failed to take meaningful action on the rising costs affecting families throughout the district.

"Families are getting hammered by one bad Hartford policy after another, leading to increased taxes, higher electric bills, and state mandates that strip away our local control," he said. "I hear the growing

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## Orange Student Project Inspires Honor For LA Firefighters



Eliona Taiwo and Jennifer Marganski. *Photo courtesy of the Amity Regional District.*

An essay written by an Amity Middle School Orange student has led to an honor for firefighters on the other side of the continent.

Former eighth grade student Eliona Taiwo was given an assignment in March by social studies teacher Jennifer Marganski to write about a personal hero and make a case for why that person (or group) deserves a monument or memorial.

Taiwo chose the Los Angeles firefighters who had battled wildfires around the heavily-populated county in January, which led to multiple deaths and billions of dollars in damage. Taiwo argued that firefighters

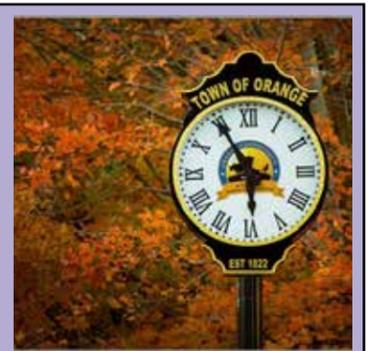
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# Turkey Trot Takes Flight In Orange



The Rotary Club of Orange held its 13th annual Turkey Trot race on the morning of Nov. 27 at High Plains Community Center in Orange. Photos by Lexi Crocco

## Collins (Continued From 1)

frustration everywhere I go, and this madness has to end. I'm running again because I'm done watching our state representative side with the people who keep making life unaffordable for the rest of us."

Collins cited rankings that have continuously given Connecticut low marks for affordability in recent years, blaming Democratic control in Hartford.

"Those rankings are a slap in the face to every family in this district," he said. "One-party control has made Connecticut unaffordable, unretireable and unbearable for parents. Our freshman representative's voting record has led us deeper down the wrong road and produced zero results for families getting crushed."

Collins, who ran in 2024 when the seat was open and lost to Shannon, laid out his

campaign's priorities, including increasing the property tax credit; eliminating the public benefits charge on electric bills; restoring full local control over zoning; stopping unfunded mandates placed to towns; and repealing the highway-use tax on trucks.

"These aren't radical ideas, they're plain common sense solutions that put money back in your pocket," Collins said. "Many of the policies Rep. MJ Shannon supports in Hartford hit homeowners and families the hardest, while the day-to-day impact feels very different for him. I pay those taxes. I feel the same pain you do. It's time to send someone to Hartford who actually understands what families are going through every single day."

A lifelong resident of the district, Collins is the former chairman of the West Haven Police Commission, a past member of the West Haven Board of Education, a union shop steward at Brescome Barton Distributing, and a longtime youth sports coach.

## Zeoli Sworn In For 11th Term



First Selectman Jim Zeoli was sworn in to his 11th term as Orange first selectman along with other town officials during a ceremony at High Plains Community Center on Nov. 14. Photo by Lexi Crocco.

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# Amity Wins Girls' Volleyball Championship



Amity won the Southern Connecticut Conference girls' volleyball championship on Oct. 29, defeating #1-ranked team Sacred Heart Academy at West Haven High School. The win was Amity's ninth overall championship victory and its 17th performance in the championships. Photo by Jeanine Capecelatro.

## Firefighters (Continued From 1)

deserve recognition just as lasting as the stars on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

She then sent a letter to the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce making the same argument.

The Hollywood Chamber of Commerce and Hollywood Community Foundation were so inspired by her words that they decided to make her idea real. The chamber will unveil an Award of Excellence Star on Dec. 12 honoring the Los Angeles Fire Department alongside the Walk of Fame at 6801 Hollywood Blvd. The ceremony will include LAFD Chief Jamie Moore, firefighters, community leaders, as well as Taiwo and Marganski.

Delta Air Lines is providing round-trip flights for Taiwo, her family and Marganski, and the W Hotel Hollywood is hosting them for the weekend. The ceremony is being underwritten with support from The Walt

Disney Company.

"This is what we hope for when we ask students to write, think and consider others," said Superintendent Jennifer Byars. We want them to see themselves as people who can shape the world. Eniola's work shows how far a student's idea can travel when teachers like Ms. Marganski create the kind of creative, supportive learning that lets kids take real risks and do real-world work. Her project is a perfect example of our Amity Portrait of the Graduate in action - communication, empathy, collaboration, and problem solving - and we couldn't be prouder of both."

"Eniola's idea came from empathy and courage," said AMSO Principal Kathy Burke. "She saw people serving others under impossible circumstances and said, 'they deserve to be honored.' That's powerful. This is an excellent opportunity to show what Amity students can do when they're encouraged to lead with purpose."

The Hollywood Chamber has given fewer than ten Awards of Excellence in its history.

# Musical "Welcome To Santa Claus" Debuts In Milford

Milford-based theater company Pantochino Productions has debuted its new family-friendly holiday musical "Welcome to Santa Claus" at the Milford Arts Council in downtown Milford with shows through December 21.

"Welcome to Santa Claus," featuring book and lyrics by Bert Bernardi and music by Justin Rugg, is about a small town in Ohio with a holiday namesake where every shop, every restaurant, every day is all about Christmas. But when a hot shot lawyer threatens to "cease and desist," it takes the jolly old elf himself to come to the rescue and save the town.

"It's like a 'greeting card channel' movie live on stage" says Bernardi. "It captures that small town charm and a colorful array of characters of all ages who live in Santa Claus. It's always fun to create a brand new holiday story for our audiences and this one just might be the merriest of them all."

The cast includes Pantochino company

members Shelley Marsh Poggio, Jimmy Johansmeyer, Valerie Loomis, Katie Durham, Tracey Marble, Rachelle Ianniello, Killian Meehan and composer Rugg. They are joined by Lia Jade, Marlena Ascher, Brenna Murphy and Quinn Fitzgerald. Also in the cast are two young actors, Davis Burke of Trumbull and Aurora Hinden of Milford. "Welcome to Santa Claus" features setting by Von Del Mar, costumes by Johansmeyer, lighting by Jakob Kelsey, sound by Tyler Kittleman, musical direction by Rugg and stage management by Christina Ronquillo.

Performances are Fridays at 7:30 p.m., Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. Seating is cabaret-style and audiences are invited to bring their own food and drink. The Milford Arts Council is located at 40 Railroad Ave. Parking is free at showtime in all train station lots. Tickets are available online at pantochino.com. Tickets are not available at the Milford Arts Council.

# Orange Lions Serve Thanksgiving Dinner



The Orange Lions Club hosted a Thanksgiving dinner to members of the community on Nov. 30. Photo by Lexi Crocco.



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# Opinion & Editorial

## Walter “Bud” Smith: Encore

By Patricia O’Leary Treat

This month marks the 81st anniversary of the World War II “Battle of the Bulge.” It was the bloodiest battle of the war, with a record of up to 83,000 casualties between Dec. 16 and Jan. 28, 1944. While the Allies prevailed by the end of the battle, their victory came at high cost.

Among those who served in that battle was Orange’s own, the late “Bud” Smith.

Known to most Milford-Orange residents as the genial owner-operator of the Orange Hills Golf Club, Smith’s obituary after his death in 2022 noted his tremendous love of family and friends.

In an article profiling Smith in 1915, journalist Randall Beach cited his philosophy of life: “Hardship Builds Character.” Smith said that among those hardships was his Army experience. When he was alive, though, he did not want to dwell in print on his experience

as a prisoner of war after he was captured in the Battle of the Bulge.

Recently, Smith’s son Jud and his daughter Judy said they would welcome the chance to learn a little more about their father’s army experience. That prompted me to dig out the notes I made in 2020 for an article about him which he said he preferred not to see in print while he was still alive. He did not care to relive the pain he remembered.

Two years before he died, Smith told me that after he graduated from Hillhouse High in 1941, he tried to enlist in the Merchant Marines, but his parents refused to sign their consent. When he turned 18, no longer needing their consent, he enlisted in the Army Infantry. After basic training, together with 15,000 other GIs, he shipped out for Scotland on the Queen Mary.

Smith said the rumor spread onboard that Winston Churchill was on their ship, and he

snuck up to see for himself if it was true. Churchill was aboard; Smith and his mates heard the leader’s famous oratory.

Not long after the new recruits arrived in Scotland, they were sent to Ardennes to form part of the long line of Allied troops guarding the territory that had been designated for rest and recruitment of battle-weary veterans of the Second Infantry.

In what was to be their final offensive of the war, the Germans took advantage of the thin defensive line the Allies formed at that point to take back Antwerp and surround Allied forces in order to seek separate peace terms from the British and the Americans. Aided by foul weather that kept Allied air reconnaissance from learning of their advance, the Germans successfully killed and captured some of the new infantrymen, including Bud Smith.

Smith lost 30 pounds in the five months he

was a prisoner of war before he was repatriated.

Once back home, he enrolled at the University of Connecticut in engineering, received his degree in 1949, and at his father’s behest, began working for him at the golf club whose name was changed from Rolling Ridge to Orange Hills. Smith said his experience in the school of hardship came in handy when he slowly and stubbornly added nine holes to the course.

In the short time I knew him, Bud Smith was truly a gentle man whose love of his children and grandchildren was palpable. He also deserves to be remembered as noting “the uses of adversity” and as one of the veterans to whom we all owe a debt of gratitude.

*Patricia O’Leary Treat is an Orange resident and a former Milford-Orange Times columnist.*

### Letters to the Editor:

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

### Love for the Animals

To the Editor:

Amber was a sweet, gentle giant who spent far too long waiting for her chance at love. At 98 pounds, this beautiful staffy/pit mix was often overlooked – her size and strong appearance made people pass her by, never seeing the tender heart within.

For 11 long months, Amber sat in her kennel at the Milford Animal Control, watching other dogs find homes while she waited and hoped. But everyone who truly got to know her saw something special – a smart, loyal, loving dog who just needed someone to believe in her.

The volunteers at Milford Orange Animal Rescue couldn’t give up on Amber. MOAR stepped in and donated \$1,000 for professional training as MOAR knew she deserved more than a life behind shelter walls.

Then one day, two brothers walked in, and everything changed. They met Amber and instantly felt that connection. After nearly a year of waiting, Amber finally has what she dreamed of all along – a forever home filled with love.

This holiday season, Amber will be spending her days by the fire with her new family, no longer overlooked but cherished.

Because of your support, stories like Amber’s are possible.

Pat Dray  
Orange

### Gratitude to the Residents of Orange

To the Editor:

I am writing this letter to express my heartfelt gratitude to the residents of Orange who supported my commitment to serve once again as your town clerk. I truly appreciate the confidence you place in me and I will continue to work hard to meet the needs and expectations that all residents deserve from an elected town official. The office of the Orange Town Clerk takes tremendous pride in the work we do. To say it is an honor and privilege to serve our wonderful community of Orange is an understatement.

Steve Job’s famous quote states, “The only way to do great work is to love what

you do. If you haven’t found it yet, keep looking. Don’t settle.” I am very fortunate that I don’t have to look anymore because I found it and owe it all to those who supported me this election season. Thank you so very much.

Mary Shaw  
Orange Town Clerk

### Thanks to Voters

To the Editor:

Thank you to the town voters who have trusted me to return to the tax collector’s office for another two years. We are continuing to improve our services to the town’s taxpayers and we have some additional things in the works, so stay tuned. We are always open for suggestions.

Best wishes to everyone for the upcoming holiday season.

Thomas J. Hurley  
Orange Tax Collector

### Thanks for Reelection

To the Editor:

I want to thank the voters of Orange for reelecting me to a 17th term on the Board of Selectmen. It is an honor and a privilege to serve our residents and I will continue to do so with pride, conviction and integrity.

As always, anyone can reach out to me with their questions, concerns and ideas. Let’s all work together to move Orange forward for the next two years.

Mitch Goldblatt  
Orange Selectman

### Let’s Keep Building on What We Started

To the Editor:

On behalf of myself and the Orange Democrats, thank you to everyone who supported us this year, from voters who believed in our plan to the poll workers who helped behind the scenes, and from neighbors who volunteered to families who juggled busy campaign schedules.

I also want to thank every candidate from both parties. Running for local office takes courage and commitment, especially when done with honesty and respect.

Leadership, though, is about more than winning elections. It’s about listening to everyone and acting on their concerns and

ideas. That’s the foundation of public service, especially in a small town like ours. Winning without meaningfully engaging voters is possible, but it doesn’t necessarily bring us together or deliver results that matter.

That’s why our campaign focused on meeting residents face-to-face. Those conversations revealed a shared love for Orange, as well as a desire to make our community even better. I’m more certain than ever that Orange is ready for leaders who address our challenges head-on and make the most of the opportunities right in front of us.

Our campaign also proved that respect, openness and accountability still matter. We focused on ideas and results, not misinformation or personal attacks. As a result, voter turnout for a local election was the highest since 2011, and support for our candidates grew across the ballot.

That’s why I’m still committed to the priorities we developed: advancing economic development within Town Hall, creating an online system to quickly report problems and see when they’re resolved, ensuring our schools remain strong and inclusive, and moving forward with long-planned Fred Wolfe Park improvements.

If you’d like to help these or other ideas move forward, now’s the time to speak up because the town is currently drafting next year’s budget. Your input can make a real difference. Send an email or schedule a meeting with town staff or board members soon to share what you’d like to see in the next town budget.

Together, we’ve made real progress, and it’s only the beginning of what we can do to build the future we deserve.

Dan Fitzmaurice  
Orange 2025 Democratic First Selectman Candidate

### Bringing Common Sense

To the Editor:

When we set out to charter the Common Sense Party of Orange, our mission was twofold: first, to gain official recognition from the Connecticut Secretary of State’s Office, and second, to raise awareness about the importance of enhancing minority representation on the Amity Board of Education.

I want to extend my sincere appreciation to everyone who made this effort possible – voters from both parties and independents alike.

Looking ahead, the Common Sense Party of Orange remains committed to giving voters real options for addressing community challenges through straightforward, com-

mon-sense principles and policies.

Thank you again for your continued support and for helping ensure a bright future for Orange and the Amity school system.

Don Farnen  
Common Sense Party of Orange

### Taxpayers Should Not Be Silenced

To the Editor:

As a tax-paying citizen of this community, I am deeply troubled by the newly crafted policy introduced by Superintendent Jennifer Byars – one that restricts who is allowed to file a formal complaint about inappropriate or sexually explicit books in our middle schools and high school libraries. According to this policy, only parents of students currently enrolled and the students themselves may voice concerns. Everyone else – every taxpayer who funds these schools – is effectively shut out.

This is an outrageous overreach. Taxpayers fund the school system, the buildings, the curriculum, the resources and yes – the superintendent’s salary. To claim that those same taxpayers have no standing to raise concerns about material available to minors is not only dismissive, it’s undemocratic. Whether someone has children in the district or not, their voice matters. Their tax dollars are being used, and they have every right to care about what is being placed in front of the community’s children.

