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Milford-Orange Times

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July 2, 2026

Milford Parade Celebrates US At 250



Milford held its America 250 Grand Parade on June 20 to celebrate the anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Additional photos on page 17. Photo by Robert Creigh.

Orange Residents Honor Pride Month



Orange residents held an event at High Plains Community Center on June 1 to raise the Pride flag in support of the LGBTQ community during Pride Month. Photo by Lexi Crocco.

Finance Head Expects Small Budget Shortfall In Orange

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

Orange Finance Director John Cifarelli told the town's Board of Finance at their June 15 meeting that Orange was likely to end the fiscal year with a modest revenue shortfall of about \$310,000.

"I don't think we're going to hit our budgeting revenue," Cifarelli said in opening the discussion.

Cifarelli's revenue estimate is one of two that the town produces; the other is made by the treasurer. They often align on the broad strokes but diverge in the details.

Cifarelli cited several categories where he expected revenue to fall short of budgeted projections: building inspections, tax

collection, conveyance fees, pool memberships and refuse charges were all below their targets.

The fiscal year ended on July 1, leaving little time to make up ground in most of those areas.

Cifarelli did note that tax collections could turn around if people making tax payments in the new fiscal year owed back taxes, as those payments would be applied first. Late taxes also carry an 18 percent interest rate that could boost the total.

"At some point, we will get that money," Board of Finance Vice Chair Jim Leahy

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Locals Voted 'Best Of' In Milford

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

The Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce has released the list of businesses, organizations and individuals in the area to receive its annual "Best of the Milford Region" awards.

The chamber will honor winners with a July 13 celebration at Riva in West Haven.

The annual awards are given out based on votes from members of the communities in which the chamber

operates – primarily Milford and West Haven. They honor local businesses for their quality in a variety of categories, including eating and drinking, services, health and fitness and shopping.

According to the chamber, the Best Of awards "shines a spotlight on the incredible local businesses, organizations and individuals that make our region so

Continued on page 2

Visconti Running In 118th District



Visconti

Steve Visconti secured the unanimous nomination of the Milford Republican Town Committee to run for state representative in Connecticut's 118th House District, representing the city of Milford.

"I am deeply honored to receive the unanimous nomination from the Milford Republican Party," Visconti said. "Milford deserves strong representation that puts residents first, protects taxpayers, supports public safety, and fights for the future of our community. I'm ready to bring energy, transparency and results-driven leadership to the 118th District."

Visconti's campaign platform includes

Continued on page 2

Pirates Sail Into Milford



Pirates sailed into Milford Harbor on June 7 to take over during the annual Milford Pirate Day event hosted by the Downtown Milford Business Association. Additional photos on page 19. Photo by Robert Creigh.



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Visconti

(Continued From 1)

promoting entrepreneurial economic growth and creating tax incentives to help fill vacant commercial properties throughout Milford. His agenda also calls for expanding state-provided health insurance coverage for children born with chronic health conditions, fully funding Milford schools during the current transitional period and ensuring first responders receive full funding while maintaining strong accountability standards.

Visconti is also advocating for a comprehensive coastal resiliency plan to strengthen and protect Milford's coastline while supporting stronger regulations designed to cap annual municipal tax increases and protect taxpayers from excessive financial burdens.

A father of three and a business management professional with nearly 20 years of experience, Visconti has long been active in the Milford community. He has remained involved in his children's schools, athletics and community activities while also leading local cleanup efforts at Hazelwood Park, surrounding trails and waterways.

Visconti has also volunteered in soup kitchens, clothing drives and community service initiatives across Milford. He is known to help neighborhood children repair bikes, scooters and other equipment.

Party leaders and supporters praised Visconti's dedication to the community and his vision for effective representation at the state level.

The 118th House District includes portions of Milford. The seat is currently held by retiring Democratic state Rep. Frank Smith.

Best Of

(Continued From 1)

special."

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

Some other notable winners included Bin 100 restaurant in the eating and drinking category; the Milford Artisan Market in the best community event or festival category; Walnut Beach in the

best local park category; Pantochino Productions in best art or creative program for kids category; and Purple Pantry in the best local cause category.

Several organizations helmed by Milford-Orange Times contributors also won awards, including the Beth-El Center and photographer Steve Cooper.

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

Mini Golf Coming To Milford Library

The Friends of the Milford Library will be hosting a new fundraising event this year: Mini Golf in the Stacks.

The event on Saturday, Aug. 29 turns the Milford Public Library into a mini golf course woven through the library bookshelves with daytime and evening hours of play. In addition, guests can take a chance on a selection

of raffle baskets or bid on silent auction prizes.

All ages mini golf will run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tickets cost \$8 per person. Mini gold for adults 21 and older will run from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. and cost \$30 per person. Tickets will be available starting July 6 at milfordct.us/573/Friends-of-the-Milford-Library.

Orange Students Earn Scholarships



Several Orange students were recently awarded with the scholarships from the Ashlie Krakowski Fund of the Orange Scholarship Fund Association. Awardees included Avery Grande, Sam DeFranco, Karin Busk, Remy Ciambrello and Troy Vendencia. DeFranco also received a scholarship from the Orange Lions Club. Photo by Lexi Crocco.

John Mayock And The Homesteaders To Perform At Case Memorial Library

John Mayock and the Homesteaders will perform at Case Memorial Library on Saturday, July 25.

The band specializes in Americana roots rock, a subgenre of mainstream rock and roll. This unique style blends traditional rock with the rich diversity of American music. It ranges from folk, country and rockabilly to bluegrass, Delta blues, and R&B.

After honing their skills for more than a decade, John Mayock and the Homesteaders will use their talents to help commemorate the nation's 250th birthday.

Based in Connecticut, the group performs a mix of original music as well as songs that everyone knows.

Homesteaders were 19th-century pioneers who settled on and improved public land. The Homesteaders band do exactly that, but with a twist – they take the music that has belonged to everyone in the country since its beginning and added their own take on it.

Sponsored by the Friends of Case Memorial Library, this event is free and open to the public, but registration is required. The show begins at 2 p.m. The Case Memorial Library is located at 176 Tyler City Rd. in Orange.

Registration begins three weeks before the performance. Register at casememoriallibrary.org or by calling 203-891-2170.



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Orange Rotary Honors Community-Minded



The Rotary Club of Orange recently honored local community champions with its Paul Harris Award, which recognizes those who go above and beyond in service to others. From left: Rotary Club of Orange President Dan May; American Legion Post 127 Commander Lewis Merritt; Rotary Club of Orange member Michael Lanza; and Orange Visiting Nurse Association members Marissa Mauriello, Kim Accetullo, Karen Wiersgalla and Maria Biondi. Photo courtesy of the Rotary Club of Orange.

TangoFest Boot Camp Returning To Milford

Milford will be one of the locations in Connecticut participating in this year's 17th TangoFest with a tango bootcamp for beginners at the Milford Arts Council on Saturday, July 11.

Tango experts Dale Ellison and Gem Duras will lead the boot camp, which will be geared towards beginners and less experienced dancers who want to review the fundamentals. During their instruction from 2:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Ellison and Duras will present the Argentine tango connection, fundamental steps such as ochos, turns and gancho kicks.

Ellison, known in Buenos Aires as De- lia, has been dancing Argentine tango for more than 30 years, and teaching for more than 20. Duras has been dancing tango for 30 years and teaching full time since 2003.

Singles are welcome; enrollment is limited. No previous experience is needed. Dance shoes or leather sole shoes are recommended. The cost is \$60.

Both events take place at the MAC building at 40 Railroad Ave. S. in Milford. For more information, visit cttangofest.org.

Tango Passion Show Coming To Milford

Tango Sueño and the Milford Arts Council will present the Tango Passion Show 2026 on Friday, July 17, featuring award winning bandoneonist Rodrigo Ávalos, master Argentine dancers Analia Carreño and Luis Ramirez, pianist Emiliano Messiez, Grupo Folklorico Rio de la Plata and Tango Sueño Performance Group.

The show will include tango music for bandoneon and piano, tango performances by Carreño and Ramirez, as well as the Tango Sueño Performance Group, Argentine folk dance performances by Grupo Folklorico Rio de la Plata and a short documentary

movie about tango.

Carreño and Ramirez are internationally acclaimed Argentine tango artists, choreographers, directors, producers, master teachers and performers from Buenos Aires with more than 20 years as a professional couple and over 30 years of dance background and artistic education.

The show begins at 8 p.m. Seats are limited and assigned. The MAC is located at 40 Railroad Ave. South in Milford. Tickets are \$48 for rows A-G and \$38 for rows H-L on sale at cttangofest.org or by calling 203-584-4480.



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Case Memorial Library Holding Summer Book Sale

The Case Memorial Library will host its Summer Book Sale on Saturday, Aug. 1 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Shoppers will find a curated selection of books in the library basement.

The sale will offer famous classics, romances, mysteries, thrillers and many of the latest releases.

The wide array of nonfiction books includes history, politics and science as well as coffee-table art books. Those into lifestyle will find books on health, self-care, cooking, gardening and sports.

There will be a children's book section in order for children to get in some extra reading before the fall.

The newest specialty table at the sale will

be devoted to historical fiction. These books combine real history with a gripping plot to carry the reader along. There will also be a table that is supplied with books that commemorate America's history in honor of the country's 250th anniversary.

The staff picks table will be filled with books the volunteers have enjoyed and think that you will enjoy too. On the banned books table, each book has a bookmark that explains exactly why the book was banned. One-of-a-kind finds will feature offerings not available anywhere else.

Bring your own bags for your purchases. Cash or checks only; the vendors cannot take credit cards. The Case Memorial Library is located at 176 Tyler City Rd. in Orange.

Orange Scouts Collect Food



Orange Cub Scouts Pack 922 families who volunteered for Scouting for Food collected around 60 bags of non-perishable food – roughly 800 pounds – from over 30 homes on June 6 to benefit the Orange Food Bank and the New Haven Food Pantry. That's enough to provide about a month of meals for 10 families who are struggling to make ends meet. Photo by Adria Boyle.

Milford Library Book Sale Patrons Prefer Paper

By Lukman Seyal

The Friends of Milford Public Library brought bookworms together during their annual summer reading book sale from June 12-14 at the Milford Public Library, offering a range of unique and affordable reading materials.

The sale featured CDs, DVDs and some classic older titles. Proceeds from the book sale benefited the Friends of the Milford Library, which helps fund different library activities and programs throughout the year.

"I hope they get pleasure and joy and learn something that they're interested in learning about," said Charles Pape, one of the event's organizers.

Pape said that attendance for the book fair seems to grow year by year.

"I've only been doing this for a couple years, but we seem to be getting more people and more sales. So it still seems like a good collection of readers out there," he said.

Patron Alexis Rios said she enjoys reading mysteries, thrillers, romance and other fiction genres. While she occasionally uses

her Kindle to read, she prefers traditional books.

"Honestly, I like physical books more. I have a Kindle, and I read some books on it, but I think I like to read more physical books," she said.

Another attendee, Carol Anne Perkins, believes that physical books offer an experience that digital reading simply can't replace.

"Nothing beats being able to pull a book, flip through the pages. Even the smell of a book, it sounds dumb, but nothing's better," she said.

Perkins said she'll travel all across Connecticut to seek out book sales, and enjoys the journeys certain books go through to get to her.

