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Milford-Orange Times

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August 6, 2026

Fireman's Carnival Delights In Orange



The Orange Volunteer Fire Department held its annual Fireman's Carnival at the High Plains Community Center fairgrounds during the first weekend of August. The carnival is typically the department's biggest fundraiser. Additional photos on page 16. *Photo by Lexi Crocco.*

Kids Make Marine Art At Milford Camp



Children at the Milford Marine Institute's Marine Biology Science/Art Camp on June 26 made pine board artwork with various maritime creatures as part of their learning experience. The institute offers several science-themed camps each summer. *Photo by Tim Chaucer.*

RWA To Replace Lead Pipes In Milford

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

The Board of Aldermen at their July 6 meeting approved an agreement to allow the Regional Water Authority to replace lead and galvanized pipes it had identified around the city – including at the building in which the aldermen were sitting.

The RWA will replace the pipes at no cost to the city.

Though the RWA has the right to replace the service lines that it owns, it needed permission from the aldermen to come onto city property. The section of pipe beyond the curb is generally the responsibility of the property owner, not the utility.

RWA Director of Public Affairs Kevin

Watsey told the board that RWA had so far identified 12 lead lines around the city, as well as over 100 galvanized lines.

“We have a few hundred lines that we just don’t know yet,” he said. “Another part of our program is to try and identify those lines, and they will be replaced also if they qualify.”

The RWA online lead map shows that City Hall has a galvanized line on the utility side and a lead line on the city property side.

“We plan on doing this building as the first replacement in that program,” Watsey

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Orange Enters Automated Traffic Camera Agreement

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

The Orange Board of Selectmen at its July 8 meeting authorized the town to enter into a three-year contract with automated traffic enforcement camera provider Altumint.

In the same meeting, the board approved revisions to the contract between the police department and surveillance company Flock to comply with new state rules about how data is used and shared.

Altumint was chosen as the vendor to

operate new red light and speed cameras to be installed around town after an evaluation committee in June reviewed proposals from various companies.

Automated traffic enforcement devices, particularly red light cameras and license plate readers, have been cropping up around Connecticut in recent years. Several nearby municipalities have pursued or installed them, including West Haven and

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Milford Expands ADU Options In Some Areas

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

The Milford Planning & Zoning Commission at its July 7 meeting agreed to expand the ability for residents to create accessory dwelling units (sometimes called “in-law apartments”) in sections of the city.

The measure will allow for structures that are detached from the main home to be used as ADUs in Zones R-18, R-30 and RA – residential areas that tend to have homes on larger lots.

Only properties of at least 18,000 square feet would be eligible.

The city in 2023 began allowing

ADUs in attached structures following changes to state law aimed at expanding affordable housing options.

Resident Kristofer Loriel had petitioned to add detached structures in an effort to convert a garage on his North Stret property into a unit, which would have been barred under the previous rules.

Attorney David Lynch, who represented Loriel before the planning board, made it clear that although the change centered

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Orange Honors US At 250



Orange held ceremonies and celebrations on July 3 to recognize the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Additional photos on page 13. *Photo by Lexi Crocco.*

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Orange Firefighters Show Off Equipment For Safety Day



Orange Firefighter Wendy Camacho gives a toy fire helmet to a visitor at Orange's Safety Day July 14. Members of the Orange Volunteer Fire Department joined the town's police and public works departments as well as the Connecticut Army National Guard and U.S. Air Force Reserve members from the 103rd Air Control Squadron, also based in Orange. Several other agencies also had exhibits. The event was hosted by Orange Youth Services at the High Plains Community Center. *Photo by Doug Fenichel.*

Orange Program Portrays Revolutionary War Spymaster



History teacher and living historian Brian Blake portrayed Major Benjamin Tallmadge, General George Washington's spymaster and a major in the 2nd Continental Light Dragoons during the Revolutionary War, during an interactive presentation on July 18 at the Bryan-Andrew House in Orange. Tallmadge led a network of spies known as the Culper Ring that provided Washington with critical intelligence on British troop movements and operated for five years without any agents being unmasked. The network was responsible for uncovering Connecticut native Benedict Arnold's treason. Tallmadge later served as postmaster of Litchfield and represented Connecticut in the US House of Representatives. The program was organized by the Orange Historical Society. *Photo by Lexi Crocco.*

Pollinator Pathway Showing Caterpillar Film At Milford Library

Pollinator Pathway, Milford will host a free showing of the film, The Extraordinary Caterpillar, and talk about how private and public spaces can become pollinator habitats in the program room at the Milford Public Library on Tuesday, Aug. 25 at 6:30 p.m.

In the film, ecologist Dr. Doug Tallamy, co-founder of @homegrownnationalpark, reveals the vital role caterpillars play in

supporting biodiversity. These tiny creatures are the engine of food webs – feeding birds, supporting pollinators and helping ecosystems thrive.

Prior to the film screening, Pollinator Pathways will host free crafts under the Fowler Pavilion from 5 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.

Registration is required for the film screening. Go to milford-pl.libcal.com/event/17146351 to register.

Orange Youth Services Buys CPR Machine

The Orange Community Services Department, through Orange Youth Services and Prevention, has announced the purchase of a LUCAS chest compression system for the Orange Police Department using opioid settlement funding.

The LUCAS device is a mechanical CPR system that delivers regular, guideline-consistent chest compressions during cardiac emergencies, allowing first responders to provide uninterrupted lifesaving care while safely transporting patients.

“While prevention remains a critical component of our work, it is equally important to invest in resources that strengthen our community’s ability to respond during medical emergencies,” said Chantelle Bunnell, Orange Youth Services and Prevention coordinator.

Orange Police Chief Robert Gagne welcomed the addition of the LUCAS device, noting that it will enhance officers’ and first responders’ ability to provide high-quality care during life-threatening emergencies.

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Amity Chamber Hosts Business Expo, Symposium



The Amity Chamber of Commerce held its second annual Amity Chamber Business Symposium & Expo on July 22 at Yale West Campus in Orange. Over 250 attended the event. The expo included over 24 businesses and organizations spanning transportation, public utilities, food and beverage, home improvement, real estate and finance. The symposium featured experts in economics, marketing and leadership. Left photo: The Milford Bank's Paul Mulligan, Tina Mason and Jorge Santiago are joined by Cheryl Thibault (second from left) of ARC Quality Solutions. Photo courtesy of the Amity Chamber of Commerce. Right photo: Amity Chamber CEO Barry Lee Cohen and Connecticut Commissioner of the Department of Economic and Community Development Daniel H. O'Keefe. Photo by Robert Creigh.

Milford Maker Nonprofit Holding Restorative Retreat

Milford Makes has opened registration for Cultivate & Create: A Restorative Retreat for Makers, a new full-day creative retreat designed to give makers, artists, crafters and creative hobbyists the opportunity to step away from everyday demands and reconnect with the joy of making.

The retreat will take place on Saturday, Oct. 10, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Sticks & Stones Retreat Center in Newtown.

“Set against a peaceful natural backdrop, Cultivate & Create is an intentionally small retreat that blends creativity, wellness and community,” the nonprofit said in a release.

Throughout the day, participants will have a catered breakfast, buffet lunch and afternoon grazing table by Kitchen Melissa; a

meditative creativity workshop led by Tammy Theis Satterlee; gentle chair yoga for makers and guided nature walks with Kelly Warters of A Breath of Calm Yoga; the herbal tea ritual with Liz Garypie; dedicated open studio time to work on personal creative projects; curated gift bags; and a community raffle featuring donations from local businesses.

The retreat welcomes individuals who enjoy knitting, crochet, quilting, sewing, scrapbooking, journaling, painting, mixed media art, writing and other creative pursuits. Attendees are encouraged to bring a personal creative project and spend the day making alongside fellow creatives in a welcoming, supportive environment.

Attendance is intentionally limited to ap-

proximately 25 participants to create a relaxed and intimate retreat experience.

The retreat also serves as a fundraiser for Milford Makes, which is working to establish a creative reuse center and makerspace in Milford. While retreat registration is designed to cover the cost of the experience itself, sponsorships and community support help advance Milford Makes’ long-term vision of creating a permanent space where residents can access affordable creative materials, participate in workshops, learn new skills, share resources and connect through creativity.

“Cultivate & Create was designed to give people permission to step away from their daily responsibilities and reconnect with their

creativity,” said Liz Garypie, vice president of Milford Makes. “Whether someone is a lifelong maker or simply looking for space to create and recharge, we hope this retreat provides an opportunity for meaningful connection, inspiration and restoration. It’s a chance to spend an entire day creating in community while supporting Milford Makes’ vision for a future creative reuse center and makerspace.”

Registration is now open and will remain available through Sept. 24 or until the retreat reaches capacity. Because attendance is limited, early registration is encouraged.

More information and registration details are available at milfordmakes.org/cultivate-create. For questions, contact hello@milfordmakes.org.

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Orange Garden Club Opens Memorial Garden At Stone-Otis House



The Garden Club of Orange partnered with the Orange Historical Society for its annual joint event at the historic Stone-Otis House and property on July 16. The afternoon began with a children's scavenger hunt led by the Orange Library, followed by a garden and house tour. The event concluded with the dedication of the new memorial garden, led by Garden Club Vice President Violet Nastri. The memorial garden honors past garden club members whose dedication and volunteer efforts have helped beautify the Town of Orange. Joining Nastri for the ceremony were Orange Historical Society President Ginny Reinhardt, Stone-Otis Garden Chair Maryellen Bepuda and Rev. Peter Orfanakos of St. Barbara's Church, who offered a prayer of dedication. The garden club will be fundraising to transform the rear area beside the Stone-Otis House into a garden space as well. *Photo courtesy of the Garden Club of Orange.*

Lobster Bake Returns To Milford



Milford Rotary held its 48th annual Lobster Bake at Helwig Street in Milford on Aug. 1. *Photo by Steve Cooper.*

Orange Lions Serve Hot Dogs



The Orange Lions served hot dogs at the Senior Center on June 30. *Photo by Lexi Crocco.*

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Milford Chamber Hosts Golf Classic



The Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce held its Trust Golf Classic at Racebrook Country Club in Orange on July 27. Photo by Robert Creigh.

Walnut Beach Creamery Celebrates 20 Years In Milford



The Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting on July 31 to recognize the 20th anniversary of Walnut Beach Creamery at 17 Broadway in Milford. The ice cream shop frequently experiments with new flavors and makes its ice creams and sorbets in house. Included in the photo are MRCC Director Simon McDonald, founder and previous owner Susan Patrick, new owner Christina Sollitto, Director of Economic and Community Development Robert Townes and Milford Mayor Rich Smith. Photo by Robert Creigh.

New Barbershop Opens In Milford



The Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting on July 29 to celebrate the grand opening of the O Tree Barbershop at 191 Bridgeport Ave. in Milford. The men's barbershop specializes in men's long haircuts and also offers fades, beard trims and other classic barbering services. From left: Milford Director of Economic and Community Development Robert Townes, owner Robert Castrillo and Milford Mayor Rich Smith. Photo by Robert Creigh.



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Opinion & Editorial

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.

Mill Rate Down, But Taxes Up

To the Editor:

Mayor Rich Smith ran on lowering taxes. His campaign spent plenty of time attacking Tony Giannattasio as “Taxin’ Tony.” Now, after revaluation and a \$278 million budget, Milford homeowners are supposed to believe a higher tax bill is somehow not a tax increase because the mill rate went down.

That is insulting.

A mill rate is not what people pay. People pay the bill that comes in the mail. If my assessment goes up, the city spends \$14 million more, and I owe more money, then my taxes went up. Calling it anything else is just a convenient way to dodge responsibility.

Maybe the mayor thinks residents will hear “lower mill rate” and stop asking questions. But homeowners understand their own budgets. They know whether City Hall is taking more money from them than it did last year.

This is the exact kind of political spin people are sick of. If taxes are going up, just say so, and admit you failed to deliver on your big campaign promise.

Emily Versteeg
Milford

Individual Cost for Individual Risk

To the Editor:

I found Warren Mudrick’s July 2 response to my prior letter regarding vaccines deeply confusing. My argument was an economic/risk management-based critique of Craig Stahl’s original letter regarding “personal choice.” His response, however, revealed a fundamental misunderstanding of “collectivism.”

First, at no point did I write about support for or opposition to the bill in question. My point was simple: refusing vaccinations increases the likelihood of infection for any given vaccine-preventable disease and therefore creates additional risk to the individual (and

the individual should bear the cost of that risk). This is not what Mudrick refers to as “official doctrine.” It is simply a fact proven repeatedly by studies over decades.

Second, having those who refuse vaccination assume the cost for the additional risk of infection is not a punishment; it acknowledges the economic reality that the insurance company will pass on the cost of treating infection to other customers. Interestingly, Mudrick rails against “collectivism,” then immediately argues for it by expressing his belief that others should bear the cost; spreading the cost of an individual risk among other customers is the very definition of “collectivism.”

