

Woodbridge Town News



Woodbridge's Exclusive Newspaper

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2021



Police Department Administrative Assistant Janice Innocenzi bidding farewell to Deputy Police Chief Ray Stuart in January.

Deputy Chief Stuart Retires After 30 Years

BY BETTINA THIEL

WOODBRIDGE TOWN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

After more than 30 years at the Woodbridge Police Department, Deputy Chief Ray Stuart retired at the end of January. "On behalf of all our officers, dispatchers and staff, I would like to thank Ray for his loyal and dedicated service to the Department and to the Town for past three decades, and for the friendships he has forged with all of us," said Police Chief Frank Cappiello at the January Board of Police Commissioners meeting.

Stuart was hired by then-chief David Burke in 1989 as a patrol officer, was quickly promoted to the rank of lieutenant in 1990, and promoted to deputy chief in 2002, a position he has held for 18 years. While in Woodbridge, he has served under four chiefs — David Burke, Denis Phipps, Gene Marcucci and now, Frank Cappiello. In fact, he served as interim chief for several months after Marcucci's retirement.

But more than his own career, Stu-

See "Stuart" On Page 15

Heller To Run Unopposed for Third Term

BY BETTINA THIEL

WOODBRIDGE TOWN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

First Selectman Beth Heller, a Democrat, will run unopposed in the upcoming municipal election in May. This will be for her third term.

Yet she will be working with a totally new Board of Selectmen, given that four of the five other selectmen are not returning to the board. The one returning candidate, if elected, is Joe Crisco. Not on the ballot are Mica Cardozo and Sandy Stein on the Democratic side; nor their Republican counterparts, Dwight Rowland and Joe Dey.

Instead, Democrats Sheila McCreven and Paul Kuriakose are running for the Board of Selectmen. The Republican ticket has one returning candidate, David Lober, who served on the board until two years ago; as well as two can-

didates new to town government, David Vogel and Stephen B. Francis.

For the two boards of Education — the Woodbridge Board of Education and the Amity Board of Education — both parties are presenting new candidates. For the Woodbridge board, Dan Cowan (R), David Ross (D) and Mike Strambler (D) are incumbents. Not returning are Maegan Genovese or Jeff Townsend. New candidates are Maria Madonick and Jay Dahya for the Democrats, and Sarah Beth Del Prete, Brooke Hopkins and Jeff Luck (2-year term) on the Republican ticket.

For the Amity Board of Education, Democrats Pat Cardozo and Robyn Berke are not running again. The Republicans are putting forth Roy Ivins and Sanjay Gupta, the Democrats Carol Oladele and Donna Shuster.

Municipal elections will take place on May 3.



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Brownie Sets Herself A Goal, And Then Another

BY BETTINA THIEL
WOODBRIDGE TOWN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

“Set a goal and don’t quit until you attain it. When you do attain it, set another goal, and don’t quit until you reach it. Never quit,” that was a quote from the late football coach Bear Bryant, and one young Woodbridge resident just proved his point.

Ana Fitzgerald, 8, a Brownie with Troop 60865 at Beecher Road School, just sold 1,300 boxes of Girl Scout cookies, well, actually it was 1,317 boxes, or 1,325 – I lost track.

Given the pandemic, Girl Scouts were not asked to sell door-to-door as previous generations have done, which always put Woodbridge Girl Scouts at a disadvantage. Instead, they passed on a link where potential customers could order their sweet treat and pay for it directly. But the delivery will be to her home, with Ana having to sort out the orders she collected.

Ana set herself a goal — 1,000 boxes — because she had researched the incentives offered up by the state Girl Scout organization. There were stuffed animals, pins and patches along the way. But that was not Ana’s goal. Her goal was to have lunch with the new CEO on May 22. “I have a lot of ideas,” she told her mom, ideas that she wants to take straight to the top.

Ana and her mom launched a campaign selling cookies. She made a list of family, friends and neighbors, both here and out-of-town, and hand-wrote a letter pitching her cookies. Every morning, before they each started their daily chores, they would have a meeting, checking their list and responses. People who didn’t want to buy cookies for themselves could also donate toward frontline workers and the military.

When she had reached the 1,000-box mark, she upped her goal to 1,300, which will earn her a free week of Girl Scout camp this summer. And her troop benefits as well, as a portion of the sales flows back to the local group.

The sales window closed at the end of January, but the job is not done. Now she is on to writing thank-you notes. Then there are 150 donations that she will get to distribute among charities of her choice. The first batch went to the Yale oncology group that is taking care of her grandma.

“It’s been a journey for her,” said her mom, Sheri Weidner. “It’s been a lesson in business as well as setting goals.”

Woodbridge Town News

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From the Democratic Town Committee

BY LAURENCE GROTHEER



Historically significant, deeply troubling events on the national stage these past three months highlight ever-present, potential threats to this nation's government, and the persistent willingness of many to use violence to depose representative democracy for the sake of authoritarian control.

In Woodbridge, the lesson rings loud and clear about the privilege and responsibility it is to nurture a government of, by, and for residents – a government responsive to the essential needs of those who live here, the legal obligations every government has, and the generally accepted administrative functions serving the best interests of residents.

As Woodbridge approaches its local elections – on Monday, May 3 this year – the Democratic Town Committee will enthusiastically promote the unanimously endorsed and nominated slate of candidates whose members have already and repeatedly demonstrated the necessary commitment, spirit, and sense of community service consistent with that tradition of government responsibility.

At the top of the slate, First Selectman Beth Heller, R.N. will stand for re-election. It is fortunate Woodbridge has a healthcare professional as its chief elected official to steer the town through a prolonged pandemic. Beyond that, Beth's experience – as Deputy First Selectmen from 2008 – 2017, First Selectman since 2017, and on other boards and commissions in town since the 1990s – uniquely qualifies her to continue in her role at the helm of town operations.

Joining Beth on the slate are current Selectman and former state Senator Joe Crisco, former Woodbridge Board of Education chair and current Amity Board of Education member Sheila McCreven, and current Board of Finance member Paul Kuriakose.

Endorsed candidates for the Woodbridge Board of Education are incumbents Mike Strambler, Ph.D. and David Ross, M.D., Ph.D., as well as current PTO Treasurer Maria Madonick, A.P.R.N. and D.N.A.P. candidate, and Jay Dayha, Ph.D., who is also active in PTO, an engaged MAG parent, and a current member of the Beecher Road School Diversity Committee.

Democratic candidates for the Amity Board of Education are Carol

Oladele, Ph.D., and marketing executive Donna Shuster, each of whom has children enrolled in Amity schools and each of whom is already active in the Amity community.

On the Zoning Board of Appeals, the town is fortunate to have the entire group of Democratic incumbents running again with their accumulated experience and familiarity with Woodbridge zoning ordinances. Chairman Hank Nusbaum and Jeff Atwood will continue their valuable service if re-elected; current member Aldon Hynes is running for the Alternate spot this time while current Alternate Celia Waters is now a candidate for a full-time seat on the board.

Likewise, incumbent Board of Assessment Appeals member Andy Schaffer, J.D., a life-long Woodbridge resident, will apply his experience and continue his service on that important board if re-elected.

This group of exceptional Woodbridge residents is part of what was a larger pool of potential candidates, each of whom was equally willing to volunteer time, talent, and expertise to the Town and its residents, as well as to the public schools and the students and families thereof. The WDTC is grateful to have had such bounty with so many qualified candidates – it helps restore faith in our system of government after the events of these past few months and years.

Over the next 75 days campaign materials will be made available to help Woodbridge voters become better acquainted with the candidates they do not know already. I encourage town residents to scrutinize the experience and qualities of the WDTC-endorsed, formally nominated candidates – individual profiles will soon be available at <https://woodbridgedtdems.org>.

Afterward, I hope you will agree: Woodbridge is once again fortunate to have each of them willing to give of themselves and bring their respective capabilities to bear for the greater good of the town, its government, and its people.

Laurence Grotheer is the current chairman of the Woodbridge Democratic Town Committee (woodbridgedtdems@gmail.com). 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



Missing the Big Picture and the Small Picture

The TPZ continues its ongoing, critically important review of the Open Communities Trust application that would, if approved, fundamentally change the zoning in Woodbridge. We need to look at the "big picture" – where this whole issue began – state law. The applicant claims state law requires all towns, including Woodbridge, to provide a housing mix of which at least 10% qualifies as affordable under state law. The law on which they base their claims was passed in 1989. Yet over 30 plus years only a small portion of Connecticut's towns have achieved the 10% goal. Why have so many towns, including Woodbridge, failed to reach the goal? As with many laws that paint with a broad brush, the 10% target contains a fundamental flaw. The law fails to take into account competing state goals such as protection of drinking water quality, wetlands and open space. Moreover, it ignores the situations in towns like ours that make meeting such a threshold impractical, if not impossible. Our situation is most of Woodbridge relies on wells and septic systems, lacks public transportation and provides a vitally important drinking water supply watershed for the greater New Haven area.

Affordable housing advocates have tried for many years to transform the 10% goal into a 10% mandate. Failure to achieve that mark comes with consequences for the town. One of our Selectman, Joe Crisco, represented our town as a State Senator for 24 years. In that time there does not seem to be any record to indicate Mr. Crisco made any substantive effort to fix this affordable housing law so it works for Woodbridge. I'm not suggesting over such a long period of service Mr. Crisco should have examined every law on the books, but this issue was the focus of Senate action several times during his tenure and a question every elected representative should ask about bills that come before him or her is "how can this affect my constituents?" I would be pleased to be proven wrong on this point because 24 years is a long

time to have done nothing about it.

The major parties have now nominated their candidates for municipal offices for the May 3 election. Woodbridge voters deserve to know where the Board of Selectmen candidates stand on this vital issue. The Republican candidates for the Board of Selectmen, Stephen B. Francis, David A. Lober and David Vogel are clear-eyed and united in their opposition to this application. Frankly, this should not be a partisan issue, but it has been on the table for months and not a single Democrat has been defending Woodbridge against accusations of racism or providing relevant facts to the residents they represent. I suggest if the Democrat candidates are in favor of this application, they should have the courage to say so and defend their position. If they want to join the Republican position in opposition, that's better for the town and we can debate other pressing issues, of which there are many. But right now, zoning is the critical issue of the day and residents deserve to know where the Board of Selectmen candidates stand.

One other point about the "small picture." Local Democrat leaders have continually tried to insert the vitriol and emotion of national politics into our Woodbridge elections. But the issues in our town are local and wholly different from those at the national level. The local Democrats have controlled the town for over 14 years. And what has been the result? Town residents have been saddled with an ever-increasing mill rate, stagnation over the future of the Country Club of Woodbridge, inexcusable treatment of our volunteer Historical Society and the aforementioned, inexplicable silence on the imminent threat to our town zoning. I respectfully submit to Woodbridge voters it is time to focus on the "small picture" of how Woodbridge is being led. We can do better and in May we'll have a chance to bring balance back to our local government. Let's take advantage of that opportunity by keeping our eye on the local ball.

