

Woodbridge Town News



Happy
Holidays

Woodbridge's Exclusive Newspaper

Mailed Free To Every Home in Woodbridge
Mailed Free To Every Home & Business in Woodbridge & Bethany

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CIRCULATION 3654

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2022



On The Road for Last-Minute Gifts? Local Stores Can Help

BY BETTINA THIEL

WOODBRIDGE TOWN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

For those of us struggling to find that one-of-a-kind, last-minute gift, local businesses may just be the ticket.

Stocking stuffers: A go-to for stocking stuffers that comes to mind is the Red Barn at 245 Bradley Street, a boutique and gift store. “We have plenty of stocking stuffers under \$20,” said Ellen Eisenberg, the owner. Among the most popular are the Snoozies (house socks) or Blue Q socks (their number one seller) which display some humorous or, well, explicit sayings. Another popular item are sachets from Liberty of London; lightly scented, they go into

the linen drawer.

Eco-Friendly: Very popular at the Red Barn are eco-friendly items such as reusable shopping bags displaying famous art; or unique items for the household, ranging from mango wood bowls and cutting boards to whimsical kitchen towels and unique entry mats.

Popular for teacher gifts are a line of gourmet teas, especially when paired with Seattle Chocolate, a woman-owned company. The chocolates come wrapped in colorful, one-of-a-kind designer wrapping.

Eisenberg also carries artful copper

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Does The Town Need a Pool or Classrooms – or Both?

Board of Education Considers Space Needs for Beecher Road School

BY BETTINA THIEL

WOODBRIDGE TOWN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

A malfunctioning pool filter at the 50-year-old Beecher Road School (BRS) pool has caused the town to close the facility down in late August, about four months ago, and commissioned an engineering report to find out what repairs are needed and what they would cost.

The engineer, Kyle Elmy with Weston & Sampson, presented his report to the Board of Selectmen at its October 12 meeting. The filter replacement would cost about \$80,000 and add some two years to the life of the pool, the selectmen learned. Lead time for new filters would be two to three months. At the same time the engineer found several structural issues which would make this a much costlier project, upwards of \$800,000, with an uncertain life span. By comparison, a new pool would cost between \$2 to \$4 million, he said.

The pool is located at the elementary school, which uses it as part of its physical education program. But it is a town pool and open to town residents on weekends.

The Selectmen subsequently referred the issue to the newly formed Town Building Committee for BRS Capital Projects – a building committee charged with developing a bond proposal to fix the school's roof leaks; to fix the water incursion due to drainage problems and make some security updates. The committee consists of

Selectwoman Sheila McCreven (chair), Board of Education Facilities Committee Chair Jeff Hughes and Board of Finance member Donovan Lofters.

But when the Board of Education members were asked to weigh in on the issue of the pool repair, they were confronted with a dilemma. Although many expressed their support of the pool and the educational value it adds, they were also aware that they are asking the town at the same time to support a bond package to fix up the school. No number has been attached to the potential bonding package yet, as the Building Committee has just started its work.

For the Board of Education members though, their thoughts were aiming beyond the necessary roof repair. What was on their minds was the fact that the school is already bursting at the seams, as far as instructional space is concerned, and enrollment is projected to increase. In fact, enrollment – which is currently at about 850 students — is projected to hit the 1,000 mark by 2031, according to Interim School Supt. Christine Syriac. “2031 will be here before you know it,” she said when the board discussed the issue at its November 21 meeting.

“We need to have the discussion that we will not be able to operate in this building in a few years,” said board member Erin Williamson. However,

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HOULIHAN LAWRENCE
WARECK D'OSTILIO
203-787-7800
NEW HAVEN | MILFORD | WOODBRIDGE
BRANFORD | OLD SAYBROOK

BY APPOINTMENT


WOODBRIDGE | 29 Pease Road | \$619,000
Magnificent estate-like setting for this contemporary style home w 4 bedrooms, 2 full bathrooms, 2 half bathrooms & 2379 sq ft of finished living space. FR w/ hardwood floors, fireplace, bookshelves. Convenient to everything - YALE, RT 15, shopping & minutes to award-winning Beecher Rd School and Amity HS.
Ross Cotjanle 203-401-1993



BY APPOINTMENT


WOODBRIDGE | 14 Fairview Road | \$239,900
A Quaint little ranch situated on a great sized lot towards the back. The home features two full sized bedrooms as well as a full sized bathroom. Wood burning fireplace as well as built in shelving for storage. Property does need work in certain areas of the house but is a cozy diamond in the rough. Full two car garage.
Blake Arruda 401-808-9895



BY APPOINTMENT


BETHANY | 15 Schaffer Road | \$899,000
Be home for the holidays! Lease/purchase also available - rent before you own. Immediate occupancy. Completed, beautiful new construction, 3400SF, 4 bedroom, 3.5 bath, Colonial situated on 3.08 acres. Hardwood floors throughout, Open floor plan, and generously sized rooms. The home is move in ready.
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“Gifts” From Page 1

ornaments as well as greeting cards for Hanukkah or Christmas. Given that it’s the season of light, shoppers can choose from an array of candles, including the newest, a CBD candle said to be promoting relaxation (just make sure you don’t fall asleep with the candle still burning!).

Give the gift of health: Few things promote health more than food, especially organic food that is grown right here in Woodbridge. That brings to mind Massaro Farm, where a gift could take several forms. It could be in the form of a brick honoring that special person in your life. Proceeds will help the farm build a pavilion that will serve as a meeting place for guests, and be equipped with a bathroom sporting sustainability-minded composting toilets. Bricks can be purchased in two sizes (\$100 or \$250) and the farm will send an acknowledgement to the recipient.

The farm also is offering a gift bag consisting of a hemp tote with the Massaro logo, filled with locally produced glasses of crushed tomatoes, marinara sauce and heirloom salsa (one each). The gift bag is \$50, and may serve as a reminder of warmer days ahead during the dark days of winter.

A really special gift is to purchase a share for the next growing season, with either full or half shares available. Check for details on its website.

Fitness training: Amity Physical Therapy recently opened new facilities in Hamden and Milford, called Amity Fitness, where they offer fitness training for individuals or in small groups. “For years, the leading reasons

why people cease workout regimens is due to injury and lack of results,” they wrote on their website. “The method we use is simple: We blend the skills of orthopedic examination with the expertise of training. Combining these disciplines before symptoms, versus doing one or the other individually, yields the best chance to catch the ‘ticking time bombs’ of injuries and lead to best results.”

Packages are \$75 for an hour or \$42.50 for 30 minutes; with reduced prices per hour for multiple sessions. For details, call Hamden at (203) 691-6248; or Milford at (203) 693-2350.

For bird lovers and more: Woodbridge Hardware carries a large selection of Audubon bird feeders, ranging in price from \$8.99 to \$49.99, along with a whole selection of bird food.

For those who are thinking candles, but want to go for something more creative, Woodbridge Hardware is selling decorative oil lamps for \$17.

On the counter at Woodbridge Hardware are products made by a Bethany company called Sea Lark Enterprises. They make soap lifts made out of corn-based “ecoplastic” that comes in different shapes and colors to match the color scheme of your bathroom. Soap lifts allow the water to drain through the strands and allow air to circulate – thus extending the life of the bar of soap.

Sea Lark also produces soaps and lotions. On display at Woodbridge Hardware was a bar soap specifically formulated to help with a poison ivy rash.

Camp fire equipment: Lock Stock and Barrel in Bethany has a large se-

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For all your holiday needs.





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“Gifts” From Page 2

lection of gift items, ranging from dog toys to home décor. “We have something for everybody,” said retail manager Molly Henion.

Among the best-sellers these days are Solo-Stoves, stainless steel, smokeless wood fire pits. The Solo Stoves are particularly good for asthma sufferers, since the airflow design allows to burn off smoke before it can find its way to your clothes and hair or lungs. The stoves are lightweight and can easily be taken on camping trips or to the beach, wherever you want to rest by a fire.

Although primarily known as a farm supply store, Lock Stock and Barrel also sells Amish furniture, hand-made in Lancaster County, and home décor items, such as paintings, vases and coffee mugs.

Located at 770 Amity Road in Bethany, they offer a wide variety of products for pet owners and farmers, including tack, equine supplements and feed, pet food and toys, poultry feed and supplies, wild bird food, and farm and ranch tools. Another part of their business is in power tools.

Let the spirit be bright: For your holiday celebration, check out the selection of wines and local bourbons at Wines and Spirits of Woodbridge, located at 245 Amity Road. The store carries fine wines, bourbons (including those from Litchfield Distillery), scotch, vodka, gins, rum and craft beers. Big sellers are Four Roses bour-

bon and single-malt scotches. **Nostalgia:** The Orange Historical Society is running a gift store on Saturdays from 12-3 at the Stone Otis House at 615 Orange Center Road. Look for toys, books, kitchen items, ornaments and more. The last Saturday for the gift store is this week, December 17.

Kriz Farm: Nostalgia is also running high with horse-drawn wagon rides at Kriz Farm, off Bear Hill Road in Bethany, on Sunday, December 18, 1-3 p.m. Meet up with Santa (or the Grinch) and indulge in their specialty, eggnog milkshake. Provided they are not sold out, Kriz will sell pre-cut Christmas trees, wreaths, holiday crafts, and ice cream in addition to hot cocoa, hot cider, and fresh donuts. Christmas trees begin at \$65 and all tree purchases include a wagon ride. Otherwise, rides are \$5/person, children under 10 years old are free. Call (203) 915-5534.

Coffee and tea: Café Rebelde, a Woodbridge based purveyor of coffee beans and teas, offers to deliver orders to local addresses, which may be crucial when time is running short. They sell single origin coffees from Nicaragua and Mexico. On their website, they also offer coffee samplers, possibly in a gift bag; and subscriptions, <https://caferebelde.net/contact>.

And so – may the season bring many blessings to all our readers while they are preparing for the celebrations ahead.



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As we close 2022, I take this opportunity to review our many Town departments and the services they provide for the community, and then reflect on our accomplishments that all of us who live in wonderful Woodbridge have made TOGETHER.

Our annual budget reflects our shared values and is a balancing act of our commitment to provide excellent education for our children and show our respect to taxpayers by carefully budgeting for responsible spending on services.

We have, and always will, place a high value on public education of our Town's children both at the Beecher Road School for Pre-K through six, and at the Amity Regional District #5 for grades 7 through 12. Our budget continues to fund the resources that are necessary to ensure the outstanding quality of our school programs and support the teachers and staff members at Beecher. At Amity Middle School Bethany and Amity High School, the Town continues to work with the District to also ensure that all necessary resources provide for the superb educational opportunities we want, and need, for our students there. Furthermore, the Town and Beecher administration continue to collaborate to consolidate services and find ways to share costs. We are always looking carefully at additional ways to save taxpayer money while maintaining top quality, locally-controlled, educational services to all Woodbridge children. I am proud that despite our sometimes-different viewpoints we have always worked together amicably. I thank both Boards of Education for working so hard to achieve what is best for our students and our taxpayers.

Our many wonderful Town departments all make Woodbridge a special place to live. Our volunteer Fire Department responds to calls for service, 24/7/365. They respond to fire calls, severe weather calls, hazardous condition calls, welfare check and service calls, and rescue and emergency services incidents. In addition to this important service, these volunteers put on tremendous community events such as "Truck or Treat". They also provide fire education at our schools, train volunteers to properly install car seats, hold a toy drive for Christmas and host Santa and Mrs. Claus every year at the firehouse.

The Public Works Department consists of three sections – Highway/Parks, Building Maintenance, and Waste Management. The Highway Department maintains 78 miles of roads including paving, plowing, storm drains, street lighting, line striping and tree management. This past year they concentrated on removing problematic trees. Building Maintenance oversees the maintenance, operation, and security of all Town buildings and sidewalks and handles set-up and breakdown for Town meetings and all our Town events. Our Waste Management team runs our Transfer Station.

