

Woodbridge Town News



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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2022

First Selectman Makes a To-Do List

BY BETTINA THIEL

WOODBIDGE TOWN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Earlier in January we asked First Selectman Beth Heller about issues the town is facing in 2022, and she responded with a whole list of initiatives, many of which seem to point to one overarching goal – to allow the town to move forward in an environment of steep price increases and social division, without significantly increasing taxes. A lot of the work on her list involves planning for ways to set the town on a sustainable path, including, but not limited to, developing a strategic plan, strengthening the business district, and finding a solution for the much-discussed former Country Club of Woodbridge (CCW).

At the top of the list is the work of the **“2030 Task Force,”** which is tasked with finding ways to grow the Grand List. The Grand List is the listing of all taxable property in town. The idea is by increasing the tax base – in particular the commercial tax base — the owners of private property will be less burdened.

The members of the task force are co-chairmen Susan Jacobs and Chris Dickerson; Jeremy Rosner, Garrett Luciani and former Selectwoman Teri Schatz. Their focus has been on the business district. The committee, which is working with Finance Director Anthony Genovese and Administrative Assistant Betsy Yagla, is about to hire a planner, Laura Pirie with Pirie Associates of New Haven, to identify ways to make the area more attractive.

Pirie suggested for the commission to visit similar towns and maybe



Beth Heller

identify some of the initiatives that have been working for those towns, said Genovese. Pirie is going to work exclusively on the town's business district, and this position is not to be confused with a future Town Planner, a position that so far is part of the proposed 2022-23 budget – provided it doesn't get cut.

Strategic Plan: The Board of Selectmen is working to come up with a strategic plan to guide the town in the budgeting process going forward. Administrative Assistant Betsy Yagla presented them with two sample plans, one of Enfield (population of 44,000) and one of Tolland (population of 15,000). Although Enfield is a bigger town, she said she included its strategic plan because she liked the way it was structured in five buckets – Economic Development – Education – infrastruc-

See **“To-Do List”** On Page 21



Town to Negotiate Housing Proposal for Country Club

BY BETTINA THIEL

WOODBIDGE TOWN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

The Board of Selectmen, in a reversal of its position just a month earlier to pause any action on the use of the former Country Club of Woodbridge, on January 12 voted along party lines to move forward with negotiations for a large housing development called Arbor Haven.

This does not mean that the officials involved in the negotiations are selling the parcel. Rather, they are negotiating the terms they would present to voters in a referendum. The ultimate decision lies with the voters of the town.

The board's vote came after discussion of the matter in executive session. It authorizes First Selectman Beth Heller, Finance Director Anthony Genovese and Town Counsel Jerry Weiner to “begin discussion with Arbor Haven in order to finalize purchase

price, amount of acreage, open space, mix and amount of residential units, and any other terms and conditions of the offer.” The motion also states clearly that the negotiation is in anticipation of a possible referendum whereby voters will decide whether or not to sell the property.”

The vote was 4:2, with Republican Selectmen David Lober and David Vogel voting against.

In tandem with the vote on the housing development, they also rejected an offer from the Woodbridge Land Trust and the Park Association to protect the land as open space with a conservation easement on some 140 acres of the 153-acre property. The two groups had offered to pay the town \$250,000 to compensate for the restriction. They excluded about 10 acres

See **“Proposal”** On Page 21

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Woodbridge First Selectman Beth Heller recently congratulated residents Jack Hasegawa and Nancy Polk and presented the couple with an official citation on the occasion of the listing of their 1842 Greek Revival farmhouse at 1932 Litchfield Turnpike on the National Register of Historic Places. “The Town thanks Jack and Nancy for their stewardship of this beautiful historic Woodbridge property,” said Heller. The home was built by James Alexis Darling, grandson of Thomas Darling, whose home is across the street and slightly south on Litchfield Turnpike. The Town owns the Thomas Darling House and it is managed by the Amity and Woodbridge Historical Society.



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From the Democratic
Town Committee

BY LAURENCE GROTHEER

The 2022 session of the state legislature got started this week. Members of the Woodbridge delegation provided these thoughts about the work ahead.

From Representative Mary Weland-er: This year brings many of the same concerns to the legislative session, and some new. The main challenge is the shortened calendar; officially a part-time legislature, this short time-frame (as well as the budget-adjustment focused agenda) poses challenges for getting legislation through.

I will continue to prioritize access to mental health services for children and adults. I have been working on legislation for months with a select bi-partisan committee assembled by the Speaker of the House. We hope this will create solutions for immediate, short term, and long-term problems in this area.

I am reintroducing legislation that I hope will be taken up by the public health committee; inspired by a local family seeking to provide legal protection for families who have suffered a stillbirth. This would guarantee a minimum amount of time after this tragic loss to make important, yet heartbreaking decisions.

I will also be focusing my time on the Education Committee toward the systemic problem of special education funding. An unpredictable cost for every district, we need to do some serious work to alleviate this financial burden on our schools so every child has access to the support they need to be successful.

Mary can be reached at mary.welander@cga.ct.gov.

From Senator Jorge Cabrera: Despite unprecedented challenges due to the pandemic, Connecticut is in prime position to thrive for years to come.

Before we move forward, we must look back and honor frontline workers who kept our state going during the darkest days of 2020 and provide them with retroactive pandemic pay. These courageous folks worked in grocery stores, healthcare facilities, taught our children and more. I am committed to ensuring they are rewarded.

The past two years have exacerbated

mental health challenges, shining a light on mental health care. We need more social workers and more therapists. I'm working on legislation to improve pay for mental health professionals and remove licensing road-blocks so when people need help, help is available.

Unresolved mental health challenges have the potential to lead some young people to vape, and flavored vaping products make the unhealthy choice more welcoming. I'm focused on stopping that by banning these harmful, predatory products.

I am also focused on providing property tax relief for homeowners, and for renters, too, as they sometimes shoulder property tax increases from landlords. We accomplished much in 2021 and can do even more in 2022, thanks to a robust rainy-day fund, surpluses and funding from our federal government.

From Senator James Maroney: I am going to focus my efforts this session on a few key pieces of legislation.

One result of the pandemic is that we are all online more often, for everything from shopping to communicating with friends and family. But what happens with that data? Who sees where you've been, what sites you've visited, how long you visit those sites, and how much you spend? I am working on a Consumer Data Privacy law to give Connecticut consumers the right to see what data is being collected about them, correct that data, delete the data, opt out of the sale of their personal data and opt out of tracking for advertising purposes. In addition, it creates responsibilities for companies to protect your data and minimize the data that is collected about you. As more of our daily lives moves online, this is becoming a critical issue.

In addition, I will co-host, with Representative Weland-er and Senator Cabrera, a Veteran's Suicide Prevention Policy Summit on March 10, at which experts will speak on potential policy ideas. While this session will move very quickly, I am always open to hearing from constituents and will continue to advocate for improved workforce development opportunities.

Other Side of the Aisle

BY CHUCK PYNE
WRTC CHAIRMAN

Whiplash and
Head Shaking

Last edition this column expressed guarded optimism that Woodbridge was finally headed in the right direction with respect to the Roger Sherman Farm. The First Selectman had announced in December that she wanted to hire a land use expert to give the Board of Selectmen (BOS) professional guidance on potential uses for this valued piece of public property. Via this column, Republicans praised the move, adding the best use for that expert would be to author a Build-Out Plan to get an accurate picture of the potential maximum development of each piece of property in town under the TPZ's new regulations. Such a report would give our town the necessary "big picture" as we address the concurrent challenges of the farm's future, the town's finances and pressures brought on by the state's affordable housing laws.

At the January Board of Selectmen meeting a majority of the Selectmen wildly reversed course. Instead of pursuing the land use expert idea, they took two votes with respect to the farm. In the first vote the majority of the Selectmen rejected a joint offer by the Woodbridge Land Trust and Woodbridge Park Association to purchase the conservation rights of most of the farm. In the second vote, the same majority agreed to proceed with negotiations with Arbor Haven, a developer looking to build 145 homes on the property. Both motions carried 4-2 with Selectman David Lober and Selectman David Vogel voting no. The "Davids" did not support rejecting the conservation offer or proceeding with Arbor Haven.