Byars should be reminded that her responsibility is to the entire community, not only a select subset of it. The idea that taxpayers have no right to question or challenge inappropriate content is both insulting and dangerous.

And shame on the Board of Education members who voted yes to this policy. Instead of standing up for transparency, accountability and community they chose to silence the very people who elected them and pay for the schools they oversee. This decision sends a loud message: dissent is not welcome, and taxpayer oversight is a nuisance rather than a guiding principle.

I urge all taxpayers – parents or not – to pay closer attention to what is happening in our school system. When policies begin to shut out the community and shield questionable decisions from public scrutiny, it is a red flag we cannot ignore. Silencing taxpayers is not leadership. It is avoidance. Our community deserves better than this.

Michele Tenney  
Orange

# Opinion & Editorial

## CT Must Protect Homeless



STATE REP. (D-117)  
MJ SHANNON

Connecticut has spent years building one of the most coordinated and effective homelessness response systems in the country. This progress has always been rooted in dignity, strong local partnerships and evidence-based solutions.

Today, that foundation is at serious risk. Recent federal actions threaten programs that keep more than 9,000 people in our state safely housed each year, including many right here in Milford and Orange.

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development is preparing to impose new requirements on the Continuum of Care program, the primary source of federal funding for housing and homelessness services. These changes would pressure communities to criminalize homelessness in order to remain eligible for funding. They would require treatment participation as a condition of tenancy, penalize programs that use the proven "housing first" model, and limit the ability of local providers to make decisions based on the needs of their own communities. These requirements conflict with decades of bipartisan policy focused on helping people remain stably housed.

Connecticut is also facing immediate challenges created by the federal government shutdown and delays in releasing the current year's funding notice. If these delays continue, many of Connecticut's housing contracts will begin to expire in early 2026 without federal renewal.

HUD is also proposing limits on the amount of funding that can be used for permanent housing, which would reduce Connecticut's permanent supportive housing programs by as much as 70 percent. That reduction would occur even if all other federal funding remained intact.

These programs serve older adults, families with children, people with disabilities, veterans and survivors of domestic violence. They support more than 1,000 landlord contracts and over 400 workers who provide outreach, case management and housing assistance.

Without these programs, Connecticut would face mass evictions, significant layoffs and a sharp increase in homelessness. The financial impact would be just as severe. It costs the state about \$36 a day to keep someone housed, while an emergency room visit can exceed \$1,600 and a night in jail costs far more than supportive housing. If people lose their homes, hospitals, shelters and public safety systems will face enormous strain.

Connecticut has the knowledge, capacity and history of collaboration needed to prevent this crisis. Lawmakers, advocates, service providers and community leaders must work together to develop a responsible solution that protects residents and preserves the stability of our homelessness response system. The partnerships that built this system are the same partnerships that will be needed to safeguard it.

Connecticut has always chosen compassion, stability and smart, long-term investment over short-term fixes. By working together now, we can protect thousands of residents from losing their homes and ensure that the system our communities rely on remains strong for years to come.

## The Cookies You Don't Want



STATE SEN. (D-14)  
JAMES MARONEY

In the midst of the holiday season, when people hear about cooking management their mind often jumps to shopping lists and cookie cutters. However, now it seems most websites you go to ask you to accept or reject all cookies or to look at a cookie policy. Unlike the delicious holiday confections, these cookies are used to track and sell your information online. As you see these popups on website after website, you might wonder, isn't there an easier way?

It turns out that thanks to Connecticut, there is. Connecticut became one of the first states to mandate a universal opt-out for data tracking in 2021. This means that instead of going to each individual site and asking them not to track you for advertising and not to sell your data, you can go to one location and establish your preferences, and the websites will have to honor them.

With the rise of digital advertising and increasing concerns over privacy, Connecticut's decision to implement this opt-out mechanism has been welcomed by privacy advocates and everyday users. It's a move that acknowledges how much we value our personal data and how difficult it is to maintain control over it.

While Connecticut's use of opting out has reduced the time and effort required to protect personal privacy, it has introduced new innovative solutions to make opting out easier.

While this one-stop shop sounds great in theory, how does it work in practice? How can you more easily exercise your rights to opt out of having your data sold? One tool you can use is OptMeOut. This service is only for residents in Connecticut and allows users to quickly opt out of most major ad networks, protecting their data with just a few clicks.

OptMeOut is useful for those who don't want to manually manage each privacy setting on every website they visit. Instead, it provides a streamlined way to exercise privacy rights, making it simple for users to block ad tracking across the web.

In addition to OptMeOut, there are other tools that can be used, such as Disconnect and Privacy Badger. These allow people to block trackers across multiple sites. These options work in tandem with Connecticut's universal opt-out framework, ensuring that residents have a variety of ways to protect their privacy.

Connecticut's initiative to mandate universal opt-out provisions for digital advertising sets an example for the rest of the nation. As more states look at similar legislation, Connecticut's efforts underscore the importance of data privacy in the digital age. Your rights should not be hard to exercise, and in Connecticut we made it easier for you to opt out of being tracked for advertising and having your data sold.



## 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 [casememoriamlibrary.org](http://casememoriamlibrary.org) for more information.

The library will be closed on Thursday, Dec. 25 in observance of Christmas and on Thursday, Jan. 1 in observance of New Year's Day

The library has a new app where you can manage your account, search the catalog and place holds, register for events, access e-books and use your digital library card. Find the app by searching Libraries Online in your app store.

### Teen Book Bedazzling

Saturday, Dec. 20, 2 p.m.; for students in grades 7-12.

Come try out the newest BookTok trend and make your favorite book sparkle. Bring your own hardcover or paperback book and use gem diamond art techniques to bedazzle your book cover. All bedazzling materials will be provided. Registration is required.

### Teen Volunteer Club

Thursday, Dec. 11, 6-8 p.m. and Monday, Dec. 29, 2-4 p.m.; for students entering grades 9-12.

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.

### American Mah Jongg Club

Fridays, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Come to an open play club with fellow Mah Jongg enthusiasts. These sessions are intended for players of all skill levels who are familiar with American Mah Jongg; instruction is not provided. Participants are encouraged to bring their own American Mah Jongg set and official Mah Jongg card. The library also has a limited number of Mah Jongg sets and cards to use during open play. If you are interested in learning to play American Mah Jongg, check the calendar for future classes in early 2026.

### Mystic Chamber Music: A Night of Regency

Monday, Dec. 15, 6:30 p.m.

An immersive musical experience that will transport the listener to the time of Jane Austen and the regency, featuring music that was composed and premiered in her time as well as dance music of the time, arranged for the string quartet and performed by world-class musicians. There will be pre-show refreshments at 5:30 p.m.

Registration is required. The program is sponsored by the Janice Fodero Fund.

### Jane Austen's 250th Birthday Party

Tuesday, Dec. 16, 2-4:30 p.m.

Stop by the library for a piece of birthday cake on Jane Austen's 250th birthday. Registration not required. This program is sponsored by the Friends of the Case Memorial Library.

### Wednesday Book Club

Wednesday, Dec. 17, 1 p.m.

Join Librarian Ellen Miller for a discussion of Persuasion by Jane Austen.

### Adult Book Boxes

Pickup dates: Dec. 22-27

This is a free book box service for adults. 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.

### Craft Workshop: Book Bedazzling

Monday, Dec. 29, 6:30 p.m.

Bring your favorite book and transform its cover with gem diamond art. All bedazzling materials will be provided. Bring your own book.

### Crochet Club

Saturday, Jan. 3, 10 a.m.

The Hooked on the Sound Crochet Guild meets monthly to share stitch successes, assist with pattern problems, education and generally have a great time crocheting. Bring any crochet project you are working on or one you may need help with. All skill levels are welcome. Please bring your own supplies. This is a drop-in event.

### The Bookcase: Virtual Discussion Group

Monday, Jan. 5, 7 p.m.

Join Bookcase leader Toby Zabinski for a discussion of Culpability by Bruce Holsinger on Zoom. Registration is required to receive the Zoom link.

### Mystery Book Discussion Group

Thursday, Jan. 15, 2 p.m.

Join discussion leader Donna DiMassa for a talk about The Husbands by Chandler Baker. Registration is recommended. Drop-ins are welcome if space permits.

### Ban This Book Club: Breathless

Monday, Feb. 2, 7 p.m.

Breathless by Jennifer Niven is the second most challenged book in the country, with 20 bans in 2025 as tracked by PEN America. Join the library to discuss this as a work of literature as well as an object of censorship. Discussion is led by Librarian Rebecca Harlow. Registration is recommended. Drop-ins are welcome if space permits.

## Milford-Orange Times

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Senator's Seat: Sen. James Maroney (D-14)

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Cathy Bradley, Running

Barry Lee Cohen, Amity Chamber

Cyndi Consoli, Arts

Steve Cooper, Restaurant Reviews

Theresa Rose DeGray, Bankruptcy

Carmela DeVito, Book Reviews

Jody Dietch, ODTC

Pat Dray, Gardening

Jennifer Fiorillo, Mental Health

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Leonora Rodriguez, Milford Seniors

PJ Shanley, Financial Planning

Raymond Spaziani, Wine

Michele Tenney, Wellness

Jude Toohey, ORTC

Don Wetmore, Time Management

The Milford-Orange Times is published by The Orange Times LLC, P.O. Box 584, Orange, CT, 06477

Phone: 203.799.7500 Online: [www.milford-orangetimes.com](http://www.milford-orangetimes.com)

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## Orange Democratic Town Committee

# What Did We Learn From The Election?

After each election, we look back and see how things went and what the numbers tell us.

Two years ago, the Orange Democratic Town Committee leadership looked at how things had been going and decided we needed to do things differently. We always ran a first selectman campaign separately from the candidates. This time, we decided we needed a reboot. This year we ran as one team.

Our team of candidates, led by first selectman candidate Dan Fitzmaurice, worked harder than any campaign in more than a decade. The results proved it. Their hard work of more than 12,000 outreaches helped increase voter turnout by about 5 percent, but more importantly saw the Democrats win more votes than ever individually and in decades collectively.

This election was by no means a mandate to the Republican leadership that "staying the course" is what the constituents want. If they think so, I encourage them to take a look at the results. Not one Democratic candidate got less than 2,100 votes for the first time. Did we win enough to flip seats? No, but that doesn't

mean we weren't successful.

The gains we made in this election were significant, and the energy the campaign generated is a strong foundation for the future of the Orange Democratic Party. In only one week since the election, we have had more interest from people wanting to join the ODT than ever before. This interest in getting involved is from many different demographics of our town. We welcome them and look forward to maintaining the energy we have generated.

There was an element of this election that tried to fly under the radar. Every voter in Orange should be very concerned about the game the Republican Party is playing.

Each party holds their caucus to nominate and endorse candidates in July. After the Republicans held their caucus and endorsed the candidates, one candidate withdrew from the Republican ticket. He had previously changed his party affiliation from Republican to a member of the Independent Party just a



JODY DIETCH

few months earlier.

The Republican Party chose not to replace him on their slate of candidates. Why, you may ask? Because the former leadership of the Orange Republican Town Committee worked with this candidate to create a shell party of the Republican Party called "Common Sense." This is right out of the national Republican playbook.

What is their goal? For this election, their goal was to win 1 percent of the vote to establish "The Common Sense Party" as a recognized party. What does that do for them?

In Orange, our charter calls for minority representation. That means no one party can hold all of the seats for any board. There are no clean sweeps. There is a maximum number per board one party can hold. By doing a bait and switch, the Republicans are trying to grab the minority representation under the unethical guise of "The Common Sense Party." They tried this in Woodbridge as well,

trying to run as the Common Ground Party. They are trying to eliminate a democratic system and steal your vote.

We expect this party to run candidates for three boards in 2027: Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance and the Amity Board of Education.

What can you do? Let our first selectman know that this is unacceptable. As the face of the Orange Republicans, he should denounce these unethical bait and switch party politics. Let your friends and neighbors know about this game the Republicans are playing. Encourage them to read this column and not be fooled by the name of this third party.

The Orange Democrats will continue to be a voice at the board meetings and will continue to be the thorn in the side of first selectman when deemed necessary. Yes, Jim Zeoli, we will be the proud thorns you want to "pull out with a pliers and discard."

If you want to join our movement, please reach out to me at 203-314-9975 or via email at [JLDOrange@yahoo.com](mailto:JLDOrange@yahoo.com).

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

## Orange Preschool Lottery Open

The Orange elementary school system is now accepting names for the blind lottery to enter its 2026-2027 preschool program.

The special education/general education integrated program is looking for both 3 and 4-year-olds to enroll as community peers.

The total cost of tuition for the community peers is \$3,500. The preschool program is held five days a week for three hours each day. No transportation is provided for general education community peers.

The program follows the district's school year calendar: the morning class

is held from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., and the afternoon class is held from noon to 3 p.m. Each classroom is a blend of 3 and 4-year-old children. Class sizes are limited to a total of 12 students, which includes special education students. By law, students with special needs identified with an individualized education program are placed in the program by the Department of Special Services through the Planning and Placement Team process.

In order to participate in the lottery, a child must be 3 years old but not older than

4 by Sept. 1. All children must be toilet trained and Orange residents.

The blind lottery is conducted in two stages. First, all names are randomly selected by age group for the limited number of available spaces, with the remaining names drawn and placed on a waiting list. Then a second drawing determines which children will be admitted the morning or afternoon classes to balance each classroom by age.

To enter a child in the blind lottery, call the Special Services Department for the

Orange Board of Education at 203-891-8023 between 9:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. Names will be accepted until 4 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 29. Parents will be mailed a letter of the lottery results by Feb. 9.

A non-refundable tuition deposit of \$180 is due by Monday, Feb. 23 to reserve the child's space. The deposit will be deducted from the total cost of tuition; the remaining tuition due will be paid in eight equal payments of \$415 from October through May. Registration paperwork needs to be completed by March 30.

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Orange Republican Town Committee

# Thanks To Those Who Are Dedicated

The Orange Republican Town Committee extends its heartfelt appreciation to every resident who participated in this year's municipal elections. Your engagement – whether through early voting, showing up on Election Day or volunteering in the weeks leading up to the vote – reflects the strength and character of our community.

This year's results delivered a clear message. With Jim Zeoli earning 57 percent of the vote for first selectman, and with Republican candidates elected to every board and commission, the people of Orange underscored their trust in steady, experienced, community-first leadership. We are humbled by that confidence and remain fully committed to honoring it in the years ahead.

At the same time, it is important to recognize that our election process only works because people from across the political spectrum step forward to serve. Running for office – regardless of party – is an act of

dedication. We thank every candidate, Republican and Democrat alike, who put their name on the ballot, knocked on doors, attended forums and brought their ideas to the voters. Their willingness to participate strengthens our democracy and enriches the civic life of our town.

This November also brought us together for Veterans Day, a moment when Orange paused to honor the men and women who have worn our nation's uniform. Their service is the foundation upon which our freedoms rest – including the freedom to vote, debate, disagree and choose our local leaders. The connection between these two events is unmistakable: the peaceful transfer of local leadership, the ability to cast a ballot and the right to participate in town government are direct results of the sacrifices made



JUDE TOOHEY

by America's veterans.