Likewise, Mudrick seems to confuse the risk to which I refer as the risk to the “collective.” The risk in question is not to the community as a whole, it is the increased risk that the insured individual will get infected and need additional treatment. Reframing the complementary effect of the insurance community benefiting from not having to assume the increased risk of additional costs from a single individual as “collectivism” inverts its definition entirely; indeed, it’s the very opposite of collectivism.

Mudrick closes his letter by writing that my opinion “place[s] bureaucratic control and collectivist risk-sharing above constitutional liberties.” Setting aside the bureaucratic part, an issue which I never addressed, it is in fact Mudrick himself who is advocating for collectivist risk-sharing by believing others should pay for the individual risk created by refusing vaccinations.

Michael Antonetti
Orange

CT Can’t Afford to Subsidize AI Data Centers

To the Editor:

Generative AI is here to stay, and with it comes surging demand for data centers that will reshape communities across Connecticut. Meeting this demand, however, must not come at any cost, and certainly not by shifting billions in expenses onto the backs of Connecticut taxpayers and ratepayers.

Our legislature has aggressively incentivized data center development. Thanks to legislation backed by Democratic leadership and Sen. James Maroney, data centers qualify for generous property tax exemptions – long-term subsidies that let these facilities contribute far less while homeowners and businesses should

der rising property taxes.

The energy and water demand of these facilities is staggering. A single large data center can consume as much electricity as tens of thousands of households and up to 5 million gallons of water per day for cooling, equivalent to the daily usage of a town of 10,000-50,000 people.

Across the US, data centers already strain local grids and water systems, driving up costs that utilities inevitably pass to customers. In Connecticut, with our already high energy prices, the impact would be especially painful: billions in needed upgrades to electric and water infrastructure, all ultimately landing on your bills.

Communities are pushing back. New York Gov. Kathy Hochul recently imposed a statewide moratorium on large data center facilities to study and mitigate these impacts. Over 100 municipalities across the country have enacted pauses or bans. New Haven is considering putting in a 12-month pause and West Haven has put in a pause.

Connecticut should follow this lead, not race ahead with subsidies that favor corporations while ignoring the strain on our grid and wallets. That is why I applaud local leaders putting in moratoriums on data center developments.

But a one-year pause doesn’t stop the tax break these data centers could receive. If elected to the state Senate, one of my first actions will be to introduce legislation for a statewide moratorium on new data centers and to eliminate the tax incentive. We must first develop a comprehensive, long-term energy policy that delivers cheaper, more reliable power for families and businesses, not one that prioritizes utility companies and big tech at your expense.

Owen Weaver
Republican Candidate for District 14

Hartford Has Lost Touch with CT Families

To the Editor:

Every month, Connecticut families brace themselves before opening their electric bills. What should be a predictable household expense has become a major financial burden for many. Seniors on fixed incomes are forced to make difficult choices, while parents struggle to balance budgets already strained by groceries, housing, insurance and taxes. Small businesses face rising operating costs that threaten their ability to keep prices affordable and remain competitive. This should not be accepted as normal.

The Public Utilities Regulatory Authority has a responsibility to oversee utility companies and protect consumers. When families receive electric bills they cannot afford, state leaders must examine what is driving these costs and whether current policies are serving the public. Too many elected officials in Hartford seem disconnected from the financial realities facing everyday Connecticut residents. Families hear technical explanations and political talking points, but those words do not lower monthly bills. They need solutions, not excuses.

Every state mandate, fee and energy policy should be judged by one simple question: Will it make electricity more affordable and reliable for Connecticut families? If the answer is no, lawmakers should reconsider it. Good intentions cannot outweigh the financial impact of policies that increase costs for ratepayers.

We need greater transparency so residents understand exactly what they are paying for. We also need stronger legislative oversight of utility costs and long-term energy policies that prioritize affordability, reliability and in-

creased energy supply.

As a candidate for state representative in the 114th District, I have spoken with families who work hard, pay their taxes and contribute to their communities. They are not asking for special treatment; they simply want a government that recognizes every dollar matters.

Connecticut deserves leaders who listen, ask difficult questions and challenge policies that are no longer working. Affordable electricity is not a luxury; it is essential for maintaining a home, operating a business and protecting public health and safety. It’s time for Hartford to stop talking past people and start listening to them. By restoring accountability, affordability and common sense to state government, we can build a Connecticut where families can afford to stay, businesses can grow and residents once again feel their government is working for them.

Brooke Hopkins
Republican Candidate for District 114

Voters Deserve Transparency

To the Editor:

In recent campaign mailers, Connecticut State Senator James Maroney (D-14) proudly presents himself as an “independent voice” for the people of Milford, Orange, West Haven and Woodbridge. His Democratic colleagues in the House, Rep. Mary Welander (D-114) and Rep. MJ Shannon (D-117), strike a similar tone, positioning themselves as pragmatic leaders who put district needs above partisan loyalty. Residents deserve the truth: their voting records show near-total alignment with the Democratic majority, not genuine independence.

Maroney, who serves as deputy majority leader, maintains an excellent attendance record and has consistently voted with his party on divided roll calls, according to Office of Legislative Management data. As a dependable caucus member, he reliably backs Democratic leadership on budgets, taxes, regulations and major social policies, with few – if any – notable departures.

Welander (elected in 2020) and Shannon (elected in 2024) both recorded perfect attendance in the 2025 House session, casting votes on all 381 floor matters. Their records reflect strong loyalty to core Democratic priorities. While they may join bipartisan efforts on routine or unanimous bills, on the contentious, party-line votes that shape state policy – spending decisions, labor mandates and regulatory expansions – they stand firmly with the majority.

This lockstep behavior is common in a one-party-dominant legislature, where Democrats enjoy comfortable majorities in both chambers. Loyalty brings influence. But loudly claiming “independence” while delivering reliable partisan votes misleads voters in these competitive districts. Real independence would require occasional breaks from party leadership on issues such as tax increases, costly regulations or flawed policies – breaks these officials have rarely provided.

Voters in the 14th Senate District, 114th and 117th House districts should recognize the pattern: campaign rhetoric emphasizing independence contrasts sharply with legislative reality.

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. Voters deserve transparency.

Craig Stahl
Orange

Milford-Orange Times

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

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Opinion & Editorial

Working Together
For CT's Pets



STATE REP. (R-119)
KATHY KENNEDY

If you've ever had a dog greet you at the door after a long day or a cat curl up next to you on the couch, you know that pets become part of the family.

For me, it's my cuddly cats Spencer and Sebastian. They give us unconditional love, and it's our job to give them the care they deserve.

That's why I'm honored to have been appointed to Connecticut's new Animal Population Control Program Working Group. I already serve as a co-chair of the legislature's Animal Welfare Caucus.

This new bipartisan group is bringing together legislators, veterinarians, animal welfare organizations, animal control officers and other experts to take a fresh look at how we can strengthen one of Connecticut's most important animal welfare programs.

For years, the Animal Population Control Program has helped eligible pet owners, municipal shelters and organizations caring for feral cats by providing assistance for spaying and neutering. These services help reduce the number of unwanted animals, ease overcrowding in shelters and save taxpayer dollars by reducing the strain on local animal control services.

The problem is simple: the need has grown, but the funding hasn't kept up to that need.

Our job is to figure out how to make this program stronger and operate for the long term. We'll be looking at ways to create more stable funding, improve access to services across Connecticut and make sure the program is there when families and communities need it most.

We'll also discuss ways to better respond to animal diseases and identify resources that can help domestic violence survivors find temporary care for their pets. For many victims, leaving an abusive situation is even harder when they're worried about what will happen to a beloved dog or cat.

These are real challenges facing real people.

One thing I've learned during my time in the legislature is that the best solutions come from listening and bringing people together. I look forward to hearing from veterinarians, shelter volunteers, animal control officers, rescue groups and pet owners who work every day to care for Connecticut's animals.

Whether you adopted your pet from a shelter, rescued a stray or simply believe every animal deserves a safe and healthy life, this work matters. Responsible pet ownership and effective population control help create healthier communities, reduce overcrowded shelters and give more animals the chance to find loving homes.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve on this working group and to represent the voices of Milford, Orange and communities across Connecticut. Together, I believe we can build on a program that has already done so much good and make it even better for both our pets and the people who love them.

A Transformative
Initiative



STATE REP. (D-114)
MARY WELANDER

I'm absolutely thrilled to share that my end of session mailer contained a mistake. That's right. This English major is ecstatic about it, honestly and truly.

Each year at the end of the legislative session we have the option to put together a comprehensive summary of some of the work accomplished that year that we think our constituency is interested in. (It's really tough to edit because we can't include everything we might want to, and I recognize the varied interests that our communities have).

This year, as chair of the Early Childhood Caucus, I wanted to highlight the continuing work that was being done for the Early Childhood Education Endowment. Well, that's when the timing of publication resulted in a big mistake.

What was printed was the anticipated and agreed upon amount to be deposited into the endowment, which was \$320 million. What Gov. Ned Lamont announced was incredible: a deposit of over \$411 million to ensure that we are creating a self-sustaining program to provide real relief for working families. A ninety-one-million-dollar typo. Amazing.

In all seriousness, what I have helped create is a transformative initiative that when fully implemented will give money back to Connecticut residents by offering no-cost childcare for families making under \$100,000 a year and capping the costs of childcare at 7 percent of income for those making more than \$100,000. It is one of the biggest initiatives that gives financial relief to the middle class that the legislature has delivered. It provides stability for families and puts money back in their pockets. It also delivers stability and predictability for the small business owner providers that are key partners in the overall economic success of the state.

The funding, which is being invested wisely by state Treasurer Eric Russell and already growing, comes from unallocated surplus funds, which means that we are still paying down pension debt responsibly, still staying within the fiscal guardrails and not raising taxes or cutting services to fund the endowment. By making large, upfront deposits now, and initiating a gradual roll-out, we have created a program that is intended to be self-funded in perpetuity.

The Early Childhood Caucus is a bipartisan group that worked together alongside providers and advocates from across the state to ensure that we took meaningful steps to help this industry and the families that are struggling under the costs. Even when there weren't unanimous decisions about the "how," we were unified by the goal, and I was incredibly proud to lead those efforts in partnership with so many colleagues.

There is still more work to do: liability insurance costs for independent providers have skyrocketed, sometimes doubling or tripling overnight or being dropped altogether. We have to pay attention to the implementation details of the endowment to ensure efficiency in its use, especially around the section of the legislation focusing on providing health insurance options to early childhood educators.

If there are any other areas of concern that you think I should be aware of, please reach out at mary.welander@cga.ct.gov.

Making Solar
More Accessible



STATE REP. (D-117)
MJ SHANNON

I was proud last month to stand alongside Gov. Ned Lamont and my legislative colleagues as he signed Public Act 26-127 into law, a bill I was proud to support that expands access to affordable solar energy while helping Connecticut build a cleaner and more reliable energy future.

If there is one thing I hear repeatedly from constituents, it is that the cost of living is too high. Rising electricity bills have put a strain on families, seniors and small businesses alike.

While there is no single solution to lowering energy costs, this legislation is an important step in the right direction because it makes it easier for more people to access clean energy while strengthening our electric grid.

To help accomplish that, the new law extends Connecticut's residential, commercial and community solar programs through 2027, giving homeowners, businesses, municipalities and nonprofit organizations the certainty they need to continue investing in solar energy. It also expands the use of battery storage, which helps improve grid reliability and makes better use of the clean energy we generate.

What I especially appreciate about this legislation is that it opens the door for more people to benefit from solar power. Traditionally, many renters and homeowners without the right type of roof have been left out of the conversation. This legislation authorizes plug-in solar systems, smaller and more affordable panels that can be installed in places like a backyard or on a balcony. It is an innovative approach that gives more Connecticut residents the opportunity to lower their energy costs and participate in our clean energy future.

The bill also encourages responsible solar development by prioritizing projects on rooftops, brownfields, municipal and state buildings, parking lots and other already developed properties. That means we can continue expanding renewable energy while protecting open space and preserving the character of our communities.

Just as importantly, this law cuts unnecessary red tape by streamlining the permitting process for residential solar installations. By making it easier and more cost effective for homeowners to install solar, we can reduce delays, lower costs and help more families choose renewable energy if it makes sense for them.

Protecting our environment and making Connecticut more affordable should go hand in hand. We should be investing in policies that reduce pollution, strengthen our energy infrastructure, create good paying jobs and save people money at the same time. Public Act 26-127 accomplishes all those goals.

I was proud to cast my vote in support of this legislation and honored to attend the bill signing. As your state representative, I will continue working to advance practical, forward-looking solutions that protect our environment, strengthen our economy and help make Connecticut a more affordable place to call home.

As always, I encourage you to reach out if you have questions, concerns or ideas about issues impacting our community. My office is here to help. You can contact me any time by email at mj.shannon@cga.ct.gov or by phone at 860-240-8585.

Transparency And
Taxes



MILFORD MAYOR
RICH SMITH

Over the past many months I've spoken with hundreds of residents, listened to their concerns and exchanged ideas. My message was consistent: Milford is at an inflection point. We must preserve our small New England town charm while adapting to an ever-changing economic landscape.