In taking these actions the BOS majority appears to ignore a resolution offered by Selectman McCreven months ago to delay decisions regarding the Roger Sherman Farm until the Housing Opportunity Study Committee issues the state-mandated report laying out a plan for Woodbridge to meet the state's affordable housing requirements. So, are we "on hold" as that approved motion would require, or not? One minute we are pausing the review of proposals for the property, the next we're voting proposals down, then we announce the Town will hire a land use expert, then we're going to proceed with an unsolicited development proposal already rejected by our own Conservation Commission. What the First Selectman and those going along with her are doing can't even be called a "process." It is driven

by the First Selectman's single-minded focus on increasing residential housing and thereby growing the Grand List in an attempt to bring in additional tax revenue. This approach is as flawed as flawed can be.

Multiple non-partisan studies presented to the Board of Selectmen document that increasing residential housing does NOT improve a municipality's finances, it has the opposite effect. Conversely, maintaining open space helps a town's finances by minimizing the burden on town services, including education. It's possible adding new residents can lead to more retail businesses coming in to serve those new residents. But considering the extremely small commercial area we have, that's not in the cards for Woodbridge. For those eyeing the Roger Sherman Farm development as a cure for the affordable housing challenge, think again. The proposal includes both ordinary multiple-bedroom homes as well as affordable units so there is barely a change in the percentage of Woodbridge housing that is legally affordable. And why would a municipality give up public land for the purpose of building affordable housing? Our town's very own CUPOP (Committee on the Use of Publicly Owned Properties) has raised this question.

For those tracking the way the Town's leadership has handled the property since its acquisition, you have to shake your head in disbelief. One misstep after another. Look at the condition the property is in now. Shameful. The future of the farm is not an "R versus D" issue – it's "a good idea versus bad idea" issue. We saw common sense trump politics when the 2 Orchard Road Zoning issue came up – more Democrats than any other registered voter group were publicly opposed to the application because it was bad for Woodbridge. In 2011, voters of all political parties defeated a referendum to sell the farm to Toll Brothers for housing by a 2:1 margin. That was no "along party lines" vote. It was a bad proposal that deserved defeat. We encourage the Democrat leadership to not waste more time working toward another doomed referendum. The financial facts don't support the Arbor Haven proposal, the vast majority of residents don't support it, and we must stop wasting Town resources on lost causes. Let's return to the land use expert/build-out plan approach and do this right.

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Woodbridge Town News

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

Upcoming Issue Date	Issue Deadline
March 11 St. Patrick's Day Issue.....	March 4
April 15 Easter & Passover Issue.....	April 8
May 6 Mother's Day Issue	April 29

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

FROM OUR READERS

Thanking Salvation Army Volunteers

Our hearts are bursting with gratitude for the Greater New Haven community! The generosity of so many individuals brought joy to children on Christmas morning and raised the spirits of our neighbors struggling to get by.

Volunteers came out to ring bells at our kettles and sort and distribute toys and holiday meals. Donations that came in this holiday season at the Red Kettles, online and at our doors are helping to provide food for the hungry, diapers for children, utility assistance and a hand up to help people get back on their feet.

These last couple of years have been especially difficult and many have been hopeless. We would like your readers to know that they are transforming lives by bringing comfort and support to people who have no one else to turn and hope to people on the brink of despair.

The Salvation Army is often a safety net for people in need, giving them encouragement and support to build a better future for themselves and their families. However, we can only be there for people in their greatest moment of need with the help and support of our community. Thank you and happy New Year!

Major Charles Adams
The Salvation Army New Haven
Citadel Corps Officer

What Happened to the "Pause"? What's The Rush? Town Needs a Comprehensive Planning Process

Like many others, I am dismayed by the precipitous action of our Board of Selectmen (BOS) in ending, without notice, its stated intention to "pause" consideration of selling the Country Club of Woodbridge Property.

As reported in this publication on

December 17, 2021, First Selectman Heller recently stated, "I believe it's in the best interest of the town to hold off...with any proposal at this time," she said. She hopes that the right person will assist the Board of Selectmen to develop a comprehensive plan that residents can support. "This is a proactive way for us to determine the future for our town."

A few short weeks later, the promised "pause" was reversed without explanation, without the hiring of the "right person," without the development of a comprehensive plan, without consideration by the Housing Opportunity Study Committee (which, presumably, was created to review proposals such as this), without referral to the 2030 Task Force (charged with brainstorming ways to diversify the Town's grand list), and without inclusion in the recently begun Strategic Planning process.

By unhappy coincidence, the BOS decision to discard its prior pledges came immediately after it again became necessary to restrict public participation due to COVID resurgence. It would be unfortunate if the BOS, in its apparent haste to make a deal, would push forward without the analysis it previously identified as necessary at a time when the public's ability to hear and be heard on the largest development in the Town's history is constrained by COVID.

This is to request that the BOS resume the pause and use the time to:

Fulfill its pledge to obtain the advice of the "right person" or persons to guide us through these important issues. There seems to be considerable disagreement as to the revenues (e.g. taxes) and expenses (e.g. education, improvements and maintenance) associated with Arbor Haven and other developments. This advisor should develop a "build-out analysis" reflecting

See "Letters" On Page 26

Woodbridge Town News

WTN LETTERS POLICY

Submit your letters for our "From Our Readers" section to:
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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.

LOCAL BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Wareck D'Ostilio Joins Houlihan Lawrence as Affiliate

Wareck D'Ostilio Real Estate has joined Houlihan Lawrence, the leading real estate brokerage serving New York City's northern suburbs as an independently owned affiliate. Wareck D'Ostilio's 75 agents and 5 area offices including New Haven, Milford, Woodbridge, Branford and Old Saybrook, will join Houlihan Lawrence's footprint as the #1 brokerage north of New York City. Houlihan Lawrence was founded in Bronxville, NY in 1888 and currently has 30 offices and 1,450 agents.

Houlihan Lawrence is well-established in Fairfield County with #1 market share in Greenwich, #1 market share in Darien and #1 market share in New Canaan. The transition to the new brand of Houlihan Lawrence Wareck D'Ostilio should be completed in early February.

"It is with great excitement that we join Houlihan Lawrence and be-

gin a new chapter in 2022" said John Wareck, Co-Owner & Managing Broker. Concurrently, Frank D'Ostilio, Greg Robbins and Rhonda Young, Partners, agree that with its longstanding roots in the communities around New Haven and the shoreline, Wareck D'Ostilio Real Estate will greatly benefit from its affiliation with Houlihan Lawrence. "Their powerful brand and marketing platform will elevate our company and both our residential and commercial clients to new levels of success," added Wareck.

"We are thrilled to partner with Wareck D'Ostilio, a well-known and respected real estate brokerage that is woven into the fabric of Greater New Haven and the Shoreline. This partnership further strengthens our leadership position in Connecticut and the northern suburbs," said Liz Nunan, President and CEO of Houlihan Lawrence.



Paul Carbone Joins Coldwell Banker

Coldwell Banker Realty, New Haven County's leading real estate brokerage firm, is pleased to announce that Paul Carbone has joined Coldwell Banker's Woodbridge office. A longtime Shoreline financial services executive, Paul and his family currently reside in North Branford.

"Delivering quality customer service is the driver of establishing a solid business relationship," according to Carbone. "Being in the financial service industry for over 35 years, I am a firm believer in being customer centric. I have a keen understanding of the local real estate market and I am here to provide all your needs in New Haven County, including North Branford and the Shoreline."

"We are thrilled that Paul Carbone has joined our Woodbridge office" said Aileen DeFeo, Coldwell Banker Branch Vice President for Orange and Woodbridge. "We know Paul will bring his commitment, market expertise, financial knowledge, and professionalism to bear on behalf of his clients. He joins an extraordinary team of realtors who are dedicated to helping their clients

exceed their real estate goals." Coldwell Banker Realty in Connecticut and Westchester County, New York, a leading real estate brokerage company, operates approximately 46 offices with over 2,660 affiliated agents. Coldwell Banker Realty is part of NRT LLC, the nation's largest residential real estate brokerage company. For more information, visit ColdwellBankerHomes.com.