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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 |
|--|----------------|
| March 12 St. Patrick's Day Issue..... | March 5 |
| April 2 Easter and Passover Issue..... | March 26 |
| April 30 Mother's Day Issue..... | April 23 |

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

FROM OUR READERS

Leahy Addresses Budget Surplus

I would take issue with three points made in the article entitled "Amity Superintendent Addresses 2019 Budget Surplus."

First, Amity Superintendent Jenn Byars infers that the Amity surplus for FY 19-20 was due to the pandemic. It was not. The surplus for Amity for FY 19-20 was \$3,449,000, only \$321,495 higher than the FY 17-18 surplus of \$3,127,505. The annual budget surplus situation at Amity is historic, habitual, and overtaxes residents in Orange & Member Towns every year.

Secondly, the Amity BOE approved \$1,498,223 in End-of-Year (EOY) purchases, nearly triple the amount of \$515,077 as stated in the article.

Finally, Superintendent Byars suggested that having surpluses helps taxpayers as improvements can be paid without the need to take out bonds. I disagree with that assessment.

I would argue surpluses in budgets OVERTAX residents right in the immediate year in which they happen. To quantify this impact, Orange taxpayers have spent \$1,300,000 in TAXES in each of the LAST 4 YEARS for what ended up being an Amity SURPLUS due to systemic Amity over-budgeting. These amounts are an unnecessary burden to every taxpayer of Orange, Bethany, and Woodbridge.

Jim Leahy – Vice-Chairman, Orange Board of Finance

Let's Hold Ourselves to a Higher Standard

I am dumbfounded by the comments of the Democratic Town Committee in WTN from January 15th. I must believe that all Woodbridge residents are saddened and outraged by the terrible events at our Nation's capital on January 6th, but Chairman Laurence Grotheer's deprecation of 1,800 fellow Woodbridge residents who voted for Donald Trump is akin to Islamophobia post 9/11 when all Muslims were painted with the broad brush that Mr. Grotheer now wields. Similar to Mr. Grotheer's sentiment, I find it troublesome that someone "so nearby" thinks as he obviously does, although it's unclear if he is speaking for himself or the DTC. At a time when our country so desperately needs healing, Mr. Grotheer instead chose to use the DTC forum to spew the same divisive and denigrating rhetoric that has unfortunately dominated in the media. As a former democrat, now independent, I wonder how many of those weren't necessarily voting for Trump but against militant identity politics and the rise of socialistic ideas the left continually foists upon us. Sadly, it appears that Joe Biden's promise of unity will be DOA on his inauguration day, but perhaps as fellow Woodbridge residents we can hold ourselves to higher standards.

Eric M. Polinsky

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



February 2021 will be interesting and challenging for all of us, as we celebrate Valentine’s Day differently this year. I wish everyone in Woodbridge a very Happy (and safe) Valentine’s Day! There are several ways during this month that should you choose, you might show how much you care about our community...especially as we continue to work together to fight the pandemic.

The Town is hosting our last scheduled free COVID testing event on Valentines’ Day - Sunday February 14th from 1:30-4:30 pm at the Center Building Gym (4 Meetinghouse Lane). This is a free PCR test, and no appointments are needed. Results are usually ready in about 48 hours. I encourage you to take advantage of this program. These free tests help identify people who are asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic. Getting tested is important to help stop the spread and keep those you love safe. If you have been exposed to COVID-19 or think you have symptoms, please call your doctor. And, of course, please continue to wash your hands, wear your mask, and practice social distancing.

The Town’s Human Services Department has done a wonderful job to help get residents age 75 and over vaccinated. The Department reached out to more than 700 residents over the age of 75, to offer help getting a vaccination. Partnering with the Quinipiack Valley Health District, Human Services held a vaccination clinic for 70 Woodbridge seniors, many of whom are our Town’s most vulnerable citizens. They have been able to get other seniors to QVHD’s regular testing site in North Haven and also helped residents secure vaccine appointments at other locations. The dedication helping our residents navigate this stressful, complicated, and frequently changing system has just been nothing short of amazing! I thank them all.

The Economic Development Commission (EDC) is asking residents to “show some love” for our local businesses. Every Monday in February, the EDC will post a request on the Town’s Facebook and Instagram pages for people to share a Woodbridge business that you love and why. Everyone who responds on these pages by Friday at 9 am will be entered in a drawing for \$25 in Woodbridge Bucks which may then be redeemed at participating Town businesses. Please visit the Town website at www.woodbridgetown.org for program details and a list of businesses where you are able to redeem Woodbridge Bucks. Please LOVE your local businesses, and Shop, Dine, and Try Woodbridge!

Last fall, the Town offered compost bins at discounted prices. The program was so successful we had to develop a waiting list! Now, we have joined our regional partner, South Central Re-

gional Council of Governments, to offer a slightly different program for discounted compost bins and rain barrels. Composting is an easy way to divert heavy food waste, such as vegetable scraps and coffee grounds, from the waste stream (saving the Town money!) while creating rich healthy soil for gardening. Program information is on the Town website, including where you might purchase the bins – they will be available for pick up at the Town’s Earth Day event on the morning of Saturday April 24. This event will follow COVID-19 guidance – masks and social distancing are required. Please save the date - details will come soon.

There is certainly wonderful news in Town, despite the pandemic - many new residents are choosing to move to Woodbridge! To welcome them, the Ad Hoc Community Council held a virtual coffee hour last month. I loved being part of this fabulous event, and I do hope there are more opportunities for new residents to feel less isolated during the pandemic, find friendly faces, meet new neighbors, make new friends, and ask questions. New residents at the event came from as far away as California and as close as New Haven. Many had young families and others were retired. Pets even joined in on the virtual meeting. If you have a new neighbor on your block please welcome them (safely!) and encourage them to call Town Hall (203-389-3400) with any questions they might have, and encourage them to review the “Welcome Guide” on the Town’s website under the Community section.

Our Boards of Selectmen and Finance are working diligently on the budget for the coming fiscal year. We have directed departments and commissions to be extra mindful of taxpayer dollars this year due to the financial impacts of the pandemic. Creating the Town’s budget is a long and deliberative process and would not be possible without input from volunteer board members and commissioners, and Town staff. Over the past few weeks, the Board of Selectmen and Finance heard from all departments and commissions with their budget requests. The Board of Selectmen will meet later this month to make their recommendations to the Board of Finance. The Board of Finance will then make appropriate adjustments to the budget, and finally, hold a virtual Preliminary Budget Hearing in April, at which residents may ask questions or make comments. Following that, the budget will be finalized and voted on in May at the Annual Town Meeting.

Every time we go through the budget process it becomes clearer to me that we need to grow and diversify our Grand List. We have consolidated staff positions and cut programs. There

See “First Selectman” On Page 8

EDUCATION

2021 Howard Jacobson Scholarship Award

CAC Area 2 will bestow a scholarship in memory of former longtime Chairperson Howard Jacobson. One high school or college student studying film, mass communications, and television or media studies will receive \$500 to help further their studies.

The Cable Advisory Council of Area 2, which serves the towns of Fairfield, Bridgeport, Stratford, Milford, Orange and Woodbridge promotes quality Community Access Television. The Council is an ongoing asset for Cable Area 2 with the support of Altice/Cablevision.

Scholarship Qualifications & Criteria - Applicants must be able to prove:

- ✓ They currently reside, and/or are students attending high school, community college, college, or university in one of the six CAC area towns: Fairfield, Bridgeport,

Stratford, Milford, Orange or Woodbridge.

- ✓ They have a declared major in the mass communications, or media studies. Along with pursuing a career in this field, they are taking classes or engaged in independent studies.
- ✓ They are in good standing with their academic institution.
- ✓ They must submit a short essay under 500 words describing their creative coursework, portfolio or project and how it relates to this scholarship award. Supplemental links to media projects are welcome.
- ✓ The winner will be selected on the basis of their overall academic performance, portfolio and their personal statement.

Deadline to apply is June 30, 2021. To apply, please email: info@cacarea2.com.

Connex Credit Union Announces \$6,000 in College Scholarships

Connex Credit Union announced that applications are now open for its annual scholarship program. Through March 12, 2021, college-bound or currently enrolled students can apply for one of three different scholarships totaling \$6,000.

The 2021 Scholarships are:

- › **Nicolas G. Hackett Memorial Scholarship (\$2,000)** established in memory of longtime Connex volunteer Nick Hackett;
- › **John R. Edwards Community Involvement Scholarship (\$2,000)** created in honor of former Connex President and Chief Executive Officer John R. Edwards and awarded to a student who emulates Connex’s commitment to community service; and
- › **Arthur B. Haesche Memorial Scholarship (\$2,000)** commemorating one of Connex’s founding members Arthur B. Haesche that is reserved for a student majoring in business or finance.

These scholarships are available to any student with a 3.0 GPA or higher that is a college-bound high school senior or is already enrolled full-time in an accredited two-year or four-year undergraduate program for the fall 2021 semester. The student, or a direct family member (parent, grandparent, sibling, aunt, uncle), must also be a Connex Credit Union member in good standing as of December 31, 2020.

To apply, students must go to connexcu.org (or bit.ly/connexscholarship2021) and complete the online application, as well as the short essay component (250 words or less) on the following topic:

The COVID-19 Pandemic has had a devastating effect on the financial well-being of many who have lost jobs or experienced reduced work hours. With this in mind, what strategies would be helpful for individuals and families to help avoid financial emergencies in the future? How can credit unions help members be prepared for financial difficulties?

Once finished, a current transcript, including GPA, should be sent to:

Connex Credit Union
Scholarship Committee
P.O. Box 477
North Haven, CT 06473

Applications and transcripts must be submitted by March 12, 2021. Any application that is incomplete or not accompanied by a current transcript will not be considered. Students may only apply for one of the three scholarships. Those who have previously won a Connex scholarship or those who are employees of Connex or are members of its Board of Directors, Supervisory Committee, or their immediate families, are not eligible.

For complete details, please visit connexcu.org or contact Anita Annunziato at aannunziato@connexcu.org or 1-800-CR-UNION.



Dean’s List

Brandeis University

Waltham, MA - Zachary Katz of Woodbridge was named to the Dean’s List for the Fall 2020 semester at Brandeis University in Waltham, Mass. The Dean’s List is an academic honor awarded to students who achieved a semester GPA of 3.50 or higher on a 4.0 scale, completed a minimum of three courses for a letter grade and received a grade of C or higher in all courses. Katz is a Junior, majoring in Creative Writing and Anthropology and is a 2018 graduate of Amity Regional High School.

Bryant University

Smithfield, RI - Bryant University is pleased to recognize the students who have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to academic excellence and achievement. Diego Rodriguez, class of 2023, from Woodbridge has been named to the Deans’ List for the fall 2020 semester.

Bucknell University

Lewisburg, PA - Bucknell University has released the dean’s list for outstanding academic achievement during the fall semester of the 2019-20 academic year. A student must earn a grade point average of 3.5 or higher on a scale of 4.0 to receive dean’s list recognition. Hannah Price, class of 2022, from Woodbridge has achieved dean’s list status.

