

Woodbridge Town News



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Memorial
DAY

Woodbridge's Exclusive Newspaper

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CIRCULATION 3654

FRIDAY, MAY 26, 2023



Front, from left, Erin Williamson, Sara Beth Del Prete, Dr. Mike Strambler, Chairman Lynn Piascyk; back row, Steve Lawrence, Maria Madonick, Brooke Hopkins, Jeff Hughes and Jay Dahya

How Did We Do?

LOCAL BOARD OF ED ENGAGES IN SELF-EVALUATION

BY BETTINA THIEL

WOODBRIDGE TOWN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

The Woodbridge Board of Education, at its meeting on May 16, took a step back from its regular business to engage in self-evaluation. At a time of great national divisiveness, when values clash and boards get embroiled in personality disputes, the Woodbridge Board of Education seems to be modeling civility as a way to get things done.

As the tensions associated with teaching through a pandemic is waning, and a new team is in place to lead the district, the board can look back on a successful year. It filled the superintendent's spot — first with an interim, followed by the current superintendent, Vonda Tencza; found leadership for the business office, again at first an interim, followed by current director

of business services, Donna Coonan. It hired Carolyn Borcharding as Special Services Director. The Board worked with the town to form a building committee to plan for needed repairs and convinced the townspeople that a 3.6% budget increase is acceptable in a general inflationary environment.

But what came up in the self-reflection was not which boxes the members had ticked off or how many, but rather the fact that they did so in a collaborative manner. In spite of being politically rather diverse — the chairperson is a Republican leading a majority Democratic board — the majority of votes are unanimous.

"This board is substantially different than [previous] boards," commented

See "WBOE" On Page 8



Major General Keynote Speaker at Memorial Day Ceremony

Army Major Gen. Thomas R. Bouchard will be the keynote speaker at the Memorial Day ceremony Monday, May 29, at 11 a.m. at the Veterans of Foreign Wars monument in front of the Center Building. With this ceremony the town pays tribute to those servicemen and women who died in the line of duty. In case of inclement weather, the event will be moved into the Center Building gym.

Major Gen. Bouchard is deputy commander for Mobilization and Reserve Affairs, United States Special Operations Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. He began his military career in 1984, enlisting in the Army Reserve and shortly after, joined the Army Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC). He holds a master's degree in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College and a master's in business administration from Boston College.

Over the course of his active duty, he has served both in Iraq and Afghanistan, and prior to that in Kosovo, Kuwait and Haiti. He is a multiple Bronze Star medal recipient and was decorated with the Legion of Merit.

In his civilian life, he is a director and portfolio manager at DWS Investments in New York City where he is responsible for the performance of investment portfolios consisting primarily of non-investment grade bonds and bank loans. His clients include insurance companies, pension funds, and corporations.

He has family connections in Woodbridge, where his wife, the former Jill Luciani, grew up.

The program, led by Dr. Barry Josephs, will also include patriotic music, a memorial wreath presentation, the Woodbridge Police Department Honor Guard, and remarks by state and local elected officials.



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Mary D'Angelo Turns 100!

On May 10, Mary D'Angelo, a resident at Coachman Square at Woodbridge, turned 100 years young! A life-long New Haven area resident, Mary has two sons, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. She was married for 62 years to Bob D'Angelo until his death in 2014. He served on the board of finance for the city of New Haven and retired as vice president for Bank of America. They met on a blind date setup by her best friend and were married at St. Joseph's Church in

New Haven across the street from her house. After high school, Mary worked at Yale, Bullard's Furniture Store and later, Connecticut Savings Bank. She was born in the Fair Haven section of New Haven to parents who immigrated from the Counties of Leitrim and Roscommon in Ireland. In fact, before she married, Mary's mother worked as a domestic and cook for a number of prominent New Haven families. At one time, she even cooked for President Taft who praised her roast goose!



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For those of you who were unable to attend the Annual Town Meeting, I've decided to post an abridged version of my State of the Town address for this month's column.

"Good evening, everyone – thank you all for attending this year's Annual Town Meeting. This gathering is required by the provisions of our Town Charter and your participation tonight is most welcome.

"My family first moved to Woodbridge in 1992 and every year since, I remain in awe of how especially beautiful the town is at this time of year. Green grass, colorful tree blossoms, and abundant flowers and flowering shrubs help us celebrate the return of warmer weather. It is a joy for me to see it each and every time.

"Also at every annual meeting, we celebrate the completion of another budget preparation cycle. After literally thousands of hours of work done by town staff and members of the community who volunteer their time, we now have the final budget recommendation from the Board of Finance for the next fiscal year, set to begin July 1.

"This year had more than its share of unique challenges with global inflation coming home to roost, compounding the town's continued static Grand List.

"With that in mind, please know we did all we could to meet the town's obligations, including its commitment to public education, and resident demand for municipal services, balanced with great respect for local taxpayers. Rest assured we made every effort to minimize the local property tax burden by controlling costs and improving efficiency, always with those obligations and commitments paramount in our deliberations. I continued to ask for resident input each step of the way.

"The Board of Selectmen reviewed and reduced the initial departmental requests and subsequently unanimously approved and forwarded our proposals to the Board of Finance for further review. The budget deliberations required tough decisions guided by careful consideration of the best interests of Woodbridge taxpayers. I hope you will all remember that since last fall I have been encouraging residents to take an active part in the months-long process of budget development. I consistently wrote that all residents could have a voice in the process. Operating budget presentations began in late January and the opportunity to ask questions of the departments and boards and commissions was strongly encouraged as was attendance at meetings, reading meeting minutes, watching channel 79, and reviewing meetings on YouTube.

"Over the past several years, we have consolidated staff positions and reduced programs. From 2016 to 2023 the Town Departments' portion of the adopted budget has increased by only 5.53 % while inflation has been in excess of 25% over those 7 years. During this same period the Amity Budget increase has been 27.33% and the Beecher Road School budget's in-

From the First Selectman BY BETH HELLER



crease has been 21.68%.

"Each year as we convene the budget process, it is clear to me that we need to grow and diversify our Grand List. In order to support our priorities, we must focus on growing revenue. In 2020, we created the 2030 Task Force, whose membership includes Woodbridge residents who are both business and Town leaders, and they have been charged with seeking ways to create a healthier, robust, grand list by 2030. The Town can grow its grand list by expanding the commercial district and by offering new and diverse housing.

"Our 2030 Task Force is examining how to accomplish just that, with a goal of having a healthier Grand List by 2030. The Task Force has already presented its connectivity proposal as well as strategies on placemaking and other ideas for the Business District to maximize grant opportunities. The Selectmen voted unanimously to endorse the concepts presented by the Task Force and authorized the Finance Director to move ahead with seeking grant opportunities. I look forward to making this vision a reality.

"Recently, Toll Brothers broke ground for a new housing development on Bradley Road at Litchfield Turnpike. These approximately 70 new units will allow older residents to downsize here in Woodbridge, should they choose to do, and also attract new and diverse businesses to the commercial district while potentially generating an estimated \$1.1 million in tax dollars.

"Other savings will be realized through the regionalization of Animal Control. We continue to handle calls for Bethany, Seymour, and may have an opportunity to add Beacon Falls. Additionally, Bulky waste fees, weighing haulers' loads and focusing on recycling can continue to keep our Waste Management costs down.

"Over the past year we have made important progress in some major capital projects. We have a restored commitment to the Town's infrastructure including roofs, roads, and buildings. After years of deferred maintenance, we are overdue in looking at the cost savings of sustainable buildings. Building Maintenance has been working on replacing all lights with LED - lower cost lighting and installing programmable thermostats. We also need to look at increasing insulation, roof replacement, and double pane windows - all the things you do to your own homes for increased energy savings.

"These infrastructure projects include The Woodbridge Center renovation, the Center Building gym renovation, the Former Fire House renovation, and the Center Building renovation.

"The Woodbridge Center's transition is almost complete and will hold a ribbon cutting next month! When finished, the Senior Center will be a

modern, fresh, welcoming, air-conditioned space with excellent ventilation. This project is the result of years of planning, and, with State and Federal funding, will help those over 55 remain healthy and active through new and continuing health and wellness programming.

"With a STEAP Grant and a portion of the Federal ARPA funds, the Center Building gym will have a modern, efficient HVAC system, refinished flooring, and improved ADA accessibility among other improvements. This is a room that is heavily used 6 days a week, year-round by multiple departments and it is long overdue for this attention. Hopefully we will resume all our Town meetings there as well.

"With \$2 million in Federal funding, the Former Firehouse plans are beginning to look transformative. This building will serve the town as a Community and Cultural Center and will be available for residents and community groups to use.

"The Center Building, which was built almost 100 years ago, and which houses our Police and Human Services Departments, is in dire need of modernization and efficiencies for energy savings. The Board of Selectmen has provided funding for the initial stages of planning with an architectural firm.

"Another much-needed project that has our full attention is the Beecher roof. The Woodbridge School District has been experiencing delays in a roof replacement project due to administrative turnover and pandemic-related disruptions. Please keep in mind the district has had three superintendents and three business managers from mid-2020 to 2023 (three years). The Town is currently working with the new Superintendent Vonda Tencza and the Board of Education to finally get this done. We have been informed by the WBOE that the project cannot disrupt academic activities, and as a result the earliest the roofing and other improvements can be started is summer 2024.

"In the meantime, the Building Committee has continued to urge the Woodbridge Board of Education to take the necessary interim steps to correct leaks and limit water damage to the greatest extent possible between now and the start of capital project work in mid-2024 and have been assured this is happening.

"We have many great departments that make Woodbridge a special place. I'm going to highlight a few for you:

"Our volunteer fire department responds to calls for service, 24/7/365. On average they respond to 480 incidents per year. In 2022 its members responded to 29 fire calls, 7 severe weather calls, 188 hazardous conditions calls, 23 service calls, and 12 rescue and emergency services incidents. In addition to this important service,

these volunteers put on tremendous community events – like "Truck or Treat". They also provide fire education at our school, train volunteers to properly install car seats, and they hold a toy drive for Christmas and host Santa and Mrs. Claus.

"Our Police Department is also a 24/7/365 operation. To date this year, they have responded to 269 car accidents, 116 traffic stops, completed 20,295 deterrent patrol assignments, answered 797 calls for medical assistance. They have answered 26,809 assorted calls for service and responded to 556 activated alarms. Woodbridge PD also sponsors a "Fill a Cruiser" to help families with toys at Christmas, volunteers at Woodbridge Center luncheons, and participates in Special Olympics fundraisers. Two officers are assigned full-time to our local schools and Officer Lynch runs a DARE program at Beecher Road School. Our department also has two trained, accident reconstructionist and one State of Connecticut certified drug recognition expert.

"Woodbridge Human Services provides social services, senior services, youth services, and veterans services for residents. Human Services continues to execute health and wellness programming including pandemic assistance such as masks, home test kits, COVID vaccine and booster clinics, isolation outreach as well as flu clinics, client advocacy, fuel assistance, VITA Tax assistance, and food pantry coordination and distribution.

"The Woodbridge Center offers senior services including a transportation program, meal distribution program, health and wellness education and exercise programs and social and hobbies classes. Their pickleball program has expanded dramatically over the past year and they've worked with the Recreation Department to add two new courts over the next year.

"Our Youth Services Bureau coordinates positive youth development and prevention programming including baby-sitting training, Home Alone classes, internet safety, job bank, after school programs, and community service opportunities for Woodbridge students.

