

Woodbridge Town News



Happy
New Year

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CIRCULATION 3654

FRIDAY, JANUARY 14, 2022



Siting Council Approves Cell Tower in Woodbridge

BY BETTINA THIEL

WOODBRIDGE TOWN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

The Connecticut Siting Council with a 4:2 majority voted on December 16 to approve the construction of a cell phone tower in the middle of a residential neighborhood at 118 Newton Road. In spite of valiant opposition from the neighbors and the town, the Council found that “the effects associated with the construction, maintenance and operation of a telecommunications facility...are not sufficient reason to deny the application.”

Verizon Wireless, also known as Cellco Partnership, is looking to improve wireless service along portions of routes 63 and 67, as well as Newton Road, including Amity High School and Alice Newton Street Park. It is planning to construct a 100-foot monopole on a 6-acre parcel at the property, located between Newton

Road and Soundview Drive.

The company will lease the site from the property owners, the Soufrine Family Trust. According to the application, the tower will be located in a 50x50 foot fenced compound. The company would install up to 12 antennas and 12 remote radio heads on a platform at the top of the tower. It would share the tower with up to three other entities, but at least at the time of the hearing in July, there were no other interested parties. The antennas will extend above the top of the tower to a height of approximately 104 feet.

A propane-fueled back-up generator and a 500-gallon propane tank will be located within the fenced facility. Vehicular access will be from Soundview Drive.

At the hearing back in July 2021,

See “Cell Tower” On Page 7



First Selectwoman Beth Heller helped distribute Covid test kits to residents on Saturday, January 8.

Town Distributes Covid Test Kits, Masks

BY BETTINA THIEL

WOODBRIDGE TOWN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Facing steep increases in Covid cases, the state recently distributed at-home test kits and N95 masks to help curb the curve. The town received two shipments, which it distributed, one on Tuesday, January 4, the other Saturday, January 8, for a total of

about 850 test kits.

Town employees, police and volunteer fire fighters braved the cold temperatures to help make the distribution go smoothly. Residents received the kits at the drive-up to the Center Building, and exited to Center Road.

See “Covid Tests” On Page 11

New Indoor Mask Requirement In Effect

Given the quick spread of the COVID-19 Omicron variant and the high positivity rate, First Selectman Beth Heller signed an emergency order on Tuesday Jan. 4 requiring masks in in-

door public spaces and meeting spaces where the public has access (except when eating or drinking), private in-

See “Masks” On Page 12

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Housing Study Group to Solicit Ideas and Opinions

The Housing Opportunity Study Group will be asking Woodbridge residents and employees to complete an online survey soliciting their opinions on housing matters. The survey is the next step in meeting the committee's charge from the Board of Selectmen "To guide the Town of Woodbridge...to promote a mix of housing opportunities, including the development of an Affordable Housing Plan, as required by State law."

This will be the second online housing survey issued recently. Last fall, an impressive number of Woodbridge residents participated in the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG) regional survey. The Housing Committee is working closely with the SCRCOG to analyze this data, which will be supplemented by information collected from the Woodbridge-specific survey. As Dominick Thomas, Chair of the committee, has said, "The Committee is committed to engaging the community so that the required Affordable Housing Plan truly reflects the housing needs of all of the Woodbridge Community."

To address this goal, the Housing Opportunity Study Committee will be actively engaging all current residents, home-owners and renters alike, as well as those who work in town and others who would like to have housing options in Woodbridge. The Committee first engaged this Woodbridge community on December 6 with a presentation by David Fink, a housing policy expert who is working with the SCRCOG. The presentation with comments from listeners is available on the town YouTube channel as the Housing Committee public forum - 12/06/21 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r9f8tjJu3Xg&t=232s>). and is highly recommended for research-based information about housing and affordable housing—including common myths.

The survey link is scheduled to be available at the end of January and will be announced as widely as possible, including on the Town website and via mail groups, social media, and outreach to local groups and churches. Watch for those announcements! Paper copies will also be available if preferred.

For additional information, contact: Kristine Sullivan at 203-389-3406 or ksullivan@woodbridgect.org.



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A LEISURE CARE COMMUNITY

From the Democratic Town Committee

BY LAURENCE GROTHEER



Muted optimism for 2022 lasted only days last week when the first anniversary of the 1/6/21 U.S. Capitol coup attempt shattered the calm. The phrase ‘coup attempt’ is used advisedly, according to NYU history professor Ruth Ben-Ghiat: “It is interesting to me that so many news outlets and commentators still only call it an ‘insurrection,’ which does not express the political design to take control of the government and stay there, in the authoritarian fashion.”

The former president and de facto leader of today’s Republican party openly admires autocracies around the world and their authoritarian leaders.

Aspects of last year’s attack remain deeply disturbing: 1) Americans carried out a sustained, violent assault on the citadel of the U.S. government, 2) the apparent connection between those who planned and promoted it and the inner circle of the former president, 3) subsequent, ongoing efforts to whitewash, minimize, and/or justify what happened, and 4) persistent, continuing efforts to undermine American democracy by those who supported - and still fail to condemn - the 1/6/21 uprising.

As described in a 1/1/22 New York Times editorial, “In short, the Republic faces an existential threat from a movement that is openly contemptuous of democracy and has shown that it is willing to use violence to achieve its ends.”

It was the worst attack on the Capitol since the War of 1812. Appallingly, the certification of a presidential election and peaceful transfer of power was disrupted, delayed, and nearly upended with malicious, nefarious intent. In a word, it was a dangerous, unprecedented assault on American democracy.

There is ample evidence of prior communication between those at the White House at the time and those at a ‘war room’ at Washington’s Willard Hotel. If only a fraction of this evidence betrays a coordinated effort to mastermind the attack, the future of Amer-

ican democracy was indeed at stake. In the year since, an assault on democratic norms continues. In 19 Republican-dominated states there are new laws to restrict ballot access and suppress voting among targeted, traditionally Democratic constituencies. Nonpartisan election officials were replaced with partisans and some Republicans who defied strongarm tactics to overturn 2020 results were replaced as well. In at least 15 states Republicans who still baselessly deny President Biden’s legitimate victory are candidates this year to be the top elections official.

This sustained attack on democracy, in the shadow of last year’s effort to secure autocratic rule, remains undeniable. It is not a coincidence that rioters carried the Confederate flag into the Capitol last year. It suggests a war against democratic ideals had been declared - and persists.

UC San Diego professor Barbara Walter studies civil war in other countries extensively, and serves on a CIA panel of experts on the topic. “There are certain indicators that measure when these shifts happen. One is a loss in elections, or a series of losses, where it becomes clear that in a democracy, this group no longer has the numbers to win elections,” Walter writes in her new book, *How Civil Wars Start*.

Others who study these matters say the litany of increasingly desperate Republican measures - among them last year’s attack on the Capitol, ongoing efforts to discredit elections, stacking federal courts with partisan judges, questioning and condemning the press, denying ballot access, and manipulating voting district boundaries - provide additional evidence that erosion of American democracy is already well underway.

President Biden succinctly described the risk last week in his anniversary remarks, “Those who stormed this Capitol, and those who instigated and incited, and those who called on them to do so, held a dagger at the throat of American democracy.”

Other Side of the Aisle

BY CHUCK PYNE
WRTC CHAIRMAN



Look Before You Leap

Last month this column discussed the First Selectman’s recognition the town should seek professional advice on options for the Roger Sherman Farm, aka the former Country Club. At that time the First Selectman explained that she wants to hire an expert on land use issues. That’s good, but we need to think more broadly. If we step back and look at the diverse issues facing Woodbridge, it is clear the town should hire a professional planner to take a wholistic look at where Woodbridge is today and where it could be tomorrow. Our town needs to make decisions based on the best information available when it comes to making long-range plans.

What are the diverse issues? The town’s Housing Opportunity Study Committee has been charged with developing a housing plan as required by state law. The First Selectman created the Ad Hoc 2030 Task Force a couple of years ago, primarily to look at optimizing our small business district. The Woodbridge Board of Education is looking at Beecher Road School’s projected enrollment and potential capital needs. And overlying all of these activities are the sweeping residential zoning changes which the Town Plan and Zoning Commission (TPZ) adopted last year. Meanwhile, existing Boards and Commissions continue to carry out their responsibilities. These diverse issues and activities intersect and all of them involve the use of land within our town limits.

Right or wrong, the TPZ’s new zoning rules have already dramatically changed how Woodbridge may be developed going forward. The new rules allow much denser housing development, including multi-family housing and accessory apartments on existing properties. Shouldn’t we find out what the new rules portend for future housing before promoting housing on the Roger Sherman Farm? Significantly, the pending housing proposal for the Roger Sherman Farm is meeting resistance from the Conservation Commission and Commission on the Use of Publicly Owned Property (CUPOP). While their concerns vary, what’s common is a lack of support for development of this property. Good, because focusing on this single piece of town property as the cure-all for our financial and affordable housing challenges is a myopic mistake. Now is the time to engage a town planner to look at the options for the Farm in the context of our town as a whole. To be clear, this is not a consultant who

typically assesses a deal on the table, but a planner who identifies and assesses options.

As a first and necessary step, the professional planner would prepare a Build Out analysis. In short, a Build Out is an objective assessment of what the maximum development potential for each piece of property - publicly or privately owned - could be. New state statutes and the TPZ’s new regulations dramatically change the potential build out of our town, making the preparation of this Build Out analysis imperative. If done well, the analysis would evaluate how existing housing stock may change over time as well as what development of all land could look like. The planner wouldn’t be making recommendations for future development but rather identifying what may evolve given current law. Without such information we are “flying blind” when it comes to making decisions in a potential referendum for any parcel - Roger Sherman Farm today or large Property X tomorrow.

Regional Plan Association and the State Department of Housing issued a guidebook on how to create a housing plan in the context of the new state mandates. That guidebook states that “understanding housing needs is one piece of the puzzle in planning for affordable housing. Another important piece is understanding how your town currently uses its land and what your zoning says about what types of housing can be built where.” It goes on to say, “The purpose of this review is to understand both how land in your town is used today and how it may be used in the future under your existing zoning regulations.” In other words, we need that Build Out analysis.

We cannot be single-minded in looking at affordable housing, Beecher’s future needs, or the town’s long-term finances. We have to look at these intersecting and potentially competing interests in an integrated manner, which starts with knowing what our new zoning regulations and state laws allow. The point is long term land use in Woodbridge is at the heart of all of these issues, so we better make the most informed, balanced decisions possible, as residents for the next many decades will have to live with them. What kind of Woodbridge do we want to leave to the next generations? It is our turn to be equally responsible for the next generations. Let’s move forward with a spirit of cooperation and the common goal of smartly balancing our many pressures. Let’s do it right.



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Woodbridge Town News

Below are the next three issue dates & deadlines of the Woodbridge Town News.
Thank you for your submissions to Your Home Town Newspaper.

Upcoming Issue Date	Issue Deadline
February 11 Valentine's Day Issue.....	February 4
March 11 St. Patrick's Day Issue.....	March 4
April 15 Easter & Passover Issue.....	April 8

Note: Copy due by 4:00p.m. Thank you.

FROM OUR READERS

Private Land Trusts Need to Acknowledge the Role Conservation Plays in Exacerbating Inequitable Access to Land

Last year, Open Communities Alliance (OCA) sought to expand housing opportunities and end exclusionary zoning practices in Woodbridge via an application to the TPZ. In its study of our zoning history, the work of the Yale Law School Housing Clinic found that Woodbridge has repeatedly resisted calls to end its exclusionary practices. According to the study, a backlash from residents concerned about property values, quality of life, and “the character” of Woodbridge ensues whenever the town attempts to remove restrictions. Ultimately the town abandons significant changes rather than risk upsetting vocal anti-density residents.

