

Woodbridge Town News



Woodbridge's Exclusive Newspaper

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FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2022



School Board Fetes Volunteer Extraordinaire

BY BETTINA THIEL

WOODBIDGE TOWN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Beth Cohen – one of the two Bs in B&B Transportation – recently retired from the position of bus route coordinator for the town and BOWA district (Bethany, Orange, Woodbridge and Amity).

“We must remember that for most of our students the school day begins and ends with a bus ride, but have you ever wondered how that component is coordinated for 850 students?” said Woodbridge Board of Education Chairman Lynn Piascyk when she officially announced the impending retirement with a heart-felt tribute at the September 19 Woodbridge Board of Education meeting. “The answer is Beth Cohen,” Piascyk said. “She’s a phenomenal leader,” she said, adding, “She leaves

me quite in awe about the size of the shoes I will be expected to fill.”

Cohen started working as a substitute teacher at Beecher Road School when John Ploski was school superintendent in Woodbridge in the 1980s. He was looking for help with the bus routes. “That was before I met Brad,” (the other “B” in the B&B team), Cohen said. “It was a need, so I kept on doing it” – for 35 years.

In fact, she has done this for the District as an unpaid volunteer. “It was a labor of love,” she said.

To illustrate what that means, Piascyk pointed to the fact that for 35 school openings Beth Cohen has been creating the bus routes for anywhere between 800 and 1,000 local students,

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Mary Welander



James Maroney

Voters Affirm Incumbents in Midterm Elections

BY BETTINA THIEL

WOODBIDGE TOWN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Woodbridge voters in the November 8 mid-term re-affirmed all incumbents to represent them, both at the state and federal level.

State Senators Jorge Cabrera (D-17) and James Maroney (D-14); and State Rep. Mary Welander (D-114), will all return to the state Legislature to represent the people of their district. Similarly, at the federal level, US Senator Richard Blumenthal (D) and Rep. Rosa DeLauro, (D-3) beat their respective challengers, giving Blumenthal a third six-year term and DeLauro her 16th term.

With a turnout of 65.8%, voter participation in the November 8 mid-terms was brisk. Most remarkable maybe was the number of new voters registering the day of the election – 49 this year; 637 voted by absentee ballot, of which 13 were rejected.

Early voting: Voters in Wood-

bridge also joined the rest of the state to authorize the General Assembly to work out an early voting framework. Statewide, 60% of voters supported the ballot initiative. In Woodbridge, 2,715 voted for, 1,155 against it.

House District 114: Incumbent Mary Welander (D) of Orange carried the district with 57.8% of the vote. In Woodbridge she got a total of 2,736 votes for a second term. The district extends into parts of Hamden and Derby. Her challenger, Woodbridge resident Daniel Cowan (R) received 1,370 votes, or 42.2% district-wide.

Cowan congratulated Mary Welander on her win, saying, “While the results are not what I expected, I am thankful for all the positive interactions I had in our community and the new people I met along the way.”

Senate District 17: Incumbent Jorge Cabrera (D) won the vote for a

See “Incumbents” On Page 10



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Don Menzies points out the history of the Quinnipiack chair, which will be on display at the Town Library. Below is a Robert Wiseman engraving of the Woodbridge Oak in its full glory.

Historical Society Unveils Quinnipiack Chair

BY BETTINA THIEL
WOODBRIDGE TOWN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

The Amity Woodbridge Historical Society, at its annual meeting on November 4, unveiled a notable donation it had received, namely the richly carved chair that once served as the President's Chair at the now defunct Quinnipiack Club in New Haven. The chair found its way back to Woodbridge, because its wood is believed to have come from the famous Woodbridge Oak, a majestic tree that was cut down in the late 19th century after lengthy controversy that drew attention well beyond the state lines. "An event like this [the return of the chair] doesn't happen very often," said Don Menzies, a member of the Histor-

ical Society's Board of Directors, when he and Barbara Hagan Smith unveiled the chair following the annual meeting in the Woodbridge Town Library's Woodbridge Room. The chair is intricately carved, with two regal Indian heads for finials, and displaying symbols of the Connecticut seal – three grapevines and an inscription of "Qui Transtulit Sustinet," (He who transplanted (us) sustains (us)). Menzies thanked town resident Paul DeCoster as "one who paid attention" and facilitated the connection with former Club president, Charles Nobel III, who chose to donate it to the Amity Woodbridge Historical Society.

See "Chair" On Page 4

“Volunteer” From Page 1

assuring that there is a seat for every child as well as a safe stop for buses to pick up and drop off students. “Each spring and summer, in preparation for the start of a new school year, Beth has traversed the roads of Woodbridge to plot out every single bus stop,” Piascyk said.

Piascyk also talked about the changes that have occurred over the years. In 1989, Beth and Brad founded and incorporated B & B Transportation. “It began with one bus and one contract but all the while Beth was creating the bus routes for all the owner-operators that serviced the Woodbridge School District.”

In 1996, the Woodbridge School District and the Bethany School District decided to utilize the resources of both districts’ transportation contractors which eliminated the need for double bus runs at both schools. “Then in May of 2001, the Woodbridge and Bethany boards of Education voted along with the Amity board to form a regional transportation system creating one of the first examples of shared services in the state of Connecticut, and Beth took on the task of chairing this Joint BOWA Transportation Committee. (Orange still has its own

coordinator, Cohen said). “Over the years Beth’s vision to create community bus stops allowed for transportation streamlining, which ultimately provided savings in the transportation budget,” Piascyk said. “Now you might think that once school begins Beth’s job becomes less demanding but that is far from the truth. Remember that when students move into the district after the first day, they too, must be assigned to a bus and sometimes this demands some creative thinking and resourceful planning. “I want to thank her for her mentorship, her sense of humor and her willingness to step up,” Piascyk said. “The English language has two little words that encompass all the above and more, and those two words are “Thank You.” When asked how she is going to fill her days after retirement, Cohen said, “I’m going to be sitting on my front porch.” Now the grandmother of 8, she is looking forward to spending more time with family, reading, enjoying some of the winter in Florida. Brad is continuing to run the company and she will stay involved in big-picture decisions. “I’ve been working since I was 15 years old,” she said. “I am looking forward to my retirement.”

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A Whole Lotta Heart

On Tuesday, November 8th, the Town of Woodbridge participated in a very important, consequential election. Voting is one important way that we can participate in our democracy. There are many to thank, as it takes a grand effort on the part of many to hold an election, especially one with such high interest and turnout. I first thank all the voters who were patient in line, respectful of the process and courteous to the election officials and other voters. Thanks also go out to the wonderful election officials...our Town Clerks, Registrars of Voters, poll workers, absentee ballot counters, police officers, and fire department volunteers. All of these folks worked very hard to make sure our election was conducted efficiently, smoothly and most importantly, according to the law.

As I mentioned last month, “**Woodbridge Like Me Day**” was a huge, largely-attended, successful event last month. This event, and others, are sponsored by the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee (DEI). If you recall, I created our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee in 2020, in response to the horrific events surrounding the tragic murder of George Floyd at the hands of the Minneapolis police. Many of us watched in anguish the systemic racism, particularly the pattern of needless and senseless acts of violence that also took the lives of many people.

I looked back at my remarks prior to the day in Woodbridge when we held a Black Lives Matter Rally in 2022. My remarks included, “*I think we have reason to hope that things will change. There is a new burst of energy, a protest movement across this country and beyond our shores, in cities and towns in all fifty states, a movement that crosses racial, ethnic, political and generational differences, a movement that binds us together by our common humanity, a movement poised to inspire new policies and new*

From the First Selectman BY BETH HELLER



legislation. Martin Luther King said, “The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.” I think Dr. King believed that the arc doesn’t bend toward justice on its own. That is our responsibility, and that is why we are here today.”

At our November 8th Board of Selectmen meeting, our DEI Committee gave the Board an update on their activities. I am so proud and grateful that our DEI Committee continues this movement toward justice. I thank each member of this most important group for their efforts on behalf of diversity, equity and inclusion.

Our annual Veteran’s Day ceremony was held this year (after a two-year COVID hiatus) at 11 am on Friday, November 11th in the Center Gym. Masks were required, and in the interests of safety, the doors were open, and we asked folks to dress warmly. Everyone in our Town was invited to join this beautiful ceremony. I was so moved by the remarks from our elected State officials and pastoral attendees, as well as the lovely voice of our soloist. The Soufrine family donated a wreath in memory of their son Eric. The wreath was placed at the Lieutenant G. Bronson Bedworth Veterans VFW Memorial monument in front of the Center Building. The Police Department did a masterful job as well, as part of the honor guard. President John F. Kennedy once said, “As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.” On behalf of the residents of Woodbridge, I extend our gratitude and pledge to never forget our veterans. Our Human Services Department is available to

our veterans and their family members who have questions or need help accessing veteran services.

Recently I met with representatives from the Regional Water Authority (RWA) at the Community Gardens at the Fitzgerald property, to explore using a possible RWA grant to connect water to the gardens. There are several ways to accomplish this, and if it happens, it will also follow the same procedures we used for water at the Dog park, where the Community Garden members pay the water bills directly and are responsible for the water spigot etc. We are now exploring ways this might be done, and I will keep you up to date on new information that is received.

The Board of Selectmen received many letters of support for keeping the Beecher Road School pool up and running (as soon as possible), beginning with the first step of replacing filters and associated piping. This pool was built in 1972, which makes it fifty years old. Board of Selectmen members are working to make a decision on next steps.

Once again, I am pleased to announce that we have been notified that our annual comprehensive financial report for the fiscal year which ended on June 30th 2022 has once again qualified for the *Government Finance Officers Association Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting*. This award is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting. I know this is awarded every year to Woodbridge, because we do this so well, but let us take a moment to thank our esteemed Finance Director Tony Genovese, our

Finance Department members, and our Board of Finance. This is truly a significant accomplishment, and we are so proud of all of you!

Our police officers and dispatchers will be participating in the annual “No Shave CT” fundraiser, in which they are permitted to grow beards during the month of November to support cancer prevention, research, and education. Again, this year, it is being conducted in conjunction with the Connecticut Cancer Foundation, with all proceeds to benefit CT cancer patients. On December 3rd, the Woodbridge Police Department will be conducting its annual “Stuff A Cruiser” holiday toy drive in the D’Andrea’s Plaza parking lot from 9 am to 3 pm to benefit the CT Special Olympics and the Toys for Tots programs. The event will be held in conjunction with Starbucks, Katz’s Deli, and the Micro-Creamery, and donations of new, unwrapped toys will be accepted.