"The Woodbridge Town Library serves the informational, intellectual, cultural, and leisure needs of the Woodbridge community. The library typically offers hundreds of programs a year ranging from story times and craft programs to lectures and concerts. This year the library has expanded its hours to include Saturdays during the summer and has started a new 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program to encourage early literacy.

"The Recreation Department offers both youth and adult programs, a variety of summer camps, and maintains facilities including the fitness center, bocci and shuffleboard courts, as well as handling tennis court permits and managing the use of Town recreational

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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

June 23 | Independence Day Issue..... June 16

September 1 | Labor Day & Back to School Issue..... August 25

September 29 | Fall Issue..... September 22

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

FROM OUR READERS

Woodbridge Tax Abatement for the Elderly

The Woodbridge town budget was finalized at the May 15 Town Hall, with a mill rate of 45.08, up from 43.77 last year, the seventh highest mill rate in the state. Because of the desirability of living in Woodbridge, and the relative scarcity of homes for sale, prices have skyrocketed, and coupled with the high mill rate, have driven property taxes ever higher.

Hardest hit by these increases are seniors on fixed income. That house purchased in 1980 for \$150,000 on today's market will fetch almost \$400,000, and valuations, the basis for taxation, have increased accordingly. The State of Connecticut, in order to help defray this burden, has established a program to allow localities to abate property taxes for seniors meeting certain income thresholds, and for the disabled, without income requirements, with reimbursement to the towns for these abated taxes. Woodbridge has such a program, providing tax abatements of \$1400 for residents over sixty-five, with and income not exceeding \$40,300 for a single individual and \$49,100 for a couple.

Smaller abatements are provided for those earning around \$80,000.

While helpful, the real problem is the constant upward creep of property taxes, with no end in sight. At the last Board of Selectmen meeting, May 10, 2023, I proposed freezing the property taxes for all seniors, without regard to income, helping to keep seniors in their homes a little while longer. The lowered tax revenue would be offset several fold if the school population was stabilized as a result.

I was told by Town Attorney, erroneously, as it turns out, that there was a statute prohibiting freezing taxes. When he could not reference the law, he told me to look it up. (I thought that was why we paid a Town Attorney!) I did, and what I found was the Local Option Property Tax Relief for Seniors, Conn. General Statute sub section 12-129n, which allows towns to provide additional tax relief for seniors over 65 or disabled, without state reimbursement, and without income criteria. This relief can include freezing taxes at certain levels, provided that it is limited to 10% of the total value

See "Letters" On Page 17

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.

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OPINION

From the Democratic
Town Committee

BY ELLEN SCALETTAR
WDTC CHAIRMAN



Are You Woke?

As a white, Jewish woman of a certain age living in an affluent Connecticut town, I may not be what you picture when you hear the term “woke.” But am I woke? I am certainly striving to be.

What does it mean to be woke? The dictionary defines woke as “being aware of and actively attentive to important societal facts and issues (especially issues of racial and social justice); it means rejecting the growing pressure to retreat into cynicism and hopelessness, but rather to take a stand and be active; challenging injustices and racism in our communities and fighting hatred and discrimination wherever it rises.”

Rejecting cynicism and hopelessness, taking a stand against racism and injustice, fighting discrimination in all its forms? If that’s what being woke stands for, I will proudly be called woke.

Sadly, there are Republicans throughout our country and right here in Woodbridge who are determined to cast woke and similar ideals as negative and pejorative. In Florida, the Republican Governor recently said, “We can never, ever surrender to woke ideology,” as if it were a force intended to rip our society apart, rather than to ensure that we all can participate in our society with respect and dignity.

In Woodbridge, there has been a related effort to convert the truly American ideals of diversity, equity, and inclusion into threatening, subversive terms. A document recently posted on the Woodbridge Republican Town Committee Facebook page claimed that DEI is a “racist Marxist-based ideology that [the Amity School District] is using to indoctrinate our children.”

Is this really about Marxism coming to Woodbridge, or rather part of a well-documented, nationally coordinated effort of the far right to gain local political power through egregious scare tactics? Tactics I might add, that are nothing new in human history and have led to censorship, book banning, and other forms of oppression (which we’re already seeing happen in communities around our nation).

This type of misinformation is not limited to attacks on concepts like woke. In our recent Amity budget process, we heard a small handful of community members allege that a surplus in the Amity School System budget is synonymous with failure, or worse, is an intentional practice to improperly use taxpayer dollars. In fact, the contrary is true. Our school system administration successfully identifies grants and efficiencies to save money, which is returned to taxpayers. That is clearly success!

I will always take the side of optimism and inclusion over fear and exclusion. It is one of the reasons I am proud to co-chair our Town Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. For those of you who are familiar with Woodbridge’s history, we were not always the increasingly diverse community we now celebrate. It has taken the work of Town leaders, individuals in our community, and a growing number of people from diverse backgrounds who have chosen Woodbridge as their home to make this happen.

If you are interested in learning more about the Woodbridge Democrats, please get in touch with us by emailing us at: communications@woodbridgedems.org or visit our website: [http:// www.woodbridgedems.org](http://www.woodbridgedems.org).

From Across the Aisle

BY CHUCK PYNE
WRTC CHAIRMAN



There’s “Good Special,” Then There’s “Out of Line, Bad Special”

Woodbridge residents can agree our town is special in many ways, and those ways have motivated long-time residents to be just that – long-time residents. The same special qualities draw new residents to enjoy what we have to offer. Unfortunately, our taxation rate is off-putting to potential home buyers and puts a financial squeeze on those residents with limited incomes.

Let’s see how we compare to other towns during this current fiscal year. In FY22-23, Woodbridge’s mill rate ranks as one of the top 10 mill rates in the state out of 169 cities and towns. To be fair, you have to look at the median home price as well as the mill rate to calculate the overall tax burden. We did, and the data show how far out of whack Woodbridge taxes are. We looked at the towns with the top 10 mill rates in the state in the current fiscal year, then applied each town’s current median home price to calculate a comparable tax burden. While our mill rate was the seventh highest, our tax burden of \$17,617.43 was by far the highest – \$5,694.77 higher than the next town (Hamden). Every town has to raise funds for essential local services and education, to be sure. But you would expect that lower home values mean higher mill rates and higher home values mean lower mill rates. That was not the case here – the median Woodbridge home value is \$575,000 while the median home value in the other nine towns is \$263,815. In our case, we have both high home values and high mill rates. That combination is indeed special – a bad special.

Another point about our budget. Every resident comment at the Preliminary Budget hearing was ignored – as is clear from the final budget mailed to residents in advance of the Annual Town Meeting. To my recollection, the four items that were changed from the Preliminary Budget were never even discussed at the public hearing. Residents should know Republicans are not all about budget cuts. We support John Adamovich, the head of the Recreation Department, who cited the need for an additional \$10,000 to cover the rising cost of the summer Rec Department staff. His budget request was ignored. So, this budget game continues and we lose. The lack of quorum at the Annual Town Meeting meant the budget passed. This system is broken. The fix is a Charter revision to vote on the town budget as we do the Amity budget.

Another important budget topic is the status of the Beecher roof repair/replacement project. For those who don’t know, every big rain yields huge leaks in the roof – especially where most students enter and exit the school. Absent huge sheets of plastic and strategically placed buckets inside the building, our kids would sit in soggy clothes on rainy days. And this is “Wealthy Woodbridge”? Sure doesn’t look like it from inside Beecher. Sheila McCreven of the BOS confirmed that the soonest roof repairs could begin is the summer of 2024. What she did not mention was that, as the Chair of the Beecher building committee, she failed to hold previously agreed bi-weekly meetings between December 2022 and March 2023 to advance the roof project, and thus missed the window to get the work done this summer (2023). That delay, combined with Beth Heller’s four-month delay in even forming that committee, doomed any hope of a fix this summer. In Beth Heller’s last Update, she attempted to run cover for these repeated failures by pointing out the changes in Beecher Superintendents over the last three years. However, one has nothing to do with the other. The roof is a town project – town government is in charge and the players have not changed.

So where do we go from here? The Town and Amity budgets are set for the coming fiscal year, and so is our tax burden. But we can and should do a few things. One, continue to push the First Selectman to abandon her beautification plans for the town center and repurpose any legally moveable funds toward commercial revenue generation projects. Two, vote for a much-needed change in town leadership in November. We need a fiscally responsible First Selectman who will prioritize the growth of our business sector and convene a Charter Revision Commission to reset how we develop and approve our town budget. Three, vote for fiscally responsible Amity BOE candidates who will put an end to repeated multi-million-dollar budget surpluses that effectively overtax us. These are good starts, and you’ll hear more in the coming months about how our candidates will deliver these improvements.



CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

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Woodbridge is run by individuals like you who choose to serve our community as leaders on Town Boards and Commissions.

If you are excited by the possibility of helping to guide Woodbridge, we would like to meet you!

Email us at communications@woodbridgedems.org and we will be in touch to talk with you about the November 2023 election and other ways of engaging.

WOODBRIDGE LIBRARY

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

Library Announcements Now Open Saturdays Year-Round

The Woodbridge Town Library will remain open on Saturdays year-round. Traditionally, the Library closed on Saturdays in July and August, however, the last few years have brought an increase of requests for summer Saturday hours. We are happy to finally make this a reality and look forward to seeing you MORE over the summer! Monday—Thursday 10 am to 8 pm; Friday & Saturday 10 am to 5 pm.



Community Survey

We want to figure out the best ways to continue to serve the community, so please take five minutes to complete our survey! You can access it via QR code or by visiting this link: <https://forms.office.com/r/dCMGRQ1kwm>. Thank you for your help.

Totes with Notable Quotes!

Support the Library by purchasing a tote bag—\$20 each, or two for \$35. Choose from five different bags, each with a different quote. For example: “A book must be the axe for the frozen sea within us,” Franz Kafka. “No need to hurry. No need to sparkle. No need to be anybody but one-self,” Virginia Woolf. Thanks to the Friends of the Woodbridge Library for its support.

Historic Woodbridge, 2nd Edition!

Enjoy pages filled with details about the history of Woodbridge. Historic homes, community buildings, and the people of ‘olden days’ come alive in this book—on sale for \$30 (from \$45). Stop by the Library to purchase.

***Cash or check payment are accepted for both items. Card payment accepted only for tote purchase.

The Friends of the Library Seek Student Volunteers

Woodbridge resident Richard Blackwell recently endowed an annual Volunteer Scholarship for graduating



WOODBRIDGE TOWN LIBRARY

Amity High School seniors who have volunteered at the Friends of the Library bookstore. Mr. Blackwell values the spirit of volunteerism in young people; he is an enthusiastic supporter of the library and is also on the Library Commission. If you are an Amity student and you are interested in volunteering at the Friends of the Library, email the Friends with your contact information and the times you would be available at woodbridgetcfriends@gmail.com.

The Friends of the Library are again accepting donations

Drop off your gently loved, no longer wanted books, CDs, DVDs, puzzles at the library during our open hours. Please, nothing in bad condition, stained, moldy, etc. Thank you!

Online Card Registration Available

Are you a Woodbridge resident? You can sign up for a library card online! Visit our website, woodbridgetownlibrary.org. After registering, you will immediately be able to use your new account to place holds on items for pick up at the library. We will then contact you via email within 2 business days with your new library card number. At this time, you will get full access to our electronic resources, including downloadable books and magazines. Please note that this is a temporary registration that will expire in 30 days. Before the 30 days is up, please visit the Woodbridge Town Library in person to verify your name and address. At that time, you will receive a permanent library card.