I am proud of my dad, who is no longer here but served in World War II and was a disabled American veteran. Growing up I was proud of him, proud to be his daughter and grateful for his service to our country and the unwavering love he showed to my mom, to me and to his grandsons.

As we reflect on both Election Day and Veterans Day, we are reminded that our community thrives when people step forward – whether to defend our country, serve in elected office or simply take part in shaping the future of Orange.

Our town's success has always come from this spirit of involvement. From our top-tier schools to our strong fiscal management, from our thriving small businesses to our safe, welcoming neighborhoods, Orange

is a place built on shared pride and shared responsibility. Residents continue to show that they care deeply about preserving what makes our town special, and we are grateful for that commitment.

Looking ahead, our pledge is simple: to uphold common-sense governance, foster transparency, maintain stable finances, support strong education and protect the small-town character that residents cherish. With your support – and with continued cooperation across our community – we will build on the strong foundation that generations before us worked so hard to create.

Thank you again for your trust, your participation and your dedication to our town.

During this season of giving, let us reflect on all we are grateful for.

*Jude Toohey is the vice chair of the Orange Republican Town Committee.*

Wine Talk

## Versatile Wines For Holiday Meals

Wine with turkey is an easier match than most people think. Most full-bodied whites and medium-bodied reds will work very well with turkey.

Because turkey is low in fat, care must be taken not to dry the turkey out during cooking. Several wines will work with a holiday feast, but there are several different side dishes that must be taken into account. To be safe, a good Pinot Noir is a great starting point. Oregon Pinot Noirs are lighter and earthier than most. However, if you like riper fruit, then northern California would be a better choice.

Chardonnay is another safe wine bet. It will work with anything, and during a hol-

iday meal that is a must. I like Kendall Jackson Chardonnay. It is reasonably priced. It is consistent and high-quality, and it is easy drinking. Wente makes great chards as well, and their "Morning Fog" is a great buy.

A sparkling wine is a great way to welcome guests. It is nice to start a big dinner with a sparkling toast. There are many champagnes and sparkling wines that will work quite well. I like Prosecco and Blanc de Blanc from Paso Robles.

They are well priced and easy drinking. A Zinfandel is a great choice as well. Zin



RAYMOND SPAZIANI

is a unique American wine. A spicy and fruity Zin is a great choice, and 7 Deadly Zins would be perfect. It is well priced, easy drinking and versatile. Seghesio makes a good Zin as well.

A Gewurztraminer is a versatile white that can be a great choice for a varied meal. It is a wine that can match with many different flavors. Any Alsatian Gewurztraminer will work. Its great texture and acidity will match and sweetness and spice

will add some zest. Enjoy one or all of these wonderful wine

choices with your holiday meal, and enjoy your family and friends this holiday season.

*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.*

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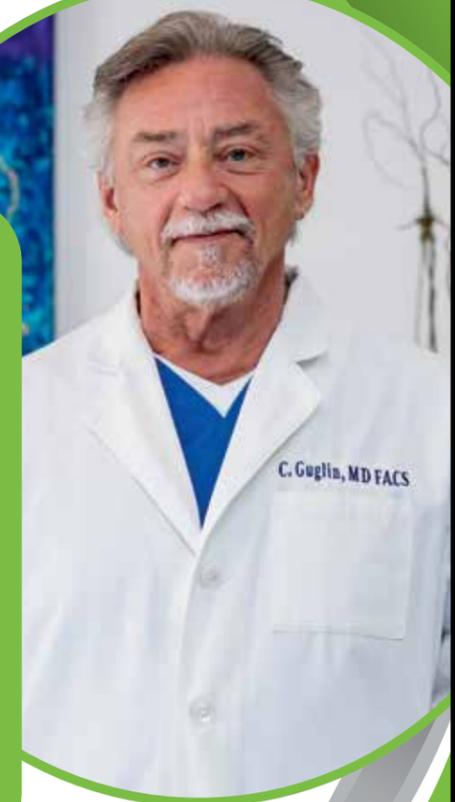
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### Orange Board of Finance

# Bipartisan Fiscal Policy Needed To Reverse Course

For six weeks, hardworking Americans had to endure another government shutdown due to the lack of leadership and continued political dysfunction in Washington. Average Americans and government workers were all negatively impacted for nearly two months, whether it be a lack of SNAP funding or paychecks for air traffic controllers who work hard to keep our skies safe.

Americans deserved leadership and accountability from our elected officials. Congress was still being paid throughout the shutdown, while essential government workers were not.

Why? We need our elected congresspeople to be debating the issues and working on a solution to address the cost of health care, which has strapped hardworking Americans for nearly two decades. If you have coverage under the Affordable Care Act, you were paying \$256 a month in premiums or \$3,072 annually back in 2020. Today the cost of that same plan is \$525 a month, which equates to an annual premium of \$6,300. That's nearly a 105 percent increase in just five years – not exactly an affordable plan.

The inability to work together to develop real solutions in Washington has led to dysfunction and was one of the leading factors

in contributing to the recent downgrade by Moody's of the US credit rating. Other contributing factors of the downgrade were the long-term deterioration of our government debt and failure of past presidents and Congress to address and take action on our \$38.2 trillion national debt.

The downgrade reflects a shift in the perception of the US debt burden, which has experienced mounting pressure on the nation's fiscal metrics and has on made our credit profile worse. The Fitch Rating Agency also downgraded the country's rating in 2023 and signaled a negative outlook for the future.

Successive administrations and legislators over the past two decades have failed to agree on measures to reverse the trend of our annual fiscal deficits, growing interest costs and building a \$38.2 trillion national debt.

When federal government spending exceeds revenue, creating a budget deficit, the US has to cover the gap by selling securities, such as Treasury bonds. The national debt is the accumulation of all past deficits and the interest owed on the resulting debt. Measur-



KEVIN MCNABOLA

ing the debt as a share of gross domestic product allows for comparing the level of debt over time relative to the size of the US economy versus other countries' debt-to-GDP ratios.

Another key reason why the US was downgraded is the lack of leadership and political polarization that exists within Washington. The federal government continues to deficit spend with no accountability, which has led to trillion-dollar deficits year-in and year-out over the past two decades. There has been little appetite or ability of the US Congress to compromise or develop workable solutions. Many of our congresspeople have been in power for decades and have no intestinal fortitude to do the right thing in attempting to fix the fiscal crisis that has been present for decades.

What steps can Congress take to put the US on better financial footing? 1) Bipartisan fiscal reform with sound fiscal and macro-economic policy that will reverse our current trajectory on debt; 2) Develop a bipartisan plan to increase revenues, optimizing tax policy and a selective tariff policy; 3) De-

velop a bipartisan plan for significant multi-year reductions in mandatory spending and deficits; 4) Continue to strengthen the US dollar and build liquidity into the market; and 4) Create bipartisan legislative solutions to stabilize and decrease deficit spending.

Both the president and Congress owe it to the American people to prioritize fiscal reforms within the coming months to reverse the course on future deficits and entitlement spending. We elect people to work together and develop consensus on solutions that matter and need our elected officials within both parties to end the political polarization and pivot to work on real fiscal solutions.

We need not look back that long ago to a time in Washington when bipartisan solutions were more prevalent. With the successful passage of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, President Bill Clinton and Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich worked together and delivered a sustainable fiscal plan and a balanced budget – the last we've seen since 1998.

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

### Here's To Your Health

## The Keep It Off Challenge

It's that time of year again where I challenge my clients, and you, to begin the annual Keep it off Challenge.

Over the past 19 years, I've seen people put on an average of 7-10 pounds during the holiday season. Typically, the New Year's resolution crowd intends to take it all off by hitting the gym hard and starting the latest fad diet. That's a recipe for disaster. Many years ago, the resolutions were gone by March and the diets took off weight for a few months. These days, resolutions are gone by February and the diets are also gone.

Resolutions are not realistic, and they are not lifestyles. Diets are geared toward making those who create them a fortune, and the cost is your health. The diet industry makes over \$97 billion annually. They certainly can and will take weight off, but they are never sustainable, which will only allow the weight to return and perhaps even add some

additional pounds.

In essence, you've put on 7-10 pounds to take off only four or five, and the next year you do it all over again. This is the backbone of why I challenge you to start taking control of how you approach this upcoming holiday season.

Here are some helpful tips. Put more veggies on your plate than mashed potatoes and gravy. Use the three-bite rule for all those pies and pastries coming your way until the New Year. When going out to holiday parties, drink plenty of water and only have one drink, instead of two. Eat a small salad before going out. This will help offset added salt in foods. Have four vegetarian meals per week and add two extra days of cardiovascular exercise to your week.



MICHELE TENNEY

I would also find a buddy to do this with you to help keep you accountable. A little honest competition never hurts anybody. Make it fun.

Be intentional about your stress management. This time of year can be very joyful, but also stressful – especially those who insist on "getting it all done." Breathe. Take 10 minutes of mindfulness for yourself every day. Do something kind for someone every day.

Not everyone enjoys this time of year. Some really struggle just to get through, for various reasons. Keep your eyes open for them and do something to make them smile.

I start with a weigh-in and measurements of muscle, and until Jan. 2, I aim to stay exactly where I am and even aspire to lose a pound or two. I set up a workout program

to follow daily to keep myself accountable – but also motivated, knowing I have a workout waiting for me to check off for the day.

I know you can do this. We're in it together. I love this time of year with family and friends and am using it to slow down, take mental pictures and use my attitude of gratitude for the small things. We've just got this one life to live, so let's live it amazingly. Here's to your health.

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

**Requirements:**  
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## Bottled Water Problems And Alternatives

By Susan Wineland

Lots of research has gone into what's inside bottled water, and the conclusion of most studies is that it's not just water. A review published in the Journal of Hazardous Materials found that people who drink from single-use plastic bottles may swallow up to 90,000 more microplastic particles each year than those who drink tap water. These particles contain phthalates, bisphenols and other toxicants.

Researchers have analyzed results from more than a hundred studies on microplastics and found that bottled water often contains thousands of microscopic fragments released from the plastic containers themselves. These particles are so small that they can travel through the bloodstream, collect in organs, and even cross the blood-brain barrier.

Scientists have linked micro- and nano-plastics to inflammation, hormone disruption and cardiovascular and neurological problems. While researchers continue to study the long-term health effects, the evidence so far suggests that plastic exposure, even in small amounts, may affect the body's immune and metabolic systems.

Plastic leaches into water throughout the bottling and handling process, during manufacturing, from cap friction when bottles

are opened, and when bottles are squeezed or exposed to sunlight and heat. The more a bottle is used or stored in hot conditions, the more plastic tends to shed. One recent study found roughly 240,000 detectable plastic pieces in a typical liter of bottled water.

An important goal of the Nature Conservancy and the Long Island Sound Coastal Watershed Network is to reduce plastic water bottle pollution in our environment.

Every individual can make a direct impact in reducing pollution going into Long Island Sound," said Justin Susaric Conservation Project Manager at the Maritime Aquarium in Norwalk. "One of the best and easiest ways you can make a change is by reducing your usage of single-use plastics. It's as simple as switching to a reusable water bottle."

Experts also recommend not using single-use bottles or any large plastic containers from water dispensers and water coolers. We are much better off using tap water and choosing one of the many reusable and portable options made from non-plastic materials, both economically and health-wise. Stainless steel and glass are considered the safest choices, as they don't leach harmful chemicals.

Local stores and online retailers offer reliable reusables including stainless steel

bottles from such popular brands as Klean Kanteen, Hydro Flask and Yeti. When shopping, look for 18/8 (or 304) stainless steel as it's the most popular and safest food-grade stainless steel for water bottles. It contains about 18 percent chromium and 8 percent nickel, making it resistant to corrosion and safe for food and beverages. Those who are sensitive to nickel can look for bottles made from 403 stainless steel, which is nickel-free. W&P Porter bottles have ceramic coated interiors.

Another healthy choice is glass bottles with popular brands such as Lifefactory and Pura, which often feature silicone sleeves for added protection. Lifefactory bottles are made from borosilicate glass, which is resistant to thermal shock, allowing it to go from the freezer to boiling water without shattering. But note that any heat-resistant glass is not recyclable.

Both stainless steel and glass reusables are very durable and can last for a dozen years or more depending on regular cleaning and care. Because stainless steel can't be crushed, they aren't recyclable in the blue bins and should be recycled via the company that makes them or used for some other purpose. There are lots of ideas online for upcycling them.

Some water bottle brands may have their own recycling programs. Hydro Flask

trade-in is one example. All customers have to do is register their product, print a shipping label, empty the bottle and mail the item within 30 days. Once Hydro Flask receives and recycles the bottle, customers will get \$5 towards their next purchase. Stainless steel can also be taken to the scrap metal collection area at the Orange Transfer Station and Recycling Center.

When buying any type of reusable bottle, look for caps and straws that are made from food-grade silicone, bamboo, or stainless steel, since some plastic caps can still contain toxins. The good news is that there are an increasing number of brands with options that completely avoid plastic on the inside. The many different styles and features include different size caps or handles, wide and narrow mouths, straws and grippy silicone sleeves. All are conveniently dishwasher safe.

Though scientists are still uncovering the full impact of microplastics on human health, one thing is clear: limiting exposure by drinking from safer, reusable containers is a simple step we can all take with lasting benefits for both health and the environment.

*Susan Wineland is a member of the Orange Recycling Committee.*

## Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce

### Finding Stability In Uncertain Times

If you have followed the headlines, you know the strain the federal government shutdown brought. It's not just the missed paychecks or delayed programs; it's the ripple effect that touches every corner of our local economy.

When government operations slow down, so does confidence. And for small businesses, the beating heart of Milford and the surrounding region, confidence is everything.

When the federal government shuts, spending slows. Families tighten budgets. Contracts get delayed. Local restaurants see fewer lunchtime crowds, retailers feel quieter weekends, and the ripple extends to every small shop owner and service provider in town. The shutdown isn't just a Washington story; it becomes a Milford story.

One of the most immediate and painful side effects is the disruption of critical support systems like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. For thousands of Connecticut families, SNAP provides essential help to keep food on the table. When that safety net frays, local food pantries, like the Beth-El Center,

WHEAT, Purple Pantry and many others, see an instant surge in need. These organizations, already operating on tight budgets and volunteer hours, step up because they always do. But they can't, and shouldn't, do it alone.

That's where we, as a business community, come in.

At the Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce, we see every day how deeply connected our businesses are to the well-being of our neighbors. A strong economy isn't about profits and payrolls; it's about people. It's about the coffee shop that sponsors a youth team, the contractor who donates materials to a community project or the retailer who collects coats for local families. When one system falters, whether it's government funding or social services, the business community often becomes the bridge.

That's why organizations like ours have a role that goes far beyond ribbon cuttings and networking events. We're a stabilizing force, a connector of resources, a source of credible in-



MICHAEL  
MOSES

formation and a convener of people who care about solving problems. During uncertain times, our job is to help businesses stay informed, stay steady and stay kind.

We also must recognize the human side of these disruptions. When assistance programs waver, anxiety rises. Families feel the pressure. Workers worry about paying bills. And even for those not directly affected, the sense of unease can be real.