Paul Carbone



Prolete Physical Therapy and Sports Medicine Opens

Prolete is a combination of the words "professional" and "athlete" and refers to the physical therapists' interest in research and commitment to teaching and their focus on athletic adults and athletes.

Dr. James Silva is the Woodbridge location's clinical director and is one of the company's six physical therapists and three assistants split between the two offices. The practice grew during the pandemic, hired new staff and outgrew its space in Milford. At the same time, they were seeing many clients from the Woodbridge area and specifically looked for space in Woodbridge to meet the area's growing demand for their service.

The office has three private rooms and a large open space with high ceilings and gym equipment. They accept all major insurance and are accepting new patients, including those who self-refer. They treat conditions including orthopedic injuries, sports injuries, movement/mobility dysfunction, orthotic fabrication, arthritis pain, neck and back injuries and neurological conditions. In addition, the staff teach at area physical therapy and medical schools.

In addition to orthopedic and sports medicine conditions, they also have a pelvic health specialist on staff

who helps patients suffering from conditions involving the pelvic floor musculature and soft tissues of the pelvis such as incontinence, pelvic pain, pre- and post-partum conditions, sexual dysfunction and pelvic cancers. "Pain and weakness from these issues can be very impactful on people's lives, and we have therapists specially trained to treat these problems," said Dr. Silva.

Due to the pandemic, Dr. Silva explained, they are treating many clients dealing with a lifestyle change – people working from home instead of their office desk, or people who used to frequent the gym but are now working out differently or less frequently. "We are seeing less traumatic injuries and more musculoskeletal injuries due to lifestyle changes," he explained.

"It's important for us to understand the activities and lifestyle that lead to the non-traumatic injury, like the setup of a home work station," he said.

Similarly, Prolete's approach is to look at the patient's preferred activities and exercises – rehabilitation and recovery should be designed differently for a ballroom dancer than it would be for a cyclist, for example.

Prolete Physical Therapy and Sports Medicine is located at 11 Research Drive, suite 3. They can be reached at 203-850-6677 or proleptept.com.

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WOODBIDGE EDUCATION ROUNDUP

The Woodbridge Board of Education Budget Series: Operating Budget

BY LYNN PIASCYK, MARIA MADONICK,
SARAH BETH DELPRETE, JAY DAHYA,
BROOKE HOPKINS, JEFF HUGHES,
DAVID ROSS, MIKE STRAMBLER, AND
ERIN WILLIAMSON

As the Woodbridge Board of Education (WBOE) continues our series of articles aimed at helping the Town better understand the needs of Beecher Road School and our budgeting process, this article will provide an overview of the 2022-2023 operating budget the WBOE voted to send to the Board of Finance and the Board of Selectmen on December 20, 2021 and revised and resubmitted on January 28, 2022. The initial budget submitted to the Town reflected a 13.52% increase over the current budget year, while the revised budget reflects a 9.21% increase. Most of the cost savings the WBOE was able to realize in the revised budget can be attributed to the administration's successful efforts to identify more cost-effective healthcare benefits and confirmed lower rates for utility expenses.

For the last seven years, the Beecher Road School budget has had yearly increases often well below the rate of inflation. During these same years, as inflation rose, so too did the costs of utilities, healthcare benefits, supplies, insurance, vendor contracts, and other purchased services. Special education needs also increased within the district requiring Beecher to increase the number of specialized certified and non-certified staff. To account for the discrepancy between the approved budget and the needs of the district, cuts were made year after year and staff had to be redistributed from general education to special education to meet the growing demands. Budget funding for books, classroom supplies, technology, professional development, staff positions, and staff support were all cut time and time again. This has led many community members to express concern regarding the lack of programming and curriculum advancement being offered at Beecher Road School, investments other comparable districts have been making for the last several years. Fundraisers and the Parent Teacher Organization have helped soften this impact; however, with COVID, even these funds are being depleted. In addition, COVID has exacerbated both the educational and mental health needs of our students,

and we now have children on waitlists for these services. We can no longer continue to expect the school to have a minimal budget increase and provide the high-quality education our community values and our children deserve.

At the most basic level, Beecher's budget is comprised of fixed and variable costs. Most of the budget (95%) is based on contractual obligations and other fixed costs – these include salaries, employee benefits, and purchasing services (e.g., utilities, bus transportation, fuel, insurance).

One of the more significant increases in this year's budget includes salary increases for staff that were agreed upon through prior contract negotiations, with some determined through arbitration. The WBOE would be remiss if we did not take a moment to recognize that the heart of Beecher and the daily stewards of our children's education are Beecher's teachers and staff. As a Board, we support our teachers and staff and will meet our legal obligations to compensate them for their dedication and service to our children.

This budget also includes additional staffing positions. As outlined below, these positions are either required by law, needed due to increased enrollment, or necessary to meet the mental health needs of our children. One special education teacher, who is currently funded through short-term COVID relief, will need to be paid for by the district, and an additional Kindergarten teacher will be needed based on projected enrollment. Similarly, a 0.5 custodian currently funded under COVID relief will need to be paid for by the district to assure health and sanitation needs continue to be adequately addressed. In addition, Beecher will add 1.2 social workers which will bring us to a total of 1.7 social workers, still below the National Association of Social Workers' recommendation of 1 social worker for every 250 students. Additionally, Beecher will require 0.1 psychologist to meet the growing demand for special education testing. During what the U.S. Surgeon General has called a mental health crisis among the nation's youth, Beecher must ensure that we care for the mental health of the children in our community.

In addition, the budget adds a needed STEAM (Science/Technology/Engi-

neering/Arts/Math) Specialist. Expansion of technology and engineering lessons for students across all grade levels is critical to ensuring that our children are prepared to enter secondary education and eventually the workforce, which are increasingly focused on STEAM related areas of study. In addition, this position will offer direct intervention for students below grade-level standards in science and math and assure standards-based science experiences across all grade levels.

Finally, Beecher will reinvest in our teacher assistants (TAs). In 2018, the WBOE made the financially sound decision to significantly reduce outsourcing special education services. However, to meet the one-on-one needs of this population, the Kindergarten TAs who provide instructional support were downsized from 1 per classroom to less than .5 per classroom, and other general education TAs were reallocated to special education. Without this classroom-based support, Beecher is seeing a steady increase in the number of children requiring early intervention in language and math, growing from 48 in 2019-2020 to 85 this school year, with additional children waiting for services. This aligns with findings from a recent study published in Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis and cited by the Brookings Institute which found "TAs in the state's elementary schools had positive effects on student test scores in both reading and math—with the largest, most consistent, and most robust effects in reading." Without TAs for general education support, our children are suffering. The budget put forth to the Town includes 10 additional TAs—4 for special education which are legally required and 6 to begin to replace the 7 TAs that have steadily been removed from the general education classrooms since 2018.

The remaining 5% of Beecher's budget is variable; however, by no means discretionary. These line items include funding for computer equipment, furniture, instructional and office supplies, custodial supplies, books, legally mandated professional development, legal services, and substitutes. These items are essential for school operations.

The WBOE is aware that there is

a narrative among some in the community that Beecher has done well with minimal budget increases in recent years and that at times Beecher has even been able to return a small amount of money to the Town. This narrative could not be further from the truth. School staff have worked hard to stretch these limited budgets, but this isn't working. In fact, with rising costs in healthcare, utilities, and other areas Beecher's budget has essentially been cut year-after-year. We must reinvest in our school.

The WBOE has also been told that residents who do not have children currently in the school are not willing to make this investment. Again, while we do not believe that most residents feel this way, we would argue that everyone should care about the quality of education at Beecher since there is no more direct tie to our property values than the quality of the education we provide as a district. We also want to recognize that many people in our community are seeking more educational and enrichment offerings to keep our students competitive. Appreciating the fiscal climate of our community, these offerings have not been included in this budget.