Do we have your email address?

Sign up for our email newsletters to receive notifications about events, new offerings, and library hours/closings. We typically only send one email a week. Join our mailing list by visiting our website and entering your email address in the form provided. That’s it! (You can also give us your email address while in the building.)

Need a Notary?

Notary Services are now available at the Library by appointment or by chance! Please contact the Reference Desk for more information (stop by or call 203-389-3434) or email Bill (warmstrong@woodbridgetownlibrary.org).

Library Information

We are open Monday through Thursday, 10 am to 8 pm and Friday and Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm. Visit the Library website 24/7 to access digital resources - woodbridgetownlibrary.org. We are fine-free and have automatic renewals on most items. Call or email to place holds, ask questions, find out information, and more.

Department phones and emails:

- › Adult Services/Reference: 203-389-3434; reference@woodbridgetownlibrary.org;
- › Children’s Department: 203-389-3439; childrens@woodbridgetownlibrary.org;
- › Circulation/General info: 203-389-3433; circulation@woodbridgetownlibrary.org;
- › Not sure who you need? Email askus@woodbridgetownlibrary.org.

Socialize with us!

- › Facebook: [@woodbridgetownlibrary](https://www.facebook.com/woodbridgetownlibrary);
- › Instagram: [@woodbridgetownlibrary](https://www.instagram.com/woodbridgetownlibrary);
- › TikTok: [@woodbridgetown_library](https://www.tiktok.com/@woodbridgetown_library).

From Adult Services The Shoreline Jazz Quintet: Celebrating the Music of Bill Evans

Saturday, June 3 at 2 PM

Join the Shoreline Jazz Quintet for its program about American jazz pianist and composer Bill Evans! Featuring Mike Bimonte on drums, (Deepak) Cyril D’Souza on saxophones, Rich Meyers on vibraphone, Steve Roane on acoustic bass, and Stephen Wood on electric guitar. Please register online or at the library.

Woodbridge Writers Workshop

Every second and fourth Tuesday of the month, from 3 to 5 pm.

Gather with area writers as we read and critique our works in a friendly atmosphere. Register online or at the library. More information on our website or call the reference desk.

Woodbridge Scrabble Group

Wednesdays at 11 AM

Meet with friends and neighbors for friendly games of Scrabble every week in the Meeting Room. No registration required.

Indoor Film Screenings

Thursdays at 7 PM

Join us on Thursday evenings for a movie screening in our Meeting Room. No registration is required to attend, but seating is first come, first serve.

Saturday Morning Meditation

Every Saturday at 10:15 am

One hour of silent Vipassana (mindfulness) meditation is hosted by experienced meditation instructors. Registration suggested, but walk-ins welcome too!

Especially For Teens Teen Volunteers needed!

Check out our teen page on our website to see what volunteer opportunities are available, or email Emily Cantor, Head of Children’s: ecantor@woodbridgetownlibrary.org.

From The Children’s Department

Summer Reading starts when Woodbridge schools end! Stay tuned for more information!

Animal Facts Club

Monday, June 12 at 6:30 pm; ages 8+

Registration required; meets monthly. Read any book about the animal group of the month, then come to the meeting ready to share some facts! We’ll also make a fun craft. This month’s theme is fish!

Teddy Bear Sleepover

Friday evening June 23 to Saturday morning June 24; all ages welcome

Special overnight adventures for your stuffed friends! Come back the next morning to find out what they did at the library. More information on our website. Registration required.

Yoga for Kids

Select Tuesdays, June–August; for kids 4 to 8 years

Ms. Sherri returns for more fun on the Library Lawn! Visit our website for dates and registration.

Recurring Programs

No registration required, come as often as you’d like! Please bring an adult with you!

—Mondays at 10:30 am: Baby Group (newborns to 18 months)

—Wednesdays at 10:30 am: Story-time (infants to age 3)

—Thursdays at 4 pm: Afternoon Craft Time (Ages 3+)

—Fridays at 11:30 am, ending promptly at noon: Morning Craft Time (Ages 3 to 5, perfect for preschoolers and homeschoolers!)

“What I can do for my country, I am willing to do.” — CHRISTOPHER GADSDEN

“WBOE” From Page 1

Board Chairwoman Lynn Piascyk, “I think we work very well together.” One indicator for that, in her mind, is the fact that board members “don’t go out into the community,” to criticize board actions after votes have been taken. “That’s different than it was a couple of years ago,” she added.

The respectful collaboration also helped the new district leadership find its footing. School Supt. Tencza, who joined the district just about 6 months ago, appreciated that atmosphere of trust. “I feel you welcomed me, interacted, shared your goals and [offered a] relationship that builds trust,” she said.

Each of the board members filled out a questionnaire, rating the board’s work in five areas, namely a shared vision, how it interacts with the community at large; board operations; ethics; and the board-superintendent cooperation. The forms were collected by the superintendent and responses collated.

“There was minimal commentary,” said Piascyk. But she did point out several areas that the board will need to improve on going forward.

“Our vision continues to be a work in progress,” she said. Board members will be working on vision and mission and related goals for 2023-24 in July, either at a regularly scheduled meeting or, if the agenda gets too full, at a special meeting.

Piascyk also thought that communications with the community at large could be improved. She welcomed the suggestion made by PTO president Rushi Jain to engage in conversations with the PTO and similarly, with the staff. The teachers as per their contract should have been offered an opportunity to “meet and discuss” with the board – for board members to listen — which didn’t happen this year. “It’s something to look for down the road for next year,” she said.

Piascyk also is hoping to get more

of the activities and achievements featured in the local newspaper. “We need to tell people ‘Look, there are great things going on in the school.’”

Current Board of Education members are:

Lynn Piascyk, was elected to the Board in 2015, after retiring from Beecher Road School in 2013. She rose to the chairmanship in 2020. During her 36-year tenure as a Grade 1 teacher, she received the Award of Excellence for Distinguished Service and was the district’s 1993 Teacher of the Year. A resident of Woodbridge since 1964, Lynn also serves as a Justice of the Peace and is on the Board of Directors of the Amity and Woodbridge Historical Society. Lynn holds a B.S., M.S., and Sixth Year Professional Degree of Advanced Study as a Classroom Teacher Specialist.

Maria Federico Madonick, DNAP APRN CRNA, vice chairman, was elected to the Board in 2021; has four children who have graduated from or attend Beecher Road School and its MAG program. A graduate of Georgetown University, SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University, she earned her doctorate at CCSU. Dr. Madonick is a clinical educator for the Fairfield University and YNH School of Nurse Anesthesia and she has held an adjunct faculty position at CCSU in the graduate Nurse Anesthesia program. Dr. Madonick is on the Finance Committee and is Chair of the Policy Committee.

Sarah Beth Del Prete, Secretary, was elected to the Board in July 2021. The New Haven native moved to Woodbridge in 2017. She has 7 children, 4 of which attend BRS. Sarah Beth is affiliated with Seabury Hill Realtors, serving real estate needs of the Yale community, Greater New Haven and Shoreline areas. Sarah Beth holds a Bachelor’s degree focused in Communications and Business from Albertus Magnus College. Sarah Beth serves on the Curriculum and Finance

Committees.

Jay Dayha, Ph.D, was elected to the Board in July 2021. Jay is professor of finance at the CUNY Graduate Center, Baruch College, and at Columbia Business School, Columbia University, specializing in corporate finance, M&A and international financial markets. Jay has received numerous teaching awards for his instruction at the undergraduate, executive and PhD level and is published in leading finance journals. He has held visiting posts at the universities of Cambridge, Porto, Oxford, Universiti di Bologna, and London Business School. Dr. Dahya serves on the Facilities Committee.

Brooke Hopkins has been a Woodbridge resident for 13 years and has 2 children attending BRS. She is a social worker with an MSW and has a long history of working in the nonprofit sector with a focus on young people. In 2012, she founded the Kelly Ryan Foundation, which raised over \$150,000 for families in need. In 2016 she started CT Youth Resources, which works with at risk youth through a mentoring program and providing support to families. In addition to her role as CEO Of CT Youth Resources, she is currently an advisor to students at the University of Connecticut School of Social Work. Ms. Hopkins serves on the Facilities and Policy Committees.

Jeff Hughes moved to Woodbridge in 2011 and has two children currently attending BRS. Mr. Hughes is a UCONN graduate in Horticulture and Agronomy and serves as the Area Manager for Residential Colleges at Yale University with oversight of 92 Yale properties. Mr. Hughes also has extensive business knowledge in landscaping, construction, restaurants, contract negotiations and capital projects. Mr. Hughes is Chair of the Facilities Committee.

Steven Lawrence was appointed

to the Board in June 2022. Mr. Lawrence moved to Woodbridge in 2012 and is the parent of two children, one of whom is a Beecher graduate and the other a current student. He is a graduate of Cornell University and the University of Chicago and provides consulting services to foundations, philanthropy-serving organizations, and non-governmental agencies to uncover new insights and make strategic decisions. Mr. Lawrence currently chairs the Finance Committee.

Michael J. Strambler, Ph.D. - Dr. Strambler moved to Woodbridge in 2018 and was appointed to the Board. Dr. Strambler is a graduate of the University of California at Berkeley and is an Assistant Professor at the Yale University School of Medicine with an appointment at The Consultation Center at Yale. He is the director of the Child Well-Being and Education Research program and the Partnership for Early Education Research (PEER). Dr. Strambler also serves on the Board of Achievement First Bridgeport Academy. He has one child attending BRS. Dr. Strambler is chair of the Curriculum Committee.

Erin Williamson joined the Board in August of 2021 and has two children attending BRS. Ms. Williamson works in the fields of social service and criminal justice, with particular expertise in the areas of human trafficking and child sexual exploitation. Ms. Williamson currently serves as the chief programs & strategy officer for Love146, an international human rights organization working to end child trafficking and exploitation. She sits on the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services National Advisory Committee on the Sex Trafficking of Children & Youth in the United States. Ms. Williamson has a Master’s in Public Administration and is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. Erin serves on the Policy Committee and the BRS Diversity Committee.

Must-have Items For Summer Entertaining In The Backyard

Summer entertaining season provides ample opportunities to soak up some sun and have some fun with family and friends. Backyard barbecues and other get-togethers at home are even more fun when hosts ensure they have certain must-have items for summer soirees.

Fire features

The days when summer hosts only needed a few extra lawn chairs and some burgers and hot dogs on the grill for a backyard barbecue are long gone. Though those items still have a place at backyard barbecues, summer parties have taken a step up. Fire features, whether it’s a standalone fire pit, one built into a patio or a gas-powered fire table, are now wildly popular. Fire features provide a welcome place to relax and converse with guests after the sun goes down. And much to kids’ delight, a

fire feature also paves the way for some post-meal s’mores.

Insulated wine cooler

Coolers are great places to store water, soda, beer, seltzers, and other popular beverages. But what about wine? An insulated wine cooler ensures wine stays properly cooled but doesn’t get too cold, which can happen when wine is stored in a more traditional cooler filled with ice. Bottles are simply placed in the insulated cooler (much like canned beverages slide easily into can koozies), and the bottle can be kept on the table much like you would for formal dinners indoors. Hosts can go the extra mile by pairing insulated wine tumblers with their wine cooler.