In moments like these, small gestures matter more than ever. Visit your favorite local store instead of ordering online. Tip your barista a little extra. Reach out to a neighbor who might be struggling. And as we head into the holiday season, it's worth remembering that while business is about transactions, community is about compassion.

So, let's all do what Milford does best: look out for each other.

Let's support the nonprofits feeding families, the volunteers keeping shelves stocked

and the small businesses that keep our main streets glowing with light and life. Let's show that a government shutdown might stop paychecks, but it can't stop community.

At the chamber, we'll continue to collaborate with our members and partners, from food pantries to city leaders, to make sure businesses have the tools they need to weather this period and to connect residents with the right resources. A resilient economy depends on a resilient community.

We can't control what happens in Washington. But we can control how we respond right here at home. In Milford and across the shoreline, we respond with heart.

As the holidays approach, let's all find ways, large and small, to be a little kinder, a little more patient, and a lot more connected. In times of uncertainty, kindness is still the best local investment we can make.

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

## College Admissions

### How To Develop A List Of Good Fit Colleges

Did you know that 80 percent of colleges in the US admit more than 80 percent of their applicants? However, just because your student looks academically admissible doesn't mean they will be admitted. Here is how to build a well-balanced college list to determine the best fit school.

**Academic Fit:** There are selective schools and non-selective schools. It's important to choose a college that will be appropriately academically challenging for your student. However, we don't want your student to choose a college that is too challenging for them, where they will end up drowning. Find the happy medium where your student will be set up for success.

To determine this, we have to evaluate your student's academic profile. Their profile will fall in a different range of each college's applicant pool and is evaluated based on their GPA, strength of schedule and SAT/ACT score. I recommend that 50 percent of your list should be "target" schools, where your student's academic profile falls in the middle 50 percent of that school's applicant pool. About 30 percent of your list should be "likely" schools where

they fall in the top half of that school's applicant pool. It's okay to have some "reach" schools on your list, where their profile falls in the bottom half of the school's applicant pool, but that should only comprise about 20 percent of your list.

**Personality Fit:** This is where you will need your student's help to determine what type of social environment will make them feel most comfortable. We want our students to arrive on campus and feel confident to make friends, try new activities and get involved in their campus community.

To determine personality fit, I recommend students use social media (TikTok, YouTube, Instagram) to get a sense of what is offered on campus. They can also read student reviews of college campuses on niche.com. Maybe your student is looking for a campus that has strong school spirit, where they can cheer on sports teams, join a sorority or fraternity and get involved in multiple student organizations. Or



NICOLE  
KELMAN

maybe your student is interested in engaging in a robust cultural atmosphere, where they can attend theater performances, art exhibits and explore the local community off campus. Visiting campuses will be the best way to evaluate where your student can envision themselves living for four years.

**Financial Fit:** If affordability will be a deciding factor for your family, balancing your list will be key in finding the best value. If your student is a high academic achiever, they may be rewarded for their efforts in the classroom through merit scholarships. Not all colleges offer merit-based scholarships. But if they do, you can easily reduce the cost of a private college to be the same cost as a public university if your student is an attractive candidate at that school. If your student falls in the top 30 percent of a school's applicant pool, you will likely be offered a 20-30 percent discount on tuition through merit scholarships.

I love this offer, because merit scholarships are dollars you don't have to pay back. Even if

you don't qualify for need-based financial aid, you can still qualify for merit scholarships. Traditionally, private schools are more generous in awarding scholarships than public schools.

If you have a well-balanced list of colleges, your student will have multiple offers of admission to choose from, instead of the college choosing for them.

*Nicole Kelman is a college admissions expert and has been working in the field for almost 20 years. She served as a director of undergraduate admissions for 10 years at four top selective universities in the Northeast. She holds a master of science in higher education administration and is a member of the Independent Educational Consultants Association. Leading college admissions committees has given her much insight into the decision-making process of admissions offices. She is also a native of Orange and an Amity High School graduate. She can be reached at nicole@needucation-consultants.com.*

Foodie Foursome

Italian Fine Dining With A Home-Style Flair

A new restaurant, Mangiare Italian, opened in June on the Post Road in Milford, and a stone's throw from Orange. Chef and owner Adrien Gjonbaloj chose the intimate space previously occupied by several restaurants directly across from PC Richards.

Gjonbaloj's rich culinary history includes Adrianna's in New Haven and Sienna Restaurant in Westport.

Cindy and I were there with friends John and Christine. Upon arrival, I saw a decades-old friend and fellow Rotarian Barry Bonessi. He was there with several veterans honoring their service on what was Veterans Day evening.

The space exudes a sense of elegance that carries through from service, menu and attention to detail. The simplicity of the décor works well with the restaurant's "home-style" elegance. Our server was very attentive throughout our culinary exploration. From the spacious dark wood bar to the cloth covered tables and cloth napkins, we anticipated a great night out.

We started out with a round of drinks featuring an espresso martini, cosmo and wine. Gjonbaloj is also a sommelier. The fresh Italian bread was served with both olive oil and an eggplant pâté that was a nice spread. I added a little olive oil and salt to my taste,

which had me eating way more bread than I should have.

On this evening, we went with a chef's choice of appetizers, which turned out to be great from start to finish for a classic Italian feast prepared like a well-trained nonna. This home-style sophistication started with a hot antipasto. The combination of eggplant rollatini, stuffed mushrooms and clams oreganata was the perfect opening act. It was as tasty across the board as it was pretty on the serving platter. The eggplant was very tender with a nice texture, while the mushrooms took on a hearty bite with a tasteful bread stuffing. The clams oreganata (Italian baked stuffed clams) was the perfect way to invite your palate to an Italian adventure. The clams had a flavorful mixture of crispy breadcrumbs, oregano, fresh parsley and garlic. This was followed by large meatballs smothered in house marinara. The consistency of these meatballs, made with three types of beef, had amazing structure and taste.

Our next course was a traditional Caesar salad. This was not just a served salad; it was expertly prepared "tableside" by Gjonbaloj. It was created with the freshest of ingredi-



STEVE COOPER

ents and balanced to our individual tastes. This was again, an elegant yet simple salad and a nice transition to the entrées.

The first entrée was a branzino filet with white wine, capers and cherry tomatoes that had finesse and balance with an incredibly fresh and perfectly prepared sea bass. The next entrée was the New York strip. This cut, from the beef short loin, features a bold and beefy flavor. It is the larger strip of beef attached to the bone on a porterhouse or T-bone steak. This was an amazing cut of beef that had to be at least 2 inches thick. This again was seared in the kitchen and then brought tableside, ready to cook to each of our temperature requests. It was sliced into serving-sized strips and cooked in a sizzling hot pan with oil and clarified butter. After it was prepared, each slice was then skillfully cut into medallions and served, topped with herb butter, and a very tasty gorgonzola cream sauce.

The veggies were served family style as a hearty serving of roasted potatoes and pan-seared green beans. The beans were tender with a nice crunch, and the potatoes had a great seasoned crust and "pillowy" interior.

We ended our round of entrées with a true Italian classic: penne with the house-made marinara. It worked because of its simplicity and the quality ingredients. The penne was cooked al dente and finished in the fresh sauce for a perfectly prepared pasta dish.

We ended the evening with a dessert platter that was incredible. The tiramisu was one of the best I have had this year, the tres leches was perfectly moist with great structure, and the tartufo (Italian ice cream covered with chocolate) was a refreshing finish, with dollops of fresh whipped cream to top it all off.

Magiare Italian is open Tuesday and Friday from noon to 9 p.m., Saturday from noon to 10 p.m. and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. The restaurant is located at 1573 Boston Post Rd. Become one of the family, enjoy your dining experience, and call for a reservation at 475-327-7114.

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

Or Shalom Members Help Clean Up Milford Harbor

During Rosh Hashanah, it is a tradition for members of the Jewish community to visit a body of water and symbolically cast away their sins into the water in the Tashlich service.

Team Or Shalom, representing one of 306 teams across 30 countries and six continents in Repair the Sea's annual coastal cleanup

event on Sept. 28, contributed by scouring the confluence of the Wepawaug River and Milford Harbor, collecting 45 pounds of debris. Participants sought to reverse the Tashlich process by removing pollutants - representing human wrongdoing - from local waterfronts through organized cleanup efforts.

Milford Native To Perform Standup

The Milford Arts Council will host standup comic John Bennett on Dec. 17 at 8 p.m. as part of its Laugh Tracks series.

Bennett is a Milford native now based in New York City. He currently co-produces "Tight Pants Comedy Show," which has been featured in TimeOutNY.

Bennett's comedic style involves a blend of personal storytelling and goofiness, with an undercurrent of controlled rage.

The show begins at 8 p.m.; doors open at 7:30 p.m. The MAC is located at 40 Railroad Ave. South in downtown Milford. For tickets, visit milfordarts.org/event/laugh-tracks-standup-comedy-december/.

Laugh Tracks features comedy acts every third Wednesday from September through June. For more information, contact the Milford Arts Council at 203-878-6647 or visit milfordarts.org.

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### The Garden Spot

## Real Versus Artificial

As we put our gardens to bed for the winter, many of us like to decorate the inside and outside of our homes with greenery – be it a table centerpiece, a wreath or a Christmas tree. As we make decisions about the use of greenery, a question often arises regarding whether to use natural or manufactured products.

Artificial greenery seems to be less costly over time, and the newer products seem very lifelike. A six-foot live tree costs around \$125, while the manufactured product of the same size may come pre-lit and cost around \$300.

From an environmental standpoint, the difference becomes less clear. Fresh, live greens and trees are typically farm raised, with 350,000 acres of land in the US in pro-

duction for growing Christmas trees. We have several local “cut your own” farms in Milford and Orange where you may even find a white pine, the only Christmas tree that is native to Connecticut. Since the trees are farm raised, deforestation (which has significantly contributed to global warming) is not an issue. It takes about 10 years for a tree to grow to size, and tree farmers will almost always plant one or more trees to replace the tree harvested for greenery. So purchasing a “natural tree” or greenery is environmentally sound.

Artificial greenery is typically manufactured in China, which has less stringent en-

vironmental regulations than does the US. Older and less expensive trees are made using polyvinylchloride and metal, while the newer ones tend to be made from polyethylene and metal. Although they are more fire resistant than a natural tree, they are not fireproof. The typical artificial tree lasts six years, so they end up in landfills where they will not decompose.

According to the Christmas Tree Association of New York, artificial tree production adds 100 pounds of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere, where a natural tree absorbs carbon dioxide from the atmosphere during its 10 years of growth.

Another benefit of natural greenery is that

it decomposes relatively quickly, even in landfills. If you have wooded space on your property, you can leave the tree in the woods and it will provide shelter for birds and other wildlife during the winter months.

As you think more about your environmental footprint, consider the true costs of using artificial materials. They may seem less costly from an initial purchase standpoint, but their total cost is high. If you’re looking for something locally grown, remember to check out one of the farms in our area.



PAT DRAY

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

### Time Management

## Daily Planning

A poet once said, “The most powerful time is when you are alone, thinking about what you are to do rather than the doing itself.”

Daily planning is the time you can set aside each evening to plan out and take control of the most precious resource at your command, the next 24 hours.

Done correctly, daily planning is not an expense that will cost you time but an investment that will pay you back many times over the time invested.

Here are four steps to follow during your daily planning time.

Create a to-do list of everything you “have to” do and everything you “want to” do during the next day. Add the action steps for your commitments and responsibilities and include action items to help you balance your life more

effectively in each of your seven vital areas: health, family, financial, intellectual, social, professional and spiritual.

Review every item on your to-do list and ask yourself three questions about each item:

“Is this the best use of my time?” If it is, plan to do it. If it is not, try to figure out a way to postpone it.

“Is there a better or more efficient way of handling or completing this item?” For example, combining telephone calls and making them all together.

“Is there anything I can do in advance to prepare for this task? Do I need supplies or information from another to get it done?”



DON WETMORE

Review any appointments and scheduled events you have planned for the next day and ask yourself the same three questions listed above. As you review each commitment, determine if it is the best use of your time.

For example, instead of having a meeting with someone, are you able to fax, email or call that person instead? Can you do anything to better prepare for it?

If you have a doctor’s appointment, are there questions you can write down to ask the doctor? Whatever these improvements are, add them to your to-do list as action items.

Prioritize your to-do list. Place the number

“1” next to the most important item on your list. Place the number “2” next to the second most important item. Continue prioritizing the complete list. You now have a to-do list of all the items you “have to” do. More importantly, you have listed all the items you “want to” do, including action items to help you achieve your goals, cultivate a better life balance, and make your appointments, scheduled events and to-do list items flow more smoothly.

The process of daily planning will save you more time overall than what you spend doing it and will increase your daily productivity each day.

*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.*



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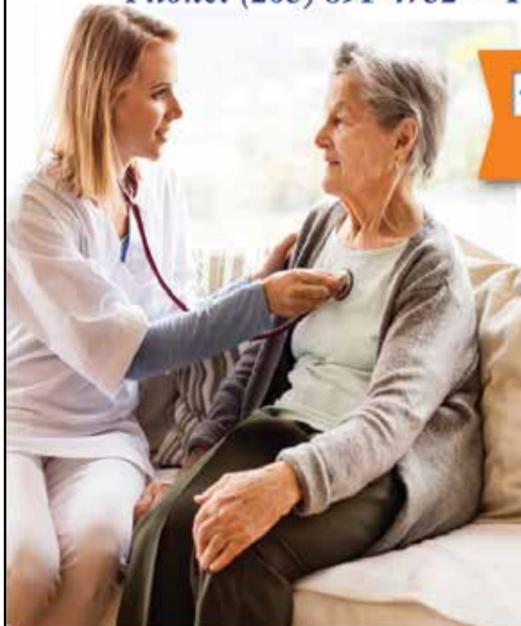


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Your Health

# Tracking Respiratory Viral Illness In Connecticut

I recently attended our semiannual meeting with Connecticut's public health commissioner. This meeting was very informative as all the local health directors learned about the cumulative impact of federal funding cuts on various public health initiatives and programs.

During this meeting state epidemiologist Dr. Lynn Sosa informed us that the state Department of Public Health has developed and launched a dashboard that displays a weekly report of viral respiratory illness. It is an interactive dashboard that provides information on influenza, respiratory syncytial virus, COVID-19, syndrom-

ic surveillance, wastewater surveillance and vaccination.

This dashboard uses a consistent method to track and analyze data across different years and diseases. The case data comes from the state's disease tracking program, the Connecticut Electronic Disease Surveillance Systems.

Influenza cases and lab data are obtained from the CTEDSS. All Connecticut labs report positive influenza tests to DPH. These test results include the type (type A, type B), or the virus



DR. AMIR MOHAMMAD

subtype (H3N2), which helps determine the specific virus strains circulating in the state. As of this writing, there have been 794 cases of influenza cases reported and the majority of them are type A.

Syndrome surveillance provides information on weekly emergency department visits in Connecticut. Compared to the last two years, the rate of ED visits due to viral illnesses are lower.

The vaccination record shows that 946,417 individuals have been vaccinated

for influenza in the current season. Similarly, 294,231 individuals of various age groups have received COVID-19 vaccines during the current season.