I was encouraged Woodbridge was going in the right direction when TPZ approved the OCA application with modifications and revised the Zoning Regulations and Plan of Conservation & Development to provide for additional housing options in residential zones served by public water and public sewer (either existing or to be provided by the developer). I agree with TPZ that the change was an important first effort in creating greater opportunities and economic diversity in housing.

I now read last month that the Woodbridge Park Association and Woodbridge Land Trust, private land trusts separate from the town (and in my opinion insular), are attempting to acquire a conservation easement from Woodbridge to prevent development on 145 acres that has access to public sewer and public water. This property is one of the few town-owned properties of scale currently capable of accommodating higher density housing.

Private land trusts need to acknowledge the role that private con-

servation plays in exacerbating inequitable access to land. An important first step private land trusts can make, when promoting conserved land for sustainable communities, is to consider opportunity housing when targeting property for acquisition. I find it unfortunate to target for open space a property of this magnitude, with the capacity of supporting higher density development, that could promote housing choice and economic diversity. I am disheartened by what looks like another roadblock for our town to model the self-awareness, sensibilities, and commitment to inclusion that are essential for a thriving community.

Scott Hunter

Do the Math Part 2: Marginal Cost Does Not Apply

Hillel Auerbach's recent letter questions my calculations of the cost of adding hundreds of residents to our town if the Arbor Haven proposal goes forward. He suggests that we should use marginal cost to estimate school expenses. For two reasons, marginal cost simply does not apply in this case.

The Amity school system is a regional system, serving three towns. The Amity school board bills each town on a per student basis – therefore, for each additional student from Woodbridge, the cost to Woodbridge taxpayers increases by \$20,000 per year. There is no such thing as marginal cost in this situation.

The concept of marginal cost is also inapplicable at Beecher Road school, because we are currently at the enrollment limit – according to the superintendent's recent statement, we are using “every nook and cranny” in the school building. Adding the number of students who would result from a large housing development would

See “Letters” On Page 9

Woodbridge Town News

WTN LETTERS POLICY

Submit your letters for our "From Our Readers" section to:
Woodbridge Town News, P.O. Box 1126, Orange, CT 06477
or email: letters@woodbridgetownnews.com.

Please limit letters to 500 words and include a daytime phone number in case we have any questions. Letters must be exclusive to the Woodbridge Town News for publication. We reserve the right to reject any letter.

WOODBRIDGE EDUCATION ROUNDUP

Elementary District Requests Unprecedented Budget Increase

By Bettina Thiel
Woodbridge Town News Correspondent

Unprecedented times call for unprecedented measures, that seems to be the motto for an unusually high budget request from the Woodbridge Elementary School District for the 2022-23 school year. The Board of Education at its December 20 meeting unanimously approved a budget for the 2022-23 school year that represents a 13.5% increase in expenditures over this year's budget. The total request is for \$17.6 million, up from \$15.5 million this year.

"We are looking at this budget as a correction," said board member Maria Madonick after hearing the superintendent's presentation. The town needs to provide its schools with the resources they need, she said, including personnel. "They are overloaded [with challenges]," she said about this school year. "This budget helps to correct some of those deficits."

The main budget drivers are salaries (12.6%), which include a number of new positions, and medical insurance costs (18.3%). The basic salary increases for the certified classroom teachers, a contract that was negotiated three years ago and ended in arbitration, is 1.25%. However, coupled with step increases and additional teaching- and support staff, the total salary increase is in the double-digits. "Education is a people-intensive business," said School Supt. Dr. Johnathan Budd when he presented the numbers.

In terms of teaching staff, the projected budget provides for an additional kindergarten teacher, based on enrollment projections for the '22-'23 school year; an additional special services teacher, a position that already exists this year, but was grant funded; and an additional STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) teacher.

The school administration also made the case for an additional social worker and for an additional part-time psychologist. The current social worker, who holds a half-time position, supports 30 students with a range of intensive support needs, said Special Services Director Cheryl Kiesel. As

for psychologists, the school employs 2.5 now, but with increased need for services, the budget would provide an additional .1 position.

To support both teachers and students, Dr. Budd plans to hire 10 additional Teacher Assistants (TAs), of which four will be mandated, to provide services for students with special needs. The other six would be assigned to general education support. Teacher Assistants are "neither supplementary nor ancillary," Dr. Budd said. Rather, they are an essential part of helping students learn independently and provide both academic and behavioral support, he said.

As part of his budget presentation, Dr. Budd showed a graph to illustrate how the number of TAs in the last few years had shifted from general education to special education. Currently the school has 6.5 TAs for 43 classrooms. Adding six additional TAs will get the district closer to where it was five years ago, when the faculty had the support of 15 TAs.

The decision in 2018 to bring out-placed students with special needs back into the building did indeed produce significant savings for the district. But it contributed to that shift of TAs. It also presented a challenge to find appropriate classroom facilities. As a result, there are multiple teaching stations in The Commons and in the Rotunda. Given that the building is used more intensely, the school will need an additional half-time custodian.

Other increases are caused by general inflationary pressures, such as for materials and supplies (+12.2%), transportation and fuel costs, and heat and electricity. The line item for heat, for example, is up by 41%, from \$179K to \$253,000.

The budget also includes some building-related expenses, namely the design phase for roof replacements. The roof project is actually part of the town's capital plan for this year, and was to be funded as part of a bonding package, which did not move forward. So instead, the district budgeted \$13,600 for the roof design in its 2022-23 operating budget and added the actual work to the capital plan. It

asks for full replacement of the K Wing (\$337,000) and D Wing/library roofs (\$350,000), and the work would be performed in the summer of 2023, with the total cost spread between two fiscal years.

The capital plan for 2022-23 also includes flooring replacement (\$141,855) and planning for a potential building reorganization, repurposing and expansion (\$125,000). The Board of Education in the fall of 2021 established an ad hoc capital plan committee to look at the building needs going forward. Similarly, the district budgeted for potential needed upgrades of its mechanicals (\$20,000) and for network wiring (\$20,000).

The superintendent pointed to several programs that are not funded in this budget, but should be considered long-term goals, such as additional English Language Learner support; additional interventionists and curriculum experts; additional music for strings/band for grades 3 and up; additional services for talented and gifted students; and possibly an additional world language option for the intermediate grades. "Such options are available in various districts to which Woodbridge compares," he pointed out.

Board of Education members unanimously supported the proposed school budget. Board Chairwoman Lynn Piascyk thanked her fellow board members for their support for the school, and for their respect for the taxpayers. She emphasized that the district administration would continue to re-adjust the numbers over time, for instance whether the additional kindergarten teacher can be filled from within.

"I want to assure the town leaders and the community that our board and our administrative team are constantly looking at (the budget)," she said. "When we vote on this budget we are doing what we truly believe is best for the school and at the same time respect for the taxpayer. I feel very passionate about this. We have a great place here at Beecher Road School, and we want to continue making it great. If we believe there is something we can cut from the budget, I believe we will do it."

For example, the board asked the

superintendent and the interim Business Manager, Richard Huot, to investigate the question whether joining a bigger medical insurance pool might reduce the jumps in insurance costs imposed on the district. The district is in the insurance pool with the town employees. Another suggestion made by Jay Dahya, who chairs the board's Finance Committee, was to maybe create a reserve fund for special education, so the district would be less vulnerable to the unpredictable financial impact.

Board member Brooke Hopkins pointed out that Beecher students did very well on standardized tests, and praised the teachers for making that possible under extraordinarily difficult circumstances. She expressed hope that the board — and by extension the town — will support the teachers with regard to hiring TAs.

Board member Mike Strambler pointed out that the school was understaffed with regards to the social worker. "It's important for us to have the resources to support kids and families," he said.

As for the teacher's compensation, it consists of a percentage increase coupled with step increases for the first 13 years of teaching. The steps, therefore, raise the total salaries paid out to the younger teachers as they gain experience. However, they do not apply to long-term teachers. The current package was negotiated three years ago and ended in arbitration. The result was a three-year contract:

- for the 2020-21 school year: a general wage increase of 1.25%, plus an estimated increment cost of 2.18%, for a total cost of 3.43%;
- for the 2021-22 school year, a general wage increase of 0%, plus an estimated increment cost of 2.30%, for a total cost of 2.30%; and
- for the 2022-23 school year, a general wage increase of 1.25%, plus an estimated increment cost of 2.03%, for a total cost of 3.28%.

Dr. Budd pointed out that the further out the year is from the award issuance date, in this case October of 2019, the more approximate the increment cost will be. The next round of negotiations is slated to start this summer.

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STUDENT NEWS

Dean's List University of Vermont

Burlington, VT - Austin Rowland, Undeclared major, has been named to the dean's list for the fall 2021 semester at the University of Vermont. Rowland from Woodbridge, CT is in

the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources. To be named to the dean's list, students must have a grade-point average of 3.0 or better and rank in the top 20 percent of their class in their respective college or school.

We begin the new year by celebrating Martin Luther King Jr. Day on January 17th. This year, I am reminded that this holiday is a time to reflect on all that Dr. King accomplished. As he once stated, “The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.” I think Dr. King believed that the arc doesn’t bend toward justice on its own. That remains our responsibility, and why we must continue to discuss local issues related to inclusion and diversity in Woodbridge. I am proud to have initiated the Ad Hoc Diversity & Inclusion Committee, which is a committed group of our residents who are exploring how to identify and prioritize issues relating to diversity and inclusion, so that all Woodbridge residents feel at home and welcome to participate in civic life. As Dr. King also wrote in his April 1963 Letter from a Birmingham Jail, “Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.” We must keep this in mind as we remain united in making Woodbridge a wonderful welcoming community.

Unfortunately, we are still in the grip of the almost two-year long pandemic. In order to protect all Woodbridge residents and others who work, visit, shop and enjoy many of our activities here, on January 4th, I signed an emergency order requiring everyone to wear masks at all indoor establishments, workplaces and public meeting spaces - effective on Monday, January 10, 2022. This order will remain in place until further notice. It is the right thing to do to keep the Town of Woodbridge safe. Masks, social distancing, vaccines and tests are the simple steps we need to continue to take to keep ourselves and our community safe. You may read the full order on the Town website.

Thank you to our Human Services Department staff, our Police Department members, and our all-volunteer members of our Fire Department for

From the First Selectman BY BETH HELLER



managing the distribution of the Town’s COVID-19 at-home test kits. This was a very well organized, efficient drive up effort. Originally, the Town had expected to receive 1,100 test kits from the State. This was already a small number for our roughly 9,000 residents, and yet to my dismay, we only received 675 kits. Each kit contained two tests. The kits were distributed just hours after the Town received them on an incredibly cold day. Days later, the Town received a much smaller set of test kits along with N95 masks, and those were also distributed.

We did not get enough test kits for everyone in town and, therefore, asked that people only come for a kit if they were symptomatic, had direct contact with a COVID-19 positive person, or were in regular contact with someone who is more susceptible to becoming infected. Additionally, our Human Services Department was able to identify more than 100 of their clients who are considered most vulnerable, and those residents received a test kit and a few masks. The Town also shared N95 masks with staff at the Amity Regional School District, the Woodbridge School District, Ezra Academy, local Day Care Centers, and Town staff.