Games

Summer entertaining season might be all about relaxation, but games can

up the fun factor at backyard gatherings. Cornhole is a wildly popular game, and customized cornhole boards can help hosts come across as party professionals. Ladder toss, bocce and wiffle ball are some additional games that can make the festivities more fun. Hosts who don’t have a pool also can invest in an inflatable pool big enough to fit all the kids who will be coming to the party.

Outdoor storage cabinet

Hosts can save themselves the stress and effort of walking in and out for dinnerware and other table accessories by investing in a sturdy outdoor storage cabinet. As meal time draws near, hosts will appreciate that all the plates, napkins, utensils, and placemats are already outside. The top of the storage cabinet can double as a small but convenient buffet station for sides that aren’t being cooked over an open flame.

Projector and screen

A projector and screen can really up the ante on summer entertaining, turning a backyard barbecue into a great place to watch a game or cuddle up after dinner for a movie night under the stars. Projectors and screens won’t bust the budget, but those who have more to spend may want to consider an outdoor television. Outdoor televisions are built to handle the glare of the summer sun, but a retractable awning may be a good safety net for hosts who plan to spend many a weekend afternoon outside watching games or movies with family and friends.

These are just a handful of items that can up the ante on traditional backyard barbecues. Homeowners should know that there’s no limit to the number of items that can make summer entertaining season more special.

Am I Tripping, Losing Balance, Getting Older or Just Clumsy?

BY MICHAEL DOW
MSPT AND CEO/CLINICAL DIRECTOR

Balance issues can be a tricky thing to self-assess, until there is a fall that causes injury, or unfortunately more serious conditions such as fractures of ankle or hips. Balance issues can affect all ages, and often gets ignored in the elderly or just attributed to getting older. There are several different systems that play significant roles, and knowing which one is the culprit (or culprits) will directly lead to the appropriate intervention.

Balance and coordination are complex and often involve the intertwining of several systems. The three major ones are vision, vestibular, and proprioception. For the purposes of this article, I'd like to discuss the two systems that we often see in physical therapy and are most likely to affect balance, even in the healthy individual.

The first system is called the vestibular system, and is comprised of three small bones in the inner ear named ossicles. These bones, like most in our body, can become degenerative or get out of alignment. The resulting interruption in feedback loops from the ossicles can lead to vertigo, loss of balance, dizziness, loss of neck rotation and headache. Oftentimes, these symptoms may require evaluation from an ear nose and throat specialist. In the case of vertigo from ossicle alignment, our physical therapists administer an advanced technique called the Epley's maneuver in the office to help realign the ossicles to stop the vertigo symptoms. Usually, this technique is followed with other manual therapy to restore the likely precipitated loss of neck rotation. There are studies that have directly linked patients who suffer with vertigo with a loss of neck rotation, suggesting that the loss of rotation may actually increase likelihood of developing vertigo.

The other system that affects balance is the most common one addressed in physical therapy, called proprioception. There are receptor cells in our joints and muscles that tell our brain instinctively where our body is in space. This feedback loop is developed by our general movements. In instances where movement is impaired (acute swelling, immobilization from a cast, pain, spinal tightness, postural changes from aging), this information is fragmented and can alter balance. In the elderly, postural changes in the spine cause a flexed position with a loss of rotation, along with hip and lower extremity tightness. The lack of flexibility does not feed the system the appropriate feedback so when the



Michael Dow

person rotates too far, they can be at a much higher risk of fall. Generally, restoring rotation in the neck, spine, and hips can greatly help increase stability and reduce risk of fall.

Proprioception problems are not limited to the elderly. When athletes get hurt and have a period of immobilization (like a surgical recovery or use of a cast and crutches), the affective area does not move throughout the normal range of motion. Thus, the receptors become inhibited from providing the same proprioceptive feedback to the brain to interpret. Physical therapists spend much of the treatment sessions performing joint mobilization techniques, flexibility and balance-oriented exercises that not only increase range of motion, but directly increase proprioception. Restoration of movement is also necessary to increase muscular strength. You have to have motion available to use it. The further a muscle is elongated, the more potential force it can produce.

It is important to recognize that balance issues are not exclusive to just getting older and should not be overlooked. Recognizing which systems are compromised is the first step in helping reduce balance issues. Should you experience any balance related symptoms, it is advisable to seek the opinion of your primary care physician, ENT specialist, or local physical therapist.

Michael Dow MSPT, and CEO/Clinical Director of Amity Physical Therapy, founded the practice 18 years ago, and now has five offices in Woodbridge, Hamden, Branford, Milford and Wallingford. He received his degree from Sacred Heart University and is recognized by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for his work with the national Multiple Sclerosis Society. He works with patients of all ages, pediatrics to geriatrics, as well as local high school and college athletes. Michael can be reached at 203-389-4593 or visit amitypt.com.

"First Selectman" From Page 4

fields. The department offers swim lessons, yoga for adults, and a volleyball league. They organize the well-attended summer concert series, the annual road race, and the Logan Testa Kids' Triathlon.

"Our Public Works Department is made up of three sections – Highway/Parks, Building Maintenance, and Waste Management. The Highway Department oversees 78 miles of roads including paving and plowing, storm drains, street lighting, line striping and trees. This year they have removed 86 problematic trees and have a list of another 50 or so to address.

"Building Maintenance oversees the maintenance, operation, and security of all Town buildings and sidewalks and handles set-up and breakdown for most Town meetings.

"Waste Management runs our Transfer Station. So far this year, they have disposed of over 1985 tons of municipal solid waste, 525.6 tons of recycling and 205.7 tons of demolition and bulky waste.

"Beyond the exquisite landscape we celebrate in Woodbridge each year in springtime, and beyond successful completion of another municipal budget cycle this year, our community has a great deal to celebrate every year

– and year 'round. Thank you again for participating tonight in the ongoing vitality of our town.

"Finally, I am grateful to all of the residents of Woodbridge who have reached out to me by phone, text, or e-mail. I value and appreciate your opinions and suggestions and offers to help. I will continue to try to get answers to any questions you may have. As your First Selectman it is my honor and my privilege to serve this community. We will continue to face challenges, but I am confident that we will find our way together. Thank you.

"Before I introduce our Administrative Officer and Finance Director Tony Genovese, I'd like to give kudos to our Finance Department, which has seen some significant staffing changes this past year, and still was awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its comprehensive annual financial report and for Distinguished Budget Presentation to the Town of Woodbridge for its annual budget by The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA). Additionally, the Town of Woodbridge maintains a Aaa bond rating from Moody's Investor Services. This rating states that Woodbridge's credit position is superior, and its Aaa rating far surpasses the median rating of cities nationwide."



TOWN OF WOODBRIDGE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING NEIGHBORHOOD ASSISTANT ACT APPLICATIONS

Pursuant to Section 12-632 of the Connecticut General Statute, notice is hereby given that the Woodbridge Board of Selectmen will hold a Public Hearing on Wednesday, June 14, 2023, 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Central Meeting Room, 11 Meetinghouse Lane, Woodbridge, CT to receive comments on the following applications received for consideration for the 2023 Neighborhood Assistant Act:

Amity Teen Center Inc. d/b/a 10seldon	
Energy Efficiency Project	\$ 24,980.00
Cure Rare Disease, Inc.	
Advancing treatments for rare diseases	\$150,000.00
Jewish Community Center of Greater New Haven	
Energy Equipment Restoration	\$150,000.00

The applications are on file in the Selectmen's Office and may be reviewed between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Dated: May 26, 2023

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Turn A Backyard Into Your Own Relaxing Respite

Backyards have long been places to unwind and enjoy some peace and quiet surrounded by nature. Thanks in part to financial instability brought on by rising inflation and measures to tame it, homeowners may decide to forgo traditional vacations in favor of staying home this season. There's no better time to invest in a home, particularly outdoor spaces, to make them welcoming respites. The following are some ways to accomplish that goal.

Incorporate a Water Feature

The sound of trickling or bubbling water can make surroundings more serene. A low-maintenance water feature can help to create a calming ambiance. A fountain that does not require a collection pond will reduce the chance it becomes a breeding ground for mosquitoes. Locating the fountain out of the sun can keep algae growth at a minimum.

Add Lights for Ambiance

Outdoor lighting options include professionally installed, hardwired lights on the home itself or accent lighting that draws attention to trees or architectural structures on the property. It also may include twinkling lights, which some consider a must-have for any outdoor retreat. Lights come in all types and price points. Hang them on porches, pergolas or cement posts inside decorative planters and then string lights between the posts. This way the lighting can be moved around as desired.

Lounging Spots

A comfortable outdoor loveseat or chairs may be a focal point of the yard, but build in some additional cozy spots specifically for lounging around. Nestle a hammock in a quiet corner of the yard, or enhance a chaise lounge with throw pillows and a large umbrella for napping poolside.

Add Lushness with Plants

Plants can transform any space. Use a combination of planted varieties around the yard, then enhance certain areas with potted plants as needed. Plants can make an area more warm and inviting, plus they give butterflies, bees and hummingbirds places to stop by and visit. Consider the help of a professional landscaper to bring a vision of a lush, plant-filled retreat to life.

Blend in the Pool or Spa

With some unique landscape architecture, the pool or hot tub can be built right into the landscape, making it a cohesive part of the design. This can make the yard seem even more like an oasis, especially when the pool is flanked by a waterfall or bubbling fountain.

Add Some Music

Thanks to wireless speakers that rely on Bluetooth technology, it's easy to have music piped right into the backyard. Set up a wireless speaker in an inconspicuous spot, such as inside a planter or in the rafters of a gazebo. Turning a backyard into an oasis can provide the respite many people look for on their properties.

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AT THE WOODBRIDGE CENTER



Left: Participants of May's Lunch Bunch enjoy socializing over a delicious lunch at the Italian Pavilion in Derby. The next outing will take place on July 12 to Dockside Seafood & Grill in Branford. Please RSVP. Right: Jessica Esposito, The Woodbridge Center, and Kelsey Lang, Elim Park, get ready to assist distribution of 100 lunches to the Mother's Day Drive-thru participants. The drive-thru was sponsored by Visiting Angels and Elim Park, with a special favor provided by Hamden Health.

Contact The Woodbridge Center: More information on available programs and services can be found on The Center's page of the Town Website. Please go to SchedulesPlus <https://schedulesplus.com/woodct> to directly sign-up for most programs. Call 203-389-3430 or email kmoriarty@woodbridgect.org with questions or for more information.

Facebook: Follow us on Facebook (The Woodbridge Center, Woodbridge CT) for current updates, local information, and fun programming photos. Email blasts: Things change quickly - please make sure you are on our email blast list to receive Woodbridge Center updates. Call The Center at 203-389-3430 to subscribe.

Grand Re-opening of The Center

The time is finally here to celebrate the long-awaited re-opening of The Center, and it was worth the wait! Everyone is invited to come to the ribbon cutting celebration on Wednesday, June 21 at 4:00 pm. Light refreshments will be served. Please RSVP with The Center 203-389-3430.

Stop by The Center Thursday, June 22 through Wednesday, June 29 to sign up for a free membership to The Center and receive a commemorative pen and special treat while supplies last.

The fully renovated Center will have a new HVAC system, new reception office, hot coffee and tea available all day, a private consultation office for meeting with the Human Services Social Worker or with a nurse during the regularly scheduled "Ask the Nurse" program (with blood pressure monitoring), and a new audio-visual system which includes a new sound system, projector, and screen (funded by a federal grant awarded by Agency on Aging of South Central CT and fundraising dollars raised at the Human Services' Living Treasure Events). In addition, The Center will continue to provide all of the programs it has offered throughout the renovation process, and on July 18, the in-person meal program will resume on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Stop by The Center in early July for

a Center Newsletter/Calendar with program details, sign-up to receive regular email blast updates, or check the Town Website for current activities and events.