College of Charleston

Charleston, SC - College of Charleston congratulates more than 2,600 students who were named to the President’s List and Dean’s List for Fall 2020. Named to the President’s List was Joshua Petro of Woodbridge, CT, majoring in General Studies. Those from Woodbridge named to the Dean’s List are: Lindsay Dragunoff, is majoring in Biology; and Jillian Mastrofrancesco, majoring in International Business. To qualify for President’s List (Highly Distinguished), students must earn a GPA of 3.800 or higher and complete a minimum of 14 semester hours. To qualify for Dean’s List (Distinguished), students must earn a GPA of 3.600 or higher and complete a minimum of 14 semester hours.

Connecticut College

New London, CT - Alana Safian, class of 2023 at Connecticut College, has been named to the dean’s list for the 2020 fall semester, achieving Dean’s High Honors. Safian is an Undeclared major.

Eastern Connecticut State University

Willimantic, CT - Eastern Connecticut State University recently released its Dean’s List for the fall 2020 semester, in which more than 1,300 students were recognized for maintaining high GPAs. Those from Woodbridge named to the Dean’s List are: Naja Davis-Drew, a full-time student who majors in Communication; and Jolie Garcia, a full-time student who majors in Biology. To qualify for Dean’s List, full-time students must complete a minimum of 12 credits in letter-graded courses with an average GPA of 3.5 or higher in the semester. Part-time students are eligible if they’ve accumulated 15 or more credits of letter-graded course work with an average GPA of 3.5 or higher.

Endicott College

Beverly, MA - Endicott College, the first college in the U.S. to require internships of its students, is pleased to announce its Spring 2020 Dean’s List students. In order to qualify for the Dean’s List, a student must obtain a minimum grade point average of 3.5, receive no letter grade below “C,” have no withdrawal grades, and be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credits for the semester. Tara Laugeni of Woodbridge, CT, is among those named to the Dean’s List at Endicott College for the Fall 2020 semester. Laugeni is majoring in Entrepreneurship, Marketing and is the daughter of Elise Laugeni and Greg Laugeni.

Hamilton College

Clinton, NY - Brian Seiter, of Woodbridge has been named to the Dean’s List at Hamilton College for the 2020 fall semester. To be named to the Dean’s List, a student must have carried throughout the semester a course load of four or more graded credits with an average of 3.5 or above. Seiter, a sophomore, is a graduate of Hopkins School.

Holy Cross

Worcester, MA - Matteo Delsanto of Woodbridge, was named to the College of the Holy Cross Fall 2020 Dean’s List. A member of the Class of 2024, Delsanto is majoring in Undeclared. Delsanto was among more than 1,453 students named to the Dean’s List for outstanding academic achievement during the fall semester of the 2020-21 academic year. To qualify, students must pass four or more letter-graded courses with no failing grades during the semester and earn a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

Iowa State University

Ames, Iowa – More than 11,000 Iowa State University students have been recognized for outstanding academic achievement by being named to the fall semester 2020 Dean’s List. Students named to the Dean’s List must have earned a grade point average of at least 3.50 on a 4.00 scale while carrying a minimum of 12 credit hours of graded course work. Woodbridge resident Jason Christopher Luciani, 3, Mechanical Engineering was named to the Dean’s List.

Quinnipiac University

Hamden, CT - The following Woodbridge students were named to the dean’s list for the Fall 2020 semester at Quinnipiac University: Victoria Foster, Christine Golden, Judah Immanuel, Karalyn Kachmar, Ayaan Malik, and Ephemia Nicolakis. To qualify for the dean’s list, students must earn a grade point average of at least 3.5 with no grade lower than C. Full-time students must complete at least 14 credits in a semester, with at least 12 credits that have been graded on a letter grade basis to be eligible. Part-time students must complete at least six credits during a semester.

Roger Williams University

BRISTOL, RI - Select students have been named to the Fall 2020 Dean’s List at Roger Williams University in Bristol, R.I. Full-time students who complete 12 or more credits per semester and earn a GPA of 3.4 or higher are placed on the Dean’s List that semester. The following Woodbridge students have earned this achievement: Michael

Baitch and Cassandra Scherer.

The College of Saint Rose

Albany, NY - Mya Duncan of Woodbridge has been named to the Fall 2020 Dean’s List at The College of Saint Rose. The Dean’s List recognizes full-time undergraduate students who complete a minimum of 12 graded credit hours and who achieve a semester average of 3.5 without a D, F, or Incomplete grade.

University of New Haven

West Haven, CT – Andrew Bucci of Woodbridge, CT, a student in the Henry C. Lee College of Criminal Justice and Forensic Sciences at the University of New Haven, has been named to the Dean’s List for the Fall 2020 semester. Andrew is working on a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice.

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Madison, WI - The University of Wisconsin-Madison has recognized students named to the Dean’s List for the fall semester of the 2020-2021 academic year. Students who achieve at a high level academically are recognized by the dean at the close of each semester. To be eligible for the Dean’s List, students must complete a minimum of 12 graded degree credits in that semester. Each university school or college sets its own GPA requirements for students to be eligible to receive the distinction. Those from Woodbridge so honored are: Elena Burshtein, College of Letters and Science, and Carly Silver, College of Letters and Science.

**Graduations
Concordia University,
Nebraska**

Seward, NE - Marika Wissink of Woodbridge, CT, earned a Master of Education from Concordia University, Nebraska after completing her studies between December 2020 and January 2021. Undergraduates earning a degree from Concordia were eligible for distinction or high distinction honors. The top 10 percent of graduates with the highest GPA in their respective colleges were designated as graduating with high distinction. An additional 15 percent were designated as graduating with distinction.

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

P.O. Box 1126, Orange, CT 06477 • edit@WoodbridgeTownNews.com



TOWN DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES



Woodbridge Recreation Family Scavenger Hunt!

Are you looking for a new, exciting, socially distant, outdoor activity for your family? No fear, it is coming soon to Woodbridge!

Beginning on a soon to be announced date in early spring, you and your family may search for special medallions hidden in Woodbridge. Look under benches, on the side of hiking trail bridges, on trail-markers, in playgrounds, and other public areas for a prize.

Bring the prize back to the Woodbridge Recreation Department for a special gift for your family.

Keep an eye out for more details on our website or call the Recreation Office at 203-389-3446.

Town of Woodbridge Meetings for the Month of February 2021



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

| | | | |
|------|--------------------------------------|---------|----------------------|
| 2/16 | 2030 Task Force | 6:00 PM | |
| 2/17 | Diversity & Inclusion Committee..... | 6:30 PM | |
| 2/18 | Board of Finance..... | 6:00 PM | Town Hall |
| | Conservation Commission..... | 7:30 PM | Town Hall |
| 2/22 | CUPOP..... | 5:30 PM | |
| | Recreation Commission | 7:00 PM | Beecher Rd School So |
| 2/23 | Board of Selectmen..... | 5:00 PM | |
| 2/23 | Gov't Access TV Commission | 7:30 PM | Town Hall |

Youth Services

BY NANCY PFUND



Team Gratitude Baskets-Deadline Extended

Community Service Event for Teachers/School Staff/Health Care Workers

Youth Services invites students to form a team of 2-6 friends to put together a thoughtful basket for our hard-working and dedicated school personnel or health care providers. Make a team captain to collect all items, while social distancing, and drop off to Youth Services. Each basket must weigh 20 lbs. or less and can include the following: \$5 gift cards, water, protein bars, trail mix, candy, coffee packs, wipes, masks, hand cream, hand sanitizers, etc. Be creative and have some fun!

Community service hours will be determined and given to each team participant at the time of drop off. Please bring completed community service forms for each team member.

Call 203-389-3449 or email youthone@woodbridget.org to schedule a drop-off. Collection will end on Friday, February 26, 2021. Sponsored by Woodbridge Youth Services and the Town of Bethany.

Snow Art Competition – Family Fun

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@woodbridget.org. Prizes will be awarded based on creativity and skill. Check the Town of Woodbridge website at <https://www.woodbridget.org/160/Youth-Services> for updates and prizewinners. Due date for photos is February 26, 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@woodbridget.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.

“First Selectman” From Page 6

are very few ways we can make additional meaningful cuts to the budget without cutting services, so we need to focus on growing revenue. The 2030 Task Force is examining how to do that with a goal of having a healthier Grand List by 2030. I look forward to hearing their recommendations.

As you probably know, the Town Plan & Zoning Commission is continuing 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, cluster-type housing. You may view the application, other documents, and videos of the Public Hearings on the Town Plan & Zoning Commission page on the Town’s website, woodbridget.org.

A committee of town residents and land use experts will be appointed to

study these important issues and make recommendations to the Board of Selectmen. Additionally, the Board has hired a town planning consultant to work with the TP&Z Commission to study the Town’s regulations. All the hearings are streamed live on local access cable Channel 79, on the WGATV YouTube channel, and on Webex. The meeting agenda on the Town website includes the link to view as well as participate in the meetings. 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.

As always, my door remains virtually open to you. Together we will get through this – we are Woodbridge Strong! If you need to reach me, call 203-389-3401 or email me at bheller@woodbridget.org. Please keep safe!

AT THE WOODBRIDGE CENTER



Senior Center Director Kristy Moriarty, right, and Human Services Director Jeanette Glicksman deliver soup and treats during the drive-thru five holiday celebration event at The Center.



Sisters Dottie Malerba and Ann Adamovich give their thumbs up after receiving the COVID vaccine hosted by Woodbridge Human Services at The Woodbridge Center.

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

Drive Through St. Patrick's Day Luncheon: "May the road rise up to meet you" as you drive-through the Center's St. Patrick's Day celebration. Enjoy a delicious, traditional meal of corned beef and cabbage, new potatoes, carrots and a special treat provided by Jewish Senior Services. This event is generously co-sponsored by Visiting Angels of Woodbridge. Pick-up your meal on March 17 between 12-1pm. RSVP by March 3.

Get to the Point of Health Lecture Series: This free Zoom lecture series will offer informative facts focused on various current health topics. The first lecture, "An Update on COVID", will be presented by Quinnipiac Valley Health District (QVHD) on Friday, February 19 from 11:30 am-12:30 pm. This presentation will provide the latest information on the vaccine including overall 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 to sign up and obtain the Zoom link. The next lecture, "Fall-proofing Yourself at Home", will be offered in March.

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 and improve sleep and health. The fee is \$30.00. Please call The Center for dates and times and to sign up for the class.

Targeted Strength Training: Sign up for a weekly Targeted Strength Training zoom class with Michele Tenney. Offered on Mondays, 9-10 am,

the new 8-week session will begin February 22. The fee of \$40.00 may be mailed or dropped off to The Woodbridge Center. Each week you will be provided with an email link for access to the next class. All fitness levels are welcome 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 9-10 am beginning February 9. 8-week session/\$40 - prorated as needed. 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 of Guilford. The beginners' class meets on Wednesdays 9:30-10:15 am from 1/13-3/31. The advanced class meets on Fridays 9:30-10:15 am from 1/15-4/2. The cost is \$30/12-week session prorated to accommodate later sign-ups. 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 10 am. Enjoy a great workout in the comfort of your home!

Transportation for medical appointments is available for those 60+ or disabled Monday - Friday from 9:00 am to 2:30 pm (with some limited exceptions). Transportation for grocery shopping and pharmacy pick-up is also available. Call to arrange transportation via car or wheelchair accessible van. 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,

stuffed chicken breast with broccoli and cheese, beef stew and cranberry, ginger salmon. Meals include a vegetable roll and dessert. Minimum order of two lunches please.