Additionally, our Woodbridge Volunteer Fire Department members will once again be collecting unwrapped, new toys at the firehouse (100 Center Road) for the Yale New Haven Hospital Toy Closet. Santa and Mrs. Claus will be at the firehouse on Saturday, December 17th from 10 am to 2 pm. Many thanks to all our fire department volunteers!

Finally, at this time of Thanksgiving, I send my deepest appreciation for all of you in our wonderful Town of Woodbridge. Working with all the Town employees, and meeting with so many residents over the past year, has been a great opportunity for me. I am truly thankful and profoundly privileged to be your First Selectman. As always, do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions or comments. You may reach me by email at bheller@woodbridgect.org or by phone at 203-389-3401. Wishing you and your friends and family a safe happy Thanksgiving holiday.

“Chair” From Page 2

The Woodbridge Oak, standing proud at the intersection of Center and North Pease roads during the second half of the 19th century, was famous in its day – second only to the Charter Oak, according to Menzies – for its size and presumed age. There were many urban legends attached to the Old Oak, both in local lore and in the national press of the time.

It was said to be 3,000 years old (Menzies, “probably not”); Washington and Lafayette were thought to have dined under its branches when they marched through (they never did); the Regicides Goffe and Whalley were said to have climbed its branches to look out for those seeking revenge (“probably not”), and it was said to be the witness to many young love stories (most likely, yes).

Even the New York Times took note in 1889 of the tree’s demise, writing

that the tree “is being now made up into chairs for the Quinnipiack Club and for individuals who have been fortunate enough to place their order.” The company entrusted with the order was Palmer & Embury of New York City.

Prior to the tree being cut, the Quinnipiack Club had developed a special stewardship of the tree, which was most likely due to its erstwhile president, Nehemia Sperry, and his connections to the Woodbridge Sperrys. In 1882, the Club formed an offshoot, the Quinnipiack Oak Tree Association, and an auxiliary. It was this auxiliary that arranged for a grand celebration under the tree in October of that year, replete with speeches and flags. The shindig drew attention far and wide, Menzies said. Even James English, a prominent New Haven businessman and former state Governor, was cited as saying that “the women of Woodbridge put together one of the best country sup-

pers anyone could remember.”

The chair will be permanently displayed at the library, Menzies said, probably elevated on a platform, so people don’t inadvertently sit on it.

In addition to the chair, the Historical Society also displayed two canes made from the wood of the Old Oak. These were donated by local families, the Beisiegel and the Razee families. Tim Razee Wilkins, whose grandfather later built a home at the intersection, was in the audience.

Menzies also took the occasion to read from a letter written in 1945 by George Hubbel to Elizabeth Kunz Beecher, whose father had owned the land where the tree once stood – describing his recollections of the “Oak Tree Feud.” Three of Hubbel’s descendants also were in the audience, Georgiana Hubbell Sorensen; her sister-in-law, Carol Hubbell; and Fanny Lou Hubbell Fossberg.

Back in the 1880s Jacob Kunz –

Elizabeth’s father - still owned 2/5 of the tree, with the rest being owned by the town. And Kunz and the town’s leaders could not agree on whether to take it down.

Hubbel saw the seeds for the conflict in the “ink slinging” members of the press, who at the time of the aforementioned picnic had told Mr. Kunz about plans to erect a fence and a tent on his property. Surprised and concerned, Mr. Kunz began “to assert his independence and ownership,” Hubbel wrote. And when a few years later the town came to him about taking it down, he said “No.”

“The town officers left, (Ho! Humming) and what to do? - Send a diplomat,” Hubbel wrote. That diplomat was Hubbel’s own father. He and Kunz came to an agreement that saved face. “I said I would not cut that tree down, and I won’t, Kunz reportedly said. “But you may cut it, Doctor, and I will help remove it.”

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Woodbridge Town News

Below are the final issue date & deadline of the Woodbridge Town News this year. Thank you for your submissions to Your Home Town Newspaper.

Upcoming Issue Date	Issue Deadline
December 16 Holiday Issue	December 9

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

FROM OUR READERS

Special Amity Board Meeting Highlights a Lack of Transparency

On Monday October, 24th there was a Special Board meeting at Amity High School for the purpose of voting on a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) ‘mission’ statement, a vote that board members were ill equipped to take due to a lack of transparency by the administration.

Three different Board members complained to the Superintendent about not receiving information in a timely fashion. Not being able to make decisions without all the information seemed to be a recurring theme. One Board member pointed out how she had asked the Superintendent repeatedly for an overview of DEI initiatives and never got an answer. Another Board member was distressed by the lack of transparency and how information was not distributed in a timely fashion for board members to be able to make decisions.

At this meeting a diverse group of 13 speakers -- consisting of current parents, past parents, students, alumni, and community members -- all spoke against the use of DEI in the curriculum. They all spoke from varying perspectives as to why using DEI as a Social & Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum was a poor choice that emphasizes differences rather than commonalities creating more rather than less racism. The board minutes that were circulated after the meeting described each public comment in vague and neutral terms, obscuring the facts and true sentiments expressed by members of the community.

The proposed DEI mission statement is lacking in transparency. It

uses vague statements that attempt to incorporate DEI concepts without defining what those concepts mean. There has been little information shared as to the impact of DEI on curriculum. For example does ‘Equity’ mean that the goal is to make sure that all students end up with the same outcome, regardless of individual potential, skills, and efforts? Shouldn’t we be supporting “equal opportunity” rather than “Equity”? Shouldn’t we as parents, teachers, and students be having that discussion with the administration rather than having policy dictated?

Policy Violations: A review of Board minutes/packets of all meetings since December 2018 did not include any evidence of the DEI curriculum being presented to or approved by the board. According to policy P9132.3, “It is the responsibility of the Board of Education to establish and approve curricula for the District.” Failure to do so is a violation of school policy. The Superintendent brought in consultants to train staff and faculty on DEI from April 2019 through May 2022 at a cost of \$98,319.64, beginning the implementation of DEI without board approval. The administration then hired a DEI coach, again without board approval of DEI curriculum.

As the board began their discussion that was going to lead to a vote on accepting or modifying this draft document, the fire alarm bell went off and everyone had to leave the school.

This lack of transparency by the administration to both the Amity Board of Education and to the community at large does not serve us well and needs to change.

By Dr. Reena Seltzer

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.

In the last issue of the Woodbridge Town News, we incorrectly identified the third place female winner of the Woodbridge Road Race. Her name is Ava Ruszkowski and we congratulate her on the accomplishment.

DID YOU KNOW?

An Attitude of Gratitude

WE'RE CHOOSING NOT TO
WRITE ABOUT SOMETHING
LEGAL THIS MONTH.

With Thanksgiving fast approaching, we can't help but take a moment to reflect on all that we, as a firm and our families personally, are grateful for this year. So, we'd like to take a moment to say thank you from our family to yours!

We know these are just two simple words, but they carry a deep sense of gratitude we have for everyone we have been fortunate enough to know and help over the past year. We wouldn't be where we are today without our amazing clients, wonderful network of advisors, or the support of our friends and family.

We hope that each and every one of you have a wonderful holiday, however that may look for you this year.

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Seiter Selected as Hamilton College Writing Center Tutor

Brian Seiter, of Woodbridge, has been chosen to serve as a tutor in the Nesbitt-Johnston Writing Center at Hamilton College for the 2022-23 academic year. The Writing Center was established in 1987 to help all Hamilton students strengthen their writing abilities.

Writing Center tutors are trained to review such aspects of student work as clarifying ideas, developing a thesis, organizing stages of an argument, and strengthening specific language. They work with their fellow students on any type of writing at any point in the process, from brainstorming potential topics or arguments to polishing a final draft.

Nominated by faculty members, those chosen as tutors must demonstrate strong writing skills and relate well to their peers. They are consid-

ered to be among the best students at Hamilton. In a typical year, Writing Center tutors conduct approximately 3,000 conferences.

Seiter, a junior majoring in history and public policy, is a graduate of Hopkins School.

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OPINION

From the Democratic
Town Committee

BY ELLEN SCALETTAR
WDTC CHAIRMAN



Election Day 2022 – Woodbridge
Shows Its Patriotism

Patriotism is “devotion to one’s country,” and there is no more patriotic act than exercising our right to vote. It has been said that voting is the language of American democracy.

Here in Woodbridge, we can be proud of the robust turnout on Election Day. The high percentages were pretty consistent among Democrats, at 71.67% (of 2633 eligible voters), and Republicans, at 72.76% (of 1160 eligible voters).

We are also proud of our Woodbridge neighbors who run our elections with integrity and dedication. They meticulously follow all applicable laws, rules and procedures and they work together in a faultless, non-partisan way. I think I can speak for all Woodbridge residents in expressing our gratitude to:

- › Town Clerk **Stephanie Ciarleglio**;
- › Democratic Registrar of Voters **Pennell Hamilton**;
- › Republican Registrar of Voters **Anna Dickerson**;
- › Democratic Deputy Registrar of Voters **Alison Valsemis**;
- › Republican Deputy Registrar of Voters **Javier Aviles**;
- › Head Moderator **Pat Madden**;
- › Absentee Ballot Moderator **Mary Lee Barker**;
- › Moderator **Leslie Lyons**;

and the many other poll workers who made our Election Day process run without a hitch!

Many of us didn’t realize that there were 3 separate voting operations going on simultaneously. At the Center Gym, there was the highly organized in-person voting, divided as required, into 2 districts (the 14th and 17th state senatorial districts). In the library meeting room, registrars set up Election Day Registration, where 49 new voters registered and were able to vote. They included new citizens and young people voting for the first time. And at Town Hall, another group of trained staff were receiving absentee ballots delivered by the Town Clerk, following the careful inspection procedures, and feeding the ballots into the tabulator.

Another remarkable aspect of voting here in Woodbridge is our IVS voting machines. These machines allow voters with disabilities to fill out their

ballots with dignity, privacy, and ease. The technology allows for touchscreen voting and button switch voting, provides an audio version of the ballot for visually impaired voters, and more.

Standing outside the polling place at the Woodbridge Democratic Town Committee tent, we welcomed friends old and new, children and babies. We could feel the sense of community that is so important in our Town.

The results of the election were heartening as well. There were stark differences between the values and goals of the Democratic and Republican candidates. The strong margins of support for the entire Democratic slate meant supporting public education and our teachers and librarians; guarding the private relationship between women and their doctors; believing in science and the need to address climate change; enacting common sense gun laws; protecting Social Security and Medicare, and respecting the dignity and the rights of all people. And the State Constitutional Amendment that would expand voting opportunities through early in-person voting passed handily.