"If it's Milford this weekend, I think Stratford is also soon. There's one in Woodbridge. I always try to find [book sales]. I really like them," she said. "I also kind of like having a used book, because it went from one person, and then to me, and maybe it'll go to somebody else after that. I just like that journey."

Case Memorial To Host Meditative Workshop

The Case Memorial Library in Orange will host a sound bath and meditative art workshop on Monday, July 27 from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

The session is meant to quiet the mind with a restorative sound healing journey using gongs and singing bowls, followed by calming process art with watercolor and

ink. Release stress, explore creativity and reconnect with stillness in this meditative, no-pressure experience.

The Case Memorial Library is located at 176 Tyler City Rd. Registration is required and opens on July 6. For more information, visit the library website at casememorallibrary.org.

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Chip's In Orange Honored For Community Service



The owners of Chip's Family Restaurant in Orange were honored with a citation from the Connecticut General Assembly for their decades of community engagement. Included in the photo are state Rep. Kathy Kennedy, Dina and Adam Bajko with the certificate, Amity Chamber CEO Barry Lee Cohen, Board of Directors members Jennifer Schempp, Owen Weaver and Annmarie Silby. Photo by Robert Creigh.

An Amity Chamber of Commerce business after-hours hosted by Chip's Restaurant in Orange on June 4 also served as a surprise recognition for the restaurant and its co-owners, Adam and Dina Bajko.

While the stated purpose of the fundraising event was to "Chip In to End Alzheimer's," the Amity Chamber and state Rep. Kathy Kennedy took the opportunity to celebrate Chip's Family Restaurant's 60th anniversary and its decades of community engagement and philanthropy. Kennedy presented a certificate on behalf of the Connecticut General Assembly.

Kennedy was joined by Amity Chamber CEO Barry Lee Cohen, Board of Directors members Jennifer Schempp, Owen Weaver, Sarah McGovern and Annmarie Silby, who is also the Executive Director of the Orange Economic Development

Corporation.

"The Bajkos continue the charitable legacy of Dina's brother, the late George Chatzopoulos, who in 2003 built on the quality, service and community Chip's has been renowned for since 1966, when the restaurant was established in Orange. We are proud and honored to recognize Dina and Adam and pay tribute to George, while thanking them for their selfless devotion to the community," Cohen said.

The event raised over \$500 and served as a pre-launch party for Chip's Restaurant annual "Purple Pancake Day" held on June 22, during which all proceeds from orders of specialty stacks of purple pancakes at both Chip's locations in Orange and Fairfield were pooled for a contribution to the Alzheimer's Association Connecticut chapter.



As our nation marks 250 years of independence, we celebrate the *spirit* that continues to bring us together—community, resilience, and growth.

We're *proud* to have been part of your journey, helping individuals, families, businesses, and organizations thrive right here at home.

Here's to the future we'll build together.



Happy 250th, America.

Milford Chamber Trust Golf Classic Race Brook Country Club Monday, July 27

Register at birdease.com/chambertrust

The Milford Chamber Trust provides scholarships and educational opportunities to students in our community

8:30 am Registration
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Opinion & Editorial

State Rep., District 114

E Pluribus Unum

A remarkable milestone is about to occur: our country will celebrate the 250th anniversary of its existence. Two hundred and fifty years ago, a group of men formally put pen to paper and wrote the beginning of the United States of America.

When I think about the terrifying levels of determination, hope and genuine conviction that they and the generations to follow would be better off if they created an entirely new and separate country...it's safe to say that I admire that amount of confidence and hutzpah.

That hope and belief in a better future is a critical part of the foundation that our country is built on and one that we keep returning to even as we evolve as a nation because it unites us.

Our founding fathers could not have imagined the challenges or changes we have gone

through as a country over these centuries. Time and again we have faced trials and conflicts both large and small, and yet our nation still returns to the foundational beliefs of freedom and the ability to create better lives for ourselves and our communities.

The original 13 colonies started this by demanding more and better of those who were governing us; by doing so they laid the groundwork and the expectations that we were due certain rights to processes and independence, and that part of being an American is challenging your government to do better.

By giving us the imperfect tools of democracy, the original signers of the Decla-



STATE REP. (D-114)
MARY WELANDER

ration of Independence gave us a process that accepts dissent and allows for challenges and changes, but always demands us to work toward "a more perfect union" so that underneath it all we remain united in our dedication to the rights and freedoms we created so long ago.

That is patriotism, to me. To see your country fully, dedicate yourself to the values it was built on, love it and celebrate it, but also demand that it can be better.

"Union" is defined as "an act...of uniting or joining two or more things into one." The founders knew that for the United States to be successful we would have to constantly work with contradictory ideas and find paths forward together. Our history is full of chal-

lenges to accepted beliefs that led to changes that improved our union as a whole.

It may seem contradictory, but my belief in those principles and my love of country are reaffirmed in challenging moments, because when something matters to you, you fight for it through the easy and the hard times.

As we approach the Fourth of July, I am reminded that our country has made it this far because for 250 years ordinary people made an extraordinary commitment to beliefs bigger than themselves. With courage and love of country they fought for a better world that promised life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That fight continues with all of us as we challenge, defend and celebrate our complicated and amazing country.

Wishing you all a safe and happy Independence Day.

Letters to the Editor:

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

Avoiding Milford Surveillance Cameras

To the Editor:

I am a resident of West Haven and am frequently in Milford. I saw two Flock cameras on Anderson Hill Road in Milford on Sunday. I hear that they are all over Milford.

These cameras are an abomination. I used to like Milford, but I must reevaluate my opinion now because I am not in favor of surveillance of any kind. It has nothing to do with criminality and everything to do with usurping the freedom of not only Milford residents but anyone driving through Milford.

In the future, I will avoid Milford as much as possible. It's a shame that I can no longer shop in Milford because there are many lovely businesses, but it is no longer safe to drive in Milford.

Michelle Stoehr-McCarthy
West Haven

Collectivist Thinking

To the Editor:

In response to Michael Antonetti's letter defending Connecticut House Bill 5044, I must highlight how his arguments draw on collectivist thinking rooted in Marxist and socialist philosophy, rather than America's foundational commitment to individual liberty and freedom of choice.

Antonetti argues that "personal choice is great, but you should also be held accountable for your personal choices" and that those who refuse vaccination "should be the one to bear the additional cost of that risk" because it would be "unfair to increase everyone's premiums." This language treats insurance as a collective pool that requires state-enforced behavioral conformity for the "greater good." It echoes Marxist emphasis on subordinating individual rights to collective outcomes and state-managed equity. In the American tradition, liberty means the right to make even unpopular or "risky" decisions without government using mandated insurance rules to punish dissent.

The bill empowers an unelected public health commissioner to impose a statewide "standard of care," forces insurance coverage, and nullifies religious exemptions under Connecticut's Religious Freedom Restoration Act. This represents the centralized state power

long favored by Marxists and socialists: experts overriding parental authority and personal conviction. Antonetti's claim that vaccines are "safe and effective" and therefore refusal must carry financial penalties dismisses informed consent in favor of state-endorsed truth. This mirrors the communist approach in which official doctrine supersedes religious conscience or individual belief, with economic punishment for deviation.

History proves that freedoms surrendered to government – especially under the guise of public health, collective risk or equity – are rarely restored. Once the state links insurance premiums and coverage to compliance with its mandates, it opens the door to controlling diet, speech, travel and other personal behaviors labeled "risky" to the collective.

True accountability belongs in a free society through personal responsibility, voluntary choices and private markets, not coercive state mechanisms that penalize families for exercising medical or religious autonomy. Craig Stahl was right. This bill and defenses like Antonetti's place bureaucratic control and collectivist risk-sharing above constitutional liberties. Connecticut families deserve the American promise of freedom to choose, not compelled conformity with penalties attached.

Warren Mudrick
Orange

The Biggest Price of Vaccine Hesitancy

To the Editor:

Reading the June 17 Connecticut Post article confirming Connecticut's first case of measles, I thought about Michael Antonetti's letter to the Milford-Orange Times of June 4, in which he makes the economic case that "Those who opt out of safe and effective vaccinations should be the ones to bear the cost of the additional risks of that decision."

I agree. But the Post reminded me there's a greater cost to abandoning vaccinations than one measured in dollars.

Connecticut is the 39th state to suffer from measles, perhaps from its proximity to New York City, which is experiencing an outbreak. According to the Post, "measles is a highly contagious disease that can spread quickly through air when an infected person coughs or sneezes." A typical case of measles "begins with mild to moderate fever, cough, runny nose, red eyes (conjunctivitis) and sore throat. Three to five days later, there is "a red or reddish brown rash, usually starting on a person's face at the hairline and spreading downward to the entire body...a person's fever may spike to

more than 104 degrees."

Awful as this sounds, the consequences of other vaccine-preventable diseases like yellow fever, meningitis, whooping cough, dengue fever, malaria, diphtheria, mumps, cervical cancer and polio can be more devastating.

The commissioner of our state Department of Health says that "vaccination continues to be the best way to protect against measles," and that "being vaccinated helps us all."

Paul Alexander spent more than 70 years in an iron lung that pumped air into his polio-shattered breathing muscles. Imagine the cost of his health services. Add to this the price of treating the millions of victims of preventable diseases. Astronomical as that may be, imagine how unnecessary Alexander's suffering would have been had he been able to access a safe, effective, affordable preventative. Immunization has spared 150 million lives in the past 50 years useless, pointless torment and grief.

There is no question that science-based, time-tested vaccines are affordable and effective while treating disease and its aftermath can be exorbitant and often unsuccessful. Immunization saves money. It saves lives and improves the quality of life for millions. Include also in its list of benefits the peace of mind that comes from knowing that you and those you care about are protected. Ask anyone who has ever suffered needlessly.

Gene Burshuliak
Orange

Civility vs. Partisanship

To the Editor:

In response to Jody Dietch's letter criticizing Jude Toohey, I find it troubling how quickly a call for basic human kindness and respectful disagreement is met with personal attacks and guilt by political association. While Dietch claims "kindness and respect are two-way streets," her response reveals a partisan lens that prioritizes scoring points over the very civility Toohey encouraged.

Dietch accuses Toohey of failing to address the "root" of polarization by linking her to support for President Trump, labeling him the "most polarizing politician" who "demonizes" others. This tactic – painting entire groups as collectively guilty for the words or actions of a leader – echoes classic Marxist class struggle rhetoric. It divides society into oppressors and oppressed, assumes bloc voting guilt and demands ideological conformity. In contrast, American freedom allows individuals to support candidates based on policy, not collective

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Milford-Orange Times

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Steve Cooper, Restaurant Reviews
Theresa Rose DeGray, Bankruptcy
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Opinion & Editorial

Letters

(Continued From 6)

condemnation. We retain the right to choose without forfeiting respect or facing public shaming for past or present associations.

Toohey rightly lamented the dredging up of decades-old personal grievances in public meetings to “score points.” Dietch’s suggestion to selectively grant “privacy” only when it suits certain sides undermines equal application of principle. True American liberty rests on consistent rules for all citizens, not situational equity enforced by social pressure. Marxist-influenced thinking often weaponizes past sins against political opponents while shielding allies, eroding the impartial fairness our republic was built upon.

Our 250th anniversary in Orange should remind us that America’s strength lies in individual liberty and the freedom to disagree without malice – not enforced ideological harmony. Once we normalize labeling opponents as inherently divisive or hateful for their choices, we lose the ability to debate ideas openly. That freedom, once surrendered to tribal score-settling and collective guilt, is rarely regained.