Our Police Department is also a 24/7/365 operation. They respond to

From the First Selectman BY BETH HELLER



car accidents, and calls for medical assistance, and answer all residents' calls for different kinds of assistance, and alarms. The Woodbridge Police also sponsor a "Fill a Cruiser" to help families with toys at Christmas, volunteer at Senior Center luncheons, and participate in Special Olympics fundraisers. Two officers are assigned full-time to our local schools and Officer Lynch runs a DARE program at Beecher Road School. Our department also has trained accident re-constructionists and one State of Connecticut certified drug recognition expert.

The Woodbridge Human Services Department provides social services, senior services, and youth services. Some examples of the social services they provide include health and wellness checks (including pandemic assistance), client advocacy programs including fuel assistance, VITA tax assistance, and food pantry coordination. The Woodbridge Senior Center offers senior services including a transportation program, meal distribution program, health and wellness education programs, as well as social and hobby classes. Additionally, the Youth Services Bureau offers positive youth development programming including evening and after school programs, baby-sitting training, Home Alone class, internet safety training, job bank, and community service opportunities for Woodbridge students.

The Woodbridge Town Library exists to serve the informative, intellectual, cultural, and leisure needs of the Woodbridge community. The library typically offers hundreds of programs a year ranging from story times, craft programs, lectures and concerts. The library also provides technical help to Woodbridge residents. Our library remains a vital part of the heart of our Town Center.

Our Recreation Department provides adult and youth programs, a variety of summer camps and maintains facilities including bocce, shuffleboard, pickle-ball, tennis courts, and manages the use of Town recreational fields. The department also offers swimming lessons, yoga for adults, and a volleyball league. They organize the beloved summer concert series, the annual road race, and the Logan Testa Kids' Triathlon.

To address our future, I have focused on funding quality of life improvements without increasing the taxpayer burden. This year I have secured more than \$3.5 million in grant funding, which includes \$2 million to renovate the old firehouse, \$425,000 for Senior Center renovations, and \$600,000 for sidewalks and pedestrian improvements in the Town Center. Additionally, Woodbridge was recently awarded a \$500,000 STEAP grant (Small Town Economic Assistance Program) to renovate the Center Gym and nearby restroom facilities.

As you all know, the old firehouse building was damaged in a fire in 2006. Using insurance proceeds and an earlier STEAP Grant, we completed design neutral, necessary upgrades to the building including a new roof and upgraded mechanicals. The additional two-million dollars in State funds for this building will finalize the project and convert the empty building into a new "Community and Cultural Center" for use by all residents, with recreation and leisure programs and room rental for community organizations and individuals. Included in the project is a new elevator making the building ADA-accessible, a small café, and a small kitchen for meeting use. The old firehouse is a beautiful building and I believe it can be a lovely "gateway" to the Town Center campus.

Construction has begun on the Woodbridge Senior Center! Woodbridge seniors will soon have a modern, fresh, welcoming, and air-conditioned space. This project is the result of years of planning and will help our seniors remain healthy and active, which of course is a critical goal for our aging population. When complete we will have a space worthy of the wonderful programming that happens inside.

Lastly, the \$600,000 Department of Transportation grant will be used to install sidewalks connecting Amity Regional High School to the Town Center and to also upgrade the asphalt sidewalk that goes around the library lawn.

These many projects have "moved the needle" on our Town Center Campus beautification plan, which envisions making our Town Center a more inviting, welcoming, safe, pedestrian-friendly space. Remaining projects in the beautification plan include additional outdoor seating and upgraded signage.

This year we also finalized the Town's first bike route paid for by a campaign of private donations matched by a grant. Thank you to all the donors. So many people made these projects possible. It has been a true community effort to make these improvements to our Town of Woodbridge.

New revenue is critical to continue to fund our high-quality education and other important and necessary Town services. Last year I created the 2030 Task Force which is charged with seeking ways to create a healthier, robust, grand list by 2030. Recently this ad hoc committee has been working diligently on a proposal that includes ideas to improve the business district. A more attractive and pedestrian friendly business district will attract more businesses and consumers. I thank the Task Force for taking on this important topic.

The State of Connecticut has set a goal that 10% of each Town's housing be "affordable". Currently, only 1.81% of Woodbridge qualify as affordable. It is our Town's obligation to provide

housing which is not exclusionary and is affordable. Our ad hoc Housing Opportunity Study Committee completed a plan to help us find ways to move toward that 10% benchmark. I thank the Committee for all their hard work. They have collected resident input through workshops and public forums. We will continue to work on this goal.

Woodbridge has also received \$2.6 million through the Federal American Rescue Plan Act. This is a once-in-a-generation funding opportunity and I strongly believe it should be used for once in a generation transformational projects. My ideas are to use these funds to make improvements to the business district, and perhaps add a pavilion to the library lawn so that outdoor events have a covered space. I would also like to upgrade our aging playgrounds and/or make investments in the older irrigation systems at our ballfields.

We continue to see new residents moving to town, many due to, in part, the pandemic as folks seek to live in more open neighborhoods. Our ad hoc Community Council has held new resident "Welcome to Woodbridge" events to help orient new residents, answer their questions, and help them become familiar with all that Woodbridge has to offer.

In 2020, I created our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee in response to the horrific events surrounding the tragic murder of George Floyd at the hands of the Minneapolis police. Here in Woodbridge, we held a Black Lives Matter Rally. That day in 2020 I said, "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 50 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 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's our responsibility, and that is why we are here today." I am proud that the 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.

We may not all agree on the best direction for our Town, but we are all sincere in our desire to make Woodbridge the best possible version of itself, and WE REMAIN STRONGER TOGETHER. I want to express my gratitude to the residents of Woodbridge who have taken the time to reach out to me by phone, text, or e-mail, or dropping by Town Hall. I have and will continue to listen to your opinions and suggestions. By working together, we can solve problems and enhance the quality of our life in Town. As your First Selectman, it has been my honor and my privilege to serve this community. I wish you all a happy, safe holiday season, and a wonderful 2023!

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Woodbridge Town News

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

| Upcoming Issue Date | Issue Deadline |
|--|----------------|
| February 10 Valentine's Day Issue..... | February 3 |
| March 10 St. Patrick's Day Issue..... | March 3 |
| April 7 Easter & Passover Issue..... | March 31 |

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

FROM OUR READERS

2023 -2024 Will Be A Difficult Time For Taxpayers

Bethany, Orange, and Woodbridge are beginning the process of preparing their town budgets for fiscal year 2023-2024. It is going to be a difficult year with inflation, and there will be many reductions in town department budgets to try and keep tax increases as low as possible. All this while Amity has millions of dollars in surpluses as a result of bloated budgets which causes over taxation of the three towns and ultimately the taxpayers who fund Amity's budget requests. In the past Amity has refunded their surpluses to the three towns to be used by the towns to lessen the burden on the dozens of town departments that provide vital services to all town residents not just those with children who attend Amity schools. This year Amity has decided to no longer refund these surpluses to the towns based on a state statute which has been in effect for years, that allows Amity to retain surplus funds and use them as they feel necessary and then offsetting their budget request with what is left. I have no confidence that the towns will ever see a significant reduction in the budget request to reduce town taxes.

First of all, Amity can retain more than \$1 million into their capital and nonrecurring fund every year to be used for what they deem capital projects that are necessary. Realize that they do this without taxpayer approval. In fact, the Amity Finance Committee which includes town representatives, voted to limit this to \$500,000 this year, but that was rejected by the Amity Board of Education, a regular occurrence with the Finance Committee recommendations, which caused me to resign from the committee after 20 years. The rest of the surplus can be used to fund the dozens of other essential projects the Superintendent sees as necessary, again without

taxpayer approval. And the Board of Education approves all of this with little discussion. Whatever is left can be used to offset future budgets, but I believe that there will be little if any additional funds available and from what I have heard, it might not happen, if at all, for two years. Amity truly has a blank check to fund whatever they want with no input from the three towns or the taxpayers who provided these funds in the first place. That is truly a recipe for disaster.

Dr. Sudhar, a newcomer to the Amity Board, recently wrote a lengthy two-part letter about the subject and he believes that Amity is handling its budget and surpluses exactly as they should. Taxpayers approve Amity's budget at referendum and do not expect part of that approval to include millions of dollars of surplus money to be used however Amity sees fit, with the taxpayers in the dark after they vote for the budget. I would invite Dr. Sudhar to attend our budget hearings and explain to the dozens of departments we make cuts to, that they have to accept these cuts while Amity has millions in surplus funds. These departments provide vital services to ALL town residents and year after year they are told to do more with less. In the past when Amity refunded their surpluses to the towns we would not have to cut as much from department budgets, but that will not happen this year. This is grossly unfair and taxpayers need to make note of this when Amity's budget referendum comes up for a vote next May.

I have never, in my nearly 50 years living in Woodbridge and my 20 years being involved with Amity, seen so much dissatisfaction with Amity. A large group of residents are attending meetings and writing letters protesting educational issues and are routinely disregarded and ignored at

See "Letters" On Page 17

Woodbridge Town News

WTN LETTERS POLICY

Submit your letters for our "From Our Readers" section to:
Woodbridge Town News, P.O. Box 1126, Orange, CT 06477
or email: letters@woodbridgetownnews.com.
Please limit letters to 500 words and include a daytime phone number in case we have any questions. Letters must be exclusive to the Woodbridge Town News for publication. We reserve the right to reject any letter.

WOODBRIDGE EDUCATION ROUNDUP



BRS Community Honors Veterans

Excitement filled the air on November 11th as students and staff at Beecher Road School donned the red, white, and blue and gathered for the first school-wide assembly prior to the pandemic. Honoring those who have served our country is a tradition at the school and this year’s celebration provided the perfect opportunity for the school community to gather together once again. The program began with a group of students signing the Pledge of Allegiance in American Sign Language followed by the recitation of the Pledge by the entire school community.

The Beecher Road School Chorus performed the National Anthem. A group of sixth grade students presented a brief history of Veterans’ Day and another shared facts about the playing of Taps. Matthew Goglia then played Taps as the audience solemnly stood to reflect on the sacrifices veterans have made for our country. The keynote speaker for this year’s event was Mr. Alan Ponchick, grandfather of second

grader Brandon Ponchick. Mr. Ponchick shared the story of his father, Murray Ponchick who served in the United States Army during World War II. Murray was honorably discharged as a Sergeant in 1947. He passed away in March 1991 at the age of 76. Alan proudly presented the flag that was given to his family at Murray’s funeral for use at Beecher Road School. In closing, Alan Ponchick reminded students that Veterans’ Day is a special day saying, “It is our tradition in our wonderful country, The United States of America, to honor our veterans every year, many of whom paid the ultimate price, which means they gave their life to protect all of us, our country, and our hard-earned freedom! We should all honor the brave men and women who continue to serve our country in every branch of the Armed Services. We should thank them for their service every chance we get, and be thankful that we live in the greatest country in the world.”



Christiane Delda from Woodbridge, a nursing student from Southern Connecticut State University, traveled to Peru for a service-learning experience sponsored by the College of Health and Human Services. Delda participated in experiential learning in areas such as global health, providing care to underserved populations, and learning about different healthcare systems within the United States and abroad. Students from Southern’s College of Health and Human Services travel each year to provide healthcare to those who otherwise wouldn’t have access.

“Beecher Space” From Page 1

fixing the roof and then asking the town for a new building is “putting the cart in front of the horse,” warned Dr. Jay Dahya. “We are in this Catch 22 situation.”

“This is a huge issue for me in many, many ways,” agreed Board of Education Chairwoman Lynn Piascyk. She said it was time for the board to start this conversation and explore their space needs in earnest.

But the town leaders who took a walk-through of the building at the invitation of the Building Committee, were surprised when, instead of inspecting the roof leaks, administrators showed them just how tight instructional space had become.