We are now at a tipping point. If we are required to cut the budget further, such decreases would directly impact students and teachers. The next tier of cuts would ask the Board of Education to increase class sizes while decreasing TA support, cut a significant amount of the remaining professional development provided to our certified staff, cut curriculum development further, and significantly cut the funds for classroom resources. The direction these cuts would take the district is the opposite of the direction we envision for Beecher. We should be talking about growing our curriculum and resources to ensure our graduates meet the expectations of higher education.

The Board is asking the Town to appreciate the need to invest in our school so that it can continue to maintain and strive to improve the level of quality education we pride ourselves in offering our children. Within a time of escalating needs and a pandemic, we must ensure that Beecher maintains its excellence and commitment to our Town's children.

“The minute I heard my first love story, I started looking for you, not knowing how blind that was. Lovers don't finally meet somewhere. They're in each other all along.” — RUMI



Achievements
Frederick Miller Completes Intensive Research Project

Worcester, MA - Frederick Miller of Woodbridge, CT, a member of the class of 2023 majoring in Mathematical Sciences at Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI), was a member of a student team that recently completed an intense research project titled “Investigating the Conversion to LED Streetlighting.”

At WPI, all undergraduates are required to complete a research-driven, professional-level project that applies science and technology that addresses an important societal need or issue. About two-thirds of students complete a project at one of the university’s 50-plus off-campus project centers, which are located around the world. A signature element of the innovative undergraduate experience at WPI, the project-based curriculum offers students the opportunity to apply their scientific and technical knowledge to develop thoughtful solutions to real problems that affect the quality of people’s lives-and make a difference before they graduate.

Dean’s List
Brandeis University

Waltham, MA - Zachary Katz of Woodbridge was named to the Dean’s List for the Fall 2021 semester at Brandeis University in Waltham, MA. Katz is a senior, majoring in Creative Writing and Anthropology, with minors in English and Classical Studies. He is a 2018 graduate of Amity Regional High School. The Dean’s List is an academic honor awarded to students who achieved a semester GPA of 3.50 or higher on a 4.0 scale, completed a minimum of three courses for a letter grade and received a grade of C or higher in all courses.

Coastal Carolina University

Conway, SC - Nearly 2,500 undergraduate students at Coastal Carolina University were named to the Dean’s List for the Fall 2021 semester, including David LaMorte, an Exercise and Sport Science major from Woodbridge, CT.

College of the Holy Cross

Worcester, MA - Matteo Delsanto of Woodbridge, was named to the

College of the Holy Cross Fall 2021 Dean’s List. A member of the Class of 2024, Delsanto is majoring in Political Science. Delsanto was among more than 1,375 students named to the Dean’s List for outstanding academic achievement during the fall semester of the 2021-22 academic year. To qualify, students must pass four or more letter-graded courses with no failing grades during the semester and earn a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

Emerson College

Boston, MA - Gabrielle McGovern of Woodbridge, CT is among the students named to Emerson College’s Dean’s List for the Fall 2021 semester. The requirement to make Dean’s List is a grade point average of 3.7 or higher for that semester. McGovern is majoring in Media Arts Production and is a member of the Class of 2024.

Fairfield University

Fairfield, CT - The following Fairfield University students from Woodbridge received Dean’s List Honors for the Fall 2021 semester: Claire DeGennaro and Leah Saulsberry. In order to be placed on the Dean’s List, students must have completed a minimum of 12 credit hours in a semester, have no outstanding or incomplete grades for that semester, and have attained a semester grade point average of 3.50 or better.

Hamilton College

Clinton, NY - The following Woodbridge residents were named to the Dean’s List at Hamilton College for the 2021 fall semester: Alexis Galinovsky, a senior majoring in economics; Eva Glassman, a junior majoring in creative writing, is a graduate of Amity Regional School District No. 5; Brian Seiter, a sophomore majoring in history and public policy, is a graduate of Hopkins School; and Deniz Tek, a sophomore, is a graduate of Hopkins School. To be named to the Dean’s List, a student must have carried throughout the semester a course load of four or more graded credits with an average of 3.5 or above.

Iowa State University

Ames, IA – More than 9,700 Iowa State University students have been recognized for outstanding academ-

ic achievement by being named to the fall semester 2021 Dean’s List. Students named to the Dean’s List must have earned a grade point average of at least 3.50 on a 4.00 scale while carrying a minimum of 12 credit hours of graded course work. Students listed from Woodbridge are: Jason Christopher Luciani, 3, Mechanical Engineering.

Lehigh University

Bethlehem, PA – Dean’s List status, which is awarded to students who earned a scholastic average of 3.6 or better while carrying at least 12 hours of regularly graded courses, has been granted to Ethan Lavi from Woodbridge, CT in the Fall 2021 semester.

Quinnipiac University

Hamden, CT - The following Woodbridge students were named to the dean’s list for the Fall 2021 semester at Quinnipiac University: Kevin Alston, Karalyn Kachmar, Ephemia Nicolakis, Alyssa Rubano, and Julia Turski. To qualify for the dean’s list, students must earn a grade point average of at least 3.5 with no grade lower than C. Full-time students must complete at least 14 credits in a semester, with at least 12 credits that have been graded on a letter grade basis to be eligible. Part-time students must complete at least six credits during a semester.

Southern Connecticut State University

New Haven, CT – Southern Connecticut State University announced those named to the Fall 2021 dean’s list. Those students from Woodbridge named to the dean’s list are: Zachary Brocklehurst, Eric Duhl, Mayel Hubbard, Wendy Kenyon, James Lepore, Samuel Martin, Kiefer Rodriguez, Corinne Sadinsky, and Ryan Wayland.

University of New Hampshire

Durham, NH - The following Woodbridge students have been named to the Dean’s List at the University of New Hampshire for the fall 2021 semester: Hannah Sosensky (High Honors), Jordan Conn (High Honors), and Zachary Zunski (High Honors). Students named to the Dean’s List at the University of New Hampshire are students who have earned recognition through their superior scholastic per-

formance during a semester enrolled in a full-time course load (12 or more graded credits). Highest honors are awarded to students who earn a semester grade point average of 3.85 or better out of a possible 4.0. Students with a 3.65 to 3.84 average are awarded high honors and students whose grade point average is 3.5 through 3.64 are awarded honors.

University of New Haven

West Haven, CT – Kaitlyn Price of Woodbridge, CT, a student in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of New Haven, has been named to the Dean’s List for the Fall 2021 semester. Kaitlyn is working on a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology.

University of Rhode Island

Kingston, RI - The University of Rhode Island is pleased to announce the Fall 2021 Dean’s List. To be included on the Dean’s List, full-time students must have completed 12 or more credits for letter grades which are GPA applicable during a semester and achieved at least a 3.30 quality point average. Part-time students qualify with the accumulation of 12 or more credits for letter grades which are GPA applicable earning at least a 3.30 quality point average. Those from Woodbridge named to the Dean’s List are: Olivia Kudasik and Sophie O’Brien.

Graduations
Eastern Connecticut State University

Willimantic, CT - Eastern Connecticut State University graduated 189 students at the conclusion of the fall 2021 semester. Among the recent graduates is Lea Reizfeld of Woodbridge, who graduated with a bachelor’s degree in communication.

Georgia Tech

Atlanta, GA - Alicia Chen of Woodbridge, CT, has earned a Bachelor of Science in Materials Science and Engineering with High Honors from the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta. Chen was among approximately 4,900 undergraduate and graduate students to be presented Georgia Tech degrees during the Institute’s 261st Commencement exercises December 17-18, 2021.

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

Woodbridge Town News

THE WOODBRIDGE TOWN NEWS
ONLINE

Online Version of the Woodbridge Town News

www.WoodbridgeTownNews.com

Happy belated Lunar New Year! February is Black History Month, and I am proud that Woodbridge is becoming more diverse. I am also pleased that the ad hoc Diversity & Inclusion Committee is finding wonderful ways to celebrate and embrace this. The committee invites all residents to participate in a new initiative, “Mosaic: Woodbridge Reading in Community.” The first (remote) discussion will be on February 24 at 7 pm regarding The1619 Project by Nikole Hannah-Jones. The discussion will be led by Woodbridge resident Reverend Antona Brent Smith. More details, including the link to participate in this virtual event, are available on the Town website and Facebook page.