Toohey’s gentle reminder to choose kindness, even in disagreement, aligns with the best of American community values. Healthy debate thrives when we reject ugliness and treat neighbors as individuals worthy of respect, not extensions of national political battles. Orange’s residents deserve better than imported polarization that divides our close-knit town. Let us uphold personal accountability, consistent standards and the freedom to choose our own path without fear of retrospective public attack.

James A. Leahy
Orange Board of Finance

Housing Done the Right Way

To the Editor:

Housing has been a hotly debated issue in our state for many years and the issues regarding affordability are well-documented. Too many young people cannot afford to buy their first home. Too many seniors who want to downsize have nowhere practical to go. Families are being squeezed by property taxes, utility bills, gas prices and the rising cost of almost everything.

But forcing one size fits all housing decisions down from Hartford is not the answer.

House Bill 8002, and now Public Act 25-1, is the latest example of the state taking more control away from towns. It pushes housing growth mandates onto local communities while giving too little weight to the things residents deal with every day: traffic, roads, school capacity, public safety, water, sewer, septic systems, wetlands and the long-term cost to local taxpayers.

Orange’s Democratic delegation featuring Mary Welander proudly voted yes on this legislation. That matters because residents deserve to know who is standing up for local decision-making and who is willing to hand more power to Hartford.

This is not about saying “no” to housing. It is about saying housing should be done the right way. Towns should be able to support senior-friendly housing, accessory dwelling units, starter homes, adaptive reuse and redevelopment in places where the infrastructure can actually handle it. Those are practical solutions. They help people stay in the communities they love without overwhelming neighborhoods or pushing costs onto taxpayers.

The same concern applies to 8-30g. While

the law was meant to encourage affordable housing, it has too often allowed developers to bypass local zoning by using affordability requirements as leverage. That does not always produce truly affordable housing. Too often, it produces projects that are profitable for developers while residents are left worrying about traffic, safety, taxes and the character of their town.

Housing policy should start with people, not political agendas. Local residents, town boards and community leaders know their towns better than state officials in Hartford.

Connecticut needs more housing options. But those decisions should be made with our towns, not forced onto them.

Brooke Hopkins
Republican Candidate for District 114

Undermining Local Control

To the Editor:

Legislation pushed through by Democratic majorities in Hartford – often via special sessions and emergency certification that bypassed public hearings – has repeatedly undermined local control in our towns.

A prime example is Public Act 25-1 (HB 8002), the housing growth bill passed in the November 2025 special session. This law eliminates local parking minimums for developments with fewer than 16 units, requires streamlined “summary review” for middle housing in commercial and mixed-use zones and eases commercial-to-residential conversions.

In Milford, the Democratic-controlled Planning and Zoning Board approved major zoning amendments on Jan. 7, 2025 that allow

significantly more multi-family and mixed-use residential development in former commercial zones. These changes are already eroding the traditional New England character and small-town aura that Milford has long been known for, and it is only a preview of things to come as further state mandates and regional housing targets take effect in the years ahead.

These state-driven mandates directly override longstanding local zoning rules that towns like Orange, Milford, Woodbridge and West Haven have used to preserve their character, manage traffic and maintain neighborhood standards. Instead of respecting home rule, the law shifts power to Hartford and regional bodies while imposing new planning burdens on municipalities.

This pattern continued in 2026 with sweeping emergency-certified omnibus bills, such as Senate Bill 298, which bundled numerous mandates with limited public input. Once again, centralized decision-making took priority over community voices.

Local Democrats Sen. James Maroney (D-14), Rep. MJ Shannon (D-117) and Rep. Mary Welander (D-114) all voted for these measures, siding with Hartford’s agenda over the interests of residents in Orange, Milford, West Haven and Woodbridge.

Connecticut needs representatives who respect home rule, prioritize transparency and listen to the towns they serve not those who expand state power at our expense. On Election Day, voters should reject the Democrats and elect Owen Weaver in the 14th District, elect Ray Collins in the 117th District, elect Brooke Hopkins in the 114th District and reelect Kathy Kennedy in the 119th District.

Craig Stahl
Orange

Summer Concerts

2026  6:00-8:00pm

Music under the Stars

Come on out for 4 free Summer Concerts in the Gazebo at the High Plains Community Center. Be sure to bring your chairs and enjoy the music.

July 9 *JP Trio*

July 23 *Ace & Friends*

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Orange Democratic Town Committee

Why Ethics Still Matter

We live in times where behaviors that just a few years ago would have been considered unacceptable are sometimes celebrated. But at the end of the day, treating people with respect, listening to different viewpoints, considering all the facts and acting with integrity are values we all share.

That's why the standards held by those who serve us in public office and as government employees matter. We should expect, and require, the highest level of integrity from those entrusted to lead.

If you ask what makes a good local government, most people will point to high achieving schools, safe neighborhoods, reliable public services and responsible budgeting. All of those matter deeply. But they all depend on a value that is less visible but arguably more important: trust.

Residents trust elected officials to spend taxpayer dollars responsibly. They trust town employees to serve the public fairly. They trust boards and commissions to make decisions based on what is best for the community, not personal gain. That trust has to be earned and protected every day.

Across Connecticut, and in some of our

nearby towns, we have seen how quickly that trust can be weakened when ethical rules are outdated, unclear or inconsistently applied. While the details vary, the outcome is often the same: public trust is damaged. That is why strict and consistently enforced ethical standards are so important in local government.

Recently, the Orange Democratic Town Committee Executive Board asked our Board of Selectmen to review Orange's Code of Ethics, which has not been updated in more than 20 years. A lot has changed in how government operates and how residents engage with it. Our standards should reflect that reality. Every town official and employee should be able to rely on a clear, accessible set of guidelines that support good decision-making. Many communities regularly revisit and update their ethics policies, and even modest updates can make a meaningful difference.

Taking time to review ethics policies is not an admission that something is wrong.



MELISSA JOHNSTON

It is simply good governance. Just as we regularly review budgets, ordinances and long-term plans, it makes sense to revisit the standards that act as our guiding principles. Ethical rules are updated and reinforced regularly in the business community. Government should be no different.

In an era when trust in institutions is declining, ethical standards are an important reminder that public service is a responsibility, not a privilege. They set expectations, reinforce accountability and help ensure decisions about our tax dollars and town resources benefit our residents.

Of course, no ethics policy can prevent every mistake or challenge. But ethics should be part of the culture of public service. Clear standards protect the trust that effective government depends on.

I've said this in previous columns, but it's worth repeating: one of the most important things we can do as residents and citizens is stay engaged and ask questions. When

something does not seem right, speaking up is not only responsible; it is part of our civic duty.

To learn more about our request to update Orange's Code of Ethics, visit OrangeCT-Dems.org/ethics.

I'd be happy to talk to anyone about my perspective. You can always email me at msmelissajohnston@gmail.com.

The Orange Democrats have a lot of exciting things coming up as we prepare to support candidates for state and national elections this fall who share our common values. We meet once a month at High Plains Community Center, and you can find out more about us and everything going on through our comprehensive email newsletter which you can sign up for at OrangeCT-Dems.org or by following us on Facebook or Instagram. We would always love to hear your perspective.

Melissa Johnston is the chair of the Orange Democratic Town Committee.

Colonial Properties Completes \$1.4 Million In Transactions

Orange-based Colonial Properties recently completed three transactions in the region totaling approximately \$1.4 million in sales and lease consideration.

Colonial associate Broker Gary Bellard was the sole broker for his representation of the landlord, Leveraged Equities, in two retail lease transactions totaling 6,110 square feet at 464 Boston Post Rd. in Orange.

The first lease consisted of a 3,100 square foot retail end-cap space leased to Marathon Sports under a five-year agreement. Marathon Sports is a premier athletic footwear retailer with 29 locations throughout New England.

Bellard also represented the landlord in the leasing of a 3,010 square foot retail space to The Head Spa under a seven-year lease agreement. The Head Spa, a full-

service salon relocating from Milford, will bring a range of professional hairstyling and wellness services to Orange.

Realtor Tony Vitti served as the sole broker in the sale of 182 and 184 Elizabeth St. in Derby, a fully leased mixed-use investment property totaling approximately 7,000 square feet situated on about 0.14 acres. The property sold to private investors for \$595,000.

The seller, EYI Properties, was represented by Attorney Brian A. Lema of Berchem Moses PC in Milford. The buyer was represented by Attorney Thomas Gerard Egan of Egan Law in Ansonia.

"These transactions reflect the continued demand for well-positioned investment and retail properties throughout the region," said Colonial President Michael Richetelli.

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Orange Republican Town Committee

Freedom Isn't Free

While summer is in full swing and the kids are out of school, many of us are busy looking for ways to keep our families happy, active and healthy.

First, I want to offer big congratulations to every student who reached a milestone this year, whether you graduated from pre-K, kindergarten, grammar school, middle school, high school or college. You are all amazing, and we are so proud of you.

Recently, I read a thoughtful editorial by AMAC CEO Rebecca Weber. It really stayed with me. She reminded us that as we approach America's 250th anniversary, our nation was built on liberty and the belief that our individual rights come from our creator, not from any government. Our founders designed a constitutional republic to protect those freedoms, and that framework helped

America become the remarkable country we love.

Her words made me pause and reflect. Generations before us sacrificed greatly to defend these ideals. Now it is our turn to strengthen and preserve them for our children and grandchildren.

In our own community, that can mean teaching our kids the local history, the love of reading and activities that build real character – not for trophies or future advantages, but simply because we care deeply about one another.

We are truly blessed in Orange. We live in a place where neighbors still look out for each other every day. Yet, like many of you, I sometimes feel concerned when I see to-



JUDE
TOOHEY

day's pressures working to erode our founding principles. While I remain optimistic about our country's next 250 years, it does give me pause.

Our own families came to America with very little, often not knowing the language or customs and sometimes facing rejection. But they worked hard, assimilated and held onto the belief that this country offered a better future. I'm especially grateful for the strength of my own grandparents and my dad, who served with the Greatest Generation. Their perseverance built the opportunities we enjoy today.

As we move forward, let us remember that our government exists to serve us – it de-

rives its power from the consent of the people. Freedom is not free. It asks something of each of us: knowledge, respect for one another and the ability to disagree without tearing each other down.

Let's teach our children how truly special this country is, that with faith, hard work and perseverance, nothing is impossible.

We each have a hand in writing the next chapter of America. May we do it with gratitude, courage and love for the freedoms we sometimes take for granted.

God bless you all, God bless our wonderful town and God bless America.

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

Time Management

Procrastination Paula

It's Monday, and oh, how Paula hates Mondays.

"Blue Monday. It's a jungle out there and a rat race," she reminds herself. She has a bumper sticker on her car that reads, "I just had a whole week's worth of Mondays."

As Paula arrives at her desk, she notes the other slogan she has pasted on the wall that best articulates her motto: "Today is the first day of the rest of my life." That helps her to feel okay that she didn't have time last night to plan her day today.

Last Friday afternoon when she left work, and all throughout her weekend, she reminded herself that this was to be the week when she would tackle and complete that client report that has been hanging over her head for the last three weeks.

"How kind this client has been allowing me to extend the due date so many times. I wish others were as patient," she thinks.

Paula has other important things to work on this week as well, like those phone calls she meant to make last week and the job description her boss asked for two weeks ago, not to mention starting the term paper for her night class which is due on Thursday of this week.