For McCreven, who some 10 years ago chaired the Woodbridge Board of Education, and has led several building committees before this one, the scenario is not new. Back in 2001, when then Superintendent Wolfe wanted to educate the community about Beecher’s space needs, he would publish a “Space Odyssey” every week, pointing out where the weaknesses were. McCreven said she encouraged the board to follow that example and do more publicity in this regard.

The community at large does not understand why the school is complaining about the lack of space when some 20 years ago they taught more

than 1,000 students. In today’s educational environment, there is a greater need for “pull-out” instruction for students than what was done even a few years ago. “They need smaller spaces,” she said.

Last year, the school divided the Rotunda to teach special ed classes – a less than desirable solution given the size and acoustics in the space. Should the district need to add another classroom due to incoming students, that will necessitate putting a Specials teacher on a cart, Syriac said.

McCreven said the Board of Ed will need to form a subcommittee to study its space needs, and suggest a solution. It will need to look at the numbers and decide whether to either add a portable classroom, build a wing or build a separate building on the Beecher grounds. Another possibility is to fill in the pool and turn it into classroom space.

In the meantime, the Building Committee will continue its work on a bonding package, to bring the immediate repairs to referendum, possibly sometime next year. The roof work could then be performed in the summer of 2024.

“Until then they’ll have the buckets in the hallways,” McCreven said. As for the swimmers, both the Jewish Community Center and the Orange pool are open to them, according to Recreation Director John Adamovich.

Attention Teachers!

We want to know what’s going on in your classroom!
Let us know about any fun activities or holiday projects.
You can also send us your pictures.
(Parental consent required)

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

OPINION

From the Democratic
Town Committee

BY ELLEN SCALETTAR
WDTC CHAIRMAN



From Thanksgiving
to the New Year

Days of Gratitude, Celebration and Determination

This time of year sees us balancing work, school, family gatherings, and celebratory get-togethers. People are busy and the pace can be hectic. At the same time, it is a time of contemplation and gratitude for what the year has brought us and of hope and determination for the year ahead.

We have had much to celebrate in Woodbridge this year. It is our good fortune to live in a town of extraordinary beauty, where open space abounds and miles of hiking trails are easily accessible.

We share a deep commitment to our children and to providing outstanding education for them from pre-k through high school. We were able to come together to approve the budgets necessary to maintain the high standards of Beecher Road School and the Amity School District.

Our Town employees have enhanced our quality of life in innumerable ways and we thank them all: the Finance Department and Town Hall staff; Police Officers, Volunteer Firefighters and their support staff; the Human Services Department, including Youth Services and the Senior Center; Parks, Public Works and the Recreation Departments. Our outstanding library adds to the richness of our lives and our Town Clerk's office and Registrars of Voters provide the tools we need to participate with confidence in our elections and our democracy.

And, of course, the hundreds of volunteers who serve on our on-going Boards and Commissions donate countless hours and their considerable expertise to keep our Town running.

First Selectwoman Beth Heller has continued to provide strong leadership on key issues. The ad hoc committees she has created are tackling longstanding areas of concern:

The Community and Cultural Center Building Committee is working on a plan to transform the Old Fire House to a space where Town residents can gather for organized events, social gatherings, performances, and more;

The Ad Hoc Woodbridge 2030 Committee is concentrating on the long-term grand list potential of the Woodbridge Business District as well as more vibrant, mixed-use opportu-

nities for the area;

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee is bringing the community together to celebrate our diversity and to identify and address areas where we can improve and grow;

-The Woodbridge Housing Committee completed the required long-term plan to promote a mix of housing opportunities, including affordable housing, and has moved on to its next task: a plan to facilitate the implementation of the strategies set forth in the Affordable Housing Plan.

Looking beyond our Town, Governor Lamont and our State legislators focused on our fiscal future, dedicating budget surpluses to significantly reducing state debt. Their fiscal stewardship brings many benefits, including Standard and Poor's increase of Connecticut's bond credit rating.

At the national level, this year brought some welcome, if overdue, causes for celebration. Congress passed the Respect for Marriage Act, with what has been called "stunning bipartisan" support, to protect same-sex and interracial marriages. And President Biden appointed and Congress confirmed the first Black woman to serve on the Supreme Court. Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson wasted no time in making her brilliant voice heard! In addition, we saw the first national gun safety legislation passed in 30 years.

Importantly this year, voters turned out in our Town, across Connecticut, and around our nation to support candidates who believe in truth, fairness, the rule of law, and making better lives for everyone. Just last week, the voters of Georgia made this abundantly clear.

As we look forward to the New Year and the many challenges that lie ahead, we take strength from the benefits and supports we enjoy as residents of Woodbridge and the advances we see at the State and Federal levels. Together, with renewed determination, we will face the challenges ahead.

The Woodbridge Democratic Town Committee invites you to join us in our work in the coming year. If you are interested in learning more about us, please get in touch by email at communications@woodbridgedems.org or visit our website, woodbridgeCTdems.org.

Other Side of the Aisle

BY CHUCK PYNE
WRTC CHAIRMAN



Open Government
Via Charter Revision

The Woodbridge Town Charter is the handbook by which we self-govern. It's our local Constitution, setting forth the number and responsibilities of both the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance, specifying the matters that must be presented to a Town Meeting, the manner in which voluntary Boards and Commissions shall be established, and the process for adopting local ordinances. Like the U.S. Constitution, the Town Charter foresees the potential need for amendment, and so allows the Board of Selectmen to occasionally establish a Charter Revision Commission to consider and propose to residents appropriate changes to the Charter. The last Charter Revision Commission was convened some eighteen years ago, and a new Commission is long overdue.

In the previous "Other Side of the Aisle" we pointed out that the overwhelming majority of Woodbridge residents voted for the state legislature to devise a process for early voting statewide. The conventional wisdom was that such a change would increase citizen participation. Now juxtapose that with how Woodbridge taxpayers are limited in our opportunity to approve or disapprove our annual town budget – we attend one week-day evening meeting a year, and there must be at least 250 taxpayers present before we are allowed to vote on each of dozens of line items (one at a time) in the proposed budget. There is never an opportunity to vote on the budget as a whole in a single vote.

We've witnessed how impractical, if not chaotic, the current budget approval process is and how it all but guarantees no changes to the proposed budget. And it's worth repeating that without reaching that charter-prescribed 250-person quorum, there won't even be a vote. Since a quorum is hardly ever achieved, the budget is almost always adopted automatically. In sharp contrast, town residents vote every year by referendum on the Amity School District budget. So why doesn't the Democrat leadership support voting when it comes to our town budget, and initiate a charter revision process? All it takes is the Democrat leadership to get that ball rolling. Thus far, repeated calls to empower town taxpayers have been ignored.

There are many other areas of our self-government that deserve a fresh

look and consideration of amendment. A big one is how the Board of Finance, the group that actually sets our mill rate, is chosen. If the power of taxation is to remain with the Board of Finance, then its members should be elected, not appointed as they are today. A quick survey of towns in our area shows the way we populate the powerful Board of Finance is way out of sync with our neighbors – they elect their tax-establishing bodies. Woodbridge should do the same – and we can if we update our Town Charter.

In a broader scope, our current First Selectman/Board of Selectmen structure is completely out of step with the concept of a check-and-balance between executive and legislative branches of government. While we don't have a local judicial branch to completely mirror our federal system, the idea of each of the two branches we do have keeping a check on the other is extremely important. In Woodbridge today, however, with the exception of the aforementioned control of our mill rate, all decisions flow from the Board of Selectmen (legislature), which includes the First Selectman (executive). This is true from ordinances to who gets appointed to the many volunteer boards and commissions. Currently, we have a six-member Board of Selectmen where the First Selectman gets a second vote in case of a 3-3 tie. Since other Charter provisions ensure that the First Selectman will always serve with at least two Selectmen of the same party, electing our First Selectman is in reality electing a king or queen for the two-year term. The First Selectman has final control to break all ties – no "veto override" is possible. So why did Woodbridge adopt this mode of governing, in defiance of the state's model charter and in opposition to the practice of so many other Connecticut towns? Our Charter inhibits open and effective government and should be reviewed by a Charter Revision Commission.

To borrow a phrase, the goal of a Charter Revision Commission is to "form a more perfect" Woodbridge. These are but a few of the areas where we should realize there is a better way to govern ourselves. This suggestion isn't partisan; our goal is a better, more open Woodbridge. Let's hope 2023 is the year that the Board of Selectmen finally establishes a Charter Revision Commission.

Chair’s Report

Each month the Board receives numerous communications expressing concerns, asking questions, making suggestions, and offering help and support. I believe it important to address some of these issues as part of our regular Board agenda. To begin with I wanted to clarify a statement made about board policies. I indicated at a previous meeting that board policies, except when they mirror state statutes, do not have the force of law. Some people interpreted that to mean that we don’t have to follow them. That was not my intention. Board of Education policies are to be followed as strictly as possible by all board and staff members. The administration is given some leeway to waive application of a Board Policy under unique and limited conditions such as student safety. It is the expectation of the Board that should those waivers occur, the administration will provide a detailed explanation.

There have been numerous concerns expressed about DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion). The diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives at Amity are being developed by Amity staff for use by the Amity School District. We are not importing a DEI curriculum; we do not have a DEI curriculum; we are not in the process of developing one; and do not plan to develop one. We also do not teach, nor have a curriculum or classroom lessons which include Critical Race Theory (CRT). We do have a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coach who is working as part of a team on curriculum audits and updates using our own evaluation tools developed for that purpose. That coach is also working with teachers in the classroom to present lessons, based on our curriculum, which students from our very diverse student body will find more up to date, interesting, and meaningful.

Declining enrollment, particularly at the high school level, has also raised concerns that parents are sending children to other schools possibly because of education issues at Amity. By every measure Amity is one of the finest public high schools in the state. A recent review of five-year enrollment figures for high schools in our DRG (District Reference Group) shows an overwhelming percentage have declines in enrollment, many more than Amity. The explanation is probably more about population changes than education. All schools have challenges, Amity is no exception. We continue, as many schools do, to struggle with bullying, racism, antisemitism, discriminatory comments and other discipline issues, but we are working hard to improve our school climates so every student can strive to reach their fullest potential.

Application of the Amity Surplus

The Board of Education tabled a motion on how to apply the unexpended funds from the 2021-2022 budget. Since July, the Board has received clarification, directions, and information on how to comply with C.G.S. 10-51c. When presented with a motion for a

From the Amity Board of Education

BY PAUL DAVIS
AMITY BOE CHAIR



process different from that suggested by the Board’s auditor, members of the Board felt it would be prudent to take more time to consider the options. The motion that was tabled read as follows: *Direct the Superintendent of Schools and the Director of Finance to apply the audited surplus to the end of the current fiscal year to reduce the expense of the District for the current fiscal year.* The Board will revisit this issue and motion at the regular December meeting.

Amity Continuing Education Program

After tabling a vote last month, the Board of Education took action on November 14, 2022, to formally end the Amity Continuing Education Program due to declining enrollment, decreasing revenues, and lack of a Program Director. The Board waited for a month prior to making this decision to hear from the public – no comments against discontinuation of the program were received. The District will continue to partner with Hamden Public Schools to offer Adult Education and English Language Learner opportunities. Any funds remaining in the Continuing Education Account will be transferred to the Drama Account for purchase of items that will support our creative theater, musical, choral, band, and whole-school programs.