This will require driving down costs through operational efficiencies, improving processes and applying new technology, while also attracting new revenue and supporting our existing commercial base.

I shared the following priorities:

- Transparency. Many residents felt disconnected from local government and unaware of city initiatives.

To address this, we now publish a quarterly newsletter with updates from my office and other departments, giving residents insight into daily operations, issues and challenges.

We held a Board and Commission Open House on May 18 with representatives from each appointed board/commission. They explained their roles and meeting schedules. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive and appreciative of the added transparency.

In recent months, I've also hosted several "Conversations with the Mayor," inviting the public to meet with me, learn about current issues and accomplishments and ask questions. The first was held at Walnut Beach Coffee Shop on April 2, followed by a June 3 session at City Hall, a July 10 session at the Milford Senior Center and a July 14 conversation at Café Atlantique. Again, the response from those who attended was very positive. As always, please feel free to schedule a meeting with me to discuss any issues, concerns or ideas.

- Lower taxes. I committed to keeping taxes low by managing costs and increasing revenue. My goal was to keep taxes at or near the rate of inflation. When I took office on Nov. 18, 2025, the city faced a \$9.7 million budget deficit: a \$6.5 million healthcare shortfall, \$2.2 million in salary contract gaps, and \$1.08 million in other obligations. Additionally, a state-mandated property revaluation alone would have increased residential taxes by over 7 percent, resulting in a potential 13 percent total increase.

For five and a half months, I worked extensively on cost models and "what if" analyses to reduce the impact. I proposed and the Board of Aldermen approved to phase in the revaluation. I also cut more than \$3.5 million in proposed spending and implemented hiring and spending freezes. As a result of these efforts, we successfully were able to drive taxes down from 13 percent to our target of the current rate of inflation, approximately 4.5 percent.

I want to thank all the residents who have reached out to thank us for our efforts as well my staff, our department heads, our city assessor, our finance director, the Board of Finance and the Board of Aldermen.

Orange Democratic Town Committee

What Can You Do?

We’re heading into a critical time with the upcoming November elections for state and national offices. I hope many of you are asking yourselves, “What can I do to help?”

We should all want to support and get behind the candidates we feel share our principles. We all have vastly different schedules and obligations, especially those of us with busy kids and families, but it’s important to make time to do something, anything, that will help elect empathetic, effective and resourceful leaders who will serve us well.

There is a plethora of ways to get involved. One of the things you can do is get involved with the Orange Democrats. You do not need to be a member or even a registered Democrat to attend our monthly meetings or sign up to volunteer. You simply need to be able to find a little time when you can.

We will soon be setting up our Democratic campaign headquarters, and during the heart of election season we will have volun-

teers there who can assign tasks and help you find ways to assist. During last year’s campaign, we had quite a few volunteers who took work home with them and did things like phone banking and writing letters from home whenever it was convenient for them.

Another thing you can do with the time you have available is find out more about the candidates. Learn about who they are, what they stand for and what they hope to accomplish. Then commit to sharing that information with at least a few of your friends. Political conversations with friends can sometimes seem scary, but sharing your reasons for supporting someone can make a difference. In this noisy world we live in, word of mouth matters more than ever.

Make sure your neighbors and friends



MELISSA JOHNSTON

have a plan to vote. You might be surprised to hear that someone you know isn’t registered or doesn’t know about early voting. Encourage everyone you can to make their voices heard.

I understand that many people feel disenfranchised with politics at this moment. I feel that way at times, too. We are living through a strange period in history. But I also feel confident that we can create a better path forward.

It doesn’t start with doing things the way we’ve always done them. It starts with believing that something can happen and being willing to work to make it happen. It starts with every one of us making even a small commitment to supporting and encouraging positive leadership and new ideas, then taking action.

The ODTC will be hosting our annual

family-friendly picnic on Aug. 21 at 5:30 p.m. If you would like to hear from some of the candidates up for election and find out more about how you can help, join us at High Plains Community Center for the four d’s: dinner, dessert, drinks and discussion. Tickets are available now on our website at OrangeCTDems.org. Kids eat free.

Our next ODTC meeting is Aug. 18 at 7 p.m. at High Plains Community Center.

What can you do? You can make a phone call. Have a conversation. Write a letter. Volunteer for an hour. Attend an event. Encourage someone to vote. Those are just a few ideas to get you started.

Every voice matters. Every action matters. And when we all do something, even something small, those actions add up.

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

ADUs

(Continued From 1)

around his client’s property, he believed the city as a whole would benefit. By limiting detached ADUs to certain zones, he said, the city would avoid the kinds of crowding complaints that a detached ADU on a smaller property might cause.

“It doesn’t fly in the face of the comments from neighbors and citizens who spoke in 2023 at the public hearings who really were against detached garages in areas where it was more dense,” Lynch said.

Several other residents backed up Lynch’s proposal, including Rachel Merva

with All in for Milford, an organization that promotes inclusive housing in the city.

“We are supportive of this regulation to broaden the detached ADU regulations to encompass more than just this North Street property, but all of these other areas,” she said.

A few speakers encouraged the board to go further, opening the option for detached ADUs in all residential areas of Milford.

“I would love to have housing for my mother who’s in Florida, but I can’t bring her up to live inside my house with me because we’d kill each other,” resident Sarah Bromley said. “So if my lot were large enough, I would love to be able to do this regardless of which R I am in, any

place in the city.”

Paul Jorgensen echoed Bromley’s push to expand ADUs to all residential areas.

“They’re not a large change to the neighborhood,” he said. “In Milford, ADU properties are owner-occupied, and this is really important. Owner-occupied properties avoid absentee landlords. They avoid large and distant capital investors coming in who have no commitment to the city.”

However, some of the board members expressed concern that parking issues could arise in zones with denser housing.

“Approving this in the smaller zones is going to prove to be parking nightmares,” board member Marc Zahariades said.

“There’s not going to be off-street parking.”

Zahariades also worried that people might use the ADUs as Airbnb rentals, which are already a cause of complaints in the beachfront neighborhoods.

“An 18,000-foot minimum can be voted on today,” noted board member Mark Macchio. “But something with smaller lots doesn’t need to be voted on today.”

Zahariades was the only no vote on the more limited measure that eventually passed.

“There is a need for housing solutions, and this is not going to solve everything, but it’s part of the puzzle,” Chair Jim Quish said.

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Orange Republican Town Committee

Elections: Democracy In Action

It's hard to believe that August is already upon us. As the days of summer gently slip by, I hope each of you is enjoying these warm months, making memories with family and friends, soaking in the sunshine and finding joy in the simple pleasures that make life in our community special. There's still time to savor the last stretch of summer before fall returns.

This past month brought a truly historic milestone: the 250th anniversary of our great nation's founding. Orange shone brightly in honoring America's rich history with a memorable America 250 celebration complete with patriotic music, a powerful fireworks display, community spirit and heartfelt tributes that reminded us all why we are so blessed to call the US home. Thank you to everyone involved for creating such a meaningful experience.

While we celebrate our nation's birthday, let's also embrace the best of what our local community offers right now. Make time

to visit the Orange Community Farmers' Market, held Thursdays through September at the fairgrounds pavilion. It's a wonderful way to support our hardworking local farms, enjoy fresh produce and connect with neighbors. And of course, we're all looking forward to that sweet Connecticut corn – there's nothing quite like it.

In the weeks and months ahead, local and state political conversations will naturally pick up. Mailings, emails, texts and even friendly knocks at the door will bring candidates and ideas into our homes. This is democracy in action: an opportunity to listen, learn and thoughtfully consider the visions being shared for our future.

Life brings struggles at times, and it's easy to feel angry, disconnected or even that our voice won't matter. Yet within each of us lies far greater strength and potential than we



JUDE
TOOHEY

often realize. Our future belongs to us – shaped by our shared values, dreams and hopes. We live in a remarkable time where we still hold the freedom to make choices, to vote for those who best represent our principles and to work together for positive change when things aren't going as planned.

As President Ronald Reagan wisely reminded us, "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. It must be fought for and defended by each generation."

Reagan also emphasized that man is not free unless government is limited. These words ring as true today as ever. Our freedoms – to speak, to choose, to build the life we envision – are among our most precious gifts. They are not guaranteed by inheritance alone; they require our active care and participation.

As we step into these final weeks of summer and look toward the opportunities ahead, let's carry forward that spirit of gratitude, resilience and civic engagement. Enjoy the remaining sunny days, support one another, stay informed on the issues that matter to our town and state, and approach the future with confidence.

Together, in Orange and across this blessed nation, we have every reason to believe in tomorrow. Here's to making the most of it – positively, purposefully and united. God bless you, your families, our community and the United States of America.

Anyone interested in volunteering time or joining the Republican party, please email our secretary at ortc.secretary@gmail.com or our chairman at ortc.chairman@gmail.com.

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

Time Management

How To Get Out Of Personal Balance

The underlying core of my more than 3,000 time management presentations during the last 30 years has been the importance of personal balance.

Success in managing our time has less to do with the tools available to us, such as "to do lists" and techniques for delegation, than it has to do with achieving daily balance in our lives. If we are not in personal balance to begin with, we are likely to sabotage our success.

Here are the seven ways to get out of personal balance.

1. Ignore your health. Do not get the quantity and quality of sleep you require. Do not take time for exercise. Eat the wrong stuff. Your resistance level will be reduced, and you will be susceptible to all the latest sniffles and flu going around to ensure that you take advantage of all the sick days you are allowed.
2. Postpone family time. Your family may not be there for you when you get the time

- for them. A student once asked me, "What is the best way to be sure to take my 4-year-old daughter on vacation?" I replied, "You must take your daughter on vacation while she's 4 years old."
3. Do not plan your financial life. Be assured that your employer, the government, or maybe a kind relative will take care of your needs. Many people arrive at the end of life financially deficient or dependent upon some type of assistance from the government or relatives. Many people do not spend even a little of their time, on a regular basis, on creating financial freedom.
4. Stay away from intellectual development. You read books at one time. Five percent of the population purchases 95 percent of all the books. The other 95 percent purchase the other 5 percent of the books. They do not have time to read them. They give



DON
WETMORE

them away as gifts. You barely have enough time to keep your head above water, what with work and other interests. Coast with the knowledge you have. It is draining away from you daily, but hopefully you filled the reservoir enough early on that it will carry you through your life.

5. Let your social contacts decide your future. Follow the advice of your friends about what you should be doing in your life, even if they are not in a place where you would want to be. Be ever conscious of "What would my friends say/think if I did...?" Always seek out and act only with the approval of your peers. Take comfort in the knowledge that when there is a void in leadership on how you should be spending your time, someone else will fill that void and tell you what to do.

6. Let your professional life just happen. Do not establish a lifetime plan of where you want to go. Take whatever opportunity and advancement life gives you and be satisfied. Do not rock the boat. Play it safe. Make it comfortable. If you chose a career path when you were 18 or 20 years old, and now at age 40 you are unhappy, do not consider a change. Hold on to that decision you made 20 years ago. It will be like going to a 20-year-old school for career counseling.
7. Avoid spending time in your spiritual area – not only in a formal religious venue, but also in your relationships with others, your community, your environment and the universe. Leave those questions to others to ponder. When man forgets his creator, his own creations will be turned upon him.

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.

Amity Chamber of Commerce

A Community Fair And A Two-Year Transformation

Mark your calendars, round up family and friends and get ready for some summer celebration. The community is coming together for the Amity Chamber Community Fair, presented by headline sponsor Xfinity, on Saturday, Aug. 15 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Hosted by Crest Lincoln of Woodbridge at 185 Amity Rd., the dealership is clearing all vehicles from its pristine parking lot to provide an easily accessible, safe venue to park your cars, explore, and get inspired by a marketplace of Amity chamber businesses and organizations. With Tweed New Haven Airport and 7 Brew Drive Thru Coffee as supporting sponsors, the stage is set for a day of innovation, energy and fun.

From physical fitness, chiropractors, free car washes and crafts, to optometry, nonprofit organizations, pickleball, tennis, Tex-Mex and more, the fair offers something for all ages.

Additionally, the Energize CT Smart Energy Living Mobile Exhibit will offer interactive displays that demonstrate how energy-efficient and clean technology can enhance comfort, reduce energy use and minimize environmental impact. The Xfinity Community Engagement Trailer will be front and center, equipped with technology, resources and interactive experiences. The Xfinity trailer will also be open to the public on Sunday, Aug. 16 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Amity Chamber Community Fair is a vibrant showcase sampling of what makes the Amity region unique. Attendees can expect a diverse, bustling marketplace featuring live demonstrations, exclusive giveaways and fun. We thank Xfinity and all our sponsors who make this event possible.

The fair is free and open to the public. Registration is not required. To receive updates on the fair, visit amityctchamber.com/events.

Last month marked my official second anniversary with the Amity Chamber of Commerce. What started as a post-COVID, financially challenged, single-town chamber has transformed into a financially stable regional organization that has grown its membership by over 78 percent.

We wouldn't be here today if it weren't for our members and being embraced by the communities we serve, coupled with the support of our corporate partners, program sponsors, local and state officials. All continue to fuel our success, enthusiasm and passion.

