

Woodbridge Town News



Woodbridge's Exclusive Newspaper

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VOL. 10 – ISSUE 1

CIRCULATION 3649

FRIDAY, JANUARY 15, 2021



Looking Ahead To 2021

TOWN FACES CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

BY BETTINA THIEL

WOODBRIDGE TOWN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

With many major projects in the air, First Selectman Beth Heller and the crew at Town Hall are facing a busy year. "We are looking at challenges AND opportunities," she said, as she was looking at what's ahead in 2021.

Among the opportunities she mentioned solar panels that will be installed on the firehouse and the Sheehy Public Works Building. The project is being managed and financed through the Connecticut Green Bank, which will own and maintain the system. The town will buy the energy from them, at considerable cost savings over the next 20 years.

Flooding study: Another major opportunity for the town is the prospect of moving ahead with flood mitigation efforts along the West River corridor and Litchfield Turnpike. The First Selectman had just received word from US Rep. Rosa DeLauro's office that federal funds were allocated in the Water Resources Development Act

for a feasibility study for flood risk management projects in that area. The study will be done by the Army Corps of Engineers.

Many steps have been undertaken in the last 10 years to prevent flooding in the area, including removing a part of the dam in Westville, and replacing the Merritt Ave. bridge. Each of these steps has helped improve the situation, but flooding still occurs occasionally. Two years ago, the First Selectman invited Congresswoman DeLauro and representatives from the Army Corps to tour the area and hear from homeowners and from businesses in the area, in the wake of a major flooding event in September 2018.

The flooding was not only caused by the West River flooding its banks, but from rain runoff coming down the hill from Amity Road, and flooding residences and parking lots before it ever reached the river. Mitigation efforts will have to take a multi-pronged ap-

See "Looking Ahead" On Page 13

Beecher School To See Some Turnover

BY BETTINA THIEL

WOODBRIDGE TOWN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Newly installed Woodbridge School Supt. Dr. Jonathan Budd at the December meeting of the Board of Education announced a number of teacher retirements to occur at the end of this school year. Retiring are long-time teacher Peter Halsey, math specialist Jean Molot, Kindergarten teacher Jeanne Dempsey, and Library Media specialist Lori Patrick.; also, teaching assistants Jill Brostrom and Marie Sposa; and administrative assistant Judy Mays.

"Together, they represent 183 years of dedicated service to the Woodbridge School District," Dr. Budd said. He emphasized how he had been compelled by the excellence of Beecher staff, including the experience and expertise represented by these individuals. "The observations I will share are informed by my impressions, as well as input

from Principal Analisa Sherman, Assistant Principal Doreen Merrill, and Director of Special Services, Cheryl Kiesel, who join with me in expressing their bittersweet feelings at announcing these retirements.

Judy Mays will be retiring after 17 years of dedicated service as administrative assistant for the Special Services Department. Judy has been called the "backbone" of that department, knowing every family's preferences, and keeping every aspect of the department's functioning very well-organized.

Marie Sposa will be retiring after 32 years of dedicated service as a teaching assistant. Marie is universally described as dedicated to her work, including arriving early and responding promptly to all requests for assistance.

See "Beecher" On Page 4



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

As of Monday, December 14, 2020, the Library is CLOSED to the public, due to rising cases of COVID-19 in Woodbridge. Library staff is in the building to answer your questions and provide EXTENDED Park & Pickup service. The book drop is also open!

Park & Pickup Has Been Expanded!

Park & Pickup hours are NOW Monday & Thursday, 10 am to 7 pm, and Tuesday/Wednesday/Friday, 10 am to 5 pm.

Park & Pickup remains in the Friends' Meeting Room. Please use the doors on the right side of the library. Passage from the meeting room to the library is not permitted. Remember to wait until you hear from the Library before coming to pick up your order. Your online account may not always be accurate!

If you are returning items, please use the outdoor book drop, located to the left of the front doors. The return bin inside of the Meeting Room is currently unavailable.

Can't Make It In? Remote Library Service Available

Phones and emails are answered by staff Monday – Friday, 10 am to 5 pm. Place holds, ask questions, find out information, and more even when the Library is not open for Express Service.

Introducing a New Program for Kids: POETRYCRAFT

Twice a month, take home a copy of a poem from the book The Proper Way to Meet A Hedgehog, along with a coordinating craft kit. Read and discuss the poem together, then make a piece of art using the materials provided. Send us pictures of your art making and reading time with your family!

OPEN TO ALL AGES, REGISTRATION REQUIRED EACH MONTH. Call or email us to register, and your kits will be placed in the Meeting Room (with Park & Pickup). More details available on our website.

The Children's Department is delighted to provide materials for homework assignments and pleasure reading/listening via Park & Pickup or during Express Service. Place holds via your online account, or contact us if you need suggestions or ideas.

Adult Services is also here to as-

sist with reading and listening suggestions! If you're in a reading slump and want something new or just want to challenge the staff to see what we'd select for you, call or email us! We will ask you a few questions to get us started and then we'll get back to you with a bunch of (hopefully) new to you titles!

Attention Book Clubs: Still meeting, but via Zoom? Tired of spending money on a book you'll read once and possibly not like? The Library has nearly 50 book club sets of popular titles. Each set contains at least 6 copies regular print, 2 copies large print, and an audiobook. Several sets have many more copies of each format. Take out one copy or the full set, or anything in between. Contact the Reference Desk for more information or see the list of sets here: <https://wd.catalog.lionlibraries.org/MyAccount/MyList/1436>.

Department phones and emails:

- Adult Services/Reference: 203-389-3434 wbrstaff@lioninc.org;
- Children's Department: 203-389-3439 childrensprogramslioninc.org;
- Circulation/General info: 203-389-3433 askus@woodbridgetownlibrary.org.

Long Overdue Items

Please return outstanding items as soon as possible, even if they are BILLED on your library account. No replacement costs will be charged, but the items need to come back. The book drop is open 24/7; items will be quarantined for 96 hours, in accordance with new guidelines. No fines will be charged for late items. Fines or bills on your account will be waived— simply call us to remove charges.

Are you on our email list?

Sign up to get alerts about our events, new offerings, and any updates about reopening. Go to our website: woodbridgetownlibrary.org and scroll to the very bottom. Enter your email address and you'll start receiving our emails! We typically only send one email per week.

The Friends of the Library thank the Woodbridge Community for their donations in October. They will not be taking further book donations until possibly Spring 2021. You are welcome to make a monetary contribution to the Friends via PayPal. More information: www.woodbridge.lioninc.org/about/friends-of-the-library/.

State Representative Mary Welander Sworn In

Representative Mary Welander (D-Orange, Derby, Woodbridge) was sworn in today to represent the 114th House District, encompassing Orange, Derby, Woodbridge for the General Assembly's 2021 session. "I am honored to represent the voices of Orange, Derby, and Woodbridge. While this legislative session will have unique challenges, I see an opportunity for more creative forms of collaboration and problem solving. After two decades of the same leadership, I look forward to bringing fresh perspectives and new solutions to the 114th District," Rep. Welander said.

As the President of her PTA and former member of the Orange Board of Education, Rep. Welander will advocate for equal access to quality education. She is committed to supporting small businesses, creating jobs, and

exploring any opportunity to encourage economic growth. As a mother of three school aged children, Rep. Welander understands the hardships that working families have faced during the pandemic, and she will ensure continued support for these families, and small businesses.

Rep. Welander encourages residents of Orange, Derby and Woodbridge to contact her at the Capitol via email at Mary.Welander@cga.ct.gov or via phone at 860-240-8500 any time with their opinions on pending legislation, ideas for enhancing State Government, or if assistance is needed navigating any issues with state agencies.

Rep. Welander has been appointed as the Vice Chair of the Committee on Children. She will also serve as a member of the Education Committee, and the Regulation Review Committee.

Virtual Welcome Coffee

All new residents are invited to a virtual Welcome Coffee on Friday, January 29 at 9:30 a.m. organized by the ad hoc Community Council. First Selectman Beth Heller created the Community Council to organize events and other opportunities for Woodbridge residents to interact, learn about each other's culture, create community and celebrate Woodbridge.

"We know it takes a while for people to feel part of a new community, and we'd like to help ease that transition," says Community Council co-chair

Debbie Brander. "It must be especially hard during a pandemic. We hope this is the first in a series of welcome coffees that will help new and new-ish residents feel more connected to Woodbridge."

Due to the pandemic, homes are selling quickly, and Woodbridge has many new residents. If you consider yourself to be a new resident, please attend this welcome coffee – (registration link is on the Town's website) and review the "new resident" welcome guide (also on the Town's website).

"Beecher" From Page 1

Jill Brostrom will be retiring after 34 years of dedicated service as a teaching assistant. Jill's knowledge and organization has supported many aspects of Beecher, including its library media center, where she was always willing to lend a hand.

Jean Molot will be retiring after 16 years of dedicated service as a math specialist. Characterized as deeply knowledgeable and passionate about math, Jean has cared deeply for the students with whom she has worked. She has also helped our classroom teachers develop curriculum and assessment resources for math that have evolved as our state and national standards have advanced.

Lori Patrick will be retiring after 24 years of dedicated service as a library media specialist. Lori's dedication has helped make the Stella Library/Media Center the hub of the school that it is today. I am told that Lori could help any student find a book in which the

student was interested, even when the request was crazy or bizarre or unique. In classrooms across our school, Lori's expertise with book selection has been felt and appreciated.

Peter Halsey will be retiring after 26 years of dedicated service as a classroom teacher, most recently at grade 2. A regional and national expert on Responsive Classroom, Peter has brought to Beecher exactly those qualities important to that program: good listening, thoughtful reflection, interest in every single student and colleague to the person's core. Peter's incredible dedication to all aspects of the Beecher community has been unparalleled.

The board accepted the retirements, "with regret." Board Chairman Lynn Piascyk, herself a long-time Beecher teacher, got emotional when acknowledging the vote. "It touches my heart," to say farewell to longtime friends and colleagues. "But I must tell them, retirement is filled with wonderful opportunities," she said.

Woodbridge Town News

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Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1126, Orange, CT 06477
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Publisher Rocky Salperto
Editor Marlene Silverstein
Production & Design J. Michael Kriz
Correspondents Melissa Nicefaro | Bettina Theil
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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 12 Valentine's Day Issue.....	February 5
March 12 St. Patrick's Day Issue.....	March 5
April 2 Easter and Passover Issue.....	March 26

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

FROM OUR READERS

Thoughts on the OCA in Woodbridge

After reading our town news correspondent, Bettina Thiel's report about OCA's challenges to our town's zoning, it got me quite upset during this holiday season.

OCA applied to build a 4-unit "affordable" complex house on a single septic system; it will certainly cause maintenance problems and risk to the local environment in the future. And to adapt to such affordable houses being built throughout our town, OCA asks our town to do infrastructure (such as public transportation, sewer, etc.) to meet requirements for such changes. It will force our current residents, who already lost their property value and suffer problems of increasing populations (such as traffic, crowded school classrooms, decline in education quality, and even security issues, etc.) due to such changes, to pay the major portion of the cost. Why do our current residents have to pay such prices to accommodate their communist's idea? Is this fair?

Just wondering if someone came to Yale and asked Yale to change its admission policy and criteria to the same as other colleges in the area so everyone can get into Yale if they qualify to enter other colleges in CT! What will Yale's response be? Will OCA let it happen?

It is not really helping people by dragging down other people because after such irresponsible and destructive changes, our town will lose its value and character and become indistinguishable from any other towns in the area; and people who live in such affordable houses will ask themselves why did they make such an effort to get into Woodbridge which is no better than any other town anymore?

If OCA really wants to make some people live better, why doesn't OCA focus on generating new good job opportunities for them so they can work hard to make a good living. This is what

most of our current residents do-work very hard to maintain a quality living standard here.

Our selectwomen/selectmen please represent and defend the interest of the majority of our current residents who voted to maintain our town's zone unchanged each time of every survey. If a majority of a town should not decide their town's zoning, who should? *Yanchun He*

Are Apartments the Answer?

The notion of moving to Woodbridge by some New Haven families whose income is only 60 to 80 percent of the medium income is a worthy aspiration. It would not only help those moving to Woodbridge, but it would also bring diversity that would foster an understanding of others - a skill that would be valuable to the youth... and the adults of Woodbridge.

But the well-meaning proponents of the new apartment zoning laws have got it all wrong. Living in a home and living in an apartment are two entirely different things. A person living in a home is king (or queen) of the castle. They plant flowers, they mow the lawn, they put a swing in the back yard for their kids; they do thousands of things - it's their castle. An apartment dweller has none of that. They can't make too much noise. And can't do many other things, and possibly can't even have a dog. Basically, they just have an interior space and a car waiting to take them someplace else. Additionally, these families will want to fit in, but as apartment dwellers it will be tough. If these families are to simply live in apartments, they just as well live in Westville where they can walk to the store and have their kids bused to Woodbridge.