February also brings our budget preparation season. The Boards of Selectmen and Finance have received capital and operating budget requests from all Town departments, boards and commissions, and will now begin the process of preparing the budget for the preliminary budget hearing, where residents are once again strongly encouraged to participate in the budget process, either by attending any meetings (which remain virtual due to COVID), asking questions of any board or commission member, and, of course, bringing your ideas and suggestions forward. In late February, the Board of Selectmen will meet and make recommendations to the Board of Finance on the preliminary budget. In early March, the Board of Finance will then begin its deliberation process and make the final recommendations for the Preliminary Budget Hearing on Monday, April 18.

It is very easy to keep up with the process. These meetings are televised and available to watch on YouTube. Links to join virtual meetings can be found in meeting agendas, and meeting minutes include links to the video. If you have ideas or suggestions, please don’t wait until May to make your voice heard. Now is the time!

From the First Selectman BY BETH HELLER



If you have been following our many budget meetings, you are certainly aware that we will be facing some tough financial decisions. Education costs make up two thirds of the Town’s budget. From 2016 to 2022 Town services increased by 3.04% total while at the same time Amity Regional Board of Education increased by 20.5% and the Woodbridge Board of Education grew by 15.32%. Our schools excel at providing the finest education for our children, but unfortunately at a high cost.

If we fund the current requested budget from all town departments and the requested increase from the Woodbridge Board of Education (now at 9.2% and Amity at 6.63% for Woodbridge’s portion based on enrollment) the Town’s mill rate will go up by 8.3%. This is unsustainable.

Education is the reason many of us moved to Woodbridge and we must continue to treat it like the priority it is. However, funding education at this level will mean that sooner or later we must cut other important services and/or accept larger tax increases or find a way to increase the Town’s grand list to pay for it.

Our budget problems are a direct result of the Town’s stagnant grand list. This year’s grand list grew by 1.7% and is the first time in 10 years that the grand list has grown by more than 0.8%. This year’s growth is primarily due to the increase in value of motor vehicles. This growth, or lack thereof, does not even keep up with inflation. That is why I remain in favor of selling 100 acres of the former Country Club of Woodbridge for \$9 million to developers Arbor Haven. This proposed sale is not a panacea, but it would be a major step toward improving the Town’s fiscal future.

At the January Board of Selectmen meeting, following an executive session, the Board voted to pursue Arbor Haven’s proposal, and to deny the Land Trust and Parks Association proposal to purchase a conservation easement on 140 of the 150 acres for \$250,000.

The former Country Club is a beautiful parcel of land and I understand residents’ emotional attachment to keeping it as it is. I moved here almost thirty years ago for the schools and the open spaces. I love the many open spaces and trails and parks we have. However, we must be realistic. Selling a conservation easement for \$250,000 and forever preventing development there is irresponsible while we are entertaining a \$9 million offer for the same parcel. The offer from Arbor Haven contemplates development on 100 acres of the 155 total acres, leaving 50 or so acres for recreational use or perhaps a solar farm. We face serious budget issues in the coming year. The Board of Selectmen, at the very least, has an obligation to let voters decide on the \$9 million project at a referendum.

Additionally, we must recognize that our housing stock needs to diversify. This project will attract and retain young residents, and downsizing residents (such as over 55 folks), who want to remain in town but in smaller, less expensive homes, as well as encouraging lower-income residents to move here. The Arbor Haven proposal includes a mix of housing styles and sizes and addresses all of these issues and still sets aside 50 acres for Town use.

Our ad hoc Housing Opportunity Study Committee is working diligently on the Town’s Affordable Housing Plan and has just released a Woodbridge-specific survey to supplement the regional survey published by SCR-

COG last fall. This survey is another tool to help us find ways to meet our state and federally-mandated obligations regarding affordable housing. You can take the survey on the Town website. Please share your opinion.

To protect Woodbridge residents and others who work, visit, shop and enjoy many of our activities in town, I signed an Emergency Order in January, requiring everyone wear masks at all indoor establishments, workplaces and public meeting spaces. Mid-month I will review all the data and decide if it is safe to rescind the requirement. You may read the full order on the Town website.

Statewide, and locally, the COVID-19 positivity rate is coming down dramatically - though it is still significantly higher than it was pre-Omicron. Masks, social distancing, vaccines and tests are the simple steps we need to continue to take to keep ourselves and our community safe. I urge everyone to take advantage of FREE vaccines and boosters. Quinnipiac Valley Health District has been holding weekly vaccination clinics and you may find other vaccine clinics and COVID-19 tests by visiting ct.gov/coronavirus. Human Services (203-389-3429) can also help residents with testing and vaccine referrals.

Woodbridge residents who are elderly, vulnerable or disabled and those with non-licensed childcare (a child taken care of by a family member or nanny, but not at a licensed daycare center) may call to request a COVID-19 at-home test kit through the Human Services office at 203-389-3429. Human Services also has N95 masks available for residents. No walk-ins available; residents MUST call ahead. Proof of residency required. Curbside-pickup only with appointment.

As always, please don’t hesitate to reach out to me if you have questions or comments. You can reach me at bheller@woodbridgetown.org or at 203-389-3401.

Woodbridge Citizens Activate Political Action Committee to Oppose Arbor Haven Development

A group of concerned citizens has organized “United for Woodbridge,” a Political Action Committee (PAC) focused on opposing Arbor Haven’s proposed housing development on the town owned open space formerly known as the Country Club of Woodbridge (CCW).

Arbor Haven, a real estate developer based in Fairfield County, is proposing to build a residential development of 145 homes on 100 acres, covering nearly all of the usable land on the site.

The Town’s Commission on the Use

of Publicly Owned Properties (CUPOP), whose jurisdiction includes the former Country Club, heard the presentation from Arbor Haven and voiced many serious concerns about the proposal. CUPOP voted unanimously in October 2021 to request that the Selectmen table any action related to housing development until July 2022 when the town will finalize its state-mandated housing plan. The Town’s Conservation Commission also voiced major objections to Arbor Haven’s scheme and voted unanimously to reject the

Arbor Haven proposal.

The Woodbridge Board of Selectmen agreed at its December 2021 meeting to table all proposals for the CCW, but inexplicably reversed course at its January meeting and announced that it would pursue negotiations with Arbor Haven.

“Arbor Haven has presented an incomplete, misleading analysis of the effects such a massive development will have on our Town,” said Paul Harigan, United for Woodbridge’s Treasurer. “We believe that Arbor Haven’s

proposal vastly overestimates Town revenues and vastly underestimates Town expenses for the Amity School District, Beecher Road School, and other town services. We plan to distribute to our fellow citizens the complete facts about the cost of such a large residential development and to show, in contrast, the financial, environmental, health, and quality of life benefits of preserving the land as open space. Concerned citizens are encouraged to contact us at UnitedforWoodbridge@gmail.com.”

“All you need is love. But a little chocolate now and then doesn't hurt.” — CHARLES M. SCHULZ

AT THE WOODBRIDGE CENTER



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

COVID Update at The Center

All in-person programming at The Center is now suspended through February 11 due to the elevated COVID positivity rate. At this time, we are planning to resume in-person programming on February 14.

Drive-thru lunches

Soup-er Sweet New Year's Party: A reminder if you have registered, the drive-thru lunch celebrating the Super Bowl, Valentine's Day, and Chinese New Year will be on February 17 from 12-1 pm. It is generously co-sponsored by Coachman Square at Woodbridge and Opal Stork Home Care. A Chinese New Year fun pack will be provided by Hamden Rehabilitation and Health Care Center.

St. Patrick's Day Drive-thru Lunch: You don't have to be Irish to celebrate at the St. Patrick's Day Drive-thru, sponsored by Coachman Square at Woodbridge and the Holli Shanbrom Team - Coldwell Banker Real Estate, on Thursday, March 17 from 12-1 pm. Pick-up a delicious, traditional lunch of corned beef and cabbage, roasted potatoes, vegetable, Irish soda bread, and a festive dessert. Please RSVP by March 10 as space is limited. No charge.