Over the last 24 months, we've focused on not attempting to duplicate what other chambers do so very well. Instead, we've become our own version of extraordinary and have leaned into our strength: member



BARRY LEE
COHEN

intimacy. We make it our responsibility to understand each member's needs and business environment and then offer tangible support and opportunities.

We rarely use the word "no" versus "not yet" or "how do we get to yes?"

From strategic marketing and business planning to member advocacy and meaningful programs that go well beyond ribbon-cuttings and business after-hours, our regional transformation has made it a requirement and responsibility to raise the bar to continue strengthening and creating value for our members and the community.

In today's nonprofit world, no single chamber can do it alone and certainly not without the trust and respect of fellow chambers and allied organizations that understand, empathize and are open to true collaboration. Egos remain at the door. Serious and constructive conversations take place on a regular basis. We all have the same mission to create value for our members, businesses and the communities we serve. Are we competitive? Of course. However, we are not each other's opposition as some may believe.

Over the last two years, the warmth, encouragement, and support of the Greater New Haven Chamber, the largest chamber of commerce in the region by far, as well as the Connecticut Business and Industry Association, Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, and the Small Business Administration's Connecticut district office are just a few fine examples that have unselfishly supported the Amity Chamber.

It makes no difference if you're a global corporation, a nonprofit or a family-owned business. Our eclectic chamber includes some of the largest employers in Connecticut and the US, from iconic brands, utilities, leading financial institutions and universities, to small and mid-sized local businesses. We know it's not a "one-size-fits-all," but all sizes and types make the region a desirable and distinct community where businesses and families come to work, live and thrive.

Thank you for allowing me to take this journey with you. It has been a journey I never planned or expected, but one I cherish every day.

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.

Here’s To Your Health

What Has Become Numb?

Our bodies have an incredible ability to protect us. When we experience repeated injury, they often adapt in remarkable ways. The same can be true of our hearts and our minds. After enough disappointment, loss, fear or stress, we sometimes stop noticing what once deeply affected us – not because we don’t care, but because becoming numb can feel safer than remaining vulnerable. Medicine uses the term “cauterized” to describe tissue that has been burned or sealed to stop further damage. While this procedure can be lifesaving physically, it presents an interesting metaphor for our inner lives. If you’re a regular reader of my column, you have read the phrase: you are a spirit that has a soul that lives in a body. What if parts of our spirit, soul or emotional well-being have become cauterized – not through a single event, but through years of disappointment, busyness, conflict or compromise? Health has often been reduced to blood pressure, cholesterol, weight or the absence of disease. However, true wellness includes

something much deeper. We are not simply bodies that think; we are people who experience life physically, emotionally, mentally and for many, like myself, spiritually. When one part suffers, the others rarely remain untouched. A healthy body can still carry an exhausted soul. A sharp mind can still wrestle with anxiety. A successful life from the world’s standards can still leave a restless spirit asking whether something meaningful has been lost along the way. Perhaps the most important health questions aren’t found on a medical questionnaire. Maybe they should sound more like this: When was the last time something genuinely moved you? Have you become too busy to notice beauty, kindness or suffering? Have you confused being comfortable with being truly alive? Are you reacting from wisdom, or simply from habit? None of these questions require someone



MICHELE TENNEY

else to provide the answers. They simply invite honest reflection. Honest reflection can be uncomfortable because when we ask ourselves what we have slowly accepted that we once questioned or what have we stopped noticing because it has become so familiar, we may not like our inner responses. Many spiritual traditions speak about the importance of guarding the heart. That’s not because the heart is fragile, but because it quietly influences every decision, relationship and priority. If our hearts gradually become hardened, or cauterized, we may continue functioning quite well on the outside while losing sensitivity to compassion, gratitude, conviction or hope on the inside. Numbness doesn’t have to be permanent. Our bodies possess an amazing capacity to heal under the right conditions. Rest, nour-

ishment, movement and time can restore what once seemed depleted. I believe our inner lives work similarly. Moments of silence. Genuine conversations (like in the good old days where it was okay to agree to disagree). Forgiveness. Gratitude. Prayer. Self-reflection. Acts of generosity. Checking your thoughts on what they line up with. These practices may not change our circumstances overnight, but they can often restore something more valuable: our ability to feel, to discern and to respond with purpose instead of merely reacting.

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.

Real Talk: You Ask, A Pro Answers

Move-In-Ready Homes Sell Faster

Would you like to buy a home that needs no work? Wouldn’t everyone? Homebuyers place tremendous value on properties that are move-in ready because the time, expense and stress of renovations can be overwhelming. Many buyers are willing to take on a larger mortgage if the home is beautifully updated and ready to enjoy from day one. That’s why turnkey properties continue to fly off the market. For sellers, renovating before listing may seem like a daunting investment, especially if you’re already planning your next move. However, a thoughtfully updated home typically sells faster and commands a higher price. The greatest return comes from working with an experienced real estate professional who can help you determine which improvements will have the biggest impact, recommend trusted vendors and assist with negoti-

ating renovation costs. If your goal is to attract multiple offers, which is still very common in today’s market, your agent can guide you through every step of the process. Although inventory has increased, there are still more buyers than sellers in many Connecticut communities. That means the right pricing strategy, combined with meaningful updates, can position your home for a quick sale. Buyers continue to compete for desirable homes and are often prepared to pay more when they find the right property. Interest rates have not slowed demand as much as many expected. As I’ve said before, mortgage rates were around 8 percent for years, yet the housing market remained active. The average sales price in Connecticut



BARBARA LEHRER

today is higher than it was two years ago. One contributing factor is that many Baby Boomers are empty nesters living in larger homes, which naturally raises the average price point. When these homes are updated and well maintained, they sell more quickly and for a higher price. In many cases, the asking price is simply the starting point. Paying above asking price does not necessarily mean a buyer overpaid. When a home checks all the boxes in a market with limited inventory, buyers are often happy to pay a premium. It is not uncommon for buyers to pay more than \$40,000 over the asking price for the right home. That trend has continued even as more listings have become available. Buyers

are searching for that special home: one that has been loved, cared for and thoughtfully updated. Connecticut continues to thrive, and families seeking the desirable Milford and Orange communities remain eager to buy. While many of our homes are older, their character, convenient locations, quality schools and proximity to neighboring states make them highly attractive. Our region also offers a sense of stability and quality of life that continues to draw new homeowners. Take good care of your home and always be ready for opportunity. You never know when your dream home will come on the market. I often receive calls from buyers who are also sellers, eager to see a home they’ve admired for years the moment it becomes available. If you need more information on these issues, email Barbara.Lehrer@cbmoves.com.

Pantochino Teen Theatre Putting On ‘Oliver!’

Milford-based Pantochino Teen Theatre will present the Broadway musical, Lionel Bart’s “Oliver!” freely adapted from Charles Dickens novel “Oliver Twist” with three performances on Aug. 8 and 9 at Arts Hall on Audubon Street in New Haven. In “Oliver!,” the streets of Victorian England come to life as the malnourished orphan in a workhouse becomes the neglected apprentice of an undertaker, escapes to London and finds acceptance amongst a group of petty thieves and pickpockets led

by the elderly Fagin. When Oliver is captured for a theft that he did not commit, the benevolent victim, Mr. Brownlow, takes him in. Fearing the safety of his hideout, Fagin employs the sinister Bill Sikes and the sympathetic Nancy to kidnap him back, threatening Oliver’s chances of discovering the true love of a family. The musical features familiar tunes such as “Food Glorious Food,” “Consider Yourself” and “As Long as He Needs Me.” “We’re delighted to give these young ac-

tors the opportunity work in an immersive two-week rehearsal process – it’s fun and exciting and provides an amazing learning experience,” said Bert Bernardi, who is co-producing the show with Jimmy Johansmeyer. The cast includes 42 young actors from Milford, Orange, West Haven, Stratford, Seymour, Wallingford, Trumbull, Shelton, Beacon Falls and Monroe. Pantochino Teen Theatre allows young actors the opportunity to work with profes-

sional directors and designers outside the academic setting, on a schedule matching that of professional theater. The production has been cast, learned and rehearsed in 10 rehearsals. Bernardi directs the show with Justin Rugg as musical director and Bec-ki Arena as choreographer. Lighting and sound for the production is by Seth Harris and costume design is by Johansmeyer. Performances are Aug. 8 at 7:30 p.m. Aug. 9 at 2 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. Information and tickets are available at pantochino.com.



Presents



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The Garden Spot

Watch Out For Ticks

We are starting to see the impact of climate change even in the type of insects that we now see here in southern Connecticut.

The amount of climate change is easily understood by looking at the USDA plant hardiness zones. The 2012 map had us in Zone 6, which means that winter lows averaged between -10 to zero degrees Fahrenheit. The 2023 map has us in Zone 7b, which means that the winter lows now average between 5-10 degrees Fahrenheit. These temperature changes mean that insects that were not generally seen here are now becoming more common.

Although most of us will immediately fear Lyme disease if they find an embedded tick on their body, new tick-borne illnesses are constantly being discovered. The most recent making the news is alpha-gal syndrome, a potentially life-threatening allergy to red meat and mammal-derived products.

In the US, AGS is primarily associated

with the bite of a lone star tick and less commonly by the bite of a blacklegged tick or a western blacklegged tick. In recent decades, lone star ticks have been moving northward, overlapping with the range of blacklegged ticks in the Northeast. This is climate change at work.

It will generally take between 10 minutes and two hours for a tick to embed itself on a host and spread disease. Avoidance and prompt removal of any ticks is key. Since ticks live in areas with tall grass, brush or wooded areas, when enjoying the outdoors avoid unmown grass, wood piles and shrubs.

Remember, ticks don't "jump" – they play contact sports. They move by crawling and use a behavior called questing to find hosts. They climb onto blades of grass, low shrubs or other vegetation and extend their front



PAT DRAY

legs to detect heat, carbon dioxide and movement from nearby hosts. When a person or animal brushes past, the tick can attach itself.

Prevention is key to avoiding ticks and tick-borne illnesses. Wear a hat and long, light colored pants tucked in to your socks so that you see any ticks easily and can remove them before they reach your skin. Use an Environmental Protection Agency-registered insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus, para-menthane-diol, or 2-undecanone. You can treat your clothing with products containing 0.5 percent permethrin, which will remain protective through several washings. You can even buy permethrin-treated clothing and gear, including special socks.

I spray my gardening pants and hat with repellent and always leave them outside

between washing just in case they have a hitchhiker on board.

Shower as soon as possible after coming indoors, but always within two hours to minimize the potential for any tick to embed itself. Wash clothing in hot (not warm) water and/or put them in the dryer on high for 10 minutes to kill any ticks that may have attached themselves.

It's also very important to check your pets for ticks, since they can bring one into the house where it may then migrate to you. There are a wide variety of prescription medications (oral and topical) for tick protection of pets.

Follow these tips and have a safe and enjoyable summer.

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

Orange Board of Finance

Connecticut Supports Farms. But Is It Enough?

Orange is a small, historic and community-oriented farm town known for its rural charm, strong schools and deep agricultural roots. It currently has a nice mix of open space and farmland with a solid tax base.

The passage of Public Act 25-152, signed by Gov. Ned Lamont, is one of the most comprehensive agricultural bills enacted in Connecticut in decades, and preserves for the time being the financial viability of farms, modernizes agricultural practices, preserves farmland and strengthens Connecticut's local food system.

From both an economic development and municipal government perspective, the law is good for Orange and presents significant benefits. But it also creates several fiscal and policy challenges.

One of the major advantages is significant property tax relief for farms around the state. The legislation increases the mandatory municipal farm machinery and equipment property tax exemption from \$100,000 to \$250,000, while also allowing municipalities to adopt an additional optional exemption of up to another \$250,000.

The benefits include improved farm cash flow, investment in newer equipment, allowing family farms to remain competitive and making Connecticut more competitive with neighboring agricultural states.

The law creates a state tax credit for in-

vestments in farm buildings, machinery, equipment and agricultural infrastructure. This lowers the effective cost of modernization and expansion. For many farms, equipment taxes represent one of the few local taxes directly tied to production assets.

This credit also encourages farmers to make significant purchases in additional capital investment, which will increase agricultural productivity and improve long-term farm profitability.

Another key provision is reduced regulatory burdens, which will lead to lower construction costs, faster installation, greater season extension and improved crop yields. This will particularly benefit small vegetable farms. The law also supports local food systems and container farms producing food for schools and food pantries. We will have improved food security, reduced transportation costs and year-round production.

It's important to note that the law does have potential disadvantages, particularly with respect to municipal revenue loss. The largest concern for municipalities is reduced property tax revenue. Increasing exemptions may significantly reduce taxable grand lists in communities with dairy



KEVIN McNABOLA

farms, orchards, nurseries and greenhouses.

For small towns with limited commercial tax bases, this could be meaningful.

For example, if a municipality has 10 qualifying farms and each receives an additional \$150,000 exemption, taxable value falls by \$1.5 million. Depending on mill rates, this can reduce annual tax collections by tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars, shifting the property tax burden to residential and commercial taxpayers. This could impact small agricultural towns.