This dashboard provides essential, accurate data for review by health care and public health professionals to keep their residents informed. We are currently in the process of posting the link on the Health Department's section of the Orange's website.

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

## Orange Senior Center

# Benefits Of Pet Ownership

My daughter's friend dropped off a dog at our house on July 4. I did not want a dog. I already told her, "No dogs." Yet here it was.

This dog was a 2-year-old Eskimo husky named Juneau. She spent much of her life in the dog pound. When she was not in the pound, she bounced from home to home. Juneau is a beautiful, smart, sweet girl.

I told my daughter, "First, Juneau needs a forever home. If she lives with us, then she will need to spend the rest of her life with us. We would have to be her forever home." Then I said, "Second, she is a husky. Huskies love to be outside. She will need a lot of walks. She will need a lot of play time. Most importantly, she needs a lot of love.

Are you up for this?"

Pet ownership comes with a plethora of benefits. While I was still mentally preoccupied with the added workload and responsibilities, my daughter was preaching these benefits. She said that petting or playing with an animal would make us healthier, help to lower my blood pressure, improve our mood and boost our emotional well-being from all the endorphins (the feel-good hormones) that would be released from the added companionship.

Having a pet reduces stress and gives a



DENNIS MARSH

person sense of purpose. The responsibilities of caring for an animal gets people out of bed, as the dog must go out and the cat needs to be fed. My daughter said walking the dog would not only improve our physical health but also give us more opportunities to meet people. This turned out to be true: people are always stopping me to say how beautiful Juneau is and to pet her.

Pets provide companionship with unconditional love, which can significantly reduce feelings of isolation and

loneliness, especially for those living alone. This dog was already making me feel old – or maybe that's how my daughter was making me feel.

*Dennis Marsh is the senior services coordinator of Orange Community Services, which includes the Orange Senior Center. The center provides activities that promote independence, creativity, physical and emotional health, and lifelong learning for residents over the age of 55. For more information on the Orange Senior Center call 203-891-4788, visit orange-ct.gov/783/Orange-Senior-Center or email dmarsh@orange-ct.gov.*

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**(Continued From 1)**

facility in Knoxville, Tennessee, eliminating 132 jobs in that city.

Edgewell would not disclose where it would house future production, telling WVLT in Tennessee, “we do not publicly share the location of our manufacturing facilities for competitive reasons.”

This year the company launched operations at a plant in Aguascalientes, Mexico, investing \$115 million into the operation, according to a report from ProMexico Industry.

**Takeovers**

**(Continued From 1)**

license suspension for anyone with three or more violations.

The legislation also empowered municipalities to adopt their own ordinances that allows them to destroy the off-road vehicles seized in such illegal activities.

The vehicles may also be put up for sale, but First Selectman Jim Zeoli said that selling them just puts them back on the street.

“Some of them have sold,” he said, “and lo and behold they end up confiscating the

same vehicles again.”

“It may make sense in certain cases to sell and bring some money to the town,” said Selectman Mitch Goldblatt. “But we’ll leave that to the police department to determine.”

“This is long overdue,” agreed Selectman PJ Shanley.

The town already had some ordinances barring recreational vehicles from town property without authorization; the previous penalty was a maximum \$50 fine and possible arrest. The updates allow for the confiscation, sale and destruction of the vehicles.

The state law also allows for increased monetary penalties, to \$1,000 for a first offense, \$1,500 for a second offense and \$2,000 for a third offense.

Several other area towns have also adopted stricter ordinances against offroad vehicles and street takeovers, including Milford, West Haven and New Haven.

On a separate but related traffic enforcement matter, the town was expected at its Dec. 10 meeting to adopt an ordinance that would allow automated traffic enforcement cameras. Orange would join a growing list of state municipalities using the technology to enforce speed limits and red lights in certain locations. That meeting had not occurred as of press time.

**Amity District Begins Budget Process**

Work has begun on the 2026-2027 Amity district budget.

At the Nov. 24 special meeting of the Amity Board of Education, principals and department directors presented estimated needs for the 2026-2027 school year. These requests are submitted to Superintendent Jennifer Byars so that she may prepare her proposed budget, which will be presented to the Amity Finance Committee in January.

The superintendent will then review her proposal with the boards of finance in each town, followed by a presentation to the full Board of Education in February. Two combined AFC and BOE workshop meetings are planned for Jan. 26 and Feb. 23. These combined meetings allow the AFC, superintendent, and full board to refine the budget until the board is ready to send it to voters for approval in early May.

**Milford Public Library Events**

Visit milfordlibrary.org for more info about book clubs, online author talks and other upcoming programs.

**Romance Book Group**

Saturday, Dec. 13, 11 a.m.-noon

This month’s selection is Matzah Ball by Jean Meltzer. Rachel is determined to find her muse at the Matzah Ball, a Jewish music celebration on the last night of Hanukkah, even if it means working with her summer camp archenemy – Jacob Greenberg. Registration is not required.

**The Caring Network: A Grief Support Group of Bridges Healthcare**

Monday, Dec. 15 and Monday, Jan. 12, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

A support program for adults who have suffered a loss through death. In an atmosphere of safety and support, the group is facilitated by a professional counselor who reviews the normal ranges of grief and mourning. Registration is not required.

**Tuesday Movie Matinee: Downton Abbey The Grand Finale**

Tuesday, Dec. 16, 2 p.m.-4 p.m.

The Crawleys must embrace change as the staff prepares for a new chapter with the next generation leading Downton Abbey into the future. Run time is 2 hours, 3 minutes. Registration is not required.

**Popular Fiction Book Group**

Tuesday, Dec. 16, 7 p.m.-8 p.m.

This month’s selection is This Strange Eventful History by Claire Messud. This story follows the Cassars over seven decades (from 1940-2010), starting with patriarch Gaston and his wife Lucienne, whose myth of perfect love sustains them, and ending with Chloe, who believes telling her family’s buried stories will bring them all peace. Registration is not required.

**Classic Book Group**

Thursday, Dec. 18, 10 a.m.-11 a.m.

This month’s selection is The Winter of Our Discontent by John Steinbeck. Ethan

Allen Hawley works as a clerk in a grocery store that his family once owned. Then one day, in a moment of moral crisis, Ethan decides to take a holiday from his own scrupulous standards. Registration is not required.

**Milford Makers Meet-Up**

Tuesday, Jan. 6, 6 p.m.-8 p.m.

This is a group for local makers, fiber artists and crafters to gather and work on projects (BYO materials) over a cup of coffee (or tea), with a side of conversation. Registration is not required.

**Virtual Author Talk: The Creative and Compassionate Art of Seeing Others Deeply with David Brooks**

Tuesday, Jan. 13, 2 p.m.-3 p.m.

Join an online discussion with prominent cultural writer and bestselling author David Brooks on his book, How to Know a Person: The Art of Seeing Others Deeply, in which he poses essential questions: If you want to know a person, what kind of attention should you cast on them? What kind of conversations should you have? Registration required on the library’s website.

**Tips for Flourishing with Dr. Wendy Hurwitz**

Tuesday, Jan. 13, 6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

There is a difference between surviving and thriving. Come learn tips and skills to augment flourishing, thriving, and enhance well-being. Registration is not required.

**Astronomy for Beginners: Electronically Assisted Astronomy**

Wednesday, Jan. 14, 6:30 p.m.-8 p.m.

Attendees will learn about “live stacking” as a way to see images being built as time goes by during an imaging session, and how to process images with free software that’s currently available. Discussion will include the different types of astrophotography, as well as demonstrate some of the image processing techniques used to get those images. Registration is not required.

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## Real Talk: You Ask, A Pro Answers

# Everyone Has Mold

Contrary to what many people believe, mold is naturally outside and a balance of it collects right inside your home as well.

Ventilation and dryness are the key to keeping the mold count at a low. All mold needs is water, extended periods of high humidity and a food source, such as dust, dirt or porous material. When a home can breathe and is free from high humidity it can combat all sorts of issues, including mold.

Leaks from pipes, attics, windows, bathrooms and kitchens can all lead to the growth of mold if it is not dried out immediately. Umbrellas, towels and even shoes can add enough humidity to cause mold.

Your attic is a prime area of suspicion as we tend to vent bathroom fans into the attic. A misconception is that an attic fan can prevent mold. It is actually the roof vent, gable vents and soffit vents that helps with temperature differential the most. We need the attic to be colder in the winter when mold

grows, and an attic fan only runs when they are triggered by heat in the summer months.

Watch for flashing leaks or gutter leaks. Anywhere moisture can get around your chimney will compromise the attic. Attic mold can weaken the roof sheathing too, compromising the structure.

Keeping your basement dry and using a humidifier consistently is key to keeping mold under close containment in the lowest level of your house. Unlike attic mold, basement mold can rise into the home, affecting breathing air and even getting into the HVAC system. Wells have a habit of sweating, so keep an eye on the basement. Monitoring your humidity can be as easy as purchasing a hygrometer for under \$30.

With testing, an inspection and treatment, the mold can be eliminated. And it should



BARBARA  
LEHRER

be, because it can cause structural issues as well as health problems. There are mold companies that are experts at identifying mold issues and can create a game plan for removing the mold safely and effectively.

Methods to remove mold may include air scrubbing, HEPA vacuuming, encapsulating and applying disinfectants like enzymes that kill mold on the surface, sub-surface and air. Trying to remove mold yourself is tricky. Using bleach is a myth when it comes to porous surfaces. The water from the bleach actually feeds the mold in the subsurface, making it worse. The rootlike body structures of fungi, including mold, are called hyphae. Imagine pulling weeds out from your garden without pulling out the roots; it's a similar concept.

Kitchen cabinets should be cleaned inside

periodically, as well as closets, garages and sheds. Any dirt can be an attractive surface for mold spores in the air.

Any areas that can collect dampness require a self-draining dehumidifier that is capable of keeping a large area at 55 percent humidity. Buy a good one for your basement, hook it up properly and be educated.

Mold is a natural and important part of the environment. Its purpose is to decompose. You just don't want it decomposing your home.

This is just another chapter in taking care of your property. Contact me with any concerns and I will gladly point you in the right direction.

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

## Amity Chamber of Commerce

# Amity Health And Fitness Expo Rings In The New Year

The Amity Chamber of Commerce Health and Fitness Expo will ring in the New Year on Saturday, Jan. 10 at the Courtyard by Marriott, located at 136 Marsh Hill Rd. from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The expo is free and open to the public.

The sold-out exhibit floor will feature a diverse roster of exhibitors spanning a robust range of health and fitness areas, including food and drink samples, fitness centers, therapies, energy efficiency, health insurance providers, optometrists, chiropractors, recreational facilities, pet health, and more.

Bring your friends, family and co-workers. All residents, organizations and businesses throughout New Haven County are welcome and encouraged to attend at no cost. The expo offers something for all ages and interests.

Last year's expo blew us away with the exceptional response that was preceded by snow the prior evening. A little white on the ground didn't stop the hundreds of attendees from keeping fit and having fun. The resources, samples, freebies, discounts and consultations offered by the exhibitors made for a memorable and meaningful event. It was a phenomenal three hours of unity in the

community.

The 2026 expo will be no exception and further enhanced. There will be new event sponsors and member exhibitors in addition to "fitness favorites" from last year; demonstrations and screenings; great eats; and networking that brings together businesses, organizations and the community. The Amity Chamber Health and Fitness Expo has become a must-attend event to kick off the new year in high gear.

The generosity of corporate event sponsors allows the chamber to offer free admission to the public as well as free exhibit space to 2026 chamber members: Xfinity, the Regional Water Authority, Charter Senior Living of Orange, 7 Brew Drive Thru Coffee and Courtyard by Marriott.

Exhibitor specialties to date (and subject to change) include fitness centers, eyecare, physical and massage therapies, chiropractic, health insurance providers, sports and recreation, senior and assisted care, legal and financial services, salons, skin care, real estate, healthy eating, energy efficiency, wa-



BARRY LEE  
COHEN

ter services and pet care and grooming.

To register for the expo, visit [lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/fy42nyw](http://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/fy42nyw)

And for those hungry for more chamber events, "Amity EATS Week!" was a delicious success. We can't wait to repeat and expand the program in 2026. The inaugural event ran from Friday, Nov. 7, through Saturday, Nov. 15. With over 17 Amity Chamber members participating, a wide variety of delectable food and beverages for free or at a significant discount were offered to the public.

Folks were caught chewing on a churro, picking up a pie, buttering a bagel, sinking their teeth into a sandwich, taking home some Thai, indulging in Indian cuisine, savoring some sushi, picking up a prepared meal, putting on a PEZ lanyard, breaking open a buffin muffin, dunking a doughnut and dining at a delicious discounts.

To redeem offers from each participating business, visitors and patrons simply showed the Amity EATS Week! webpage, an Amity

EATS Week! social media posting or advertisement on their mobile device.

The chamber is thankful for you. In less than 18 months, the Amity Chamber has increased our membership by over 73 percent, with a 31 percent increase since Dec. 31, 2024. We've expanded our corporate partners and event sponsors while also strengthening ties with businesses and the community. It's been our privilege to engage the Amity region and surrounding area with our Community Awards (honoring the Business, Police Officers, and Firefighters of the Year), Business Symposium & Expo, Amity EATS Week! and Health & Fitness Expo business after (and before) hours, as well as so much more.

In 2026, we will continue to introduce programs and expand coverage as part of our commitment and mission to create value for our members and the community. Without your membership and partnership, this would not be possible.

*Barry Lee Cohen is the chief executive officer of the Amity Chamber of Commerce. Contact him at 203-645-2913 or [director@amityctchamber.com](mailto:director@amityctchamber.com).*

## Giving Back

# Seeley's Deli: Where Milford Feels Like Home

In the heart of Milford, just minutes from the shoreline and surrounded by the hum of daily life, there's a place where locals gather not just for a great sandwich, but for a genuine sense of connection. That place is Seeley's Deli, owned and lovingly run by Amanda Williams, a chef, community advocate and Milford resident who has turned a neighborhood deli into a true local treasure.

For more than a decade, Seeley's Deli has been a fixture in town – a go-to spot for bold, creative flavors and warm, familiar service. Williams founded the deli with a simple but heartfelt vision: to create a place that felt like home. Her passion for good food quickly blossomed into something bigger – an opportunity to serve her community in ways that go well beyond what's on the menu.

"I wanted Seeley's to feel like the kind of neighborhood deli people could claim as their own," she said. "A place where you're welcomed, fed well and part of something local and real."

That sense of authenticity is woven into everything she does. Williams brings play-

ful twists to classic deli favorites, perfects each recipe with pride and lights up when customers discover a new favorite. But what truly sets Seeley's apart is her deep commitment to Milford itself.

Giving back isn't a marketing tactic at Seeley's – it's a core value. Williams proudly sponsors Milford Little League, cheerleading squads and local school programs, not for exposure but out of genuine belief in supporting local kids and families.

One of her most meaningful moments came when she saw young Little League players wearing jerseys with the Seeley's Deli name across the back.

"Watching those kids feel supported and proud – that made everything worth it," she said.