All activities and programs, except for aerobics, Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance, and pickleball, will meet in The Center beginning Monday, June 26.

Sponsored Lunch

(For Woodbridge residents 60 years of age or over)

Father's Day Drive-thru Luncheon

Thursday, June 15, 12-1 pm
In front of main entrance of The Center

Everyone is welcome to celebrate all fathers at the Father's Day Drive-thru Luncheon. Enjoy choice of turkey BLT on wholegrain bread or BBQ shredded beef on a roll, macaroni salad, and dessert sponsored by Whitney Rehabilitation Care Center and Coachman Square. A deconstructed root beer float will be provided by Hamden Rehabilitation and Health Care Center. No charge. RSVP by June 8.

Upcoming Programs

Immersive Japan Experience

Friday, June 9, 11 am - 12 pm
Library Meeting Room

Enjoy a virtual tour of Japan, trivia, and authentic treats during this one-hour immersive experience provided by Hamden Rehabilitation and Health Care Center. Please RSVP with The Center 203-389-3430.

Flip Flop Wreath Craft

Thursday, June 29, 11 am - 12 pm
The Center Cafe

This workshop, sponsored by Hamden Rehabilitation and Health Care Center, will provide everything required to make a fun flip flop wreath for summer. Please RSVP with The Center 203-389-3430.

Lunch Bunch

Wednesday, July 12
Van leaves The Center at 11:30 am or meet at Dockside Seafood & Grill at 12 pm
Join in a social outing to lunch at

the Dockside Seafood & Grill in Branford. Self-pay for your meal at the restaurant. \$3.00 per person for transportation (or meet at the restaurant). Call The Center to RSVP by July 6.

Hands-Only CPR & AED Training

Wednesday, July 19, 10 am - 12 pm
The Center Cafe

This free training opportunity is offered through the American Red Cross and Yale New Haven Health. Hands-on learning is included in this program that will teach life-saving skills to recognize the signs of cardiac arrest, perform CPR on adults and children, and utilize an AED. Please RSVP with The Center 203-389-3430.

Annual Indoor Summer Picnic - once again IN the Center Café!

Thursday, July 27, 12-1 pm
The Center Café

Enjoy live music & BBQ at its best with the Woodbridge Police Department Grill Masters serving up BBQ chicken, hot dogs, and hamburgers. Summer salads, watermelon, and dessert will also be served. This free event is co-sponsored by The Woodbridge Police Department and the law firm of Resnik & Resnik. Please RSVP by July 20. Space is limited.

Regular Programs

Exercise

Not sure if a class is right for you? Try a complimentary class first!

Aerobics Class with Laura Richling

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10-11 am
Center Building Gymnasium

Come enjoy a complete cardio and strength training workout to a variety of music. Bring your own 1- or 2-pound hand weights, if you have them, to use during the class. Please pay \$3 at the beginning of each class.

Indoor Pickleball

Monday through Friday, 12:30-3:30 pm
Center Building Gymnasium

All levels are welcome. There is an annual fee of \$20 for residents, \$25 for non-residents. The annual fee includes outdoor play as well. Please make sure your dues are current. Call The Center 203-389-3430 for more information.

Outdoor Pickleball

Every Day
Outdoors on the Town Courts

All levels are welcome. There is an annual fee of \$20 for residents, \$25 for non-residents. The annual fee includes indoor play as well. Please make sure your dues are current. Call The Center 203-389-3430 for more information.

Hobbies/Social: All will meet in The Woodbridge Center beginning Thursday, June 22. Bridge

Wednesdays, 1-4 pm
Library Meeting Room

Seasoned bridge players are welcome to play bridge every Wednesday in the Library Meeting Room. Please call prior to initial play.

Craft Group

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 am - 12 pm
Woodbridge Room of the Library

Bring your current knitting, crocheting, or needlepoint project to work on while having an enjoyable time socializing.

Pinochle

Thursdays, 1:30-4 pm
Center Building, Room 16

Anyone interested in playing pinochle, or learning to play pinochle, is invited to join the pinochle group on Thursdays from 1:30-4 pm in the Center Building, Room 16. Call 203-389-3430 for more information.

Services offered

(For Woodbridge residents only)

Computer Lab

Multiple computers and laptops are located in room 11 of the Center Building Human Services corridor, which is open Mondays, Wednesdays,

See "Woodbridge Center" On Page 14



Sarah Mach, Whitney Rehabilitation Care Center – recipient of the Business Award, and Deb Urso, Hamden Rehabilitation and Care Center – recipient of The Woodbridge Center Award, display their awards standing with Kristy Moriarty and Jessica Esposito, The Woodbridge Center, at The Human Services Volunteer Appreciation Event in May

“Woodbridge Center” From Page 13

Thursdays, and Fridays, 10 am - 2 pm. Printing is available (first 5 pages free).

Transportation

Those 60 years of age and older, or who are temporarily or permanently disabled, may call to arrange car or wheelchair accessible van transportation to medical appointments to 17 surrounding towns, local grocery shopping, banking, pharmacy pick-up, and social engagements. This service is provided Monday - Friday from 9:00 am - 4:00 pm based on availability. Appointments may be made up to three months in advance. Vehicles are cleaned between each use.

Delivered Meals

Healthy, well balanced, flash frozen meals for \$5.25/meal are available. Order by noon on Monday for delivery to your home during the same week. Choose from a wide variety of options including baked ziti, chicken piccata,

flounder Florentine, and turkey pot pie. Meals include a roll, fresh fruit, and dessert. Two meal minimum order with a ten-meal limit. See The Center’s page on the Town website for a complete list of offerings. A wide variety of frozen soups are also available for \$1.50 per 10 oz. container.

Friendly Visitor Program

Call the Human Services Social Worker at 203-389-3429 to arrange for a friendly visitor.

Medical Loan Closet

Durable medical equipment, including walkers, wheelchairs, knee rollers, shower chairs, and more, is available for lending. Donations of transport chairs are needed. Call for details.

Job Bank

Residents may call Nancy Pfund, Youth Services Director, at 203-389-3429, to hire a student worker. Schedule now for yard clean-up, party assistance, baby-sitting, and more.

ARTS & LEISURE



Brynn Keevil ‘23 Displays Monster Talent

When they invade the imagination, monsters can become a source of great fear. But the opposite is true for Woodbridge resident Brynn Keevil ‘23.

In Clark University’s craft studio, Keevil molds clay into ceramic gargoyle heads with their fang-filled mouths agape - pieces of art that are both eerie and beautiful. Crafting them, Keevil says, is a way to help ease real-life anxieties, including the uneasiness of the unknown as commencement approaches and they prepare to transition into a new chapter of life. Shaping the gargoyles has become a passion project for Keevil with the dual benefit of calming their nerves and feeding their creative spirit.

“I think making physical monsters feels like a way to mitigate any other fear in my life,” says Keevil, a community, youth, and education studies major and studio art minor. “Each of these gargoyles is a different part of my identity that exists outside of me, which I then can see as beautiful and lovable.”

Keevil started regularly working with clay during his first year at Clark after stumbling upon the craft studio. Come junior year, Keevil was working in the studio about 15 hours per week. “It felt like what I wanted to do all the time,” says Keevil.

Keevil starts by sculpting clay freely, with no specific plan or approach in mind. After creating the first gargoyle, Keevil immediately felt called to make more. Now, they have almost 15 in their collection. It takes two to 10 hours to sculpt each gargoyle, two hours to burnish, two hours to glaze, and then two or three days in the kiln.

“I love them unlike any other art I’ve ever created,” says Keevil. “They feel like children in a way that is incredibly bizarre to me. It feels like I am a vessel for the birth of this really cool being.”

The gargoyles can stand alone as decor, but Keevil also uses the mon-

sters’ mouths as an unusual plant pot. CYES courses taught Keevil the value of relationships and feeling connected to one’s work. It’s the same way they approach art.

“Connecting deeply to land is a huge part of why I love ceramics,” says Keevil, who enjoys scavenging clay from a river to create mugs or sculptures.

After graduation, Keevil will work at a pollinator plant nursery in Western Massachusetts this summer in exchange for housing. The property has a barn that they plan to transform into a pottery studio. After the summer, Keevil hopes to find a ceramics apprenticeship.

“I’m completely self-taught, so my technique could use some work,” says Keevil. “I finally feel like I’m learning how to execute things as I imagine them. It’s taken at least two years to get to a point where I feel excited about what’s coming out of my hands.”

Keevil would love to make and sell ceramics full-time but would also consider a career as an art teacher. Eventually, they want to construct a full-size gargoyle, using wild clay, sticks, and branches to build the creature on a riverbank. Keevil will skip the kiln process and let the creation melt away in the rain. “It gets me excited because earth and water are things I feel connected to,” says Keevil. “This is a way to be in relationship with them.”

Founded in 1887, Clark University is a liberal arts-based research university that prepares its students to meet tomorrow’s most daunting challenges and embrace its greatest opportunities. Through 33 undergraduate majors, more than 30 advanced degree programs, and nationally recognized community partnerships, Clark fuses rigorous scholarship with authentic world and workplace experiences that empower our students to pursue lives and careers of meaning and consequence.







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How To Make Outdoor Living Spaces More Comfortable

Private backyards are now go-to spaces for recreation and entertainment and great places to recharge the body and mind.

One ripple effect of the COVID-19 pandemic was more time spent outdoors, even if it was predominantly on one's own property. OnePoll, in conjunction with the lawn care company TruGreen, surveyed 2,000 American homeowners and found participants spent 14 hours outside every week in 2021, which was three hours more than prior to the pandemic. In addition, respondents admitted that time spent outdoors was therapeutic.

A separate survey conducted for the International Casual Furnishings Association found that people now spend more time relaxing, gardening, exercising, dining, and entertaining outside than in years past. Though COVID-19 may no longer dominate headlines, the desire to enjoy outdoor spaces has not waned.

While enjoying outdoor living areas, homeowners can do all they can to make these spaces comfortable and welcoming. The following are some good starting points.

Get All Lit Up

Outdoor spaces can be enjoyed no matter the hour when there is ample lighting. That could be why the International Casual Furnishings Association reports those who plan to renovate their outdoor spaces list outdoor lighting as a priority. Outdoor lighting not only sheds light on entertaining spaces, but also makes spaces safer and more secure.

Increase Privacy

No matter how friendly homeowners are with their neighbors, there comes a time when privacy is paramount. Fencing, whether it is wood or vinyl, or even a natural fence made

from closely planted hedges, can ensure residents feel comfortable venturing outdoors to swim, take a cat nap or even star gaze in private.

Address the Elements

Homeowners should note the direction their backyard faces and the typical daily conditions of the space. For example, a yard that faces southwest may get plenty of strong sun during the day, requiring the addition of shade trees, covered patios or arbors to cut down on the glare and heat. If the yard is often hit by winds, trees or bushes planted strategically as windbreaks can help.

Sit Comfortably

High-quality comfortable seating increases the likelihood that homeowners will want to stay awhile in their outdoor spaces. A deep seating set complete with plush chairs, outdoor sofa or love seat and chaise lounge chairs gives people more opportunity to sit and stay awhile.