The answer is to rent actual Woodbridge homes to the said low income

See "Letters" On Page 8

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.

From the First Selectman BY BETH HELLER



Happy New Year - I hope you all are happy and healthy, and I sincerely hope this year is better than last!

We are planning for the Town of Woodbridge to become a vaccination site for Phase 1b, and we are waiting on guidance and instruction from the State. As soon as we have more information, we will share it with you! Once the vaccination clinic dates are finalized, seniors 75+ will be notified. Please use the form on the Town website (www.woodbridgect.org) to share your contact information with us for this purpose. If you do not have computer access, please contact The Center at 203-389-3430.

The Town is also offering two more walk-up (no appointment needed) COVID testing dates on Sunday, 1/17 and Sunday, 2/14 from 1:30-4:30 pm at the Center Building Gym (4 Meetinghouse Lane). I encourage you to take advantage of this program. These free tests are to help identify people who are asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic. If you have been exposed to COVID-19 or think you have symptoms, please call your doctor.

Also related to COVID-19 the Town is again offering a Tax Deferment Program under Governor Lamont's Executive Order 9R. This program is for eligible taxpayers impacted by COVID-19, by application only, which will apply to municipal taxes due on January 1, 2021. The effect of this program is the equivalent of an extended grace period. The application is due January 20, 2021 and can be found on the Town website along with more program details.

In response to COVID-19, the Economic Development Commission has found a creative way to encourage residents to support our local businesses through "Woodbridge Bucks." This February, the EDC will hold weekly drawings to give out hundreds of dollars in Woodbridge Bucks to be spent locally. Woodbridge Bucks may be spent at local participating businesses. To enter the drawings residents must reply to the weekly posts on the Town's Facebook page (like or follow us here: www.facebook.com/woodbridgect) soliciting positive local business reviews and recommendations. People may also submit recently written positive Yelp or Google reviews of local businesses to the EDC via email (byagla@woodbridgect.org) or mail them to Betsy Yagla; 11 Meetinghouse Lane; Woodbridge CT 06525.

The Economic Development Commission is also encouraging residents and businesses to complete surveys. Both can be found on the Town's business website (www.woodbridgect.org/business). I thank the Commission for all these creative ideas and efforts to encourage everyone to shop, dine and try Woodbridge.

The Town Plan & Zoning (TPZ) Commission has also been very busy

with two major issues. The first is a proposal to relocate the award-winning and very popular New England Brewing from its current location on Amity Road to the corner of Bradley and Litchfield. I am very excited that the brewery plans to stay in Woodbridge - they had been courted by several area towns. The move will allow the Brewery to expand operations and capacity. I believe that nearby businesses will see a positive effect, and I am hopeful this may spur additional development.

TPZ is also in the middle of holding hearings to consider an application to amend the Zoning Regulations and the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development to permit multi-family housing in most of the Town's residential districts, with affordable units. You may view the application, other documents, and videos of both Public Hearings on the Town Plan & Zoning Commission page on the Town website (woodbridgect.org) in the "Government" section.

The Public Hearing has again been continued to February 1, and you may submit comments virtually or by email to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission at ksullivan@woodbridgect.org prior to February 1. Please DO NOT directly contact commission members about the application. You may watch the hearings live on local access cable Channel 79, on Youtube or via Webex - the link will be included in the meeting agenda on our Town website.

I am confident that the Zoning Commission will review the application in a fair, thorough and thoughtful way, and provide an opportunity for all sides to be heard. I am equally confident that Woodbridge will remain the wonderful community that we have all come to love.

We continue to work against the proposal to construct a cell tower in a residential neighborhood here in Town. This is a private transaction between a Town resident and Verizon/Cellco. The Board of Selectmen hired an attorney and consulting engineer to advise the Town in its opposition to location of the tower in a residential neighborhood. The final decision regarding placement of the tower rests with the State Citing Council. The Board is not opposed to a new cell tower located in Woodbridge but believe it should NOT be in a residential neighborhood. We continue to explore alternative locations to find an appropriate and suitable site to provide reliable cell service in this area without impacting our neighborhoods.

Last month at our Regular meeting, the Board of Selectmen discussed a possible bond project to upgrade the Senior Center (with assistance from a State grant), replace three leaky roofs

See "First Selectman" On Page 7

WOODBIDGE CENTER



The Woodbridge Center hosted 112 visitors in its drive through Holiday Lunch in mid-December. The event was sponsored by the Rotary Club and catered by Lasse's Restaurant. Stay tuned for the next drive-through event on February 2.

The Woodbridge Center has a new Director! Kristy Moriarty has been named Woodbridge Center Director. Kristy is a Woodbridge resident and has been The Center's Clerical Program Assistant for the past 20 months. Prior to working at the Center, Kristy volunteered for a year earning her the Human Services Volunteer of the Year award. According to Kristy, "I have thoroughly loved my time working at The Center and look forward to working in my new role as Director."

We hope you'll join us in congratulating Kristy on this terrific accomplishment!

Drive-Thru Holidays Party: Come on Ground Hog Day, February 2 from 12-1 pm, to celebrate a 'Super Maskcarade New Year Party with Love'. This fun drive-thru event is sponsored by Coachman Square of Woodbridge and celebrates the Super Bowl, Mardi Gras, Chinese New Year, and Valentine's Day. Hearty soup, a craft provided by the Yale China Assoc. and The Eli Whitney Museum, chocolate and other treats will be part of this unique winter pick-me-up. RSVP by January 19.

Get to the Point of Health Lecture Series: This free Zoom lecture series will offer informative facts focused on various health topics beginning mid-February. The first lecture, "An Update on the Coronavirus", presented by QVHD, will provide current information on the vaccine including the effectiveness, how long before it is fully effective and safety measures to maintain after vaccination. Mitigation strategies and how to care for someone who has COVID will also be addressed. An opportunity to ask questions will follow. Call for more information and to sign up.

Mindfulness Class: This 6-week class will be taught by Dr. Jennifer Botwick of the New Haven Naturopathic Center. The class will run on Wednesday afternoons via zoom. Mindfulness can help relieve stress, lower blood pressure, reduce chronic pain, improve sleep and health. The fee is \$30.00, please call the Center for dates and times and to sign up for the class.

Target Strength Training: Sign

up for a weekly Targeted Strength Training zoom class with Michele Tenney. Offered on Mondays, 8:30-9:30am, the new 8-week session will begin February 8. The fee of \$40.00 may be mailed or dropped off to The Woodbridge Center. Each week you'll be provided with an email link for access to the next class. Try a free trial class or join the current class for a prorated cost of \$15. All fitness levels are welcomed as the instructor makes individual accommodations as needed. Call to register.

YOPA is a combination of yoga (balance), pilates (core work) and stretching (flexibility) for all fitness levels. Michele Tenney will lead this class on Zoom on Tuesday mornings from 9-10am beginning February 9. 8-week session/\$40. Call for more information and to sign up.

Tai Ji Quan Moving for Better Balance: Try this variation of T'ai Chi offered as a Zoom class through the VNA. The beginners' class will meet on Wednesdays 9:30-10:15am from 1/13-3/31. The advanced class will meet on Fridays 9:30-10:15am from 1/15-4/2. The cost is \$30/12-week session. Sign up at: www.connecticuthomecare.org/calendar/ or call the Center with questions,

Exercise with Laurie continues to run on GATV channel-79 on Tuesday and Thursday mornings at 10am. Enjoy a great workout in the comfort of your home!

Transportation for medical appointments is available for those 60+ or disabled Monday - Friday from 9:00am to 2:30pm (with some limited exceptions). Transportation for grocery shopping and pharmacy pick-up is also available. Call to arrange transportation for all. For safety reasons, masks are required, and temperatures will be taken. Please know the vehicle is cleaned between each use.

Meals: Seniors may reserve flash frozen meals (\$5/ meal) by noon on Monday for delivery to your home on Tuesday. Choose from a wide variety of options including Tortellini Alfredo,

See "Woodbridge Center" On Page 21

WOODBRIDGE EDUCATION ROUNDUP

Amity Superintendent Addresses 2019 Budget Surplus

Amity School Supt. Dr. Jennifer Byars had the following comments regarding the surplus at the end of the 2020 school year, “Many school districts (if not most) had significant surpluses at the end of the school year last year because we were closed for a quarter of the school year and many programs were not operating,” she wrote.

It should also be noted that the District returned close to \$2 million to the member towns, as follows:

Bethany	\$358,085;
Orange	\$992,321;
Woodbridge	\$600,371;
Total	\$1,950,777

The Amity Finance Committee and Board of Education approved the transfer of \$495,482 (1%) of the FY20 budget surplus into the Capital and Non-recurring account. “School districts are permitted to maintain a capital non-recurring account for larger projects and statutorily, regional school districts may designate funds remaining at the end of the school year to that account to pay for capital improvements,” Dr. Byars wrote. “This helps taxpayers because those improvements can be paid for without the need to take out bonds and pay interest.”

Regional school districts are permitted to put no more than 1% of the unspent funds into the capital non-recurring account.

According to a memo from Amity Finance Director Theresa Lumas, end-of-year purchases (EOY) of \$515,077 included the following:

Self-Insurance Fund (\$229,311)

- The suspension of routine exams, diagnostic tests, dental appointments, and non-emergency surgeries reduced

the medical claims for the final quarter of FY20. It is anticipated that once the State reopens the missed procedures will be scheduled, as well as those of age and need for the current year, and in a worst-case scenario claims could rise due to COVID-19 treatments as the District reopens.

By raising the medical insurance fund, the district increases its reserve from a 25% threshold of claims to 30% on a temporary basis for one year. If funds are not needed, the reserve will be reduced back to 25% and the funds will be utilized to offset the budget request for fiscal year 2021-22.

Preparing for virus protection

- The district purchased personal protective equipment such as masks, gowns, gloves, and face shields to prepare for reopening schools in the fall of 2020, recognizing none of these items were anticipated in developing the FY21 budget. Thermal security cameras were purchased to register temperatures and perform a mask check of staff and students arriving at main entrances of all three schools.

Laptops for high school teachers were purchased to prepare for remote instruction upon reopening.

Cafeteria (\$100,000) - The District’s fund to support the school lunch program has been running a deficit for three straight years. The ongoing repair and maintenance of aging equipment contributed to the deficit and the State’s change in eligibility status determination increased free and reduced lunch status. Next year appears to be even more challenging in the COVID-19 environment as we will have to change how service is provided, food is served, and food packaging.

STUDENT NEWS

Dean’s List Southern Connecticut State University

The following Woodbridge students were named to the Fall 2020 Dean’s List: Victoria Acampora, Serena Arduini, Morgan Armstrong, Kayla Britton, Zachary Brocklehurst, Christianne Delda, Shua Kim, Cassidy Marchitto, Samuel Martin, Tammy Michel, Benson Rodrigues, Kiefer Rodriguez, Corinne Sadinsky, and Belaid Zusi.

University of Vermont

Burlington, VT - Nicole Cohen, Class of 2024, has been named to the dean’s list for the fall 2020 semester at the University of Vermont. Cohen from Woodbridge, is in the College of Arts and Sciences. 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.

Open Registration For OCC Nursery School

Orange Congregational Church Nursery School is now accepting applications for fall 2021. Our nursery school has served the community for more than 55 years, and is open to all faiths. Our school day runs from 9-1, with 3-year olds attending twice

a week, and 4-year olds three days. We also offer a five-day program for returning students.

For more information about the school, or to schedule a visit with your child, please email us at occns@yahoo.com.

Attention Teachers!

We want to know what’s going on in your classroom!
Let us know about any fun activities or holiday projects.

You can also send us your pictures.
(Parental consent required)

Woodbridge Town News
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“First Selectman” From Page 6

at Beecher Road School, and finally renovate the Old Firehouse and make it a new Community Center, which I envision as a gateway to our Town. Plans for the Old Firehouse include a fitness room in one bay and two multi-use meeting or program rooms in the other two bays, all on the first floor. An ADA accessible elevator is also planned for the building. The Board had been expecting that the Amity Transition School would rent the second floor of

the building, and revenue from that program would help offset some of the project expenses. However, the Amity School District school abruptly decided against using the Town building. I hope we will proceed with renovations to the second floor, which will include a large meeting room/gathering space and a small kitchenette for Town use.