As she looks at her desk, she is reminded of a lot of other things that need to be done because they are all right there in front of her. Some are spread out over the top of her desk, some stacked next to the desk on the floor, and the rest on a table behind her desk.

"I've got too much to do," she concludes.

"Actually, the boss didn't say when he wanted that job description, so maybe I can get to that tomorrow," she reasons as she sets that file on top of the magazines she has been meaning to read.

Just then, Bill drops by and asks, "Coffee, Paula?"

"Sure," she replies. Both proceed to the coffee service area, and Paula discovers she is fascinated hearing about every detail of Bill's weekend, asking him to repeat certain parts and asking pointed questions to fill in the gaps to his story.

Back at her desk, Paula stares at the client report folder.

"This is going to take forever to complete," she says as those feelings of dread well up



DON
WETMORE

inside of her. "I can't get this done on a Monday. There's just too much to do today. I'll just work on this tomorrow," she assures herself as she places the client folder on top of the job description file, which is on top of the magazines she's been meaning to read.

To her left is a stack of some junk mail that arrived on her desk over the last week. There are many catalogs for office products, one for motivational audiotapes and another for decorative curtains.

"I can't work with this hanging over my head. I'll just go through these and get them off my desk so I can get a better focus," she reasons.

So diligent is her focus that over the next two hours she ignores three incoming phone calls that go directly to her voicemail.

"I'll finish these catalogs later," she says as she redirects her time to catching up on her voicemail.

The first voicemail is from Sarah, who works down the hall. She needs to know if

Paula is going to Rosita's retirement party on Thursday, and if so, what she will be wearing. The second call is from her boss who is looking for the job description and the third call is from Sarah again asking Paula if she would care to share a ride with Sarah to the party on Thursday.

"I better call Sarah," Paula decides. "She did call twice."

After going to an early lunch with Sarah, Paula is feeling spent.

"Mondays are tough," she says.

While she knows she ought to get going on some of the things that have been hanging over her head for some time, but, she thinks, "Today really is the first day of the rest of my life and I really do have the rest of this week to do those things."

So it's back to the catalog pile. Paula can't help noticing that her desk is a little dusty.

"Tomorrow I've got to get this desk cleaned. I'll never get done what I need to get done working with this mess," she decides.

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.

Orange Recycling Committee

Why Summer 2026 Is The Time To Recycle Better

Summer is a great time to enjoy cook-outs, gardening and outdoor activities. But it can also be a season of increased waste. By adopting a few simple habits, you can reduce the amount of trash created and help conserve resources for future generations.

When shopping, consider environmental impact, as mindful purchasing is a simple way to reduce waste. Choose durable, reusable items, buy only what's needed and reuse when possible.

Easily Reduce Usage of Single-Use Products: When heading to the beach, a picnic or a neighborhood gathering, bring reusable food and beverage containers, utensils and dishes instead of disposable ones. Items like plastic utensils, straws, cups and novelty toys are often used for only a few minutes before being thrown away, where they'll stay in landfills or pollute waterways.

Create a "party utensil kit" using stainless steel forks, spoons and knives you already own or buy from a thrift or discount store. Keep them in a container, ready to grab when needed. They'll last for years, save money over time and eliminate the need for disposable utensil packs that often include un-

used items and excessive plastic packaging.

Compost Food Scraps: Summer means more fresh fruits, vegetables and outdoor meals, making it an ideal time to start composting. A backyard compost pile is great for fruit and vegetable scraps, coffee grounds, eggshells, cardboard egg cartons and more. Mix in leaves and/or grass clippings to speed decomposition, and soon you'll have nutrient-rich soil for your yard.

Not interested in composting at home? Orange residents can bring food scraps to the compost collection program at the Orange Transfer Station & Recycling Center. Accepted materials include fruits and vegetables, eggshells, coffee grounds, meat, seafood, leftovers and spoiled food.

See Orangerecycles.com for more about composting at home or at the transfer station. In both cases, composting saves Orange money on waste disposal.

Dispose of Plastic Bags Correctly: Spring and summer gardening and yardwork



ILENE
MOYHER

bags (those containing mulch, fertilizer, topsoil, seed and other landscaping materials) along with black plastic plant containers, are not recyclable under any circumstances and must go in the trash. Even if these bags or containers have a recycling symbol, they are not accepted for recycling in Connecticut and should be thrown away.

Do not put any plastic bags or films in household recycling bins or the mixed recyclables bin at the transfer station. Instead, bring clean, dry items such as grocery bags, bread bags, zip-top bags, bubble wrap and plastic packaging wrap to the red shed at the Transfer Station & Recycling Center or designated collection bins at local stores.

When in Doubt, Check First: If there's an item you're unsure is recyclable, check the Recycling Wizard at RecycleCT.com or visit OrangeRecycles.com before putting it in a recycling bin. Wishcycling – putting items in recycling hoping they're recyclable – can contaminate an entire truckload,

causing it to be rejected and sent to the trash, which increases disposal costs for Orange and diminishes environmental efforts.

Simple habits like using fewer disposable products, composting food scraps and recycling correctly help conserve resources and lower costs. These actions also teach children environmental stewardship and help create a cleaner, healthier community for future generations.

The contract for residential recycling pickup was recently up for renewal in Orange, so the Board of Selectman reviewed bids from the existing provider, City Carting, and three other companies. Enviro Express of Bridgeport was selected, as they were the lowest bidder and will provide the same level of service. Starting July 1, your recycling pickup day has not changed, but the time of day may be different than it has been. Contact Public Works at 203-891-4712 with any questions.

Visit orangerecycles.com, recyclect.com and facebook.com/ORCinCT for more recycling guidelines and best practices.

Ilene Moyher is a member of the Orange Recycling Committee.

Book Reviews

Sipsworth By Simon Van Booy

I have fallen in love with many fictional characters in my reading life: a cantankerous old man with a heart of gold in *A Man Called Ove*; a gentle soul who seeks to do good in the world in *Theo of Golden*; a man who finds joy in connecting with others in *The Borrowed Life of Frederick Fife*. But a mouse that's not Mickey?

Following the devastating losses of her husband and son, 86-year-old Helen returns to her English childhood home after an absence of 60 years. Finding ways to fill her time, she begins a daily walk to the local market to pick up whatever she needs. On her way home she notices an abandoned aquarium full of aquatic toys. With nothing better to do, she takes the aquarium home and sets about fixing it up.

Helen takes each toy out, methodically and meticulously examining them several times while simultaneously cleaning them. It is during one of these cleanings that she notices a box...that moved. Shortly thereafter, a tiny head appears and the rest of the

mouse follows.

Not wanting a mouse in her house, Helen begins to investigate shelters and other places that would take a mouse, but to no avail. Being tender-hearted and admittedly lonely, Helen learns the appropriate foods to feed a mouse and buys a supply of oats and fresh fruit. She uses a bottle cap to give the mouse water. Observing that the mouse takes only a sip or two, she decides to name the mouse Sipsworth.

Helen and Sipsworth begin to develop a routine of sorts. She talks to Sipsworth as she prepares breakfast while listening to an opera presented by the BBC. As she prepares the fruit and oats for him, she begins to tell him some of her life story. Helen is gratified to see that Sipsworth is listening attentively.

While speaking to Sipsworth, she notices he is having trouble breathing. Panic-stricken as any pet parent would be, Helen rushes to the local hospital. It's revealed that Helen



CARMELA DEVITO

is a doctor and knows exactly what to do and who to ask for. She's very careful in not revealing Sipsworth's identity.

At the hospital, Helen meets the head of cardiology, Dr. Jamal. Jamal in turn is thrilled to meet the creator of a device that has saved countless lives. Jamal is at first gobsmacked to learn the identity of the patient. But seeing how devoted Helen is to Sipsworth, he agrees to help with some needed medical equipment.

Cecil, the owner of the neighborhood pet store who is friends with Helen, steps in to build a breathing chamber that Sipsworth desperately needs. Jamal prescribes medications, but the syringes prove much too large. Helen solves that dilemma by putting the medications on her finger and coaxing Sipsworth to lick them off.

Helen wakes up late one morning to what appears to be a cast of thousands outside her

door: Jamal, Cecil, the librarian who recommended a number of books to Helen on the proper care of mice, and the librarian's son who wanted to spend time with Sipsworth. It is in the midst of this impromptu gathering that Helen suffers a medical crisis and needs cardiac intervention. Suffering physical pain afterward, Helen is devastated to learn that Sipsworth has gone missing.

I won't reveal anything more, except to say this is a heartwarming book with plenty of smiles and an occasional tear. I was thrilled to meet the author at Booktopia 2025. He was charming and endearing as he told the story of what inspired him to write *Sipsworth*. There's a line in the book where Helen says to Sipsworth, "You bring out the best in people." That line will give you the warm fuzzies for a long time.

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

What Comes After The 250th Celebration? It's Up To Us

By Marilyn May

We just wrapped the city in bunting, cheered louder than Knicks fans and lit up the sky with fireworks. But as a country that's only 250 years old, this nation that started with 13 colonies is still just an infant.

The indigenous Americans (or what the Canadians call First Nations people) lived right here for 10,000 years on the land we call Milford. (Now that would warrant quite a parade.) But most of those people are gone.

We are just at the beginning. What paths will we take? It behooves us to ponder why many of the greatest ancient civilizations failed so completely that we have barely heard of some of them.

Throughout history mankind seems to have had an insatiable thirst for more of everything. More land, especially if it belonged to someone else. More forest clearing that

decimated environments. More scarring of the earth to mine minerals for stronger weapons. These practices were fatal tipping points for some ancient civilizations that did not adapt to change.

So many factors eroded civilizations: fragmented central governments, warfare, disease and fluctuations in the Earth's weather resulting in droughts and diminished potable water supplies. Many empires had prosperous cities with millions of people over large land areas. They had sophisticated agricultural and irrigation systems. They had profitable trade routes, built massive monuments and encouraged crafts that fashioned pottery and metal tools that still fascinate us today.

Laws anchor civilizations. In 1754 BCE, the King of Babylonia gave the world the Code of Hammurabi, one of the earliest written documents with 262 laws. He dis-

seminated the laws so that the people would know them.

The Magna Carta (Great Charter) written in 1215 in England by King John contained 63 rules with some interesting statements, such as that the king was subject to the law and not above it, and justice should not be sold, denied or delayed.

Let's get back to what we have in 2026 and the reasons this country could live far longer than Methuselah of the Hebrew scriptures, if we learn from the past.

We have many documents to guide us for many centuries to come, but we must read them and follow them. We have the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights and the US Constitution. For most of us it's been a long time since we have read these, if we ever have. Unlike some ancient writings, these were written "by the people." So it's

up to the people to know what has shaped this nation, and we must see that laws are equitably administered. Each individual carries the responsibility to ensure that. Having a democracy takes work.

I wonder what the 500th commemoration of the US will look like. Today we cheer and feast. We update laws that need changing, amend the Constitution to adapt to ever-changing times, listen to concerts of patriotic music, salute our military, parade around the city, visit historic sites, and celebrate the Fourth of July like never before.

Our story will be written in the centuries to come. We are just at the beginning.

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

Rotary Club of Orange

Honoring Those Who Put Service Above Self

As youth services chair for the Rotary Club of Orange, it is always an honor to reflect on the impact our members and community partners make each year.