Virtual Programs

Disaster Preparedness 2 Day Webinar: Tuesday, February 22 and Wednesday, February 23, from 12-3 pm. This webinar, presented by FEMA, will include information on important prevention, safety, and risk-mitigation

strategies as well as national and state resources that are available for the older population. Call The Center for more information. No charge.

Free Virtual Art Tour Series with optional in-person viewing co-hosted with the Woodbridge Town Library: Experience art history via the oldest public art museum in the U.S. Join us to view the Wadsworth Virtual Art Tour series in The Woodbridge Library's meeting room and the Center Building room 16. Pre-registration is required – call 203-389-3430 to sign up. Each tour will feature a different docent lead theme. Join for any or all of the free tours.

- The series includes:
- › 3/16/2022 @ 1 pm: Women Artists: A Women's History Month Spotlight (in the library's meeting room)
 - › 4/6/2022 @ 7 pm: Milton Avery: A Special Exhibit (in the Center Building, room 16)
 - › 5/11/2022 @ 1 pm: Impressionists (in the library's meeting room)

If you prefer, you can register to view the tours at home by going to www.aarp.org/ctevents. Please be sure to sign up for each tour individually to receive log-in information. The Zoom link will be delivered 48 hours and one hour prior to the event. Please check junk/spam folders if you do not receive it. AARP membership is not required.

Lifestyle Change program for optimal health - offered in-person and on Zoom: Concerned about your health risks as you age? Want to live healthier but don't know where to start? Join An Evidence-Based Lifestyle Change program, led by a certified lifestyle coach. The program includes 26 weekly sessions on healthy eating, type 2 diabetes prevention, weight loss, stress management, physical activity, and more. You may also participate in individual sessions with a Registered Dietician, cooking classes to support improved health, and fitness sessions.

This program will be provided AT NO COST to everyone 60+ years of age. It is co-sponsored by the South Central CT Agency on Aging and the non-profit, Monitor My Health, in an effort to promote good health. An informational Session will be held on

February 15 at 1:00pm. The program will be offered on Tuesdays, beginning February 22 at 1:00pm. All classes meet in the Center Building, room 16 or virtually on Zoom. You may join after the program begins. Please RSVP to participate.

Movie Viewing: Join us for the award nominated movie Selma, Friday, February 25, at 1pm, in the Center Building gym. Please RSVP as space is limited. The Internet Movie Database (IMDb) describes Selma as the tumultuous three-month period in 1965, when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. led a dangerous campaign to secure equal voting rights in the face of violent opposition which culminated in President Johnson signing the Voting Rights Act of 1965, one of the most significant victories for the civil rights movement. Enjoy a snack to go provided by Hamden Rehabilitation and Health Care Center.

The American Armchair Adventure - National Park Series: Mark your calendars! This in-person monthly series, sponsored by Hamden Rehabilitation and Health Care Center, will take you to 6 National Parks in 6 months. Each month you will travel to one of the most breathtaking parks in the United States. Enjoy simulated tours, interactive discussions, trivia, local cuisine and more. There will even be a passport craft to stamp all your armchair travel adventures! Pre-registration is required for this adventure that will meet the 2nd Friday of each month beginning March 11, with a "trip" to Yellowstone National Park, from 11am – 12pm in the Woodbridge Library's meeting room.

Exercise

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

FREE Aerobics Classes during Heart Health Awareness Month! Coachman Square at Woodbridge and The Center will offer Tuesday and Thursday aerobics classes, from 10-11 am, with Laura Richling at no charge (regularly \$3/class) for the month of February to promote Heart Health. Come try out the class and start a fun, healthy habit to carry you through 2022. Classes will be offered on Zoom until in-person programming resumes

on February 15 in the Center Building gym. Call The Center (203-389-3430) to register as space is limited.

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.

Targeted Strength Training with Michele Tenney: Monday, 9-10 am, beginning February 14, in the Center Building gym. This exercise class uses exercise bands to focus on strengthening specific muscle groups to help increase balance, stability, and flexibility. Bands are available for purchase through the instructor. The class fee is \$40 for an 8-week session. Join anytime- fee will be prorated.

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. Next session begins February 18. Please call to register.

Hobbies/Social

Computer lab is open Monday - Friday, 10 am - 2 pm. Two-person limit in computer lab. Printing is available (first 5 pages free). Preregistration is required.

Craft Group: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 am - 12 pm, in The Center café. Bring your current knitting, crocheting, or needlepoint project to work on while enjoying a lovely time socializing.

Painting for Pleasure with Carole Abbate: Next session starts February 14! Mondays, 10 am - 12 pm, in The Center café. You will find joy in creating your own paintings as Carole helps inspire beginners to intermediates. Paint the subject of your choice with acrylics or watercolors- bring in a postcard or photo for inspiration. Call to sign-up for this 6-week, \$36 class.

Mahjong and card playing are suspended until further notice due to the elevated COVID positivity rate.

Services offered

Tech Tuesdays and Thursdays,

See "Woodbridge Center" On Page 11

“Woodbridge Center” From Page 10

2:45-4:00 pm: Need some help navigating your computer, laptop, tablet, or smart phone? Not sure where to start? Want to know more about what features you aren’t using? Call 203-389-3430 to sign-up for a 1:1 session in The Center’s computer lab with patient, knowledgeable, Amity High School student volunteers. No fee.

Transportation for medical appointments is available for those age 60+ or with a long-term or short-term disability, Monday - Friday from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm with limited exceptions. Transportation for grocery shopping, local banking, and pharmacy pick-up is also available. Call to arrange car or wheelchair accessible van transportation. 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 on Tuesday. Choose from a wide variety of options including chicken parmesan, lemon dill cod, eggplant rollatini, beef pot roast, vegetable frittata, and fresh Cobb salad with grilled chicken breast. Meals include a roll, fresh fruit, and dessert. Two meal minimum. See website (<https://woodbridgect.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, chicken noodle 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.

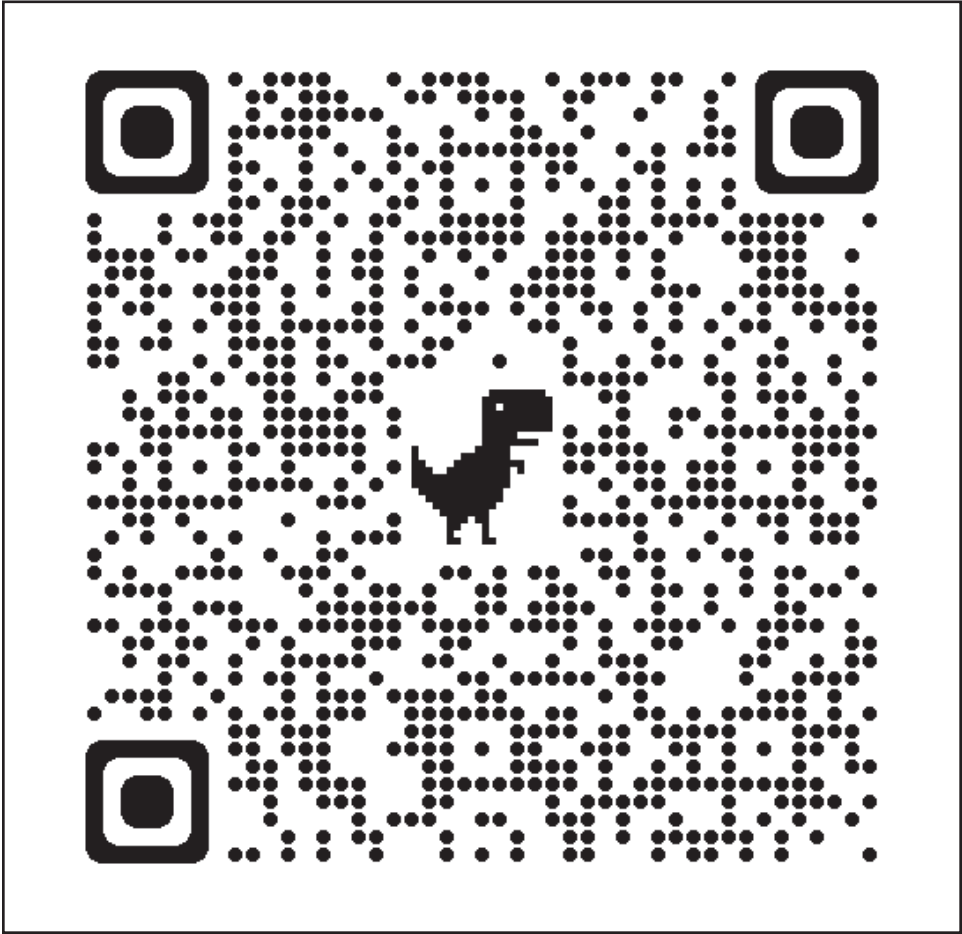
Medical Loan Closet: Durable medical equipment is available for lending including walkers, wheelchairs, knee rollers, shower chairs and more. Call for details.