As a result of how widespread the pandemic is in Woodbridge, I once again ask all residents to PLEASE wear a mask at all times, especially on Town property, including our walking trails

and the playgrounds (unless you have a medical exemption or are under age 2). With the number of folks who are walking, jogging or bicycling on our Town roads, I remind everyone to wear reflective clothing and/or a light so that you are visible to oncoming traffic.

Despite the pandemic, Town offices remain busy. Our employees have done an amazing job of taking care of our residents for the past ten months. The Covid-19 Pandemic has brought out the best in many people, especially in the Town of Woodbridge. I have

seen friends and neighbors who have shown compassion and empathy, and those who have offered a helping hand to others during this extraordinary time. I do believe that help is on the way, especially with the vaccines. Until then, we must continue to take care of each other. Thank you all for working with me this past year – let’s usher in 2021 with hope for the future together.

As always, I am happy to hear from you! My door is virtually open to you and I can be reached at bheller@woodbridge.org or 203-389-3401.

“All of us every single year, we’re a different person. I don’t think we’re the same person all our lives.” — STEVEN SPIELBERG

“Letters” From Page 5

families. Over time the Government - federal and state - should buy and build modest homes in Woodbridge until the total is 10% (or some lower percentage) of the homes in Woodbridge. (And, of course, this is a program that should also be applied to towns all over America.) The cost of renting these homes to families would not be astronomical. The government can borrow money at almost no interest. And the real estate taxes might be \$500 a month. At present, the government is spending money for public housing in New Haven.

Let me give you a little history about Woodbridge. I first moved into Woodbridge in the spring of 1946 - there were 2000 plus residents then. For high school the Woodbridge kids went to Hillhouse in New Haven. They called us hicks and farmers - although a majority of us were not farmers. The hicks and farmers did not in the 1930s create “snob zoning” or racial zoning. They were merely trying to protect their beautiful environment. They felt that 1 1/2 acres was the minimum one needed for a country life and to maintain their beautiful country environment. There was no exclusivity involved in their thinking.

Of course, the builders are just trying to make money. But the well-meaning Yale law students and the Open Communities Alliance need to be much more progressive. They need to foster truly meaningful solutions. They need to get people into homes, not moving them from one apartment to another. Yes, they must use their smarts and be truly progressive.
Charles Griffith

Affordable Housing

I am concerned about attempts by outside forces to compel Woodbridge to allow “affordable” housing in a hilly, rocky, residential, rural neighborhood devoid of water mains, sewer lines, gas lines, and public transportation. Why did the plaintiffs purchase the property first, then apply to change the zoning, in such an impractical location for such changes?

I agree with other residents at the January 4 meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission, that zoning changes should be “Woodbridge driven.” Woodbridge already provides

affordable housing for those over 65 in our community, although more would be even better.

Plaintiffs should consider the vacant fields near the intersection of Route 63 and Route 69, north of the Merritt Parkway. For example, the property at Litchfield Turnpike and Bradley Road already has bus service and a variety of other amenities, including stores. The land is on level grade, and is generally free of rocky ledge, making construction easier, and less costly, than building up in the hills. The recently reconfigured road net can sustain the traffic. If this area is already being considered by developers, let competitive bidders compete for that chance and pay a fair market price for these desirable properties.

Waiting for a judicial mandate may bring more severe consequences than if we proactively navigate our own zoning changes. Woodbridge, as a community, can handle its own accountability. Thus, I suggest we move forward with a pro-active solution.

It is wrong to suggest, as the Yale Law School has, that Woodbridge has intentionally neglected affordable housing, when their data ignores that which already exists.
Robert Livingston

Zoning Regulations

After reading my friend Chuck Pyne’s “From Across the Aisle” articles in the Woodbridge Town News (WTN), being encouraged to let my voice be heard by “Woodbridge Residents for Town Planning”, and reviewing the complete application prepared by Open Communities Alliance, I respectfully submit the following comments on this application.

The arguments against this application presented in the WTN paper and mailings are more emotional than fact based and actually lend credence to the applicants’ claims for why the current Woodbridge zoning regulations and Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) need to be changed. Opponents’ claims that the proposed multi-family structure will stress well water and septic systems is not supported by any engineering analysis. To the contrary, the proposed system meets all health department requirements. The total size of the multi-family structure, about 5500

square feet, is smaller than many single-family houses in Woodbridge. For some reason a 9-car parking area is offensive while 3- and 5-car garages with 6-8 vehicles parked outside an 8000+ square foot home is not.

The language used by the opponents – “non-resident troublemakers”, “zoning regulations [are] the foundation of the quality of life in our town”, “overpopulation...can create health hazards”, “safety concerns”, “race card [being played]” – are intended to reinforce the underlying attitudes that have prevailed since Woodbridge was incorporated about 250 years ago.

The foundation for the current lack of racial diversity in towns like Woodbridge across CT and this country lie in exclusionary spot zoning laws, racial restrictive covenants, redlining, denial of FHA and GI bill mortgages to Black Americans, access to public transportation, and the difficulty African Americans had in obtaining mortgages and insurance, among others. These segregationist policies fed fears that poor people will increase crime and reduce property values. In reality, property values increased because Blacks had to pay more to buy into white and integrated communities. Poverty is not a crime. I imagine, that like me, many residents here came from families whose parents or grandparents were poor and did not end up in a life of crime. What is a crime is that all previous attempts to amend these regulations have been rebuffed.

Woodbridge’s current zoning regulations clearly violate Connecticut General Statutes 8-2 and the Town’s own Affordable Housing District requirements and POCD. As much as everyone wants to believe Woodbridge is an open and welcoming community to one and all, the overriding impediment to “all” being able to live here is cost of housing. Mr. Pyne cites the 15% Asian population as proof Woodbridge is not racially exclusive and claims the “Asian population is blatantly ignored” in the OPA application. Read pages 106, 109, and 124 of the application to see why he’s wrong. A more important measure of diversity than demographics is to look at the composition of the Town Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance, Commissions such as Planning and Zoning, police and fire departments, the Woodbridge Land Trust and Parks

Association, Board of Education, teachers and administrators in our schools, and most apropos to the topic at hand, real estate agents in this town.

Becoming compliant with Federal, State and Town laws is not the primary reason the zoning regulations need to be changed. Increasing the availability of affordable housing will enhance Woodbridge as a community. A population with diverse income, ethnicity, culture and religion improves the quality of life for all. This change will also provide opportunities for current residents to stay in Woodbridge after retirement, loss of income or other changes in finances.

The article “Rethinking single family home as American Dream” in the December 27, 2020 Hartford Courant discusses the new book by Diana Lind “Brave New Home: Our Future in Smarter, Simpler, Happier Housing”. Lind, an urban policy specialist, traces changes in American housing needs and concludes that owning a single-family home “is unaffordable, unhealthy and out of step with consumer demand”. I understand that accepting change is difficult for some people. But fear of change is not a valid reason for not moving forward as a community.

Therefore, the P&Z Commission needs to approve the 2 Orchard Rd. application and enact the necessary changes to the zoning regulations.
Andrew Danzig

Political Climate

As the Chair of the Woodbridge Republican Town Committee, I am outraged and sickened by the illegal events that took place in Washington, D.C on January 6. There is no room for that behavior in our republic and it is my sincere hope that all who committed illegal acts are punished to the full extent of the law. The residents of Woodbridge should know our local political committee is focused exclusively on delivering good government to Woodbridge, period. The divisive national political scene has no place in Woodbridge as far as we are concerned. And as we move into our municipal election in May, I’m confident the town will see level-headed, qualified and civic-minded neighbors as WRTC-endorsed candidates offering to serve our town.
Chuck Pyne

Holidays See Sharp Increase In Local Virus Infections

BY BETTINA THIEL

WOODBRIDGE TOWN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Coronavirus infections spiked in this area over the holidays, according to the state’s Covid-19 data tracker. The website, which tracks the average

daily number of cases over two weeks, showed cases almost doubling in all three Amity towns, Bethany, Orange and Woodbridge, in the period from December 20 to January 2. In Woodbridge, the number of cases increased

from 17 to 30, in Orange from 44 to 73 and in Bethany from 15 to 26.

From December 1 to January 7 Woodbridge has seen 46 new cases, said Police Chief Frank Cappiello. Only 2-3 of those occurred at extended care

facilities and nursing homes, he said. That is a very different picture from when the virus was first spreading here last spring.

See “Virus” On Page 23

“Hope smiles from the threshold of the year to come, whispering,
‘It will be happier.’” — ALFRED LORD TENNYSON

TOWN DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES

Recreation News

Winter Outdoor Youth Saturday programs. Programs will tentatively start in January and run through March. Grades k-2 will meet 9 am to 10 am. Grades 3 through 6 will meet 10:30 am to 11:30 am, Activities include soccer, flag football, and stickball.



Still time to join Bill Banick’s **Yoga** sessions already in progress. Virtual class, or outdoors, weather permitting. Call the Recreation Office at 203-389-3446 for times and days available. Pro-rated price available.

Virtual Cooking Class will take place Tuesdays, February 2-23, 4:30-5:30 pm; \$60 per child. Join Miss Carla, Registered Dietitian from Food Explorers for some after-school baking! Learn how to make: chocolate chip cinnamon rolls, winter fruit cobbler, apple pie

pop-tarts and 30-minute dinner rolls... all from scratch! A detailed grocery list will be provided each week, all recipes are nut free and many ingredients can be substituted.

Youth Saturday Basketball and Gymnastics is tentatively planned to begin in late January as follows:

Basketball - Grades K-3, 12 -1 pm & Grades 4-8, 1:30-3 pm;

Gymnastics - Grades PreK-1, 8:30-9:15 am & Grades 2 -6; 10-11 am. Space is limited to 16.

The **Town Pool** is open Saturdays and Sundays for adult swim to Woodbridge residents or members by reservation only; drop ins are not accepted. There is a \$10 charge for resident non-members. Resident seniors over 65 years of age are free. It is time for members to renew. Get a full year at a half year price. Renew online at woodbridgect.org. Call 203-389-3446 during Recreation Office hours to make a reservation. 12:00-12:45 pm, 1:00-1:45 pm, 2:00-2:45 pm, and 3:00-3:45 pm available.

COVID-19 rules and regulations for activities will be followed for all in person programs. Temperatures will be taken; those with over a 99.9° temperature will not be allowed to participate in the program and will need medical clearance according to CDC guidelines in order to return.

Youth Services

BY NANCY PFUND



Woodbridge Youth Services Program Coordinator Cathryn Ressler organizes “We Care” bags for homeless.

“We Care” Kits to Aid Homeless/Community Service Project

Youth Services invited local teens to help the homeless this holiday season by making kits of essentials to donate to our local shelters. The response from students was overwhelming. Nine hundred bags were received with personal items, gift cards, PPE, and snacks. Many contained heartwarming holiday wishes in homemade cards. New Reach, Inc. and Columbus House in New Haven and Beth-El Center in Milford gladly accepted the donations for distribution to the homeless. Hopefully, this brought some hope and comfort to our neighbors who need it the most, while students were able to earn community service hours. We applaud the efforts of our young people and their families.

Woodbridge Youth Services and the Town of Bethany.

Snow Art Competition

Bethany and Woodbridge families who find themselves in a heap of snow can express their talents this winter. Each family is encouraged to get out on a snowy day and build the best snowperson or animal they can. Get creative and start sculpting. Then email a photo of your family with your creation to youthone@woodbridgect.org. Prizes will be awarded based on creativity and skill. Check the Town of Woodbridge website at <https://www.woodbridgect.org/160/Youth-Services> for updates and prizewinners. Due date for photos is February 16, 2021. Sponsored by Woodbridge Youth Services and the Town of Bethany.

Woodbridge Job Bank Seeks Teens Who Want Work

The Job Bank in Woodbridge offers occasional jobs to teen residents (ages 13 – 18) who would like to work to earn some extra cash. The application process provides an opportunity to learn about the interview process, safety on the job, and how to negotiate pay.

Due to COVID-19, most jobs are currently outdoors with masks and social distancing as required. Teens can do yard work, dog walking, shoveling, etc. Responsible teens who wish to join the Job Bank should call for an interview at 203-389-3464 or e-mail npfund@woodbridgect.org.