Our recent end of year installation dinner was a meaningful evening filled with gratitude, celebration and a renewed commitment to service. This annual tradition not only marks the transition of leadership within our club but also gives us the opportunity to recognize individuals and organizations who truly embody Rotary's motto: Service Above Self.

One of the most memorable moments of the evening was the presentation of the Paul Harris Fellow Award, one of Rotary International's highest honors. Named after Rotary's founder, Paul Harris, who started the organization in Chicago in 1905, the award recognizes those who go above and beyond in service to others.

This year, we were proud to recognize three incredibly deserving honorees: Lewis Merritt, the Orange Visiting Nurse Association and myself.

Merritt, commander of American Legion Post 172 in Orange, exemplifies what it

means to serve the broader community. As a veteran himself, Merritt is deeply committed to creating a welcoming and supportive environment for other veterans, working tirelessly to make the American Legion a place where members of our community can come together, connect and support one another. He organizes weekly dinners at the American Legion to help with fundraising efforts, while also fostering a sense of camaraderie and belonging. In addition, he has taken meaningful steps toward restoring and modernizing the American Legion building, ensuring it remains a vibrant and functional space for years to come.

Through his leadership, he has created a friendly and inclusive place where veterans of our community can bond, share experiences, and feel supported.

We also recognized the Orange Visiting Nurse Association, an organization that plays a critical role in keeping Orange Safe



MICHAEL LANZA

and healthy. Serving some of the most vulnerable members of our community, OVNA provides in-home skilled nursing care, physical, occupational and speech therapy, medical social services and home health aide support to residents in Orange, Milford, West Haven and Woodbridge.

Beyond in-home care, the organization also oversees the school health program for the town's four elementary schools, helping to ensure the well-being of our youngest residents. OVNA also conducts flu vaccination clinics each fall and offers free blood pressure screenings on the third Thursday of every month at their office in the Clark Building. Their services are truly remarkable and deserve recognition. OVNA has a deep commitment to preventive care, accessibility and community wellness.

As this year's third honoree, I am both humbled and grateful. The Rotary Club of Orange has provided me with so many great opportunities to volunteer and get involved. There are

lots of nonprofit organizations that need

assistance, from volunteering to financial aid. I encourage all my readers to raise your hand and get involved.

Recently, I was able to support two great organizations in town: Orange Youth Services and Amity Youth Football. Using the money raised at our successful bingo night fundraisers, these organizations now have a greater ability to impact young lives and provide support services to children in need.

This Paul Harris Fellow Award is both recognition and a reminder that there is more work to be done.

Beyond recognizing these outstanding individuals and organizations, the evening also celebrated the installation of our incoming leadership, a reminder that Rotary's mission continues to grow stronger with each passing year. The Rotary Club of Orange remains committed to serving our community, with a special focus on youth development, local partnerships, and impactful service projects.

Michael Lanza is youth services chair for the Rotary Club of Orange. Follow him on Instagram at @lanzatrstateinsurance.

Advertise In The Milford-Orange Times. Call us at 799-7500.

The Garden Spot

Our Founding Farmers

As we celebrate the founding of our great nation this month, we also reflect upon the farming traditions of our Founding Fathers.

George Washington, who many call “The Father of our Nation” was not just a bold leader during the Revolutionary War and our first president, but also a farmer. Mount Vernon, his 50,000-acre farm in Virginia, used a variety of innovative techniques such as crop rotation, livestock breeding and fertilization. Washington oversaw the design and planting of the farm, including what he called his “botanick garden” where he grew many different types of plants from all over the world.

Our second president, John Adams, was also a farmer. According to Corliss Knapp Engle in John Adams, Farmer and Gardener, Adams wrote a recipe for compost in 1771 that many of today’s organic gardeners would be delighted to use. It included sea-

weed, kitchen scraps and animal waste. Adams and his wife, Abigail, planted many ornamentals at their farm in Quincy, Massachusetts, some of which still exist.

In 1786, Adams was living in London when he called upon our third president, Thomas Jefferson, to assist in negotiations with the Barbary States of North Africa. Adams and Jefferson traveled outside of London to see some of the great estates.

With his farm, Monticello, in mind, Jefferson was fascinated by new style of gardening developed by landscape artists such as Lancelot “Capability” Brown. Brown was an early proponent of creating a more natural landscape, and he manipulated lakes, hills and roadways, planted groves of trees



PAT DRAY

and included “follies” or “haha’s” in the landscape to create a sense of surprise and to contain livestock.

This naturalistic style appealed to Jefferson as it was more sustainable and required fewer regular maintenance expenditures. Monticello, built over a period 40 years, included the Monticello Grove, an ornamental forest, a fruit garden with over 170 varieties of fruit, and a vegetable garden with over 330 types of vegetables.

As we take time to with friends and family to celebrate graduations, weddings and fireworks, let’s reflect upon the three first presidents and key framers of the Declaration of Independence, and also think about them as “founding farmers.”

I suspect these three men would look at

today’s “farm to table” movement and congratulate the independent farmers, with their small-scale, self-sufficient farms. So don’t forget to go to the farmers market at High Plains Community Center of Thursdays and enjoy the local bounty.

To quote Washington’s letter to Dr. James Anderson from April 7, 1797, “I am once more seated under my own Vine and Fig-tree, and hope to spend the remainder of my days...in peaceful retirement, making political pursuits yield to the more rational amusement of cultivating the earth.”

Somehow, that seems especially pertinent in these uncertain times.

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

Real Talk: You Ask, A Pro Answers

Are You Taking Good Care Of Your Central Air?

With summer temperatures climbing, now is the perfect time to make sure your central air conditioning system is operating efficiently. A few simple maintenance steps can help lower energy costs, improve comfort and extend the life of your HVAC system.

One of the easiest ways to improve efficiency is to ensure that air vents and registers are not blocked by furniture, rugs or other household items. Proper airflow is critical to the performance of your cooling system. If a sofa or large piece of furniture is positioned over a vent, inexpensive vent deflectors can help redirect airflow and maintain circulation.

Regularly changing your air filters is one of the most important maintenance tasks you can perform. Clean filters allow air to flow freely and reduce strain on the system. Be sure to keep the outdoor condenser unit free of leaves, grass clippings and debris. Maintaining clear space around the unit allows it

to operate more efficiently. While covering the condenser with plastic is generally not recommended, routine cleaning of sticks, dirt and vegetation is beneficial.

When scheduling annual professional maintenance, ask your technician to verify that the outdoor unit remains level. Even slight shifts over time can reduce efficiency and place unnecessary stress on the equipment.

Leaky ductwork is another common issue that can increase energy costs. Ducts located in basements, attics or near the air handler should be inspected periodically for loose connections or gaps. Small leaks can often be sealed using mastic tape or other approved duct-sealing products. Likewise, any openings around the HVAC system should be sealed to prevent conditioned air from escaping.



BARBARA LEHRER

Many homeowners are surprised to learn that keeping interior doors open can actually help a central air system operate more efficiently. HVAC systems are designed to maintain balanced airflow throughout the home. Closing doors can disrupt circulation, create pressure imbalances and force the system to work harder.

Thermostat management also plays a significant role in energy savings. Raising the temperature a few degrees when you’re away from home or during particularly hot days can reduce energy consumption and lessen the workload on your equipment. This helps the system cycle less frequently and may contribute to a longer operating life.

Be alert for signs that your system may require service. Weak airflow, warm air coming from vents, unusual noises, water leaks

or a sudden increase in electric bills can all indicate a problem that should be addressed promptly by a qualified HVAC professional.

Remember the basics: keep windows and doors closed while the air conditioning is running, vacuum dust around vents and registers and schedule a yearly maintenance checkup. During a professional inspection, technicians typically examine refrigerant levels, electrical connections, coils and overall system performance.

For added comfort and efficiency, consider using ceiling fans in conjunction with your central air conditioning. Fans help circulate cool air more effectively, allowing your home to feel comfortable while reducing the burden on your HVAC system.

Stay cool, stay comfortable and enjoy a safe and energy-efficient summer.

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

Travel Matters

Hidden Gems Of Italy

To some, the hidden gems of Italy may not be “hidden,” but to most travelers, they are definitely off the beaten path that usually starts with Rome, Florence and Venice.

We just returned from a culinary adventure in Umbria, where we stayed in a former abbey – now a four-star resort and spa in the hills of Colazzone. What is so much fun about a trip like this is using one location as a hub and spoke for exploring many different hill towns, each with their own unique character and specialties.

Todi is known for its beautiful medieval

plaza and well-preserved underground cisterns. It offers beautiful views of the Tiber Valley in the region of Perugia.

Assisi is the birthplace of St. Francis and a UNESCO World Heritage Site filled with art, history and culture. It’s about a two-hour drive from Rome or Florence.

Montefalco is known as the “Balcony of Umbria” with a beautiful panoramic view over



KAREN QUINN-PANZER

the Spoleto Valley. It’s known for its red wine, Montefalco Sagrantino DOCG, one of Italy’s most prestigious red wines. We visited Cantina Baldassarri, a great winery nearby.

Spello is remarkable for its flowered streets and home of the annual Infiorate di Spello, where residents create flower-petal carpets in the street for Corpus Christi. It is considered one of Italy’s most beautiful villages – for good reason.

Finally, there’s Perugia. Dating back to the Etruscan period, Perugia is the capital of Umbria, a university town and home to an annual jazz festival. It is also known for chocolate – we visited a local factory nearby where we made our own chocolates.

The next leg of our trip was to Alghero, Sardinia, an hour’s flight from Rome. I have wanted to visit this island for years, and it did not disappoint. The old town of Alghero is situated on the Mediter-

anean with a charm all its own. Known as the Coral Riviera, it’s a great place to stroll through town, stop at cafes and beach hop.

The highlight is definitely Neptune’s Grotto, offering the most impressive cave I’ve ever experienced. It can only be accessed by boat, which drops you of just inside the opening of the cave. There you walk up and down stairs through a wonderland of stalagmites and stalactites with emerald green water. It was an unforgettable experience.

Last but not least, we visited Lake Garda. This lake may not be as well-known as Como, but it’s the largest lake in all of Italy and offers great water taxi and ferry service from Riva up to Desenzano. We stayed almost halfway up the lake in Gardone at a grand resort built in 1904 right on the lakefront with direct access to the town promenade.

One day we took the taxi to Bardalino, which was offering a wine festival featuring all the best vineyards in the region. The next day we went in the other direction and were awed by the mountains surrounding Lake Garda. This is a great getaway – I highly recommend it.

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



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Here's To Your Health

The Importance Of Hydration During Summer Exercise

As temperatures rise during the summer months, staying hydrated is more important than ever – especially for those who enjoy exercising outdoors. Whether you're walking, running, biking, gardening or participating in sports, your body depends on adequate hydration to perform efficiently and safely.

Water makes up approximately 60 percent of the human body and plays a critical role in regulating temperature, transporting nutrients, lubricating joints and supporting your overall health. When we exercise, our bodies naturally produce heat. To cool itself down, the body releases sweat, which evaporates from the skin and helps your body regulate temperature. However, this process also causes you to lose valuable fluids and electrolytes.

During hot and humid weather, fluids can be lost more rapidly. Even mild dehy-

dration can negatively impact physical performance. Symptoms include fatigue, dizziness, headaches, muscle cramps, decreased endurance and difficulty concentrating. In more serious cases, dehydration can lead to heat exhaustion or even heat stroke, both of which can become medical emergencies.