Job Bank: Residents may call Nancy Pfund, Youth Services, at 203-389-3429, to hire a student worker. Schedule now for snow shoveling and more.

Yale Research Study Opportunities

SCOPE (Saliva Carriage Of Pneumococcus) Study: Help researchers understand normal saliva (self-collected) in the households of older adults aged 60 and above. Participation is very easy and can be done from home, without in-person contact. All the study materials will be sent to you in the mail and a courier will pick them up. Participants receive up to \$125 each for completing the study (6 virtual visits). Please call 1-877-978-8343 with questions or to participate.

FACT-AD (Families Coping Together with Alzheimer’s Disease Study): If you are over 55 years old, have early-stage dementia, and you have a child that is at least 18 years old, you and your child may be eligible to participate in a free and confidential study to understand your experience coping with dementia together. Your child does not need to live in the same state as you. Study may be completed over the phone, by mail, or on the computer. Compensation up to \$600 for completing all 3 sessions. Contact Kathleen Williams at (203) 641-5373 or email kathleen.williams@yale.edu for more information or to participate.



Moved By National Shortage, Local Plans Blood Drive

A blood drive is scheduled to take place right here in the heart of Woodbridge on Sunday, March 6, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., in an effort to combat the national blood shortage. It will take place in the Center Building Gym.

The Red Cross has frequently had low donor turnout in the winter, due to weather. But that was compounded this year by the Covid pandemic, as potential donors stayed home.

“We’re comfortable when there’s a five-day supply of blood,” said Richard Branigan, COO of the Connecticut and Rhode Island Chapter at a recent press conference in New Haven. But blood banks don’t have that comfort level right now, he said, adding that currently they are down to a one-day supply.

At the same press conference, side by side with Governor Ned Lamont and Lt. Gov. Susan Bysiewicz, Woodbridge resident Nicole Donzello stepped to the podium to tell the audience what that means to her.

Donzello, a leukemia patient at the Smilow Cancer Center, had received some 155 units of blood over the course of her treatment since the diagnosis seven years ago. Said she was shocked to hear the extent of the shortage.

Donzello, who also founded the Nicole Donzello Foundation to help leukemia patients, immediately shifted gears, thinking what she could do to help. That’s when First Selectman Beth Heller reached out to her, because Heller had seen the segment on the local news. They decided to arrange a blood drive in Woodbridge, and Heller referred her to Human Services Director Jeanette Glicksman.

Within hours they managed to plan the event for March 6.

“It’s a great community story,” she Donzello said, “with a huge impact for those who depend on it.”

To sign up, go to www.redcross-blood.org or use the above QR code.



Woodbridge Earns Major Grant

First Selectman Beth Heller announced that the Town of Woodbridge was awarded a \$599,855 grant to make bike and pedestrian improvements to the Town Center following a 2020 submission. The Town applied for the Connecticut Community Connectivity Grant in the fall of 2020 requesting funds to install a sidewalk on the western side of Newton Road to connect the Amity Regional High School to the Town Center Campus along with upgrading the asphalt sidewalk at the library lawn. The grant application included additional improvements to pedestrian and cyclist safety including signage and lighting.

Recently Governor Ned Lamont announced that the State Department of Transportation would fund “runners up” from those grants submitted in 2020, including the Town of Woodbridge.

“This grant will help us make significant safety improvements for people, especially students, walking to, in and around Town Center Campus,” said Heller. “This is particularly critical as we continue to make our Town Center a more active destination with communi-

ty events and physical improvements.”

The grant was written with input received from residents who responded to a bike and pedestrian improvement survey.

Last year the Town earned a Sustainable CT matching grant thanks to a successful crowdfunding campaign to fund a small portion of the original submission. With those generous donations, the Town created its first bike route – a 6-mile on-road loop connecting many destinations including Amity Regional High School, Town Center Campus, Beecher Road School, the former Country Club of Woodbridge and Pease Place Playground. Funding paid for signage, three solar-powered speed awareness signs and bike racks along the bike route. The Community Council is planning a community bike ride this May to celebrate the new bike route.

Residents interested in participating in future planning around active transportation in town are invited to join a Bike Walk Woodbridge zoom meeting on Wednesday, February 23 at 7 pm. The link to participate is on the Town website calendar, www.woodbridget.org/calendar.

Woodbridge Housing Survey

The Woodbridge Housing Opportunity Study Committee invites you to participate in its latest survey. The Woodbridge Housing Opportunity Study Committee was created by town officials to develop an Affordable Housing Plan as required by state law, and to increase the diversity of housing to meet the needs of current and future Woodbridge residents. This process is dependent upon input from current and future Woodbridge residents. To date, the Committee has received feedback through the South Central Regional Council of Governments survey, and during the December 6, 2021, public meeting, where participants were able to ask questions and offer ideas on future housing options. The current survey was created by the Committee based on that feedback and is an integral part of the implementation of an affordable housing plan for the Town of Woodbridge.

Some important facts to consider while taking the survey: Connecticut General Statutes section 8-30g requires 10 percent of homes, in every municipality within the state, to be affordable. Currently, only 1.3 percent of Woodbridge homes qualify. Affordable hous-

ing are units that are deed restricted to be guaranteed affordable, for those making 80 percent or less than the Area Median Income, which is currently \$82,000 for New Haven County. For example, a family of two with an annual income of \$66,000 or less would qualify for affordable housing.

Currently 1 in 5 Woodbridge households, approximately 21 percent, do not meet the “survival budget” as reported in the United Way of Connecticut’s ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) Study. These “housing-cost burdened” households are comprised of single person households earning \$28,000 annually, elderly households earning \$33,000 annually, and four person families earning \$90,000 per year.

The survey is another opportunity for current and future Woodbridge residents to help shape the affordable housing plan, and the Housing Committee encourages everyone to participate. The survey link is provided below and is also available on the Town’s website, woodbridget.org, and will close on March 4, 2022.

Survey link: <https://survey.zoho-public.com/zs/H2D7uX>

Town of Woodbridge Meetings for the Month of March 2022



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

3/2	Housing Opportunity Study Committee	7:00 PM	Town Hall
3/3	Board of Finance – Budget	6:00 PM	Town Hall
3/7	Town Plan & Zoning Commission.....	6:30 PM	Town Hall
	Human Services Commission	7:00 PM	
3/8	Agricultural Commission	8:00 PM	Virtual
3/9	Board of Selectmen	5:00 PM	Town Hall
3/10	Economic Development Commission.....	7:00 PM	Town Hall
3/14	Library Commission	6:00 PM	Library
	Zoning Board of Appeals	7:30 PM	Town Hall
3/15	2030 Task Force	6:00 PM	Town Hall
3/16	Diversity & Inclusion Committee.....	6:30 PM	Library
3/17	Board of Finance	6:00 PM	Town Hall
	Conservation Commission.....	7:30 PM	Town Hall
3/21	Fire Commission	6:00 PM	
	Police Commission.....	6:15 PM	Police Dept.
3/22	Gov’t Access TV Commission	7:30 PM	Town Hall
3/23	Inland/Wetland Agency.....	7:30 PM	Town Hall
3/24	Conservation Commission.....	7:30 PM	Town Hall
3/25	Board of Assessment Appeals	6-9:00 PM	Town Hall
3/26	Board of Assessment Appeals	8AM-12PM	Town Hall
3/28	CUPOP.....	5:30 PM	Town Hall
	Recreation Commission	7:00 PM	Beecher Rd School S
3/30	Board of Assessment Appeals	6:00-9:00 PM	Town Hall



ARTS & LEISURE

Show Farmers Your Love this Valentine's Day

Farms in your community help preserve open space, reduce your carbon footprint by contributing to the supply chain and drive the economic engine with jobs. There are many ways you can show Massaro and other local producers your love this month:

- › Shop the CitySeed winter farmer's market at Conte West Hill School (we'll be there every other week through March).
- › Celebrate National CSA Day, February 25, 2022 by subscribing to our 2022 CSA. Vegetables, fruit and eggs available at scaled pricing; also accepting EBT cards.
- › Enjoy one of our many farm programs for toddlers through adults. Sign up for our bi-weekly newsletter to get all the news on classes and registration info.
- › Volunteer! The farm has many ways to be involved, including year-round animal care, garden maintenance, committee and board service.