I would urge everyone to please take advantage of the widespread availability of FREE vaccines and boosters, especially given the quick spread of the COVID-19 Omicron variant. You may find vaccines and tests by visiting www.ct.gov/coronavirus. Masks continue to be required at all times in Town buildings, all town meetings remain virtual, and in-person programming has been scaled back significantly to curb the spread of disease, and help to continue to keep our community safe.

Now that we are in our budget season, I once again remind everyone that education expenses take up approximately two-thirds of the Town’s annual operating budget. As the school districts’ budgets continue to increase without a corresponding increase in the Town’s grand list, the Town may be forced to reduce services and/or raise taxes. It will be up to the Boards of Finance and Selectmen to make these hard choices. I expect this will be a tough year. Over the past several years, we have consolidated staff positions and reduced programs. To give additional perspective, between Fiscal Year 2015-2016 and Fiscal Year 2020-2021, the Town portion of the budget (not including the boards of education) decreased by 0.12%.

Please remember that ALL RESIDENTS have a voice in the budget process. Operating Budget presentations will begin in late January and February to the Boards of Finance and Selectmen, and then discussions will begin. Residents are encouraged to ask any budget questions, or make suggestions to boards and commissions, or department heads. Budget meetings can be watched live on Channel 79, Webex and the WGATV YouTube page. Links to the meetings are in the meeting agenda notices. Videos of meetings that have occurred can be found as recorded written minutes on the Town website, and also on YouTube. Our 2030 Task Force has been tasked with finding ways to grow the grand list. It is currently focusing on the business district and are looking into working with a planning consultant to identify the goals for the area and next steps based on those recommendations.

Our ad hoc appointed 2021 Housing Committee is working diligently

on the Town’s Affordable Housing Plan. I believe it will release a Woodbridge-specific survey to supplement the regional survey published by SCR-COG. We are also planning to offer a town public hearing at some point to listen to our residents’ thoughts and ideas. Hopefully this plan will help us find ways to meet our state and federal mandated obligations regarding affordable housing.

Beginning on February 1st, there will be a new fee system for bulk trash. Bulk trash is large items such as furniture and construction demolition. The Town’s Transfer Station has a scale which is used to charge haulers bringing in residential trash. Also, starting on February 1, the scale will be used for residents and contractors bringing in bulk trash items. That fee will be \$0.10 per pound. Cash is not accepted at the Transfer Station.

This modified fee is one way for the Town to prepare for a difficult fiscal future by shifting the cost of the service to those who use it rather than have all residents subsidize it. Currently the Town charges \$20/cubic yard, but the Town is charged by the ton, to dispose of trash. In fiscal year 2021 the Town collected \$4,511 in bulk trash fees, but paid out \$69,490 to haul and dispose of bulk trash. The new fee will help to offset the Town’s costs. Additionally, the Town will continue to offer bulk trash pickup five months a year by appointment, but with a fee. Starting on February 1 there will be a \$50 per appointment fee. That fee will partially cover the Town’s cost to run this program including staff time and disposal costs.

I remain hopeful that we will get through this pandemic together. We must be kind to one another, and continue to help our neighbors. As always, please feel free to contact me with questions or comments. I can be reached at 203-389-3401 or bheller@woodbridgect.org.

“Cell Tower” From Page 1

which took place on Zoom, some 30 or so residents spoke in opposition to the proposal. They called the proposal an eyesore, and expressed concerns about what this project would do to their property values.

“We chose [to live in] this area for its proximity to nature and to hiking trails,” said Christine Edwards, adding that power outages and higher taxes are the trade-offs to living close to nature. “But I do not like living in proximity to a cell tower.”

Elliot Agin said he was appalled that the Siting Council would benefit a single resident – “without neighbors’ consent, by a process we have no control over.”

Similarly, Bruce Fraser raised two objections, one to the aesthetics of

placing equipment in a quiet residential neighborhood; and the other concerning what he felt was the inherent unfairness of this proposal, with one party benefiting economically while everyone around them suffers the consequences.

The town hired a lawyer to represent it during the proceedings. It submitted a list of alternative sites, including the existing tower at the police station and the Public Works compound. But none of the alternatives worked to increase coverage sufficiently. A number of properties were too low, others too far, some had wetlands. The company agreed to lower the initial 140-foot tower to a 100-foot monopole; it also agreed to move the compound slightly within the property, should the owner consent.

A group of neighbors formed the

Newton Neighborhood Environmental Trust (WNNET), which also hired a lawyer. “We are not against cell phone towers, but we are against cell phone towers in residential neighborhoods,” they wrote on a Go-Fund-Me page.

Jonathan Greengarden, who grew up on Soundview Drive, and whose parents still live there, addressed the Siting Council via Zoom. He recalled a “quiet, safe street, where I learned to ride my bike.” And he brought up the right of quiet enjoyment of a property, “which has clearly been taken away from them,” he said.

But in the end, the Council found that “the proposal would not cause unreasonable pollution, impairment or destruction of the public trust in the air, water or other natural resources of the state. The Council has considered all reasonable alternatives and

finds that the proposal represents the best alternative consistent with the reasonable requirements of the public health, safety and welfare.”

Verizon said installation may take between five and seven months before it’s fully complete. The company refers to this cell site as its “Woodbridge North2 Facility”.

“The...facility will provide improved wireless voice and data services in north-central portions of Woodbridge, where reliable wireless service is either lacking or non-existent today.”

Go to https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/CSC/1_Dockets-medialibrary/1_MEDIA_DO500_600/DO502/ApplicantSubmissions/Application/09-Visual-Assessment.pdf to see a visual of the cell tower. Page 13, shows how it is seen from Soundview Drive.

AT THE WOODBRIDGE CENTER



The aerobic class stretches after enjoying a fun workout to energetic music with Laura Richling. Enjoy FREE aerobic classes for the month of February, thanks to a generous donation from Coachman Square.



Transportation service is available to those age 60 and above or with a long-term or short-term disability. Service is available to medical appointments to 17 surrounding towns, as well as local shopping and banking for a nominal contribution. Call for more information.

Are you over 55 years old? Contact The Woodbridge Center: Call 203-389-3430 or email kmoriarty@woodbridgect.org for information on all programming.

Facebook: Follow us on Facebook (The Woodbridge Center, Woodbridge CT) for current updates and local information. Check out some fun photos from recent programming.

Email blasts: Things change quickly- please make sure you are on our email blast list to receive Woodbridge Center updates. Call The Center at 203-389-3430 to subscribe.

COVID Update at The Center: All in-person programming at The Center is suspended through January 17 due to the elevated COVID positivity rate. We will reassess at that time if we can resume in-person programming.

Soup-er Sweet New Year's Party Drive-thru Lunch: Celebrate the Super Bowl, Valentine's Day, and Chinese New Year on February 10, with a drive-thru lunch from 12-1 pm, co-sponsored by Coachman Square at Woodbridge and Opal Stork Home Care. Enjoy a choice of roast beef and Swiss cheese on a hard roll or turkey BLT on a croissant with a choice of Italian wedding soup or chicken and rice soup, and Linzer cookies for dessert. No charge. Please RSVP by February 10.

Virtual Programs: Disaster Preparedness 2 Day Webinar: Tuesday, February 22 and Wednesday, February 23, from 12-3 pm. This webinar, presented by FEMA, will include information on important prevention, safety, and risk-mitigation strategies. National and state resources that are available for the older population will be provided. Stay tuned or call The Center for more information.

Movie Viewing: Join us for the award nominated movie *Selma*, Friday, February 25, at 1pm, in the Center Building gym. Please RSVP as space is limited. *Selma* is the story of a tumultuous three-month period in 1965, when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. led a dangerous campaign to secure equal

voting rights in the face of violent opposition. The epic march from Selma to Montgomery culminated in President Johnson (Tom Wilkinson) signing the Voting Rights Act of 1965, one of the most significant victories for the civil rights movement. Director Ava DuVernay's *SELMA* tells the real story of how the revered leader and visionary Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (David Oyelowo) and his brothers and sisters in the movement prompted change that forever altered history.

Start 2022 focusing on your health with these programs (Not sure if an exercise class is right for you? Try a complimentary class!)

Evidence-Based Lifestyle Change Program (Diabetes Prevention): January 18 from 1-2 pm, in the Center Building, room 16 for an informational session to discuss the program in detail and answer questions. This program, a \$1,200 annual value, will be provided **AT NO COST to everyone 60+ years of age** as it is sponsored by the Agency on Aging of South Central CT (AOASCC) and non-profit Monitor My Health (MMH) in an effort to promote good health. The program includes 22 coach-led weekly sessions on healthy eating, physical activity, weight loss, stress management, diabetes prevention, and more. You will also participate in individual sessions with a Registered Dietician and learn new recipes and skills on how to create healthy, balanced meals that can help prevent or manage various health conditions. The program will meet on Tuesdays, beginning the following Tuesday, January 25, from 1-2 pm, in the Center Building, room 16. Call The Center to sign up (203-389-3430).

FREE Aerobics Classes during Heart Health Awareness Month! Coachman Square at Woodbridge and The Center will offer Tuesday and Thursday aerobics classes from 12-1 pm with Laura Richling at no charge (regularly \$3/class) for the month of February to

promote Heart Health! Come try out the class and start a healthy new, fun habit to carry you through 2022! Call The Center (203-389-3430) to register as space is limited.

Pickleball: Monday through Friday, 12:30-3:30 pm, in the Center Building gym. New players please call to register. All levels are welcome. Call for more information.

Targeted Strength Training with Michele Tenney: Mondays, 9-10 am, in the Center Building gym. This exercise class uses exercise bands to focus on strengthening specific muscle groups to help increase balance, stability, and flexibility. Bands are available for purchase through the instructor. The class fee is \$40 for an 8-week session. Join anytime - class will be prorated.

Zumba Gold with Amanda Aranzullo: Friday, 9-9:45 am in the Center Building gym. Who says exercise can't be fun? This fun "dance party" focuses on all elements of cardiovascular health, muscular conditioning, flexibility, and balance. No prior Zumba experience required. The fee is \$30 for a 6-week session. Next session begins January 24, prorated as needed.

Ongoing Activities at The Center

Hobbies/Social: Computer lab is open Monday - Friday, 10 am - 2 pm. Two-person limit in computer lab. Printing is available (first 5 pages free). Preregistration is required.

Craft Group: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 am - 12 pm, in The Center café. Bring your current knitting, crocheting, or needlepoint project to work on while enjoying a lovely time socializing.

Painting for Pleasure with Carole Abbate: Explore a new hobby for the new year- next session to start January 24! Mondays 10 am - 12 pm, in The Center café. You will find joy in creating your own paintings as Carole helps inspire rank beginners to intermediates to paint with acrylics or watercolors. Paint the subject of your choice - bring in a postcard or photo

for inspiration. Call to sign-up for this 6-week, \$36 class.

Services offered: Tech Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:45-4:00 pm: Need some help navigating your computer, laptop, tablet, or smart phone? Not sure where to start? Want to know more about what features you aren't using? Call 203-389-3430 to sign-up for a 1:1 session in The Center's computer lab with patient, knowledgeable, Amity High School student volunteers. No fee.

Transportation for medical appointments is available for those age 60+ or with a long-term or short-term disability, Monday - Friday from 9:00 am - 4:00 pm with limited exceptions. Transportation for grocery shopping, local banking, and pharmacy pick-up is also available. Call to arrange car or wheelchair accessible van transportation. Vehicles are cleaned between each use. Masks are required.