Congratulations to Governor Lamont and all the State Constitutional officers: LG Susan Bysiewicz, Secretary of the State Stephanie Thomas, Attorney General William Tong, Comptroller Sean Scanlon, & Treasurer Erick Russell; US Senator Richard Blumenthal and Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro; and State Representative Mary Weland, State Senator Jorge Cabrera and State Senator James Maroney!

We are grateful for these outstanding public servants. And as we think about giving thanks, the Thanksgiving holiday is just ahead. I want to remind you about the annual Thanksgiving Interfaith Community Service that this year will be held at the First Church of Christ on Meetinghouse Lane. It will be on Monday, November 21st at 7PM, with a reception immediately following the service in the Church parish hall.

If you are interested in learning more about the Woodbridge Democratic Town Committee, please get in touch with us by emailing us at: communications@woodbridgedems.org or visit our website: woodbridgeCTdems.org.

Other Side of the Aisle

BY CHUCK PYNE
WRTC CHAIRMAN



Ignore The Man Behind
the Curtain – At Our Peril

As I read the last edition of my counterpart’s column, it struck me there was a topic disappointingly missing from the piece – Woodbridge. All the Democrat national talking points were there - pro-choice, gun laws, climate change, etc. Even Donald Trump was mentioned. Trump? How in the world does a former President impact the important issues of Woodbridge? Spoiler alert – he doesn’t. The balance of the article is then a long list of Democrat candidate websites. Not a lot of thought about or attention to Woodbridge. And that, my fellow Woodbridge residents, is precisely the problem.

To be quite direct, nearly every major challenge we face as a town is courtesy of Democrats. This is a fact. The Country Club of Woodbridge was purchased under the leadership of a Democrat Board of Selectmen. Yes, there was a town vote that favored the sale – but it was pitched as how we could save the property as open space, which would be a great benefit to the town. Successive Democrat leaders have advocated solely for the property’s development. The result is a controversial eyesore. They even refused to allow residents to vote on the open-space-minus-10-acres proposal of the Woodbridge Land Trust and Woodbridge Park Association. More controversy than benefit, all under Democrat leadership. Now, with the specter of that property being a target for affordable housing, this situation, too, lies at the feet of our one-party rule. The state law that has Woodbridge at the center of the housing controversy, was written, passed and strengthened by Democrats. Again, fact. There is no evil Republican influence doing these things to us, it’s all Democrats.

Another recent issue is the Amity Board of Education not returning surpluses to the three towns, as has been the practice for years. There was zero effort to continue the practice or a willingness to legally defend the practice if challenged. It is being driven by a Democrat majority on the Amity Board which has zero Woodbridge Republican representation. We don’t seem to mind having the 7th highest mill rate in the state, but that feeling may change when the new Amity stu-

dent census reveals that our share of the Amity budget is going up. These important issues, my fellow Woodbridge residents, are the “man behind the curtain” and if we ignore how badly they are being handled, we’re in for continued failures in leadership.

Laying out facts such as these has been criticized as “talking down Woodbridge.” Quite the contrary. It’s how serious leaders correctly and transparently identify important issues. Failure to do so is Pollyanna and demonstrates either a lack of awareness or skill to positively address and solve them. Which brings me to our recent election and an issue that should back our Democrat leadership into a corner created by their own voters.

The majority vote in favor of “early voting” was clearly along party lines, with Democrats overwhelmingly supporting it, right down to the “Vote Yes” lawn signs prominently displayed in front of the Democrat party tent outside the polls on Election Day. Fine, majority rules and we go from there. But let’s not overlook a similar Woodbridge issue: how our local Democrat leadership has stubbornly refused to call for a Charter Revision Committee to examine any proposal to make the vote on our town budget an all-day, go-to-the polls referendum. As those of us who have endured our annual town meetings know – if you are not in your seat at precisely voting time, yes, that one hour of the whole year – you don’t get to vote. No way to square the enthusiasm for early voting with its antithesis – one hour, on a weekday, or you’re out of luck. This is hypocrisy, not democracy.

It is no secret that what happens in Woodbridge today from a local government perspective is decided within the ranks of the local Democrat party. Their public comments, press releases, newsletters and articles ignore, spin or gloss over crucial challenges we face. A good place to start to right the ship, driven by the November 8 referendum results, is a Charter revision effort. Amending the way we approve our budget is one of many positive changes we can make – all it takes is the Democrat majority on the Board of Selectmen to get the ball rolling and let the process play out transparently.

OPINION

Amity Budget Surplus and Costs Are Reasonable and Compare Favorably with Peers

Common Questions About the Amity Budget and Surplus (Part 2 of 2)

DR. K. SUDHIR

AMITY BOE AND AFC MEMBER

Over the last few years, many articles complained that the Amity budget surplus is too high, with high cost to the taxpayer. This is the second of a 2-part article to address common questions and clarify misconceptions about the surplus. The first part with 3 questions was published last month.

1. What was Amity’s surplus this year? How did it compare with previous years?

The surplus for FY 21-22 was \$1,536,234, much lower than in previous years. An important reason for the lower amount this year is that medical claims were close to what was budgeted. During COVID, staff postponed health visits and treatments, leading to higher unspent amounts in the claims reserve. Also, during the COVID years, the school district operated fewer activities; hence costs were lower than budgeted.

As health insurance claims vary much more than school expenses, a larger reserve (surplus) is needed to cover health insurance claims. In the future, administration will report school-expense-related surplus separately from medical insurance surplus/deficits. This will help taxpayers evaluate the budget surplus better.

The opinion pieces in the town news complain that even this year’s surplus is high. Can you explain why we have a 1.5 million surplus this year? Is this surplus necessarily bad for taxpayers?

The term “surplus” suggests that more money than needed was budgeted. This is not true; the term “unspent funds” is perhaps more accurate. The three main drivers of this year’s unspent funds are:

1. Salary savings (about 20%, 300K): New staff or replacements take time to hire, so there are periods in which allocated budgets are not used;
2. Grants and cost savings (about 20%, 300K): Administration obtains grant money for budgeted items, found cheaper bids and more cost-efficient ways to solve a problem;
3. Special Education (about 60%, 900K): This is the biggest chunk. The number of students and their needs vary considerably across years; so costs are hard to forecast. Further, there is room to optimize costs during the year (e.g., by efficiently grouping students for services and transport) after student needs are known. Services may be moved in-house or outsourced as appropriate. The district should be commended for optimizing costs and finding cost savings.

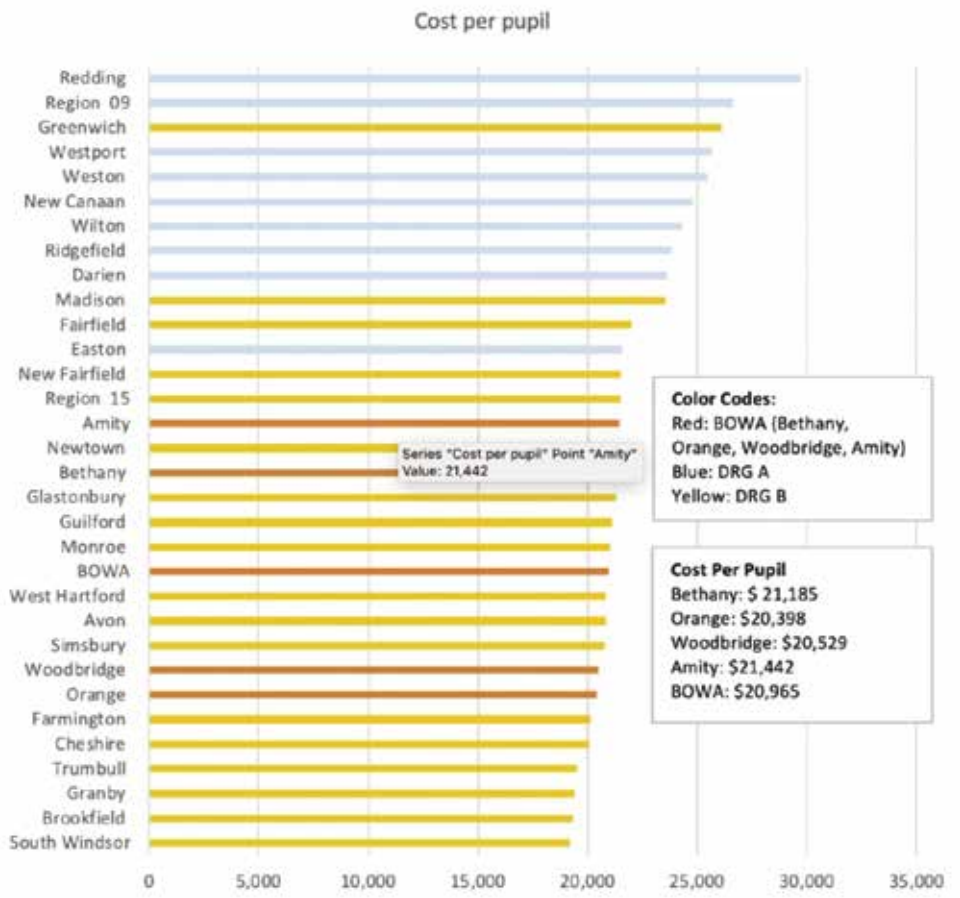
Overall, after a detailed analysis, we found that the unspent funds did not arise from over-budgeting; it arose from savings due to (1) vacant unfilled positions; (2) effective use of grants even after budget was approved; and (3) efficient cost minimization. Also note that over 60% of the surplus is from Special Education, where spending variability is high.

Finally, remember that the cost of “surplus” is at most the interest on it and not the entire amount, as unspent funds are used to reduce next year’s expenses. Further, taxpayers **should want** the administration to aggressively discover cost savings, even if it increases “unspent funds” (surplus) for the year. This is because such cost savings in one year often also reduce costs in future years.

The board’s goal is ALWAYS to minimize total taxpayer cost, WITHOUT compromising on the educational mission. It should NOT be to minimize the surplus. A single-minded focus on reducing surplus will hurt taxpayers because it disincentivizes the administration to find cost savings and grant money after the budget has been approved.

2. I am a regular taxpayer---I don’t understand budget details and processes. Just tell me, how do Amity’s costs compare to other schools in CT?

CT groups school districts into tiers called District Reference Groups (DRG) based on their socio-economic profiles. The nine high-income districts of Fairfield County are DRG A. Amity, Orange and Woodbridge are in DRG B, as part of a group of 21 school districts. Bethany is in DRG C. The graph shows the average cost per pupil across DRG A and B districts and Bethany.