Amity BOE Recognizes National Merit Scholarship Program Recipients

The National Merit Scholarship Program recognizes and honors academically talented students across the United States. Students qualify for National Merit recognition based on their PSAT results from fall of their junior year of high school. On November 14, 2022, Amity continued its tradition of recognizing the National Merit Commended Scholars and National Merit Semifinalists before the Board of Education. Approximately 3.5 million students participate in the PSAT/NMSQT each fall. Commended scholars honors are awarded to the students who score in approximately the top 3% of all test-takers. The Semifinalists represent the top 16,000 students in the country – or those who score in approximately the top 1% nationally. The following students received National Merit Commended Scholars Recognition: Anushka Acharya, Henry Atwood, Simran Jain, Isha Khan, Marin Korenaga, Matthew Li, June Lin, Daniel Liu, Sophia Liu, Jennifer Luo, Nicholas Massey, Sophia McDermott, Harshil Parmar, Kiley Pickens, Lucas Rodriguez Herlihy, Sreenidhi Tadepalli, Silas Turner, Aadya Wijesekera, and Mingyue Zha. The following students were recognized

as National Merit Scholarship Program Semi-Finalists: Piyush Bahel, Jacob Betencourt, Francis Cavallaro, Jennifer Li, Si Ru Liang, Yuqi Liu, Melinda Lu, and Brian Scully.

Policy Committee Updates

The Board took action on two policies at its November meeting, approving updates to the Bus Conduct policy and adopting a new policy on Restorative Practice. Restorative Practice complements the punitive consequences of the student conduct policies by pairing discipline with meaningful instruction and guidance to help students learn from their mistakes. The main goals of Restorative Practice are accountability, community safety, and social skill development. The Board also moved two policies on to a second read, including the revised Conduct & Discipline policy.

Science Research Makes the News

Amity’s Science Research Program, a multi-year opportunity for students interested in careers in research, was featured on WTNH Channel 8’s “What’s Right With Schools” program on November 1, 2022. This is a program co-produced by WTNH and the Connecticut Association of Schools that features positive news about schools.

Virtual Keynote Series

Amity Regional School District is hosting a Virtual Keynote Series. Similar in concept to Parent University, these online webinars are designed for parents around topics relevant to supporting their teens. The ARHS Counseling and District Pupil Personnel Services departments hosted the first Virtual Keynote Speaker presentation of the year on November 3, 2022, featuring Dr. Alicia Farrell, who presented *The Pressure to be Perfect and Its Unintended Consequences*. With over 115 attendees, this program focused on practice suggestions for parents on how to raise resilient children in a society that sometimes values performance over character. Feedback from the presentation indicated this was a much-needed message. Please be on the lookout for additional speakers in this series.

Amity NAHS Exhibition

The National Art Honor Society will have its opening reception for the exhibition at the Woodbridge Library in the Community Room on November 15, 2022 from 5:30-7:30 pm. The NAHS invited all students grade 7-12 to participate in this exhibition. The exhibition can be viewed during normal Woodbridge Library operating hours through November 30, 2022.

BOE Adopts Its Core Values

Late in 2021 through the beginning of 2022 the Board held a series of workshops to develop a group of core values. We believe these values are critical to building a learning community. After a discussion about the values, how they were developed, and whether they truly express our beliefs; the board unanimously voted to accept these values as the current core values for the Amity Regional Board of Education. These are listed and described below:

- › **Integrity/Ethics:** WE BELIEVE an effective school system requires the highest levels of integrity and ethics, open and honest communication, dependable and trustworthy effort, and accountability to learners and the community;
- › **Relationships:** WE BELIEVE that learning is a social endeavor and thrives in healthy relationships at all levels. Open, strong relations, between and among students, staff, the Board, and families, rooted in common purpose and sense of direction, enhance trust and motivation and promote learning;
- › **Respect/Empathy:** WE BELIEVE a healthy learning environment stems from a foundation of respect that supports expression of human dignity. Learners value different voices and perspectives and grow as kind, humble, compassionate, and open listeners, communicators, and colleagues;
- › **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:** WE BELIEVE the district should nurture a community of learners who embrace individual and cultural differences, valuing how differences enrich society. WE BELIEVE that all learners should have access to the resources necessary to achieve their fullest educational potential with the full support of a community of leaders. WE BELIEVE that learners must belong to and feel supported in their learning environment for them to thrive socially, emotionally, and academically;
- › **Resilience:** WE BELIEVE in the importance of generating learners who are resilient and adaptable, engaged, curious, and eager, who embody growth mindsets and are highly motivated to persevere to achieve mastery/excellence in academics, sports, the arts, and extracurricular performance. Further, we value a system that nimbly responds to unexpected challenges, has a process in place to learn from them, and uses this learning to improve future responses;
- › **Commitment to a caring community:** WE BELIEVE learners who establish meaningful, healthy connections will become effective stewards of their broader communities and recognize the importance of their contributions to society.

BULLETIN BOARD

Friends Of Beacon Falls Library Annual Holiday Spring Stuffed Breads Sale – 12 different varieties from the Venice Bakery in Hamden, Orders being taken now through December 17, \$12 each, benefits the Beacon Falls Public Library, order form at <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1eOoYY0LGgMiu1GNPSD-F4m2veYY0mzg0U1Aek5-znIFQ>. Pick-up will take place in front of the library on Thursday, December 22nd from 4:30pm-6:00pm. Drivers can pull right up!

Derby Historical Society's Old Fashioned Christmas Celebration – December 18, 2022, 1:00-4:00PM, David Humphreys House, 37 Elm Street, Ansonia, Yuletide Carolers, Christmas Stories by the Fire, Children's Holiday Games and Crafts, Gingerbread Cookie Decorating , Hot Chocolate and Holiday snacks, visit from Santa.

Chabad of Orange & Woodbridge New Lecture Series – Real People Real Talk! We are bringing out everyday heroes with inspiring messages. Our first lecture will take place on January 29. Our guest speaker is Judge Ruchie Freier, the first Hasidic woman to be elected to serve as a Civil Court Judge in Kings County, New York. She also

founded Ezras Nashim, an all-women's EMT ambulance service. She is a proud wife, mother and grandmother. Go to <https://www.chabad.org/> for more details and location.

Donate Your Car, Truck or Van – FREE, FAST, TOW AWAY, Running or Not Running, can be used for a charitable tax deduction. Call Charter Oak Education dba Sterling Education at 860-643-1100.

Woodbridge Recreation Yoga Classes – Yoga offers ways to relax while developing strength, balance, and self-awareness. Gentle classes, modified for individual needs, also focus on posture and breathing within a caring community of practitioners. Of course, we stretch, too! Classes are every Monday and Wednesday from 10:30-11:45 and Monday evenings 5:30-6:45 until December 21. (A new session begins January 2.) Location: Room 16 at The Center in Woodbridge, 4 Meeting-house Lane. Please email for specific directions if needed. Late fall special is \$10/ drop-in, paid to the instructor, Diane King. Cash or checks payable to Woodbridge Recreation. Questions: yogadiane@gmail.com or call the Recreation Department at 203 389-3446. A perfect time to give yoga a try!

Residents Invited to Discussion on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The Woodbridge Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion invites residents to a community discussion led by Connecticut Poet Laureate Antoinette Brim-Bell on Tuesday, January 17th at 6:30pm. The event will be held in the Terrace Room at the JCC of Greater New Haven located at 360 Amity Road in Woodbridge.

"As the state's representative poet, the Poet Laureate serves as an advocate for poetry and promotes the appreciation of — and participation in — poetry and literary arts activities among Connecticut citizens" (portal.ct.gov).

The event is a part of the "Mosaic: Woodbridge Reading in Community" series which offers opportunities for residents to have thought-provoking conversations with their neighbors that deepen our understanding of each other and the diversity of our community.

For more information and to RSVP for the event, please email woodbridgedei@gmail.com. To learn more about Antoinette Brim-Bell visit antoinettebrimbell.com. To learn more about the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, please visit woodbridget.org.



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Making Mezuzah – Local women recently gathered at the new Chabad Jewish Center on the Boston Post Road to create glass-fused mezuzah cases. These cases hold parchments inscribed with Torah verses and will be attached to a door frame. (Photo by Riki Hecht)



Rabbi Hershy Hecht and his wife, Riki, with daughter Miriam, preparing for the grand opening of the new Chabad Jewish Center

Chabad Opens Jewish Center

BY BETTINA THIEL
ORANGE TOWN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Chabad of Orange and Woodbridge, the local branch of a world-wide movement promoting and deepening Jewish life, recently opened a new community center at 280 Boston Post Road, Orange. “We envision this as a space for people to connect, be inspired and

engage with their Judaism,” said Rabbi Hershy Hecht, 28, whose parents Rabbi Sheya and Bluma Hecht started the local group right around the time Hershy was born. He is now continuing their work together with his wife, Riki. The center is open to Jews of any background, he said.

Chabad Jewish Center is located

in the space that was formerly occupied by Lampshades Plus. The store, once filled with lampshades of all sizes and shapes, is now a light-filled open space that allows small groups to occupy a corner. There is a corner for a book lending library, a corner for the youngest ones to learn about Jewish life; a corner for the sale of

Judaica – currently mostly menorahs, given that Chanukka is just around the corner.

A large conference table points to the heart of it all: the study of and discussion of scripture. Not far away, right opposite the entrance, hangs a

.....

See “Chabad” On Page 11

INDEPENDENT LIVING | ASSISTED LIVING | MEMORY CARE

Coming Spring 2023:

THE VERO

AT ORANGE

A LEISURE CARE COMMUNITY

Better with age. Exceptional with us.

Introducing The Vero at Orange, the area’s newest senior living community. Managed by Leisure Care, The Vero is backed by more than 50 years of excellence in hospitality-focused senior living, bringing a unique and refreshing approach to retirement. Our residents will enjoy premier dining, our signature PrimeFit Wellness program, travel, education, social opportunities, and more – you name it, we’ve got it.

Contact us at (203) 867-0123 to schedule your private tour or visit TheVeroatOrange.com to learn more about our community.

CALL (203) 867-0123 TO LEARN MORE. | 197 INDIAN RIVER ROAD, ORANGE, CT 06477 | [THEVEROATORANGE.COM](https://TheVeroatOrange.com)



The new Chabad Jewish Center offers a welcoming, light-infused space where Jewish families can deepen their faith. Pictured is Riki Hecht, who is creating programming for children and women.

“Chabad” From Page 10

portrait of the most influential leader of the Chabad movement, Menachem Mendel, who, according to a Wikipedia entry, “transformed the (Chabad) movement into one of the most widespread Jewish movements in the world today.”

The local Chabad is offering after-school programs for young children from public schools so they experience Jewish life; also, Torah classes for adults; they will establish a Mitzvah Center for good deeds; form a Jewish birthday club.

For Hershy Hecht, and his wife Riki, the center is an extension of their home life. Both grew up in Chabad households, Hershy in Orange, Riki in Pittsburg. “Our home [in his parents’ house] was always full of guests,” he said. They were delivering food, making Purim baskets, helping those in need. “That’s what I’m made of,” he said when he showed this reporter around the new center.

Even before the center had officially opened, a group of women gathered to make mezuzah cases with fused glass. These cases will be attached to a door frame and hold parchments inscribed with Torah verses. “We had a local scribe to talk and show the prac-

tical side of a mezuzah scroll,” said Riki Hecht. It was a joyful gathering.

Up until recently the local Chabad has been operating out of the Southern Connecticut Hebrew Academy on Derby Avenue, where Rabbi Sheya Hecht is the headmaster. But the school has been growing and space became tight at times. Events that draw larger crowds, such as for Chanukka or Purim, will continue to be held at the school, Hershy Hecht said.

The new center offers office space, a Judaica shop, a Jewish lending library, a small children’s corner and more. In their vision, the center will become a welcoming place for Jews who live or work in the area. Parents who wait for their children involved in after-school activities might choose to use the lending library. Hecht is planning to start a Lunch and Learn class for those who work in the area. Starting in mid-January they will host JLI (Jewish Learning Institute) courses.

“It will be a place where the spiritual heartbeat of our community can grow,” the Hechts wrote in an email announcing their plans.

For more information, you can check out their website at www.chabadow.org. The Chabad Jewish Center will be open Monday - Thursday from 10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. or by appointment.

CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS



Garden Club of Woodbridge

On September 13 the Garden Club of Woodbridge had its first meeting of the 2022-2023 season. At the meeting, members revealed some of their special gardening tools - Fiskars serrated pruner, which was described as the best dead-header; a hand sickle to cut down spent day lilies; and a spear-headed spade.