Take a Dip

A pool can be the perfect gathering spot on a warm day, while a spa/hot tub can bridge the gap to cooler weather. According to the Family Handyman, soaking in hot tubs can relax tired muscles after a long day, loosen up stiff joints, improve cardiovascular health, and reduce the time it takes to fall asleep.

Bite Back at Bugs

Homeowners may want to consider using a professional exterminator to get rid of ticks, mosquitoes and other nuisance insects from outdoor spaces.

As people spend more time enjoying their properties, they can consider the many ways to make outdoor living spaces more comfortable.



Driving to a vacation destination rather than flying can save travelers lots of money on costly airfare.

How To Make Summer Travel More Affordable

Summer is peak travel season. Whether vacationers plan to travel internationally or domestically, they can expect to pay top dollar as they head off for parts unknown.

Much has been made of inflation over the last year-plus, as the cost of seemingly everything has risen considerably since early 2022. And the cost of travel has seemingly increased by an even greater percentage than the cost of groceries. Data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Price Index indicates the cost of airfare increased by more than 25 percent between January 2022 to January 2023.

Though travel has never been inexpensive, the rising costs noted in the Consumer Price Index have scared many consumers into staying home. However, consumers who want to travel but don't want to break the bank can try various strategies as they seek to get out of the house this summer.

Travel domestically. With airfare costs skyrocketing, now might not be the most budget-friendly time to travel overseas. Thankfully, would-be vacationers can still get away. Average gas prices in early spring 2023 hovered around \$3.43 per gallon, which is nearly \$1 less per gallon than the year prior. By driving to their destinations, vacationers can save substantial sums of money and also maintain greater control of their trips, something that isn't always so easy in an era marked by

routine flight delays and cancellations.

Change your timeline. If a faraway dream destination beckons, travelers might still be able to make it work if they have the flexibility to alter their timelines. Rather than taking a Monday through Friday off from work, consider starting and ending a vacation in mid-week. It's generally less expensive, and sometimes significantly so, to fly mid-week compared to flying Friday-Monday.

Cash in your credit card points. Another way to ensure summer travel doesn't put a big dent in your savings is to utilize cash back rewards or airline miles linked to your credit card account. If you have a lot of cash and/or miles saved up, the coming summer of expensive travel could be the ideal time to use them.

Consider a homestay over a hotel. Homestays, which includes bookings through sites such as Airbnb and VRBO, are typically much less expensive to book than hotel rooms. But homestays also save travelers money on food, as many listings feature fully operational kitchens that can help travelers avoid dining out three times per day over the duration of their trips.

Travel is a significant expense as consumers continue to confront sharp increases in prices on various goods and services. However, it's still possible to vacation without breaking the bank.

DEATH NOTICES

Randy (Rumzi) Kaoud

Randy (Rumzi) Kaoud, 85, of Woodbridge died on May 6, 2023. Born in Ramallah, Palestine on February 19, 1938, a son of the late Khalil and Azizeh Kaoud. Survived by his son James (Kristina) Kaoud of Woodbridge; grandchildren Randy James “R.J.”, Jillian, and Joseph “Joey” Kaoud; brother Abe (Aida) Kaoud of Woodbridge; sister Wedad Elfar of San Jose, CA; as well as sisters-in-law Jackie Kaoud of Woodbridge, and Rachel Kaoud of Milford. In addition to his parents, Randy was preceded in death by his beloved wife of over 54 years, Salwa Misleh Kaoud; as well as brothers Sam Kaywood of Woodbridge, Fred Kaoud of Woodbridge, and Wadi “Willy” Kaoud of Milford.

Randy attended the Friends Boys School in Ramallah, Palestine where he excelled as Captain of the soccer team. After three years of service in the armed forces, he met and married the love of his life, Salwa, and immigrated to the United States. Along with his brothers Fred and Abe, Randy established the family business, Kaoud Rugs, which would become a household name in carpet and rugs in the state for 68 years. Randy possessed an absolute entrepreneurial mindset, whether in retail or residential and commercial real estate development, his keen attention to detail, standard of excellence, and steadfast commitment to detail perpetuated his reputation and success. Always readily equipped with a story to tell or a life lesson to share, his knowledge and advice remained well received by both his contemporaries and those he mentored. Randy believed in civil service and giving back to one’s community, as illustrated by his involvement in the business community and Chamber of Commerce of Orange, serving as a Burgess of Woodmont, as well as past Police Commissioner for the Town of Woodbridge, where he resided for over 46 years. Upon spending several winters in Florida with his wife Salwa, Randy took up the game of golf in later years while enjoying his membership of the Racebrook Country Club. Other interests included his home, yard, and surrounding gardens. His greatest love, however, was that of his family. Randy was proud of each member, adored spending time with them, and was especially excited by his cherished grandchildren.

The Kaoud family would like to extend sincere appreciation for Maria Kosciuszke and her family, for taking care of him and his family for over 35 years. Arrangements were entrusted to West Haven Funeral Home at the Green. You may offer an online condolence by visiting www.westhaven-funeral.com.

Ray D. Leoni

Ray Dennis Leoni, 94, of Woodbridge, CT and Centerville, MA, passed away peacefully at home on May 10, 2023. He was born in Woonsocket, RI on May 5, 1929, son of Angelo N. Leoni and Millie E. Maselli.

Ray received his bachelor’s degree in engineering from Brown University and master of engineering degree from Yale University. He began his career at Sikorsky Aircraft as a junior engineer in 1951 and retired 41 years later as Senior Vice President, Engineering and Advanced Programs. Ray was awarded nine patents including the Black Hawk helicopter design patent. He authored the book “Black Hawk, the Story of a World Class Helicopter,” published in 2007. After retiring, Ray served as a trustee with the Igor I. Sikorsky Historical Archives.

Ray was a member of the American Helicopter Society since 1952 and received its Fellow Award in 1990 and its prestigious Historical Achievement Award in 2009 for preserving, in his book, the history of one of the most famous helicopters in the world.

Ray’s hobbies included building and flying radio control model airplanes and boating, fishing and clamming in Nantucket Sound. He was a twenty-five-year member of the Branford Yacht Club.

Ray was predeceased in 2021 by his beloved wife of 69 years, Patricia Morrow Leoni. He was cherished by his children, Susan Eident (Peter) of Woodbridge, CT, Peter (Linda) of Bethany, CT and Christopher (Kim) of Woodbridge, CT, eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Arrangements were in the capable hands of the Wakelee Memorial Funeral Home, 167 Wakelee Avenue, Ansonia, CT. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Sikorsky Archives at sikorskyarchives.com or to the charity of one’s choice. Online condolences may be made at www.wakeleememorial.com.

“Letters” From Page 5

of real estate in the town, and the local and state-allowed reimbursement does not exceed the property holder’s annual tax. Towns can also vote to abate property taxes without regard to age if the tax exceeds 8% of the owner’s income for that year. Owner must agree to reimburse the town for the abated amount upon death or when the property is sold.

Some 109 towns have varying levels of abatement:

- › Bethel has a credit program for incomes below \$42,500 which allows an abatement of up to 75% of a participant’s property tax, which does not have to be repaid, and a freeze program for incomes below \$45,000;
- › Branford allows deferral of up to 75% of annual property taxes for an income of up to \$62,500 for singles and \$75,00 for married couples; above 75% a lien is placed on the property, with a variable rate of interest of from 0 to 3%, depending on income;
- › Bristol allows up to 100% of taxes deferred for incomes below \$40,320 and \$49,420 for single and married respectively;
- › Other towns have freeze programs, credits, abatements and deferrals all with varying eligibility criteria, percent limits, payback plans;
- › Guilford, a town not dissimilar to ours, allows a 75% deferral for couples earning less than \$95,000, with a property lien, and freezing of taxes for the same income, without a lien.

I think it’s time for a serious look into finding tax relief for our older population, who’ve paid taxes for a lifetime, well after their children finished school. I think our other elected officials should make this a priority. I know that I do.

David Lober MD
Selectman, Woodbridge CT

A Valuable Asset to Our Community

A town-based Health & Wellness Fitness Center is a valuable asset to our community. It provides a facility to focus on both the personal and physical development of community residents. The joy of working out and meeting with fellow town residents brings family and friends together.

While over the years many fitness facilities have opened and provide excellent workout areas, they are impersonal and do not provide a sense of community. Getting to know your neighbors and interacting with them on a local level can make for a stronger

sense of community.

Our town-based Health & Wellness fitness center provides a space that is used by people who would not join other gyms. Many people lead sedentary lifestyles. The larger fitness facilities offer many opportunities and are filled with a wide range of skill levels and are heavily used. For some, however, those fitness facilities may be intimidating. Some are hesitant to join such a facility.

The importance of a community-based facility is to offer these individuals a setting that is inviting and on a smaller community scale, to find camaraderie as they connect with community members of varied ages, while staying physically active. Residents will find it easier to be proactive about their health and well-being in a local community center that promotes local community involvement.

As we enjoy greater longevity, we continue to need to feel connection with others, both on an emotional and physical level. The Woodbridge Recreation Department Health & Wellness Fitness Center provides the space and opportunity to facilitate social connection of our town residents. One of the most important aspects of a community fitness center is to provide an environment that promotes health and a space of mutual support. The Health & Wellness and Fitness Center sends a message that we care about our fellow residents, of all ages, fostering community health and community involvement.

There is no doubt that daily physical activity is important for our town residents from the oldest to the youngest. The Health & Wellness Fitness Center is an environment that boosts the attitude of community members. Keeping active promotes independence. For over 30 years, under the supervision of trained instructors, our town Health & Wellness Fitness Center has provided our residents with a designated space for advancing physical health as well as social well-being and development.

We hope the Board of Finance will continue to support the importance of this town resource. With plans to relocate the town Health & Wellness Fitness Center in the new Community and Cultural Center, the Recreation Department plans to continue to promote the facility to increase annual dues through increased membership. Within the new Community and Cultural Center, the planned Health & Wellness fitness space will also incorporate recreational activities such as a ping pong table along with traditional fitness equipment to meet the needs of a wide range of community members.
John Adamovich
Director of Recreation

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

Woodbridge Town News

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HOUSES OF WORSHIP EVENTS

Congregation Beth El – Keser Israel Events

Children’s Programs

Children’s Havura, K-2 Kehila, and Junior Congregation, all led by parent or grandparent volunteers, meet in person each Saturday, including through the summer. For more information, consult Education Director Annie Norman-Schiff at anormanschiff@beki.org.



Religious School Registration

BEKI’s K-6 religious school, which is called BINA, is accepting registrations from member and non-member families. School starts Sunday, September 10. More information and the registration form is at <https://www.beki.org/youth/religious-school>.

Shavuot at BEKI

Shavuot services, led by Rabbi Eric Woodward and congregants, will be held Friday, May 26 and Saturday, May 27. Yizkor memorial prayers will be included on May 27. Details at beki.org.

Study with the Rabbi

Rabbi Woodward leads a discussion of the weekly Torah portion on Thursdays. Details at beki.org.

Celebrating 300 Members

For the first time since the 1960s, BEKI’s membership now exceeds 300 family units. While most of the newcomers are young families, another growing demographic is grandparents who have moved to the New Haven area to be near their children and grandchildren. The congregation will celebrate this membership milestone at the annual meeting on June 14.

Pride Shabbat

Saturday, June 17 will be the congregation’s annual Pride Shabbat, honoring the diversity of gender



identity and sexual orientation of BEKI’s members. Details at beki.org.