Unlike some other tax exemptions, there is no full state reimbursement to municipalities for the lost local revenue associated with these expanded exemptions. As a result, towns may need to absorb the fiscal impact through budget adjustments or by shifting more of the tax burden to other property owners.

Larger commercial farms are generally better positioned to take advantage of investment tax credits, equipment exemptions and capital improvements. Smaller farms with limited access to financing may realize fewer benefits.

Another factor that comes into play with

farms is what will be the impact of Connecticut's new housing law? While the law is primarily designed to address the state's severe housing shortage, it could indirectly increase development pressure on agricultural land unless municipalities proactively protect farmland through zoning and preservation policies.

Although the agriculture industry has shown surprising resilience, supported by strong consumer demand for locally grown food, state investment and new tax incentives, the state continues to lose developable farmland to residential and commercial development. This is particularly happening in western and central parts of Connecticut, where land values are among the highest in the country.

Protecting our farmland in Orange and around Connecticut through zoning preservation measures should be a priority. The alternative of expanding too quickly with additional apartments, townhouses and multifamily developments would most certainly put a significant financial strain on town finances, which in turn would adversely impact taxpayers.

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

ORANGE DEMOCRATS

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Zeoli Helps Orange Couple Celebrate 70 Years



Orange First Selectman Jim Zeoli delivered a proclamation to celebrate residents Robert and Minnie Pinckney's 70th anniversary on June 16. Photo courtesy of the town of Orange.

Rotary Club of Orange

Fall Volunteering Opportunities

I celebrate my 10-year reunion this year at Bryant University. Returning to campus to see old friends and familiar faces gives me that nostalgic feeling of going back to school. I can't help but reminisce on the days of my past, when I was in high school.

Summer was great – a perfect time to rest and relax after a tense end of the school year filled with final exams, papers and presentations. I always picked up a summer job to make some cash, played sports and hung out with friends.

But then August rolled around I could feel the pressure to prepare for the upcoming school year. How would I make the most of it? Which classes should I pick? Which sports to play? Would I audition for the school play? What clubs should I join?

And of course, how would I get my community service hours?

If you're a high schooler in Milford and Orange asking yourself the same questions today, I have great news: the Rotary Club of Orange is here to help with your community service hours.

It's simple. You can get involved in two ways: volunteer to help with fundraisers or volunteer to help with service projects.

Our club will host a number of different fundraisers this fall and winter: the Orange Thanksgiving Day Turkey Trot, Halloween Bingo, the Painted Pumpkin Scavenger Hunt



MICHAEL LANZA

and Shred Day.

Our club also serves the following community organizations: Purple Pantry, Marrakech, Special Olympics, the American Legion, Orange Senior Center, Orange Little League, FISH and End Hunger New England. The list grows by the day. There is no shortage of ways to get your community service hours.

I have had the honor over the past few years of volunteering with Amity and Milford high school students. Rotary served as an avenue for many to reach their community service goals, but the service did not stop there. The individual growth and learning for the students far exceeded expectations. We thank those stu-

dents who volunteered with us and look forward to welcoming many more.

If you're a parent or student planning for this new school year, keep the Rotary Club of Orange in mind. We know about serving the community and can offer diverse opportunities to get involved. It's a triple win. You will get your service hours. You will build your network. And you will walk away knowing that you impacted lives.

Ask your school about the Rotary Club of Orange. Call us for more information at 914-924-2449 or email us at mail@rotarycluboforange.org. Visit us on Instagram @orangerotary.

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

Travel Matters

When You Can't Afford Your Own Super Yacht

There is a new cruise ship to sail, and it's called Emerald Kaia. Owned by the Scenic Group based in Australia, it's only three months old and one of the best cruises I've ever experienced.

The maximum capacity of the ship is 128 guests and 92 crew – almost a one-to-one ratio. The service is beyond compare. On our recent sailing in June we had only 106 guests, and it felt like even fewer because the ship is much larger than the guest accommodations would lead you to believe.

Emerald decided to make the public spaces very large and keep the maximum number of cabins to 64 so that you almost do feel like you are on a private yacht – albeit maybe not yours.

There are three dining rooms: La Cucina dining room, with outdoor space to sit if you

so choose; Solea Bar and Bistro at the infinity pool and sundeck with a totally separate menu for each meal; and a specialty restaurant called Night Market which offers small dish and wine pairings inspired by the best street markets all over the world.

The standard balcony cabins are huge, averaging of 323-344 square feet. They come complete with a sizeable deck, large shower and Dyson hair dryer.

The ship's amenities include an infinity pool, indoor spa pool, hot tub on the observation deck, observation lounge with library, fitness room and spa including hairdresser and massage, infrared sauna, complimentary self-laundry and water sports of the



KAREN QUINN-PANZER

marina on select days.

But the primary advantage Emerald Kaia gives you as a guest is access to the hidden gems of the world. Right now the ship is sailing the Mediterranean and the Adriatic. We traveled to the Istrian Peninsula in northern Croatia roundtrip from Venice. We stopped in a number of places too small for most ships, including: Piran, Slovenia; Mali Losinj; Senj; and Baska, Opatija and Rovinj in Croatia.

The other advantage is sailing into places like the Grand Canal of Venice, which very few ships are allowed to do anymore. Other destinations include cruising the Caribbean and Central America, the Seychelles, Indian

Ocean or Red Sea.

Entertainment includes enrichment talks on the places visited, Italian and Croatian language lessons and culinary demonstrations. The ship brings in local talent most nights, including a jazz band, and multiple duos who play instruments and sing.

What Emerald Kaia does well is connections: connecting to your destinations and immersing you in the culture. It also connects you with other passengers. It's not difficult to make friends when there are only 100 or so on board.

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

Wine Talk

The Wineries Of Connecticut

Just a few years ago the wine industry in Connecticut was in its infancy. Today there are 45 farm wineries in Connecticut that employ over 1,000 people. They produce over \$85 million in direct sales. Each year the quality is improving.

How do you find them? Go online and get a wine passport, or you can get a wine passport app.

Every year the farm wineries get together and produce an annual passport. The wineries are generally gorgeous places with great views. Many of them have wonderful prizes to entice you to visit.

Here are some of my favorites.

The Central Grown Connecticut Trail includes wonderful restaurants and great places to visit. In Simsbury you can stop at Rosedale Farms & Vineyards. Here you can enjoy farm-to-table dinners and try some

fresh fruits and vegetables. They have handcrafted wines as well.

Gouveia Vineyards is in Wallingford, but it looks like you are in the south of France. You can purchase a charcuterie board and enjoy the view while you taste the wines.

In Clinton you can enjoy wines at Chamard Vineyards. They have a great bistro that features many ingredients from local farms.

The Eastern Grown Connecticut Trail includes many places to visit and many wonderful restaurants. Some of my favorite wineries include Cassidy Hill Vineyard in Coventry. They have live music on Fridays during the summer, and they have a large selection of wines.

The Taylor Brooke Winery and Brewery is



RAYMOND SPAZIANI

a beautiful spot located in Woodstock. They have special "meet the winemaker" events.

In Colchester there is Priam Vineyards. They have delicious wines and many special events.

At the Western Grown Connecticut Trail stop at the Community Table on Monday for wines and enjoy burger night. Community Table is in New Preston and is a fun place to be.

Hopkins Vineyard is in Warren, where you can enjoy some nice wines overlooking Lake Waramaug.

Jones Family Farms & Winery is in Shelton. They have a selection of enjoyable wines, as well as pies and fresh fruit.

Stappa Vineyard is in Orange off Route 34. The tasting area has a European flair.

Savino Vineyards is a family-owned winery in Woodbridge. It has a scenic tasting room and great hand-crafted wines.

There are about 40 other wineries in Connecticut. Go online to see pictures and check out specials and promotions.

Ray Spaziani is the former chapter director for 25 years of the New Haven Chapter of the American Wine Society. He is a certified wine educator who worked for the American Wine Society, Amete de Vino and Winemaker Magazine judging wines and conducting wine judging. He is an award-winning home wine maker and has written wine articles for newspapers and magazines for the past 20 years. Spaziani teaches wine classes for the Milford Board of Education at Citrus Restaurant in Milford. Email Ray with wine questions and anything wine at realestatepro1000@gmail.com.

Book Reviews

The Borrowed Life Of Frederick Fife By Anne Johnston

Frederick has a problem. He's about to be evicted from his apartment and has nowhere to go.

He takes a walk to the river, where he sees a man in a wheelchair who doesn't appear to be alive. In an effort to help the man, Frederick trips and the body goes flying into the river.

Frederick enters the river and is immediately approached by Denise, one of the caretakers helping other patients. The resemblance between Frederick and the man in the wheelchair is uncanny. Denise, not noticing any differences, begins to call him Bernard.

Frederick does his best to tell Denise and the officials at the care home his true identity, but no one believes him. Bernard was

a dementia patient, and his statements were not taken seriously.

Frederick has a lot of misgivings about being an impostor that weigh heavily on him. He is justifiably concerned that the truth will come out and he'll be out on the streets.

But once he's entered the care home, things begin to change for him. His inherent goodness makes him very approachable and endears him to the other residents. This includes Patricia, who is a bit of a nymphomaniac.

Frederick gets the shock of his life when he's informed Bernard's daughter Hannah is coming for a visit. Hannah has been estranged



CARMELA DEVITO

from her father for many years. Bernard had abandoned the family when Hannah's younger sister Sadie passed away from leukemia when she was 13.

Hannah remembers her father as being angry and can't reconcile that history with the man who now seems to be a totally different person. Frederick presents letters Bernard had written to Hannah and vice versa but were returned unopened.

When Hannah reads her father's letters, she begins to understand the depth of Bernard's feelings for her and how devastating Sadie's death was for him.

Eventually the truth comes out. Frederick becomes concerned again over his living situation and how this will affect his relationship with Hannah.

I won't say much more, other than it's a beautifully heartwarming story. You will get swept up with the chain of events that lead Frederick to the care home, a relationship he never would have dreamed of and an ending that will give you all the warm fuzzies. I absolutely loved this book.

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.

Orange Celebrates US At 250



Orange held ceremonies and celebrations on July 3 to recognize the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. *Photos by Lexi Crocco.*

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Milford Historian Emeritus Tells His Own Story

By Marilyn May

When English-born Richard Platt was among the first settlers who walked through the wilderness from New Haven to a territory we now call Milford in 1639, it was beyond his imagination to think that 11 generations later another Richard Platt would be living here.

It's no surprise that today's Richard Nathan Platt, Jr., whom most call Dick, spent 16 years as the official historian of Milford. He was born on Platt Lane, and after college, military service and marriage he moved back to another family house on Platt Lane. He lives on ancestral lands that once included acres of fields, orchards and cow pastures.

With family roots like Platt's, genealogy has always been one of his hobbies. But it was still a surprise to find out that he and his wife of 61 years, the former Jane Hitchcock of New Haven, have 19 ancestors in common.

"And we're related!" he said. "But no closer than fifth cousins."

Platt knows just about everything about the history of this settlement, plantation, republic, town and city. But how much do we know about him?

Both of his grandfathers were classmates in the Yale class of 1898. Grandfather Irvin Wilbur Sanford studied civil engineering, eventually helping design the Merritt Parkway. Grandfather Frank Nathan Platt majored in agricultural studies. He died young during the Great Depression and was the last to farm the land.

Platt's father, Richard Nathan Platt, Sr. worked for the Woodruff Seed Company, then the post office, and eventually became superintendent at the US post office in Woodmont.

Platt Jr. was in the Yale class of 1955. At that time students could also be enrolled in the Reserve Officer Training Corps. At graduation he was handed his diploma and orders from the US Navy about when to report for duty.

But let's start his story from the beginning. He was born in 1933 on his family's farm that ran along both sides of North Street. Because so many trees had been cut from everyone's surrounding farmland, he said, "You could see all the way from here (Platt Lane) to the towers of First Church and Plymouth Church."

Today the former Platt land includes the community gardens, a soccer field, the Platt Vocational Technical School, the Orchard Golf Course, part of Eisenhower Park and many houses at the end of Platt Lane.

What was Milford like when he was a boy? A good day meant doing his chores and then riding his bike around town to meet up with friends Eddy Beach, Ned Heberger, David Kelsey and many others. They would find a pick-up baseball game and spend the morning playing on the Milford Prep or Washington Street fields or wherever teams were forming.

Like almost every youngster in town, he had to head home when the noon whistle sounded from fire headquarters. After checking in at home and getting a quick lunch, he would be out the back door, back to the bike, back to the ball game, back to the freedom of a summer's day in a small town. But at the 6 p.m. whistle, almost every kid headed home for a family supper. Many families lived by the sounds of those whistles.

"They don't have those whistles anymore," he said with a touch of nostalgia.

One day he and friends were playing touch football on the side lawn of Plymouth Church.

"They hiked the ball to me and I split my pants! I went across the street to the First Church parsonage and told Louise Thursby what happened," he remembered.