Notes: Region 15: Middlebury–Southbury; Region09: Easton–Redding.
Data source: WalletHub. The cost per pupil data is based on state guidelines to compute cost per pupil and helps cost comparisons across districts. It is not equal to Budget/Number of Students.

Overall, the average cost per pupil in the BOWA system–Bethany, Orange, Woodbridge and Amity (highlighted in red), range from \$20,398 (Orange) to \$21,442 (Amity). The BOWA system (combining Amity and elementary districts) average is \$20,965; it falls between West Hartford and Monroe. Overall, the cost of schools within the BOWA system is towards the lower end of the distribution.

Note that it is more expensive to educate middle and high school students relative to elementary school students, as they have more course and extra-curricular offerings. So, it should be expected that Amity will have higher cost per pupil than the elementary schools in Bethany, Orange and Woodbridge. It is gratifying that Amity’s cost per pupil is even below many school districts that combine elementary, middle and high schools.

Given Amity’s overall high rankings (10th out of 117 CT school districts by Niche. Com), Amity gives excellent value to the taxpayer in terms of great outcomes at mid-range costs.

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LOCAL BUSINESS

Coldwell Banker Realty Offices Hosting Food Drive

The Coldwell Banker Realty offices in Orange and Woodbridge are hosting a FOOD DRIVE through November 18th. Giving back to the community is so important every day, but especially during the holiday time.

Non-perishable food items and other requested items are needed such as paper goods, including toilet paper, paper towels, tissues as well as soap, toothpaste, shampoo, conditioner, body wash, pads/tampons, etc. These

donations will be benefiting the Community Champions Network on behalf of Orange Community Services, CT Food Bank and Food2Kids.

Drop off boxes will be in the front reception area of each of the offices. The Orange Office is located at 236 Boston Post Road. The Woodbridge Office is located at 270 Amity Road.

For more information about the Food Drive collection, please contact Aileen DeFeo at (203) 795-6000.

HEALTH & FITNESS

Positional Vertigo: The Lowdown on Dizziness

BY WARREN RODERICK

Despite our own familiarity or experience with dizziness—whether it be a game of Dizzy Bat or lightheadedness when quickly rising from bed—there is still great misunderstanding in regard to different kinds of dizziness and what may be the physiological cause of each. In other words, it is common for such symptoms to be placed under the same broad umbrella, thus making accurate diagnosis and the ensuing treatment a murky process. Perhaps the most misunderstood or misused term associated with this feeling is “vertigo,” which is often used as a generic diagnosis to put a name to what the patient is experiencing. However, in reality, “vertigo” is not a diagnosis at all, nor should it be used as a blanket term for dizziness, regardless of what may be causing it.

In reality, vertigo is described as a SYMPTOM rather than a diagnosis or disease. What differentiates the vertigo symptom from that of more generalized non-descript dizziness is that of a very profound spinning sensation of the patient’s body and/or the room they are in at the time. Once it is confirmed that a patient is indeed experiencing vertigo, it becomes the task of us therapists to determine the source via our specialized assessment and testing.

Among the most treatable of these diagnoses within the Physical Therapy scope of practice is that of Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo, simply known as BPPV. BPPV is characterized by a pathology in the canals of our inner ear, or the balance center of our nervous system. More specifically, it is the displacement of calcium crystals that line the inside of the utricle—or the area located at the base of the canals—that causes the symptoms we have come to associate with “vertigo. These crystals, known as canaliths, are tasked with telling our brains the position of our head, thus allowing it to send signals to the proper muscle groups that help us maintain balance.

However, these crystals may occasionally become dislodged from their proper place, whether it be from a high-impact trauma or natural degradation due to aging. Once displaced from the inner wall of the utricle, certain movements or postures may



Warren Roderick

cause the crystals to migrate into one of the three canals where they don’t belong. This improper migration causes misleading signals to overwhelm the brain, eliciting a strong spinning sensation accompanied by rapid involuntary movement of the eyes TOWARD the problematic ear, known as nystagmus. By intentionally placing patients in these problematic positions, we as therapists can confirm or rule out issues with the inner ear—or vestibular system—as the cause of a patient’s symptoms.

In confirmed cases fitting these criteria, a corrective maneuver can be done, in which the patient is placed through a specific sequence of postures in order to move the displaced crystals out of the canal that they’re stuck in and BACK to their proper home—the utricle. If done correctly, this sequence should result in nearly immediate cessation of the patient’s dizziness. Comprehensive patient education on proper posture and correct body mechanics can help minimize or eliminate recurrence of episodes going forward.

Warren Rodrick, DPT, is a Physical Therapist and Site Supervisor of our new Wallingford location. Warren has worked with Amity PT since graduating from University of Hartford with his Doctorate of Physical Therapy in 2015. Working with patients of all ages and ability levels, Warren prides himself on his commitment to their goals and providing the individualized care they need. To set up an appointment to see if your Glutes are up to par, contact us at 203-626-5330 or visit amitypt.com.

Town of Woodbridge Meetings for the Month of December 2022



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

12/1	BRS Capital Projects8:30 AM Boards of Finance & Selectmen Joint Mtg	6:00 PM
12/5	Town Plan & Zoning Commission.....6:30 PM Recreation Commission7:00 PM Human Services Commission7:00 PM	Town Hall Beecher School So.
12/7	Housing Committee.....7:00 PM	Town Hall
12/8	Community Council.....9:30 AM Economic Development Commission.....6:00 PM	Town Hall Town Hall
12/12	Library Commission6:00 PM Police Commission.....6:15 PM Zoning Board of Appeals7:30 PM	Library Police Dept Town Hall
12/13	Gov’t Access TV Commission7:30 PM Agricultural Commission7:30 PM	Town Hall
12/14	Board of Selectmen5:00 PM	Town Hall
12/15	BRS Capital Projects8:30 AM Board of Finance.....6:00 PM Conservation Commission.....7:30 PM	Town Hall Town Hall
12/19	Fire Commission6:00 PM	
12/20	2030 Task Force6:00 PM	Town Hall
12/21	Community & Cultural Ctr. Bldg. Cmte. 4:00 PM Diversity & Inclusion Committee.....6:30 PM Inland Wetlands Agency.....7:30 PM	Town Hall Library Town Hall

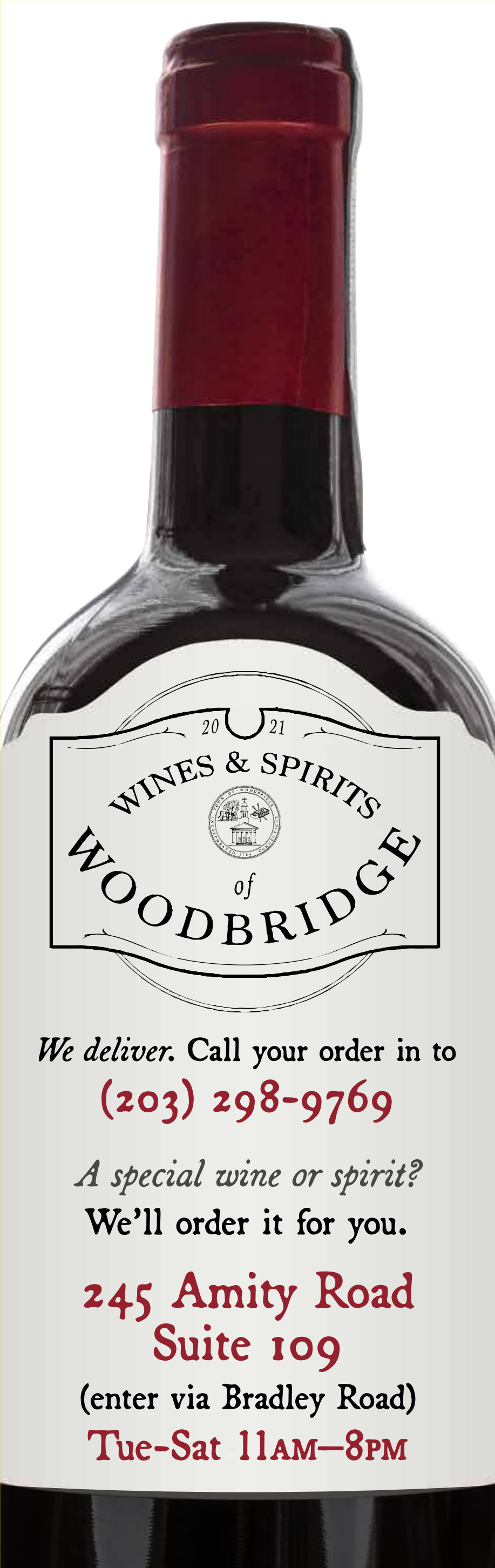
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Jorge Cabrera

“Incumbents” From Page 1

second term. He carried the district, which encompasses parts of seven towns from Derby to Naugatuck, by 54.7%. In Woodbridge, he received 2,264 votes.

His challenger, Kathy Hoyt (R), received 1,259 votes. In an email to voters, she expressed her conviction that the Republican message of safety and affordability had resonated with people across the district. “We’ve continued to show there’s a better alternative for policy,” she wrote.

Senate District 14: Incumbent James Maroney (D) won a third term in a district that encompasses Orange, Milford, and parts of Woodbridge and West Haven. He carried the district with 55% of the vote. In Woodbridge, he received 445 votes.

These were the Woodbridge results in detail:

For Governor and Lieutenant Governor

- › Ned Lamont and Susan Bysiewicz – (D) 2,737, Griebel Frank (9), Working Families (56);
- › Bob Stefanowski and Laura Devlin – (R) 1,439;
- › Robert Hotaling and Stewart Beckett (I) – 34;
- › Michelle Louise Bicking and Cassandra Martineau (write ins) – 0.

For US Senator

- › Richard Blumenthal – (D) 2,728, (Working Families) 85;

- › Leora Levy – (R) 1,415;
- › John Anderson (write in) – 0;
- › Shabadjob Bharara (write-in) – 0.

For US Congress, Third District

- › Rosa L. DeLauro – (D) 2,735;
- › Lesley DeNardis – (R) 1,415;
- › Amy F. Chai – (I) 89;
- › Justin Paglino – (Greens) 20.

For State Senate, District 14

- › James Maroney – (D) 422, (I) 23;
- › Kim Marie Mullin – (R) 260.

For State Senate, District 17

- › Jorge Cabrera – (D) 2,155, (I) 55, (Working Families) 54;
- › Kathy Hoyt – (R) 1,259.