Plant sale co-chairs, Muffy German and Barbara Hagan-Smith, organized the Garden Club of Woodbridge October 1, 2nd fall plant sale. Members donated perennials from their gardens, and Bell Nursery, Bethany Farms, Connecticut Food and Produce Market, Smithland (Agway), Waterfield Farms and Woodbury Farm Market made contributions. Thank you to all for making this a successful fundraiser.

On October 11 members of the Garden Club of Woodbridge were guests of the Garden Club of Orange. Guest speaker, Lisa Oberholzer-Gee, demonstrated creative autumn floral designs. Lisa has a floral certificate of design from Longwood Garden, PA and a floral business. Her first design included a Styrofoam ball, with dried lemon leaves dyed maroon pinned to the outside of the ball. Miniature orange roses and explosion grasses inside the ball were anchored by Agra wool. The design was put on a round base.

The Garden Club of Woodbridge Civic Beautification chairperson, Nancy La Bianca, and her gardeners wrapped up the 2022 season. Meeting for 1 hour every Thursday morning from April through the first frost,

members spruced up, cleaned up and planted at the town library, the Adella Baldwin Stewart Garden at the corner of Center Street and Meetinghouse Lane, and the Darling House.

The November 1 meeting of the Garden Club of Woodbridge, with co-sponsor the Woodbridge Land Trust, had guest speaker Mary Hogue communicate on “The Pollinator Pathway.” Mary is a member of the Pollinator Pathway Steering Committee and spoke about Woodbridge connecting to Canada and 9 U. S. states’ Pollinator Pathway. Integral to the Pollinator Pathway plan: rethinking your lawn, reducing synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, planting native plants, and providing fresh water.

Garden Club of Woodbridge members Mary Ann Tyma, Mary Leigh Sabshin, Maria Kayne, Cindy Marien and Debbie Schlegel participated in designing the Philippines room feast for the Osborne Homestead Museum holiday tour “Holiday Feasts around the World”-November 25 to December 17. Nine area Garden Clubs participated in enhancing the Museum for this event.


On December 6 the Garden Club of Woodbridge had a “warm winter vibes” holiday party hosted by a member in her home. Lunch was followed by a viewing of floral arrangements “depicting warmth” made by designated garden club members. Horticulture participants were challenged to share “aboreal winter interest” specimens containing specific measurements.

Christmas Tree Recycling
(Woodbridge/Orange Residents Only)

Sign up online at:
Troop41Woodbridge.org



Boy Scout Troop 41
2023 Pick-up Dates: 1/8 and 1/15



We deliver. Call your order in to
(203) 298-9769
A special wine or spirit?
We'll order it for you.
245 Amity Road
Suite 109
(enter via Bradley Road)
Tue-Sat 11AM-8PM

Wine Tasting Saturday
December 17 from 12-3

TOWN DEPARTMENTS



Members of the local 4H are also getting on the Pollinator Pathway! The group attended Mary Hogue’s presentation and displayed their award-winning Pollinator Pathway project.



More than 50 residents came to hear Mary Hogue present the Pollinator Pathway. Many thanks to the JCC for hosting the talk.

The Pollinator Pathway

Land Trust Invites Residents To “Bee” On It!

Without pollinators, we can’t feed ourselves. Bee, butterfly, and bird populations are in sharp decline because of pesticide use, loss of habitat, and climate change. The monarch butterfly population has declined to the point where just this summer it was re-classified as an endangered species.

Luckily, there is a solution. Every one of us can do something to help reverse this alarming trend and support our food web: we can join the Pollinator Pathway.

After several delays due to the pandemic, the Woodbridge Land Trust and the Garden Club of Woodbridge recently hosted a talk by Pollinator Pathway board member Mary Hogue. She explained the program, which involves creating pesticide-free cor-

ridors of native plants that provide nutrition and habitat for pollinators. The program has grown quickly: after only five years, it is in more than 300 towns in the United States and Canada! The Land Trust has added Woodbridge to the program, and is looking to sign up new members. You can join by doing these four simple things:

- › Avoid pesticides;
- › Plant native species;
- › Provide a fresh water source;
- › Rethink your lawn.

Many of you probably already have yards that qualify for the pathway – contact the Woodbridge Land Trust to register and add your property to the network. Please visit www.WoodbridgeLandTrust.org for more information, including the slides from Mary Hogue’s presentation.



AT THE WOODBRIDGE CENTER



Left: Alyssa Ulrich, The Willows, and Kristy Moriarty, The Woodbridge Center, help distribute delicious traditional meals provided by Lasses Catering to over 100 attendees of the Annual Thanksgiving Day Luncheon drive-thru. The Luncheon was generously sponsored by Coachman Square at Woodbridge, The Linden at Woodbridge, The Willows, and The Woodbridge Police Union. **Right:** Participants enjoy crafting gnome wine toppers at this craft workshop provided by Hamden Rehabilitation and Health Care Center.

BY KRISTY MORIARTY
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.

Happy Holidays from The Center! We would like to wish each of you a happy and healthy holiday season, and a Happy New Year! We look forward to 2023 being the year to have everyone back together again in the beautifully renovated senior center complete with weekly sit-down luncheons.

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

Upcoming programs

There are many choices to start your new year happy and healthy!

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 11 am - 12 pm in the Library Meeting Room. Please RSVP.

FREE: Mindfulness 4-week Session: Learn how to use mindfulness to help relieve stress, lower blood pressure, reduce chronic pain, improve sleep and health with Dr. Jennifer Botwick of the New Haven Naturopathic Center. This program will meet on Tuesdays, beginning

January 10, from 6 - 6:50 pm in the Library Meeting Room. Please remember to RSVP for this free program sponsored in collaboration with the Woodbridge Library.

Lunch & Learn - Start 2023 Clearing the Clutter and Organizing Lost Space: Learn where to start, tools to help, and the difference between a closet vs. a mini storage unit to efficiently and effectively declutter and organize your home once and for all. This essential presentation with lunch is offered by The Holli Shanbrom Team, Coldwell Banker Real Estate, on January 11, from 11:30 am - 12:30 pm in the Library Meeting Room. Please RSVP to attend.

Lunch & Learn: New Year, New Joints? Kyle Branday, MSPT, of Amity Physical Therapy will cover how to prepare for knee or hip replacement surgery to shorten recovery time and mitigate complications, as well as provide instruction for how to get the most out of your replaced joint if you have had replacement surgery. January 25 from 11:30 am - 12:30 pm in the Library Meeting Room. Please RSVP. Lunch is sponsored by Coachman Square at Woodbridge.

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, 10-11 am 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, 12:30-3:30 pm, 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, 9-9:45 am, in the Center Building gym. Who says exercise can't be fun? This fun "dance party" focuses on all elements of cardiovascular health, muscular conditioning, flexibility, and balance. No prior Zumba experience required. The fee is \$30 for a 6-week session and will be prorated as needed. The next session will begin January 6.

Hobbies/Social

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

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

Painting for Pleasure with local artist Carole Abbate: Monday, 10 am - 12 pm, 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. The next session will begin January 9.

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

Services Offered

(for Woodbridge residents only):

Tech Tuesday and Thursday, 2:45-4:15 pm: 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 Center Building Human Services corridor, which is open Monday - Friday,

10 am - 2 pm. 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 9:00 am - 4:00 pm. Vehicles are cleaned between each use. Masks are required.

Meals: Healthy, well balanced, flash frozen meals for \$5.25/meal are available. Order by noon on Monday for delivery to your home during the same week. Choose from a wide variety of options including baked ziti, chicken piccata, flounder Florentine, and turkey pot pie. Meals include a roll, fresh fruit, and dessert. Two meal minimum order with a ten-meal limit. See website (<https://woodbridget.org/541/Lunch-Meal-Programs>) for a complete list of offerings.

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

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

Medical Loan Closet: Durable medical equipment, 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 snow shoveling, party assistance, help wrapping gifts, baby-sitting, and more.

"For it is in giving that we receive." — FRANCIS OF ASSISI

TOWN DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES

Recreation News



The Woodbridge Recreation Commission voted to donate \$3,000 from the 40th Road Race to the Residence Assistance Fund, formerly the Food and Fuel program. Pictured above from the Road Race that was held on October 1st is First Selectman Beth Heller, Recreation Director John Adamovich, and Recreation Chair, Andrea Weinstein.

Skating Rink

The Town’s ice skating rink is located at the Center Road tennis courts, 149 Center Road, managed by the Recreation Department, and is open for the season, weather permitting. The rink is available for use daily, and the Recreation Department will provide lighting on selected Friday and



Saturday evenings from dusk until 8:30 p.m. The dates will be listed on the Town’s website when they become available. “The Recreation Department would like to thank the Parks Department, and the Fire Department for providing the water for the ice skating rink,” said Recreation Director John Adamovich.



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Youth Services

BY NANCY PFUND



Woodbridge Youth Services brings Fall Paint Party to Amity Middle School-Bethany

Woodbridge Youth Services News

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

Fall Paint Party

Artist Samantha Woodruff shared her talent with students at Amity Middle School – Bethany. They enjoyed creating their individual masterpieces and enjoyed socializing and refreshments with friends.

Toys 4 Kids

Youth Services collected several toys for the Toys 4 Kids program which benefits local families in need. Families applied through TEAM, Inc. in Derby.



We Care Kits donated by Amity Students and Local Residents

We Care Kits

Students and community members created packages for the homeless and residents brought items like blankets, pillows, toiletries, hat, and gloves to assist those at shelters run by New Reach in New Haven. We thank all those who showed they care through their generous donations.

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

Teens Need Jobs

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

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.

HUMAN SERVICES



1: Gabi Durso, of Woodbridge, shows off some of the pajamas she donated to the Holiday Basket program. Gabi, president of the Good Night, Sleep Tight PJ Program, raised funds and provided pajamas for all the children in the Holiday Basket program for the third year; **2:** Christina Papa and Amanda Medling of Surreybrook Preschool stand with Human Services' Ellen McDonald and a generous donation from the staff and parents to the Woodbridge Food Pantry; **3:** Stephanie Cabral, center, co-owner of Progressions Salon in Woodbridge, stands with staff and many of the socks collected during their 16th annual sock drive to benefit Woodbridge Human Services Holiday Basket program; **4:** Members of the Rotary Club along with Human Services staff gather prior to distributing 50 pumpkin pies and Stop and Shop gift cards during the recent Thanksgiving event co-sponsored by Bailey, Moore, Schaefer, Glazer and Proto LLP and the Woodbridge Rotary Club; **5:** Members of the Girl Scout Juniors Troop 60865 from Beecher Road School stand with their donation to the Holiday Basket program.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance: In partnership with the IRS and the Connecticut Association for Human Services (CAHS), the Woodbridge Senior Center offers free tax preparation through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. The program will begin February 7 and run through April 11 at Woodbridge Human Services. Taxpayers with low to moderate income, senior citizens, people with disabilities, or those with limited English have options to safely and accurately complete 2022 tax returns at no cost. If you have access to a computer and Internet, you can complete your own tax return through MyFreeTaxes.com, supported by United Way in partnership with the IRS. If doing your own taxes seems daunting, preparers can complete your return either virtually or in person. If you have a camera phone, you can virtually access Woodbridge VITA tax preparers through GetYourRefund.org/WBSC-CT without leaving home. If you don't have access to technology, call Woodbridge Human Services (203) 389-3429 for an in-person appointment. Appointments are available Tuesdays, 9 am - 12 pm. For a list of required documents and to schedule an appointment, call 203-389-3429. For more details on Woodbridge VITA services, see the Human Services website: <https://www.woodbridgect.org/223/>

Human-Services-Department.

Change to Medicare Part D Insulin Costs Beginning January 1: According to medicare.gov, beginning in 2023, the cost of a one-month supply of Part D-covered insulin will be capped at \$35 and there will be no deductible for insulin. Starting July 1, 2023, similar caps on costs will apply for insulin used in traditional insulin pumps covered by Medicare Part B.