Need Snow Shoveling or Yard Work? Woodbridge Job Bank Can Help

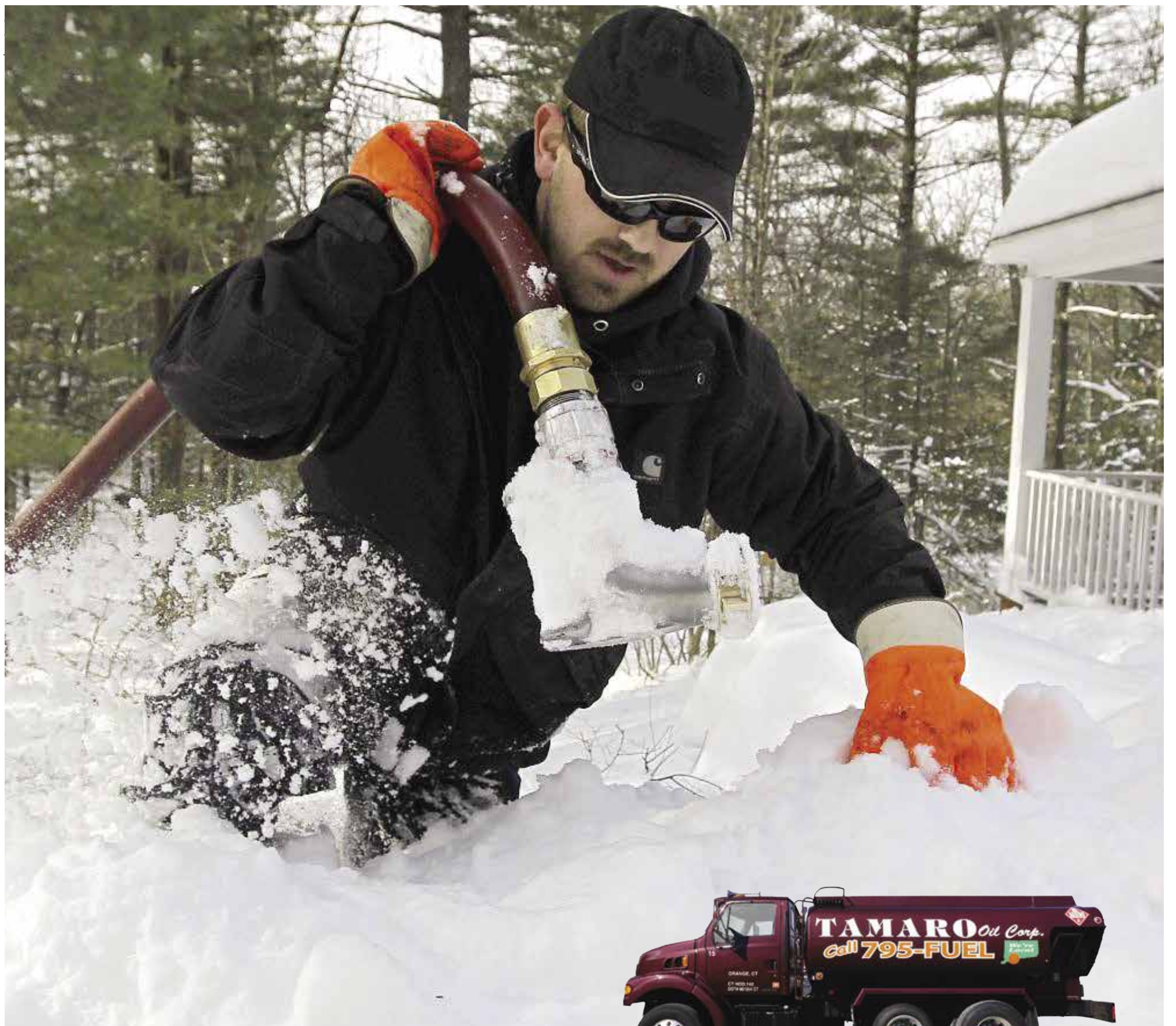
Woodbridge Job Bank teens will work for Woodbridge residents who wish to hire someone to assist for odd jobs like yard cleanup, weeding, moving boxes, and snow shoveling. Call 203-389-3464 for more information.

Town of Woodbridge Meetings for the Month of January 2021



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

1/20	Inland/Wetlands Agency	7:30 PM	Town Hall
	Board of Finance.....	6:00 PM	Town Hall
1/25	CUPOP.....	5:30 PM	Town Hall
	Recreation Commission	7:00 PM	Beecher Rd Sch So
	Human Services Commission	7:00 PM	Center Bldg Darling
	Town Plan & Zoning Commission.....	7:30 PM	Town Hall
1/26	Special Jt. Boards of Selectmen & Finance....	6:00 PM	Town Hall
	Gov’t Access TV Commission	7:30 PM	Town Hall
1/28	Special Jt. Boards of Selectmen & Finance	6:00 PM	Town Hall



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From the Democratic Town Committee

BY LAURENCE GROTHEER



The violent assault on the U.S. Capitol by pro-Trump extremists January 6 – compounding utterly shocking behavior by Trump and his surrogates for the nine weeks preceding it – have now stained American election proceedings with bloodshed and mayhem previously reserved for despotic power plays in developing democracies.

It is reprehensible that provisions of the U.S. Constitution and this nation's history of peaceful transfers of power have been desecrated and treated so contemptuously by Trump and his submissive, complicit sycophants. It is disgusting that Trump – who was sworn to protect and defend the Constitution – instead willfully incited and repeatedly encouraged such degradation of American democracy.

Just ten weeks ago, Trump received more than 1,800 votes from Woodbridge residents. It is troubling to think so many, so nearby, were so willing to co-sign Trump's four-year assault on time-honored American values. I believe we will all be better served beginning next week when, not a moment too soon, a new administration will begin to restore decency, diplomacy, and dignity to the United States and its government.

In Hartford last week the new legislative session got underway, with an outdoor swearing-in ceremony on state Capitol grounds yielding new representation serving Woodbridge and its residents. State Senators James Maroney and Jorge Cabrera and state Representative Mary Welandar are now in place to help Woodbridge – and Connecticut – emerge from the pandemic, address other pressing challenges, and provide timely constituent services.

Senator Maroney is the longest serving member of the delegation, beginning a second Senate term after having previously served in the House. Senator Maroney is the Senate chair of the General Law Committee and the Regulations Review Committee; he is also vice-chair of the Veteran's Affairs Committee, with membership on the Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee, the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee, and the Insurance and Real Estate Committee as well.

"The coronavirus pandemic really hit families and businesses hard and we (must) strive to protect the future of Connecticut. From work, to health care, to being in the classroom, several changes were made in order to stay safe and healthy this past year," Senator Maroney said. "The session will look a bit different this year but discussing issues virtually won't stop me...I'm excited to get to work."

Senator Cabrera is the Senate chair of the Veteran's Affairs Committee and vice-chair of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. He is a member of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee, Insurance and Real Estate Committee, and Human Services Committee as well.

"I am looking forward to working... to address the needs that have arisen as a result of the pandemic and tackle important issues like health care reform, transportation, education, (and) supporting our small business community," Senator Cabrera said. "I'm going to...see if the legislature can do something to provide hazard pay for frontline workers, people who work in nursing homes, nurses, grocery workers, people who have been on the frontlines from the very beginning, who didn't have the luxury of working from home, who had to go to work every day."

State Representative Mary Welandar, with an impeccable advocacy record for young people and public schools, is vice-chair of the Children's Committee and a member of the Education Committee. She serves on the Regulations Review Committee besides.

"The online aspect of this session will bring new challenges to be sure, but it may also bring opportunities for collaboration and non-traditional problem solving that might not occur normally. We have serious concerns that need to be addressed as we...begin the recovery phase of this pandemic and I look forward to bringing a fresh perspective to this role," Representative Welandar said. "One very specific thing for education would be looking at the process in which special education is reimbursed for schools, because that is a unifying concern for every district across the state."

"I am honored to be serving in the General Assembly...and encourage anyone to reach out (Mary.Welandar@cga.ct.gov) if I can be of assistance," Welandar added.

Of the two dozen freshmen legislators this term, only eight (five Democrats, three Republicans) were profiled in a Hartford Courant story last week: Senator Cabrera and Representative Welandar are two of them. Woodbridge residents are fortunate and will be proud to now be represented by these proven – and promising – public servants.

Laurence Grotheer is the current chairman of the Woodbridge Democratic Town Committee. He has more than 20 years' experience in state and municipal government working professionally, in appointed positions, and in elected office.

From Across the Aisle

BY CHUCK PYNE
WRTC CHAIRMAN



Here is an update on the controversial application from Open Communities Alliance to construct a 4-family building at 2 Orchard Road and permit multi-family housing throughout our town, as well as the experience of those looking to make a public comment on this critical issue. The Town Plan and Zoning Commission (TPZ) held a virtual hearing on January 4 which exposed several issues.

It is clear that virtual meetings are a poor substitute for in-person meetings. Public accessibility to these hearings has been and continues to be flawed. More residents tried to participate in the January 4 hearing but faced challenges. The posting of the meeting notice for that Special Meeting was not easily found on the Town website and there were technical issues trying to access the meeting to make a live public comment. Due to the time limit imposed on the meeting, many residents waited patiently to speak but were never given time. There were many written submissions, and these have been posted on the Town's website. Most of the written communications opposed the application, but there is reason to be concerned that the written submissions won't have the same impact as in-person communication. Anything short of a traditional public meeting is a disservice to all of us. Yes, these are extraordinary times and we are the worse for it.

Where is our town leadership in providing information, if not a clear position, on this application? Our previous First Selectman, Ellen Scalettar, was clear in her statements regarding the controversial town issue of her day, the Country Club of Woodbridge (CCW). In September 2015 she called all of the Town's board and commission members to a presentation by Finance Director Tony Genovese laying out the situation. In her next Woodbridge Town News column, she stated, "As we consider next steps with respect to the property, it is important that we all start from a common base of factual information. This is essential as we evaluate options for the long-term use of CCW." Today, wouldn't it make sense for our First Selectman to inform town residents regarding the basis for our zoning regulations, the current requirements for septic systems and wells, and other relevant facts? Such information should be on the front page of the town website and in every

communication coming out of Town Hall. The Town has hired an attorney to defend our zoning, potentially in court, so why isn't our First Selectman doing the same by bringing relevant facts to the court of public opinion?

While the applicants paint our zoning laws as "exclusionary," the truth is our zoning requirements for new lots in the Orchard Road neighborhood were adopted in accordance with state recommendations. In 2001 the TPZ adopted several changes to zoning for the Residence A District, which includes most of our town. One change was that new lots which are 50% or more within a public water supply watershed must be at least two acres. Yes, even more than the 1.5-acre size now under attack. This zoning revision was initiated at the request of the Woodbridge Conservation Commission, based on a recommendation from the Department of Environmental Protection, with the goal of protecting the region's public drinking water supply. The Regional Water Authority strongly supported the proposed revision, citing documentation from the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management and the Connecticut Department of Public Health. A map prepared by the Regional Water Authority shows more than half of Woodbridge is in the Wepawaug River public water supply watershed, including 2 Orchard Road.

Several residents have asked the TPZ to confer with the Quinnipiac Valley Health District (QVHD), since all new septic systems and wells must comply with QVHD's health protection requirements. To date, the applicant's team hasn't contacted QVHD, so none of the required soil testing, evaluation of the water supply, impact of runoff from the proposed parking lot, etc. has begun. Our TPZ should invite QVHD's input on the application including the broad request for a zoning change, given the multiple state agencies that support the Town's 2001 action to minimize housing density in public water supply watershed.

It's safe to say all residents will never agree 100% on any issue, let alone one as important to the future of our town as this one. Nonetheless we should be able to agree on facts. And we should expect Town leadership to bring forth the facts and share them with us, their constituents, so we can offer informed public comment on this important application.

ARTS & LEISURE



Massaro Lays Out Plans for New Year of Planting & Programming

Happy New Year from the staff at Massaro Community Farm! While frigid temperatures give the appearance of no activity at the farm, rest assured there is still plenty going on. Read a full summary of 2020 accomplishments, including the 8,500 pounds of produce we donated to hunger relief, in our Annual Report available on our website, www.MassaroFarm.org.

Programming: Bee School and more

All levels of beekeepers are invited to join the Connecticut Beekeeper's Association (CTBA) for its Bee School. Previously offered as a full day seminar, this annual event will take place entirely online this year at 10:00am on January 9, 16, 23 and 30. Numerous veteran beekeepers will lead workshops on everything from equipment needs and purchasing bees to best practices for suburban beekeepers and managing your hive through the four seasons. Fee is \$50/pp and includes an annual membership to the CTBA, which offers monthly talks to support your backyard beekeeping efforts. Register at www.ctbees.org/events/bee-school-2021.

We were extremely pleased at the response to our outdoor activities last fall – youth Explorer series, adult workshops, a concert, and a production of Snow White. This affirms that amid a pandemic we are all yearning for connection and time away from our screens. The farm is working on a schedule of remote and in-person activities for youth and adults beginning in February. Visit our website to sign up for our bi-weekly newsletter or see events posted on Facebook and Eventbrite.