For State Rep., 114

- › Mary Welander – (D) 2,618, (I) 58, (Working Families) 60;
- › Daniel Cowan – (R) 1,496.

Secretary of the State

- › Stephanie Thomas – (D) 2,602, (Working Families) 86;
- › Dominic Rapini (R) – 1,450;
- › Cynthia R. Jennings – (I) 71.

Treasurer

- › Erick Russell – (D) 2,511, (Working Families) 75;
- › Harry Arora (R) –1,527;
- › Jennifer Baldwin – (I) 86;
- › JoAnna Laiscell – (Libertarian) 8.

Comptroller

- › Sean Scanlon – (D) 2,544, (I) 80; Working Families (62);
- › Mary Fay – (R) 1,507.

Attorney General

- › William Tong – (D) 2,697, Working Families (83);
- › Jessica Kordas – (R) 1,389;
- › AP Pascarella – (I) 35;
- › Ken Krayeske – (Greens) 25.

Judge of Probate

- › Clifford Hoyle – (D) 2,635, (R) 1,482.

Registrar of Voters

- › Pennell Hamilton (D) – 2,552;
- › Anna Dickerson (R) – 1,626.





Gratitude for All Who Support Massaro Community Farm

2023 CSA Registration Now Open

Thank you to the more than 300 families who subscribed to our vegetable and egg CSA programs in 2022! We welcomed many new customers in 2022 with the flexibility of 10-week shares, subscribing online and paying with EBT cards.

Registration for the 2023 CSA season is now open. While we've been able to keep our share prices flat for the last five years, customers will see a slight increase for 2023 reflecting the farm's increased cost of supplies. 2023 prices are \$405 for a 10-week flexible share and \$745 for a 20-week share. We are still offering a tiered pricing in order to make the CSA accessible at various price points. Fruit and egg shares are available again as add-ons, and you can choose to pick up at the farm, or at District in New Haven. At the farm, you can take advantage of u-pick crops like cherry tomatoes, peas, green beans, flowers and herbs, when available. The farm now accepts EBT cards as payment for fruit, vegetables, eggs and our jarred products. Purchase your subscription online using our new third-party platform, GrownBy, or call the farm office at (203) 736-8618 to arrange to swipe your EBT

card during normal business hours.

The farm is also offering pre-sale farm sweatshirts, turkeys and special Thanksgiving produce bundles. Turkeys and produce bundles will be available for pickup on Monday, November 21. Sweatshirts will be delivered before the Christmas holiday. Small produce bundle: \$37. Large produce bundle: \$75. Turkeys: \$30 deposit with balance due at pickup based on final weight.

Final Workshop of the Season

Register now for Wool Felting taking place on Saturday, December 3 from 10:00am-12noon. This class will be led by Valley resident and crafter, Kayleigh Mihalko, who will instruct on making either a snowman or polar bear. All supplies included. Only 12 spaces available. The class will take place in the barn rain or shine. Please dress for cooler weather; masks are optional. \$30/pp. Tickets are available on Zeffy.com or you can find the link on our website.

Farm Volunteers

The farm just wrapped up its official volunteer hours for the season. Every Wednesday throughout the spring,

summer and fall, garden crusaders came out regardless of heat, rain or cold and clipped weeds and vines off fences, moved rocks, planted, harvested, carted mulch and much more. The farm also welcomed corporate volunteer teams from Citizens Bank, Elevant, The Henkel Group, Newtown Savings Bank and Daily Harvest. We are incredibly grateful to all volunteers for maintaining the Learning Garden, Valley community gardens and perimeter spaces on the farm. Anyone interested in becoming an animal care volunteer should contact the farm office at (203) 736-8618 or send an email to education@massarofarm.org.

Program Participants

Looking back on the season, we wish to express our gratitude for all those who participated in programs and attended farm events demonstrating the farm's role as a vital member of the community. From animal care to summer camp to Dinner on the Farm and everything in between, we were happy to bring you many opportunities for farm engagement for those aged 5 – 95. This year, Dinner on the Farm raised over \$21,000 in support of the farm's food donation efforts.

Farm programming will take a little

break over the holidays and return with School Vacation Days and Winter Rangers shortly after the New Year. Please visit our website and sign up to receive our bi-weekly newsletter for new offerings as they are listed.

Board Members

In spring of 2022, we bid adieu to long-time board member, Cathy Wick. Cathy serviced as both treasurer and vice president during her 11 years on the board and contributed greatly to the farm's fundraising efforts. We thank her for her dedicated service to the mission of the farm.

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

Ansonia Nature Center Events

The Llove Llama and Friends

Sunday, November 20, 11:30 a.m.

Monica Talbot-Kerkes, local author and llama mama at Rowanwood Llama Farm in Sandy Hook, will be reading the first book "the Llove Llama Travels the 7 Continents" in her Mom's Choice Gold award-winning children's book series The Llove Llama and Friends. Join the Llove Llama as she travels the world, and continent looking for her best friend in her fantastic adventure around the world! Teaches about geography and animals with real animal facts and photos. Fun activities will be included! Llamaste!!!! To register email us at ansnaturectr@ansoniact.org.

Winter Wreath Workshop

Saturday, December 3, 10 a.m.

Celebrate winter and the festive season as you create a wreath from fresh locally grown greens, then decorate your masterpiece with natural trimmings. Enjoy some warm mulled cider and a cookie too! Wreath frames and wire will be provided. Please bring

your hand clippers. MATERIALS FEE: \$15. To register for this limited space program, please email ansnaturectr@ansoniact.org.

Game Night

Friday, December 9, 7 p.m.

After the building is closed and the animals are asleep, join us for a fun-filled night indoors playing a variety of games. Whether you're a tabletop veteran or new to board games all are welcome. Ages 12 and up. (Teens do not have to be accompanied by an adult.) Bring your snacks, and be prepared to chat, mingle, and relax! Visit our website ansonianaturecenter.org for more details on the game line-up. FREE. Register in advance at ansnaturectr@ansoniact.org.

Storytime and Creature Feature

Saturday, December 10, 11:30 a.m.

Join Ms. Jenn from the Ansonia Library to hear a story called The Mitten. Come see the amazing creatures who use special adaptations to

adapt in the winter months. FREE

Animal Tracking

Sunday, December 11, 1 p.m.

Ever wonder where the animals go in the winter or what type of wildlife you might have in your backyard? Join ranger Jeremy to learn all about our local wildlife. Together we will walk the trails and discover clues and evidence of our local species. Dress for the weather and wear appropriate shoes. Age 12 + Adult, FREE. Register at ansnaturectr@ansoniact.org.

Oozing Oobleck

Tuesday, December 27, 11:00 a.m.

Join Lisa from the Regional Water Authority for this water science program. After reading Bartholomew and the Oobleck by Dr. Seuss, the children will explore the properties of different liquids and whether those properties change when materials are combined to make oobleck. FREE Ages 6 and up. Register at ansnaturectr@ansoniact.org.

Ongoing Programs

Sunday Guided Hikes

Sundays, 1 pm

Join a Nature Center guide on Sunday afternoons for fun, exercise, and learning. See the above listings for hikes with a specific theme. FREE.

Saturday Creature Feature

Saturday, 12 pm

Come to meet our furry, scaly, and feathery animal ambassadors. You'll have a chance to touch and hold them in this FREE family program for all ages.

Monday Morning Hikes

9 am

Hike the Ansonia Nature and Recreation Center trails for a positive start to your week. Come and learn about the history and ecology of the land while Ranger Dan, our Assistant Director, leads this weekly hike on our beautiful nature preserve. We will begin promptly at 9:00 am. Dress for the weather and conditions. No pets, please. FREE. Please register in advance at ansnaturectr@ansoniact.org.

AT THE WOODBRIDGE CENTER



Left: Sarah Mach shares Whitney Rehabilitation Care Center’s offerings with Julianna and Jim Baker at the Spooky Sponsor Social on October 27. Whitney Rehab co-sponsored the lunch (with Coachman Square at Woodbridge) for over 85 participants at the festive, annual event. **Center:** Debbie Schlegel, Gisele Chona, and Rebecca Lavi of the Holli Shanbrom Team, Coldwell Banker Realty, get in the Halloween spirit greeting attendees, Michele and Paul Madonick, at the Spooky Sponsor Social on October 27. **Right:** Participants enjoy creating beautiful autumnal luminaries at this craft workshop provided by Deb Urso of Hamden Rehabilitation and Health Care Center.

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

Facebook: Follow us on Facebook (The Woodbridge Center, Woodbridge CT) for current updates and local information. Look for fun programming photos as well.

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.

Sharing Gratitude

With November being a month to reflect on all we are thankful for, we would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of The Woodbridge Center, to thank the local businesses for their ongoing support. There have been several challenges of late due to the pandemic and not having a designated senior center space. The generosity of these local businesses and agencies, coupled with the flexibility of other Town departments, have enabled The Center to increase our services during this difficult time.

We would also like to thank the “older adults” of the community who are the heart of The Center. The positivity and support you spread to each other, from your kindness within, are both admirable and contagious.

This web of support makes The Center the treasure that it is. We look forward to the near future when we can further expand on our offerings, while supporting the community to come together and safely socialize, in the beautifully renovated Center.

We wish each of you a Happy Thanksgiving and hope you all have the opportunity to reflect on what you are thankful for as well!

-Kristy and Jessica

COVID-19 Guideline Update at The Center

Masks will be required for all indoor Center programming and events when New Haven County is at a “high” level based on the CDC’s tool for monitor-

ing COVID-19 in the community. For the safety of others, please stay home if you have symptoms of COVID-19, have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, or if you tested positive for COVID-19.

Please note: There will be no programs, activities, or events the week of December 23 through January 2.

Sponsored Lunches For Woodbridge Residents Over 60 Years Of Age

Holiday Drive-thru Luncheon: Celebrate the Holidays with The Center at this festive drive-thru on December 15, from 12–1pm, generously sponsored by The Rotary Club of Woodbridge! Pick-up a delicious meal of stuffed chicken breast, mashed potatoes, and fresh roasted vegetables, provided by Lasse’s Catering, to be heated and enjoyed at home with mini pastries for dessert. Please RSVP by December 8. Quantity is limited to the first 100 people that register.

Upcoming Events/Programs

Lunch & Learn: Fight Back Against Cardiovascular Disease! Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States. Join Becket Gretchen-Harrison, cardiology PA and founder of Hearts at Home, for a presentation to learn how to reduce the risk of developing heart disease and how to reclaim quality of life living with it. This informative program will meet December 2 from 11:30am–12:30pm in the Library Meeting Room. Please remember to RSVP 203-389-3430. Lunch will be provided.