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.

Free Rides: The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) announced that all public transit buses will be fare-free across Connecticut through March 31, 2023. A previous policy signed by Governor Lamont made buses fare free since April 1, 2022. The legislature held a special session on November 28 which passed a bill to continue the fare free program; the bill was then signed by the Governor.

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.

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

Masks available: Contact Woodbridge Human Services if you would like to pick up 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), please make checks payable to Woodbridge Human Services and indicate RAF on the memo line. Donations of gift cards for groceries or area shopping are also requested year-round. Many thanks to the residents and businesses who have already donated.

Holiday Basket Program: Generous Woodbridge donors made the Holiday Basket program a success again this year. While we cannot name all the donor families here, we offer gratitude to the repeat donors, as well as the two new donors, who stepped up to provide a wealth of giving to Woodbridge fam-

ilies in need. In addition to the donors for each family, the department also received a large food donation from Amity Middle School and Surreybrook Preschool in Bethany, a sock collection donation from Progressions Salon, book donations for each child from the Friends of The Woodbridge Library, pajama donations for each child from the Goodnight, Sleep Tight program coordinated by Beecher Road School student Gabi Durso, as well as group donations from the 10Selden (Teen Center), Town Hall staff, the Library staff, Beecher Road School, Girls Scout Juniors Troop 60865, the Woodbridge Childcare Center, the First Church of Christ, the One of Kind Foundation, Barry and Hyla Vine, John and Mary Beth Womer, the Human Services staff, and members of The Center's Craft Group - Alice Lippman, Ruta Majumdar, and Lillian Malkus - for handmade, knitted gifts. The Human Services Department also received contributions for both the Thanksgiving program and the holiday basket program from Bailey, Moore, Schaefer, Glazer, and Proto LLP. Additional thanks to the Woodbridge Rotary Club for its support of the Thanksgiving program and the holiday lunch for The Woodbridge Center. Many thanks to all the donors, groups, and community support that made the Holiday Basket program such a success.

WOODBRIDGE LIBRARY

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

Library Announcements

Support the Friends of the Library at their Holiday Book Sale

Shop local, shop sustainable! The Friends have beautiful books in barely used condition—and ideas for pairing suggestions to match your gifts. Example: a cookbook with a bottle of wine or a grow your own herbs kit, or a gardening book with a new plant or bulbs. Items are on display in the front lobby and on the mezzanine in Bookstore Alley. Supporting the Friends supports the library—thank you as always!

Changes to Hours

Visit us Monday through Thursday, 10 am to 8 pm and Friday and Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm. Our upcoming holiday closures: Saturday, December 24; Monday, December 26; and Monday, January 2. We will close at 2 pm on Saturday, December 31.

New Online Card Registration Available

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

Do we have your email address??

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

Notary Services

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



WOODBRIDGE TOWN LIBRARY

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

What's available at the Library:

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

The Woodbridge Room is open! The study room is available for two-hour reservations; please call the reference desk to book your time. Our puzzles and children's toys are back, and so is our seating!

Call or email to place holds, ask questions, find out information, and more.

Department phones and emails

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

Socialize with us!

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

LIBRARY NEWS

Library Skywatch

Every Monday & Tuesday, conditions permitting (dark & clear), a reference staff member will assist the public in identifying and viewing celestial objects with our new Zhumell 1114mm refracting telescope. Join us on the Library lawn, from where we can see the Moon and the larger and closer planets. Telescope viewing starts 1/2 hour after sundown. Reservation

not needed; walk-ins welcome. Contact Bill at warmstrong@woodbridgetownlibrary.org with questions.

The Library is now FINE FREE!

The Woodbridge Town Library has gone fine free, which means patrons will no longer be charged fines for overdue items. All existing overdue fines for Woodbridge Town Library items have been removed, but this policy change will not include replacement fees for missing or damaged items. Please see the Circulation Department with any questions, or contact them: 203-389-3433 or askus@woodbridgetownlibrary.org.

Museum Passes Available

We have museum passes to area attractions, everything from The Beardsley Zoo in Bridgeport to the Wadsworth Athenaeum in Hartford, providing you with free or discounted admission. Reserve your passes online then print out at home (when allowed) or pick up at the library. We can also print them here for you. Visit <https://woodbridge.lioninc.org/museum-passes/> for more info. Please note that every attraction has its own policies for pass usage and availability may be limited.

From Adult Services

Woodbridge Writers Workshop

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

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

Woodbridge Scrabble Group

Wednesdays at 11 AM

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

Indoor Film Screenings

Thursdays at 7 PM.

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

- › **December 22:** Lucy Worsley's 12 Days of Tudor Christmas;
- › **December 29:** BOWIE: Moonage Daydream.

Holiday Music with Joe Neumann

Tuesday, December 20 at 7 PM
Join us as Joe Neumann—singer,

songwriter, and guitarist—will be performing a December solo concert featuring a mixture of traditional Christmas songs and songs from the 50s and 60s. Register online or at the library.

New Year, New Uke

Saturday, January 7 at 2 PM for Adults & Teens

Want to try an instrument that is fun and easy to play? Join Julie Stepanek as she shows the fundamentals of ukulele playing. No experience necessary. Bring your own ukulele or borrow one of hers. Registration is required, as space is limited. Please register online or at the library.

Introduction to Mindfulness

4-week program on Tuesdays, January 10 to 31 at 6 PM

Learn how to use mindfulness to address ongoing pandemic related anxiety and health issues, relieve stress, lower blood pressure, reduce chronic pain, improve sleep, and improve overall quality of life with Dr. Jennifer Botwick of the New Haven Naturopathic Center. Register online or at the library. This program is co-sponsored with the Woodbridge Center.

Music concert featuring: Headwaters

Saturday, January 28 at 2 PM
More info to come!

Especially For Teens

Teen Volunteers needed!

Check out our teen page on our website to see what volunteer opportunities are available.

SAT Practice Session with the Princeton Review

Tuesday, January 24 at 3 pm

Held in-person at the library! More information and registration via our website.

From The Children's Department

Winter Break Fun

Check online or just drop in for all sorts of activities during the winter break week.

Winter DIY

Tuesday, December 20

Learn to make some easy and surprisingly elegant homemade gifts. Online registration is required.

- › Ages 12+ Session meets 2:30-3:30pm;
- › Ages 9+ Session meets 6:30-7:30pm.

Creative Writing Club

Wednesday, December 21
from 6:30-7:15 pm

A club for writers ages 8-12. Join

See "Library" On Page 17

HEALTH & FITNESS

Adhesive Capsulitis: How to Thaw a Frozen Shoulder

BY WARREN RODRICK DPT

Those who have had the misfortune of experiencing adhesive capsulitis—commonly known as “frozen shoulder”—are well-acquainted with the tedious and uncomfortable process of getting it to subside, or “thaw.” Characterized by inflammation in the stabilizing ligaments of the shoulder, capsulitis can lead to a profound decrease in function due to a tightening and/or thickening of these structures, as well as the development of dense scar tissue known as adhesions.

The origin of this oft-misunderstood ailment can vary, but tend to fall into two general categories. Cases that develop after a trauma or illness, such as post-fracture, stroke, or surgical repair, are known as “secondary capsulitis.” Instances that develop idiopathically, or without a known trauma or illness, are deemed “primary capsulitis.” This “primary” type usually affects the non-dominant side and is seen most commonly in females above the age of 40, which accounts for 70% of all cases.

Regardless of what demographic a patient may fall within, the hallmark presentation of capsulitis remains consistent: increased pain in and around the involved shoulder, as well as a magnificent decrease in the motion of the joint. Progression of these symptoms is further divided into three stages: Freezing/Painful, Frozen, and Thawing. As we see a patient’s self-reported pain rating INCREASE during the initial “freezing” stage, we also tend to observe a DECREASE in the active range of motion in the joint, and vice-versa toward the end of the “frozen” and beginning of “thawing” stage.

Although capsulitis can be a painful and limiting issue, accurate diagnosis in the early stage of development, with a timely start of physical therapy treatment, can be an effective non-surgical solution. In addition to alleviat-



Warren Roderick

ing the patient’s short-term pain, a treatment approach combining manual techniques (i.e., passive stretching and joint mobilizations) with therapeutic exercise to increase strength/stability of the shoulder joint and surrounding postural muscles, can minimize the possibility of long-term functional deficits or disability.

If you think that you may be developing a frozen shoulder—or any other shoulder issue affecting your daily activities—please consult a licensed Physical Therapist to properly diagnose and treat your particular issue, thus maximizing return of function and quality of life 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 at amitypt.com.

“Letters” From Page 5

Board meetings. Yet this group and our finance group are growing every day with dissatisfied residents. Amity had better wake up and realize that voters are taking notice of what is going on at Amity. They rejected the budget twice last year and this year there is much more negative news which will, in my opinion, result in multiple rejections.

Consider that 20% of the eighth-grade class from Orange chose not to attend Amity High School and are going elsewhere, with parents paying significant tuition. How do you imagine those parents will vote? If that isn’t cause for concern then what is?
*Matthew T. Giglietti CPA
Chairman Woodbridge Board of Finance, 20 Year Vice Chairman - Amity Finance Committee*

“Library” From Page 16

us for games, prompts, and activities to help jumpstart your ideas. Online registration is required.

Graphic Novel Club

Tuesday December 27 & Tuesday, January 24 from 6:30–7:15 pm.

Come to one, the other, or both! A club for children ages 9-12 that love reading and chatting about graphic novels. We will also enjoy a game, craft, or snack related to the book. Online registration is required.

Buildwave

Wednesday, December 28 at 2 pm

For 1st through 4th grades; please register online.

Winter Break Ice Science

Thursday, December 29

from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm.

Drop by the library to experiment with a few chilly science “tricks” to wow your friends and family with at

home. Ages 7 and up. Online registration is required.

Magic Show with Ed Pop

Friday, December 30 at 2 pm

Ages 3 and up; please register online

New Year, New Uke

Saturday, January 7

It’s the New Year, which means it’s time to learn a new skill! Want to try an instrument that is fun and easy to play? Join Julie Stepanek as she shows the fundamentals of ukulele playing. No experience necessary. Bring your own ukulele or borrow one of hers. Registration is required, as space is limited—please do so online or at the library.

- › Children Ages 7+: 1:00pm-1:45pm;
- › Teens & Adults: 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm.

Animal Facts Club

Monday, January 23 at 6:30 pm

Ages 7+. Registration required. Meets monthly. January’s theme is arctic animals.

Town of Woodbridge Meetings for the Month of January 2023



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

| | | | |
|------|--|---------|-------------|
| 1/2 | Fire Commission | 6:00 PM | |
| | Human Services Commission | 7:00 PM | |
| 1/3 | Town Plan & Zoning Commission..... | 6:30 PM | Town Hall |
| 1/4 | Housing Committee..... | 7:00 PM | Town Hall |
| 1/9 | Library Commission | 6:00 PM | Library |
| | Police Commission..... | 6:15 PM | Police Dept |
| | Zoning Board of Appeals | 7:30 PM | Town Hall |
| 1/10 | Agricultural Commission | 7:30 PM | |
| 1/11 | Board of Selectmen | 5:00 PM | Town Hall |
| 1/12 | Economic Development Commission..... | 6:00 PM | Town Hall |
| 1/17 | 2030 Task Force | 6:00 PM | Town Hall |
| 1/18 | Comm. Cultural Center Bldg. Cmte. | 4:00 PM | Town Hall |
| | Diversity, Equity Inclusion Cmte..... | 6:30 PM | Library |
| | Inland Wetlands Agency | 7:30 PM | Town Hall |
| 1/19 | Board of Finance..... | 6:00 PM | Town Hall |
| | CUPOP..... | 6:00 PM | |
| 1/23 | Recreation Commission | 7:00 PM | |

CALL TODAY TO RESERVE YOUR AD SPACE!
203-298-4399

www.WoodbridgeTownNews.com

HOUSES OF WORSHIP EVENTS

Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel Events

Menorah Lighting

The community is welcome to help light the BEKI Hanukkah menorah each evening before the quick maariv service, starting Sunday, December 18. Details at beki.org.