One common mistake people make is waiting until they feel thirsty before drinking water. Thirst is a sign dehydration has already begun, so it's important to be proactive and intentional about drinking water consistently throughout the day to maintain proper hydration levels. A good rule of thumb is to drink water before heading outdoors to exercise. During any activity, aim



MICHELE
TENNEY

to take water breaks, especially if you're exercising for more than 30 minutes. After exercise, replenish by continuing to drink water throughout your recovery time.

Certain groups of people are at higher risk for dehydration, including older adults, young children and individuals with chronic health conditions, as well as those taking medications that affect fluid balance. These people need to pay extra attention to hydration needs, especially during periods of high

heat.

In addition to drinking water, you can also consume water-rich foods such as watermelon, cucumbers, strawberries, oranges, celery and lettuce. These foods provide both fluids and essential nutrients that help support

overall wellness.

Summer is a wonderful time to finally get outdoors and stay active. Whether you're taking a morning walk, working in the yard or playing your favorite sport, you need to stay hydrated. It's one of the simplest and most effective ways to protect your health – not just in summer, but all year round.

Make hydration a priority this summer. Keep your water bottle full and close, listen to your body and make staying hydrated part of your daily routine. Here's to your health. Happy summer.

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.

Orange Senior Center

An Exercise For Everyone

Have you ever heard of the old saying "move it or lose it"? Wasn't it Sam Cooke and others who sang "You Gotta Move"?

Well, they are right. A June 2021 PubMed Central article identifies that a sedentary lifestyle in older adults is strongly linked to a higher risk of chronic diseases, muscle atrophy, loss of independence and even dementia.

Thankfully, it's never too late to reverse the damaging effects of prolonged sitting. Small, consistent and gentle movements are highly effective. The goal is not to push yourself into an intense workout, but rather to break up long periods of sitting with movement.

At the Orange Senior Center we offer a wide gambit of exercise programs. We have a wonderful, free chair exercise class on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:55 a.m. to 11:25 a.m. Chair exercise uses

seated exercises such as leg extensions, seated marches and a variety of arm exercises that get the blood flowing.

On Thursday we offer a free cardio drumming class to our members, which is a great form of low-impact exercise. Plus, it's a great way to meet people.

On Tuesdays we have a fitness class which offers low impact cardio exercise that proves to be a great way to build stamina.

On Friday we have line dancing. For something more vigorous, on Mondays we have a tap class. Studies have shown dancing improves brain function.

We have a wonderful Tai Chi class with Bill Banick on Tuesdays at 2:30 p.m. and Wednesdays at 1:30 p.m. Tai Chi has been shown to improve balance and flexibility as



DENNIS
MARSH

well as reduce fall risk among older people.

Yoga is offered Mondays or Wednesdays at 9 a.m. Yoga has been found to improve health, flexibility, deepen awareness and quiet the mind.

Zumba gold, designed for all levels, is offered Tuesdays and Thursdays.

If you want to do something outside, the High Plains Community Center has a gravel 0.4 mile walking track. If you prefer, you can join our Hiking Group for a two mile-ish walk in the woods. If you are up for a fun, social and slightly competitive activity, join our bocce group during the warm months or corn hole during the cold months.

Or join all the rage and come out for pickleball. The Orange Senior Center has pickle-

ball Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday.

We are very fortunate to have a wide range of fitness activities. You could start off with something simple. There are so many fabulous classes to meet whatever your needs are. The important part is to get moving and to keep moving. All our classes and activities can be found in our Orange friendlies newsletter.

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 dmars@orange-ct.gov.

Orange Board of Finance

Does The US Have A Plan To Address Its Long-Term Debt?

As we pass the end of the second quarter, average Americans still seem to be struggling with affordability.

Our overall economy continues to be resilient, with GDP growth projected to be 2.5 percent in 2026, along with strong productivity and innovation gains within AI and technology investments. The labor market continues to be strong, with unemployment around 4 percent.

However, economic headwinds continue, with rising debt levels and the 2026 deficit projected to be \$2 billion.

How will the US ever get its fiscal house in order? Even with revenue growth, the country continues to see structural deficits year after year. Successive presidential administrations and Congress over the past two decades have failed to take the necessary countermeasures. That includes four members of Connecticut's congressional delegation, who have failed to agree on measures to reverse the trend of our annual fiscal deficits, growing interest costs and \$39.3 trillion national debt.

When spending exceeds revenue, creating a budget deficit, the federal government has to cover the gap by selling securities, such as Treasury bonds. The national debt is the ac-

cumulation of all past deficits and the interest owed on the resulting debt.

Measuring 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.

Is default likely? Between 2011 and 2025, Congress delayed raising the debt limit 13 out of 15 years, forcing Treasury to rely on extraordinary measures. Ultimately Congress passed the debt ceiling limit on last day possible. This type of brinkmanship was a major reason why the nation's credit was downgraded in 2011 and again in 2023.

Our congressional representatives should be working on common sense solutions before we face another credit downgrade, which historically has been driven by the long-term deterioration of government debt.

So what steps can Congress take to put the US on a sustainable path? Here is my 10-point proposal:

- Bipartisan fiscal reform with sound fiscal and macroeconomic policy that will reverse our current debt trajectory.



KEVIN
MCNABOLA

- Develop a bipartisan plan to increase revenues: optimizing tax policy and a selective tariff policy.

- Develop a bipartisan plan for significant multi-year reductions in mandatory spending and slow the growth in spending within health care and pensions.

- Continue to strengthen the US dollar and build liquidity into the market.

- Create bipartisan legislative solutions to stabilize and decrease deficit spending.

- Invest in long-run growth drivers with targeted investment in infrastructure, energy and digital connectivity.

- Support research and development innovation (including AI) while ensuring that policy prevents monopoly power.

- Let the Federal Reserve keep focusing on its dual mandate – price stability and maximum employment – without political interference.

- Align fiscal policy with monetary policy: avoid large, pro cyclical stimulus when the economy is already strong and inflation risks are elevated.

- Recalibrate trade policy and shift tariffs from the current across-the-board approach to a more targeted approach so as to minimize consumer price impacts.

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

We need not look back that long ago to a time and place in Washington when bipartisan solutions were the norm. The successful passage of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 is a prime example, when President Bill Clinton and House Speaker 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.

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

Amity Chamber of Commerce

Symposium Tackles Economic Challenges, Opportunities

The Amity Chamber of Commerce is holding its second annual “Amity Chamber Business Symposium & Expo” on July 22 in Orange.

This year’s event has been meticulously developed to engage, inform, excite and empower businesses, nonprofit organizations and the community.

Bring your colleagues, customers, friends and family. Whether your objective is to obtain economic and business updates, refine your go-to-market strategies or sample some fantastic, free food from our F&B chamber members, the program offers resources, education, networking and business opportunities to improve your organization’s operations, culture and bottom line.

The event takes place at the Yale West Campus, located at 100 West Campus Dr, from 3:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. Both the symposium and the expo are free and open to the public.

The program will begin with the business symposium. The primary focus of this year’s symposium reflects the current evolving international landscape, which has presented economic challenges, financial implications as well as opportunities for businesses of all sizes and scopes. The heightened importance of how businesses position and communicate their brand to engage, create customer value and increase return on investment will also be presented. Attendees are strongly encouraged to be seated by 3:15 p.m. for what will be a prompt start and an extremely impactful symposium experience.

Symposium speakers and their respec-

tive presentations include Daniel H. O’Keefe, commissioner of the state Department of Economic and Community Development and the state’s chief innovation officer. O’Keefe’s talk is titled “Navigating Economic Crosswinds: Business Opportunities and Challenges.” With the ongoing Iran conflict, Mideast instability, tariffs and rising business costs, O’Keefe will discuss the potential challenges and impact on the state’s economy, as well as business expansion and opportunities.

State Comptroller Sean Scanlon will give a presentation titled “Connecticut’s Economy Today: Financial Trends and Impact on Small Business.” He will share an update on Connecticut’s finances and economic outlook and the impact on the state’s small businesses.

Morgan Nyerick, director of Connecticut Statewide Marketing and Tourism, will give a talk titled “Shaping Connecticut’s Story: How Perception Drives Growth.” Connecticut is experiencing a measurable shift in how people perceive our state, and the momentum is just beginning. In this session, Nyerick will explore how perception influences economic growth, talent attraction, tourism and business development. Blending marketing insights, state initiatives and real-world examples, this conversation will examine the role we all play in shaping Connecticut’s narrative and future.

Eric Lopez, a four-time Bronze Star Medal recipient and founder and CEO of



BARRY LEE COHEN

Arrowhead Leadership Consulting, will discuss “Leading Across the Generations.” As Gen Z rapidly reshapes the workforce, many organizations experience increased friction, shifting expectations and a growing disconnect across teams. Lopez will challenge common assumptions about younger leaders and reveal what drives performance, engagement and accountability across generations. You’ll

walk away with clear, practical strategies to lead without compromising, strengthening alignment, elevating standards and unlocking the full potential of every generation in your organization.

The expo portion commences at 5:30 p.m. and will include over 20 businesses and organizations that span transportation, public utilities, food and beverage, home improvement, real estate, finance and more.

The expo has been purposely designed for networking with colleagues and friends, one-on-one discussions, or bringing the family to explore leading businesses throughout the Amity region.

An eclectic expo floor offers an exceptional mix of well-established and leading corporations, as well as iconic and rising-star brands. An abundance of meaningful business knowledge, fun and collaboration is free and will not disappoint, from PEZ Candy, Jimmy John’s, Barrio Burrito Bar, and Duck Donuts to Tweed-New Haven, Coldwell Banker Realty, Regional Water Authority and many more.

The Small Business Administration Connecticut district office will also be stationed on the expo floor for attendees to learn about free and low-cost resources available to assist with business plans, accessing capital and other great opportunities available to entrepreneurs and small businesses.

This year’s sponsors and Amity Chamber corporate partners include Avangrid, The Milford Bank, Signarama – Orange, 7-Brew Drive Thru Coffee and Beers Hamerman, Cohen, & Burger.

The Amity Chamber is tremendously grateful to Avangrid, The Milford Bank, and all our Corporate Partners, which also include Yale West Campus, Coldwell Banker Realty, Roebic Laboratories, Coastal Bridge Advisors, Laticrete, Verizon, and Liberty Bank, who provide substantial operational and financial resources that are essential, offer exceptional expertise, and tangibly demonstrate their shared commitment to nurturing businesses and engaging communities throughout the Amity region and surrounding areas.

To register for the Amity Symposium and Expo, and view the full list of exhibitors, visit amityctchamber.com.

Although registration is not required, advance registrations allow presenters and panelists to best engage the attendees and for expo exhibitors to ensure they are resourced with adequate supplies, samples or giveaways.

Barry Lee Cohen is the chief executive officer of the Amity Chamber of Commerce. He may be reached at 203-645-2913 or by emailing director@amityctchamber.com.

TOWN OF ORANGE
AMERICA 250
CELEBRATION
Friday, July 3rd, at 6 PM
250TH Anniversary of the Signing of the United States Declaration of Independence

Two hundred and fifty years ago, a generation of Americans stepped forward and chose courage. Now in our time, we have the privilege of remembering and the responsibility of carrying that torch forward. In Orange, we will meet that moment.

This is a once-in-a-generation moment, 250 years since our nation began, and Orange is going to ensure this monumental moment is given the attention it so rightly deserves! Various events are planned during the Concert & Fireworks Celebration on Friday, July 3rd, at 6 PM and more throughout the year!