Gnome Wine Topper Craft: Come make adorable gnome, winter, or holiday themed, wine toppers to give as gifts or to keep for yourself. All supplies are provided. This program is sponsored by Hamden Rehabilitation and Health Care Center and will meet on December 15, from 11am–12pm in the Library Meeting Room. Please RSVP.

NEW Date - Lunch and Learn: Conservatorship, Guardianship, and

Supported Decision Making: This workshop, presented by Drazen Rubin Law, provides information on navigating the complicated world of special needs planning including key benefits and available resources as well as power of attorney, estate planning, financial considerations, and more. RSVP to enjoy lunch while attending this presentation on December 14 from 11:30am–12:30pm in the library Meeting Room.

Christmas in London: Although you may not be able to experience it in person, come take part in a lovely virtual visit to experience Christmas in London complete with delectable British treats. This immersive experience, sponsored by Hamden Rehabilitation and Health Care Center, will take place on December 16 from 11am–12pm in the Library Meeting Room. Please RSVP.

Exercise: Not sure if a class session is right for you? Try a complimentary class first! Hybrid Aerobics Class with Laura Richling: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10–11am in the Center Building gym and on Zoom. Enjoy a complete aerobic, cardio, and strength training work-out to a variety of music. Bring your own 1-or 2-pound hand weights, if you have them, to use during the class. There is a \$3 fee payable at the start of class or invoiced monthly for Zoom participants. Please call for the link.

Pickleball: Monday through Friday, 12:30–3:30pm, in the Center Building gym. New players please call to register. All levels are welcome. Call for more information. There is an annual fee of \$20 for residents, \$25 for non-residents.

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

Hobbies/Social

Bridge: Wednesdays and Fridays, 1–4 pm in the library Meeting Room.

Craft Group: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10am–12pm, in the Woodbridge Room of the Library. Bring your current knitting, crocheting, or needle-point project to work on while enjoying a lovely time socializing.

Painting for Pleasure with local artist Carole Abbate: Mondays, 10am–12pm, in the library Meeting Room. Create your own paintings as Carole helps inspire beginners to intermediates to paint with acrylics or watercolors. Paint the subject of your choice-bring in a note card or photo for inspiration. No experience necessary. Call to sign-up for this 6-week, \$36 class.

Pinochle: Wednesdays, 1–4pm and Thursdays, 1:30–4pm in the Center Building, room 16.

Services Offered

(For Woodbridge residents only)

Tech Tuesday and Thursday, 2:45–4:15pm: Need help navigating your computer, laptop, tablet, or smart phone? Call to sign-up for a 1:1 session in The Center’s computer lab with patient, knowledgeable, Amity High School student volunteers. No charge.

Computer Lab: Multiple computers and laptops are located in room 11 of the Human Services hallway which is open Monday - Friday, 10am–2pm. Two-person limit in the computer lab. Printing is available (first 5 pages free). Preregistration is required.

Transportation: Those over the age of 60, 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 9:00am–4:00 m. Vehicles are cleaned between each use. Masks are required.

Meals: Healthy, well balanced, flash frozen meals for \$5.25/meal are available. Order by noon on Monday

See “Woodbridge Center” On Page 18

TOWN DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES

HUMAN SERVICES



Boy Scout Food Drive: Many thanks to Woodbridge Boy Scouts of America Troops 63, 907, and 410 for their efforts to plan and execute a remarkable food drive to benefit the Food Pantry at Woodbridge Human Services. Special thanks to Scout Master Bill Nardini and Aron and Ben Smith for their wonderful organizing of this event. This is also a reflection of the VERY generous residents of Woodbridge who donated over 3,500 pounds of non-perishable food which will help their neighbors this winter. The department also acknowledges the adult and student volunteers assisting with the task of sorting and shelving all this food by date and category.

Energy Assistance Program: Qualifying residents may schedule an appointment to apply for the 2022-2023 CT Energy Assistance Program administered by TEAM, INC. For more information regarding this program, please call Judi Young at 203-389-3429.

Needed! Medical Loan Closet: Transport chairs and regular wheelchairs, in good working order, are needed for the Medical Loan Closet. Please contact Human Services to donate.

Emergency Preparedness: In the event of a weather emergency or power outage, elderly residents and those with disabilities are encouraged to register for the Emergency Call List by calling the Human Services Department. Please make sure to have flashlights, batteries, food, and water

for all members of the household on hand- including pets-as we head into the winter months.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA): Tuesdays, 9 am - 12 pm, VITA is a free tax preparation service available to low-income individuals, people who have a disability, those who speak limited English, and qualifying seniors. For a list of required documents and to schedule an appointment, call 203-389-3429. The program will begin February 7 and run through April 11 at the Woodbridge Human Services Department. Services will once again be provided both virtually and in-person.

Food Pantry: Residents in need may call for access to non-perishable food each month. Donations of non-perishable, non-expired foods are accepted. Please call 203-389-3429 for more information.

Masks available: Contact Woodbridge Human Services if you would like to pick up either a few medical or KN95 masks. There is no charge for masks. Please no walk-ins.

Seasonal Giving: If you would like to donate to the Resident Assistance Fund (RAF), or the Holiday Basket program (HBP), please make checks payable to Woodbridge Human Services and indicate RAF or HBP on the memo line. Donations of gift cards for groceries or area shopping are also requested. Many thanks to the residents and businesses who have already donated.



Youth Services

BY NANCY PFUND



Officer Lynch talks about emergencies with students at the Youth Services Home Alone Class.

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>

Welcome to our New Program Coordinator



New Youth Program Coordinator
Jami Joy Gibson

Woodbridge Youth Services welcomes new Youth Program Coordinator Jami Joy Gibson. She is a New Haven, CT native who has her bachelor's degree in Psychological Science from Vassar College, and is presently working towards her master's in social work at SCSU. She spent her last two years working as a math teacher for a middle school. Jami Joy loves to spend time with her family watching movies and cooking. She also loves to sing in her spare time and is excited to work on programming for youth in the community. Please feel free to call or email Youthone@woodbridgect.org to

welcome her and share your thoughts for the future of Youth Services and its programs.

Holiday Cookie Decorating and Craft

For Amity Middle School Students: Winter is approaching, so join us to get into the spirit on Friday, December 9, from 2:30 to 4:00 in the AMSB West Cafeteria. Use your creative flow as you decorate yummy cookies, listen to music, and make a fun winter craft. Fee is \$5.00 and includes donuts and hot chocolate. Call now to sign up. 203-389-3429. Permission form and advance payment required.

Toys 4 Kids

Youth Services is collecting toys for the TEAM Toys 4 Kids program which benefits several families in our area. Collection boxes are in the Woodbridge Public Library and by the Woodbridge Center Gym. Call Youth Services with questions. Toys are due by 12/7 and will certainly bring some smiles to kids for the holidays.

We Care Kits

Students and community members can help people in need by placing items in large gallon size bags for the homeless. Anything that could create more comfort for someone including warm hats, gloves, mittens, underwear, socks, water bottles, healthy snacks, gift cards for food/coffee, and small toiletries are appreciated. We approve community service hours for students. Donations of items like blankets or pillows will also be accepted for a homeless shelter.

See "Youth Services" On Page 18

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 volunteers, meet in person each Saturday morning.

On December 2, and every First Friday of the month, BEKI's Kabbalat Shabbat service is kid-friendly, though not specifically a children's service.

BEKI's annual children's Hanukkah party will be Wednesday, December 14. For more information, contact Education Director Annie Norman-Schiff at anormanschiff@beki.org.

Book Talk on Jefferson

On Saturday, November 19 Robert Forbes will discuss his new book, an annotated edition of Thomas Jefferson's "Notes on the State of Virginia." In the first edition to be based on both the 1785 first edition and the original manuscript, Prof. Forbes uncovers Jefferson's extensive revisions, situating the work in the context of transatlantic debates over slavery and shedding new light on Jefferson's shocking disparagement of African Americans. Details at beki.org

Violin & Guitar Concert



By popular demand, violinist Ilana Zaks will return to present "Dances for Two" with guitarist Barbie Matthews on Sunday, December 4. Now a student in the Master of Musical Arts program at the Yale School of Music, Zaks has been described as a "fearless, refreshing and commanding" performer. Recent awards include: at Yale, the Broadus Erle Prize for Outstanding Violinists in May 2022, and at Fontainebleau Schools, France, the Ravel Competition in July 2022.

Matthews is a classical guitarist currently pursuing her Master's Degree at Yale, where she studies under virtuoso guitarist and composer Benjamin Verdery. Details at beki.org

Talk on Anti-Zionism

Corinne Blackmer, a professor of English and Judaic Studies at Southern Connecticut State University, will



Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel

discuss her recently published book "Queering Anti-Zionism," which focuses on academic freedom, LGBTQ intellectuals, and Israel/Palestine Campus Activism, on Saturday, December 10. Details at beki.org.



Enemies into partners

Rabbi Hanan Schlesinger and Noor Awad will speak on Saturday, December 17. Colleagues from Shorashim/Judur/Roots, they will share stories about their work with this Israeli/Palestinian grassroots initiative for understanding, nonviolence and transformation.

This program is made possible by members of the BEKI community, with support from the Jewish Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven. Details at beki.org.

Hanukkah Events

BEKI will offer a Hanukkah sing-along with a light dinner and s'mores on Sunday, December 18. The Connecticut Z'mirah Chorale, directed by Dr. Kevin Mack, will perform at BEKI on Tuesday, December 20.

In Person and Online

BEKI offers in-person services twice daily, led by Rabbi Eric Woodward and congregants. Weekday services also are on Zoom. To request the Zoom link, email office@beki.org.

Healing Service

Rabbi Woodward will lead a Kabbalat Shabbat healing service on Friday, December 16, and on the third Friday of each month.

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

Congregation B'nai Jacob Happenings

Weekly Services & Classes

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: ShabbatSchmooze: 6:00pm; Services: 6:30pm
- › Saturday: Bread & Torah: 9:00am; Services: 10:00am
- › Bread & Torah Saturday Mornings: 9:00am-9:45am

Meet in the B'nai Jacob Library (or join us on Zoom) 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.

Woodbridge Community Interfaith Thanksgiving Service

Monday, November 21 at 7:30am

Hosted this year by The First Church of Christ, Meetinghouse Lane, Woodbridge

Please join us for this beautiful service. Co-sponsored by Congregation B'nai Jacob, First Church of Christ, and Our Lady of the Assumption Church.