Meals: Healthy, well balanced, flash frozen meals for \$5.25/meal are available. Order by noon on Monday for delivery to your home on Tuesday. Choose from a wide variety of options including chicken parmesan, lemon dill cod, eggplant rollatini, beef pot roast, vegetable frittata, and fresh Cobb salad with grilled chicken breast. Meals include a roll, fresh fruit, and dessert. Two-meal minimum.

Frozen soups are available for \$1.50 per 10 oz. container. Varieties include Italian wedding, beef orzo, minestrone, harvest vegetable, chicken noodle and many more. Call 203-389-3430 to place your order.

Friendly Visitor Program: Call Judi Young, Senior Social Worker, at 203-389-3429, to arrange for a friendly visitor.

Medical Loan Closet: Durable medical equipment is available for lending including walkers, wheelchairs, knee rollers, shower chairs and more. Call for details.

Job Bank: Residents may call Nancy Pfund, Youth Services, at 203-389-3429, to request a student worker. Schedule helpers now for snow shoveling, and more.

“Letters” From Page 5

tip the enrollment over the school building’s physical capacity, necessitating a large infrastructure project. Building an addition onto the school would cost how much – \$30 million? \$40 million? \$50 million? Certainly, much more than the taxes that could be collected on the homes in question.

It is a well-known and broadly accepted fact that residential development is profitable only for developers; it has never been, and will never be, financially beneficial for towns. Indeed, the Highstead Foundation of Redding, CT recently published a paper summarizing 39 separate studies conducted across New England showing how open space land provides financial benefit to towns and residential development creates a financial drain. Open space benefits towns in many ways – in addition to costing towns much less than residential land, open space mitigates the effects of climate change, raises property values for current homeowners, and enhances quality of life for everyone. Let’s maintain our quality of life here in Woodbridge by thinking beyond a short-term cash grab and permanently protecting this land. Future generations will thank us.

Cathy Wick

Let the People of Woodbridge Decide on the Proposal to Protect Land

While the First Selectman and town attorney pursue the Arbor Haven deal and dangle the prospect of a \$9 Million bonanza to taxpayers, a closer look and some common sense will show whether the \$9 Million is a bonanza or Fool’s Gold instead.

Beyond the fact that the cost of services for residential development exceeds the taxes from it, the hard cost of a new school obliterates any pretense of a bonanza. When neighboring Hamden approved \$24.2 Million for a new West Woods School, inflation upped the cost to \$26 Million. Then construction estimates came in at \$32 Million. And that was before the 2021 leap in building material costs. Given our experience with Beecher Road School expenses, we see the flaming red ink on the wall. The \$9 Million is fool’s gold.

But there are even more painful costs to consider. The golf course has evolved into a vibrant sanctuary where many enjoy a peaceful refuge from Covid. Its value to mental and physical well-being is incalculable.

Also, a significant part of the land is prime agricultural soil. Imagine one day working lands that contribute to the region’s food security. Just as we are vulnerable to pandemics, so are food sources vulnerable to blight. Our dependence on industrial agriculture makes it wise to preserve local resources that can serve for food production.

And then quality of life. In a meeting last summer with the town officials, I was stunned to hear that the term “quality of life” is offensive today, as

if wanting to preserve rural character is somehow racist or exclusionary. Hogwash. I’ve lived in New York City and three smaller cities and found my peace in the country. Find your peace where you will, but it’s not exclusionary to preserve 145 acres for the benefit of all people.

The Woodbridge Park Association and Woodbridge Land Trust proposal to protect the land with a conservation easement is in the best interest of our town and region. While Beth criticizes the \$250,000 offer as too low, she omits from the calculation that town residents have already paid \$400,000 a year for 13 years. Add that for a proper accounting. And account for the remaining millions in value of the 10-acre clubhouse parcel when the administration acts responsibly and returns it to the grand list.

This administration should honor democracy. Instead of wasting more money on consultants, order a referendum. Let the people of Woodbridge decide on the proposal to protect that land.

Jim Urbano

WLT & WPA Come Together with A Shared Goal

The Woodbridge Land Trust (WLT) and the Woodbridge Park Association (WPA) have come together with a shared goal: to preserve and protect American patriot Roger Sherman’s Clover Hill Farm (the former Country Club of Woodbridge). Our two organizations have submitted a formal offer to purchase a grant of conservation restriction on this property, one of the largest, most magnificent parcels of open space land remaining in our town.

The First Selectman has raised concerns about our plan because she believes it will “tie up” the land. However, we believe that protecting open space does not tie up land, rather it opens up the land to uses that benefit the entire community.

In 10, 20, 50, 100 years, do you think anyone will be at all interested in how much it cost to protect this precious natural resource? The cost is irrelevant – the land is priceless!

Woodbridge residents have an opportunity to do something profound: protect – forever – a historic farm and beautiful open space land in our town. In the coming weeks and months, the WLT and WPA plan to provide our neighbors with facts to show that – both short and long term – the only truly viable proposal for the Roger Sherman Farm is our proposal.

Economically, ecologically, environmentally, historically, psychologically, aesthetically– this property will benefit the residents of Woodbridge far more as protected open space than any of the housing developments proposed over the last twelve years.

Stay tuned...

Chris Dickerson, President, Woodbridge Park Association
Bryan Pines, President, Woodbridge Land Trust

Town of Woodbridge Meetings for the Month of Jan/Feb 2022



(Subject to Change, Check with Town Clerk’s Office, 203-389-3422)

1/18	2030 Task Force	6:00 PM	
1/19	Inland/Wetlands Agency	7:30 PM	Town Hall
1/20	Board of Finance (BOF).....	6:00 PM	Town Hall
	Police Commission.....	6:15 PM	
	Conservation Commission.....	7:30 PM	Town Hall
1/24	CUPOP.....	5:30 PM	Town Hall
	Recreation Commission	7:00 PM	Beecher Rd School So
1/25	BOF & BOS Joint Budget Mtg.	6:00 PM	
	Gov’t Access TV Commission	7:30 PM	Town Hall
1/27	BOF & BOS Joint Budget Mtg.	6:00 PM	
2/1	Boards of Finance/Selectmen Joint Mtg.	6:00 PM	
2/2	Housing Opportunity Study Committee	7:00 PM	Town Hall
2/3	Boards of Finance/Selectmen Joint Mtg.	6:00 PM	
2/7	Town Plan & Zoning Commission.....	6:30 PM	Town Hall
	Emergency Medical Services Comm.....	7:00 PM	Center Building
	Human Services Commission	7:00 PM	
2/8	Agricultural Commission	8:00 PM	Virtual
2/9	Board of Selectmen (BOS).....	5:00 PM	
2/10	Economic Development Commission.....	7:00 PM	Town Hall
2/14	Library Commission	6:00 PM	Library
	Zoning Board of Appeals	7:30 PM	Town Hall
2/15	2030 Task Force	6:00 PM	Town Hall
2/16	Fire Commission	6:00 PM	
	Police Commission.....	6:15 PM	Police Dept.
2/17	Board of Finance (BOF).....	6:00 PM	Town Hall
	Conservation Commission.....	7:30 PM	Town Hall
2/22	BOS Budget Recommendations.....	5:00 PM	
	Gov’t Access TV Commission	7:30 PM	Town Hall
2/28	CUPOP.....	5:30 PM	Town Hall
	Recreation Commission	7:00 PM	Beecher Rd School So





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ARTS & LEISURE

New Year and New Programs at Massaro Community Farm

Happy New Year from Massaro Community Farm! Like many of you, we take this time to catch a little extra rest and turn our attention inward. Farmer Steve grows a small amount of produce in our high tunnels that we'll share with you as it becomes available. At the same time, winter gives us an opportunity to strategize, fundraise, hire new staff, and buy supplies – all to bring you another bountiful season.

Produce donations

By the end of 2021, we donated 8,400 pounds of fresh produce, and approximately 500 dozen eggs, which went to the following agencies: FISH of Greater New Haven, Spooner House, St. Vincent de Paul, Kathleen Samela Memorial Food Bank, Seymour Oxford Food Pantry, Trinity Church and CT Food Bank. The farm also wrapped up a pilot study in partnership with Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center offering free vegetables to EBT cardholders. You can read a full summary of 2021 accomplishments in our most recent Annual Report available on our website, www.MassaroFarm.org.

Your support makes our food donation program possible. **Help us reach our “Growing the Future” goal of \$15,000 by making your tax-deductible contribution** either on our website or by mailing a check to the farm at 41 Ford Road, Woodbridge, CT, 06525. Remember that your contribution:

- ✓ makes healthy food accessible. In



addition to produce donations, we offer scalable pricing and accept EBT cards, helping more neighbors in need put healthy food on the table.

- ✓ protects the future of farming. On small farms like Massaro, planting heirloom varieties strengthens the ecosystem's biodiversity, making it more resilient in the face of extreme weather and pests.
- ✓ supports open community space. The challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic emphasized the importance of nature – both as healer and as a safe public gathering space. In 2021, about 6,000 visitors walked our trails, sang, danced, planted, crafted and volunteered on the farm.

2022 CSA Registration Now Open

At a time when many food prices are on the rise, we are pleased to offer this year's subscription at the same rate as last year: **\$375 for a 10-week flexible share and \$695 for a 20-week share**. We are implementing a tiered pricing structure for subscriptions in

order to make the CSA accessible at various price points. Fruit and egg shares are available again as add-ons, and you can choose to pick up at the farm, or at District in New Haven. At the farm, you can take advantage of u-pick crops like cherry tomatoes, peas, green beans, flowers and herbs as they are available. **The farm now accepts EBT cards as payment for fruit, vegetables, eggs and our jarred products.** Purchase your subscription online using our new third-party platform, GrownBy, or call the farm office at (203) 736-8618 to arrange to swipe your EBT card during normal business hours.

Winter Programs

We'll be holding winter **Goat Walks** every other Saturday at 10:00am beginning Saturday, January 29. Only steady rain or ice will cancel. On these family-friendly walks we'll explore the woods and edges of the farm where wildlife abounds. Dress for winter weather. \$5/pp or \$10/family. Secure a spot on SignUpGenius.com.

We've opened up registration for a return of our **Growing Sprouts**

program for children ages 3-5. This eight-week parent+child program encourages farm exploration, gardening, curiosity, and connecting with nature. Please note that this is not a drop-off program. Growing Sprouts will begin Saturday, January 29 from 11:00am-12:00pm. \$130/parent and one child; \$150/parent and two children.

Back by popular demand, registration is now open for **Winter Explorers** for children ages 6-11. This eight-week series allows children to explore the woods and fields of the farm and learn winter survival techniques. Winter Explorers will begin Sunday, January 30: two sessions are offered. 10:00am-12:00pm and 1:00-3:00pm. \$160/pp (sibling discount available). Held rain or shine.

Registration for youth programs can be made through the farm website, MassaroFarm.org.

Massaro Community Farm is a non-profit, certified organic community farm on 57 acres of land whose mission is to keep farming, feed people, and build community. In addition to growing vegetables for seasonal subscribers, the farm donates thousands of pounds each year to hunger relief. The farm serves as a hub of education for all ages and shares its space with the community. The farm's nature trail is open to the public 365 days a year. For more information visit our website at www.MassaroFarm.org or contact Executive Director Caty Poole at 203-736-8618 or at caty@massarofarm.org.

“Covid Tests” From Page 1

Cars were lined up on Meetinghouse Lane, around the corner up Newton Road all the way to Penny Lane, said Human Services Director Jeanette Glicksman.

Given the limited supply, the first selectman's office had requested to limit them to those experiencing symptoms or who have been exposed to someone COVID-19 positive.