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.

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.

COVID vaccination distribution: Woodbridge has been fortunate to have multiple opportunities for vaccine appointments at clinics in North Haven hosted by the Quinnipiac Valley Health District (QVHD). Additionally, on Friday January 29th, The Woodbridge Center hosted a clinic for 70 residents, aged 75 or older. According to the Department of Public Health the statewide average of those over 75 who have already received the vaccine is approximately 30% while Woodbridge has had 43.1% access vaccinations. For those 65-74-year-olds awaiting an opportunity to be vaccinated, please check <https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/covid-19%20vaccinations> for up-to-date information on statewide vaccination rollout.

Having trouble getting access to a COVID vaccine? If you are 75 or older and have not gotten an appointment for the COVID vaccine, please contact this department at 203-389-3430 for assistance. You may also send email to jglicksman@woodbridged.org. Staff members will assist you with access to an appointment at one of the local clinics in surrounding towns. If you are unable to drive, or find a ride to a vaccination clinic, please contact The

Woodbridge Center for information about the Transportation program.

File 2020 taxes with VITA from home for free: 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. Following a telephone intake interview, a VITA volunteer will schedule a drive-through appointment for document scanning.

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. If you are able to donate to the Human Services food pantry please consider purchasing the



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LOCAL BUSINESS ROUNDUP



Citizen's Oil Co-Op Donates \$600 To CT Food Pantry

Citizen's Oil Co-op organized existing members to refer a friend to the Co-op in an effort to raise money for a Connecticut food pantry. Our members responded and Citizen's Oil Co-op is proud to donate \$600 to the pantry to help those in need during a difficult year. "The Co-op saves me money every year and it's a bonus to be able to give back to the community" says Co-op member Elik Dvorkin of Woodbridge, Connecticut.

Providing help to those in need is nothing new to the Co-op. Established in 1981, Citizen's Oil Co-op has partnered with many local businesses to save its members money on home heating oil and propane. To find out more about the Co-op, visit oilco-op.com or call 860-561-6011. To make a donation, contact Second Star of Jacob Church food pantry, 201 Chapel Street New Haven, CT 06513. Phone: (203)-776-9603.

The CTBA Ready To Advocate For Beauty Professionals

The CT Beauty Association (CTBA), a non-profit, composed of beauty industry leaders, with over 3500 members, is prepared to advocate for all beauty professionals across the state of Connecticut. The need for representation in this industry became apparent during the 2020 shutdown, but the new formation is prepared to use its board members to communicate and represent all of its professional members to the CT legislature. CTBA is currently seeking to fill open board positions and invites all beauty professionals to gain benefits through a membership, be it hair salon and spa owners, stylists, barbers, estheticians, makeup artists, etc. to join the mission advocating industry interests, exploring ideas to stay open, safely and successfully. "We are legal and running and helping to give our

industry a voice," says Odete DaSilva, executive board member. "We want [the industry] to know what our positions are for the benefit of our members and how someone can become a member of CTBA." CTBA hopes to unite the industry and find solutions to current issues, as well as, future issues, such as argue for industry specific funding and vaccine guidance, so that they too can continue to remain in business, given the impacts of the economic crisis. Personal service professionals forcefully reopened their businesses during phase 1, yet there is no date assigned in Lamont's vaccine schedule rollout for these essential workers. To learn more about the CT Beauty Association please write to: Odete DaSilva at ctbeautypros@gmail.com or visit www.ctbeauty.org.



EDC Announces Woodbridge Bucks

The Woodbridge Economic Development Commission (EDC) 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 (see below for a full list). To enter the drawings residents are encouraged to reply to the weekly posts on the Town's Facebook and Instagram pages (like or follow here: www.facebook.com/TownofWoodbridgeCT) to share their love for local businesses. The Town will post the request on Monday mornings and responses received before 9 am on Fridays will be entered into that week's drawing. 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. During the first week of the program Josh Edelman, Joi Prud'homme, Susan Rubino, Kim Sembiente and Ed Walsh won the drawings. Residents praised Solun Tapas Bar and Restaurant for "delicious" food and "excellent" customer service; Woodbridge Running Company for "great staff, personal fittings;" Brown Fitness & Wellness has been a "fantastic experience" for one poster; the UPS Store is "very reliable, friendly

and they always go out of their way;" and Fernis Barbershop at Lucky Soul Tattoo is "fantastic." Additional comments lauded Paolo Ristorante because "the atmosphere, people and dining experience make each visit a special memory;" and "The Woodbridge True Value Hardware store has the nicest most helpful people around." Another resident said "Thai Stories is our go-to place for takeout. It never disappoints!" Yet another shared that she "had a great take-out meal at Las Brasas! Their tortas are amazing!" Ceci's Salon received praise – "all the ladies are so talented and sweet and really enjoy pampering all their clients;" and another shared that "Bobby at Elm City Trailers is a huge local supporter." On Instagram a resident shared love for Massaro Community Farm for its weekly online produce sale and activities. "I'm excited to see residents taking the opportunity to share their positive experiences with our local businesses," said EDC Chair Jeremy Rosner. "We know that positive reviews are helpful to businesses and I'm proud that the EDC can reward residents for writing those positive reviews. Please continue to shop, dine and try Woodbridge!" "I'd like to thank the Economic Development Commission for this innovative program," said First Selectman Beth Heller. "Now more than ever it is important to support local businesses. I hope that the chance of winning Woodbridge Bucks will inspire

See "Woodbridge Bucks" On Page 20

ARTS & LEISURE

Celebrate Heart Health with Massaro Farm

Starting in 2021, Massaro Community Farm is adjusting its program fees in an effort to make them accessible to everyone. We offer sliding scale fees for workshops and scholarships for farm-based education. If you do not see an option that works for you, please reach out to the farm office so we can work with you. See our contact information below. For all in-person events at the farm, we take appropriate safety precautions by keeping group sizes small, temperature screening, practicing social distancing and wearing masks.

Outdoor Winter Explorer Series

Massaro Community Farm has launched its second season of Winter Explorers. This on-farm program encourages children ages 4-11 to embrace outdoor activities during the winter season. Participants will look for animal tracks on the trail, build a survival shelter, enjoy (safe) time by the fire, learn of the importance of the change in seasons, understand the impact of climate change on food production and much more. Sessions run for eight weeks starting February 7 (latecomers welcome). Led by environmental educator Corey Thomas.

MASSARO

COMMUNITY FARM

\$150/per child with sibling discounts available. massarocommunityfarm.eventbrite.com.

Winter Wellness Series

When you're not getting outside, wintertime is also the perfect time to turn your focus inward - to re-energize, rejuvenate and set your intentions for the year. Join Naturopathic Physician Dr. Jenn Botwick for a three-part virtual self-care series to bring awareness to the present moment and take action for your ongoing mental and physical wellbeing during an isolating time. February 18, 26 and March 4, 7:00-8:00pm. Sliding scale fee (\$30-\$50/pp) includes journal, pencils, plant, votive candle and snacks. massarocommunityfarm.eventbrite.com.

Maple Tapping How-To

Visit the farm Saturday, February 20 at 2:00pm for this beginner how-to on making homemade syrup. We'll

give you the tools you need and the basics for tapping and boiling syrup from maple and other tree varieties to make your own delicious syrup. If it's cold, we may even enjoy some time around the firepit. Admittance includes the cost of the tree tapping kit. Sliding scale tickets \$15-\$25/pp. massarocommunityfarm.eventbrite.com.

Garden Bootcamp

Last spring, Massaro Farm sold three times the number of vegetable seedlings than in prior years! Following that we received many questions about home gardening. Watch for our Garden Bootcamp class coming in March to give you all the details you need for a bountiful garden harvest in 2021.

A Season of Apiary Management Begins

The Connecticut Beekeeper's Association (CBA) returns to the farm this year for another season of managing your

backyard beehives. Ted Jones of Jones Apiaries will lead live workshops from the farm's apiary beginning Saturday, March 20 at 9:00am. Workshops will run as interactive webinars until it's again safe to gather in groups. Please register in advance to receive the Zoom link to join in. The first session will deal with introducing your new bee package to the hive. This series is offered on a "pay as you go" basis; please consider making a donation to the CBA and support the important work of preserving pollinators: www.ctbees.org. Register at www.ctbees.org/events/.

Farm Online Store

Massaro's organic produce and other locally produced items are available through our online store every other week. Support local farmers while getting milk, eggs, buttermilk, kefir, cheese, mushrooms, pork products, coffee, and Massaro produce and jarred tomato products. Other items added based on their availability. Order by 8pm Wednesday evenings for no-contact pickup on Friday afternoons. Peruse the online store at www.Massarofarm.square.site.

Registration Open for 2021 Seasonal Vegetable

See "Massaro Farm" On Page 13



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Happy Valentine's Day! ❤️

The Shops at Yale

Plan your visit at TheShopsatYale.com

The Chapel Street Historic and Broadway Districts in downtown New Haven.



ARTS & LEISURE

The Memory Project

Since 2008, Amity High School (AHS) art students have created over 400 portraits for disadvantaged children all around the world through an organization called The Memory Project. Children in Honduras, Peru, Indonesia, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Mexico, Haiti, Ghana, Bolivia, Congo, and Russia have received portraits of themselves created by AHS students, and the joy expressed by the artists and the children is always overwhelming.

AHS students were midway through their Memory Project portraits when schools went remote in March 2020. The portraits remained on the classroom drying racks, in students' portfolios, or at students' houses for many months. In the fall, all of the portraits were gathered and sorted, and this year's art students made it their mission right at the beginning of the school year to complete or re-start every portrait the school committed to. Students in Drawing and Painting II and Honors Art completed 67 beautiful portraits, which were then sent to The Memory Project organization in Wisconsin. From there, they were brought to Russia by Memory Project staff, and hand-delivered to the children. This has generally been the process every year, but Covid has made student participation and travel a big challenge for The Memory Project, and when the AHS portraits were received, a reply was sent from the organization's founder, Ben Schumaker, "WOW! Truly, I am blown away to receive this incredible package! It has become so rare in the past six months to receive a package of so many wonderful portraits, and what

a treat it is! Thank you, thank you, and thank you. The kids in Russia will be so excited to receive them, especially since their lives are now so much more isolated than before. I hope you stay well over the weeks and months ahead, and we will stay in touch as always!" - Ben

Last week, AHS art students received a video in which they can watch their portraits being delivered to the children in Russia for whom they were created. It is impossible to describe the beautiful reactions from both the children and the art students. There were definitely some tears shed. AHS art students will create more Memory Project portraits this spring, and they are very much looking forward to it.

None of these accomplishments would have been possible without the constant support from the Jamie Hulley Arts Foundation. Since 2008, the foundation has fully funded AHS's involvement (which costs \$15 a portrait). The foundation has donated over \$6000 so that AHS art students can have this experience, and so that kids all over the world can receive a unique and beautiful portrait of themselves. These children are often living in refugee camps, orphanages, group homes, or temporary housing due to natural disasters or extreme poverty. The portraits are often one of their few personal possessions. To see their reactions from this winter's delivery, watch this beautiful video, <https://vimeo.com/memoryproject/january2021>. To learn more about the Jamie Hulley Arts Foundation or make a donation to its wonderful cause, visit <https://jamiehulleyartsfund.org/>.