Online Store

Massaro's organic produce and other locally produced items are available through our online store every other week as long as there is demand. Avoid the supermarket and support local farmers while getting milk, eggs, buttermilk, kefir, cheese, mushrooms, pork products, coffee, and Massaro produce and jarred tomato products. Order by 8pm Wednesday evenings for no-contact pickup on Friday afternoons. Peruse the online store at www.MassaroFarm.Square.Site.

Registration is open for our 2021 Seasonal Vegetable Subscription (CSA)

It took a pandemic to elevate interest in Community Supported Agricultural farm models like ours. Though they've been around since the 1970s, CSAs have been riding the wave of interest in the local food movement in recent years. We rely on advance subscriptions to know how many seeds to order and how much to plant starting as early as February and March. Please reserve your 2021 CSA spot today.

Massaro has held CSA subscription prices firm for four years. But given the increased costs since the onset of Covid-19 coupled with maintaining fair wages for our trained farm staff, we may need to raise prices this spring.



Amity Regional High School Student Photography Featured

Amity student, Riley Palazzo of Orange, received some fantastic news on December 10! She is the first Amity Regional High School student who has ever been chosen to have her work shown in The 2020 Drexel University High School Photography Contest Exhibition. There were over 2100 photographs received, 771 individual students submitted, 348 schools represented and work submitted by 39 states. This year the whole exhibition is online at www.drexelphotocontest.com.

Her teacher Lisa Toto says, "I was beaming with pride when I realized Riley's accomplishment and the students in the Photo III Class cheered with excitement for their classmate! The kids somehow always rise to the top and teach me more than I teach them. It's just an amazing thing to realize and I feel its importance often." Please take the time and look at Riley's photography along with many other students from across the country. Congratulations, Riley Palazzo!

Signing up now will give you the advantage of getting your subscription at existing rates. Ten and 20-week options available; fruit option made available thanks to High Hill Orchard in Meriden.

Last year's CSA sold out early, so please reserve your 2021 CSA subscription today. Print out and return a subscription form or pay online with a credit card at www.MassaroFarm.org.

Seeking Committee and Task Force Members

This year, the farm begins its twelfth year of operation. Our success is due to our amazing staff, hundreds of community volunteers and to the guidance of board, committee and task force members. Some of our longtime board members are reaching retirement. This creates the opportunity for you to lend your energies to Massaro Community Farm. In becoming a committee or task force member, you can support educational programming initiatives and annual events such as Celebrate

Spring, Dinner on the Farm and Family Fun Day. As a committee member, you can lend your skills in financial management, strategic planning, marketing and fundraising to the strategic direction of the farm. The farm now draws an audience of ~5,000 visitors each year. Inquiries can be made to board chair Jon Gorham at president@massarofarm.org or to Caty Poole at caty@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.

“Looking Ahead” From Page 1

proach, said Betsy Yagla, administrative assistant in the First Selectman’s office. The study by the Army Corps of Engineers will look at the feasibility of dredging the river and dredging the pond above; or of widening the river.

It is due to the persistence of the First Selectman that the project is getting federal support, Yagla added

Economic Development: Growing the Grand List is ultimately every municipal leader’s goal, and Heller is no different. But it is tough during a pandemic. Each business had its own set of challenges, and all had to come up with new ways to survive. The town has continued to work with the Economic Development Commission to reach out to existing businesses and see what their needs are. Betsy Yagla has been the point person in this effort, and she recently posted two surveys on the town website, one for business owners to get their input how the town can help; and another survey for the general public to weigh in regarding what kind of businesses they would like to see in town. The latter has been posted for a couple of weeks already, and Yagla said she had received some 150 responses. The survey is still open, and she will report on the responses later this spring.

Heller was pleased about new interest for businesses along Bradley Road; a liquor store is looking to move into 245 Bradley, the space formerly occupied by Peter Dermer clothier.

The town is also supportive of growing plans for New England Brewing, which is looking to move into a large building on the corner of Bradley and Litchfield Turnpike.

Both projects are on the agenda of the Town Plan and Zoning Commission.

Town planner: The town has de-

cided to hire a part-time town planner who will help develop ideas for the business zone. Heller is also hoping to get some guidance regarding possible uses for the Country Club of Woodbridge. “I still have the vision of having a park there,” she said. Funds left over from an auction of Country Club property could be used to pay for the planner without using taxes for it.

Cell tower: Verizon Wireless, in an effort to improve cell phone reliability along Newton Road, has developed plans to locate a cell tower on a piece of land off Soundview Ave., where it would be located in the middle of a residential area. When neighbors became aware of the plans, they turned to the town for help. “It does not belong in a residential area,” Heller agreed. The Board of Selectmen, which has no authority over the siting of cell towers, voted not to support the project. It seems that so far no application with the Siting Council has been filed yet. Instead, the town has retained an attorney and an engineer to review Verizon’s choices when they become known. Heller said the town has suggested a number of alternative locations to the cell carrier.

Zoning challenge: The town is facing a challenge to its zoning regulations and its Plan of Conservation and Development from a group of lawyers who want to reduce housing segregation in the state. The Open Communities Alliance (OCA) wants the town to allow multi-family housing with a portion of affordable housing throughout the town, wherever suitable properties are available, rather than restrict it to a small section of town.

Based on research performed by Yale law students, they laid out how the history of zoning had served to keep poor people – and by extension people of color – out. “Woodbridge’s housing laws clearly violate the state’s

constitution, various state statutes and the federal Fair Housing Act,” said Erin Boggs, OCA executive director during the Town Plan and Zoning hearing on November 30.

The hearing was continued on January 4 and has been continued a second time to February 1.

The Alliance has purchased a property at 2 Orchard Road, where it is applying to demolish the existing single-family home and replace it with a four-unit home, with one unit deemed affordable.

Building projects: Heller is also looking to bring to the voters a bonding package for some \$2.5 million, which would allow the town to finish several long-standing projects. If approved, it would pay to turn the empty old firehouse building into a community center, it would pay for the construction of a shed behind the firehouse; it would add some updates to the senior center; and roof repairs on the kindergarten wing at Beecher Road School.

The old firehouse, a handsome brick building on Center Road stemming from the 1930s, had been damaged in a 2006 fire and, although repaired and with updated mechanicals, has been left unfinished. The fire department uses part of the building to store equipment and an antique fire truck in the empty building. In order to finish the old firehouse for town use, the fire department will need to build a shed behind the new firehouse, cost of which would be part of the bond package.

Architect David Stein presented preliminary ideas to the Board of Selectmen, to turn the bays into meeting rooms and a fitness center. “It will be a gateway to the town center,” Heller said. The idea to move the Amity Transition Program into the upstairs space, with the high school in walk-

ing distance, has been kicked around for some time. It is unclear whether Amity and the Town will come to an agreement.

Stein estimated the renovations of the old firehouse to cost just under \$1 million; the storage shed would add another \$557,000. At the Board of Selectmen meeting, Finance Director Anthony Genovese recommended bonding for the project, for two reasons: the town had paid off some debt, so adding these projects would not increase taxes; he also said that with interest rates being at a historic low, this would be a good time to get projects done.

Senior Center: At the Woodbridge Center, the Human Services Department is looking to update the reception area, construct a sports equipment storage closet and add built-ins in the lounge.

Police Station: Heller is planning to appoint a Building Committee to determine the needs and hopefully find solutions for a 21st century police department. The current station is located in the town’s former elementary school, and is deemed inadequate for many functions of policing in this day and age.

Unfortunately, the renewed effort comes too late for Deputy Police Chief Ray Stuart, who was instrumental in working on a needs assessment and related plans some 15 years ago. He is planning to retire at the end of this month.

Local elections: Come May 3, Woodbridge residents will have the opportunity to confirm the first selectman in her efforts to lead the town through turbulent times. Beth Heller said she plans to seek the Democratic nomination, which was scheduled for Jan. 14.

By press time, no opponent had been named.

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CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS



First BSA Girls Troop Founded in Woodbridge

BY SHREYA VISWANATHAN

Early in December, the first all-girls troop of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) in Woodbridge was initiated under Congregation B’Nai Jacob. This girl’s troop has been named Troop 410 to associate it with the boys troop (Troop 41) which has been around for more than a century. The formation of a girls-only BSA troop is a milestone event in the history of Woodbridge as it is one of the first and few BSA girls Troops in all of the United States. Six very interested girls in age ranging from 11-14 years have joined the Troop so far and are actively engaged in scouting activities. Even during these pandemic times, the girls of Troop 410 have been active on par with their boy scout counterparts and have already started to explore the outdoors via trails in Woodbridge. This was, of course, organized with the highest priority to social distancing and safety in mind. On a hike on the blue trail, with the Scoutmaster

Mrs. Yucelen, assistant Scoutmaster Mrs. Santhanakrishnan, and assistant Scoutmaster Mr. Baitch (of troop 41), the girls learned orienteering using a map and compass as well as identifying signs of local animals and hazardous plants. The Troop conducts meetings every week at B’nai Jacob, learning and honing valuable scout skills. In their very first meeting, the girls learned how to whip and fuse ropes and how to apply first-aid to treat minor injuries. Committed to serving the local community, in the week before Christmas, the girls of Troop 410 worked with the Troop 41 boys on a food drive to replenish the supplies of the local soup kitchen. The scouts collected three pick-up truckloads of non-perishable foods, toiletries, and utensils. Troop 410 aims to instill the qualities of self-confidence, leadership, and community service in young girls through fun and adventure. We welcome all interested girls of ages 11 - 17 to join our Troop.



Woodbridge Boy Scout Troop 907

Woodbridge Boy Scout Troop 907 enjoyed a winter campout the weekend of December 19-20, 2020. Scouts built an igloo with the fresh fallen snow and two scouts actually slept in it! Other scouts camped out in lean-tos or tents in the frigid weather, maintaining social distancing. Scouts prepared their meals, gathered around the fire pit, and participated in four advancement Boards of Review, not venturing inside the camp cabin. The troop also hosted a safe socially distanced Thanksgiving for the scouts and their families. The boys prepared meals for 30+ family members while also accomplishing tasks for advancement. It was 2 great weekends worth of outdoor memories and adventure that you can’t get plugged in or con-

nected to Wi-Fi. Shown are scouts and adult leaders who participated at Camp Whiting across from the Darling House in Woodbridge. The troop recently completed its re-chartering for year 2021 and continues to meet on Thursday nights, but at Camp Whiting outside on Thursdays as the pandemic continues. New scouts and potential scout leaders are always welcomed. If you’re interested in introducing your son to new adventures, new friends and developing the skills he needs to “be prepared” for what life throws at him come check us out! Contact Troop 907 Recruiting Coordinator today: Eileen Rickel 203-258-5891 and check out our website. www.troop907.org.

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[@TheShopsatYale](https://www.instagram.com/TheShopsatYale)

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HOUSES OF WORSHIP EVENTS

Congregation Or Shalom Events

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Congregation Or Shalom

To register for a Zoom event, please see the event information below.

Join Us for Our Weekly Services Morning Minyan

- › Sunday 9:00 AM – Zoomed
- › Monday 8:30 AM – Zoomed
- › Thursday 8:30 AM – Zoomed

Shabbat Services

- › Friday 7:30 PM – Zoomed
- › Saturday 9:30 AM – Zoomed
- › On the first Saturday of the month, we offer an in-person service with limited attendance. It will also be available via Zoom (please call the synagogue office at 203-799-2341 to find out more information).



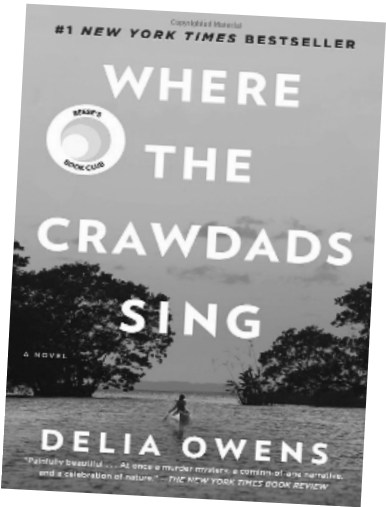
Virtual Learning This Month ZOOM & LEARN!

“MOSES THROUGH THE EYES OF MIDRASH & ART”

Wednesdays, 11–12 Noon. This is a continuing series.

Through the ages, the powerful stories of the Bible have been illuminated in legend and on canvas. In this class, Rabbi Alvin Wainhaus will discuss dramatically different artistic and folkloristic takes on Moses. All Are Welcome!

Please email Coshalom@sbcglobal.net or call the office at 203-799-2341 to register.