Betsy Yagla, the administrative assistant officer at the Town Hall, who had helped plan for the distributions, said the town received about 600 test kits, then another 250, and gave some to first responders and to the town's neediest cases before they handed them out to the general public. Some masks also went to high school staff and Beecher Road School staff, as well as staff at local daycare centers.

Up-to-date Covid-positive numbers for the town were hard to come by, as the state Covid tracker showed

Woodbridge at 129 cases per 100,000 residents on New Year's Day. Some 85 Beecher Road School students reported out sick when they returned to school on January 3, that's about 10% of the student population.

The high infection rate is in spite of a relatively high vaccination rate. More than 90% of the local population has gotten at least the first shot; while 81% were fully vaccinated as of January 5.

To further curb the spread of infection, First Selectman Beth Heller instituted a mask mandate for the town, which requires people in all indoor public spaces to wear a mask, except when they are eating or drinking.

Town Hall and other municipal buildings are open for business, said Betsy Yagla. Senior Center classes have been canceled until January 17, at which point they will reassess. Senior lunches are available for drive-through or frozen meals for delivery. Transportation to medical appointments is available.



HEALTH & FITNESS

“New Year, New You”

BY PETER GELOSO DPT

“New Year, New you.” That’s the saying right? For many of us that means getting back in shape, losing weight, and hitting the gym. However, you must beware of the pitfalls of doing too much too fast, not having a plan, not knowing the proper form and technique, and not knowing how to properly progress your exercise program. Failure here can and will result in lack of results, poor adherence and compliance, and worst of all injury.

Many people have tendencies to just jump in the gym blind, without any sense of direction. They just hop on the treadmill and start running, or aimlessly pick up a few dumbbells with not the slightest clue of how to properly warm up or safely progress their chosen activities. A proper warm up is crucial for preventing injury. It helps get your heart rate up to a working level, increase blood flow throughout your body, increase muscle extensibility, and increase joint mobility. This will improve your quality of motion through various exercise movement patterns, in turn reducing your risk of injury.

Proper exercise progression is also a key component to success and achieving your desired results. You don’t want to get stuck in a loop of doing the exact same exercises, sets and repetitions, and resistance. A vital mistake often made by new gym goers is to do more weight than they can handle, being under the impression that more weight equals more muscles. But in reality, it usually equals poor form and technique. Another classic misconception is that low weight and high repetitions at a fast speed will get you more “toned”. These are both easy ways to find yourself injured and unable to adhere to your desired exercise program.

If you are one of those people who



Peter Geloso DPT

are thinking about getting back in the gym as part of your New Year’s Resolution, you may want to think about having a health care professional perform a general musculoskeletal screen. This helps to identify any possible impairments that may predispose you to an increased risk of injury while beginning your journey on the quest to a healthier lifestyle. Don’t make the mistake of waiting until you’re injured to address a problem. The best way to treat an injury is to prevent it from ever happening in the first place. Let us help you start your New Year’s off right, and pain free!

Peter Geloso DPT is a physical therapist at Amity Physical Therapy. He received both his Bachelors in Exercise and Sport Science and Doctorate of Physical Therapy from Elon University. He has been a licensed Physical Therapist in the State of Connecticut for nine years. Amity Physical Therapy was founded 17 years ago by Michael Dow MSPT/CEO of the practice with four offices: Woodbridge, Hamden, Branford and Milford. Peter Geloso DPT can be reached by phone with any questions at (203) 693.2350.



“Masks” From Page 1

door businesses and places of employment starting Jan. 10 at 12:01 am. Masks will be required regardless of vaccination status.

“This is the right thing to do to keep Woodbridge safe,” said First Select-

man Beth Heller. “Masks, vaccines and tests are the simple steps we need to take to keep ourselves and our community safe.”

The order will remain in effect until further notice. The full emergency order can be read on the Town website, woodbridgect.org.



Hidden Treasures from the Collections of Historical Societies

The Amity and Woodbridge Historical Society will display photographs of rare, unusual, and never-seen items from its collections in an exhibit during the month of February in the meeting room of the Woodbridge Town Library. An opening reception will be held on Friday, February 4 from 4-7 p.m. where items will be on temporary display, some of which will be displayed for the first time in public.

This exciting opportunity to see the hidden treasures of the Amity and Woodbridge Historical Society was made possible by volunteer Kenneth Mull who photographed the collection and, together with volunteer and textiles specialist Nancy Mull, posed, processed, and mounted all photographs

for the exhibit. A dedicated group of volunteers worked to curate the exhibit as well as research and write accompanying historical details for each item.

The Amity and Woodbridge Historical Society is located at 1907 Litchfield Turnpike, Woodbridge, CT at the Thomas Darling House. The mission of the Amity and Woodbridge Historical Society is to preserve and promote the history of Woodbridge and Amity Parish. We support this mission through maintaining our museum and collections, creating engaging programs for all ages, and promoting the preservation of historic buildings and sites. Visit us online at woodbridgehistory.org and follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

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HUMAN SERVICES

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Four Ways to File 2021 Taxes for Free

In partnership with the IRS and the Connecticut Association for Human Services, the Woodbridge Senior Center offers free tax preparation through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. For over 50 years the VITA program has offered free tax help to people with low to moderate income, senior citizens, and people with disabilities and limited English. Volunteer preparers are annually trained and certified to IRS standards. This year Woodbridge VITA offers even more ways for you to accurately and painlessly file your tax return and check taxes off your to-do list. Pick the option that suits you. Begin the process once you have all your tax documents together, no earlier than early February. Taxes are due April 18 this year.

1. Do It Yourself (DIY) - For the 12th year, United Way is providing online tax filing software, accessible through MyFreeTaxes.com, to help taxpayers easily and accurately file their taxes from their computer or smartphone. MyFreeTaxes® is an easy way to file federal and state tax returns for free on a mobile phone, tablet or computer. The majority of taxpayers are able to complete the process of filing federal and state taxes in one hour. Features include:

- Helpline answered by a real person trained by the IRS;
- Schedule C filing for small business and gig work;
- Beginning-to-end interview screens available in Spanish as well as English; and
- No cost. No costly add-ons. Free. Just free.

2. Full Virtual - Never leave the comfort of your home and have a trusted IRS-certified Woodbridge VITA preparer complete your taxes remotely. Designed for the pandemic and now here to stay, GetYourRefund® offers a secure national platform through which taxpayers can communicate by email, text and phone with their tax preparer from initial interview through e-filing. Taxpayers can file taxes for 2021, file back taxes (2018-2020), and even amend previous returns. Taxpayers are directed to upload documents using a mobile phone, tablet or computer. If you have a camera phone and an email address, you can begin the process at GetYourRefund.org/WB-SC-CT. Turnaround time is typically less than one week.

3. Valet - Available by appointment only, this hybrid option offers drive-in scanning of tax documents followed by phone-based conversations with a Woodbridge VITA preparer and reviewer. If you have no way to capture images of your tax documents, but would like to have your taxes prepared virtually by the Woodbridge VITA site preparers. A second drive-through appointment may be required to sign your tax return. Phone Woodbridge Human Services (203) 389-3429 to begin the process. Most clients will have taxes filed within two weeks of initial phone call.

4. In Person (depending on positivity rates in CT) - Available by appointment Tuesday mornings only (February 8 - April 12), taxpayers meet in person with a Woodbridge VITA preparer and reviewer and have their taxes completed in person in approximately one hour. There are a limited number of appointments available. Clients must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and wear a face mask throughout the appointment time. Unvaccinated cli-



ents may be served through any of the other options above. Phone Woodbridge Human Services (203) 389-3429 to request an appointment.

If Woodbridge VITA offerings are not a good fit for you this year, dial 211 to learn about other VITA sites in the area.

Energy Assistance Program

Human Services will accept appointments for residents to apply for the 2021-2022 CT Energy Assistance Program administered by TEAM, Inc. Income eligibility requirements must be met. For information, or to schedule an appointment, call Judi Young at 203-389-3429.

Emergency Preparedness

In the event of a weather emergency or power outage, elderly residents and those with disabilities are encouraged to register for the Emergency Call List by calling the Human Services Department.

COVID-19 Home Test Kits Distributed

Cars lined up at The Woodbridge Center for residents to pick up COVID-19 home test kits recently. The kits were distributed to those residents who may have had exposure to COVID-19, who were symptomatic, or for those who are in frequent contact with someone who is vulnerable. Many thanks to the Police Department for traffic coordination and assistance to the Human Services staff with the distribution. Thank you to Cathy and Tim Austin for their volunteer assistance as well. Test kits were also set aside for Woodbridge's most vulnerable residents. Those kits were distributed by a smaller drive thru event and by home delivery. Future distributions will be announced through the CT Alert system, the Town's website, e-newsletter, and social media. If you have questions about the test kits, you may call the Human Services Department.

Call (203) 389-3429 or email humanservices@woodbridgect.org

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TOWN DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES

Youth Services

BY NANCY PFUND



Snow Art Challenge for Woodbridge and Bethany Families



A Snow Art creation from last year's challenge

Bethany and Woodbridge families who find themselves looking for outdoor fun this winter can express their talents by entering in the Youth Services Snow Art Competition. Email a photo as an attachment of you and your family with your creation to youthone@woodbridgect.org. Prizes will be awarded for skill and creativity. Check the Town of Woodbridge website at <https://www.woodbridgect.org/160/Youth-Services> or see our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Woodbridge-Youth-Services-Woodbridge-CT-> for updates and prizewinners. Due date for photos is March 1, 2022. Sponsored by Woodbridge Youth Services and the Town of Bethany.

Job Bank

It's snow season. Residents may call to request teens to shovel or do odd jobs. Please plan for snow shoveling as the number of teens is limited. Teens who want paid work should contact Youth Services to schedule an interview. The Job Bank is a referral service for residents who offer odd jobs to resident teens ages 13 – 18.

Yale Teen Vaping Cessation Program

Call for information. Financial incentive available to help high school students end the vaping habit.

Amity Spartans Assist with Holiday Baskets



Amity students assist with Holiday Baskets for Woodbridge families

Several students under the guidance of Amity High School paraprofessional

Akeem Elliott-Lazarus assisted with the distribution of the holiday baskets to Woodbridge families in December. Their energy and enthusiasm were inspiring, and their generosity was much appreciated.

Delivery to New Reach Homeless Shelter



Sarah Pearson (right) delivers We Care Kits and Toys to New Reach Homeless Shelter in New Haven

Amity Middle and High School students and some residents contributed 170 kits and gift cards for the homeless. Sarah Pearson and Nancy Pfund of Woodbridge Youth Services delivered kits, gift cards, and many donated toys to the New Reach Shelter in New Haven for homeless families to bring cheer to those in need. Students who made kits were awarded community service hours for their efforts.



Paint Party a Success

Amity Middle School-Bethany after-school paint party hosted by Youth Services

Youth Services held a paint party in December as an after-school activity at Amity Middle School-Bethany Campus. Students created beautiful winter scenes on canvas under the patient instruction of Samantha Woodruff. Hot chocolate, snacks, and holiday music created a warm and serene atmosphere for the students. Watch for the next paint party in the school's newsletter and on the Youth Services Facebook page and the Town of Woodbridge website.

Call 203-389-3429 or email npfund@woodbridgect.org for information or to sign up for programs. Like us on Facebook: Woodbridge, CT Youth Services

Recreation News





Skating Rink

The Town's new ice-skating rink is located at the Center Road tennis courts, 149 Center Road, managed by the Recreation Department, and is open for the season, weather permitting. The rink is available for use daily, and the Recreation Department will provide lighting on selected Friday and Saturday evenings from dusk until 8:30 p.m. The dates will be listed on the Town's website when they become available.