Hanukkah Singalong

BEKI's Hanukkah Singalong around the campfire (weather permitting) will be Sunday, December 18, the First Night of Hanukkah. The songsheets include Hanukkah parodies of popular songs plus old favorites, including as many verses of "I Have a Little Dreidel" as the group can compose. A light dinner and s'mores will follow.

Hanukkah Concert

The Connecticut Z'mirah Chorale, directed by Dr. Kevin Mack, will perform at BEKI on Tuesday, December 20. The program will include traditional Hebrew favorites and more contemporary songs sung in Hebrew, Yiddish, Ladino and English. The BEKI Youth Choir will be the opening act. 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.

Author Liana Finck

The author of *Let There Be Light: The Real Story of Her Creation* will speak



at BEKI Sunday, January 8, sponsored by the BEKI Sisterhood and Giftshop. In this graphic novel, which the *The New Yorker* listed as one of the best books of 2022, Liana Finck reimagines the story of Creation with God as a woman. Signed copies will



Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel

be available for purchase. Light refreshments will be available. RSVP to giftshop@beki.org.

Mark Oppenheimer

Writer and podcast host Mark Oppenheimer will speak on Sunday,



January 29 about his recent project, *Gatecrashers: The Hidden History of Jews in the Ivy League*, an eight-part series about how Jews fought for acceptance at each of the eight Ivy League schools, and how the Jewish experience in these elite schools shaped American higher education. Brunch will be served. Details at beki.org.

Children's Programs

Children's Havura, K-2 Kehila, and Junior Congregation, all led by parent volunteers, meet in person each Saturday morning.

On January 6, and every First Friday of the month, BEKI's Kabbalat Shabbat service is kid-friendly, though not specifically a children's service.

Starting January 7, and on every Saturday evening in January and February, BEKI's kid-friendly online Havdalah returns. This ten-minute event on Zoom includes singing the blessings along with Rabbi Eric Woodward and reading a story with Education Director Annie Norman-Schiff. For more information, consult anormanschiff@beki.org.

In Person and Online

BEKI offers in-person services twice daily, led by Rabbi 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.

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 Service: 6:00pm
- › 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.

Shir Hadash

Saturday, January 21 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 and January 7 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!

B'nai Jacob's Annual Family Hanukkah Party

Wednesday, December 21 at 5:30pm

Join us for a festive and fun family celebration! Bring your own Hanukkah



Congregation B'nai Jacob

Menorah, and we will light the candles together. Enjoy dinner, including latkes and sufganiot, with games and activities for kids of all ages. \$10 per person, \$36 max per family.



B'nai Jacob has Connecticut's largest Judaica gift shop.

A great place for Hanukkah shopping!

Menorahs, candles, dreidels, and gifts for all ages. Shop at your convenience. We are always happy to meet you. Call 203-389-2111.

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. ALL ARE WELCOME!

Shabbat Chanukah at Temple Emanuel of Greater New Haven

Come join the fun and celebrate Shabbat Chanukah at Temple Emanuel. On Friday, December 23, we will welcome Shabbat with a music-filled service led by Rabbi Michael Farbman and the Temple Emanuel Band. We will recite the holiday blessings and fill the sanctuary with the light of our chanukiot, followed by a delicious dinner with family and friends. All are welcome to participate in this joyous annual event. The service begins at 6pm. Please



Temple Emanuel

See "Temple Emanuel" On Page 20

HOUSES OF WORSHIP EVENTS



Congregation Or Shalom in Orange Is Now Debt-Free

On November 19th, a “double-mitzvah” was celebrated at Congregation Or Shalom. The evening featured a celebration of Rabbi Alvin Wainhaus’ 40 years of service as its spiritual leader, as well as a mortgage-burning ceremony. Or Shalom’s longtime member and past-president, Linda Zwerdling, along with her family, recently paid off the Synagogue’s mortgage. The Zwerdlings dedicated their generous gift to the memory of Marty Zwerdling, Linda’s husband. Rabbi Wainhaus was honored by Mitch Goldblatt, Selectman of Orange, who read citations and greet-

ings from Jim Zeoli, Orange’s First Selectman, Senator Richard Blumenthal and House Representative Rosa DeLauro. Speakers included the Rabbi’s past students, Rabbi Marissa James and Jesse Sachs, who focused on the Rabbi’s life-changing influence. Rabbi Richard Eisenberg of Congregation Rodeph Shalom and Father Peter Orfanakos of St. Barbara Greek Orthodox Church provided moving invocations and blessings. The evening, which the Rabbi called a “night he will never forget,” included much food, dancing and reportedly great fun.



Congregation Or Shalom held its 16th annual community-wide Kristallnacht Commemoration on Sunday, November 13. Posthumously honored the conscience and courage of Kateryna Sikorska. Kateryna, a Ukrainian widow, along with her three young daughters, risked their lives to save members of the Jewish faith during the Holocaust. Senator Blumenthal is seen here presenting a U.S. Senate Certificate of Special Recognition to Kateryna’s family via Rabbi Alvin Wainhaus.

Orange Congregational Church Upcoming Events

Orange Congregational Church invites you to join us for our holiday worship services in our Sanctuary on the corner of 205 Meeting House Lane and Orange Center Road.

On Saturday, December 24, 2022, Christmas Eve Worship will take place at 3pm and at 10pm. At 3pm you may join us for an Intergenerational Worship Service where our children, youth, and families will tell the story of Jesus’ birth. At 10pm we will offer a Traditional Candlelight Worship Service where our choir and music director will lead us in a service of lessons and carols.

On Sunday, December 25th at 10am you may come in your pajamas or whatever you feel comfortable wearing! We will celebrate Christmas Day with joy, laughter, and fun.

On Sunday, January 1st at 10am our worship will be lay led. Come start



Orange Congregational Church

the New Year with intentions for new beginnings on the first day of 2023!

All services will be livestreamed to our YouTube channel. Please visit orangecongregationalchurch.org for more information on our worship, faith formation, and music programming. We are an Open and Affirming Congregation. No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here!

Town of Orange
GRAFFITI CHANUKAH
MENORAH LIGHTING
PRECEDED BY THE MENORAH PARADE

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2022
3:30 pm Line up at Chabad (261 Derby Ave)
4:00 pm Departing from Chabad with police escort
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We will publish them for free.
Woodbridge Town News – P.O. Box 1126, Orange, CT 06477
edit@woodbridgetownnews.com

HOUSES OF WORSHIP

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!

December 18 – Outdoor Children’s Pop-up Christmas Pageant: The pageant will be from 4:00 – 4:30 pm in front of the Parish House at 5 Meetinghouse Lane. Join us indoors from 4:30 – 5:00 pm for Kid’s Christmas Songs and cookie decorating.

December 24 – Christmas Eve Worship Service at 7:30 pm (no Christmas Day Worship Service)

January 15 - Winter Festival & Potluck Supper for Families – 4:30 – 6:00 p.m. at 5 Meetinghouse Lane, Woodbridge

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

Boy Scout Troop 907: Woodbridge Troop 907 Boy Scouts partnered with Troop 600 from Hamden for a Christmas tree sale at the Mt. Carmel Congregational Church, 3284 Whitney Avenue, Hamden. Scouts sold 150 trees and also learned wreath making. The troop wishes all a joyous holiday season!

Troop 907 will return to regular Thursday evening meetings in 2023 at 7:00 PM at the Parish House, rear entrance, of the First Church of Christ in Woodbridge center. The troop is an outdoors-oriented cohesive troop and always welcoming prospective scouts and parents to come by and check out troop meetings. The winter Court of Honor will be held on Thursday, January 19th at 6:00 PM in the First Church of Christ Parish House Parish Hall, all are invited. More information at <http://www.troop907.org>.

Zoom Option: The option to attend Sunday Service via Zoom continues to be available. To receive an



The First Church of Christ

invite, please email the office or log on to our website and add your name to our church email list. All people in the community are welcome in person or via Zoom.

**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!

First Church of Christ
5 Meetinghouse Lane
Woodbridge, CT 06525
Phone: 203-389-2119
*Email: office@uccw.org
Website: www.uccw.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/uccwoodbridge

**For online or media related questions, please email Lisa Tartaglino at office@uccw.org.*

\$25 per family.
Not a member of TE? Come check us out.

For more information about services and celebrations at Temple Emanuel, please go to the TE website, www.tegnh.org. Temple Emanuel is located at 150 Derby Avenue in Orange.

“Temple Emanuel” From Page 18
.....
bring your voices, your favorite chanukiah and candles and your friends. Dinner reservations are required and can be made either on our website, tegnh.org, or by calling the TE office: 203-397-3000. The suggested donation for dinner is \$10 per person or

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DEATH NOTICES



Sara Consiglio Vecchio

Sara (Consiglio) Vecchio, 95, of Woodbridge passed away peacefully with family by her side on Tuesday, July 5, 2022 after a long illness.

Sara was born on December 30, 1926 in New Haven, the daughter of the late Gennaro and Filomena (Pepe) Consiglio. She married the love of her life, Anthony “Tommy” Vecchio, at St. Michael’s Church, New Haven on July 6, 1953. She was predeceased by her loving husband in 1980.

Sara was a graduate of Commercial High School class of 1945 and went on to attend comptometer school. Her first job was at S. S. Kresge’s Department Store creating holiday gift baskets. The New Haven Transportation Company is where she put the skills she learned at comptometer school to use. Sara was a waitress at the world-renowned Sally’s Apizza on Wooster Street in New Haven, which was founded by her mother in 1938. Sally’s Apizza was where she met her future husband, Tommy. She and Tommy owned and managed several successful businesses, including East Haven Laundromat. Sara also served as a postal clerk at the U.S. Post Office substation in Milford until her retirement.

Sara loved and was loved beyond measure. She was a loving wife, mother, and grandmother who was devoted to her family. Whether it was hosting family gatherings, caring for her grandchildren, baking trays of delicious cookies for everyone she knew,

volunteering as a Cub Scout den mother, or volunteering with the Woodbridge Recreation Department, she put her whole heart into it. She was named the “Mother of the Year” by the Woodbridge Recreation Department not just once, but twice! Other favorite activities were cooking and baking (her love language was food), listening to Sinatra music, shopping, playing “Wheel of Fortune” at the casino, and travel. Favorite travel spots were Cape Cod, Las Vegas, New Orleans, Hawaii, and Italy. We will remember her smile, warmth, boundless energy, helpfulness, and love for life. For Sara, every day was a celebration. Her love for her family is her legacy.

Sara was a communicant of Our Lady of the Assumption Church in Woodbridge and Holy Infant Church in Orange. She was particularly devoted to the Blessed Mother, and her strong faith and love for God helped her through the most difficult times in her life. Sara’s family would like to thank the priests and caregivers who helped her over the years, particularly in the last few years of her life.

Mother of Frances (Paul Silverman) Vecchio of Woodbridge, John Vecchio (Sheri Hoyt) of Southbury, and Roberta (Michael) Calhoun of Cabot, Arkansas. Grandmother to Vincent Silverman, Alessandra Vecchio, Michael Anthony Calhoun, Anthony Calhoun, and Cherish Calhoun-Blazevich. Sister of the late Frances Cavallaro, Salvatore “Sally” Consiglio, Anthony “Tony” Consiglio, Carmel “Connie” Flegert, Rose Lanziero, Andrew Consiglio, and Luca Consiglio. She is also survived by many loving nieces and nephews.