Join a New Book Group in 2021!

“Where The Crawdads Sing” by Delia Owens

Thursday, January 14th @ 7pm

Led this month by Prof. Joyce Saltman, our local “Professor of Laughter”. “Where The Crawdads Sing” is an ode to the natural world, a heartbreaking coming-of-age story, and a surprising tale of possible murder. It reminds us that we are all subject to the beautiful and violent secrets that nature keeps. It’s not necessary for participants to

have read the book to enjoy our discussion. Visit our website www.orshalomct.org to register.



Celebrate Tu B’Shvat!

January 28th, @ 7:00 pm

Celebrate with Rabbi Marisa James, Director of Social Justice Programming at Congregation Beit Simchat Torah, NYC. Tu B’Shvat takes place at the full moon as Israel’s almond trees blossom! Learn about the universal message of this little-known holiday with our own Rabbi Marisa James. Rabbi Marisa, who celebrated her Bat Mitzvah at Congregation Or Shalom, has been leading our High Holiday services as our Visiting Rabbi and Cantor. Visit our website www.orshalomct.org to register.

Social Action OR SHALOM SUPPORTS YALE’S COVID FRONTLINE STAFF

As we all know, the rising COVID-19 rate is taking an increasing toll on healthcare workers.



Congregation Or Shalom’s Social Action Committee has therefore begun to reach out to our front-line heroes at Yale New Haven Hospital’s “COVID Floor.” We’ve “adopted” a conference room on

that floor to serve as a drop-off point for fruit baskets, donuts and pizza gift-cards. Each of these expressions of support comes with messages of deep appreciation from our Hebrew School children. If you would like to be involved in this “Mitzvah”, please call the synagogue office at 203-799-2341.

Our Mitzvah Of The Month is collecting school supplies. We will be donating the supplies to JUNTA in New Haven. If you would like to donate, please contact the synagogue office 203-799-2341.

Activities ZUMBA GOLD AT OR SHALOM – Zoomed

Congregation Or Shalom announces the continuation of ZUMBA GOLD. ZUMBA Gold is an easy-to-follow dance movement program that incorporates music from every decade to create an upbeat and fun exercise class. Burn lots of calories, meet new friends, and have a blast. It’s perfect for active older adults who are looking to dance and have a good workout while increasing balance, range of motion and coordination.

Tuesday nights at 7 PM. Contact Robin at zumbarobin@gmail.com or call 203-314-8176 or the synagogue office at 203-799-2341. No experience needed and classes are on a drop-in basis.

Tuesdays and Fridays at 10:15 AM with Danielle Pettit. 10 class punch card/\$70, drop-in class/\$8. Email daniellepettit@yahoo.com or call 203-509-3683 (cell).

205 Old Grassy Hill Road • Orange, CT 06477 • 203-799-2341 • www.orshalomct.org

Congregation Beth El – Keser Israel Events

Children’s Services

Children’s outdoor services, open to families with kids of all ages, are held “Pop-Up Style” on Saturday mornings, weather permitting. To receive the email newsletter that provides updates, email Youth and Family Programming Director Annie Norman-Schiff at anormanschiff@beki.org.

Indoor Services

- › Fridays 6:00 pm inside the main sanctuary

Outdoor Services (weather permitting)

- › Saturdays 9:30 am
- › Sundays 9:00 am**
- › Mondays 5:45 pm**

** also available via Zoom, like other daily services

Blood Drive

On Monday, January 25, from 9 am to 5 pm BEKI hosts a Red Cross blood drive. A free COVID-19 antibody test is included for every donor. Strict health protocols will be in place. Sign up at <https://www.redcrossblood.org>.

Wednesday Schmoozes

January 20 is the first of two programs for Tu BeShevat, the new year of the trees, a conversation about the powerful connections between environmental sustainability and ethical Jewish life. Speakers will be Nigel Savage, President & CEO of Hazon,



Nigel Savage

the Jewish lab for sustainability, and Shamu Sadeh, Managing Director of Education at Hazon’s Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center, located on 400 acres in Falls Village, CT.



Gavriel Savit

On January 27, the guest speaker is Caroline Scanlan from New Haven’s Urban Resources Initiative. URI is the

See “BEKI” On Page 17

HOUSES OF WORSHIP EVENTS

Our Building Is Closed, But Our Community Is Open!

Please join us live on Zoom!
To register for a Zoom event, please
call the office at (203) 389-2111.

Happening This Weekend Friday

- › 6:30 pm Kabbalat Shabbat - on Zoom and live stream only

Saturday

- › 9:00 am Bread & Torah - on Zoom
- › 10:00 am Shabbat service - on Zoom and live stream only
- › 5:30 pm Havdalah Harmonics - Join us on Zoom for this new twice/monthly gathering.

Sunday

- › Sunday School classes on Zoom

Upcoming Classes & Events

Sunday, January 17 at 10:00am on Zoom
Commemorating Martin Luther King, Jr. 2021: A Year of a Criminal Justice Reform? The Top 10 Trends Driving Change



Michael Lawlor, J.D.

CBJ presents Michael P. Lawlor, J.D., Professor of Criminal Justice at University of New Haven, former prosecutor, CT state legislator, and Governor's Criminal Justice advisor. Lawlor's discussion will explore central themes found in two award-winning



films, "13th," and "Just Mercy". Viewing of both films is recommended prior to attendance.*

"13th," director Ava DuVernay's documentary about the U.S. prison system, examines how the country's history of racial inequality drives the high rate of incarceration in America. "Just Mercy," based on the work of civil rights attorney Bryan Stevenson, tells the true story of Walter McMillian, who, with the help of young defense attorney Stevenson, appeals his murder conviction. A widely acclaimed expert, Lawlor has served on numerous national criminal justice reform commissions and led the push for CT's same-sex civil union legislation. His current focus is on researching, writing, and collaborating with students on policy reforms. We are fortunate to be able to learn about Lawlor's work and how the nation might carry Dr. King's democratic vision into the future.

*"13th" is streaming on Netflix. "Just Mercy" is streaming on Amazon Prime.

Saturday Evening January 23
and Sunday January 24
Power of Ten



This year, our popular Power of Ten fundraiser will return on Zoom. We hope you will enjoy the diversity of the schedule and the opportunity to choose multiple offerings in four different time slots.

Sunday, January 31, 2021
at 10 am on Zoom
Covid 19 Update

David Banach, MD, MPH

Dr. Banach, an infectious disease specialist and epidemiologist, is a Lecturer in Epidemiology at the Yale Schools of Medicine and Public Health, Associate Professor of Medicine and the Head of Infection Prevention at UCONN Health, as well as co-chair of the Science Subcommittee of the state's Vaccine Advisory Group which makes vaccine distribution recommendations to Governor Lamont. Please join us as Dr. Banach discusses current issues in combatting the pandemic.

Wednesday, February 3,
2021 at 7 pm on Zoom
James Baldwin's The Fire Next Time

Discussion Led by Sami Ginzberg

Sami Ginzberg will lead a discussion on this critically acclaimed book as part of a series on anti-racism. Sami Ginzburg is an English teacher at Wilbur Cross High School and is completing her 6th year certificate in Education with a focus on Social Justice.

Thursday, February 11, 2021
at 7 pm on Zoom
What is Jewish Poetry? A discussion based upon original poems

Barry Zaret MD

Barry Zaret's third book of poetry "A House of Many Rooms" will be published in 2021. Dr. Zaret will read and discuss several poems containing Jewish themes, liturgical/text references, and metaphors. The poems will be drawn from Dr. Zaret's first two books as well as unpublished works from his new book. The poems will be distributed before the session. The two earlier books "Journeys" and "When You Can't Do Any More" will be avail-

able for sale at the Congregation B'nai Jacob gift shop.

CBJ Winter Coat Collection for Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen (DESK)

-All sizes welcome. Coats should be in good, clean condition.

-A collection box is located between the doors, outside the synagogue office, for contactless drop-off during CBJ office hours.

-If you would like to donate other winter gear, please check the DESK website for guidelines.

-THANK YOU for your generosity and compassion!

CBJ Continues Support for the Homeless During COVID: Helping the Homeless of Columbus House

During the month of January CBJ is partnering with United Church on the Green to collect funds for Columbus House, since the COVID19 pandemic prevents us from hosting the men in Abraham's Tent. Please open your hearts and give generously so that we can help those who are homeless, especially during these freezing winter months.

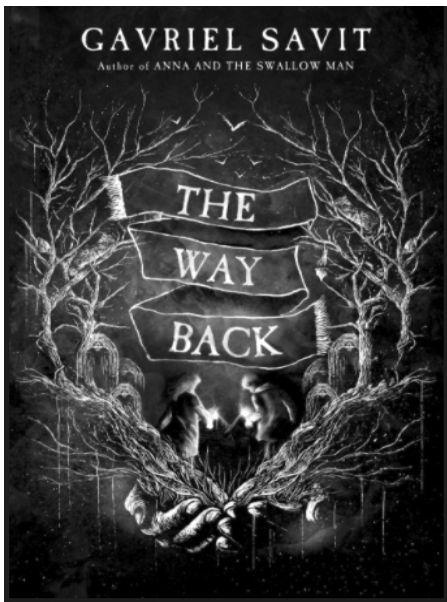
Please donate online or send a check to the synagogue.

ZOOM SCHEDULE of weekly services and classes:

- › Morning Minyan at 7:45am
- › Evening Minyan at 6:00pm (Sunday-Thursday)
- › Shabbat Shmooze at 6:00pm Friday
- › Kabbalat Shabbat at 6:30pm Friday
- › Bread & Torah at 9:00am Saturday
- › Shabbat Morning at 10:00am Saturday

203-389-2111 info@bnaijacob.org/BnaiJacob.org • Congregation B'nai Jacob, 75 Rimmon Road, Woodbridge, CT 06525

"BEKI" From Page 16



Steve Werlin

university not-for-profit partnership that plants free street trees and creates park areas all over New Haven.

On February 3, Gavriel Savit, a

New York Times Bestselling author, will talk about his newest Young Adult novel, "The Way Back," which is a National Book Award finalist. The story follows the spooky adventures of two 19th century Jewish kids, Bluma and Yehuda Leib, as they travel from the little shtetl of Tupik deep into the Far Country, the land of Death and demons.

On February 10, Steve Werlin, Executive Director of Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen [DESK], will talk about feeding people during this pandemic and about DESK's plans for its new three-story building on State Street.

From 8 to 9 pm on Zoom, BEKI Schmoozes include a presentation and

time for questions. To request the link, email office@beki.org.

Purim Celebration

On Thursday, February 25 from 4:00 to 5:30 pm, BEKI will host a Costume Parade and Car-Nival in the parking lot. There will be prizes, surprises, and a chance to pick up Shalach Manot orders. The reading of Megilat Esther will be at 6:30 pm in person and on Zoom, beginning with "spotlights" of costumes, and will be repeated at 7:00 am Friday morning, February 26. For details, email office@beki.org.

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

DID YOU KNOW?

We're Expanding in 2021

We are excited to tell you that we have merged Floman DePaola, LLC (FD) with the law firm Wiley, Etter & Doyon (WED). The merger is effective January 1, 2021. The principals in WED are Matthew Wiley, Bryan Etter, and Trevor Doyon. We have known each other for many years, have brainstormed ideas about legal issues and business planning, and have learned that our cultures, processes, and commitments to our clients have much in common.

As you know, we intentionally have limited our practice areas to estate planning, long-term care planning, asset protection/Medicaid planning, and estate administration. WED's practice areas cover these same topics, but they also include business transactions and litigation. This will allow us to expand the scope of our services, and add skilled, talented and young members to our team.

You will continue to find us accessible, available, welcoming and warm. You also can continue to count on us for carefully drawn legal documents that protect what's important to you, plenty of plain language translations of what they say, and easy to understand explanations of complicated legal issues.

We will have two office locations. We will keep our office in Orange. Some of you know that Steve has been practicing in Orange since 1977 and Allison has been practicing in Orange since 2009. Staying in Orange is important to all of us. WED's office is located in North Haven. We hope you will feel comfortable meeting with us at either location, but if you prefer to meet with us in Orange, we will be here!

We have not decided on the final name of the merged law firm. For convenience, we will use Wiley, Etter & Doyon (we hope you'd agree that Wiley, Etter, Doyon, Floman, Depaola-Droz is a mouthful). We are working on developing a more generic firm name that describes the legal services we provide, instead of who we are; one that would be flexible as we plan to add more attorneys in the future.

We look forward to continue to write to you and seeing many of you in 2021. Feel free to reach out to either Steve or Allison if you have questions about our merger.