"The Recreation Department would like to thank the Fire Department for providing the water for the ice-skating rink," said Recreation Director John Adamovich.

Spring Registration for Woodbridge Rec. Spring Programs will begin on Wednesday, February 23. Most programs begin the week of March 28. Programs include: bowling, basketball, Build with Ricky—a Lego program, ultimate team sports, Clay Date, cooking,

gymnastics, Kids Dig Farms—Massaro Farms program, Hip Hop Dance, Kumon, Little Scientists—science and coding class offered, running club, swim lessons, tennis and taekwondo. Also available are adult programs including badminton, yoga, and T'ai Chi. Ping Pong will be added to the adult classes offered this spring. For registration information, call 203-389-3446 or register online at woodbridgect.org beginning February 23. Visit the website for a complete listing of the program schedules.

Summer Concert Sponsor: Each year, the Town seeks corporate sponsors to help defray the costs of the concerts. If you would like to help and make a donation, contact the Recreation Department for the sponsorships available. Sponsors will be recognized at the concerts and will be listed on the Town website.





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PEACE OF MIND



"My mother had been living on her own after my father passed. Although she had been very active, she never really rebounded. She was later also diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease. She stopped participating in things she used to love, became nervous driving, and was anxious about being at home alone. It was time to make a change. I visited 13 communities before coming to Maplewood and was immediately impressed by how welcoming and beautiful it was. I felt the staff were real people; true caregivers, who were genuinely concerned about my mom's wellbeing. It took her six weeks to settle in. She started physical therapy and is working on strength training to continue to be mobile. She attends the group exercise classes, loves to play bridge, helps run the country store, and works on the welcoming committee. There is always something to keep her engaged and social. Living at Maplewood has reduced her anxiety and lessened the impact of the Parkinson's. She finally has her independence back."

— *Melanie*, Daughter of Resident

With a renowned reputation and unrivaled services and amenities, Maplewood Senior Living communities offer residents an exceptional lifestyle. No matter what our residents need, we provide the right level of support and the added peace of mind families are looking for.

Our Vistas™ program was designed specifically for those looking for some extra support in their daily lives. Expert caregivers are available to lend a hand with personal care, such as dressing, bathing, and grooming, or with more comprehensive support, such as medication oversight. We also offer a variety of health and wellness activities, a full schedule of social and cultural programs, fine dining experiences, scheduled transportation, and more. We take care of everything so our residents are free to explore their interests and pursue their passions.

MAPLEWOOD
Senior Living

Maplewood at Orange
245 Indian River Road | Orange, Connecticut 06477
203.795.3117 | MaplewoodAtOrange.com



How To Plan For Medical Emergencies

Medical emergencies pose a significant threat to human health. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, unintentional injuries accounted for more than 192,000 deaths in 2020. That marks a significant increase since 2015, when NCHS data indicates roughly 146,000 people died from unintentional injuries.

Unintentional injuries are not the only situations that qualify as medical emergencies, which also can result from sudden, life-threatening issues like heart attack or stroke. Knowing what to do in the wake of a medical emergency can reduce the likelihood that such instances end in tragedy. And though medical emergencies might be most often associated with aging men and women, such scenarios can affect anyone at any time. That means it's in everyone's best interest to learn how to plan for medical emergencies.

Document your medical history and keep printed documentation in an easily accessible place. Younger individuals likely won't have as much documentation regarding their medical histories, including existing conditions, medications and even previous emergencies. But all individuals should print out a document that includes a brief rundown of their medical histories, and keep the document in an easily accessible place so caretakers, spouses or roommates can quickly find it and share all relevant information with first responders.

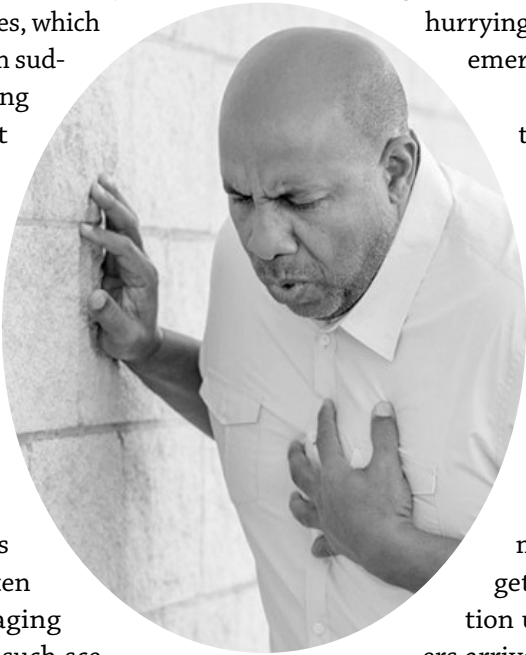
Pack an overnight bag. Aging men and women or young people with a

history of illness and/or medical emergencies should pack an overnight bag or ask their caretakers to pack one for them. Include pajamas, personal toiletries and other care items, and even some books or activity books so you have something to do should you require an extended stay in the hospital. Include a spare phone or device charger in your overnight bag, as it's easy to forget such items when you're hurrying out the door in an emergency situation.

Become CPR-certified. The medical experts at Med-Star Health recommend that individuals take classes for first aid and CPR. Such lessons can save lives and help anyone experiencing a medical emergency get immediate attention until first responders arrive to administer additional care. Some organizations may offer free CPR courses, while others, including the American Red Cross, offer training at affordable prices.

Map out the quickest route to the nearest emergency room. Modern drivers are accustomed to relying on their car's GPS systems to get from point A to point B. However, during a medical emergency it's ideal if individuals or caretakers already know where the nearest hospital is and how to get there. That removes uncertainties from the situation and ensures that precious seconds won't be wasted trying to get devices to connect with automobiles.

Medical emergencies can affect anyone at any time. Knowing what to do in such situations can save lives and increase the chances of a positive outcome.



HOUSES OF WORSHIP

The First Church of Christ – Woodbridge

The First Church of Christ welcomes you to our Worship Service every Sunday morning at 10:00 a.m. in the Meetinghouse.

Zoom Option: The option to attend Sunday Service via Zoom continues to be available. To receive an invite, please email the office or log on to our website and add your name to our church email list. All people in the community are welcome in person or via Zoom.

Live Stream: Sunday Service can be viewed on our website every Sunday at 10:00 a.m. A video recording of the live stream is featured for the entire week following the service. To view previous Sunday Services, visit our YouTube channel, using the link provided on all pages of our website. (Links, contact info, and a schedule of upcoming Services are listed at the bottom of this article.)

**If you would like assistance gaining access to Sunday Services, please call us by Friday morning, at 203-389-2119, or email us at office@uccw.org.*

Office Hours: The Church office in the Parish House is open from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Mondays through Fridays.



The First Church of Christ

extraordinary individual!
**The Rev. Janice Touloukian has graciously offered to continue on as our On Call Pastor, helping with visitations and congregational needs when Rev. Murtha is not available.*

Weekly Bible Study: Bible Study meets at the Parish House each Wednesday, 10:00 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. All are invited!

Join the FCCW Choir! New members are always welcome. Join us for rehearsals Wednesdays at 6:30PM.

Boy Scout Troop #907: Regular scout meetings are held every Thursday, at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish House. Stop by with the young man in your family (ages 11-17 years old) and meet our great scouts! New members are always welcome. For more information go to www.troop907.org.

Pre-school space is available: Pre-school/day care space is available in the Parish House at 5 Meetinghouse Lane. Three rooms, 1,200 sq. ft., and an outside fenced playground.

For More Information: Visit our website at www.uccw.org for resources such as our calendar of events, monthly newsletter, ministry and volunteer opportunities, photo galleries, scout info, and much more! Follow us on Facebook and stay up to date with parish happenings, including memorials and baptism announcements.

Feel free to email us or call the office with all your questions. We are happy to hear from you!

**For online or media related questions, please email JoAnna Rubino at growfirstchurch@gmail.com*



Sanctuary Décor Restoration: The John Canning Company has completed the Phase One sanctuary restoration. Please attend a Sunday service and see the restored ceiling, rosette, cornices, and the north wall. The new décor is glorious.

Interim Minister: FCCW is pleased to announce that we have found a very qualified candidate to fill the position of the Interim Minister. The Rev. Susan Murtha will be starting as of February 1, 2022. Visit the church office for more information. You can also read about her on our website or in our January newsletter. We are honored to welcome such an

FCCW SUNDAY SERVICE MINISTER SCHEDULE

Jan. 9 th	Rev. Walter Pitman
Jan. 16 th	Rev. Walter Pitman
Jan. 23 rd	Rev. Janice Touloukian
Jan. 30 th	Rev. Raquel Irizarry
Feb. 6 th	Rev. Susan Murtha
Feb. 13 th	Rev. Greg Mobley
Feb. 20 th	Rev. Susan Murtha
Feb. 27 th	Rev. Glenn Dulko

5 Meetinghouse Lane,
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www.facebook.com/uccwoodbridge

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ourladyofsorrowsct@yahoo.com

Facebook: @OurLadyOfSorrowsTraditional

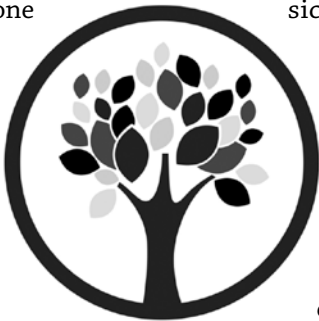
378 Spring St., Orange (off of Racebrook Rd)

HOUSES OF WORSHIP EVENTS

Congregation Beth El – Keser Israel Events

Tu Bishvat Seder

This Sunday, January 16, BEKI will celebrate Tu Bishvat, the New Year for Trees, with a Zoom Seder from 6:30 to 7:30 pm. To fully participate, prepare a glass of wine or grape juice and a dish of three things that grow on trees, such as almonds, walnuts, cashews, oranges, apples, pears, or olives. The program will include songs and videos to keep both adults and children engaged. This is one of BEKI's Synagogue Vegan Challenge events, supported by Vegfund. To request the Zoom link, email bulletin@beki.org.



Congregation Beth El - Keser Israel

sicology from the University of Chicago, regularly offers classes at BEKI about Jewish music. Tune in for some or all of the sessions, provided with support from the Morris & Sara Oppenheim Fund for Sacred Music. To request the Zoom link, email office@beki.org.

Services on Livestream

While all services continue to be held in person, Shabbat services will be live streamed in January at www.beki.org, on Fridays at 6:00 pm and Saturdays at 9:15 am. Weekday morning and evening services are available in person and on Zoom. To request the Zoom link, email office@beki.org. BEKI requests that only vaccinated people come to in-person services and that they wear a KN-95 or better mask.

Havdalah for Families

Children's Havura, K-2 Kehila, and Junior Congregation services have temporarily transitioned from Saturday mornings to Saturday evening Havdalah events. For more information, email Youth and Family Programming Director Annie Norman-Schiff at anormanschiff@beki.org.



Melodies for Prayer

Ethnomusicologist Rachel Adelstein is offering a 6-part program on Mondays at 8:00 pm, continuing through February 14, focusing on the origins and the evolution of tunes for Jewish prayers. Adelstein, who received her PhD in ethnomu-



What's New in Westville

Lizzy Donius, Executive Director of the Westville Village Renaissance Alliance, and Alisha Crutchfield-McLean, owner of Bloom, a new gathering space and retail shop on Edgewood Avenue, will answer questions about what's new in Westville at a BEKI Schmooze on Wednesday, February 2 at 7:30 pm. To request the Zoom link, email office@beki.org.