Courtyard Campfire

Because of the success of the Lag BaOmer gathering, BEKI has planned another campfire singalong for adults and children. On Thursday, June 22, Max DuBoff and other participants will teach songs from summer camp (both English and Hebrew songs). Everyone is invited to roast vegan marshmallows and create s’mores (with graham crackers and fairtrade chocolate). Details at beki.org.



Interfaith Service Day

BEKI is participating in an interfaith day of service Sunday, August 6. Projects that morning will include building a house with Habitat for Humanity, preparing food for the hungry with the Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen, restoring a cemetery with the Hebrew Burial and Free Loan Association, pounding guns into garden tools with Swords to Plowshares, or cleaning a shoreline with Save The Sound. Lunch will be on the New Haven Green at 12:30 pm, with festivities until 4 pm. For more information about joining the BEKI work team, contact office@beki.org.

Art by Dganit Zauberman

An exhibit by Israeli-born artist Dganit Zauberman, titled “Land in Flux,” is on view in the BEKI Gallery through June 14. Based in a studio at New Haven’s Erector Square since 2016, she has exhibited in galleries located throughout Pennsylvania, Ohio, New York, California and Connecticut, including at the Institute Library and ArtSpace in New Haven.

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

Congregation B’nai Jacob Events

Weekly Services

- Daily Minyan Services**
- › Monday-Friday: 7:45am
 - › Sunday-Thursday: 6:00pm (on ZOOM only)
 - › Sunday: 9:00am
 - › National Holidays: Times vary

Weekly Shabbat Services

- › Friday Eve: 6:30pm
- › Saturday: 10:00am

Bread & Torah

Saturday Mornings 9:00am–9:45am

Meet in the B’nai Jacob Library to explore the weekly Torah portion and the way in which its story relates to our own. Be prepared for a lively discussion over bagels and coffee. No experience necessary. Taught by Rabbi Rona Shapiro.

Shabbat Family Picnic

Friday, June 9 at 5:30pm

Celebrate the warmth of Shabbat with family and friends at the first outdoor service of the season. B.Y.O. Picnic for your family (dairy or pareve).

YAHAD

YAHAD, the combined religious school for Congregation B’nai Jacob and Congregation Or Shalom, is gearing up for another vibrant year of education for students in grades K-7.

Gan Hayed Sundays

Open to all Jewish 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds in the community! Play-based Jewish curriculum, offered Sunday mornings, provides a warm, caring environment in which children can develop social skills while also learning about Jewish holidays, traditions, and values.

For more information about any of the listed events, programs, or inquiries about becoming a member of B’nai Jacob:

- › Call 203-389-2111;
- › Email: office@bnaijacob.org;
- › Visit our website, bnaijacob.org.

Congregation B’nai Jacob is a conservative synagogue located at 75 Rimmon Road, Woodbridge, CT. ALL ARE WELCOME!

Tame Stress During Air Travel

The excitement of an upcoming vacation can be eclipsed by the frustration and stress that sometimes results from air travel. While vacations are often intended to alleviate stress, the sheer task of getting to a destination can compromise that goal.

Traveling by air can be an ordeal for a variety of reasons. Busy airports can be challenging to navigate, especially when pressed for time. There’s also the possibility of lost luggage and the anxiety that comes with going through TSA and potentially customs if you are flying internationally. Of course, some people are simply nervous about flying as well.

The good news for reluctant air travelers is that there are many ways to cut down on the stress surrounding flying.

Enroll in TSA PreCheck. Individuals in the United States who are citizens, lawful permanent residents and U.S. nationals may be able to avoid the long lines at TSA by becoming members of PreCheck. For a fee that covers five years and after a background check, approval, fingerprinting and interview, PreCheck enables members to skip the removal of shoes and jackets as well as other TSA protocol. It is valid for domestic and international flights from more than 200 U.S.-based airports.

Similarly, there is a Global Entry program to expedite the customs process.

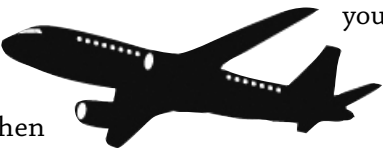
Weigh before you go. Paying extra for luggage is no fun. Measure luggage and put it on a scale before heading to the airport to make sure it does not exceed size and weight limits. Account for any souvenirs or items that you may bring home as well.

Get a travel perks credit card. Certain credit cards enable you to earn not only points toward travel miles and discounted flights, but also some additional benefits. For example, you may be able to enjoy priority boarding if you are a cardholder or gain access to special member lounges while you wait for flights. These perks can go a long way toward making flying more comfortable.

Skip the bag check. Pack light and only bring a carry-on bag to save time when the flight lands.

Download the airline app. There’s much to be said about technology, especially when it can streamline travel. Airline apps can be used to purchase tickets and have boarding passes available to be scanned at check-in. In addition, airline apps can keep you apprised of flight delays and boarding gates.

These are a few of the ways to reduce the stress of air travel.



Woodbridge Town News

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We will publish them for free.

Woodbridge Town News – P.O. Box 1126, Orange, CT 06477
edit@woodbridgetownnews.com

HOUSES OF WORSHIP EVENTS

The First Church of Christ, Woodbridge

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

Interim Minister

The Rev. Susan Murtha is the Interim Minister at FCCW and has made quite an impact. Plan a visit to see what is "happening." You can also read about her on our website.

Kid's Church Has Begun Again at First Church!

Families meet at the church at 10:00 and at 10:10 the children are walked over to the Parish House for Kid's Church by Forest Vandeflor, our project leader for children's ministries, along with an adult volunteer. This is a great time for the children while their parents are at the worship service!

Weekly Bible Study

Bible Study meets at the Parish House each Wednesday, 11 am. All are invited!

Boy Scout Troop 907

Boy Scout Troop 907 is in its 55th year under the umbrella of The First Church of Christ and its Scout Master, Tom Luciani, who has been with the troop since 2004 as a leader. Serving under SM Tom are 5 assistant leaders including Ken Hulse, Nicenor Kohncke, Matt Welander, Gerry Case and our newest assistant Ryan White (an Oklahoma Eagle scout who is currently a student at University of New Haven). Other key volunteers in Robin Mooring, advancement chair, Daniel and SarahBeth DelPrete who manage accounting and camping sign ups, Kelly and Eric Orzel mum sale fundraiser coordinators, Marie Pedenski summer camp coordinator and many other parent volunteers who step in as jobs are needed to

be managed.

Incredible news is the troop has doubled in size in just 18 months. In September, 2022, there were 10 boys and as of May, 2023 there are now 21. This is an excellent showing considering the BSA challenges of competing with other groups, sports, school activities and various other commitments these young boys complete. Our scout members hail from Woodbridge, Orange, Bethany, New Haven, West Haven and Milford.

The troop fundraisers over the past year included their Fall mum flower sale, Christmas tree sale in conjunction with Troop 600 out of Hamden, and the spring "spruce up sale" with flowers and fertilizer.

Notable troop events over the past year include the June family picnic, Camp Sequassen (New Hartford, CT) summer camp, November holiday party, camping locally at Camp Whiting, a local ski night, camping at Camp Way Way Tasee in Hamden, and most recently being selected to participate in the West Point Academy, Cadet-run, Camporee on the grounds of West Point Academy, New York. The troop members also enjoyed their annual trek to the Wallingford Go-Kart night in celebration of their accomplishments and will be canoeing on the Connecticut River at the end of May.

The troop has participated in a multitude of service activities in the community with local churches and other organizations. In Woodbridge alone, the members assisted with the food drive, work clean up party at Camp Whiting, Our Lady of Assumption church bazaar, flag distribution in cemeteries, Memorial Day Parade honor guard, the FCC Strawberry Festival and pie a la mode fundraisers, and Woodbridge Trail clean up. The scouts have also assisted at Cub Scout Pack events and campouts as well as working with the Town of Orange

Lions Club Lobster fundraiser, BSA Order of the Arrow activities, volunteer hours at the World War II museum in West Haven and many other community related service projects.

The troop celebrated 3 Eagle recipients. Ben Rickel, Amir Faud and Jack Belfonti who are all graduates of Amity Regional High School and now finishing up their first year of college. Their projects included Ben's new flag disposal box with community board right here in Woodbridge Center, Amir built a bridge at the Wepawaug Conservation District in Orange and Jack beautified and created a natural tree barrier to residential homes on the Alice Newton Trail right behind our church.

As a troop and as individuals, the scouts continue to work on advancement ranks, merit badges, community service activities and will celebrate their yearend at their Court of Honor here at the church on June 10th. This is a very vibrant and active group who will continue to make a great impact on our communities and we all should be proud to be associated with this fine group of young men.

Strawberry Festival

Friday, June 9th, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. First Church of Christ, 5 Meetinghouse Lane, Woodbridge. The menu includes hot dogs, hamburgers, cheeseburgers & veggie burgers grilled by Scout Troop 907. Enjoy our tradi-

tional STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKES with fresh whipped cream. Tours of our historic church. Entertainment by Eventide. Children's activities include face painting, lawn games, sidewalk chalk art, music, and more. Cash or check only.

Zoom Option

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

Office Hours

The Church office in the Parish House is open from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday Wednesday Friday.

Join the FCCW Choir!

New members are always welcome. Join us for rehearsals each Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.

Pre-School Space Is Available

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

5 Meetinghouse Lane, Woodbridge, CT, 203-389-2119, office@uccw.org, www.uccw.org, www.facebook.com/uccwoodbridge

Annual Strawberry Festival at Bethany First Church

On Saturday, June 3, 2023, Bethany First Church is hosting its Annual Strawberry Festival. The festival will run from 10 am to 3 pm.

There will be dozens of craft vendors outside in the grove, along with some amazing gift basket raffles. There will be great fun for the kids with a huge bounce town, face painting and a visit from the pigs from Mad Mare's farm. There will also be a diaper drive, collecting donated diapers for the New Haven Diaper Bank. Bring a

pack to donate and get a free basket raffle ticket.

There will be great food available including burgers, hot dogs and the star of the event, Fresh Strawberry Shortcake. The shortcake sells out every year, so be sure to get yours!

For more information about this event, please contact the church office at 203-393-3116, infor@bethany-firstchurch.org or visit www.bethany-firstchurch.org or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/bethanyfirstchurch.

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WOODBIDGE EDUCATION ROUNDUP



Officer Lynch, the DARE officer, Chief Cappiello, Rotarians Dr. Neelima Kaushel, Chris Lovejoy and Karen Bellamy

DARE Graduation

The Woodbridge police department presented an 18 week DARE program to sixth graders at Beecher Road School. The students were tested after participating and their average score was the highest in the nation! Woodbridge Rotary purchased pizzas to help them celebrate!

APT Establishes Scholarship at Sacred Heart University

Amity PT has partnered with Sacred Heart University to establish an annual scholarship of ten thousand dollars (\$10K) for any student of the men or women sports team basketball team that is majoring in exercise science and/or pursuing a graduate degree in physical therapy.

Michael Dow, MSPT/Founder of Amity Physical Therapy commented, "As an alumni of both the undergraduate and graduate schools at SHU, as well as a former member of the men's basketball team years ago, I felt it was important to give back to the college. Without the experiences I got from SHU, I would have never developed the skills to become the physical therapist I am today, nonetheless to open my own practice, now with 5 offices.