Louise Thursby, wife of Rev. Irvin Thurs-

by of First Church, didn't skip a beat and said, "Oh, I know. I have two boys. Come in." Platt said he went behind a couch, handed her his pants that she quickly repaired, and he was back to the game in minutes.

His school days were spent in the Central School, which today we call the "yellow building" that was later named after Diane Toulson, a state legislator from Milford.

When in high school in the late 1940s, the area around the Central School was a place of destruction and construction. It was noisy and dusty as nearby buildings were destroyed to make room for a new Milford High School, which is today's Parsons Government Center.

The historic Clark Tavern, which at different times accommodated George Washington and Aaron Burr, was demolished along with a private mansion called The Linden, which in its last years was the Weylister Secretarial Junior College.

About the same time, an entire neighborhood on Hawthorne Place was taken off the map. Gone were the homes of W.J. Shea, Jr., Charles Rice, Herbert Smith, G.H. Standen, Marion Razee and others. The city directory lists Hawthorne Place at 54 West River St. It ran perpendicular from West River Street to High Street, just to the right of the Central School.

Meanwhile, looking out the Central School windows, students who had spent four years on half sessions wondered if they were ever going to be in the new building.

Well, no and yes. They never studied there, but Platt's class of 1951 had their graduation ceremonies in the brand new auditorium. That was the first event ever held in the new MHS.

"They were still installing the seats during our graduation rehearsals, but they finished just in time," he said.

Platt was in the National Honor Society; upon graduation he was fourth in his class.

His extracurricular activities included being in Boy Scout Troop #3 and going on a camporee in the wilds of Wilcox Park. He played the euphonium (a baritone horn) in the Milford High School band, and was president of the Pilgrim Fellowship, the youth program at the First Congregational Church of Christ.

Then he was off to Yale, where he lived in Silliman College. He majored in economics and political science.

"One fond memory," he said, "was playing in the Yale Precision Marching Band and performing at every football game."

After college graduation, all band alums were invited to come back to play in the band. So, after the Navy he went back a few times.

"I'd march out on the field and get in the big 'Y' formation," he said.

Platt was in the Navy from 1955-1959 during the Cold War. His first assignment was on an amphibious transport ship stationed in San Diego.

"I was on that ship for two-and-a-half years and made two trips to the Far East. I thought the Pacific was calm, but it was far from pacific. We had storm after storm and got battered all the way. Then in the late afternoon on the day before we arrived in Japan, it cleared. We had a gorgeous

sunset and off in the distance you could see Mt. Fuji glowing pink. I still remember that quite vividly."

His other Navy cruises took him to Taiwan, the Philippines and Hong Kong.

During his last year and a half he was assigned to a radar picket ship out of Rhode Island.

"It was an old World War II liberty ship that went all of 11 knots," he said. "We would station out about 200 miles for 30 days at a time with the latest radar to listen for the Russians."

They never discovered any Russian ships. But they did get calls from overhead US airplanes asking what coordinates the ship was in to compare with their readings.

"I was the navigator of the ship, and I'd tell the pilots where they were," he said. "I still have my sextant."

After his military service, he earned a master's degree in history from Wesleyan that set him up for a 31-year career of teaching history at East Haven High School.

During our conversation, Platt's phone rang. He looked at it and said, "Oh, it's just a spam call. I don't know why something so unwanted is called spam. I used to like Spam."

Platt is the oldest of three siblings: Josephine and Tom, who both have passed. He and Jane have two sons, Richard Hitchcock Platt and James Thomas Platt, who make up the 12th generation of Platt's.

Platt's interest in history engendered a passion for preservation of old houses. He was a founding member and past president of the Milford Preservation Trust. As a longtime member of the Milford Historical Society, he



Platt.

was president in 1971-1973. He is a member of the Milford Cemetery Association and a 2014 charter member of the Friends of Milford Cemetery, a group that cares for the old gravestones and offers cemetery tours.

He and Jane have sponsored several "founding families" weekends that have brought together hundreds of descendants of Milford's first settlers. The couple has also led genealogy workshops at Milford Library helping others find out where their roots were planted. He was also on the Milford Board of Education from 1959 to 1969.

It seems that Platt is always busy. Last year he went to the 70th reunion of his Yale class. As our talk came to an end, he was getting ready to pack up his euphonium and play in that night's Milford Concert Band performance. And he continues to share his stories of Milford's history every day.

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

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Foodie Foursome

Covered Stone Patio Puts An Al Fresco Face On Chip’s

If you have lived in Milford, Orange or surrounding communities you have probably seen the big yellow Chip’s sign a million times. The Post Road in Orange has been the home of one of Connecticut’s most iconic restaurants, Chip’s Family Restaurant, since 1966. This month marked the 60th anniversary of the family restaurant. It has expanded its seating with a well-designed covered stone patio with plenty of tables and decorative umbrellas.

When “Georgie” Chatzopoulos took over the restaurant in 2003, he not only maintained the previous culture of community involvement but took it to a new level, creating fundraisers and support for Rotary, Parkinson’s research and way too many more to mention.

Chatzopoulos’s philosophy was clear: “We are here because of the local people; I believe that providing great service, high-quality food, and a friendly atmosphere will keep our customers coming back,” he said. We lost him in 2022, but his legacy lives on through his sister, Dina, and brother-in-law, Adam, as well as their boys A.J., Alex and Evan.

Chip’s created a wonderful outdoor oasis for their loyal patrons to enjoy an al fresco dining experience. The stonework patio and spacious, umbrella-clad tables make for a fun dining experience that expands their seating capacity.

On this night Christine and John joined Cindy and me for a relaxing outdoor dining experience.

Chips, famous for their breakfasts served all day long, features what Connecticut

Magazine has dubbed the “best pancakes in the state.”

On this evening, however, we decided to go with the dinner menu, starting with a few savory appetizers. The southwestern mini egg rolls were so good, the wrappers filled to the brim with chicken, tomato, corn and black beans and served with fresh salsa and sour cream.

To take a more creative path, we chose for our second app a light fare breakfast item which when shared by several people made for an incredible starter: the crab cake benedict, which was artfully prepared with two poached eggs atop hash browns, baby spinach, tomato and crab cakes and topped with hollandaise sauce. The sauce was good, but surprisingly enhanced with the oozing egg yolk creating a silky smooth addition to the taste and texture of the crab cake and the griddled hash brown construction. This came with a choice of sides. We had the onion rings, which were ever so crispy with a tender onion interior. This will be on my radar upon my return.

Next up were the salads. There are so many well-constructed choices with generous servings and fresh produce to choose from. We decided to go with the Chip’s power salad and the Mediterranean bowl. The power salad is a combination of shredded kale, quinoa, sunflower seeds, cucumbers, red onion and blueberries tossed in an incredibly tasty champagne vinaigrette dressing. While I am not a huge lover of kale, this was a balanced salad and pleasing to the palette. It can also



STEVE COOPER

be a complete meal if you add protein.

The Mediterranean bowl is made with a five-grain blend topped with tomato, kalamata olives, feta, artichokes, red onion and cucumbers, with a side of fresh tzatziki dressing. This, along with several other menu options, shows off the family’s Greek heritage.

We kicked off our entrees with the patty melt, an 8-ounce certified angus beef burger with American cheese and grilled onions on toasted grilled wheat bread. The simplicity of seasoning and quality meat was extremely flavorful, cooked to a tender yet seared exterior and a juicy medium inside, just as we all liked. The price for this quality burger and crispy fries was more than reasonable compared to other restaurants in the area.

Next was the chicken a la Greco. The tender chunks of marinated chicken were served with perfectly grilled peppers, onions, mushrooms, tomatoes and topped with feta cheese over rice pilaf. The combination took us back to our trip to Greece. We ordered the mous-saka to further sample their Mediterranean fare. This signature dish featured eggplant layered with tomato meat sauce and topped with béchamel that showed off the Chip’s family, cultural and culinary expertise.

From here, we moved to a couple of my favorites: family-friendly comfort foods. One was the turkey dinner, made with a bountiful amount of sliced roasted turkey, mashed potatoes and stuffing and served with cranberry

sauce and their perfectly sautéed veggies.

Our last entrée of stuffed peppers was perfectly tender without losing structural integrity. The stuffing was a combination of seasoned ground beef, rice and breading and capped with a subtle tomato sauce. Served with mashed potatoes and sautéed vegetables, these stuffed peppers were terrific.

We had rice pudding for dessert, a giant fresh waffle topped with vanilla ice cream and served with fresh whipped cream and syrup. The last was four thumbs up: the warm lava cake oozed a wonderful chocolate sauce that was truly drool-worthy.

Generations of customers know that is what sets Chip’s apart from other restaurants in the area: the atmosphere, community participation, the sourcing of only the highest quality products available, the homemade dishes, a culture that everyone in the community appreciates.

Chip’s has fused Mediterranean favorites with traditional American comfort food to create a restaurant that the locals love for breakfast, lunch and dinner seven days a week. They also cater to vegan and vegetarian appetites. And of course they have the best pancakes in the state. They have plenty of off-street private parking at 321 Boston Post Rd. in Orange.

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

Orange Students Get Little League Scholarship



Owen Higgins and Alexandra Melingonis were awarded the 2026 Orange Little League Scholarship and honored at Old Tavern Fields on May 18. Higgins will be attending Union College to study pre-law and minor in Spanish as well as play football there. Melingonis will be attending the University of Maryland to study government and politics/ pre-law. Photo by Jennifer Schemp.

Orange Student Earns Scholarship From Goddard School



The Goddard School of Orange in June awarded its Bob Marchetti and Gerard Kick Memorial Scholarship of \$5,000 to Jett Ramos, an Amity High School graduate, and a former Goddard student. Ramos stood out for his academic achievement, commitment to service and unique perspective on how early childhood education shaped his path and values. He reflected in his application on lessons from his time at Goddard-like patience, kindness and perseverance-that continue to guide him today. Ramos is a competitive gymnast and volunteer at the Autism Health and Fitness Center in Orange. In the fall, he will be attending the University of Massachusetts at Amherst with hopes of being a chemist. The scholarship honors Bob Marchetti, the original owner of The Goddard School of Orange and father of co-owner Kim Kick, as well as Gerard Kick, father of co-owner Chris Kick. Photo courtesy of the Goddard School of Orange.

RWA Offers Tips To Use Water Wisely In Summer

The Regional Water Authority, which covers Milford and Orange, is encouraging residents to conserve water and take precautions to stay safe and hydrated during the summer. Sustained hot weather can strain water treatment and distribution systems. Customers are encouraged to reduce unnecessary water use during heat waves.

- Consumers can help conserve water by taking these simple steps:
- Check water faucets, toilets and pipes for leaks and repair them promptly.
 - Water lawns and gardens before 7 a.m. or after 7 p.m. to reduce loss from evaporation.

- Limit car washing; commercial car washes often use less water than washing at home.
 - Take short showers instead of baths.
 - Turn off the tap while brushing teeth or washing dishes.
 - Avoid unnecessarily topping off of pools.
 - Use a broom – not a hose – to clean driveways, sidewalks and patios.
- For more tips, go to rwater.com/learn-more/sustainable-solutions/water-wise-ways.
- To reduce the risk of heat-related illness on the hottest days, residents should limit

strenuous outdoor activity during the hottest parts of the day and drink plenty of water to stay hydrated.

While it’s important to stay cool during hot weather, it is illegal to open fire hydrants for cooling or recreation. Unauthorized hydrant use can cause localized discolored water issues, reduce water pressure and compromise resources for firefighting and other emergencies. Also, the force of water from an open hydrant can pose serious safety risks, particularly to children.

Increased demand and changes in water pressure during hot weather can stir up

existing sediments in water mains, causing temporary discoloration, which may look unappealing. The RWA recommends that customers wait until it clears before drinking it, showering or washing laundry.

Discolored water should clear on its own, but to help the situation if water is lightly discolored, run cold-water faucets for 10 minutes and flush toilets two or three times to clear discolored water from plumbing. Contact the RWA if discoloration persists after several attempts. Apartment or condominium residents should notify building management.

Fireman’s Carnival Delights In Orange



The Orange Volunteer Fire Department held its annual Fireman's Carnival at the High Plains Community Center fairgrounds during the first weekend of August. The carnival is typically the department's biggest fundraiser. Photos by Lexi Crocco.

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Insuring Your Future

Need Help? Ask A Professional Instead Of DIY

In an age when information is available at our fingertips, many people choose to handle important decisions on their own. Online platforms make it easy to book travel, purchase insurance, search for homes and manage investments.

While these tools offer convenience, they cannot replace the expertise, guidance and personal support that a professional agent provides. Whether it is travel, insurance or real estate, having a trusted advisor can help people make informed decisions and avoid costly mistakes. In most cases, there is no fee for their services as they are compensated by the vendors or companies that provide the products.

Insurance is an area where professional guidance can make a significant difference. Policies often contain complex terms, coverage limits and exclusions that can be difficult to understand. An insurance agent helps clients evaluate their needs and select cov-

erage that provides the right level of protection. Whether purchasing auto, home, health or life insurance, having an expert explain the details can prevent unpleasant surprises later. In the event of a claim, an insurance agent can also assist with the process and serve as an advocate for the policyholder.