Art Conversation

Artist Bruce Oren will discuss his current exhibition of sculpture, photography and paintings, called "Entropy Warriors," in the BEKI galleries on Saturday, February 5 at 12:30 pm (snow date February 12). This retrospective exhibit displays 50 years of Oren's art. Sabbath rules will be observed. BEKI requests that only vaccinated people come into the building and that they wear a KN-95 or better mask.



Located at 85 Harrison Street (corner of Whalley Avenue - Route 63 - in Westville)

B'nai Jacob Book Group Discussion Led By Author Mirvis

The Book of Separation a Memoir by Tova Mirvis

Sunday, February 6 at 10 am on Zoom

A New York Times Book Review Editors' Choice - Featured on the New York Times Paperback Row.

One of Jewish Week's "Books To Read This Fall",

"Tova Mirvis has already established herself as a first-rate novelist with *The Ladies Auxiliary*, *The Outside World*, and *Visible City*. With *The Book of Separation: A Memoir*, Mirvis shifts genres, reveals some of the autobiographical germs of her fiction, and compellingly chronicles the process of separating from Orthodoxy... The respect for intra-Jewish difference that Mirvis models for her children—and for readers—is a precious gift to the Jewish literary world... Beautiful and poignant." — *Lilith Magazine*

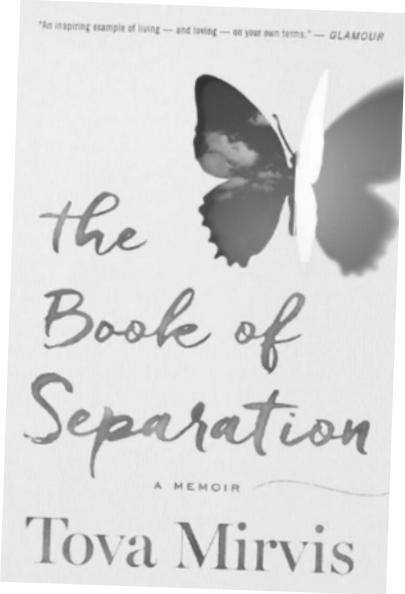
"Mirvis intimately chronicles her divorce and her separation from modern Orthodox Judaism in this bold memoir... Hers is a story of grief and

rebirth. She is compassionate and judicious in her portrayal of Orthodox Judaism... Her personal journey makes for an introspective and fascinating story." — *Publishers Weekly*

About the Author

Tova Mirvis is the author of the memoir *The Book of Separation* which was a New York Times Book Review Editor's Choice and was excerpted in the New York Times Modern Love Column. She is also the author of three novels, *Visible City*, *The Outside World* and *The Ladies Auxiliary* which was a national bestseller. Her essays have appeared in many publications including *The Washington Post*, *The Boston Globe Magazine*, *Real Simple*, and *Psychology Today*, and her fiction has been broadcast on NPR. She lives in Newton, MA with her family.

For more information contact Congregation B'nai Jacob at 203-389-21



Woodbridge Town News

ATTENTION CHURCHES, SYNAGOGUES, AND HOUSES OF WORSHIP!

Send us your organizations events listings and items of interest. We will publish them for free.

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https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/5212016

JAN. 22nd [SAT]

Doors 6:30 PM
Show 7:00 PM

WILEY ETTER DOYON ATTORNEYS

A New Year, New Numbers
to Keep in Mind for 2022

Estate and Gift Tax:

- The federal lifetime exemption for property passing to non-spouse beneficiaries has been increased to \$12.06 million.
- The Connecticut lifetime exemption for property passing to non-spouse beneficiaries has been increased to \$9,100,000.00.
- There is still an unlimited gift/estate deduction for property passing to a spouse; however, to qualify for the unlimited gift/estate tax deduction the spouse must be a U.S. citizen.
- The amount that can be gifted to any person without needing to file a gift tax return has been increased from \$15,000.00 to \$16,000.00 per recipient. Additional gifts can be made for qualified medical expenses and qualified education expenses without needing to file a gift tax return.

Long Term Care:

- If one spouse requires Medicaid and the other spouse remains at home (“Community Spouse”), the maximum amount of non-excluded assets the Community Spouse can keep has been increased to \$137,400.00.
- If one spouse requires Medicaid the minimum amount of non-excluded assets the Community Spouse can keep has been increased to \$27,480.00.
- If one spouse requires Medicaid the minimum amount of monthly income the Community Spouse can keep has been increased to \$2,117.50, and the maximum amount it can be increased to, without an administrative hearing, has been increased to \$3,435.00.
- If one spouse requires Medicaid the other spouse is living at home, the maximum amount of equity in the family home that can be excluded by the Community Spouse has been increased to \$955,000.00.

Long Term Care Provided in Your Home:

- The amount of gross monthly income you can have and still be eligible for the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders (CHCPE) has been increased to \$2,523.00.
- Use of a pooled trust for excess income to establish eligibility or to avoid co-pays remains a viable option.

If you are interested in learning more about how these 2022 numbers affect you and your family please visit our website and read our blog for recent posts. For advice specific to you or your family, please contact the office. We would be glad to meet with you for a no hassle, no charge initial consultation, no matter how long it lasts.



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DOLLAR\$ AND \$EN\$E

2022 Focus on
Financial Literacy

BY ROBERTA L. NESTOR

Is financial literacy an issue in this country? Just about anyone will tell you, yes, it is a problem and, one that is easily identifiable. The good news is that more programs are being developed to devise solutions that will start to ensure that more Americans understand how to make better financial decisions and lead more comfortable lives.

Let’s face it, we have all made bad financial decisions. We see it every day with ourselves, our children, and now, our grandchildren. Some of us may be victims of the Silent Generation—the generation that does not talk about money. Most families have discussions about how much things cost, but discussions on budgeting, buying on credit and managing debt are non-existent. Because the Silent Generation has been reluctant to talk about money, as a result today’s Baby Boomers and Gen Xers have struggled to make sound financial decisions. Likewise, most have not talked about money with their own children. And so, silence on this topic has been handed down creating a vicious circle of financial illiteracy.

Experian has a fair summary of financial literacy, “The goal of financial literacy is to establish a feeling of control over your finances while also using money as a tool to freely make choices that build greater life satisfaction, including the ability to navigate unexpected issues like job loss and to set and work toward financial goals.”

Think about it, if you are financially literate, you can understand how to allocate your income toward different goals simultaneously. This can mean juggling on-going expenses, savings, debt repayment, short- and long-term expenditures, and having a sufficient emergency fund. When you are financially literate, you possess the tools to evaluate credit cards, loans, mortgages, and eventually, investment opportunities.

Currently, only twenty states mandate high school classes for financial literacy (CT is not one of them). So, how do we get there and how do we guide our children? Of course, you can start by talking and having open discussions about money; however, this may be a foreign concept if you are part of the Silent Generation. Fortunately,

there are increased resources that can help get the discussions moving.

Let us start with The Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association (SIFMA). SIFMA is a not-for-profit trade association that represents securities brokerage firms, investment banking institutions, and other investment firms. The SIFMA Foundation is dedicated to fostering knowledge and understanding of the financial markets for individuals of all backgrounds. They provide the essential tools to help individuals increase their understanding of personal finance and make sound decisions that underpin lifelong success.

Instead of Robinhood, point your children or grandchildren in the direction of the SIFMA Stock Market Game. This is an online simulation of the global capital markets that engages students grades 4–12 in the world of economics, investing and personal finance, and prepares them for financially independent futures.” SIFMA provides all the curriculum and activity sheets.

There are many other organizations — The Foundation for Financial Planning; Invest in Girls; InvestmentNews; BNY Mellon and Pershing – established firms offering programs that seek to break the cycle of financial illiteracy and position Americans for a more successful financial future. If you are interested in getting involved, whether through direct participation or financially, reach out to one of these groups to learn more.

Roberta L. Nestor is a financial advisor practicing at 759 Boston Post Road in Milford, CT offering retirement, long term care, investment, and tax planning services. She offers securities and advisory services as a Registered Representative and Investment Adviser Representative of Commonwealth Financial Network – a member FINRA/SIPC and a Registered Investment Adviser. Fixed insurance products offered through Nestor Financial Network are separate and unrelated to Commonwealth. Commonwealth Financial Network or Nestor Financial Network does not provide legal or tax advice. You should consult a legal or tax professional regarding your individual situation. Roberta can be reached at Nestor Financial Network, 203-876-8066 or roberta@nestorfinancial.com.



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WOODBRIDGE LIBRARY

All information accurate at press time. Be sure to check our website woodbridgetownlibrary.org or call us before your visit for any changes to our hours or events.

Library Announcements

Our NEW Hours and Holiday Closings: The Library will be closed Monday, January 17 in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Our hours are changing! Starting Tuesday, January 18, we will return to our pre-pandemic hours: Monday through Thursday, 10 am to 8 pm; Friday and Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm. We hope to see more of you soon.

Library Information

Visit the Library website 24/7 to access digital resources - woodbridgetownlibrary.org

- What's available at the Library:
- › In-person browsing: come see all of the new books, audio-books, and DVDs;
 - › Computers: one hour per user; no appointment needed;
 - › Printing, copying, faxing, and scanning;
 - › Periodicals: recent newspapers and magazines;
 - › Reference help: including getting started/troubleshooting our digital library services (hoopla, Kanopy, Libby, Creativebug);
 - › Ancestry Library Edition: use this popular resource to explore your family history. Use our computers or bring your own device to work anywhere in the building on our wi-fi.

At this time, the Woodbridge Room is closed, however staff can retrieve items shelved there (magazines, poetry, plays, etc.). The study room is available for one-hour reservations; please call the reference desk to book your time. Seating throughout the Library is limited and no puzzles or children's toys are in use.

Call or email to place holds, ask questions, find out information, and more. Due to current staffing levels, you may need to leave a message if calling. Please leave a message, we WILL call you back!



WOODBRIDGE
TOWN LIBRARY

Department phones and emails

- › Adult Services/Reference: 203-389-3434; reference@woodbridgetownlibrary.org
- › Children's Department: 203-389-3439; childrens@woodbridgetownlibrary.org
- › Circulation/General info: 203-389-3433; circulation@woodbridgetownlibrary.org

Not sure who you need? Email ask-us@woodbridgetownlibrary.org

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- › Instagram: [@woodbridgetownlibrary](https://www.instagram.com/woodbridgetownlibrary)
- › TikTok: [@woodbridge_town_library](https://www.tiktok.com/@woodbridge_town_library)

Library Events

Art Exhibits have returned to the Library's Meeting Room! Our first artist is Glen Kapostas, whose art will be on exhibit during January. Stop by the meeting room during open hours, check out his work! See more about him: <https://woodbridge.lioninc.org/art-exhibits-return-to-the-library/>.

We will be featuring a different artist every month; stop by and check out these talented artists. Interested in having your artwork displayed? Fill out the form here: <https://woodbridge.lioninc.org/events/art-exhibits/> Contact Kira Edic at kedic@woodbridgetownlibrary.org for more information.