"Massaro Farm" From Page 12

Subscription (CSA)

Did you know we start planting seeds at the end of February? Our toasty little greenhouse will give birth to thousands of seedlings that will find their way into our fields and, eventually, into your weekly CSA. Subscribe to our 10- or 20-week CSA now to assist our farmers in planning for the coming season. This will also free up farm staff time from administrative work later in the spring when they need to be outdoors. 20-week share: \$675 cash/check or \$695 online. 10-week flexible share: \$360 cash/check or \$370 online. Fruit option from High Hill Orchard in Meriden: \$110. Last year's CSA sold out early; therefore, we encourage your reservation by April 1 to secure your spot. Print out and return a subscription form or pay online with a credit card at www.Massarofarm.org.

Massaro Community Farm has always strived to be a place of openness and inclusion. However, we also recognize we are at a time when divisive-

ness can push us even further apart as a society. Therefore, we are undertaking additional efforts to make sure healthy food is accessible to everyone who needs it, that our programs are equitably priced and that people of all races, colors and creeds feel welcome at the farm. We humbly ask your patience as we navigate this journey and welcome any suggestions you may have. Please call us or email us at any time.

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

Local Author Releases New Title

The Elderslie Press is pleased to announce that Woodbridge architect and author Harwood Loomis has released his new book, *The Frugal Yankee's Guide To Personal Security*, which is now available for purchase on Amazon as a paperback book and as a Kindle e-book. The book is also available as an e-book in Nook format from the Barnes & Noble website.

The Frugal Yankee's Guide to Personal Security is neither a martial arts book nor a "self-defense" book. Reading it will not transform the reader into a Ninja shadow warrior or an elite commando operator. The author's daughter attended college in a large city, where her cell phone was stolen three times and she was mugged twice (once at gunpoint) within the span of two years. Recognizing that his daughter had never learned the basics of perceiving and avoiding potentially dangerous situations, the author set out on a search for ways to teach his daughter how to be more "street smart" about keeping herself out of such situations. *The Frugal Yankee's Guide To Personal Security* sets forth many of the concepts and information he

learned from his investigations.

The Frugal Yankee's Guide to Personal Security offers a wide variety of suggestions for making everyday life safer and more secure, both at home and away from home, without spending large amounts of money. Many of the suggestions don't cost anything, and don't require any significant changes to the way we live from day to day. They require only awareness, and possibly restructuring some habits that are easy to reprogram—once the motive to do so has been presented and recognized.

Retired District Ombudsman Richard McCleery of Weeki Wachee, FL, said about the book, "I found Mr. Loomis' book, *The Frugal Yankee's Guide to Personal Security*, to be thought provoking, and a valuable resource for anyone seeking to establish or enhance the level of security for themselves, their family, or business.

"Whether you intend to spend a little or a lot on personal security, the book is a great place to start, and provides a wealth of information. I found it to be an interesting and easy read, and highly recommend it."

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honors those who came before us, who helped build the wealth of our nation, and who introduced staple crops we eat every day.



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CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS



Chess Club Is Looking For More Ninjas

BY BETTINA THIEL
WOODBRIDGE TOWN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Every Saturday at 4 p.m. brothers Alexie Petrov, 10, and Niki Petrov, 14, sit down to play chess with their friends. Online, that is – given the pandemic. They are part of the Woodbridge Chess Ninjas, a free private group they formed last fall on chess.com. The group has about 31 members, with typically 12-18 logging on any given Saturday.

“Group members are randomly paired and play four (10- or 15-minute) Swiss rounds against one another,” said their mom, Chandra Prasad. The group is open to Beecher and Amity Middle School kids who want to play chess and improve their game.

In addition, Amity High School Chess Team member Christian Chen has been offering free 30-minute chess tutorials on different topics every week, from endgame- and middle-game strategies, to various

openings, to in-depth game analysis. These tutorials are taking place on Wednesday afternoons. Another Amity Chess Team member, Dan, also joins at times.

“Chess club members range in experience from novice/very new players to moderate players,” Prasad said. “Interested kids should know that we have mostly novice players and a few who are slightly more advanced with ratings around 1200. Because of limited time and resources, we cannot teach kids how to play chess; so, all of the kids who join the club come in knowing the basics, at a minimum.”

The Woodbridge Chess Ninjas are inviting any interested elementary or middle-school- aged Woodbridge resident to join them. To reach out, email Chandra Prasad at chandraprasadbooks@gmail.com. All children who live in Woodbridge are welcome to join as long as they know the basics of the game.

Jewish Genealogical Society of Connecticut February Webinar

The Jewish Genealogical Society of Connecticut will host a webinar on Jewish Given Names on Sunday, February 21, 2021, at 1:30 pm, presented by Warren Blatt. The webinar is free for members. The fee for non-members is \$5.

To join the Jewish Genealogical Society of Connecticut or to pay for the webinar, visit www.jgsct.org.

Warren Blatt is the author of “Resources for Jewish Genealogy in the Boston Area” (JGSGB, 1996); and co-author (with Gary Mokotoff) of “Getting Started in Jewish Genealogy: (Avotaynu, 1999).

Warren has over 40 years of research experience with Russian and Polish Jewish records, and is the author of the “JewishGen FAQ” and many other JewishGen InfoFiles. He was the Chair of the 15th International Seminar on Jewish Genealogy. In 2004, he was awarded the IAJGS’ Lifetime Achievement Award in Jerusalem.

This presentation is an introduction to Jewish given names (first names), focusing on practical issues for genealogical research. Our ancestors each had many different given names and nicknames, in various languages and

alphabets, often making Jewish genealogical research difficult.

This presentation will teach you about the history and patterns of Jewish first names, and how to recognize your ancestors’ names in genealogical sources. Topics include religious and secular names; origins of given names; variants, nicknames, and diminutives; double names (unrelated pairs, kinnui, Hebrew/Yiddish translations); patronymics; name equivalents; Ashkenazic naming traditions (naming of children); statistics on the distribution and popularity of given names in various regions and times; spelling issues; Polish and Russian declensions; interpretation of names in documents; and the Anglicization of immigrant Jewish names: adaptations and transformations.

The Jewish Genealogical Society of Connecticut looks forward to the end of the novel coronavirus pandemic, and to welcoming members, and guests, to our programs at Temple Sinai, where JGSCT houses its library. At that time, JGSCT members will be able to borrow items, except reference books and materials, which must remain in the library.



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“Stuart” From Page 1

art said, he is proud of the service of his four children, who all served in the Military: The first one, a daughter, is a combat medic instructor with the Army National Guard; she is currently a firefighter and paramedic in Milford; his eldest son, a 1st Class officer with the Navy in Hawaii, his younger daughter graduated officer training and is now training to be a jet pilot; and the youngest son, a US Marine, is stationed in California.

Stuart started his career in Milford, where he attended the Police Academy in 1979, and where he met his wife, Rosalie. They got married three years later and moved to Florida, where his parents lived. He got a job in the Sheriff’s Department in Pasco County, north of Tampa. “It was pretty intense,” Stuart remembered. He had cross trained as a customs agent, and with the drug trade blooming, policing was a different animal. Miami Vice may not have been far from reality. “It was a dream job,” he said.

But the young family decided to move back to Connecticut, where he joined the Woodbridge PD under then-chief David Burke.

One project he felt passionate about for many years was planning for renovating the police headquarters. Parked in the basement of the former elemen-

tary school, the department made due, and the town over the years has tackled problem areas one at a time.

“The car port was a big relief,” Stuart said. Before that was put up, it might take officers 45 minutes to clear the vehicles parked in the open before they could respond. The next step is the renovation of the dispatch area. “They need better working conditions,” he said. “It’s the first contact people have with the department, whether they walk in or call in. It reflects how officers treat them on the road,” he said.

“Eventually a renovation is going to be inevitable,” he said. “I’m sad I’m not going to be around to see that happen.”

The Police Department is an integral part of the town, he said. “Residents appreciate the department. It keeps them safe.” If it weren’t for the local cops, more problems from neighboring urban areas would filter into Woodbridge. “Problems are being held in check.”

Whenever people have an issue, they want to know that police are going to be there within a couple of minutes. “A lot of people are going to expect that.”

As for his own future, “I’m going to fish,” with at first a stint in Florida to take a vacation. Come spring, he is hoping to be working for Jones Family Farm in Shelton, where he has helped out in the past. “That’s relaxing,” he said. “I want to stay busy.”



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HOUSES OF WORSHIP EVENTS

Congregation Or Shalom Happenings

Open Minds, Open Hearts, Open Doors

Staying Connected While We Keep Our Distance

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

Join Us For 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

Only the first Saturday of the month will offer an in-person service with very limited attendance. It will also be available via Zoom (please call the synagogue office at 203-799-2341 for more information).

Virtual Learning This Month ZOOM &..LEARN!

“THE EXODUS 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 the birth of the Israelite nation and their faith. All Are Welcome!

Email coshalom@sbcglobal.net or call the synagogue office at 203-799-2341 to register.

Social Action

MITZVAH OF THE MONTH

Our monthly mitzvah for February



Congregation Or Shalom

is collecting socks and mittens for the Downtown Soup Kitchen in New Haven. If you would like to contribute to this effort, please call the synagogue office at 203-799-2341 for further information.

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).

Orange Congregational Church, UCC Virtual Workshop

Orange Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, welcomes you to join us for virtual worship on Sunday mornings. We are an Open and Affirming Congregation, which means we welcome all people into the full life and leadership of the church regardless of race, class, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, or family type. No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here!

You can worship with us on YouTube at Orange Congregational Church, UCC. We also are offering virtual coffee hour, church school, Bible study, book club, and an anti-racism ministry. Occasionally, we have other special interest groups for art, music, and other topics.



Orange Congregational Church

Please email us at occhurch@snet.net for Zoom links or to be put on our church emailing list. A virtual Ash Wednesday service will take place on February 17, 2021.

For more information about us, visit www.orangecongregationalchurch.org.

Temple Beth Sholom Announces 75th Anniversary

In Fall 2021, Temple Beth Sholom (TBS) is celebrating its 75th Anniversary. Temple Beth Sholom will have a year-long celebration of a wide variety of events beginning in January. Programming includes Friday Night Shabbat services to recognize congregants who joined during each decade, a special recognition of past Temple presidents, and much more. It will all lead up to a culminating event in November 2021. Details will be available on www.tbshamden.com.

Seeking Memories about TBS

Our journey is not complete without our community and our membership. If you or your family were members of Temple Beth Sholom – or attended a special event at Temple Beth Sholom – we would love to hear from you! Please email tbshamden75@gmail.com your Temple Beth Sholom story. We will be compiling memories for a tribute book.