"It is often hard to believe that it's been over 20 years, but I remember fondly the dedication it requires to obtain a degree in physical therapy while also sacrificing your time playing

a sport. The demands can be tough, but well worth it. The idea of the scholarship is to help minimize those demands, as well as promote the profession as a whole. Today's students are our future leaders."

Interested applicants should contact their respective coaching staff, as well as being recommended to Stacy Velarde in SHU alumni services.

Michael Dow MSPT, and CEO/Clinical Director of Amity Physical Therapy, founded the practice 18 years ago, and now has five offices in Woodbridge, Hamden, Branford, Milford and Wallingford. He received his degree from Sacred Heart University and is recognized by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for his work with the national Multiple Sclerosis Society. He works with patients of all ages, pediatrics to geriatrics, as well as local high school and college athletes. Michael can be reached at 203-389-4593 or visit amitypt.com.

STUDENT NEWS

Achievements

Quinnipiac University

Hamden, CT - Ephemina Nicolakis of Woodbridge, CT was inducted into Quinnipiac University's chapter of Lambda Pi Eta, the National Communication Association's official honor society, during a recent ceremony. To be eligible for induction, students must complete 60 semester credit-hours; have a minimum overall cumulative grade point average of 3.0; complete the equivalent of 12 semester credit-hours in communication studies; have a minimum GPA of 3.25 for all communication studies courses and be enrolled as a student in good standing, as determined by the institution's policies.

University of Pittsburgh

Pitt's Madelyn McCollough, of Woodbridge, Connecticut has been named a 2023 Fulbright Scholar. She is a student in the Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences pursuing a German language and cultural studies major with a sociology minor and a certificate in West European Studies. She will serve as an English teaching assistant in Germany.

Ten Pitt students and alumni have joined an esteemed group of scholars who have received one of the world's most lauded and prestigious awards from the Fulbright U.S. Student Program. The University's 2023-24

cohort of grantees includes current students and graduates from schools across campus, including the College of General Studies, the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences and the Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences.

Dean's/President's List Southern New Hampshire University

Manchester, NH - It is with great pleasure that Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates Tucker Saley of Woodbridge on being named to the Winter 2023 President's List. Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

Graduations University of the Cumberlands

Williamsburg, KY - It was another joyful graduation weekend at University of the Cumberlands as the campus hosted annual commencement ceremonies. Heidi Binford of Woodbridge recently graduated from University of the Cumberlands. Congratulations, Heidi!

Did You Know?

Despite global financial uncertainty, many people are still planning to spend on travel in 2023. A recent survey from Booking.com found that 73 percent of respondents were more optimistic about travel than they were in 2022. The survey also studied why people are looking to travel, and the most popular type of vacation was a nostalgic getaway, which 88 percent of travelers planned to take in 2023. That's likely due to people looking back to the days before the COVID-19 pandemic with a strong sense of appreciation. Individuals also seem to see travel through a somewhat therapeutic lens, as 42 percent of survey respondents indicated they want a break that focuses on their mental and physical health.



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MEMORIAL DAY

HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

HUMAN SERVICES



Left: Construction continues in The Woodbridge Center. If you are interested in attending The Woodbridge Center’s ribbon-cutting ceremony on June 21, please contact either The Woodbridge Center at 203-389-3430 or Woodbridge Human Services at 203-389-3429 for more information and to RSVP. **Right:** Dr. Leonard Bell receives his bi-valent booster during the recent COVID-19 vaccine clinic sponsored by CT Department of Public Health and Griffin Health. A second clinic will be held on June 1 from 2- 6 pm at the Center gym.

COVID Clinic: In partnership with Griffin Health and the Department of Public Health, there will be a second all-ages COVID - 19 vaccination clinic held in the Center Building gym on June 1. No appointments are needed - ages 6 months to 100+ are welcome. Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are available for both the primary series and the bivalent booster. The clinic will run from 2 pm to 6 pm. Please bring a health insurance card and a photo ID if you have them, but it is not necessary to have either to receive a vaccine. Check with your physician to see if you are up to date on your vaccines.

Living Treasure Committee Volunteers Sought: Human Services will hold the 5th annual Living Treasure event on September 14. The event honors residents age 60 or over who have demonstrated positive actions to improve the quality of life in Woodbridge, who have contributed and may continue to contribute their time to enhance our community, and who have performed this work on a volunteer, unpaid basis. Members of the community are welcome to join the event planning committee which meets during the months of June, July, August, and September. This event raises funds for The Woodbridge Center. Please call 203-389-3429 to volunteer.

Food Pantry: Residents in need may contact Human Services for access to non-perishable food each month. The food pantry is currently looking for donations of canola/olive oils, ground coffee and tea, baking mixes/ snacks, jams and jellies, crackers, salad dressing, deodorants, and laundry detergent. Kindly check all expiration dates prior to drop-off.

Volunteer Appreciation Event: The Human Services Department honored approximately 150 volunteers at the 33rd Annual Volunteer Recognition celebration. Many thanks to all receiving this honor for their dedication,



First Selectman Beth Heller, Human Services Commission Chair Susan Davidson, Woodbridge Center Director Kristy Moriarty, and Human Services Director Jeanette Glicksman stand with many of the award-winning volunteers at the Human Services Volunteer Appreciation event recently. The department honored the service of approximately 150 volunteers at the 33rd annual event.

their time, and their generous contributions to the Town of Woodbridge. The Human Services Special Recognition Award was presented to Barbara ‘BJ’ Ahern, the Surreybrook School, and the Woodbridge Recreation Commission. Outstanding Volunteers this year are Katie Behr, B. Patrick Madden, and Sheehan Munim. The Community Organization and Business Award was given to Bethany Fuel LLC, Boy Scout Troops 63, 907, and 410, and Whitney Rehabilitation Care Center. The Woodbridge Center Award was presented to Deb Urso of Hamden Rehabilitation and Health Care Center and the First Selectman’s Youth Award was presented to Jack Morrison. Congratulations to all these wonderful volunteers!

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

at 203-389-3429. The Department will provide outreach to all on the list prior to anticipated emergencies.

Hot Weather Safety: Too much heat is not safe for anyone, it is even riskier for older people and those with health problems. Please make sure children, older adults, and pets are not left outdoors or in cars for prolonged periods of time. According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), isolated seniors are often susceptible to heat exhaustion if they spend long periods of time in a very warm home, do not find ways to cool off, or do not actively hydrate. Additionally, the NIH advises, “older adults are more likely to have chronic medical conditions that affect the body’s response to temperature, and to take prescription medicines that alter the body’s ability to control temperature or sweat.” Hydration is a key element in averting heat exhaustion or even heat stroke as well as making sure air conditioning and/or fans are used

during hot days. One way to check for dehydration is to pull up the skin on the back of the hand for a few seconds; if it does not return to normal almost immediately, the person is dehydrated. The following tips are always a good reminder: drink plenty of liquids but avoid drinks containing alcohol and caffeine; Try to keep your home as cool as possible by opening windows overnight and keeping shades or curtains closed during the day; Dress for the weather using natural fabrics such as cotton; Do not try to exercise or do other outdoor activities when it’s hot. If you need help getting to a cool place, please call The Woodbridge Center Monday - Friday to arrange transportation at 203-389-3430.

Got Yarn? The Woodbridge Center’s craft group is looking for donations of new, clean yarn for projects they donate to Human Services and other agencies.

Services to Homebound residents: The library, in conjunction with the Human Services Department’s Friendly Visitor Program, offers delivery of library materials to the homebound. Through this program, library service is offered to residents who are 60+ as well as those who are disabled, temporarily disabled, or lack transportation to come to the library.

Residents may request books, large-print titles, audiobooks, magazines, CDs, and DVDs. The Senior Center arranges for delivery of the requested materials to homebound persons. The library now has no overdue fines and offers automatic renewals for items unless another patron is waiting for them. Contact the library at 203-389-3433 or askus@woodbridgetownlibrary.org if you are interested in these services even if you do not have a library card.

To reach Woodbridge Human Services call 203-389-3429 or 203-389-3415 or email humanservices@woodbridgetown.org

Woodbridge Youth Services News

BY NANCY PFUND



Left: Amity students and local seniors create sticker masterpiece. Right: Red Cross Babysitter Instructor AnnaMaria Mauhs suggests bedtime stories for children.



Left: Woodbridge Youth Services Director Nancy Pfund (left) with After-School Guided Study Teachers Meghan Saunders, Christine Campbell, Katie McCollom, Jeanne Ciarleglio, and Barbara (BeeJ) Ahern. Jack Morrison receives First Selectman's Youth Award for 2023. Right: Pictured from left to right are Woodbridge Youth Services Director Nancy Pfund, First Selectman Beth Heller, Winner Jack Morrison, Human Services Commission Chairperson Susan Davidson, and Beth-Wood Baseball President Dwight Rowland.

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 for Woodbridge residents to earn money. Youth Services provides an opportunity to learn about the interview process, safety on the job, and how to negotiate pay. Improve your communication skills and gain experience. Do yard work, babysitting, dog walking, etc. Call for an interview at 203-389-3464 or e-mail npfund@woodbridgect.org.

Job Bank Helps Residents

Woodbridge residents who wish to hire someone for odd jobs like babysitting, yard work, moving boxes, animal care, etc., save your energy and keep teens working to gain experience. Call 203-389-3464 for more information.

Collaborative Efforts at Intergenerational Program

Woodbridge and Orange Youth Services invited some Amity students along with Social Worker Nicole Bux-

ton and School Psychologist to visit the Human Services Department in Woodbridge recently to learn about youth, senior, and social services offered within the BOW tri-town area. They walked through each section of the department, visited the food pantry, and received resource information in a welcome bag.

A brief walk to the Woodbridge Town Library allowed the teens to meet some senior citizens who warmly greeted the students. The group worked together to create a beautiful sticker mosaic depicting Monet's Bridge. The poster contained over 3,900 colored stickers. Excitement ensued as the creation developed and the surprise masterpiece was completed. A delicious lunch and great comradery were enjoyed by all.

Home Alone Course Completed

Several students enjoyed the recent Home Alone class held for students ages 9 – 12. Woodbridge Youth Services Director Nancy Pfund presented information about safety, house rules,

and internet safety. Officer Vincent Lynch and Fire Marshal Joseph Capucci shared facts about handling emergencies, calling 911, and fire safety. Attendees received information packets to share with their parents.

Woodbridge Youth Services Holds Red Cross Babysitter Training

Instructor Anna Mauhs trained thirteen students in basic babysitting skills recently. Students spent two Saturday mornings in April listening, learning, and practicing new skills like diapering and feeding. Students are well-prepared to watch children and keep them safe while earning their own money.

After-School Guided Study Held at Beecher Road School

A guided study program was held at Beecher Road School for several weeks to aid students in organization and study skills and provide support with

homework. The program is funded by a state grant obtained through Woodbridge Youth Services who provided a pizza party for the hard-working students and deserving teachers. Teacher Katie McCollom coordinates the program at Beecher Road School.

Jack Morrison Receives First Selectman's Youth Award

Woodbridge First Selectman Beth Heller presented Jack Morrison with a town citation and a plaque for his community support at the recent Volunteer Appreciation Celebration held by Human Services. Woodbridge Youth Services Director Nancy Pfund presented the state citation while Beth-Wood Baseball President Dwight Rowland presented Jack with a \$200 check from the league.

Call 203-389-3429 or email npfund@woodbridgect.org or youthone@woodbridgect.org for information or to sign up for programs. Like us on Facebook: <https://facebook.com/WoodbridgeYouthServices.CT>.

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