JULY 3RD EVENTS

- ★ Concert Featuring All-American Music
- ★ Unique Fireworks Display Show with 250 Volleys and a Special USA Display
- ★ A Fife & Drum Corps Segment Featuring Colonial Era Music
- ★ Student Essay Readings from Local Schools
- ★ The National Anthem Sung by a Special Guest
- ★ Patriotic Photo Booth for Family Selfies
- ★ Powerful Flag Display Across Orange Center Road
- ★ An Official Proclamation from First Selectman James Zeoli & the 250 Committee

HONORING HISTORY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

- ★ A Reading of the Names of Orange’s Revolutionary War veterans at the Memorial Day Parade
- ★ Town-wide Church Bells Ringing on July 4th at 2 PM (to mark the official signing of the Declaration of Independence)
- ★ America 250 exhibits at the Orange Country Fair in September

For more information or to become a sponsor, visit www.orange-ct.gov/2215/America-250
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Milford Pride Comes To Green



Milford celebrated Pride Month on the Green with booths, speakers and other activities throughout the day on June 27. Photos by Lexi Crocco.

Orange Student Earns Gold In Jiu Jitsu Competition



Lochlann Smith won two gold medals at the NAGA Connecticut Grappling Championship in Newtown on June 13. He is the son of Robert Smith and Sarah Mason of Orange. He began training in jiu-jitsu in December under Coach Kubi Demirhan of Milford. Demirhan is opening the VIA Jiu Jitsu Academy in Milford this summer at 333 Quarry Rd. This was Lochlann Smith's first competition. He competed as a novice in the 40-49.9 pound bracket for 6-7 year olds. He is 6 and won both the gi and no-gi competitions. He attends Turkey Hill School and completed first grade on June 12. Photo by Sarah Mason.




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Milford DAR Chapter Honors Locals For Patriotic Activities



Regent Elizabeth White-Peters pins the DAR 250 medal onto Tracy O'Brien, owner of Marvin Display, while her mother, Ellen, holds the DAR Certificate of Appreciation for their continued patriotic programming during the DAR annual meeting in Milford on June 12. Photo courtesy of DAR.

The Freelove Baldwin Stow Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution has announced that Tracy O'Brien, owner of the women-owned international Milford business Marvin Display, was the recipient of the DAR America 250 recognition after presenting an interactive program on the American flag's heritage during the group's June 12 annual meeting.

Thomas Hunt of Milford's Public Works Department was also recognized with the DAR certificate for honoring the flag based on his Milford Commission for America 250 beautification.

Several DAR members also received honors: the National Teacher Appreciation Dedication Award went to Casey Heyer; the Regent's Award went to Barbara

Stewart; and the 2025 Service to America Illuminating Our Legacy Volunteerism Certificates were awarded to Marie Compare for 177.75 service hours and Pamela Illyn for 560 service hours.

"We are honored to have such dedicated members collaborate with local government and businesses during America 250 continuing the chapter traditions since 1896," said Regent Elizabeth White-Peters. "Their leadership and service reflect our chapter's ongoing commitment to the DAR mission and to making a meaningful impact in our community."

The DAR is a women's service organization whose members can trace their lineage to an individual who contributed to securing American independence during the Revolutionary War.

New Priest Joins Church Of The Good Shepherd In Orange



Rev. Geoff Sinibaldo has been appointed priest-in-charge at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Orange. Photo by Sinibaldo.

The Church of the Good Shepherd in Orange has appointed Rev. Geoff Sinibaldo as priest-in-charge effective immediately.

The church held a celebration of new ministry on June 28 followed by a barbeque picnic. The celebration was held in conjunction with St. Joseph of Arimathea American National Catholic Church, which shares worship space with the parish of the Church of the Good Shepherd.

Sinibaldo teaches religion full-time and serves on the campus ministry team at Notre Dame High School in West Haven. He lives in Old Saybrook, where he is also a volunteer firefighter and chaplain with the Old Saybrook Fire Department. Ordained into the ministry of word and sacrament

in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 2002, Sinibaldo has served in parish ministry for more than 20 years.

"Every day provides moments for us to encounter Jesus in how we receive one another and reflect his love, peace and mercy in our lives. Together, we listen for his voice, discerning where he is calling us. If you are looking for a community to explore faith and friendship with opportunities to serve others, we invite you to join us at Good Shepherd," Sinibaldo said.

Established in 1958, The Church of the Good Shepherd continues to welcome the community into worship and fellowship at 9 a.m. on Sunday mornings at 680 Racebrook Rd.

Wooden Loon Acquired By Milford Marine Institute For Bird ID Camp



The Milford Marine Institute acquired a wooden loon that will debut during the organization's Bird ID summer camp in July. Photo by Tim Chaucer.

The Milford Marine Institute has acquired a wooden loon, and this summer's Bird Identification Art Camp will be the first group to see the model when the institute sets up the Tri Beach Center as a "bird museum" with numerous carved and mounted birds.

The Bird Identification Art Camp runs from July 6-10 for ages 6 and up. Campers use the birds as models for their drawing on pine board, cut out, sand and paint.

The bird ID camp is just one of several hands-on science programs the institute has run each summer for 43 years in conjunction with the Milford Recreation Department.

There are also two archeology camps coming up in July.

The Archaeology/Native Culture Camp A runs from July 13-17 and is for ages 9 and up. The Archaeology/Native Culture Camp B runs from July 20-24 for ages 9 and up.

All camps begin at 9:30 a.m. and end at 1 p.m. Campers bring a lunch and drink each day. All camps are \$175 for the week which includes all materials (pegboards, wood, paints).

For more information contact Camp Director Tim Chaucer at 203-988-0918, email tchaucer@msn.com or visit milfordmarineinstitute.org.

REGISTER FOR FREE!



AMITY
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

BUSINESS SYMPOSIUM & EXPO

Yale West Campus
Conference Center - Building 8
100 West Campus Drive
Orange

Wednesday, July 22nd
3:30 - 7:00 pm
Symposium: 3:30 pm.
Expo: 5:30 - 7:00 pm.

Featured Speakers



Daniel H. O'Keefe
Commissioner, CT Dept. of
Economic & Community Dev.



Sean Scanlon
State of CT Comptroller



Morgan Nyerick
Director of CT Statewide
Marketing & Tourism



Eric Lopez
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Strawberry Fest Blooms In Orange



Orange Congregational Church held its 17th annual Strawberry Festival and red car show at the High Plains Community Center fairgrounds in Orange on June 13. Photos by Lexi Crocco.

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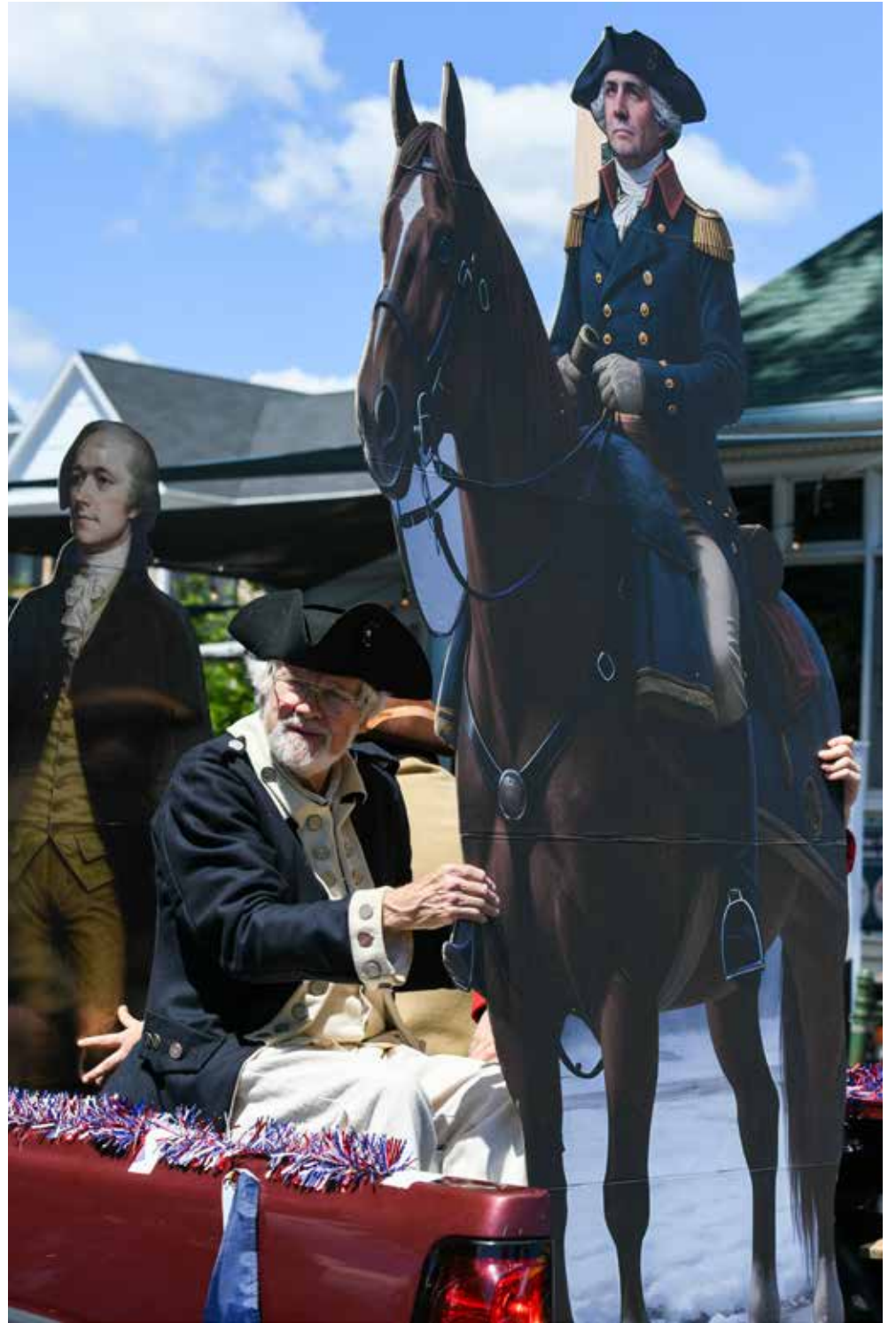
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Milford Parade Celebrates America At 250



Milford held its America 250 Grand Parade on June 20 to celebrate the anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence with marching bands, decorated floats, community groups and tributes honoring the nation's history. Photos by Robert Creigh.

Pantochino Announces 2026-27 Season Of Musicals In Milford

Pantochino Productions, a not-for-profit theatre company in Milford, has announced its 2026-2027 season, including two new musicals and the return of a holiday favorite.

Coproducers Jimmy Johansmeyer and Bert Bernard, founders of the company in 2010, will return to the stage at Milford Arts Council for all four productions.

"The season is a reflection of our mission to entertain, engage and enrich audiences with an array of original, affordable musical theatre," Bernardi said.

"It's an exciting lineup with something for everyone," added Johansmeyer.

Pantochino will open its season with the new musical, "The Real Housewives of Sleepy Hollow" with book and lyrics by Bernardi and music by composer Justin Rugg. Performances run Oct. 9-25. The show is a mash-up of the popular reality television phenomenon and Washington

Irving's class legend.

"We're seeing the story of Ichabod Crane, Katrina Van Tassel and of course the Headless Horsemen through the eyes of the outspoken housewives. This will be a blast," explains Bernardi.