Steven P. Floman, Allison M. DePaola-Droz, and Nicole Camporeale of the law firm Floman DePaola, LLC are the authors of this article. This article has been prepared for general informational purposes only and is not intended to constitute legal advice or to create an attorney client relationship. Readers should not act upon the information contained in this article without seeking advice from an attorney regarding the specific facts and circumstances of your case.

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HOUSES OF WORSHIP

The First Church Of Christ Woodbridge

Sunday 10:00 a.m. Worship Services, conducted by our pastor, Rev. Shepard Parsons are being held remotely via Zoom and are live streamed from our website at www.uccw.org. We invite all people in the community to join us.

For instructions on how to receive a Zoom invite, please email us at office@uccw.org.



The First Church of Christ

Notice Of Congregational Meeting

The membership of The First Church of Christ, Woodbridge, is hereby called to a ZOOM meeting on Sunday, January 31, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. in order:

1. To receive and act upon the Treasurer's Report for 2020;
2. To receive the final report of the Board of Stewardship on the pledge drive;
3. To receive and act upon the Board of Trustees' recommended budgets for 2021;
4. To elect a Treasurer and members of other boards as per the Nomi-

nating Committee;

5. To discuss the process of reviewing the future needs and wants of our congregation as we move forward into 2021 and how this pertains to the search of an interim pastor;
6. To transact any other business appropriate to come before the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Stoddard, Clerk

Church School and Youth programs are planning activities for 2021. Please contact JoAnna Rubino

See "First Church" On Page 19

BULLETIN BOARD

Please Note: If you have an event for the Bulletin Board, please send it along no matter how far in advance it is. We will include it in the appropriate issue(s) until the event has taken place.

Boy Scout Troop 63, meetings Monday nights 7:00pm-8:30pm, Our Lady of the Assumption "Mother" Church, 1700 Litchfield Turnpike (Route 63), Woodbridge. For more information, visit <http://www.troop963.org> or email Troop63CT@gmail.com.

Woodbridge Republican Town Committee Meetings, second Tuesday of each month, 7:30pm, Center Cafeteria. Visitors welcome and we urge you to join us. For information, go to www.woodbridgeregop.org.

Boy Scout Troop 907, Come find out why Troop 907 has been Making a Difference in the Life of Scouts since 1968. Meetings Thursday nights 7:00-8:30PM at the First Church of Christ in the Parish House (enter via back parking lot), 5 Meetinghouse Lane, Woodbridge next to Town Hall. Boys aged 10 and older or who have completed 5th grade are invited to visit an upcoming meeting and join the adventure of scouting. For more information, visit our website Troop907.org or use the website "contact us" link

to communicate directly with troop leadership.

Woodbridge Rotary Club Meetings, 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month, New Members wanted! The Woodbridge Rotary Club has changed its meeting places. Please go to the website to see current meeting dates and event dates: <https://woodbridgerotary.org/> Contact the Club President Diane Millan or Secretary Karen Bellamy for any updates.

Donate Your Car, Truck or Van, help raise funds for a local private school; FREE, FAST, TOW AWAY; Running or Not Running; Can be used for a charitable tax deduction. Call Charter Oak Education DBA Sterling Education at 860-643-1100.

Fairfield University Art Museum Announces By Design: Theater and Fashion in the Photography of Lalla Essaydi, January 29 – May 21, 2021, Fairfield University, Walsh Gallery in the Quick Center for the Arts; online lecture by exhibition curator Cynthia Becker on January 28, 2021. Due to COVID-19 precautions, in-person viewing is not available; viewing is available through the museum's website as a 3-D tour; www.thequicklive.com.

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

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 seven years. Amity Physical Therapy was founded 16 years ago by Michael Dow MSPT/CEO of the practice with three offices: Woodbridge, Hamden and Branford. Peter Geloso DPT can be reached by phone with any questions at (203) 389-4593.

Physical Fitness, Healing And Safety In The Age Of Covid

While normal living seems to have come to a halt during the pandemic, physical fitness and the needs of the human body to remain healthy and strong move on. In fact, “Movement as Medicine” is a mantra for Amity Physical Therapy, the only local physical therapy practice that has embedded a Fitness unit into all three of its offices.

Founded sixteen years ago by Michael Dow, MSPT and CEO/Clinical Director, Amity Physical Therapy is renowned for its “Prehab/Rehab” program that has established the practice as a destination for patient therapy before and after orthopedic surgery. “It’s possible,” Dow said, “that in many cases surgery can be avoided with specific preventative methods. Our clinicians are skilled at restoring movement in joints, reducing or eliminating pain, and possibly avoiding or forestalling further orthopedic procedures.

“From pediatrics to geriatrics, we cover all the bases in human physical movement increasing performance, strengthening muscles, ligaments and joints, and returning patients to normal activity in record time.” Dow continued: “Our Fitness Centers, now an integral part of our therapy programs, are staffed by licensed professional trainers who work side by side with physical therapists to apply a holistic approach to our practice. Health-Wellness-Fitness – it’s all here including nutritional programs for the most comprehensive physical health service in the area.”

Amity Physical Therapy is a classic example of the adherence to all Covid-19 safety practices outlined by the government. From the socially-distanced lobby to private therapy rooms and tables to fitness equipment – all are thoroughly sanitized after patient treatments and usage.

Masks and appropriate PPE gear are in force. For patients who prefer



Mike Dow

online or Telehealth sessions rather than in-person visits, these are offered as well. Dow concluded: “Again, we’ve covered all the bases in physical health responsibly, safely, and in many respects, uniquely.

“With the pandemic having limited our lives and the way we perform personal and professional tasks, it also limits our physical activity impairing our health and weakening the body’s physical structure. Correct fitness and therapy programs tailored to the individual, can significantly sustain and improve one’s muscular-skeletal profile during a very restrictive time in our lives.”

Michael Dow MSPT/CEO founded Amity Physical Therapy sixteen years ago and maintains offices in Woodbridge, Hamden and Branford. He received his degree from Sacred Heart University and is recognized by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for his work with the national Multiple Sclerosis Society. He works with patients of all ages, as well as local high school and college athletes. Michael can be reached at 203-389-4593 or visit amitypt.com.

“First Church” From Page 18

at growfirstchurch@gmail.com or visit the Sunday School page of our website at www.uccw.org/sunday-school for more information.

The Church office is open by appointment only, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., Tuesdays through Fridays. Please call 203-389-2119 or email us to schedule an appointment.

Weekly Bible Study sessions are now being held, in person, at the Parish House. Meetings are each Wednesday, 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. For more information, please visit our website at <https://www.uccw.org/bible-study>.

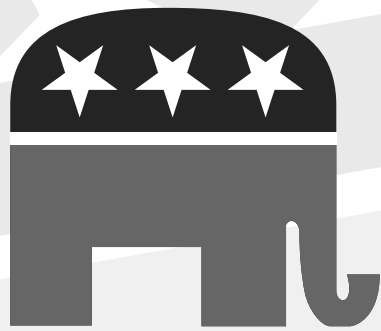
Boy Scout Troop #907 continues to meet weekly at 7:00 p.m. For information, visit its website at www.troop907.org.

For more information regarding the First Church on any activities and/or events, please contact us at 203-389-2119 or email us at office@uccw.org. Visit our website at www.uccw.org or our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/uccwoodbridge.

Please Note: For any and all meetings and events being attended at First Church: A facemask must be worn upon entering the building(s) and all Covid-19 safety protocols and standards followed.



The **Woodbridge Republican Town Committee** is seeking residents who may be interested in **running for local office in May 2021**. There will be many positions on that ballot and the winners will make important decisions that impact our community.



HERE ARE THE POSITIONS UP FOR ELECTION:

**First Selectman; Board of Selectmen;
Woodbridge Board of Education; Amity
Board of Education; Zoning Board of Appeals;
and Board of Assessment Appeals.**

If you are interested in learning more about running for any of these important offices and being endorsed by the Woodbridge Republican Town Committee, please contact Amey Marrella at 203/752-8658 or Lynn Piascyk at 203/387-3545.

Offering candidates who can deliver good, local government is our priority and we welcome potential candidates from all political parties.

TOWN OF WOODBRIDGE
**NOTICE TO ALL
WOODBRIDGE TAXPAYERS**

The second installment of the Woodbridge Real Estate and Personal Property Taxes and the full amount of the Supplemental Motor Vehicle Tax become due and payable on Friday, January 1, 2021.

Monday, February 1, 2021 is the last day to pay said taxes without interest. Interest will be calculated from the due date of January 1, 2021 at the rate of 1½ percent per month or 18 percent per annum. Minimum interest charge is \$2.00. In accordance with state statute sec. 12-130, failure to receive a bill does not exempt you from payment of taxes, interest charges and fees.

The Woodbridge Town Hall is closed to the public. The office of the Tax Collector is available by phone 203-389-3425 Monday thru Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. the office will be closed, Friday, January 1, 2021 and Monday, January 18, 2021.

For your convenience, during December 2020 and January 2021, we will open the window to the right of the front doors, on the front porch of town hall, Monday thru Friday from 9 am to 12 noon. We will also be open February 1, 2021, the last day to pay without penalty, from 8:30 am to 7:00 pm.

Checks and appropriate bills may be mailed to: Tax Collector, Woodbridge Town Hall, 11 Meetinghouse Lane, Woodbridge, CT 06525.

If a receipt is desired, please enclose the correct bill and a self-addressed stamped envelope. Credit card payments may now be made online (only) at woodbridgetownnews.com. There is a fee involved with using this service, be sure you understand the fee before you finish the transaction.

Pat Crisco, CCMC
Tax Collector

DEATH NOTICES

Grace Rose Leroy

On Wednesday, December 9, 2020, Grace Rose Leroy passed away peacefully in her Woodbridge, CT home at the age of 63. Grace was born on February 27, 1957 in New Haven, CT to the late Olive R. (Glowacki) and Stephen J. Leroy.

A lifelong resident of Woodbridge, Grace was a 1975 graduate of Amity Regional High School and a 1979 graduate of UCONN, earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing and subsequently working as a psychiatric nurse in hospitals in the New Haven area. Grace eventually became a Licensed Massage Therapist, earning her CT license in 1993 after which she spread her kind and loving touch to many.

Grace's greatest love, however, was for hiking; she scaled many mountains

over the decades, including those in Switzerland, Germany, Italy, Peru, New Zealand, Scotland, Iceland, and Canada as well as a coast-to-coast hiking trip in 2016 across England. She hiked the trails at Sleeping Giant State Park for many years and had a particular love for Mt. Washington in New Hampshire.

Grace was known to her friends for her curiosity, keen intellect, and mild manner; she will be greatly missed, most especially by her longtime companion Scott Mathews of New Haven.

There were no calling hours; funeral and burial arrangements were private. Donations in Grace's memory can be made to the Appalachian Mountain Club, 10 City Square, Boston, MA 02129 or the Nature Conservancy, 4245 North Fairfax Drive, Suite 100, Arlington, VA 22203-1606.

Woodbridge Town News

DEATH NOTICES

The Woodbridge Town News will publish Death Notices for Woodbridge families free of charge as a service to our readers. Family members please email notice (limit 250 words, please) to: edit@woodbridgetownnews.com

JOB OPENING

Clerical Program Assistant

Part-time Clerical Program Assistant for The Woodbridge Center - 28 hours per week, \$19.43. Duties include creating and maintaining computer files, data entry, record maintenance, answering phone, and billing management. Coordinates programming including Transportation Program dispatch and reports. Must have mastery of computer and office management skills as well as attention to detail. Experience with seniors a plus.

Send resume by February 12, 2021 to Woodbridge Human Services, 11 Meetinghouse Lane, Woodbridge, CT 06525 via email humanservices@woodbridge.org. EOE.

Apartments For Rent


Woodbridge:

Thank you! We're accepting names for our waiting list. Applicants must be 62 or older or disabled. One Bdrm-\$1088/mo; Two Bdrm-\$1152/mo incl utilities. On-site laundry, patios with garden area, off-street parking, handicapped accessible. CHFA Financed. EHO. Gibson Assoc., Inc. 175 East Mitchell Ave, Cheshire, CT 06410. Ph: 203-272-3781. TDD 1-800-545-1833 Ext 165

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“Woodbridge Center” From Page 6

stuffed chicken breast with broccoli and cheese, and sliced turkey and gravy. Minimum order of two lunches please. Meals include a vegetable, roll and dessert.

Email address: Want to receive updates from The Center? Call or email us with your email address.

Human Services: Call 203-389-3429 for information. The Human Services Department social worker, Judi Young, is available to those in need of assistance due to isolation and other issues associated with long-term quarantine and social distancing.