Her compassion also extends to Milford residents facing hardship. Seeley's regularly supports the Beth-El Center, which provides essential services to those in need. Helping feed local families and individuals is some-



WENDY  
BARRY

thing Williams speaks about with humility and heart.

"It reminded me how something as simple as a warm meal can bring comfort and dignity," she says.

Williams's connection to Milford runs deep. She has watched the town grow, supported its schools and built relationships with customers who have become like family. For her, community involvement isn't optional – it's part of the

responsibility of being a local business owner.

"Small businesses aren't just storefronts – they're neighbors," she says. "The money spent at Seeley's goes right back into Milford. It supports our families, our teams and our shared future."

Williams believes supporting small businesses is simpler and more powerful than most people realize. Whether choosing a local deli over a chain, sharing a Facebook

post, recommending a sandwich to a friend or showing up at community events, every gesture strengthens Milford's local economy and the families behind it.

"When you support a small business, you're investing in your town's heartbeat," she says. "To the Milford community: thank you. Seeley's Deli isn't just my business; it's ours. It's built from your support, your stories and your belief in what local really means. I'm grateful every day to serve you and honored to be part of this incredible community."

If you haven't visited Seeley's Deli yet, now is the perfect time to discover (or rediscover) one of Milford's most beloved businesses.

Seeley's Deli is located at 554 Boston Post Rd.

*Know a local business that deserves to be recognized? Email [wendy@wbarryrealtor.com](mailto:wendy@wbarryrealtor.com) to nominate a business for an upcoming column. Let's keep celebrating the people who keep Milford and Orange strong.*



## Travel Matters

# New Ship Review – Star Princess

From my balcony on the brand-new Star Princess, I have decided that Star Princess is great for almost everyone, but especially fun for multigenerational families. It's large enough to offer something for every age.

With a guest capacity of 4,300, the ship never feels crowded. The "smart" elevator strategy works well for traffic flow: just press the floor you are going to and you will be alerted to one of six elevators going to that floor next. Brilliant.

There are a total of five pools on this beauty, including an adult-only indoor/outdoor pool in the Dome where you can swim from sun to shade through the gateway to the indoor part of the pool. Pretty cool.

For kids, there are games and crafts in clubs for three specific age groups, including special programs like Jr. Chef at Sea for ages 8-12 and science activities through partnerships with Discovery at Sea and

the California Science Center. There's a splash pad for younger children as well.

For adults, there are 12 different dining venues. Four are complimentary, with two of them outdoors, steps away from a pool. One of the new dining options is Makoto Ocean with Japanese sushi. Another is Love by Britto – an artistic experience that combines the signature designs of Romero Britto with the culinary genius of Rudi Sodamin. There is also a new option for true carnivores called Butchers Block by Dario, which serves up delicious cuts of steak and sides family style – with a complimentary bottle of Chianti.

For entertainment, the 11 bars and lounges provide a large number of entertainment options, including craft cocktail classes,



KAREN  
QUINN-  
PANZER

many different musicians and a new speakeasy called Spellbound. It combines storytelling with an illusionist known as "The Great Cardini" – a celebration of mixology and magic. O'Malley's Irish Pub is a popular hub for gathering with friends. It offers classic pub games and music. There are excellent productions in the theater, and the casino feels like being on the old Vegas strip rather than on a cruise ship. I enjoyed playing blackjack there.

If you've been onboard one of the newer Princess ships, you know that the Medallion program is quite innovative. You can find your friend, find your way around the ship, unlock your door with it, have food and drinks find you and connect with guest services from anywhere with a new CrewCall

chat feature.

Princess is one of the cruise lines that offers a package tailored to your needs and can save you a good deal of money onboard – Princess Plus or Premier.

And if you like exclusivity (grandparents or parents), then try accommodations that include the Sanctuary – with an exclusive restaurant and outdoor Sanctuary Club with upscale sundeck and pool that offers activities such as live music, sunrise yoga, a champagne wall and so much more. It's the latest in the "ship within a ship" concept. They do it quite well.

Star Princess is sailing in the Caribbean now and Alaska this summer.

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

## Rotary Club of Orange

# Give And Take

It is that time of year when solicitations from charitable organizations and invitations for fundraising events appear daily via email or post or in yard signs around town. Rotary clubs are part of that solicitation onslaught, but these clubs are a bit different in that they request funds that will be redistributed to other, usually local, community groups. In a way they serve as a smaller-scale version of community United Way organizations.

That role gives Rotarians a somewhat broader view of community needs, and unfortunately both needs and urgency appear to be greater in recent years. With a third of our fiscal year completed, Orange Rotary has already received more requests for funds than it has been able to provide in the past to community organizations in total for a whole

year. Current funds to help address food insecurity and temporary homelessness, continue educational enrichment for youth and support seniors, veterans and the disabled will soon be insufficient.

One way anyone can help others in our community has been to register and participate in Orange Rotary's Thanksgiving Day Turkey Trot. This is an early morning 5K road run or a 2K walk that starts at the town's High Plains Community Center. This is our biggest fundraising event and draws 700-800 participants per year. And it is a merry event to be part of hundreds lining up to run for charitable causes. We started



DAN  
MAY

this in 2012, with many repeat runners, but especially welcome newcomers.

The holiday season is a time to give thanks, but it is also a time to give. One of the other columnists for this paper – Don Wetmore – writes about business skills and productivity, but he is also the Rotarian who will take over the main leadership role for all 50+ clubs across southern Connecticut. At a recent meeting, Wetmore was describing approaches to expand another role of Rotary clubs – networking among club members and across clubs to develop both business and service opportunities.

Wetmore steered me toward a 2014 book by Adam Grant called "Give and Take: Why Helping Others Drives Our Success." It can be read as either a business or interpersonal guide. It emphasizes that helpful interactions are as important for success as passion, hard work, talent or luck. Not to mention that helping others also has the side effect of increasing personal happinesses and satisfaction.

Writing checks to your preferred charities is great, and I encourage you to support as many charitable organizations as you can.

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

## Ponder This

# Saving The Milford Marine Institute

If ever a town deserved a museum to honor marine science and history, Milford is top of the list.

Milford is a coastal city stretching 14 miles along the Long Island Sound with zigzags along inlets and inland waterways. This beautiful city nestled at the mouth of the Wepawaug river is known for beautiful beaches, parks, extensive green, restaurants, arts and cultural happenings along with varied local festivities.

Milford also has a rich seafaring history that includes shipbuilding and oystering. Hats off to Marilyn May of the Milford Historical Society and a Milford-Orange Times columnist, for the informative article published in this paper in October. The piece introduces us to Captain George Coggeshall, a Milford native, sea captain and meticulous author of personal logs that provides a rich history of his navigational journeys of the role of Milford later in the War of 1812.

A marine institute museum might house such an exhibit related to this less well-known and later period of Milford's seafaring history.

The history of Milford oyster harvesting and trading is remarkable. An annual Milford Oyster Festival originally started to honor oyster history is a successful enterprise, sought after tourist attraction, boost to commercial oyster harvesting and an economic driver for Milford.

The original purpose of the Marine Institute was to create a museum. The initial focus of the institute's founders was to focus interest on the history of the indigenous inhabitants of the land and the remarkable role of Milford during the Revolutionary War era.

Milford educators Dr. Helen Langner,

Dr. George Whitney and Joseph Foran created the Milford Marine Institute in 1983 with the express purpose of establishing a natural science center in Milford. Former Mayor Fred Lisman, together with the city planner, the director of public works and Conservation Commission Chair Tim Chaucer sought and received local government approval in 1990 to repurpose a city-owned building for this purpose. Members of the Public Works Department then turned an aging, inactive wastewater treatment building on the Gulf Pond State Wildlife Refuge into a suitable building for use as a museum and nature center.

The Gulf Pond Museum, a component of the incorporated Marine Institute, provided an actual physical space for artifacts and exhibits. Summer camps in marine biology, bird identification and Native American history and archaeology were offered at this site in conjunction with the Milford Recreation Department over the course of subsequent years.

The Milford Marine Institute continues to offer these summer camps, though it was relocated in 2024 to the Tri Beach Neighborhood Center. These camps continue to provide field experiences based on the original mission to educate and enthrall children with unique nature-related experiences.

Whenever lists are made there is risk of excluding people and/or groups that should be included and deserve recognition. This seems especially true when discussing Milford, since there is an extensive record of community engagement in both historical



ELLEN RUSSELL  
BEATTY

and conservation efforts. An array of talented, volunteer residents over many years has been instrumental in preserving the history of Milford and advocating for protection of tidal and inland wetlands. In addition, there has been and remains strong local governmental support across multiple mayoral administrations.

One need only look at the city charter to understand the structure of committees and commissions supported over many years by local government. A notable few among the many associations and /or local government supported are Milford Historical Society, Milford Land Conservation Trust, Conservation Commission, Historic District #1 and Historic District #2 as well as an Historic District Commission. Milford boasts a city historian, Art Stowe, who is currently working with City Clerk Pete Smith on a project transcribing written documents currently stored in the vault. These transcriptions can then be included in the broader effort to digitalize the city clerk's vault holdings, providing public access to records that reflect the history of Milford.

The Milford Marine Institute has collections of marine items too numerous to mention here. A permanent museum would house all aspects of Milford history, including the significant collection of marine artifacts.

It is important to secure a protected space for exhibits. The Audubon Center to the west and a museum for the Marine Institute's collections closer to the Boston Post Road and town center seems ideal and perhaps over-

due.

The geographical composition of our long coastline makes Milford first among equals in relation to coastal management issues. Connecting our geography to issues of conservation can become a strong suit for securing grants, and state or national funding for coastal management in the long term. Establishment of a museum to emphasize our coastal heritage and provide space for rotating collections will enhance our reputation as a coastal city. Our long history of high-level community engagement coupled with interest in erosion management science and technology makes us competitive. Our highly skilled, industrious and well-informed public works department is in a strong position to participate in projects to address erosion, pollution and coastal development issues as they emerge.

Across political divides and with true bipartisan engagement, we can forge a future together based on the high regard we all share for the little city with the big heart. This is an opportunity that we must not miss.

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

## NEW Accepting Applications For 2026 Scholarship Program

The Milford-based Network of Executive Women is now accepting applications for their 2026 scholarship program.

One of the primary community services of NEW is the annual scholarship program, providing monetary support to women who would not ordinarily be able to afford educational programs. The objective of the awards is to offer scholarships to women in need of financial assistance for educational undergraduate degrees, retraining or certification purposes, thereby enabling them to find meaningful employment, better their present position or reenter the work force.

To be considered, applicants must: be at an undergraduate level but not transitioning from high school to college; be enrolled at an accredited school in New Haven or Fairfield counties; demonstrate financial need; and be enrolled, continuing or returning to school to further their educational goals or training

to enhance their job skills. Members of the NEW and their families are not eligible for this scholarship.

This scholarship is not open to recent high school graduates or students who have continuously schooled since high school. The program is designed for women who have had their education interrupted or delayed, never had the opportunity to pursue higher education, or otherwise need additional credentialing to advance in their career.

The deadline for submitting applications is Friday, Feb. 23 at 5 p.m. No application submitted after that deadline will be considered by the committee. To learn more about NEW and the scholarship program as well as access the application online, visit [networkofexecutivewomen.org/scholarships](http://networkofexecutivewomen.org/scholarships). For questions and to request an application, email Debbie Siena at [Deb.Siena@snmc.com](mailto:Deb.Siena@snmc.com).

## NEAACCC Hosts Moon Festival



The New England Asian American Cultural Center in Milford hosted its annual Moon Festival celebration on Oct. 25, with theme of "Togetherness & Wellness," bringing together over 100 families for an afternoon of cultural exchange and community health education. Guests included Milford Mayor Tony Giannattasio, forensic expert Dr. Henry C. Lee, state Sen. Tony Hwang, state Rep. Kathy Kennedy, and Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling Director Shebrieka Warburton. The event included lion dance and kung fu showcases, a boxing and sparring mini workshop, mooncake making and lantern painting. Photo courtesy of the NEAACCC.

## Moonrise Cartel Wins Regional Music Award



From left: band members Steve Tobey, Stephanie Harrison, Al Pascarelli and Benj LeFevre. Absent is Jason Polise. Photo courtesy of The Moonrise Cartel.

The Moonrise Cartel, based in Milford, has been named Rising Star: Connecticut by the New England Music Awards – a distinction recognizing emerging artists whose work is shaping one of the area's music scenes.

"We're proud to represent such an incredible Connecticut music community

– and honored to be named Rising Stars of Connecticut by the New England Music Awards," said Al Pascarelli, founder, lyricist and vocalist for The Moonrise Cartel. "This community has supported us from the beginning, and we're grateful to be growing together."

The New England Music Awards are presented annually to musicians whose dedication, spirit and achievements have established them as a vital part of New England's robust and diverse musical landscape. The NEMA nominating committee comprises journalists from major music publications, radio personalities, talent buyers, event planners, record-label executives and more, representing all six New England states and every awards category. Each year, the committee selects over 100 nominees across multiple genres.

The Moonrise Cartel will open for The Alternate Routes at FTC's Warehouse in Fairfield on Saturday, December 6, and headlining Upstage at The Stamford Palace on Jan. 9.

## Orange Child Care Hosts Hayride



Holly Hill Childcare & Learning Center in Orange held its annual horse-drawn hayride for the center's children on Nov. 5. Horses Ben and Jerry, driven by farmer Bryan Clark of Maple View Farm, led the hayride through the neighborhood with children, teachers, parents and grandparents aboard. Pictured with students are Director Debbie Manson Fedorko, left, and Assistant Director Sue Puhl. Photo by Kyla Rhoades.



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## HEALTH & FITNESS EXPO

**Courtyard by Marriott**  
136 Marsh Hill Road, Orange

**Saturday, January 10, 2026**  
10:00 am - 1:00 pm



**FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!**



FREE Registration

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### Veterans March Through Milford



Milford held its annual Veterans Day parade through downtown on Nov. 9. The city held a wreath-laying ceremony on Nov. 11. Photos by Robert Creigh.

### Gabrielli Donates Truck To Milford Boy Scouts For Food Drive



Gabrielli Truck Rental and Leasing donated a refrigerated truck to the Milford Troop One Boy Scouts for their annual food drive and aided the group in collecting enough grocery items to feed more than 1,000 city families. The 21st annual food drive was held Nov. 14 through 16 at Wasson Field, where the scouts collected food and turkeys, stored in a Gabrielli refrigerated truck. From left, Milford Troop One Leader Mark Krom with scouts Christopher C. Beers, 14; Henry R. Bedenbaugh, 14; Tristan A. Brown, 12; Jacob Bernardini, 11; Dariella Z. Williams, 12; and Aidan L. Jackson, 13. Photo by Manon L. Mirabelli.