History of Temple Beth Sholom

Temple Beth Sholom began in 1946 when five couples met monthly at Church Street School as a small social circle. They formed The Hamden Jewish Community Center. Soon after, over 100 people met at different school buildings in Hamden and agreed that a Sunday and a Hebrew School for the youths of the Hamden Jewish families was in demand. Once that was established, it was decided that a place to play, learn and conduct High Holiday



Temple Beth Sholom

services would be needed. This new Center became a welcoming place for Jewish families moving into suburban Hamden from New Haven and elsewhere.

In 1952, a permanent home was sought and found at 1809 Whitney Avenue. Shortly after, The Hamden Jewish Community Center was renamed Temple Beth Sholom. In 1964, a sanctuary was added to the building, along with additional classrooms and a library. In 1983, Rabbi Benjamin E. Scolnic became the spiritual leader. In 1985, TBS installed stained-glass windows depicting milestones in Biblical history. In 2006, a new Chapel, a new library, a refurbished social hall, and all new classrooms for the Hebrew School and the K’tanim Preschool were dedicated.

Today, Temple Beth Sholom is an egalitarian conservative synagogue with over 350-member families and singles from the Greater New Haven community.

For more information, please contact Lauren Piscitelle at communicationsvp@tbshamden.com.

Woodbridge Town News

ATTENTION CHURCHES, SYNAGOGUES, AND HOUSES OF WORSHIP!

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

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HOUSES OF WORSHIP EVENTS

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



Bob. Alper

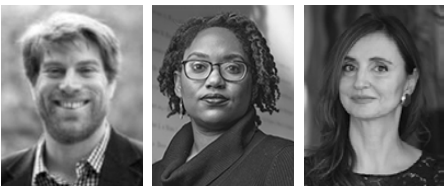
Comedian Rabbi Bob Alper

You might have heard his jokes on Sirius/XM Satellite Radio or at one of his gigs at comedy clubs, conventions, synagogues, or colleges over the last 27 years. Rabbi Bob Alper, who describes himself as “the world’s only practicing clergyman doing stand-up comedy intentionally,” will present his new show, “The Spirituality of Laughter,” on February 24 for the BEKI Wednesday 8 pm Schmooze. Email office@beki.org to request the Zoom link.

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.



Adam Rothman, Marcia Chatelain, and Roya Hakakian

More Schmoozes

On Wednesday, February 17, Georgetown University history professors Adam Rothman and Marcia Chatelain will lead a discussion about that university’s financial reliance on slavery, the research process in unearthing this history, the resulting truth and reconciliation process, and what steps Georgetown has made to atone for this past.

On Wednesday, March 10, Roya Hakakian will speak about her new book, “A Beginner’s Guide to America.” Born and raised in a Persian Jewish family in Tehran, she arrived in the U.S. in 1985. Her two prior books are the award-winning memoir “Journey from the Land of No: A Girlhood Caught in Revolutionary Iran” and “Assassins of the Turquoise Palace,” about the shooting of Iranian and Kurdish opposition leaders in Berlin in 1992.

From 8 to 9 pm on Zoom, BEKI Schmoozes include a presentation and time for questions. To request the link for any event, email office@beki.org.

Passover Inspiration

On March 17 Ethnomusicologist Rachel Adelstein will present “Singing Around the Seder Table: The Music and Memories of Passover” as the 8 pm weekly Schmooze. A favorite BEKI speaker, Dr. Adelstein has produced podcasts about music in Jewish life around the world. The following week, on March 24 at 8 pm, Annie Norman-Schiff, BEKI’s Youth and Family Programming Director, will lead a conversation about how to make the Passover Seder meaningful and fun for kids and grandkids. She will also discuss ideas for “virtual” Pesach fun to link extended families who are apart for this holiday. Email office@beki.org to request the Zoom link.

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

Happenings at B’nai Jacob

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Happening This Shabbat

- Friday**
- › 6:30 PM Kabbalat Shabbat - on zoom and live stream
- Saturday**
- › 9:00 AM Bread & Torah - on zoom
 - › 10:00 AM Shabbat service - on zoom and live stream
- Sunday**
- › Sunday School classes on Zoom

Upcoming Events Rabbi’s Winter/Spring Class – NEW!

Monday Nights 7:30 – 9:00 pm on Zoom
Beginning Monday, February 8, and through May on these dates: February 8, 22; March 1, 8, 15, 22; April 5, 12, 19, 26; May 3, 10
How Did the Siddur Come to be the Way it Is?

A first or even a second encounter with the siddur (prayer book) can feel like endless random Hebrew chanting? How did we start having fixed prayers and why these prayers? Why are they in this order? Come explore the history of Jewish liturgy.

From BRCA to Tay-Sachs: How Genetic Testing Saves Lives

Thursday, February 18 • 7pm on Zoom
Learn about the history of Jewish genetic screening, hereditary risks in the Jewish community, and how genetic testing can help ensure your health, and the health of your children and



Congregation B’nai Jacob


grandchildren. JSscreen is a national, non-profit initiative based out of Emory University. JSscreen’s goal is to prevent genetic diseases by improving access to testing through an online, at-home education and screening program. JSscreen makes genetic screening simple, accessible, and affordable.

Title: Game Changer: How the Abraham Accords Alter the Middle East, Strengthen Israel and impact the Path to Peace with the Palestinians

Sunday, February 21 • 10am on Zoom
Herb Keinon, senior contributing editor and analyst for The Jerusalem Post, looks at the significance of the Abraham Accords on the Middle East and Israel’s place in it. Herb Keinon is a senior contributing editor and analyst at The Jerusalem Post, writing extensively on diplomacy, politics and Israeli society. Keinon lectures widely in Israel and around the world on political and diplomatic developments in the country.

To register for a Zoom Event please contact Congregation B’nai Jacob at 203-389-2111, info@bnaijacob.org, or BnaiJacob.org.

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...Although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools...

ROMANS 1: 21, 22

“The Three Kings” by Karl Schmidt-Rottluff (1917)



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DID YOU KNOW?

A New Year, New Numbers to Keep in Mind for 2021

Estate and Gift Tax:

- The federal lifetime exemption for property passing to non-spouse beneficiaries has been **increased to \$11,700,000.00.**
- The Connecticut lifetime exemption for property passing to non-spouse beneficiaries has been **increased to \$7,100,000.00.**
- There is still an unlimited gift/estate deduction for property passing to a spouse; however, to qualify for the unlimited gift/estate tax deduction the spouse must be a U.S. citizen.
- The amount that can be gifted to any one person without needing to file a gift tax return **remains the same at \$15,000.00** per recipient. Additional gifts can be made for qualified medical expenses and qualified education expenses without needing to file a gift tax return.

Long Term Care:

- If one spouse requires Medicaid and the other spouse remains at home ("Community Spouse"), the **maximum** amount of non-excluded assets the Community Spouse can keep has been **increased to \$130,380.00.**
- If one spouse requires Medicaid the minimum amount of non-excluded assets the Community Spouse can keep has been **increased to \$27,328.00.**
- If one spouse requires Medicaid the minimum amount of monthly income the Community Spouse can keep has been **increased to \$2,155.00**, and the maximum amount it can be increased to, without an administrative hearing, has been **increased to \$3,259.50.**
- If one spouse requires Medicaid the other spouse is living at home the maximum amount of equity in the family home that can be excluded by the Community Spouse has been **increased to \$906,000.00.**

Long Term Care Provided in Your Home:

- The amount of gross monthly income you can have and still be eligible for the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders (CHCPE) has been **increased to \$2,382.00.**
- The amount of gross monthly income you may have without triggering a co-pay has been **increased to \$2,126.67.**
- Use of a pooled trust for excess income to establish eligibility or to avoid co-pays remains a viable option.

If you are interested in learning more about how these 2021 numbers affect you and your family please visit our website and read our blog for recent posts. For advice specific to you or your family, please contact the office. We would be glad to meet with you for a no hassle, no charge initial consultation, no matter how long it lasts.



Attorney Steven Floman and Attorney Allison DePaola Drozd are responsible for this advertisement. This advertisement 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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HEALTH & FITNESS

Pandemic/Winter Sedentary Precautions

BY MICHAEL DEMETRIADES DPT

As the winter and cold months proceed in conjunction with a pandemic, many people are slowing down, not going out as much and ultimately move their bodies less. This can be the perfect combination to allow muscle weakness to set in. Between moving less, outdoor household chores, and weather conditions; there are many ways to stay active and keep yourself safe during this time of year.

During this pandemic and now the winter, people are staying inside more, becoming less active, which could lead to falls. There are a number of ways to combat this without leaving your home during this vulnerable time. Several body weight exercises can be performed in your home for people of every skill and disability level. Physical therapists can take an assessment and provide you with a great home exercise program tailored for your specific needs and skill level which can be done in clinic or through an E-visit (internet visit/phone). In my experience, patients that tend to be more active using specific home exercises overall fall less frequently. Some general exercises that most people are able to do would be sit to stand transfers from a chair, straight leg raises in bed, going up and down one step, lunges performed at your counter are just a few options. For a more specific plan contact a physical therapist.

As snow starts to fall this time of year, there can be more work around your house. These winter activities, shoveling snow and winterizing your house, can be very taxing on your body. Prior to going out in the elements, make sure you are having a proper meal, drinking plenty of water and performing light stretching. Also, when performing these activities do smaller, more frequent rounds of the task, instead of leaving one daunting, big clean up. In my experience, I have seen many patients come in with injuries related to shoveling and raking when they leave everything for one big clean up. A good recommendation would be to go out a few times during the snow storm to keep up with it while there is less accumulation as opposed to try to shovel 12 or more inches at one time. This can be a hazard to pulling muscles and more



Michael Demetriades

importantly heart attacks.

Finally, with the weather conditions getting worse in the winter, proper preventative measures can be made in order to avoid falling. A few ways to prevent falls would be to salt and sand walkways and driveway before and after snowfall. This small amount of traction can help avoid a slip and fall injury. Another way would be to purchase attachments for your shoes which have small spikes or grips which will allow you to walk over ice with significantly less chance of falling.

In the chance of an injury that occurs during the winter months or anytime for that matter, physical therapy is a great option that requires no prescription. Injuries will improve quicker when treatment intervention occurs sooner in the process. There are also E-visit options available during this pandemic as well.

These few tips and preventative measures can keep you safe this winter. If there are questions about any of the content above, I can be contacted at Amity Physical Therapy in Branford at 203-433-4683.

Michael Demetriades DPT received his doctorate degree from Quinnipiac University. He has experience working with all ages and injuries. Michael is a previous varsity hockey and baseball player who is well versed in the modern athlete. Amity Physical Therapy was founded by Michael Dow MSPT, CEO/Director 15 years ago. The practice now has three offices: Branford, Woodridge and Hamden. Michael Demetriades can be reached in Branford at (203) 433-4683.

Woodbridge Town News

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ADULT SERVICES

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Federal Taxes

Federal 1040/1040-SR forms and instruction booklets are available (self-service) in the meeting room, with Park & Pickup. The Adult Services department can print off any additional forms you might need—call us at 203-389-3434 or email us at wbrstaff@lioninc.org. We will leave them in the meeting room under your name.

Woodbridge Human Services VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) program is still available to prepare income tax returns at no cost for qualifying residents. Please call Human Services at 203-389-3429 for more information.