COVID vaccination distribution: We are planning for the Town of Woodbridge to become a vaccination site for Phase 1b. Currently we are awaiting guidance and instruction from the State. As soon as more information is available, we will share it with you! Once the vaccination clinic dates are finalized, seniors 75+ will be notified via robo call. Please use the form on the Town website (www.woodbridgect.org).

org) to share your contact information with us for this purpose. If you do not have computer access, please contact The Center at 203-389-3430 to provide contact information.

File 2020 taxes with VITA for free from home: In partnership with the IRS and the Connecticut Association for Human Services (CAHS), the Woodbridge Human Services VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) program is still available to prepare income tax returns at no cost for qualifying residents. Like everything else in a pandemic, the program looks a little different this year. If you have a camera phone and an email address, you can begin the process at GetYourRefund.org/WBSC-CT.

This new and secure national VITA website was created to serve the virtual needs of the program during the pandemic. To use this website, you will be directed to fill out the intake questionnaire and upload specific documents. Your secure file will be conveyed to our local group of volunteer tax preparers based on your indicated preference.

One tax preparer will contact you for a phone interview during which your taxes will be prepared. A second will call to review your return for accuracy, and finally you will receive a copy of your Federal and State returns via email to be electronically signed before they are e-filed. Estimated turnaround time from start to finish is one week. Taxpayers who are unable to access a camera phone or email are encouraged to call Woodbridge Human Services at (203) 389-3429 to schedule an intake telephone appointment with a tax preparer and directions for drive-through document scanning.

The VITA program has operated for over 50 years, offering free tax help to people with low to moderate income, senior citizens, as well as people with disabilities and limited English. Volunteer preparers are annually trained and certified to IRS standards.

Fuel Assistance: Woodbridge residents may call for an appointment to apply for CT Energy Assistance program administered by TEAM Inc. Income eligibility requirements

must be met. Call social worker Judi Young at 203-389-3429.

Food Pantry: Woodbridge Human Services is available to assist seniors and families in need with non-perishable food items from the food pantry as well as gift cards to Stop & Shop for perishable items. To view items currently in need you can download a new app for your iPhone called Pantry Angels. Please visit the Human Services webpage at the Town’s website for more information under volunteer opportunities.

Emergency Call List: Prepare for storms by stocking up on water, canned goods and batteries. Residents can call the Human Services Department to be added to the Emergency Call List. For those who are elderly, have a health issue, are disabled or know someone who falls into these categories, please sign up for the Human Services’ Emergency Call List. During emergencies, the department calls listed residents to ensure they are safe and to offer help as needed. To be added to the list, please call 203-389-3429.

“Let our New Year’s resolution be this: we will be there for one another as fellow members of humanity, in the finest sense of the word.” — GORAN PERSSON

LOCAL BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Store Owner Among Operator Of The Year Award Recipients

The New England Convenience Store & Energy Marketers Association (NECSEMA) announced the recipients of its 29th annual Store Operator of the Year Awards and honored those operators and managers on December 16, 2020 during a Zoom ceremony. NECSEMA received over 70 nominations from industry peers and partners in 2020. Each nominee is visited three times by different judges who rate each store on a variety of metrics in the categories of merchandising, interior/exterior conditions, customer service, foodservice and responsible retailing of age-restricted products.

Marc Olabi, owner of Woodbridge Phillips 66 in Woodbridge, Conn., earned the top prize for Owner/Operator of the Year. “I was so excited when I learned I had won,” Olabi said. “I work hard to stay well merchandised, keep the inside and outside looking beautiful and executing on what matters most to my customers. So far they have been very happy and it feels good to know that my industry thinks we’re doing a good job too.”

Developed by the association’s Associate Board of Directors which is comprised of vendor companies and convenience retailers, the Store Operator of the Year program is intended to identify and recognize the industry’s

best of the best. Each year NECSEMA receives dozens of nominations and issues 13 different awards for customer service, foodservice and merchandising in addition to the Owner/Operator and Manager of the Year awards.

“To be nominated for the Operator or Manager of the Year Award is a tremendous honor in itself, as candidate nominations are submitted from industry peers and associates,” said Lisa Lawinger-Brown, Director of Membership & Marketing at NECSEMA. “Anyone who received a nomination should be extremely proud, but to actually win a category specific award or be highlighted as the top Manager or Operator for all of New England is truly a distinctive award and a recognition of consistent execution of retail excellence.”

“This has been an incredibly challenging year for everyone, including our members. Convenience stores have been essential lifelines in many communities throughout the COVID-19 pandemic for basic food and household items, and have kept thousands employed,” added Jonathan Shaer, NECSEMA’s Executive Director. “This year’s winners should take some additional pride in their achievement given the incredibly difficult circumstances that the industry has faced.”



F and J Urbano Company Wins Award of Merit

F and J Urbano Company, a Woodbridge family owned and operated business, has a demonstrated history of restoring and maintaining Woodbridge’s historical integrity and contributing to the Town’s economic development. The Company, owned and run by Jim and Diane Urbano of North Pease Road, was a key player in the restoration of the Old South School on Johnson Road and Massaro Community Farm’s farmhouse and barn on Ford Road.

Please join our appreciation for their most recent achievement. In September of 2020, F and J Urbano Company received an Award of Mer-

it from Preservation Connecticut for the restoration of the Thomas Bevins House on Sperry Road in Woodbridge. An appropriate homage to their grit and commitment to historic preservation, this was the only residence awarded, along with 11 other structures throughout Connecticut, out of 112 nominations. Two hundred and twenty years following its erection, the Thomas Bevins House and its revitalized working lands, are admired and appreciated again by its homeowners and passersby who enjoy the serenity of this quaint farmhouse. Congratulations Jim and Diane, and thank you.

EDC Announces Woodbridge Bucks

The Woodbridge Economic Development Commission is proud to announce “Woodbridge Bucks.” The program is designed to encourage residents to shop, dine and try Woodbridge and to support local businesses.

This February the EDC will hold weekly drawings to give out hundreds in Woodbridge Bucks to be spent locally. Woodbridge Bucks may be spent at participating Woodbridge businesses. To enter the drawings residents are encouraged to reply to the weekly posts on the Town’s Facebook page (like or follow here: www.facebook.com/woodbridgect) to share their love for local businesses. People may also submit recently written positive Yelp or Google reviews of local businesses to the EDC via email (byagla@woodbridgect.org) or mail them to Betsy Yagla; 11 Meetinghouse Lane; Woodbridge CT 06525.

“We know that positive reviews are helpful to businesses and the EDC would like to reward residents for

writing those positive reviews,” said EDC Chair Jeremy Rosner. “We hope these \$25 incentives will encourage Woodbridge Bucks winners to shop, dine and try Woodbridge!”

“I’d like to thank the Economic Development Commission for this innovative program,” said First Selectman Beth Heller. “I hope that the chance of winning Woodbridge Bucks will inspire residents to share all the things they love about our fantastic local businesses and to shop locally!”

If your business would like to participate, please contact Betsy Yagla. Participating businesses will accept the \$25 in Woodbridge Bucks and will turn the bucks into the Town for reimbursement. No change will be given, and Woodbridge Bucks must be spent in person.

Woodbridge Bucks are required to be spent by June 1 and businesses have until June 30 to request reimbursement from the Town.

Real Living Wareck D’Ostilio Expands in Old Saybrook

Real Living Wareck D’Ostilio Real Estate proudly announces the opening of its newest office on 101 Main Street, Old Saybrook on January 1, 2021. “Opening in Old Saybrook puts us closer and in a more convenient location to many of our existing customers and prospective clients that are working on the Shoreline. We are proud to expand our brand, recognition and footprint and gain a real foothold on central CT and the eastern shoreline,” said John Wareck.

Greg Robbins and Rhonda Young, partners in the company’s Branford location headed the effort to open this newly renovated Old Saybrook office together. Realtors Barbara Erni, Mim Beardsley, and Shawn Powers have joined the Old Saybrook office. Barb and Mim are founders and partners at the highly respected Harbor Light Realty which they have operated for dec-

ades at the 101 Main Street location.

“We are so pleased to welcome these fine Realtors to Real Living Wareck D’Ostilio. We are so thankful to have the decades of experience that Barb and Mim bring into our company,” said Robbins.

“We continue to focus on growth with our company and our expansion to the Old Saybrook location fits well with our business strategy for the future,” added Frank D’Ostilio, Partner and Designated Broker.

“We will be hiring more agents to accommodate clients as the company continues its record growth,” said Young.

Real Living Wareck D’Ostilio Real Estate has offices in Milford, Woodbridge, New Haven, and Branford and part of The Real Living Network of Home Services of America, a Berkshire Hathaway Affiliate.

“Virus” From Page 8

“At the onset, the majority of positive cases and deaths were associated with residents and patients at our three nursing homes and extended care/assisted living facilities in town,” Cappiello said. “But over the past several months, the majority of the cases are from private residences, involving residents of all ages – from children to adults.”

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Woodbridge has logged 245 positive cases, Chief Cappiello said, and 34 deaths, although no deaths were reported since May 2020.

Woodbridge

Week 1 Cases: 17
Week 2 Cases: 30
Rate Per 100,000: 38.1
Report Period: 12/20/20 - 01/02/21
Date Updated: 01/07/21

Orange

Week 1 Cases: 44
Week 2 Cases: 73
Rate Per 100,000: 59.9
Report Period: 12/20/20 - 01/02/21
Date Updated: 01/07/21

Bethany

Week 1 Cases: 15
Week 2 Cases: 26
Rate Per 100,000: 53.5
Report Period: 12/20/20 - 01/02/21
Date Updated: 01/07/21

Testing This Weekend

In the meantime, the town continues to offer monthly testing services, especially for asymptomatic individuals. The next opportunity is Sunday, January 17 and again February 14 (Valentine’s Day) from 1:30-4:30 at Center Building Gym, 4 Meetinghouse Lane. Those who have been exposed to COVID-19 or have symptoms, are asked to call their doctor for an appointment to get a test.

People will need to park and walk into the building. The line will start outside, go down the hallway and wind through the gym with people exiting through the gym’s side door. Everybody is strongly encouraged to wear a mask. The PCR test is administered through a company called Sema4. “Our goal is 24-48hr TAT (turn- around-time). However, in a few instances that has become 48-72 hours.

A release on the town’s website recommends that those for whom these dates/times do not work to check the state’s 211 Testing Locator to find a test site.

Griffin Hospital in Derby offers Saturday testing times. Call 203-437-6815 to make an appointment and use the word “community” so you will not need a doctor’s note for a test appointment.

In New Haven the Fair Haven Community Health Clinic is operating daily testing at 293 East Street. No doctor’s

note is required. They are doing walk-ups and taking appointments. Call 203-871-4179.

Policing During The Pandemic

Chief Cappiello said the Police Department has seen its share of COVID positive cases in addition to employees having to quarantine due to exposure and potential exposures amongst officers and dispatchers. “Despite these staggered Covid-19 related absences and the associated scheduling challenges they create, especially for a smaller sized agency like ours, we have been able to continue with the fluent and uninterrupted delivery of police operations and services,” he said.

Criminal and traffic related activity for the year was directly impacted by, and correlates with, the Coronavirus pandemic and trends seen state-wide. Thus, the police activity log up to November 30 shows the number of activated alarms much lower than the year before (489; 712 in the same period the year before), probably because people stayed home. But the number of burglaries was up (18 vs 9 the year before). With fewer vehicles on the road, traffic stops decreased to 407 from 2,389 the year before. And while police logged fewer traffic accidents overall, the number of accidents with injuries actually increased (44 vs 34 the year before).

Mental health (35) and other medical calls (333) were fewer than during the prior year (37 and 534, respectively), but police were called to deceased persons 16 times (9 the year before).

While the calls to intervene in verbal disputes were down (15 vs. 24 the year before) the number of family disputes was up a tad (18 vs. 17).

Police logged a significant increase in criminal mischief incidents (60 vs. 29 the year before) and stolen vehicles (18 vs. 9 in 2019).

Another number that stuck out in the report was the number of fingerprints, which was down to 136 (from 266), but fingerprints for the purpose of obtaining a pistol permit were up (94 from 29 the year before).

With vaccinations underway, there is hope the nation will be able to put the restrictions behind it in a few months. Woodbridge first responders have been getting their first doses of the COVID vaccine in late December, with no significant adverse reactions reported, according to Chief Cappiello. The other department employees, including dispatchers, were expected to receive their first doses this week.

Teachers To Be Vaccinated

Woodbridge School Supt. Dr. Jonathan Budd said latest plans were for Beecher teachers to be vaccinated by mid-February. Plans are for the vaccination to occur at the school.

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