### Amity Class of 75 Holds Reunion



The Amity High School Class of 1975 held their 50-year reunion the weekend of Nov. 7-9. The weekend began on Friday with a tour of the high school provided by Principal Andre Hauser and the Amity Link Crew students, followed by a gathering at Ernie's Pizzeria in New Haven. Saturday featured a buffet dinner and dancing at Race Brook Country Club, which included a photo booth and a fireworks display. An after party followed at the Orange Ale House. Sunday morning concluded the festivities with a farewell brunch held at The Valley Diner in Derby. Over 150 members of the Class of 1975 attended this gala weekend. Pictured are Reunion Committee members Andy Weinstein, Brenda Whiting Beard, Jennifer Botwick, Sara Reilly Dixon, Roberta Thomas Mancuso, Karen Agapiou Kerames, Patty Duffy, Cathy Boppert and Mitch Goldblatt at Race Brook Country Club. Photo courtesy of Mitch Goldblatt.

### Orange Honors Veterans Day



Orange honored Veterans Day on Nov. 11 with a ceremony at the Orange War Remembrance Memorial at High Plains Community Center. Photo by Lexi Crocco.

### Brownies, Orange Garden Club Decorate Pumpkins



The Garden Club of Orange partnered with the third-grade Brownie troop from Racebrook School in October to decorate pumpkins that were placed on the tables at the Lions Club's annual Thanksgiving Dinner in November. Sally Denny of the Garden Club led the activity. Photo courtesy of the Garden Club of Orange.

### Orange Coldwell Banker Agents Organize Food Drive

Ten Coldwell Banker agents, including from the Orange office, joined a food drive held by St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank on Nov. 16 at the Walmart in Shelton, collecting enough for at least 5,000 meals for in-need families.

"We are so appreciative and filled with gratitude to all the great people of the Valley that came out to support our food drive on Saturday," said John Izzo, a Coldwell Banker agent and organizer of the event.

"The need for nutritious meals for families in need this year is greater than we have seen in a long time," said Aileen DeFeo, senior vice president at the Coldwell Banker Orange and Woodbridge offices. "As a company, we have a duty to support several worthy causes that benefit those in need and I am so proud and grateful to our agents who selflessly give of themselves to support such important events."

"A huge thank you to the big-hearted staff at Coldwell Banker for running a spectacular food drive to benefit our busy pantry and the Valley residents we serve," said Remy Kocurek, executive director of St. Vincent de Paul of the Valley. "The zest and passion they showed from the first flyer handed out to the last box of stuffing collected was contagious to all," she said.

### Boating Safety & Weekend Navigator/GPS Courses 2026

for power boats, sailboats & personal watercraft.

SATURDAYS, Boat America: Feb. 21, Mar. 14 (Fairfield Library, 1080 Old Post Rd., Fairfield CT), Mar. 21, Apr. 18, May 16, June 6, July 18, Aug. 15 and Sep. 19.

Navigator/GPS: Apr. 11 & June 27 Registration at 7:30 a.m., class from 8 a.m. to approx. 4:30 p.m., \$70/person. Taught at our Training Center, 1 Helwig Street, Milford CT, unless otherwise noted above. https://tinyurl.com/Boating-Class

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If you have questions, please call Dennis Belanger, public education staff officer, at 203-494-5219



The Boat America course is required by the state of Connecticut to obtain your State Certificate of Boating/Personal Watercraft Operation with Recreational Towing Endorsement.

## The Arts

## Ring In The New Year With The Arts

Need a last-minute gift or a place to get away from all the hustle and bustle of the season? Thinking of doing something interesting for the new year? Take a look at what the arts community has to offer.

From the very young to the young at heart, there is something for everyone this season. Consider purchasing a Connecticut Art Trail and Museum passport for a year or gift yourself and a friend a season subscription to a local theater. Join a holiday singalong or see a Broadway touring show. Treat the kids to a ballet from their bookshelf brought to life on stage. And there is still time to visit Santa and his live reindeer.

The new year is a great time to make a resolution to become more familiar with the many offerings of the arts and culture in our local and surrounding communities. Take some time to be inspired by new and unique experiences. Pair an arts event with a new eatery you've been meaning to try. Take the back roads instead of the highway and enjoy the ride. You'll be glad you did.

The Beardsley Zoo presents **Glow Wild Lantern Festival**, now through Dec. 14, Thursdays through Sundays, from 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at Beardsley Zoo, 1875 Noble Ave. in Bridgeport. This illuminated lantern festival transforms the zoo into a glowing wonderland filled with over 35 larger-than-life, hand-crafted lantern displays that celebrate wildlife, nature and the magic of the season. Perfect for families, date nights and evening adventures, this festival offers a unique way to experience the zoo after dark. Enjoy new experiences, tasty treats and exciting photo opportunities throughout the display. Tickets are \$25 for ages 12 and up, \$23 for children 11 and under, free for ages under 2 and for adults 76 and up. Purchase tickets by visiting [beardsleyzoo.org](http://beardsleyzoo.org) or calling 203-394-6565.

New Haven Chorale presents **Holiday Concert: Music for Hope and Peace** on Dec. 13 at 4 p.m. at East Haven High School, 35 Wheelbarrow Ln. in East Haven. This uplifting concert will feature a selection of joyous choral and orchestral music. The audience is invited to participate in song with carols and seasonal favorites. Admission is \$25 general, \$20 seniors, and free for students and children. Tickets can be purchased by visiting [newhavenchorale.org](http://newhavenchorale.org) or calling 203-776-7664.

New Haven Ballet presents **The Nutcracker** by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky with matinee and evening performances from Dec. 12-14 at Shubert Theatre, 247 College St. in New Haven. This timeless and magical ballet performance tells the story of a young girl and her nutcracker doll that comes to life on Christmas Eve. Tickets start at \$37 and can be purchased by visiting [shubert.com](http://shubert.com) or calling the box office at 203-562-5666.

The Legacy Theatre presents **Scrooge and Marley**, a musical adaptation by Keely Baisden Knudsen, based on the book *Jacob T Marley* by R. William Bennett. Matinee and evening performances run now through Dec. 14 at The Legacy Theatre, 128 Thimble Islands Rd. in Branford. This family-friendly musical is the prequel to *A Christmas Carol* and tells the story of a young Marley, how he and Scrooge crossed paths, became business partners and how one man's ultimate sacrifice is another man's redemption. Tickets start at \$36.50 and can be purchased by visiting [legacytheatre.org](http://legacytheatre.org) or calling 203-315-1901.

The Mark Twain House & Museum presents **Christmas Ekphrastic Poetry Workshop** guided by poet and master teaching

artist Victoria Nordlund on Dec. 14 from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Mark Twain House, 351 Farmington Ave. in Hartford. Participants will create poetry as they write in the library of the Mark Twain House, decorated for the season. Writers of all levels are welcome. The workshop will explore ekphrasis poetry, weaving words and imagery to articulate emotional experiences and subject matter inspired by the objects and art in Mark Twain House, and by the house itself. Using haiku suites, free verse and concrete poetry, the workshop encourages the convergence of visual and poetic expressions. Tickets are \$40 per person and \$35 for members. Reservations can be made by visiting [marktwinhouse.org](http://marktwinhouse.org) or calling 860-247-0998.

Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art presents **Festival of Trees and Traditions**, now through Dec. 14 at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, 600 Main St. in Hartford. Each year, community members, artists and organizations donate trees and holiday decorations that transform the museum into a dazzling winter wonderland. Donated creations are for sale and profits support the museum's programs and special exhibitions. Bring home the holiday cheer or give your purchase to a local charity. A \$5 fundraising surcharge is added to all museum admissions during the festival. Registration is encouraged by visiting [thewadsworth.org](http://thewadsworth.org) or calling 860-278-2670.

The Bushnell presents **Spamalot**, with book and lyrics by Eric Idle and music by John Du Prez and Eric Idle. This musical comedy is based on the film classic *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. Matinee and evening performances run now through Dec. 14 at William H. Mortensen Hall at The Bushnell, 166 Capitol Ave. in Hartford. This hilarious show has everything that makes a great knight at the theater, from flying cows to killer rabbits, British royalty to French taunters, dancing girls, rubbery shrubbery and, of course, the Lady of the Lake. Features well-known song titles such as "Always Look on the Bright Side of Life," "The Song That Goes Like This," and "Find Your Grail," among others. Tickets start at \$36 and can be purchased by visiting [bushnell.org](http://bushnell.org) or calling the box office at 860-987-5900.

Waterbury Palace Theater presents **Clue: Live On Stage** by Sandy Rustin, based on the fan-favorite 1985 Paramount Pictures movie and inspired by the classic Hasbro board game. This show is presented as part of the Broadway Series. Matinee and evening performances run Dec. 16-18 at the Waterbury Palace Theater, 100 East Main St. in Waterbury. Murder and blackmail are on the menu when six mysterious guests assemble at Boddy Manor for a night they'll never forget. Was it Mrs. Peacock in the study with the knife? Or was it Col. Mustard in the library with the wrench? This is the ultimate whodunit that will leave you dying of laughter and keep you guessing until the final twist. Tickets start at \$49 and can be purchased by visiting [palacetheaterct.org](http://palacetheaterct.org) or calling 203-346-2000.

The Mark Twain House & Museum presents **Holiday Spirits**, a tour with a ghostly taste of Victorian Christmas, on Dec. 19 and 20 at the Mark Twain House, 351 Farmington Ave. in Hartford. Meet one of the house's ghosts of Christmas past to explore the ghostly side of Victorian Christmas, including the recent supernatural encounter in the home and the Clemens family's interests in spiritualism and the unexplained. Tours



CYNDI CONSOLI

are offered at 5 p.m., 5:45 p.m., 6:30 p.m., and 7:15 p.m. Tickets are \$35 and can be purchased by visiting [marktwinhouse.org](http://marktwinhouse.org) or calling 860-247-0998.

New Haven Symphony Orchestra presents **Holiday Extravaganza** with Chelsea Tipton, II, principal pops conductor, featuring the Symphony Carolers combined voices from New Haven, Shelton and West Haven high schools. The shows are on three separate dates and locations: Dec. 19 at 7 p.m. at West Haven High School, 1 McDonough Plaza in West Haven; Dec. 20 at 3 p.m. at Shelton High School, 120 Meadow St. in Shelton; and on Dec. 21 at 3 p.m. at Woolsey Hall, 500 College St. in New Haven. Enjoy a program of festive favorites, sing-along carols, and seasonal surprises for the whole family, including music from the *Polar Express* and *Home Alone*, 'Twas the Night Before Christmas, Sleigh Ride, and a visit with a special guest from the North Pole. Tickets range from \$15-\$49 for general admission, and \$10 for students and children. To purchase tickets, visit [NewHavenSymphony.org](http://NewHavenSymphony.org) or call 203-693-1486.

Connecticut Ballet presents **The Nutcracker** by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, featuring guest stars from New York City Ballet and American Ballet Theatre with live accompaniment by Hartford Symphony Orchestra and Maestro Carolyn Kuan in the orchestra pit. Matinee and evening performances run Dec. 20 and 21 at the Bushnell's Maxwell M. and Ruth R. Belding Theater, 166 Capitol Ave. in Hartford. This annual holiday production offers a post-show meet-and-greet opportunity in the theater lobby. Make a tradition of seeing this classic ballet that tells the adventures of a young girl and her nutcracker doll that comes to life on Christmas Eve. Tickets start at \$92.50 and can be purchased by visiting [bushnell.org](http://bushnell.org) or calling the box office 860-987-5900.

The **17th Annual Greenwich Reindeer Festival & Santa's Workshop**, presented by Jenny Allen and Kristen Studwell at Compass Real Estate, takes place through Dec. 24. Meet Santa and his live reindeer at the North Pole on North Street, Sam Bridge Nursery & Greenhouses, 437 North St. in Greenwich. Meet the reindeer and enjoy Santa's Workshop. Activities include dog-friendly photos with Santa with a raffle to win a Mercedes-Benz kids pedal car for every photo with Santa, a reindeer coloring station, a letter writing to Santa station, a "name the baby girl reindeer" contest with a winning prize of a Mercedes-Benz kids electric car, plus many more festivities. Bring your dog for a photo with Santa and receive a free doggy gift bag every Monday through Friday throughout the event. A portion of photo proceeds support Kids in Crisis for the 17th consecutive year. Photos with Santa will take place Mondays through Fridays from noon to 6 p.m., Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., and on Christmas Eve from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The workshop is closed Sundays. For photo pricing and a list of activities visit [greenwichreindeerfestival.com](http://greenwichreindeerfestival.com).

Waterbury Palace Theater presents **Shen Yun**, a colorful, meaningful historic interpretation of pre-communist China through music, dance and costumes through Dec. 27. Matinee and evening performances are at the Palace Theater, 100 East Main St. in Waterbury. Take an extraordinary journey through China's 5,000 years of divinely inspired culture. As translated, Shen Yun means "the beauty of divine beings dancing." This

stunning and meaningful production tells of the exquisite beauty from the heavens, profound wisdom from dynasties past, timeless legends and ethnic traditions all springing to life through classical Chinese dance, enchanting live orchestral music, authentic costumes and interactive backdrops. Revisit a time when scholars and artists sought harmony with the Tao, or the "way" of the universe, and when divine beings walked upon the Earth to inspire humanity. Tickets start at \$90 and can be purchased by visiting [palacetheaterct.org](http://palacetheaterct.org) or calling 203-346-2000.

Hartford Stage presents **A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas** by Charles Dickens, adapted and directed by Michael Wislon with matinee and evening performances through Dec. 28 at Hartford Stage, 50 Church St. in Hartford. On a bleak and snowy Christmas Eve, Ebenezer Scrooge wants nothing more than to collect his debts. But when he is visited by a ghostly old friend, Scrooge must confront his own selfish ways and discover the true meaning of Christmas. Join Scrooge and the spirits of Christmas Past, Present and Future on this journey of redemption. Tickets start at \$32 and can be purchased by visiting [hartfordstage.org](http://hartfordstage.org) or calling 860-527-5151.

The Goodspeed presents Irving Berlin's *White Christmas*, a musical based on the classic holiday film, with book by David Ives and Paul Blake and music and lyrics by Irving Berlin. Extended by popular demand, matinee and evening performances run now through Dec. 31 at The Goodspeed, 6 Main St. in East Haddam. This heartwarming musical comes to life when two army buddies-turned-entertainers team up with a singing sister act to save a snowless Vermont inn and discover love along the way. Featuring familiar songs and brilliantly choreographed dance numbers, it's the perfect way to celebrate the most wonderful time of the year. Tickets for this family-friendly show start at \$35 and can be purchased by visiting [goodspeed.org](http://goodspeed.org) or calling 860-873-8668.

Ridgefield Playhouse presents **Saxsquatch**, a seven-foot tall fully costumed abominable saxophone genius and multi-instrumentalist, producer and electronic music artist from North Carolina on Dec. 31 from 8 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the Ridgefield Playhouse, 80 East Ridge Rd. in Ridgefield. This one-of-a-kind musician has released music with John Oates, Billy Ray Cyrus and the band WAR. Showcasing his music production, stage plot and saxophone skills over original music, remixes and crowd participation, this concert is perfect for a fun and unique way to start the new year. A VIP event is available after the performance and includes a post-show photo opportunity, a signed vinyl and a Saxsquatch-branded bandana. Tickets are \$40 and can be purchased by visiting [ridgefieldplayhouse.org](http://ridgefieldplayhouse.org) or calling 203-438-5795.