For the holidays, the company will revive its award-winning "panto" musical, "Christmas Carol, the Panto," which debuted in 2022. The Bernardi and Rugg creation won seven Broadway World Connecticut Awards, including Best Musical and Best New Work. This effervescent retelling of the Dickens classic is full of sight gags, one-liners and fast paced fun. The musical also features the unpredictable merriment of Victoria Sautee in a cameo role. The show plays Dec. 4-20.

Pantochino's Teen

Theatre company will present "Urinetown, the Musical" by Mark Hollmann and Greg Kotis from Feb. 26-28. The satirical musical comedy is set in a dystopian future where a water shortage has led to a totalitarian regime controlling public restrooms. The tale of love, corruption, greed and revolution will be performed by a cast of local young actors.

Pantochino debuts "At This Performance," a new musical farce by Bernardi and Rugg, with shows from April 23 through May 9. Set in the dressing room of a Broadway theatre, the curtain is about

to rise on the most talked-about show of the season. But the legendary leading lady is missing. In the tradition of theatre, the show must go on inciting a series of hilarious, outrageous and side-splitting antics.

"This is purely Pantochino," said Bernardi. "I can't wait for audiences to see it."

Pantochino's performances are cabaret style, with audiences invited to bring their own food and drink during the performance. Tickets for all performances will be on sale starting Aug. 1.

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Pirates Sail Into Milford



Pirates sailed into Milford Harbor on June 7 to take over during the annual Milford Pirate Day event hosted by the Downtown Milford Business Association. Photos by Robert Creigh.

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MILFORD-ORANGE TIMES

BEST NEWSPAPER

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No Limits Auto Body Shop Holds Grand Opening In Milford



The Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting on June 18 for the grand opening of No Limit Auto Body at 324 New Haven Ave. in Milford. The franchise specializes in auto body, auto leasing and wraps/graphics. From left: state Rep. Kathy Kennedy, owner Ivelisse Morgan, Crue Morgan, owner Josh Morgan, MRCC Director Simon McDonald and Milford Mayor Rich Smith. Photo by Robert Creigh.

Frosty Twist Celebrates 15 Years In Milford



The Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting on June 26 to celebrate ice cream store Frosty Twist's 15th anniversary of selling frozen treats in the city at 22 Broad St. Included in the photo are MRCC Director Simon McDonald, Milford Mayor Rich Smith, owner Patrick Jean and MRCC President Michael Moses. Photo by Robert Creigh.

Students Earn Scholarships From Milford Garden Club

The Milford Garden Club has awarded two scholarships this year to Madeline Babcock of Foran High School and Siya Patil of Jonathan Law High School.

The club provides annual scholarships to local high school students who are going into horticulture, agriculture or similar field.

Founder Of Milford Law Firm Honored With Community Award



Berchem

The Walter Camp Football Foundation announced today that Robert L. Berchem will receive the 2026 Walter Camp Champion of Community Award at the Walter Camp Ring of Honor Event, to be held on July 12 at Race Brook Country Club in Orange.

Berchem is a founder one of Connecticut's largest law firms, Milford-based Berchem Moses PC.

Walter Camp, based in New Haven, oversees the selection of the nation's oldest All-America Team, a tradition established in 1889. The foundation annually recognizes individuals whose achievements and service have made a lasting impact on their communities.

The Champion of Community Award recognizes individuals who have achieved distinction in business, public service or private life while making meaningful contributions to their communities and charitable causes.

Berchem is the second recipient of the award, joining long-time foundation member Bill O'Brien of Branford.

Berchem is a graduate of Fairfield University and was valedictorian of the Villanova University School of Law in 1965. He went on to clerk for US District Court Chief Justice William Timbers, and then was awarded a fellowship where he obtained a master of law from the University of Michigan Law School in 1967.

Berchem has been actively involved in the attraction, development and construction of many retail, commercial and industrial projects in the region over the last five decades. Berchem has also served as chair of the Bridgeport University Board of Trustees, trustee for Fairfield University, president of Race Brook Country Club and on the board of directors of Boys and Girls Village and the Cardinal Sheehan Center.

Opossum Rescue Comes To Orange



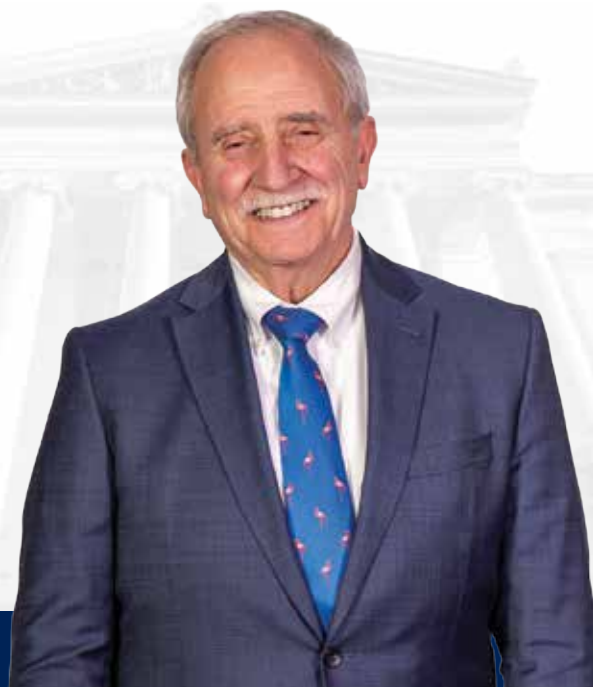
The Orange Land Trust hosted the Ferncroft Wildlife Rescue Opossum program on May 27. Ferncroft, which is located in Woodstock, rehabilitates injured opossums and releases them when possible. Photo by Pam Leffert.

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Obituaries

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

Robert R. Abed, 62, of Milford, entered eternal rest peacefully on June 3, 2026, at Bridgeport Hospital. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Robert J. Bento of Milford, beloved husband of Monique S. Bento for 56 years, passed away peacefully at Bridgeport Hospital on June 12, 2026. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Margaret Loretta Bowerman, (affectionately known as "Sis,") age 97, of Milford, the wife of the late David C. Bowerman, Sr., went home to be with the Lord, June 17, 2026. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Anthony Cacciabauda, 81, of Milford, beloved husband of Patti Cacciabauda, passed away on June 24, 2026. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Debbie Marie Carroll is now forever sitting under the sun, peacefully, tending to her garden. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Andre Jean Dannenhoffer, otherwise known as "Andy," passed away on Saturday, June 20, 2026 at the age of 89. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Elizabeth Doris Enders, 81, passed away peacefully on June 2, 2026, surrounded by the love, prayers, and presence of family and friends. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Joan Fitch, 90, of Milford, beloved wife of the George R. Fitch, passed away on Monday June 1, 2026. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



With heavy hearts we announce the passing of **Edward Greenbaum III**, Milford, CT, on June 9, 2026.



Richard Francis Guarnieri, age 98, of Milford, passed away on May 22, 2026. (West Haven Funeral Home)



Donald P. Ianniello, 88, of Milford, passed away June 22, 2026 at Evergreen Woods in North Branford. (Porto Funeral Home)



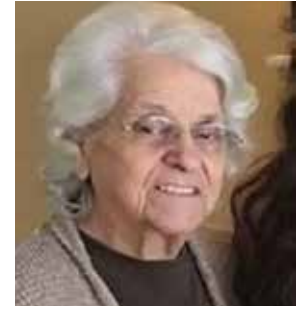
John (Skip) H. Kenworthy III, 80, of Milford, beloved husband of 49 years of the late Patricia (Marconi) Kenworthy, passed away peacefully on June 6, 2026. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Roger W. Kirwood, of Orange, affectionately known as "Captain Funn," passed away peacefully on May 22, 2026, with the love of his family surrounding him. (Iovanne Funeral Home)



Joan Linsley, 92, of Orange, Connecticut, beloved wife of the late Arthur Linsley, passed away peacefully on June 2, 2026, surrounded by the love of her family. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Barbara (Ogilvie) Listro, age 87, passed away peacefully on June 1, 2026, surrounded by her loving family.



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Obituaries

Dennis Allen MacKenzie, 74, of Milford, CT, beloved husband of Michelle Burke MacKenzie, passed away on Friday May 29, 2026. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



William Anthony Rahgo Jr., 90, of Milford, CT, passed away peacefully at home on March 18, 2026. He was born in Bridgeport, to the late William A. and Cornelia Rahgo of Stratford.



Frances McNeill, 84, of Milford, CT, beloved wife of the late Bernard McNeill, passed away on June 10, 2026. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Brian F. Smith, known to his fire department friends as Dutchie, age 79, of Milford, CT passed away after a brief illness on December 18, 2025. (Abriola Parkview Funeral Home)



With heavy hearts we announce the passing of **Carol Nichols**, Milford, CT, on June 5, 2026. She passed peacefully, surrounded by family.



It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of **Jon Paul Stevens** on May 24, 2026. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Marie Carmel Palma Parente of Woodbridge, died peacefully on June 18, 2026. Born September 12, 1930, the only child of Peter and Florence (Mus-to) Palma.



Shaileen Mary Tracy, lovingly known as "Sha," passed away peacefully on June 11, 2026, at the age of 74, surrounded by her devoted husband, children, and grandchildren. (Lesko Funeral Home)



Energize CT Launches Community Grant Initiative

Energize Connecticut sponsors have announced the launch of the Community Energy Boost Grant, a new funding initiative designed to support Connecticut communities in their efforts to promote cost-saving energy efficiency programs and solutions.

The sponsors of Energize Connecticut are utility companies Eversource and Orange-based Avangrid subsidiaries United Illuminating, Connecticut Natural Gas and Southern Connecticut Gas.

Awardees may receive grants of up to \$5,000 to support community-led outreach efforts that increase participation in Energize Connecticut energy efficiency programs. Funded initiatives may focus on programs such as Home Energy Solutions – Income Eligible, the Multifamily Initiative, Small Business Energy Advantage, heat pump adoption or other projects focused on energy efficiency outlined in the application.

Interested applicants are encouraged to review the qualifications and schedule a discussion with company staff prior to applying. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis from until Oct. 1.

Building on the success of the Community Partnership Initiative, the group said that the Community Energy Boost Grant expands collaboration with community-based organizations to reach more households and businesses through trusted relationships and local engagement.

"Our experience with the Community Partnership Initiative showed that community leadership is critical to expanding the reach of energy efficiency programs," said Marissa Westbrook, senior manager of conservation and load management at UI, CNG and SCG.

For more information about the application process and to sign up for an informational webinar, visit EnergizeCT.com/explore-solutions/community-grant.

TOWN OF ORANGE Notice of Public Hearing Amending Section of Code

Notice is hereby given to the legal voters and those persons qualified to vote in Town Meetings of Town of Orange that in accordance with Section 3.4 of the Charter of the Town of Orange, the Board of Selectmen of said Town will hold a Public Hearing on Wednesday, July 8, 2026 at 7:00 P.M. in the lower level meeting room of the Orange Town Hall, 617 Orange Center Road, Orange, CT to consider amending the code of the Town of Orange - Chapter 302 Peddling and Soliciting.

Notice of Public Hearing on the amendment of Chapter 302 Peddling and Soliciting dated at Orange, CT on this 15th day of June 2026

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BY: James M. Zeoli, First Selectman
Attest: Mary Shaw, Town Clerk

Gregory F. Doyle

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