I recently learned the value of working with a travel agent the hard way. While on a two-week vacation in Paris, I realized how difficult it is to get tickets to museums and events. A travel agent could have helped me avoid standing in long lines in 90-degree heat. The personalized service they provide is the difference between a stress-free vacation and continuous challenges.

Planning a trip involves much more than selecting flights and hotels. Travel agents



TRISH PEARSON

create itineraries and identify options that best fit their budget and interests. They also stay informed about travel requirements, restrictions and potential challenges. When unexpected issues arise, such as flight cancellations, itinerary changes or in my case a heat wave, a travel agent can often resolve problems more efficiently than travelers can on their own, saving both time and frustration.

Real estate transactions are among the largest financial decisions many people will make during their lifetime. Buying or selling a property requires market knowledge, negotiation skills, legal documentation and attention to detail. A real estate agent brings valuable expertise to every stage of the process. They help buyers find suitable properties, guide sellers in setting

competitive prices and provide insight into local market conditions. Most importantly, they help clients avoid common pitfalls that can lead to financial loss or unnecessary stress.

Across all three industries, agents provide more than just a service. They offer expertise, advocacy and peace of mind.

While technology has made information more accessible, it has also increased the complexity of choices available. Having a knowledgeable professional to guide important decisions can reduce risks, save time and improve outcomes. In a world where major financial and personal decisions carry significant consequences, the value of a trusted agent remains as important as ever.

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

Orange Recycling Committee

New Recycling Service: Tips For Smooth Pickup

Enviro Express of Bridgeport began collecting residential recycling in Orange on July 1, after being selected by the Board of Selectmen following a competitive bidding process. While all residents have kept the same recycling collection day, pickup times may differ from the previous provider.

During the first few weeks of service, some residents contacted Orange Public Works and Orange Recycling Committee Chair Mitch Goldblatt to report missed collections or unexpected pickup times. As the Enviro Express team becomes more familiar with Orange's routes, these issues have lessened.

Recycling collection may begin as early as 6 a.m. To avoid missing collection, residents are strongly encouraged to place their blue recycling bins at the curb the night before their scheduled pickup day. As with any service, occasional glitches can occur, and severe weather may affect collection schedules. Your patience – and reporting

any issues to Public Works – is appreciated.

If your recycling bin was placed at the curb on time but wasn't collected, one possible reason is contamination from non-recyclable materials. Please take a moment to make sure only accepted recyclables go in your blue bin. For a complete list of accepted materials, visit OrangeRecycles.com/your-bin. To look up how to recycle a specific item, use the search tool at RecycleCT.com.

As part of its efforts to reduce contamination, Enviro Express collection crews visually inspect recycling bins as they're emptied. If they see unacceptable materials, such as trash, plastic bags, heavily soiled containers or other non-recyclable items, they may leave the bin uncollected. In some cases, a photo is taken and sent to



ILENE MOYHER

Town Hall to document the contamination.

This process helps prevent contamination that can cause an entire truckload of recyclables to be rejected, allowing the town to avoid unnecessary disposal costs and ensuring more materials are successfully recycled.

Residents can help keep Orange's recycling program running smoothly by following these simple guidelines:

- Place only accepted recyclables in the blue bin: paper, cardboard, cartons, glass bottles and jars, plastic bottles, jugs, tubs and containers and metal cans.
- Do not place trash, plastic bags, bubble wrap, plastic film, black plastic containers or other non-recyclables in the blue recycling bin.
- Accepted types of plastic bags and wraps should be taken to the Orange Trans-

fer Station (signage clearly states allowed and not allowed materials) or participating retail stores that accept clean, dry plastic film for recycling.

- Place recyclables loose in the cart (or in a brown paper bag if needed), flatten cardboard boxes, and place your cart at the curb with the opening facing the street.

A few simple steps can help ensure your recycling is collected and processed properly while keeping Orange's recycling program efficient and cost-effective. If you experience a missed collection or have questions, contact the Orange Public Works Department at 203-891-4712.

You can follow the Orange Recycling Committee for more updates on facebook.com/ORCinCT.

Ilene Moyher is a member of the Orange Recycling Committee.



Orange Players presents

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Cameras

(Continued From 1)

Milford.

The cameras generally capture images of license plates as cars pass them. They have primarily been adopted to deter unsafe driving, but police have also used the data to help solve certain types of crimes.

Though automated traffic cameras have been proliferating, there have also been recent revelations that the data collected may not be as secure as promised. Several jurisdictions have found that their data was used in searches from other states, raising concerns that it could be used for such things as going after immigrants or people coming to Connecticut for reproductive care.

In his presentation before the selectmen, Altumint sales representative Martin Plank stressed that the company is the most-chosen vendor in Connecticut, already serving Milford and West Haven. He also said that the company strictly adheres

to state data protection laws, including a suite of additional rules passed by the legislature earlier this year.

“Systems capture images only during violations,” Plank said. “Legal drivers are never recorded or stored. The municipality retains full control of all records, which are protected from public disclosure. The town owns that data, not Altumint.”

Once Altumint develops a plan for camera locations in conjunction with the town and the state, there will be a public hearing for residents to weigh in.

Drivers who receive a citation will be able to pay through a website dedicated to Orange, where they will also be able to access the evidence related to their citation.

There’s no installation cost to the town, and funds from citations go back to Orange. Altumint charges a processing fee to the violator to generate its revenue.

Resident Eric Meeson had some reservations about the surveillance technology in general, but he did praise the idea of only collecting data on violators.

“It’s only violators that get tagged, which is something that’s very important to me,” he said. “I think that that’s a key distinction between a system like this, which I’m presuming is triggering based off of a radar or a LIDAR for an actual speed before it takes a picture, and a system like Flock, which is just taking a picture of everyone everywhere.”

The Orange Police Department has an existing contract with Flock for license plate readers, which the board also updated during the meeting.

Police Chief Robert Gagne said that the contract needed to be updated because of the state’s new laws around automated cameras used by law enforcement, as well as a model policy developed by the Police Officers Standards and Training Council.

Gagne said Flock had added an addendum to its contract with the town to address the new rules, which included not to sell data or transfer data to third parties without the department’s authorization; not to allow anyone other than the department to access the data without authorization or

a warrant issued by a court; not to share the data for immigration, reproductive or gender-affirming healthcare purposes; not to allow it to be used to interfere with constitutionally-protected activities like protests; and to hold data under accordance with industry practices and encrypting data transmission.

“This is basically just Flock codifying what Connecticut has put into place,” Gagne said. “Right now we are only sharing with Connecticut departments. We are not sharing with federal government. We are not sharing with out-of-state departments. Some of what you’ve seen on the news and what’s been reported about sharing that shouldn’t have happened – some of that was mistakes, quite honestly, by those departments that did not set their system up the right way.”

The legislation allows Connecticut police departments to share data with neighboring states, such as Massachusetts. However, Gagne noted, those states would have to abide by Connecticut’s restrictions before receiving the information.

Lead Pipes

(Continued From 1)

said of City Hall.

Many water pipes around the country – especially in areas like Connecticut with older infrastructure – are made of lead. Corrosion can cause the pipes to leach lead into drinking water. Lead can cause nervous system and developmental problems, and there is no safe level of lead for children.

Galvanized steel pipes also need to be replaced because they can trap lead particles

from service lines and are prone to corrosion that then releases that lead into drinking water. Galvanized pipes were largely discontinued in the 1960s.

The US Environmental Protection Agency in 2024 published a rule requiring water systems to replace all lead service lines and galvanized service lines between 2027 and 2037.

The RWA is launching its line replacement program in Milford, since 12 of 17 known lead lines are there.

“Because this area has the highest density

of lead service lines in the system, the RWA is maximizing efficiency by starting replacements in this area,” the RWA website says.

The pipes will be replaced with copper, according to Watsey.

“We are required to replace all lead service lines in our service territory for those who want them replaced. Any homeowner, any business can opt out of this program. If you do opt out, we are required to send you four letters a year confirming that you are opting out,” he said.

Watsey said the RWA had been working

since the 1970s to remove lead pipes from its service lines, meaning that most of the remaining lines are on property owners’ side. He also said the authority treats water passing through known lead pipes to prevent leaching and regularly tests that water.

The RWA’s lead map shows other locations scattered throughout the city with lead or galvanized lines, most of them at residential homes or businesses.

There are also several galvanized lines in Orange – most notably at the historic Stone-Otis House on Orange Center Road.

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

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Case Memorial Library Events

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

The library will be closed for Labor Day on Saturday, Sept. 5 and Monday, Sept. 7.

The library has a new app where you can manage your account, search the catalog and place holds, register for events, access e-books and use your digital library card. Find the app by searching Libraries On-line in your app store. Visit casememoriallibrary.org for the weekly email newsletter and for updates on events at the library.

Summer Baby Playtime

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

Come to the library for a baby playtime. Stay for baby-safe toy fun and social interaction. This program is designed for children and engaged adults. Drop-offs will not be permitted.

Family Storytime

Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m.; for children ages birth-5.

Join the library for storytime designed for children birth to 5. Siblings are welcome. This program is designed for children and engaged adults. Drop-offs will not be permitted.

Books and Barks

Thursday, Aug. 6, 6 p.m.-7 p.m.; for children in grades pre-K-6.

Come and read to Titan, a golden retriever therapy dog. You can bring your own book or use one of the library's. This is a drop-in program with no registration required. However, time slots will be assigned on a first come, first served basis starting at 5:50 p.m. There will be limited time slots for readers ages 4-12. The event will be in the Children's Room.

Tween Movie Hangout

Monday, Aug. 10, 2-4 p.m.; for tweens in grades 4-6.

See a recently-released movie in the comfort of the library with your friends. Feel free to bring your own snacks. Register everyone who will be attending.

Solar Eclipse Viewing

Wednesday, Aug. 12, 1 p.m.-2 p.m.; for children in grades 3-6.

What is an eclipse? How can you watch a solar eclipse safely? Listen as John Sillasen, NASA partner eclipse ambassador, answers those questions and more. The program will include a presentation, outside time to view the partial solar eclipse, and a Q&A session. Safe viewing glasses are mandatory and will be provided. Registration is required.

Family Matinee (Sensory-friendly Showing)

Thursday, Aug. 13, 2 p.m.-4 p.m.; for children in grades K-6.

See a recent release with the whole family. This will be a sensory-friendly screening, meaning some lights will be left on, captions will be on, sensory aids are welcome and rules in general will be relaxed. There will be a coloring station for anyone needing a break from the movie. You may bring your own snacks from home. Registration is required.

Minecraft: Seeds to Sustain

Saturday, Aug. 15, 2 p.m.-3:30 p.m.; for children in grades 2-6.

Bring your own device for this Minecraft event. Manage crops and livestock within a delicate ecosystem as you learn firsthand about resource management and sustainable food systems. Registration is required.

Salt Painting

Thursday, Aug. 20, 3 p.m.-4 p.m.; for children in preschool to 6th grade.

As part of the library's "Make It Together" series, explore painting with salt at Case Memorial Library. Registration is required.

Children's Ice Cream Party

Saturday, Aug. 22, 2 p.m.-3 p.m.; for

children and families.

Enjoy some delicious ice cream and find out if you won an Amazon gift card. Registration is required.

Preschool Sensory Play

Saturday, Aug. 29, 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.; for children ages 18 months-5 years

Explore hands-on sensory stations with bins, textures and simple experiments designed for young children. Registration is required.

High School Volunteer Club

Thursday, Aug. 6, 6 p.m.-8 p.m.; for students in grades 9-12.

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

Teen Book Boxes: August

Pick up dates: Aug. 24-29; for students in grades 7-12.

Each month that you register you will pick up a box containing two books selected by the librarians based on your reading preferences for you to borrow as well as some treats to keep. Registration is required and opened Aug. 1.

Teen Summer Reading Finale: After Hours Tie-Dye

Saturday, Aug. 8, 5:15 p.m.-6:45 p.m.; for rising 7th-12th graders.

Join the library outside on the back lawn to create custom tie-dye apparel. Bring a white cotton shirt to tie-dye. All other supplies will be provided. Pizza will be served. This is a drop-off event. Registration is required.

Teen Summer Reading Finale: After Hours Laser Tag

Saturday, Aug. 8, 5:30 p.m.-7 p.m.; for rising 7th-12th graders.

"Blast" your competitors in an ultimate laser tag showdown in the library. Pizza will be served. This is a drop-off event. Registration is required.

American Mah Jongg Club

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

Come to an open play club with fellow Mah Jongg enthusiasts. These sessions are intended for players of all skill levels who are familiar with American Mah Jongg, as instruction is not provided. Participants are encouraged to bring their own American Mah Jongg set and official Mah Jongg card. The library also has a limited number of Mah Jongg sets and cards to use during open play. Games are non-betting as gambling is not allowed in the library. Registration is recommended. Drop-ins are welcome if space permits.

Happily Ever After: Romance Reader Social Club

Monday, Aug. 10, 7 p.m.