The Connecticut Art Trail is offering the **Passport-Journal: 30 Museums in a Year** for \$35. Explore sculpture trails, riverside dining, holiday festivals, art installations and more. The passport provides free admission to each holder to all 30 Art Trail member museums and several affiliate museums for one year after purchase. Enjoy discounts, gifts and other benefits. Purchase online by visiting [ctarttrail.org](http://ctarttrail.org) or in person at any Art Trail member museum. A full listing of all participating museums and events is on the website.

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

### Adopt A Pet: Chowder



Chowder is about 2 years old, has been neutered, and is up to date on his vaccines. He is very friendly and funny and loves people. Due to his size and power, he might be best in an adult home with no other dogs. He 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.

### St. Mary School Running Christmas Tree, Wreath Sale

St. Mary School in Milford is holding its annual Christmas tree sale through Christmas. in Milford. Hours are Monday through Friday from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

The sale has freshly cut Christmas trees, wreaths and cemetery pieces available to purchase at St. Mary School, 72 Gulf Street All proceeds benefit St. Mary School. For more information, visit [saintmaryschoolmilford.org](http://saintmaryschoolmilford.org).

### NOTICE OF REPUBLICAN CAUCUS: ORANGE

Notice is hereby given that there will be a caucus of all enrolled Republican electors of the Town of Orange on Wednesday, January 7th 2026 at the High Plains Community Center, 525 Orange Center Road at 7pm to endorse candidates for the Republican Town Committee.

Chad Lombardi  
Chairman, ORTC

### NOTICE OF DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS: ORANGE

To enrolled members of the Democratic Party of the Town of: Orange, Connecticut

Pursuant to the Rules of the Democratic Party and State election laws, you are hereby notified that a caucus will be held on: January 13, 2026, at 7:00pm, at High Plains Community Center, 525 Orange Center Rd, Orange, CT to endorse candidates for the Orange Democratic Town Committee, to vote on revised By-Laws of the Orange Democratic Town Committee, and to transact other business as may be proper to come before said caucus.

Dated at Orange, Connecticut, December 18, 2025,

Democratic Town Committee of Orange, CT

Jody Dietch, Chairperson

### TAX COLLECTOR'S LEGAL NOTICE TOWN OF ORANGE

Per CGS 12-145, the second installment of the town tax on the 2024 Grand List of 1 October 2024 and the Supplemental Motor Vehicle taxes are due and payable on 1 January 2026. Payments received after 2 February 2026 are considered delinquent and are subject to the rate of 18% per annum, 1.5% per month, \$2.00 minimum CGS 12-146, dating back to the original due date. Supplemental Motor Vehicle bills are payable in one installment. ALL TAXES ARE DUE 1 JANUARY 2026. We DO NOT rebill for second installments. Your July tax bill has a January tax bill attached. FAILURE TO RECEIVE A TAX BILL DOES NOT EXEMPT YOU FROM PAYMENT OF ALL INTEREST CHARGES AND COLLECTION COSTS, per CGS 12-130, 12-148. If you need a tax bill, call the tax office. There is a \$.50 copy fee per page charged for copies at the tax window. Payments may be processed in person at the Town Tax Window in Town Hall, 617 Orange Center Rd, Orange, CT, Monday-Friday except holidays from 8:30 a.m. -12 noon and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Bring your entire three-part tax bill if you wish a receipt. A payment coupon must accompany each payment. Payments may be made by US Mail. Only USPS stamped dates or IRS approved Private Carrier Delivery Services are considered valid for timely posting otherwise the posting date will be as we receive them! If a receipt is desired a self-addressed stamped envelope must be included with your payment. We do not accept CASH payments through the mail, only in person at the tax window! Credit, and Debit Card (E-check payments on-line only) are accepted on-line, at the tax window, or by interactive voice response(phone) 1-203-902-0387 (convenience fees apply). Go to the town website:Town of Orange - CT - Tax ([orange-ct.gov](http://orange-ct.gov)) or <https://orange-ctmybill.com/#/> to pay. Payment in minor coinage is limited to 25 cents or as acceptable to the Tax Collector.

Thomas P. Hurley  
Town of Orange Collector of Taxes



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# Obituaries

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

**David Arthur Adams** of Milford, Connecticut and Naples, Florida passed away on November 8, 2025, at the age of 84. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



**William Christopher Brocar** (lovingly known to his family as "Butch"), Age 78, of Milford entered into peaceful rest on November 25, 2025. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



The world lost a beautiful soul and a true artist on November 9, 2025, when **William Louis Cofrances** passed away at the age of 63. (Porto Funeral Home)



**Lillian Patricia Foster**, age 81, of Milford, beloved wife of the late Charles Foster, entered into peaceful rest on November 29, 2025. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



**Donald L. Brown**, 76, of Milford, passed away on Tuesday, November 11, 2025 surrounded by his family. Don was the beloved husband of Marie Giustino Brown. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Alma Cohen**, 96, of Bradley Rd., Woodbridge, CT died peacefully on November 27, 2025, at her home in Woodbridge.. (Robert E. Shure Doyle Funeral Home)



**Elizabeth Frances Gildea**, 95, passed away peacefully on November 23, 2025 while surrounded by her loving family. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Estebania Baerga** was born on August 31, 1938 and passed away on November 25, 2025. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of our beloved mother, **Marie E. Busk**, who departed this life on Tuesday, November 4, 2025, at the age of 90. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



**Michael David DiRienzo**, 56, of Orange, beloved husband of ToniAnn DiRienzo, passed away on November 29, 2025 surrounded by his family and close friends. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Martinha Goncalves**, 46, of West Haven, passed away peacefully at CT Hospice on October 8, 2025, surrounded by her loving family, after a courageous battle with cancer.



**Victoria A. Blake**, 57, of Milford, passed away on November 5, 2025. Born in Milford on December 15, 1967, she was the daughter of the late Germaine Paul. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Arthur Edward "Ted" Carveth**, 82, of Milford, husband of Judit Adams Carveth, passed away at his home on December 1, 2025, after a courageous battle with cancer. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



**Lucille Ann (Dubois) Dlugos**, age 92, of Cheshire and formerly of Milford, beloved wife of the late Richard Dlugos, Sr. for 60 years, died on Sunday, November 2, 2025. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



**Marjorie Jean (Cook) Goss**, of Shelton, longtime resident of Oronoque Village, Stratford, joined her Lord on November 17, 2025. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

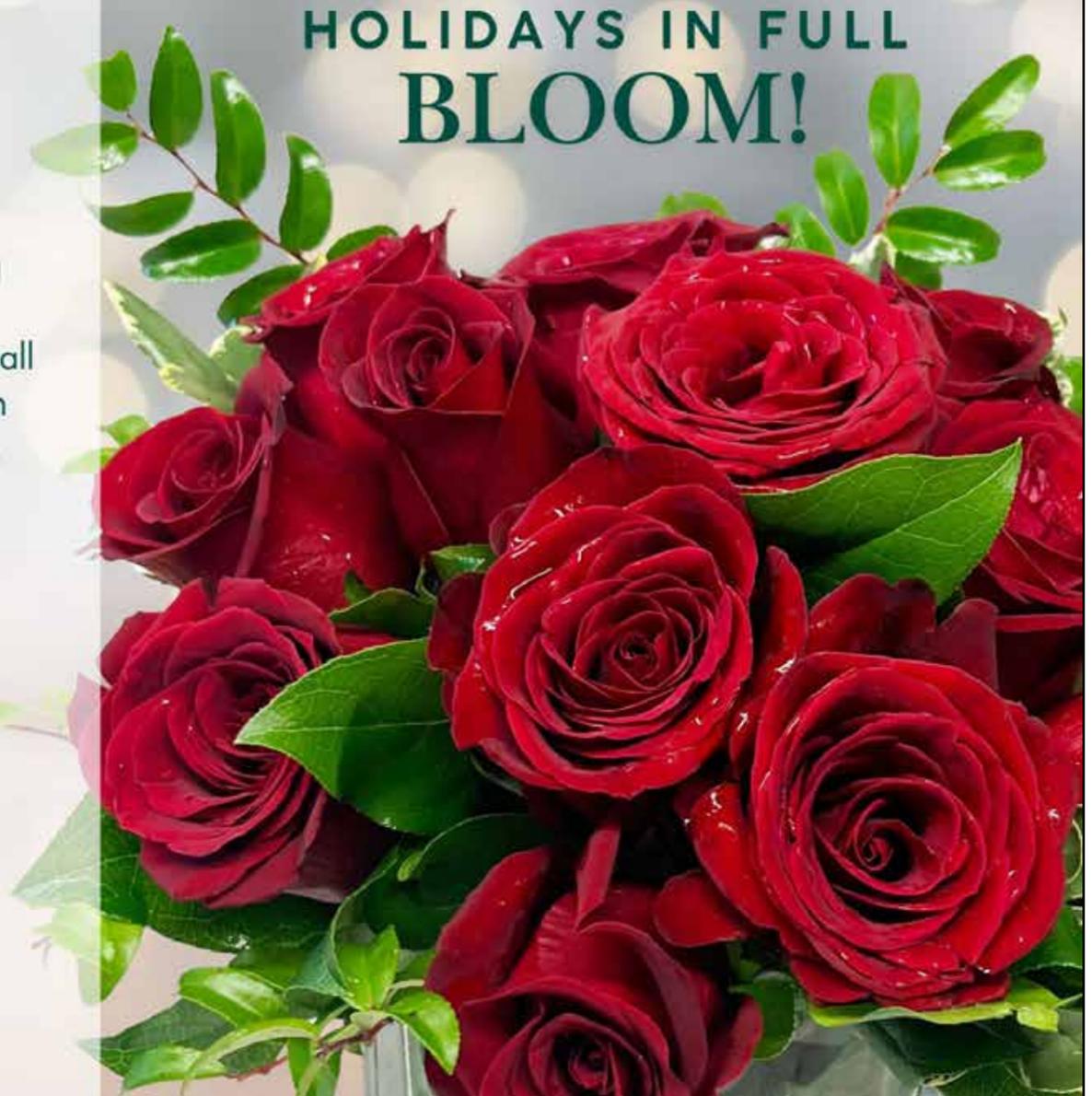


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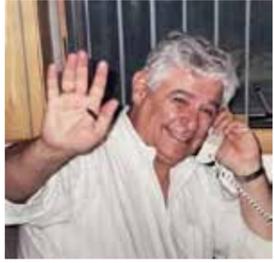
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## CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS IN FULL BLOOM!



# Obituaries

**Ian Green**, private pilot and flight instructor, 85, of Orange, CT, took off on his "final flight" on Thanksgiving. (Robert E. Shure Funeral Home)



With great love and deep sadness, we announce the death of **Joan L. Holden** (95), beloved wife of the late Dr. Jack Holden, on November 19, 2025. (Robert E. Shure Funeral Home)



**Peter C. Kluchnick**, 78, of Milford, Connecticut, passed away peacefully on November 13, 2025, surrounded by his loving family. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Joseph P. Maco**, of Milford, died peacefully at his home on Friday, November 28, 2025. (Pistey Funeral Home)



**Greto, Isabel (Petrucelli)** of Orange, CT age 105, passed away peacefully at her home on Friday November 20, 2025. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Agnes Patricia Horkan**, known to those close to her as "Pat" 96 of Milford, passed away peacefully on October 25, 2025 while surrounded by her loving family. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**August "Gus" Kreuzkamp** of Orange, CT, was born in New York City, 1942. Gus departed Monday night November 24, 2025 after a long illness. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Joanne Barbara Marchitto**, 76, of Orange and Milford, beloved wife of the late Michael Joseph Marchitto, passed away on November 7th, 2025. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**David Francis Gross**, 59, of Milford, Connecticut, passed away on October 10, 2025. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Mary Eula (Tucker) Jenkins**, received her eternal reward with peace on Saturday, November 1st, 2026 at the age of 92. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Roger LaRiviere**, 72, of Milford, passed away on November 7, 2025 in his home. Roger was born in Bridgeport, CT on March 28, 1953. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Anna Mazur**, 91 of Orange, passed away peacefully on October 27, 2025 while surrounded by her loving family. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**John B. Hanson**, lovingly referred to as "Dad" and "Pop," passed away in his home on Wednesday, November 12, 2025, after a brave battle with cancer. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Jane F. Joseph**, 90, of Milford, beloved wife of the late Donald C. Joseph, passed away peacefully on November 23, 2025. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Dorothy B. Leland**, 99, of Milford, beloved wife of the late Ralph Leland, passed away on November 2, 2025. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Cynthia McBath**, 72, previously of Orange CT, beloved wife of the Richard McBath, passed away on 11/26/2025. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



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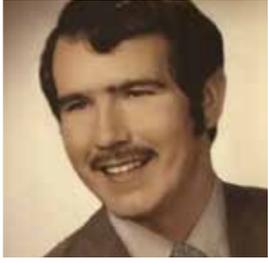
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# Obituaries

**James Michael McGarry**, 77, of Orange, beloved husband of the late Helen (Moschitta) McGarry, passed away peacefully on November 3, 2025. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Raymond (Ray) Novak**, 80, of Woodbridge, a former Hamden resident, passed away peacefully on November 11th. (Sisk Brothers Funeral Home)



**Michael J. Quinn**, 55, of West Haven, died peacefully on November 16, 2025, after a short and courageous battle with cancer. (West Haven Funeral Home)



**Sandra Short**, 83, of Milford, CT passed away after a brief illness at Bridgeport Hospital on Sunday, November 2, 2025, with her children by her side. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Stella Artusa Moher**, age 91, passed away peacefully at Gardner Heights Nursing Home in Shelton on November 15, 2025. (Adzima Funeral Home)



It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of **Donald Edward Nytko (Don)**, who left this world peacefully on Nov. 14, 2025, at the age of 86. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Neal Nelson Ramadan**, beloved husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and friend, passed away surrounded by his family. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Alberto Soto**, 73, of Milford, passed away on November 5, 2025. Born on July 6, 1952 in Utuado, Puerto Rico, he was the son of the late Eduardo and Ana Soto. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Barbara Foote Moritz** of Orange departed this life on October 28, 2025 in the presence of her loving family at her home of 33 years. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



**Eleni Pappas (née Kasimati)**, age 87, fell asleep in the Lord's arms on November 17, 2025, at her home in Woodbridge, Connecticut. (Celantano Funeral Home)



**Glen E. Rees**, 79, of East Haven, passed away on 18 Nov 2025 in Milford, CT with family by his side. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Marlene Torre**, 94, of Orange passed away on November 24, 2025 surrounded by her family at her home. (Porto Funeral Home)



**Lynne Nastasia**, of Milford, comfortably passed away November 7, 2025 in her home with her husband by her side. Lynne was born in Bridgeport on October 5, 1946. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of **Dennis John Pollina, Sr.**, 65, of Milford, who departed this life peacefully on November 24, 2025. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



**Jean Scionti Rourke**, of Sarasota, FL, and West Haven, entered into rest on November 8, 2025, the day before her 96th birthday. (West Haven Funeral Home)



**Robert M. (Bob) Waters** age 82 of Orange, CT passed away on November 27, 2025, with his family at his side. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



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