Shir Hadash

Saturday, December 10 at 9:00am

A songful, prayerful, soulful service led by Cantorial Intern, Kochava Munro, and Rabbi Shapiro. We use the power of our music and kavanah of our words and hearts to make God's presence manifest. A mini-Kiddush will be served following the service.

Prayerful Shabbat Morning Walk on the Blue Trail

Saturday, December 24 at 8:30am (weather permitting)

Join Rabbi Shapiro for a thoughtful, prayerful, meditative walk on the Blue Trail. Meet behind the church in Woodbridge Town Center. Wear comfortable walking shoes!

Rabbi Shapiro's



Congregation B'nai Jacob

Monday Night Class

God is Here: Reimagining the Divine

With this book as a guide, we will explore how we use metaphors in language generally and in speaking about God in particular, and discuss eight metaphors the Bible frequently uses to talk about God and how those metaphors might be useful for us. If you would like to get clearer about what we might mean when we say, "God," and cut through some of the ideas about God that are often unhelpful, this is a great class for you. Please get a copy of the book and read the introduction and the first chapter before the first class. All are welcome; no previous experience is necessary.

Class Schedule: Mondays, November 28, December 5, 12. Class will meet in person at CBJ and on Zoom

Guest Speakers

Dr. Becca Levy, Professor of Epidemiology, Yale School of Public Health and Professor of Psychology, Yale University

Saturday, December 3, Shabbat Lunch and Learn, 1:00pm at B'nai Jacob

Breaking the Age Code

CBJ member and pioneering researcher on the psychology of aging, Dr. Becca Levy, draws on her ground-breaking research to show how age beliefs can be improved on an individual and societal level so they can benefit aspects of the aging process, including the way genes operate and the extension of life expectancy by an average of 7.5 years. All ages of our community are invited for an interactive discussion of this work as Dr Levy challenges us to reconsider

See "B'nai Jacob" On Page 15

Woodbridge Town News

ATTENTION CHURCHES, SYNAGOGUES,
AND HOUSES OF WORSHIP!

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

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

HOUSES OF WORSHIP EVENTS

Orange Congregational Church Happenings

Orange Congregational Church invites you to join us for worship Sundays at 10 a.m. in our Sanctuary on the corner of 205 Meeting House Lane and Orange Center Road. You can also view our livestreamed services online at our “Orange Congregational Church, UCC” YouTube page. Church school for children Kindergarten through 6th grade takes place in-person during worship, and fellowship and coffee hour follows afterward. We also have a crib room for babies and toddlers on Sunday mornings. Our Senior Choir leads us during worship and our Handbell Choir performs monthly.

Our next concert in the 2022-23 Music on the Green series will be a traditional “Christmas Handbell Concert & Carol Sing” on Sunday, December 4, 2022 at 4 p.m. in our Sanctuary. Our talented church Handbell Choir leads the popular annual Christmas Concert prior to the Town Green tree lighting ceremony. The members will play five octaves of brass bells and complimentary handchimes. The audience joins in singing some favorite carols and holiday songs. Christmas cookies from



Orange Congregational Church

our annual “Cookie Walk” will be available for sale in the lower level before and after the concert. Admission is free. Please visit orangecongregationalchurch.org for more information on our worship, faith formation, and music programming.

The church office can be reached at 203-795-9749 and is open weekdays from 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. We are an Open and Affirming Congregation, which means we welcome all people into the full life and leadership of the church regardless of race, class, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, or family type. No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here!

“B’nai Jacob” From Page 14

our own beliefs about aging and our experiences with structural ageism. CBJ member Kinneret Chiel, who participated in a cultural redefinition group that is profiled in the book, will join us to add her valuable perspective.

This book will make a wonderful Hannukah gift. Thanks to Dr Levy’s generosity, we will have some copies available in the office that will support the synagogue and offer you a discounted price. Please also feel free to buy online or support your local bookstore.

Elisa Bernick

Sunday, December 11,
10:00am on Zoom

**Departure Stories: Betty Crocker
Made Matzoh Balls (and other lies)**

Join Award winning Writer and Journalist, Elisa Bernick, on Zoom, for a discussion of her newest book, *Departure Stories*. The book ponders the ways marginalized individuals find themselves defined, and who and what we hold accountable for the worst and best parts of ourselves. Written with wit and dynamism, the book explores

the long-term effects of intergenerational trauma using the two definitions of departure — leaving and deviating from the norm — to explore the author’s experience of growing up “different” (i.e., Jewish) in the White Christian suburb of New Hope, Minnesota, during the early 1970s. The question at the heart of this book is how the invisible baggage of place and memory, Minnesota’s uniquely antisemitic history, and the cultural shifts sweeping the country during this tumultuous period contributed to her family’s eventual implosion.

Unless otherwise noted, all services, classes and events are in person at B’nai Jacob, located at 75 Rimmon Road, Woodbridge. All services are also live-streamed and some are on ZOOM. Call the B’nai Jacob office for digital access and more information 203-389-2111 or email office@bnaijacob.org.

For more information about any of these events, or becoming a member of B’nai Jacob: Call 203-389-2111, Email: office@bnaijacob.org, Visit our website, bnaijacob.org.

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Congregational Church Holds Christmas Carol Sing, Cookie Walk

The annual Christmas Concert and Carol Sing resumes this year at the Orange Congregational Church on Sunday, December 4th at 4:00 p.m. Friends from the community are welcome to join singing as we share the most loved songs of the season. Between the carols, the Handbell Choir of the Orange Congregational Church will play some holiday selections on their five octaves of brass bells. Bryan Campbell, the church’s Music Director, will lead the event and play the sanc-

tuary pipe organ. From twelve noon through the afternoon and concert time you are invited to participate in the Music Committee’s Christmas Cookie Walk in the lower level of the church and select homemade cookies for \$7 a box. Upstairs, there is no charge for admission to the Christmas Concert. The festivities precede the Town Green tree lighting ceremonies out of doors. For more information, visit orangecongregationalchurch.org or call 203-795-9749.

Holly Fair at Christ Episcopal Church

Save the date! The Annual Pumpkin and Holly Fair will be held at Christ Episcopal Church, 526 Amity Road, Bethany (at the blinking light) on Saturday, November 19 from 9 am-2 pm. Get goodies for the holidays at our fabulous bake sale, beautiful Christmas

decorations, Twice as Nice clothing bargains, jams, jellies, pickles, and cheddar cheese direct from Vermont.

Take your chances on gift card trees and baskets. And enjoy lunch at our cafe, either eat in or to go. Hope to see you there!



The Holy Infant Church Women’s Guild recently had a wine and cheese social. They collected a lot of warm hats, gloves, scarves, and socks that will be donated to the Battered Women’s Center in Ansonia.

HOUSES OF WORSHIP EVENTS

Temple Emanuel Hosts Annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service

Temple Emanuel of Greater New Haven will host the annual Orange Interfaith Thanksgiving Service on Sunday, November 20, at 7 pm.

Every year, clergy and congregants from many of the houses of worship in Orange come together to celebrate Thanksgiving with a family-friendly service full of music and readings representing the spirit of Thanksgiving that is common to all faiths. Participants this year include: Congregation Or Shalom, Holy Infant Church, Orange Congregational Church, Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church, Saint Joseph of Arimathea Church and Temple Emanuel.

The musical portions of the service will be performed by a small group from the Temple Emanuel Band. We are unable to have massed choir this year - instead, the entire congregation will be invited to



Temple Emanuel

sing along with the band and the officiants.

All members of the greater New Haven community are invited to attend this special service.

Temple Emanuel is located at 150 Derby Avenue (Rt. 34) in Orange. For more information about this and other services and events at Temple Emanuel and for remote access to services, please go to the TE website, www.tegnh.org.

HOW TO MAKE A CHARITY A BENEFICIARY

Giving to charity can be a rewarding endeavor that makes a difference in the lives of people in need. Many people donate throughout their lives, and some people may want to impart a more lasting legacy by continuing to support a charity even after they have passed away.

Incorporating a charity into an estate plan is a great way to continue giving after you pass away. Individuals may not know how to make charities beneficiaries in their wills. A financial planner, attorney or accountant can answer the more complex questions individuals have about naming charities as beneficiaries in a will. In the meantime, this general guide can serve as a solid foundation for individuals who want to give back in their wills.

Most people think of beneficiaries as loved ones, but a beneficiary can be any person or entity one chooses to leave money to, including nonprofit organizations. It's relatively the same process to name a charity as a beneficiary as it is an individual. According to the resource Trust & Will, first identify the charity that will be supported, including getting its Employer Identification Number or Taxpayer Identification Number. Next, determine which type of gift to make, which may be a predetermined financial contribution, a gift of property, or other assets like stocks. For large donations like real estate or cars, it may be best to contact the charity in advance to ensure they are able to accept such gifts. Finally, be sure to include your wishes in an estate plan. A qualified attorney can help clients draft a will that spells out their wishes in detail.

Keep in mind that charities also can be named as beneficiaries on life insurance policies or individual retirement accounts. They also can be listed on bank accounts. Again, people are urged to discuss all options with estate planners to ensure their plans fully reflect their wishes.

When naming a charity as a beneficiary, it can be wise to inform family members and other beneficiaries so no one is caught off guard upon your death. This way the charitable gift is not held up by delays in executing the will.

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.

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. We are honored to have such an extraordinary individual here with us at First Church!

Upcoming Events

Classical Concert on a Fall Afternoon: On Saturday, November 19th, at 4:00 p.m., the Woodbridge First Church of Christ will be hosting a concert in its sanctuary, 5 Meetinghouse Lane, Woodbridge, featuring Music Director Nenad Ivočić on piano and Filip Tomić on cello.

A reception will be held afterwards in the parish house to meet these musicians. For more information, call the church office, 203-389-2119. A free will offering will be taken.

Children's Sing and Say "Thanks": How can we sing and say thanks in the season of Thanksgiving? Join us for a family-focused event of songs, words, and games for children of all ages! Sunday, November 20 from

2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

- › Songs by Michele Urban (Singer, songwriter, performer and Early Childhood Music Specialist)
- › Practicing appreciations at home by Susan Murtha (Interim Senior Minister, FCCW)
- › Games for children of all ages by Forest Vandeflor (Project Leader for Children's Ministries)

Interfaith Thanksgiving Service: The First Church of Christ, Woodbridge, will host this year's annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service on Monday, November 21, at 7:00 p.m. It is a wonderful tradition that welcomes the greater community, and everyone is encouraged to attend. There will be a reception immediately following the service in the church parish hall. Join us in starting Thanksgiving week in the spirit of gratefulness.