Love romance? Join the romance reader so-

cial club. Share your latest favorite reads, swap recommendations and meet fellow romance readers. All subgenres are welcome. Create beautiful decoupage bookmarks to laminate and take home. Relax with a refreshing drink while you chat and craft with fellow readers. Registration is required. Drop-ins are welcome if space permits.

Historical Take & Bake Kit: Wacky Cake

Pickup dates: Aug. 17-22; for all ages.

One kit is allowed per household. Create a classic wacky cake and explore how home bakers adapted to ingredient shortages during the Great Depression. Each kit features a historical recipe along with the dry ingredients needed to make it at home and fascinating background information that brings the recipe's story to life. Registration is required.

Wednesday Book Group (Plus a Movie)

Wednesday, Aug. 19, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

Double the fun for the Aug. 19 meeting of the Wednesday Book Group. The group will watch the film adaptation of Elizabeth von Arnim's 1922 novel, *The Enchanted April*, then will have their usual hour-long book discussion. Join for both the film and the discussion, or for whichever works for your schedule; bring your lunch for the film if you'd like. Registration is required.

Concert: Hearing America

Saturday, Aug. 22, 1 p.m.

Mystic Chamber Music Series presents a captivating string quartet concert exploring the sounds, traditions and composers who helped shape the American musical voice in celebration of America's 250th anniversary. Registration is required. Drop-ins are welcome if space permits.

Adult Book Boxes

Pick up dates: Aug. 24-29

Each month that you register you will pick up a box containing two books selected by the librarians based on your reading preferences for you to borrow as well as some treats and other surprises for you to keep. Registration is required and opened Aug. 1.

Crochet Club

Saturday, Sept. 12, 10 a.m.

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

Virtual Author Talks

Enjoy a range of live virtual talks from bestselling authors and thought leaders, brought to you in partnership with the Library Speakers Consortium. Register by visiting libraryc.org/casememorial-library for any of the following virtual talks:

- Thursday, Aug. 6, 2 p.m.: Preserving the Seasons: The Art of Canning, Jamming, and More with Holly Capelle.

Thursday, Aug. 20, 7 p.m.: My Bicentennial Summer: A True-Life Adventure across America with G. Neri.

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2 p.m.: When Trees Testify: Reclaiming America's Black Botanical Legacy with Beronda Montgomery.

Thursday, Aug. 27, 2 p.m.: High Altitudes and High Stakes: A Miss Marple Mystery with Lucy Foley.

Carriage Green

at Milford

“Between friends and activities,
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Elaine M., Resident since 2023

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Sea Turtle, Struck By Propeller, Washes Up In Milford



The Milford Marine Institute's marine biology science camp on June 29 discovered a loggerhead sea turtle which had been cut by a propeller and died after it floated onto the Tri Beach behind American Legion Hall in Milford. The turtle measured 47 inches from the tip of its beak to the tip of its hind flipper. The shell was 29.5 inches wide. Propeller cuts are a common cause of death for sea turtles, especially during peak boating season. The Connecticut population is listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. *Photo by Tim Chaucer.*

Kennedy Visits Tutor Time In Milford



State Rep. Kathy Kennedy visited Tutor Time in Milford, where she toured the facilities, spoke with educators and read to children. *Photo courtesy of Kennedy.*

Orange Jeweler Earns National Award

Jewelers of America, the national trade association for businesses serving the fine jewelry marketplace, has named Bobby Bengivengo Jr. of Orange-based Cellini Design Jewelers as one of the recipients of its 20 Under 40 Program.

“Receiving this recognition is especially meaningful because it reflects not only my work, but the values my family has built into our business. I’m proud to carry that legacy forward while helping introduce new ideas that will keep independent jewelers strong for generations to come,” Bengivengo said.

Cellini Design Jewelers offers bridal pieces, fine jewelry and watches, as well as repair services.

The national 20 Under 40 Program honors exceptional young professionals under the age of 40 who exemplify leadership, innovation and a commitment to excellence in the fine jewelry industry.

The initiative was launched in 2022 to highlight emerging talent in the jewelry retail space. Jewelers of America expand-

ed the program in 2025 to include a second category – jewelry suppliers – to recognize the contributions of individuals working in design, manufacturing, wholesale and service companies that support the jewelry retail market. This year, a total of 40 rising stars were selected: 20 from jewelry retail and 20 from the supplier sector.

“Jewelers of America’s 20 Under 40 program was created to spotlight the rising stars shaping the future of the jewelry industry. Bobby exemplifies the innovation, dedication and leadership that will drive the industry forward and inspire the next generation of professionals,” said David Bonaparte, president and CEO of Jewelers of America.

Award recipients were selected by a panel of industry experts based on their professional success, leadership abilities, innovative approach and dedication to the jewelry community. All honorees also demonstrated alignment with Jewelers of America’s Code of Professional Practices.

State Rep. Kathy Kennedy (R-119) recently visited Tutor Time of Milford to meet with teachers, staff and students and discuss the important role childcare providers play in supporting local families.

During the visit, Kennedy toured the facility, learned more about the programs offered at Tutor Time and spent time reading “Moo Hoo” to a Pre-K classroom.

“Any day you get to sit down and read with these precious little kids it’s a good day,” Kennedy said. “I want to thank the wonderful teachers and staff at Tutor Time of Milford for welcoming me into their classroom and showing me firsthand the care, creativity and dedication that goes into early childhood education.”

Kennedy also met with representatives from Learning Care Group to discuss is-

ssues facing childcare providers, including access, affordability, workforce challenges and the importance of ensuring families have quality childcare options.

“As a mom, I understand how important it is for parents to have confidence that their children are learning, growing, and being cared for in a safe and nurturing environment,” Kennedy said. “Childcare providers are partners with our families, and it’s important that lawmakers listen directly to those doing this work every day.”

“As we saw during the pandemic, childcare was an essential and necessary pillar in the three-legged stool for families and our state economy, which also includes parents and employers. Without a thriving childcare system, the stool collapses,” she added.

Chip’s Celebrates 60 Years



Chip’s Family Restaurant in Orange is celebrating 60 years in the community this summer. From left: family owners Evan, Dina, AJ, Adam and Alex Bajko. *Photo by Steve Cooper.*

Milford Library Leading AI Talk

The Milford Public Library will host a discussion covering the artificial intelligence use strategies, tips and considerations in the program room on Wednesday, Aug. 26.

Librarian Fred Danowski will discuss how these intelligent search and creation tools work, and how they can be used to do many things from idea generation and iteration to writing and illustrating short stories, or essays on many different subjects. The discussion will also touch on the potential impact that these tools may have on our

economic system in the years ahead, and what they mean for intellectual property and the environment. Tips will be provided to efficiently use the technology so that resource use is minimized while working on your project.

The discussion runs from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. and is free and open to the public. No registration is required.

The Milford Public Library is located at 57 New Haven Ave. For more information, go to milford-pl.libcal.com/event/15577520.

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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.



Peter Daniel Axten, 74, of Milford, passed away peacefully on Monday, July 20, 2026, at Milford Hospital following a period of challenging health issues. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Louise Ann Barbieri, 81, of Milford passed away peacefully at her home surrounded by her loving family on July 26, 2026. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Violet May Battalino, beloved matriarch and cherished member of the community, passed away at her home, surrounded by the love of her family, on July 6, 2026. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Barbara Bowman Boston, age 84, of Milford, formerly of Fairfield, passed away peacefully on June 26, 2026. (Spear Miller Funeral Home)



James E. Buynak, age 87, of Orange, beloved husband of the later Carol A. Stofko Buynak, passed away peacefully on June 27, 2026. (Galelo-Luchansky Funeral Home)



Barbara Carangelo was born on June 28, 1933 and passed away on July 21, 2026. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Dolores M. Christie was born on May 20, 1936 and passed away on July 29, 2026. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Devoted wife, mother, grandmother, sister, and friend, **Elaine Parise Clifford** passed away peacefully on July 9, 2026, at the age of 88. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Kathleen Elizabeth Cody, 53, of Milford, CT, beloved wife of Michael Cody, passed away surrounded by her family on July 11, 2026. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Peter Myles Costello, age 94, beloved husband of the late Joan M. Costello, died on Wednesday July 29, 2026. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



It is with immense sadness that the family of **Purificacao Fernandes Cristal** of Milford, announce her passing on July 16, 2026 due to complications from gastric cancer. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



John "Jack" Steven Dirgo, 63, of Milford, passed away on July 18, 2026, after a courageous battle with Interstitial Lung Disease (ILD). (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Constantine Ellis, 76, of Orange, beloved partner of 34 years to Chris Merolla, passed away on July 23, 2026. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Andrew M. Esposito, Jr., of Woodbridge, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, July 8, surrounded by his loving family. He was 89 years old. (Iovanne Funeral Home)



Teresa "Terri" Fasanella, a lifelong resident of Milford, passed away peacefully on July 22, 2026 following a short but courageous battle with cancer. (Cody-White Funeral Home)

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Obituaries

Judith Ann Franco, 91, of Orange, passed away on July 8, 2026.. (West Haven Funeral Home)



Dorothy Ann Karpicky, age 73, of Milford, beloved wife of the late Thomas Karpicky, entered peaceful rest on July 15, 2026. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Fernando Martins, 86, of Orange, beloved husband of Marcelina Santos Martins, passed away on July 27, 2026, surrounded by his family. (Porto Funeral Home)



John "Jack" Olexovitch, of Milford, passed away peacefully on June 26, 2026, at Connecticut Hospice. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Linda Gagel, age 76, of Orange, beloved wife of Charles Gagel, passed away on July 17th, 2026. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Constance Maxine Levy, 91, of Milford, CT, passed away on June 30, 2026. Born on February 19, 1935 in Ripley, OH, she was the daughter of the late Robert and Anna Mae Myers. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



David Arthur Nelson, 79, of Milford, CT, beloved husband of Betty Nelson, passed away on June 25, 2026. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Nada Bear Ottenstein passed away on Saturday, July 4, 2026, in Woodbridge, CT. (Robert E. Shure Funeral Home)



Diane M. Rogers Grace, known by almost everyone as Maha, born September 3, 1933 in Milford, died peacefully on July 12, 2026. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Evelyn Laura Loesch, age 83, of Milford, passed away on Wednesday July 15, 2026. Laura was born in New Haven on December 27, 1942. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Lynn Buchmiller Novicki, beloved wife of Dr. David C Novicki passed away on July 26 after a courageous battle with cancer. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Ferdinando Antinio Paladino Jr. ("Fred" to all who knew him), age 82 of Milford, passed away peacefully on July 14, 2026, surrounded by loved ones. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Sundeep Kaur Gill Harper, 46, of Milford, beloved wife of Scott Harper, passed away on July 26, 2026, surrounded by the love of her family after a courageous battle with cancer. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Gary James Mankus, 66, of Milford, CT, passed away on July 13, 2026. Born on April 7, 1960 in Maspeth, NY. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Edward D. O'Brien, 91, of Milford, passed away peacefully in his home on June 29, 2026. Ed was the beloved husband of 63 years to Anne M. Ryan O'Brien. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Iva "Jeanne" Russ, age 89, of Woodbridge, wife of the late Paul Russ, passed away peacefully on Friday, July 10, 2026, in Meriden, CT. (William R. McDonald Funeral Home)



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Obituaries

Dr. Henry B. Samson, age 79, of Woodbridge CT, passed away on July 26, 2026, at Hospice of Branford. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



George Michael Turko of Milford, passed away July 7, 2026. He was born in Bridgeport on October 22, 1940 to the late John and Clara Turko. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Robert N. Sforza, age 79, of Milford, beloved husband of the late Sharon Adzima Sforza, passed away on July 21, 2026. (Adzima Funeral Home)



Frederick R. Turner, 84, of Orange, beloved husband of 60 years to Leatrice M. (Cardea) Turner, passed away on June 28, 2026. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



John E. Soldi Sr., age 89, of Milford, passed away on Friday, June 26, 2026. (Frank Polke and Son Funeral Home)



John Van Arman, age 84, of Orange, passed away on July 17th, 2026. He was the beloved husband of nearly 57 years to Ruth Kilfeather Van Arman.. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



Joanne Polonetz Stefkovich, 72, passed away on June 17, 2026 at Bridgeport Hospital with her loving family by her side. (Cody-White Funeral Home)



John E. Wildman, age 82, of Milford, beloved husband of 59 years to Louise (Gillotti) Wildman, entered into peaceful rest on July 24, 2026. (Gregory F. Doyle Funeral Home)



Adopt A Pet: Tyson



Tyson is the resident grandpa at the Milford Animal Control shelter, but he acts like a total puppy. Tyson loves to play with his toys, play tug-of-war and go on long walks in the park. He is extremely sweet and has a wonderful disposition. Tyson will make any family looking to add a senior boy to the ranks happy. Tyson is a black mouth cur mix, about 9 years old, 69 pounds, is neutered and has all of his shots. If you would like to meet Tyson, visit Milford Animal Control at 49 Silver Sands Parkway. Kennel hours are Monday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Call the shelter at 203-783-3279.9. Photo courtesy of Milford Animal Control.

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