State Taxes

Unfortunately, the State of Connecticut is not providing libraries with state tax forms or booklets this year. All state tax forms and instructions can be found on the Connecticut Department of Revenue Services (DRS) website: <https://portal.ct.gov/DRS>.

To request paper forms and instructions, call the DRS at 860-297-5962. Free assistance in completing Connecticut returns is available from DRS by telephone or videoconference. Normal business hours: Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Use the numbers below to ask general questions or request paper forms by mail:

- › 860-297-5962 (from anywhere);
- › 800-382-9463 (Connecticut calls outside the Greater Hartford calling area only);
- › 860-297-4911 (TTY, TDD, and Text Telephone users only).

Taxpayers may also call 711 for relay services. A taxpayer must tell the



WOODBIDGE
TOWN LIBRARY

711 operator the number they wish to call. The relay operator will dial it and then communicate using a TTY with the taxpayer.

UPDATE FOR DIGITAL MAGAZINES

The Library's collection of 3,000 digital magazines is moving from RBDigital to OverDrive. Up to three years of back issues will be available, and all magazines will be available for unlimited simultaneous access (a.k.a. NO HOLDS LISTS!).

You can search and check out the titles in our catalog, then download to a device or read in your browser. If you have the Libby or the OverDrive apps, you'll notice the new additions under "format." Don't have the apps? You can get them for Apple and Android devices; search your platform's store for Libby, download the app, and set up an account with your Woodbridge Town Library card. Need a library card? Email askus@woodbridgetownlibrary.org.

FROM THE CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT

Black History Month and Lunar New Year Activities

Stop by the meeting room each week in February for a new packet celebrating Black History Month, with different activities to take and make or do at home. Each packet focuses on a different person from history or more recent/current times. The activities are STEM/STEAM-based and feature art, science, creative writing, or baking.

Lunar New Year is February 16! Celebrate the Year of the Ox with a craft and activity sheets also in the meeting room.

Bookmark Contest

Have your art featured on a bookmark at the library! Entry forms are available in the meeting room. Drop off your bookmark by February 26—there is a box for entries in the meeting room.

Contest Guidelines:

1. Open to all Woodbridge residents in grades K-6;
2. Entry must be child's original work and not contain any other images or attachments, and must be done in color;
3. Draw your bookmark within the template to the right of the entry form;
4. The entrant and parent/guardian consents to the scanning, copying, printing, distribution, promotion, and/or other use of their bookmark by the Woodbridge Town Library;
5. A winner will be selected once all entries are received. The winner will be notified by Children's Library staff.

PoetryCraft Program

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.

LIBRARY NEWS

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 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 NEW book drop inside the meeting room, or the outdoor book drop, located to the left of the front doors.

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.

Department phones and emails:

- › Adult Services/Reference: 203-389-3434 wbrstaff@lioninc.org;
- › Children's Department: 203-389-3439 childrensprogram@lioninc.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/.



“Woodbridge Center” From Page 9

following items: jarred sauces, jams and jellies, canned or jarred fruit, shampoo, conditioner, body wash, and disposable razors. Please call and let us know when you plan to drop off needed items and leave bagged items on the bench outside of the Senior Center during business hours.

Job opportunity: Woodbridge Human Services seeks a part-time Clerical Program Assistant for The Woodbridge Center - 28 hours per week, \$19.43/hour. 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. Contact Woodbridge Human Services with resumes and cover letter if qualified by February 19.

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.


“Woodbridge Bucks” From Page 11

residents to continue sharing all the things they love about our fantastic local businesses and to shop locally!”

Participating businesses include (see the website for an up-to-date list): Amethyst Lounge, Amity Bikes, Amity Bowl, Brown Fitness and Wellness, Curtain Call, Deli Delish, Elm City Trailer, Fernis Barbershop, JCC, Las Brasas Mexican Grill, Massaro Community Farm, New England Brewing, Paolo Ristorante, Progressions Salon, The Red Barn, Simply Dance Studio, Solun Tapas Bar & Restaurant, Street

’n’ Savory Food Truck, Sweet Seidners, The UPS Store, Woodbridge Running Company, Woodbridge Social, Woodbridge True Value, The Write Approach and Yarn Barn.

If your business would like to participate please contact Betsy Yagla. Participating businesses are asked to accept the \$25 in Woodbridge Bucks and turn the bucks into the Town for reimbursement. No change will be given, and Woodbridge Bucks must be redeemed in person. Woodbridge Bucks are required to be spent by June 1 and businesses have until June 30 to request reimbursement from the Town.



“If we are strong, our strength will speak for itself. If we are weak, words will be of no help.”
— John F. Kennedy

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

Gibson Assoc., Inc.
175 East Mitchell Ave, Cheshire, CT 06410
Ph: 203-272-3781. TDD: 1-800-545-1833 Ext 165

DEATH NOTICES

Imogene Pratt Luther

Imogene Pratt Luther of Woodbridge, CT passed away peacefully on January 8, 2021. She was 89.

Gene, daughter of the late Robert W. Pratt, III and Caroline R. White and twin sister of Robert W. Pratt, Jr. was raised in Warwick Neck, Rhode Island. She graduated from the Mary C. Wheeler School in Providence, Rhode Island in 1949. She attended the University of Texas for two years and graduated from the Katherine Gibbs Secretarial School. After graduation, Gene made a career as a medical office manager in Boston, New York City and New Haven.

Gene married Michael Luther in 1964 and moved to Woodbridge to build a new home. Gene felt strongly about contributing positively to her community and volunteered for

a number of organizations including Planned Parenthood, The League of Women Voters and Girl Scouts. She attended Christ Church Bethany and was an active member of the Women’s Group there.

Gene was a dedicated mother, wife, aunt, sister, daughter and friend, and a kind and generous person with an easy laugh and a caring heart. She is survived by her loving husband, Michael, her daughter Sarah, her sister Cynthia Woodruff Pratt, her brothers Sam and Thomas White and nieces Cynthia and Carrie Pratt.

Due to the pandemic no service is planned, though a memorial to celebrate Gene’s life will be held in the spring. In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to the Wheeler Financial Aid Endowment Fund, Wheeler School, 216 Hope Street, Providence, RI 02906.

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

Origins Of The Heart-Shaped Chocolate Box

Hearts abound on February 14, and few symbols (and gifts) are more widely associated with a holiday than heart-shaped boxes of chocolate are with Valentine’s Day.

Chocolates became trendy in the mid-19th century when the first chocolate bar was made by British company J.S. Fry & Sons by combining cacao powder with sugar and cacao butter to make a rich, melt-in-your-mouth treat that was markedly different than the gritty and greasy drinking chocolate that was losing popularity in Europe. Within a few years, competitor Cadbury introduced the first box of chocolates. It was called the “Fancy Box” and it didn’t take long to become wildly popular.

The marriage of chocolate and heart-shaped boxes seemed a natural progression, but the National Valentine Collectors Association says that heart-shaped boxes actually predate chocolate boxes. Various heart-shaped vessels, including “betrothal pendants” and silver boxes in the shape of hearts, were popularized a century earlier. There even were heart-shaped porcelain boxes as well as ones for sewing.

Having already introduced a chocolate box, Richard Cadbury marketed


the first Valentine’s Day box in 1861. It was filled with delicious chocolates, and later could be saved as a keepsake to store special notes or other mementos, according to the North American Packaging Association. Furthermore, the gift fit with Victorian sensibilities in that it was demurely suggestive, NPR reports. Its introduction coincided perfectly with Valentine’s Day, which also soared in popularity around the same time.

Giving chocolate on Valentine’s Day also proved popular in North America. The American chocolate company Hershey’s introduced its Hershey’s Kisses in 1907, and in 1912 the Whitman’s Sampler arrived. In the 1920s, Russell Stover unveiled their own heart-shaped boxes, which today still include the “Red Foil Heart” and the “Secret Lace Heart.” Russell Stover has since become the No. 1 boxed chocolate brand in the United States.

Today, more than 36 million heart-shaped boxes holding 58 million pounds of chocolate are sold each year, reports the education resource SoftSchools. They have become a quintessential symbol of Valentine’s Day celebrations.




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The Story of Cupid

What would Valentine’s Day be without images of a golden-tressed boy armed with bow and arrows? The arrows represent feelings of love and desire, and they are aimed and cast at various individuals, causing them to fall deeply in love — or fall out of it.

In Roman mythology, the boy is known as Cupid and is the son of Venus, the goddess of love. Portrayed as a cherubic and mischievous toddler, this magical boy was purported to be the matchmaker of gods and mortals alike.

For students of Greek mythology, Cupid represents Eros, the Greek word for “desire.” He was the son of Aphrodite, Venus’ Hellenistic counterpart, and would play with the hearts of mortals and gods, sometimes leaving mayhem in his wake. In Greek mythology, Eros was more teenager than bubbly baby, and capitalized on his status as a heartthrob rather than the cherubic status of Roman mythology, according to Richard Martin, a Stanford University professor. While Cupid may have been an adorable imp, some historians say Eros had a darker side, going so far as to describe him as calculating and sinister — forcing the wrong people into lovelorn matches.

According to Museum Hack, while Cupid could make people fall in and out



of love, he also was once in love himself. In this telling, Cupid is a young man when Venus learns that a mortal girl is born with such great beauty that others start to forget to worship Venus, adoring this girl instead. Upset about the misdirected adoration toward this mortal, Venus asks Cupid to have the girl, Psyche, fall in love with a monster. Cupid agrees, but once he sees Psyche he “accidentally” hits himself with one of his own golden arrows and falls in love with Psyche. The resulting match does not prove easy, and through a series of unfortunate events, Psyche must prove her love to Cupid and accomplish various tasks to win back his heart. Eventually, Psyche does and achieves goddess status.

Cupid has been portrayed both as a young man and child through Renaissance art and beyond. When Valentine’s Day became popular in the 18th and 19th centuries, Cupid was linked to Valentine’s Day celebrations due to his matchmaking abilities. His popularity only continued in the early 20th century, when Hallmark began to manufacture Valentine’s Day cards featuring Cupid.

Cupid helped push people together in ancient mythology, and he can even be the catalyst for modern day match-making as well.

Flowers and their Various Meanings

Flowers can represent various emotions. Flowers play a prominent role in many and holidays, perhaps none more than Valentine’s Day.

Valentine’s Day is a busy day for florists. ProFlowers says it accounts for most of the industry’s fresh flower sales. Around 78 percent of the flowers purchased for Valentine’s Day are cut flowers, and men are the top consumers.

Roses are the go-to flower on Valentine’s Day, but shoppers can look to various blooms to send the right message to that special someone in their lives. In fact, each type of flower conveys its own unique message.