Funeral arrangements were in the capable hands of Maresca & Sons Funeral Home, New Haven. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated July 8th at Holy Infant Church, Orange. Entombment followed in St. Lawrence Garden Mausoleum, West Haven. Memorial contributions in Sara’s memory may be made to Cure Alzheimer’s Fund, 34 Washington Street, Suite 310, Wellesley Hills, MA 02481 (<https://curealz.org/giving/donate/>).

Woodbridge Town News

DEATH NOTICES


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

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“Christmas is not a time nor a season, but a state of mind. To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas.” — CALVIN COOLIDGE

Apartments For Rent

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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

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ARTS & LEISURE



Frosty Fest 2022

It's not too late to purchase a snowman for our 2nd Annual Frosty Fest! The Frosty Fest is a chance for you and your family or business to show off your community holiday pride! Be among the group of snowpeople lining the street in front of High Plains Community Center!

With your donation you will receive a "Frosty Kit", consisting of a blank snowman-shaped lawn sign for participants to paint and decorate as you'd like. Be creative. Be fun. Size is approxi-

mately 18"x 32". This fundraiser is open to families, BOW-based businesses, organizations, and clubs while supplies last. Proceeds will benefit BOWDAAC (Bethany, Orange, Woodbridge Drug/Alcohol Action Committee) and substance use prevention/mental health awareness programming for our local youth. Business/Organization/Club: \$50.00 per snowman, Family: \$25.00 per snowman.

Contact info.bowdaac@gmail.com for more information.

Ansonia Nature Center
Upcoming Events

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
Saturday Creature Feature
Saturdays, 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.

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.

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.



Massaro Community
Farm – A Year in Review

What follows is an excerpt from the 2022 Annual Report, now available on the farm's website. The full report also includes many photos and testimonials of those who visited the farm over the past 12 months. Programming will return in January 2023. In the meantime, consider securing your subscription in the 2023 vegetable program (CSA) or make your gift to support

- › the continued cultivation of 10+ acres of organic produce resulting in thousands of pounds of donated food annually
- › the enrichment of students of all ages who participate in the many educational programs, and
- › the priceless connections made by those who attend Celebrate Spring, Dinner on the Farm, free movie nights and other community events.

in Community Supported Agriculture, helping to make our produce accessible to more people while covering costs of operation. We also began accepting EBT cards as payment for our products, and we're working on making it possible to use EBT cards for online payment in 2023.

The flock of laying hens we introduced last year continued to scratch and forage in our pasture, living in an integrated solar-powered system. To support the chickens over winter, we improved their acreage, leveraging National Resources Conservation Service and CT Department of Agriculture grant funds to install a bioswale, electricity and a frost-free hydrant. And we owe a big "thank you" to the Haynes Group, who was a key partner in completing this work.

Farming

Over 13 years of farming we've experienced extremes of all kinds. We know that significant weather events can occur in every month of the year. In 2021 we had massive rainfall in each month of summer, from June to September. This summer, hardly a drop. 2022 was among the hottest and driest we've experienced, with most of the state the same. We build flexibility into our planning to adapt throughout the season as needed. While this year's conditions presented a significant challenge, we were prepared, and delivered bountiful harvests of high-quality produce to our nearly 300 summer Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) subscribers.

We offered sliding scale CSA pricing for the first time in 2022, allowing people to choose the pricing tier that fits best for them, ensuring nobody is turned away for lack of funds. Sliding scale pricing engages the community

Farm Education

Since farm-based education launched in 2012, we have sought ways to provide opportunities for individuals and families to stay engaged with the farm from youth through adulthood. In 2022, the 28 distinct youth and adult programs offered everything from beekeeping to bird watching, from maple tapping to field sketching. Summer camp returned for six weeks and hosted 225 campers. If the last two years have taught us anything it's how nurturing our connection to the land and each other can be. This was evident from the 25 home-schooled students who returned for weekly programs and 80 students who attended after-school programming. We experienced a resurgent interest in field trips and hosted 10 groups over eight weeks this fall.

We also saw an expansion of Massaro's farm-to-school connection thanks to the recently enacted CT Farm to CT

See "Massaro Farm" On Page 23

“Massaro Farm” From Page 22

Schools legislation. Branford School District purchased marinara sauce for its cafeteria made solely with heirloom farm tomatoes. We also developed a close relationship with West Haven Child Development Center, which received 90 seedlings for their school garden, two garden instruction classes, two CSA shares, five online cooking classes and farm field trips for 85 pre-schoolers. We expect this partnership to continue in 2023.

Community Engagement

Massaro continued its food security efforts to support local families. Food donations included just over of 5,000 pounds of produce and ~200 dozen eggs. The farm continued to support twelve community gardens across Ansonia, Derby, Shelton, Seymour and Oxford. Two gardens in Ansonia and one in Seymour are planning to expand in 2023.

The farm is grateful to partner with students of Emmett O’Brien Technical School in the construction of a 24’ x 32’ post-and-beam pavilion. The pavilion will provide much needed weather protection for farm staff and serve as a gathering space for educational programs. Additionally, these students are gaining valuable experience for their

future in the workplace. Led by experienced farmers MC Whelan and Cass Darrow, 10 youth (from Ansonia, Orange, Seymour, and Woodbridge) took part in the farm’s summer youth employment program this year. During their 10 weeks with us, this team was largely responsible for the several tons of summer squash and cucumbers harvested on the farm. Highlights for the students - Alexandra, Aliah, Bella, Bobby, Faith, Halvor, Mad-die, Morrigan, Steven and Zeke - included each of them facilitating a staff workshops on a topic of their choosing, consisting of the right to healthy food, the enrichment of animals on a farm, and mental health for farmers.

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.

www.WoodbridgeTownNews.com

WOODBIDGE TAX NOTICE

THE SECOND INSTALLMENT OF THE WOODBRIDGE REAL ESTATE AND PERSONAL PROPERTY TAXES AND THE SUPPLEMENT MOTOR VEHICLE BILLS BECOME DUE AND PAYABLE ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 1, 2023. YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE A BILL FOR JANUARY - ONLY THIS REMINDER – THE BILL YOU RECEIVED IN JULY INCLUDED YOUR JANUARY INVOICE. YOU MAY IGNORE THIS NOTICE IF YOU ESCROW YOUR TAXES WITH YOUR MORTGAGE COMPANY.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2023 IS THE LAST DAY TO PAY SAID TAXES WITHOUT INTEREST. INTEREST WILL BE CALCULATED FROM THE DUE DATE OF JANUARY 1, 2023 AT THE RATE OF 1.5 PERCENT PER MONTH OR 18 PERCENT PER ANNUM. MINIMUM INTEREST CHARGE IS \$2.00. IN ACCORDANCE WITH STATE STATUTE SEC. 12-130, FAILURE TO RECEIVE A BILL DOES NOT EXEMPT YOU FROM PAYMENT OF TAXES, INTEREST CHARGES AND FEES.

THE WOODBRIDGE TAX OFFICE IS OPEN MONDAY THRU FRIDAY FROM 8:30 AM TO 4:30 PM. (CLOSED JANUARY 2ND AND JANUARY 16TH).

FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE, THE TAX OFFICE WILL ALSO BE OPEN SATURDAY, JANUARY 28TH FROM 9:00 AM TO 12 NOON AND WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2023, THE LAST DAY TO PAY WITHOUT PENALTY, FROM 8:30 AM TO 7:00 PM. PLEASE TAKE THE WEATHER INTO CONSIDERATION WHEN PAYING AT THE LAST MINUTE.

CHECKS AND APPROPRIATE BILLS MAY BE MAILED TO: TAX COLLECTOR, WOODBRIDGE TOWN HALL, 11 MEETINGHOUSE LANE, WOODBRIDGE, CT 06525. THE PAYMENT MUST BE POSTMARKED AT A UNITED STATES POST OFFICE BY FEBRUARY 1, 2023 TO BE CONSIDERED ON TIME. IF A RECEIPT IS DESIRED, PLEASE ENCLOSE THE CORRECT BILL AND A SELF-ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE. CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS MAY NOW BE MADE ONLINE (ONLY) AT WOODBRIDGET.ORG. THERE IS A FEE INVOLVED WITH USING THIS SERVICE, BE SURE YOU UNDERSTAND THE FEE BEFORE YOU FINISH THE TRANSACTION.

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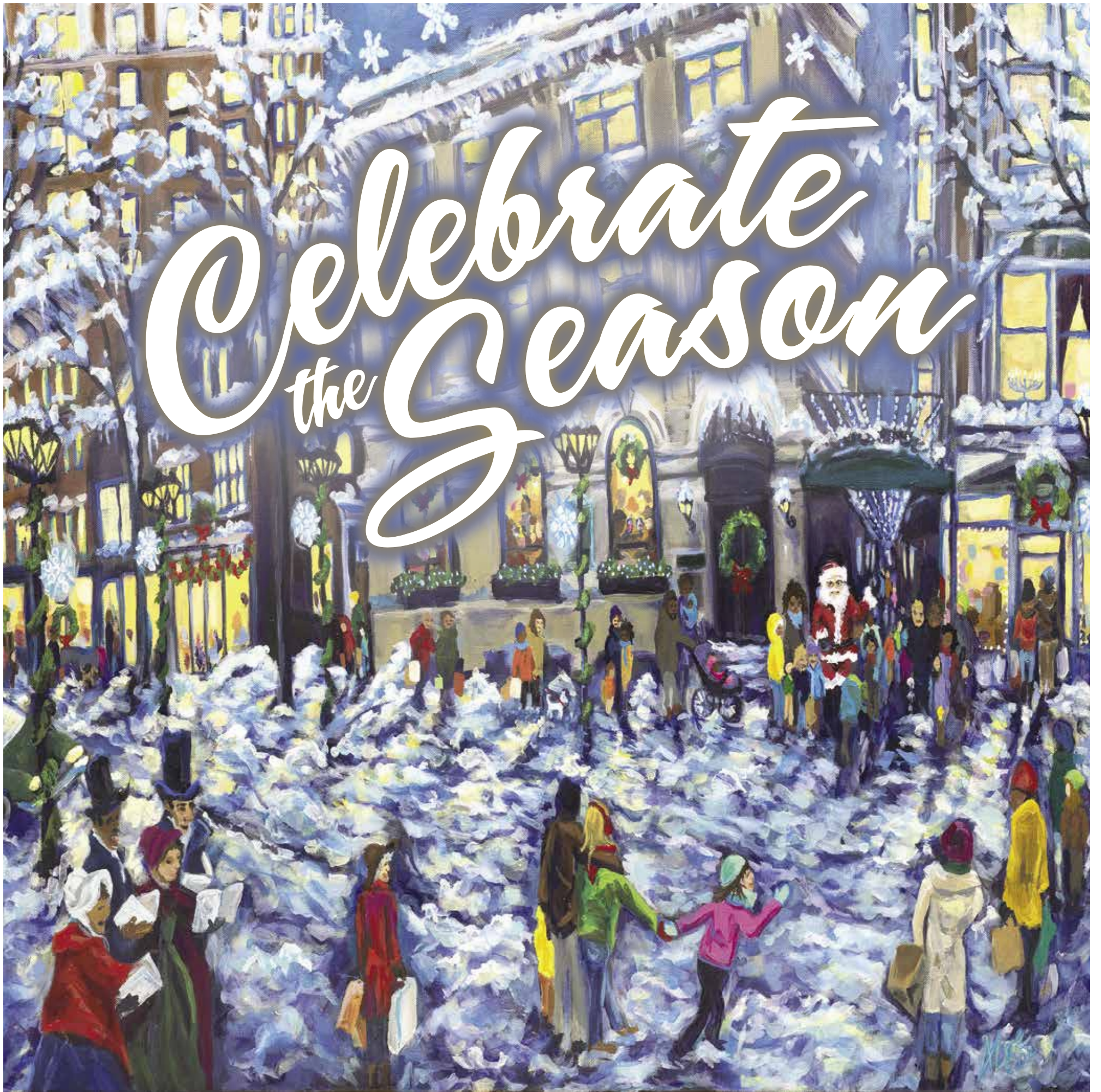


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