FCCW Trimming Bee and Tree Lighting: Saturday, December 3, from 2-6 p.m. Help us Deck the Halls! If you would like to donate greens, please contact Jesse Hubbard: jwin-hubb@gmail.com. No Hemlock please! Greens Needed: yew, spruce, juniper (red cedar), holly, pine, and fir. There will be a potluck dinner immediately following the trimming bee in the Parish Hall. Once the wreaths have been

made, we will gather outside for a few Christmas Carols as we light the tree on the green.

December 11 – Outdoor Community Carol Sing



December 18 – Outdoor Children's Pop-up Christmas Pageant at 4 pm in front of the Parish House.

2022 FCCW Christmas Stocking Project: FCCW will again be conducting a Christmas Stocking Project for the benefit of children in New Haven. Christmas Bags will be available for pick up daily, in the Parish House, starting at 9:00 AM, Sunday, November 20, and must be returned by Sunday, December 11 at 12:00, noon. Details for filling a bag will be with the bag when picked up. This has been a successful program of our church for many years, and trust that we will

again make the Christmas wishes of a few children, come true.

Weekly Bible Study: Bible Study meets at the Parish House each Wednesday, 10:30 am. All are invited!

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

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


Office Hours: The Church office in the Parish House is open from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday through 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.

For More Information: Visit our website at www.uccw.org for resources such as our calendar of events, monthly newsletter, ministry and volunteer opportunities, photo galleries, scout info, and much more! Follow us on Facebook and stay up to date with parish happenings, including memorials and baptism announcements. Feel free to email us or call the office with all your questions. We are happy to hear from you!

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Find The Right Volunteer Opportunity For You

Giving back to one's community can provide a sense of purpose and improve an individual's overall well-being. Data from Volunteer Hub indicates that people who volunteer improve their health by strengthening their bodies, improving their moods and reducing stress. Volunteerism also produces additional benefits, including boosting one's positive perception to others. A study from CareerBuilder found 60 percent of hiring managers see volunteerism as a valuable asset when making recruitment decisions. Furthermore, human resources executives attest that contributing to a nonprofit can improve leadership skills.

By understanding the value behind volunteer work — for the people or organization on the receiving end as well as the volunteer — more individuals may decide to donate their time and services. However, finding the right



volunteer opportunity may take some trial and error. The following are some tips for finding the right fit.

Consider skills and interests. Before choosing a volunteer opportunity, make a list of activities that you enjoy. This may help guide volunteer choices. For example, if you like hiking, you may volunteer to clean up a local park.

Assess your skill levels. Is there something you are particularly adept

at doing? For example, if you are a certified public accountant, you may be able to volunteer by mentoring young accounting students, or doing taxes or bookkeeping tasks for the elderly or less fortunate.

Think about commitment level. Figure out how much time you can spend volunteering. Maybe you only have the weekends or a few hours in the evenings? Understanding how much

free time you have can help you choose opportunities that fit within these parameters.

Research potential organizations. Not all nonprofit groups are created equal. Utilize resources such as CreativeVolunteer that vet charitable groups to determine if they are trustworthy.

Define your goals. Have goals in mind when selecting opportunities. Defining a goal can help you maintain the motivation to volunteer and see a project through to completion.

Start small. Wade into a volunteer opportunity slowly to see if it is the right fit. This may include volunteering one day a week or month. Increase the time you spend volunteering once you've found the right place for you.

Volunteering can bring joy to a person's life, especially when individuals find an inspiring opportunity.

TOWN DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES

Recreation News



Beecher Road School Pool Update

The pool at Beecher Road School was closed September 3 for its regularly scheduled annual maintenance. While addressing normal maintenance, several issues were uncovered that require repair. The Town is working toward identifying the repair costs, and to determine if a phased reopening is possible.

For your convenience while the pool is closed, all individuals with existing pool memberships may use the JCC pool or the Orange Town pool. Simply, show your current membership card at either pool.

The Recreation Department will continue to provide updates and the status of pool reopening as information becomes available. In the interim, please do not hesitate to contact the Recreation Office with questions, concerns, or comments at 203-389-3446 or recreation@woodbridgect.org.

Summer Concert Performers Wanted

Summer Concert Performers—

Musical acts interested in performing for the 2023 concert series, please contact the Recreation Department Office in December and January. New acts interested please send a website link, to the Woodbridge Recreation Department at recreation@woodbridgect.org. Previous applied acts can just send an email to reactivate your application. If anyone would like to recommend an act for the summer concert series, please contact the Recreation Dept. at 203-389-3446, or email us.

Winter Registration in Progress

Registration for winter programs is in progress. Check our website for a complete listing. Adult programs include Badminton, Tai Chi, Yoga with instructors Diane King or Bill Banick. Ongoing registration and prorated pricing available.

Correction To Road Race Finisher

The third-place female winner of the Woodbridge Road Race was Ava Ruskowski, not Ana.

3430 to place your order.

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

Medical Loan Closet: Durable medical equipment, including walkers, wheelchairs, knee rollers, shower chairs, and more, is available for lending. Donations of wheelchairs and 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 fall cleanup, party assistance, baby-sitting, and more.

“Youth Services” From Page 13

Drop off day is Wednesday, December 7, 2022, from 2:15 – 4:15 at Youth Services in Room 12 of the Woodbridge Center Building at 4 Meetinghouse Lane. Please contact Youth Services with questions.

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 in Woodbridge to earn money. Youth Services provides an opportunity to learn about the interview process, safety on the job, and how to negotiate pay.

Do yard work, babysitting, weeding, dog walking, raking, etc. Call for an interview at 203-389-3464 or e-mail npfund@woodbridgect.org. Masks and social distancing may be required.

Teens Need Jobs

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



Spooktacular Friends

Halloween Spooktacular

Over 160 seventh and eighth graders had a blast at the Youth Services Halloween Spooktacular last month. Youth Services wishes to thank all our students, staff, and volunteer parents

and high school students who made this such a success. Kids enjoyed a mummy wrap, DJ, games, pizza, a costume contest, and a raffle.

Home Alone Class Teaches Safety

Officer Vincent Lynch assisted Youth Services Director Nancy Pfund offering advice and safety information at the recent Home Alone class. Students learned about answering phone calls and doors, internet safety, house rules, and how to handle emergencies.

Volunteers Needed

The Woodbridge Youth Advisory Board makes recommendations for Youth Services programming and seeks to include a diverse membership to support our diverse population. A few positions remain open for adults and high school students. Community Service hours will be approved. Interested residents may contact Youth Services for information.

BOWDAAC-Let’s Talk Prevention

BOWDAAC (Bethany, Orange, Woodbridge Drug/Alcohol Action Committee) is a grant-funded Local Prevention Council serving the communities of Bethany, Orange, and Woodbridge. Its mission is to reduce underage drinking and substance use by promoting awareness through educational programs and community collaborations. New members are welcome. For more information or to join our committee, email info.bowdaac@gmail.com or check out our website www.bowdaac.org

Families in Need

Resident families in need should contact Human Services to apply for food, fuel assistance, and holiday toys. Call 203-389-3429 for more information.

Mental Health First Aid Trainings Available

BRIDGES of Milford is providing Mental Health First Aid Trainings for Youth and Adults. To register see website: <https://bit.ly/trainings-MHFA>

Apartments For Rent

Woodbridge:

Thank you! We’re accepting names for our waiting list. Applicants must be 62 or older or disabled. One Bdrm-\$1,195/mo; Two Bdrm-\$1,295/mo incl utilities. On-site laundry, patios with garden area, off-street parking, handicapped accessible. CHFA Financed. EHO. Gibson Assoc., Inc. 175 East Mitchell Ave, Cheshire, CT 06410. Ph: 203-272-3781. TDD 1-800-545-1833 Ext 165

Gibson Assoc., Inc.
175 East Mitchell Ave, Cheshire, CT 06410
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CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

Boy Scout Troop 63 Annual Christmas Tree Sale

Boy Scout Troop 63 will be holding its annual Christmas Tree Sale. For over 50 years, Troop 63 has been selling trees, wreaths, kissing balls and other fresh holiday decorations. The sale will be located behind the Public Library in Woodbridge on Center Road. The troop will sell fresh balsam pine trees beginning Friday, November 25. The sales will start on the 25th from 9AM until 4PM and then will be open on the following schedule though Christmas Eve, while supplies last: Wednesday through Friday from 4-8PM; Saturday and Sunday from 9AM-8PM; and closed on Monday and Tuesday. Free delivery will be available on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday during the sales. Various size trees, ranging from 5' to 13', and prices are available to meet your needs and include limited free local delivery.

Boy Scout Troop 63, founded in 1963, is one of the oldest troops in the Connecticut Yankee Council. Our

objective is to bring scouting to the boys in Woodbridge, Bethany, Orange and surrounding communities. Known as an "outdoor troop," we are active all year. Our outings include camping, hiking, backpacking, skiing, canoeing, and whitewater rafting, as well as cultural events such as visits to historical parks and monuments. We also plan and participate in many community events and service projects throughout the year, like the annual Scouting for Food drive that provides critical assistance to the Woodbridge Food Pantry. Join our adventure and see what scouting is all about. Weekly meetings are held in Woodbridge on Monday nights from 7-8:30 PM. We welcome boys who have completed the fifth grade, up to age 18. Prospective members and their parents are welcome to visit our meetings. For more information about the tree sales or questions about joining, please contact Troop 63 at troop63CT@gmail.com.

Jewish Genealogical Society Meeting

Please join the Jewish Genealogical Society (JGSCT) on Sunday, November 20, 2022, from 1:30 until 3 PM ET, for the third annual Marcia Indianer Meyers Memorial Lecture. JGSCT Board Member Deborah Samuel Holman will present "Sharing Your Family's Stories." Have you been wanting to share your family stories but feel overwhelmed by the all the possibilities? This presentation will help you determine which method fits your needs. Following a brief overview of the various options, Deb will describe her evolution from blog writer to book author, sharing what she learned through the process. She will also provide examples of differ-

ent ways to structure a family history book and offer suggestions to help you get started. Deborah Samuel Holman is a member of the JGSCT Board and Editor of Quest, JGSCT's quarterly newsletter. She has been involved in genealogy for almost two decades, and has authored several family books. Her forthcoming novel, "Nothing Really Bad Will Happen," tells the story of her mother's family, whose livelihood was stolen from them when Hitler's men seized the family business in the spring of 1938. There is a \$5 charge for non-members. Please visit www.jgsct.org for additional information.



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