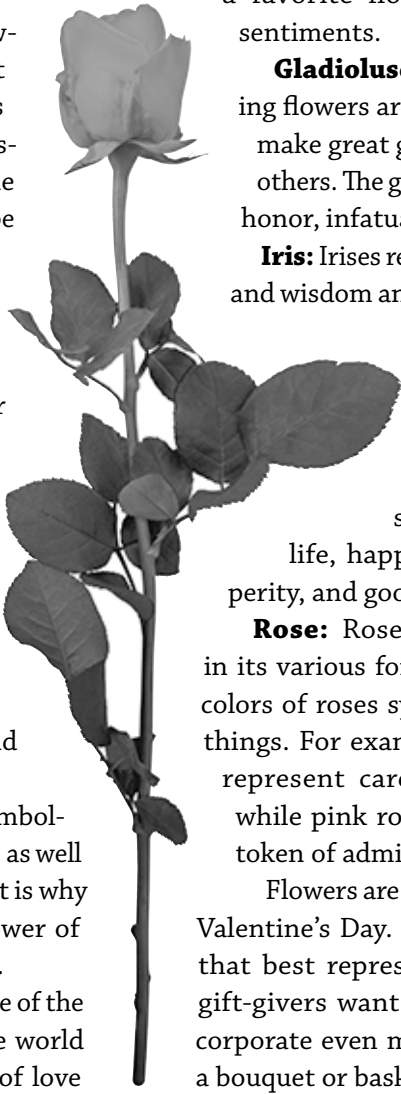
ProFlowers and Pick-up Flowers note that the following are some popular blooms and the messages those flowers are traditionally associated with.

Amaryllis: This flower is symbolic of splendid beauty and can be used to indicate worth.

Aster: The aster symbolizes patience, elegance and daintiness.

Calla lily: This bloom symbolizes magnificence and beauty, as well as purity and innocence. That is why Calla lilies are often the flower of choice in wedding bouquets.

Carnations: These are one of the most popular flowers in the world and are generally symbolic of love



and fascination.

Daffodil: Daffodils symbolize regard and chivalry. They also can be indicative of rebirth, new beginnings and eternal life. A single daffodil can signal misfortune, while a bunch expresses joy and happiness.

Gerbera daisies: With large, beautiful blooms in a wide assortment of vibrant colors, gerbera daisies are a favorite flower for cheerful sentiments.

Gladioluses: These tall, striking flowers are eye-catching and make great gifts for significant others. The gladiolus symbolizes honor, infatuation and strength.

Iris: Irises represent faith, hope and wisdom and are cherished for their big, beautiful blooms.

Peony: This flower, which resembles a rose, symbolizes a happy life, happy marriage, prosperity, and good health.

Rose: Roses symbolize love in its various forms, and different colors of roses symbolize different things. For example, yellow roses represent care and friendship, while pink roses are given as a token of admiration.

Flowers are popular gifts come Valentine’s Day. Choosing a flower that best represents the feelings gift-givers want to convey can incorporate even more meaning into a bouquet or basket.

WOODBIDGE ELECTION 2021



Democrats Unanimously Nominate Heller For Re-Election

First Selectman Beth Heller was nominated to run for another term at the town’s January 14th Democratic caucus. Prior to her 2017 election as First Selectman, Heller was a member of the Woodbridge Board of Selectmen since 2008 and served as its Deputy First Selectman from 2009 – 2017.

Heller’s nomination was unanimously endorsed; the town’s municipal election will be held this year on Monday, May 3rd.

“I am grateful for this continuing vote of confidence in my stewardship of the town and its resources. I believe the best ideas flow from input from all constituencies. Good government is at its best when it is more collaborative than partisan.” Heller said after accepting the nomination. “Stability in town government and ongoing excellence in its public schools will continue to make Woodbridge an attractive community in which to live and raise a family.”

Joining Heller on the ballot for Board of Selectmen for the term beginning July 1, 2021 are incumbent Selectman Joe Crisco, Amity Board of Education member Sheila McCreven,

and Board of Finance member Paul Kuriakose.

For the Woodbridge Board of Education incumbents Mike Strambler and David Ross were nominated along with Maria Madonick and Jay Dayha. Woodbridge Democrats also nominated Carol Oladele and Donna Shuster to be part of the town delegation to the Amity Board of Education.

Also nominated were Hank Nusbaum, Jeff Atwood, Celia Waters, and Aldon Hynes for the Zoning Board of Appeals. Incumbent Andy Schaffer was nominated to run for re-election to the Board of Assessment Appeals.

“This slate of exceptional candidates represents a cross-section of the creativity and talent that permeates Woodbridge and I’m grateful for the willingness of these residents to contribute to the town’s good government as effective public servants,” Heller said. “Each of us is dedicated to making this town live up to its full potential, along with its reputation for excellence. I’m proud to have been nominated and honored to lead a team of candidates who offer so much experience working on behalf of this community.”



Woodbridge Republican Town Committee Announces Slate

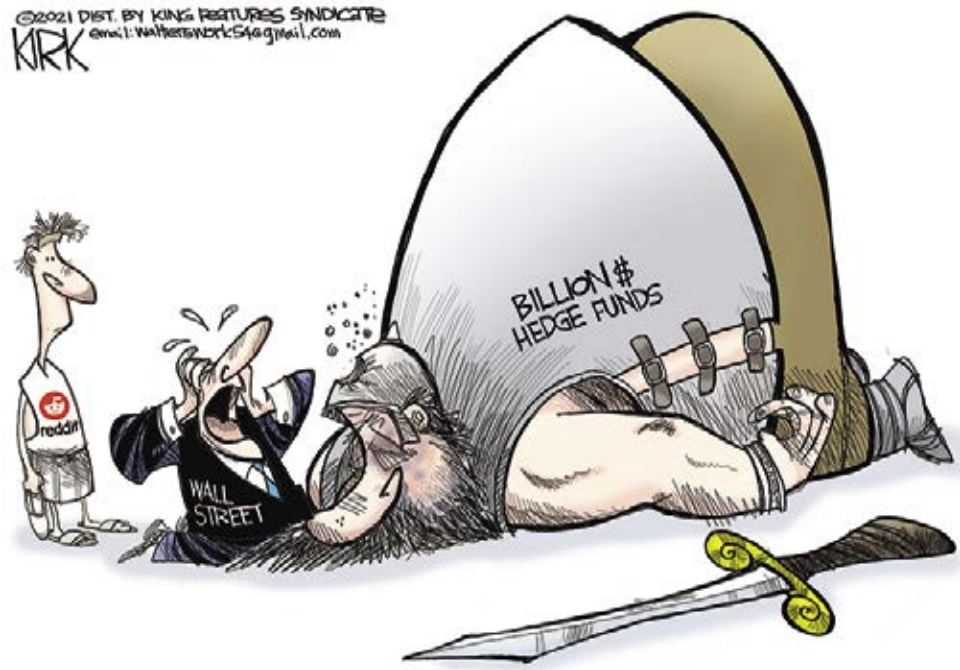
The Woodbridge Republican Town Committee has announced its slate of candidates running in the upcoming May 3, 2021 Woodbridge municipal elections. The candidates were nominated in a unanimous caucus, done virtually to comply with social distancing. The Woodbridge Republican Town Committee is proud to announce: David A. Lober, David Vogel, and Stephen B. Francis as Board of Selectmen candidates. Sarah Beth Del Prete, incumbent Daniel Cowan, Brooke Hopkins and Jeff Luck (2-year term) as Woodbridge Board of Education candidates. Roy Ivins and Sanjay Gupta for Amity Board of Education. Previous Board member Janet Barillari for Board of Assessment appeals. Previous Board member Robert A. Wiznia, Barbara

Hagan-Smith, Muffy German, and Lin Yang (Alternate) for Woodbridge Zoning Board of Appeals.

“The campaign theme is Vote Row B for Balance. The slate will promote good local government by bringing balance to our town, which has been dominated by single party rule for well over a decade,” said Woodbridge Republican Town Committee Chairman Chuck Pyne. He expressed his optimism for voters to be very impressed with the slate and expressed confidence that highlighting the key issues facing our town and how they have been addressed by the current leadership will play a major role in communicating with voters - and they will be pleased to have an opportunity for new leadership on May 3.

Registrars to Hold Ballot Lottery

On Tuesday, March 9, the Registrars of Voters, Pennell Hamilton and Anna Dickerson, will be conducting the lottery to determine the ballot order for the May Municipal election on from 9AM-10AM at the Woodbridge Town Hall at 11 Meetinghouse Lane.” For more information, call 203-389-3408 or 3409.



LOCAL SPORTS

#AngelsforAthletes Challenge Benefits Special Olympics

The #AngelsforAthletes Challenge is a fun way everyone can support Special Olympics Connecticut athletes this winter. Here's how:

- › Make a snow angel and have a friend or family member take a photo or video;
- › Sign up and make a donation by visiting soct.org and clicking on #AngelsforAthletes;
- › Post the photo or video of your snow angel on Facebook or Instagram with the hashtag #AngelsforAthletes and challenge three (3) friends to do the same by tagging them in your post.

No snow where you are or don't like the cold? Snow angels do not need to be the traditional kind, created outside in the snow. You can make your angel in the grass, on the beach, on the floor filled with toys or wrapping paper, or wearing a costume. The possibilities are endless and the more creative the better!

To find out more, go to soct.org or email specialolympicsct@soct.org and follow Special Olympics Connecticut on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

Special Olympics Connecticut provides year-round sports training and competitions for more than 12,000 athletes of all ages with intellectual disabilities and Unified Sports® partners - their teammates without disabilities. Through the joy of sport, the Special Olympics movement transforms lives and communities throughout the state and in 193 countries around the world by promoting good health and fitness and inspiring inclusion and respect for people of all abilities, on and off the playing field (www.soct.org).

Partner Sponsors: Bozzuto's Inc., Enterprise, ESPN, Eversource Energy, The Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation, The Hometown Foundation, Law Enforcement Torch Run, NBC Connecticut and Telemundo Connecticut, TD Bank, Raytheon Technologies and WWE.

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by Freddy Groves

VA, Fitbit Team Up

BY FREDDY GROVES

Do you have a Fitbit activity tracker? If so, the Department of Veterans Affairs has a free program for you.

The VA and Fitbit have hooked up to provide one year of free membership to eligible veterans who have the device. This couldn't have come at a better time, when we need more exercise, less stress and better sleep at night.

Up to 10,000 veterans (including caregivers and VA staff) can get one free year of Fitbit Premium, which includes a health metrics dashboard, guided programs and more. Plus, you'll have access to coaching. Check health-solutions.fitbit.com.

Eligibility will depend on a few things, such as whether you already use Fitbit and where you are. A bonus for veterans who already use VA healthcare: You might qualify for a Fitbit Sense, which is the Fitbit health smartwatch.

If for some reason you can't get into the Fitbit program, you have other

options for exercise and working out. Step one is to call the gyms closest to you and ask if they offer anything for veterans. CrossFit, Gold's Gym, 24 Hour Fitness, OrangeTheory and numerous others offer discounts and special deals for veterans. Don't forget to try the non-chain locations. If you're eligible for Medicare, check into the Silver Sneakers program at local gyms; many Medicare plans will pay for that.

Near a base? If you're retired, are a MOH recipient or have a disability rating of 100%, you can qualify to use the gym on base.

For at-home equipment, if you're a Veterans Canteen Service (shopvcs.va.gov) member, check out the prices on equipment such as rowing machines and exercise bikes. Look online for a FreeCycle group in your area (freecycle.org), an online listing of items people are giving away. There are 5,300 groups across the U.S. Finally, don't forget Craigslist.org for people selling equipment near you.

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