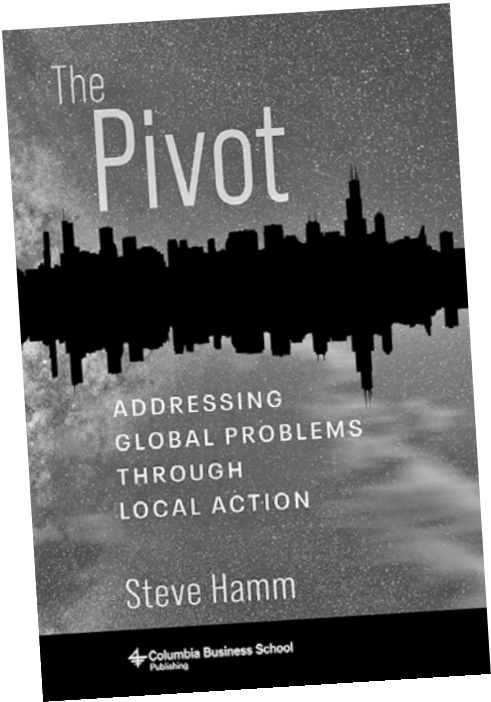
From Adult Services

Ancestry at Home has ended – Remote access for Ancestry Library Edition was disabled at the end of 2021, per the company's request, after they decided to end at home use. Patrons are welcome to return to the library to access Ancestry Library Edition through our computers or within the building with your own laptop, tablet, or mobile phone via our wi-fi.

Adult Winter Reading – There's still time to participate in Adult Winter Reading! Read books and complete challenges to win prizes through Feb-

ruary 28th. For more information, call or email the Reference Desk.

NEW DATE! Mindless to Mindful Eating Makeover – Postponed until March 10 at 7 pm in the Meeting Room. Learn healthier behaviors and how to create goals for improved personal habits in relation to food. Registration required. (Originally scheduled for January 20.)



It's Time to Pivot – February 23, 6:30 pm in the Meeting Room. New Haven author and documentary maker Steve Hamm returns to the library with a program aimed at fostering action on climate change. He will talk about the need for action and the forms it can take as he explored them to write his new book, *The Pivot: Addressing Global Problems Through Local Action*. The book follows the journey of Pivot Projects, a collaboration launched at the beginning of the COVID crisis aimed at helping the world – and communities – become more sustainable and resilient. Through his involvement in Pivot Projects, Steve also produced a documentary, *A River Speaks*, focusing on Connecticut's Mill River, and which he will screen at the library. Taken together, the book and video are a call to action for society, to pivot to becoming

more sustainable and, for individuals, to become climate activists.

From The Children's Department

IMPORTANT! Our indoor programming is canceled until the latest Covid surge decreases—including weekly morning story times and Monday/Thursday craft times.

Poetry Craft continues! The next bags will be ready the third week of January—register online to get your kit!

Winter Craft Kits: Available every 2 weeks now though the end of March. Participants must sign up online for each date they wish to receive a craft kit; registration is on a first come, first served basis. Kits will be held for one week for pick up in the children's department.

NEW! Eager Readers K-2 at home book discussion group. Our popular reading program moves home Pick up the book, discussion questions, and a simple craft to do together at home with parents or caregivers. This program is for students in K-2 only. Register online monthly.

Coming in February

Chinese New Year crafts will be available in person at the children's desk beginning the last week of January through the first week of February. Stop by the desk and ask for a craft to take and make at home!

Valentine STEAM kits and craft kits will be available for pick up in the children's dept. beginning February 7th through the 14th. Online registration is required for each take home activity.

News From The Friends Of The Library

The Friends Bookstore Alley is open anytime the library is, with ever-changing displays and fresh inventory. We can't wait to see you!

You can also lend support by shopping on Amazon via Amazon Smile, and selecting Friends of the Woodbridge Library as your designated charity. The Friends also accept donations via PayPal. Supporting the Friends supports the Library—thank you!





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Woodbridge Education Association Scholarships

Education, Music or Technology Scholarship in honor of Rick Wood: \$500
Awarded to a graduating Amity senior who attended Beecher Road School and is planning on attending secondary education to pursue a career in education, music or technology. The scholarship will be awarded based on criteria exhibited within the application and overall embodiment of the spirit of BRS.

Global Citizen Scholarship in honor of Kevin Kucinkas: \$500
Awarded to a graduating Amity senior who attended Beecher Road School and who is planning on attending secondary education in the fall. This award is based on a desire to be involved in the global community, whether that be through global issues, the environment, education, activism, or any other endeavors. The scholarship will be awarded based on criteria exhibited within the application and overall embodiment of the spirit of BRS.

Future Educator and Community Service Scholarship in honor of Ann D’Addio: \$500
Awarded to a graduating Amity senior who attended Beecher Road School and is planning on attending secondary education to pursue a career in teaching. This award is based on scholarship and community service. The scholarship will be awarded based on criteria exhibited within the application and overall embodiment of the spirit of BRS.

To apply for any of these scholarships, please complete a Scholarship Application online at: bit.ly/wea2022
All recipients will hear back by the first week in March.

Simple Strategies To Combat Stress

Just about everyone experiences stressful situations. Sometimes a measure of stress can provide motivation to do one’s best or strive for an especially lofty goal. However, when stress becomes a chronic condition, it can adversely affect individuals’ quality of life and even their overall health.

Harvard Medical School says stress can manifest itself in myriad ways. Stress can cause tension headaches, indigestion, aches and pains, or even heart palpitations, and it may affect the mind by making it hard to concentrate or make decisions. Many people experience stress through emotional or psychological symptoms, such as irritability or feeling down. Learning how to effectively manage stress is essential for individuals’ overall well-being.

Exercise Regularly
Exercise serves many functions, including acting as a potent stress relief strategy. The Cleveland Clinic says aerobic exercise releases endorphins, which are natural substances that help a person feel better and maintain a positive attitude. Movement activities like yoga or Tai Chi also can relax the mind and body and promote physical health.

Take Media Breaks
Overwhelming oneself with a barrage of negative news stories or constant information can increase stress levels. Individuals can strive to remain informed and still build breaks into their schedules. Shut off news programs, turn over the newspaper or tune out of social media from time to time. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that individuals who are stressed out by world events reduce the number of times they read the news or check the headlines each day.


Meditate or Perform Breathing Exercises
Breathing and meditation can help alleviate stress, according to the American Heart Association. A quick meditation can provide some perspective. If a situation is stressful, go for a walk or take a few slow, deep breaths until the body relaxes. Harvard Medical School also says meditation can induce a relaxation response, which is an antidote to stress.

Change Negatives to Positives
Negative self-talk may increase stress, but positive self-talk can help a person calm down. Individuals should practice positive self-talk every day. Instead of saying, “I hate when this happens,” say, “I know how to deal with this, I’ve done it before.”

A small amount of periodic stress can be a good thing. However, chronic stress poses a significant threat to individuals’ long-term health.

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Age-Based Health Screening Guidelines

Early detection is crucial to overcoming serious illnesses. Preventive care is something parents prioritize when raising children, but it's a crucial component of healthy living as an adult as well.

Health professionals recommend various age-specific screenings and tests, and these can serve as a guideline for individuals as they navigate adulthood. The following age-specific health screening recommendations, courtesy of Beaumont Health and Columbia Doctors Primary Care, can serve as an preventive care guideline, though doctors may advise patients to get more frequent screenings depending on their medical histories.

18 to 39 years old

- › **Cholesterol:** A cholesterol check should occur around age 20, then every five years until age 35. Afterward it can occur annually.
- › **Skin screening:** An annual full body screening will identify any suspicious moles or skin lesions.
- › **Cervical cancer:** Women in this age range should receive a Pap smear every three years and an annual pelvic exam.
- › **Breast exam:** Self-examination of the breasts and examination by a clinical provider should take place every year.
- › **Testicular exam:** Men should con-

duct self exams for testicular abnormalities. Doctors may examine the testicles during annual physicals as well.

- › **Tdap vaccine:** All adults should get the Tdap vaccine if they did not receive it as an adolescent to protect against pertussis, and then a Td (tetanus, diphtheria) booster shot every 10 years.
- › **HPV vaccine:** The human papilloma virus vaccine is recommended if you did not receive it as an adolescent.

40 to 64

- › **Zoster (Shingles) vaccine:** Two doses of this vaccine will be administered between two and six months apart starting at age 50 and up.
- › **Colorectal screening:** A colonoscopy to detect any colorectal illnesses is recommended beginning at age 50.
- › **Prostate screening:** Prostate screenings begin at age 50 unless you are a high-risk individual, in which case screenings begin at age 40.
- › **Osteoporosis:** Doctors may recommend a bone density test and osteoporosis screening at age 50 and up if certain risk factors are present.
- › **Lung cancer screening:** If you are a past or current smoker, it's wise to have an annual lung cancer screening. The American Lung Association says adults age 55 and up can have this screening covered by health



- › **insurance.**
- › **Mammogram:** Women should begin receiving annual mammograms at age 40.

65 years and older

- › **Cervical cancer:** Most women can stop getting Pap smears at this age if they have no history of cervical cancer. Women who have had a hysterectomy may no longer need pelvic exams after age 65.
- › **Pneumococcal and pneumonia vaccines:** These are recommended every five years for certain condi-

- tions and risk factors.
- › **Cognitive health:** Doctors may assess your cognitive health to see if there are any risk factors for dementias.
- In addition to these screenings, doctors may conduct annual depression screenings to assess mental health. Routine blood glucose monitoring may be necessary based on risk factors for diabetes.

Individuals are urged to speak to their doctors to map out a health screening schedule specific to their needs.

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How To Prepare For An Extended Power Outage

Planning ahead can help make adverse situations more manageable. Such is the case when storms strike and the power goes out. Extended power outages may not be pleasant, but some proactive planning can make it easier to withstand blackouts.

Establish a local support network. Support can be just as valuable as supplies when confronting power outages. The American Red Cross urges individuals to identify people who can help them during an extended power outage. Such individuals may help you stay at home or evacuate if the power will be out for a lengthy period of time. Support networks can include relatives who live in nearby towns, but also neighbors. A single street can be served by different substations and main power lines, so friends or neighbor across the street may keep their power when your house does not, or vice versa. When the power goes out, support networks can pool their resources in various ways, including sharing refrigerators or allowing neighbors without power to access the internet. Such support makes it easier for everyone to get through the outage with as little interruption to their lives as possible.

Print a list of important contacts. If the power is out, it's only a matter of time before smartphones lose their battery power. Phones can always be plugged into vehicles to get a quick power boost, but that's not the most practical way to keep phones charged, especially if local roads are closed. A printed list of important contacts, including nearby relatives like seniors who may be incapacitated, doctors

and school officials, ensures people whose phone batteries have died can still contact their loved ones and other important individuals so long as they can use a neighbor's or a loved one's phone.

Learn to use your generator. Consumer Reports notes that improper operation of a generator can quickly prove deadly. If carbon monoxide concentrations are too high, individuals can lose their lives in as little as five minutes. And this is no insignificant threat, as the Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that 95 people died from generator-associated carbon monoxide poisoning in 2017. CR recommends operating generators at least 20 feet away from the house. Individuals should familiarize themselves with their generators upon purchasing them so they aren't forced to endure a trial by fire when the power goes out.

Stock up on essentials. The Red Cross recommends keeping a two-week supply of nonperishable food and water in the house, making sure to date each container of water and replace it every six months. Keep some extra coolers in the house so food can be stored on ice before it spoils in the refrigerator or freezer. In addition, make sure there's enough blankets in the house to keep everyone warm overnight, as it's not safe to use outdoor heaters indoors. Stock up on battery-powered lights and candles to light the house at night, but make sure all candles are extinguished before going to bed.

Extended power outages can be a nuisance. Planning for such outages in advance can make blackouts more manageable.



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