Below is a list of upcoming winter programs.

Winter Goat Walks

The farm will hold winter goat walks around the farm every other week through February and March. Come take a walk along the trail or along the farm's perimeter with our five resident goats. This is a lovely small-group social activity and a great way to get some fresh air and exercise. \$5/person or \$10/family. Eventbrite.com.

Winter Explorers

There are a few spots left for Massaro Farm's Winter Explorers program, returning February 6 for children ages 6-11. This on-farm program encourages children to enjoy outdoor activities during the winter season. Participants



will look for animal tracks on the trail, build a survival shelter, enjoy safe time by the fire, learn about the change in seasons, understand the impact of climate change on food production and much more. Sessions run for eight weeks but can be pro-rated for latecomers. Led by environmental educator Jim Matheson. \$160/per child with sibling discounts available. Eventbrite.com.

School Vacation Days

Registration is open for the next School Vacation Day, Monday, February 21 from 8:30am-3:00pm. For ages 5-11. \$50/child for the day. Does not include lunch. Children should dress for outdoor activities. Eventbrite.com.

Forest Divining

On Saturday, February 26, Urban Resources Initiative (URI) staffer and native species expert Chris Ozyck will lead volunteers in an exercise of 'forest divining.' Chris will instruct volunteers on identifying and pruning invasive vines that, when cut back, allow a healthy forest canopy in the farm's woods and wetlands. We have a limited number of pruners and loppers; bring

your own if you have them. Sturdy, waterproof shoes are suggested. Sign up via Signup Genius on our website.

Maple Tapping How-To

Visit the farm Saturday, February 26 at 2:00pm for this beginner how-to on making homemade syrup. We'll give you the tools you need and the basics for tapping and boiling syrup from maple and other tree varieties to make your own delicious syrup. If it's cold, we may even enjoy some time around the firepit. Registration fee includes the cost of a tree tapping kit to use at home. Sliding scale tickets \$15-\$25/pp. Eventbrite.com.

Garden Workshop Series

If you're dreaming of spring, Massaro has partnered with Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) in New Haven to offer a six-part garden workshop series. Sign up for one class or receive a discount for all six. All classes are offered on Saturdays from 10:00am-12:00pm via Zoom by Advanced Master Gardener Rachel Ziesk.

- › February 12 - Soils and Composting
- › February 19 - Garden Planning and Season Extenders

- › February 26 - Cool Weather Crops
- › March 5 - Warm Weather Crops
- › March 12 - Seed Starting
- › March 19 - Essential Flowers & Herbs for Vegetable Gardens

NHS is generously making these classes available for FREE to any community member who participates in a community garden in New Haven or the Valley. Standard fee: \$20/class. Register at Eventbrite.com.

Farm Online Store

Our produce, eggs and jarred products are available through our online store every other week. Order by 8pm Wednesday evenings for pickup on Friday afternoons. Peruse the online store at www.MassaroFarm.Square.Site.

Registration Open for 2022 Seasonal Vegetable Subscription (CSA)

Very soon, we will begin work in our greenhouse, planting the tiny seeds that will eventually produce thousands of pounds of veggies for your weekly CSA. Subscribe to our 10- or 20-week CSA now to assist our farmers in planning for the coming season. For the first time, we are offering our CSA with scaled pricing; you choose the price point that's right for you. 20-week share: \$440-795. 10-week flexible share: \$240-425. Fruit option from High Hill Orchard in Meriden: \$110. Last year's CSA sold out early; therefore, we encourage your reservation by April 1 to secure your spot. Print out and return a subscription form or pay online with a credit card at www.MassaroFarm.org.

The farm is also now accepting EBT cards. Call the farm office at (203) 736-8618 to arrange to make payment.

Ansonia Nature and Recreation Center Events

Location for all events: 10 Deerfield Lane, Ansonia Contact: 203-736-1053 or ansnaturectr@ansoniacr.org

Valentine Workshop at the Ansonia Nature and Recreation Center

Event Name: Eco Art & Upcycle Valentine Workshop
Date: Saturday, February 12, 2022
Time: 1:30 pm
Admission: FREE
Create gifts for your loved ones out of recycled materials. Up-cycle an old honey bottle into a colorful, mesmerizing sensory jar for your "beary-special" someone this Valentine's Day (or make one just for fun!). Supplies are provided, but you are welcome to bring small odds and ends, such as beads and buttons, if you'd like.

This will be a fun day to share with your family and friends! Register at ansnaturectr@ansoniacr.org for this FREE program. For all ages.

Tracking Class at the Ansonia Nature and Recreation Center

Event Name: Fresh Tracks
Date: Sunday, February 13, 2022
Time: 1:00 pm
Admission: FREE
Join Ranger Jeremy on a walk through snow-covered trails and discover some fascinating tracks. You will learn about local wildlife and how to identify different native species by their imprints and other signs left behind. Wear good boots and extra layers for this outdoor program. For ages 6 and up (children

must be accompanied by an adult). Please register ahead at ansnaturectr@ansoniacr.org.

Fly Fishing Class at the Ansonia Nature and Recreation Center

Event Name: Introduction to Fly Fishing with Paul Dinice
Date: Friday, February 18, 2022
Time: 7:00 pm
Admission: FREE
This free program covers all the essentials for beginners on how to Fly Fish. It will be in the form of a PowerPoint presentation as well as a 'hands-on' display of the items below. The program includes: - Gear and equipment needed - Line, leader, and tippet setup - Life cycle of May Flies and Caddis - Fishing techniques and

review of streamer fishing, nymphing, wet fly fishing, and dry fly fishing - Salt Water Fly Fishing in New England and the gear, equipment, and techniques needed. The program will also include a brief overview of fly tying and the flies needed for fresh and saltwater fly fishing. Email to ansnaturectr@ansoniacr.org to register for this free program. Space is limited.
"Dedicated to creating a lifelong connection to nature." Our mission is to foster environmental stewardship that connects our communities to the natural world of the Lower Naugatuck River Valley, and balance the demand for recreation with the need for conservation. Our 156-acre nature preserve is located at 10 Deerfield Lane, Ansonia, CT. For more information, visit ansnaturectr@ansoniacr.org.



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Amity Budgets, Surpluses, & the Impact on Taxpayers

Avoid Unnecessary Tax Increases; End Inflated Budgets

BY JIM LEAHY, VICE-CHAIRMAN
ORANGE BOARD OF FINANCE (OBOF)

The annual budget surplus situation at Amity is historic, habitual, and causes over-taxation of the residents in Bethany, Orange & Woodbridge every year. For example, if Amity had sent budgets over the past 4 years that accurately requested their needs, taxes in Orange would not have had to be raised much at all.

POINT 1: AMITY HAS INFLATED BUDGETS. Over the last 4 years Amity has over-budgeted by an average of **\$2.9 million per year**, see chart. As a result, we have consistently had to increase your taxes each year to cover these inflated Amity budgets.

Amity EOY Surplus	
FY 17-18	\$3,114,711
FY 18-19	\$2,367,820
FY 19-20	\$3,449,000
FY 20-21	\$2,991,592

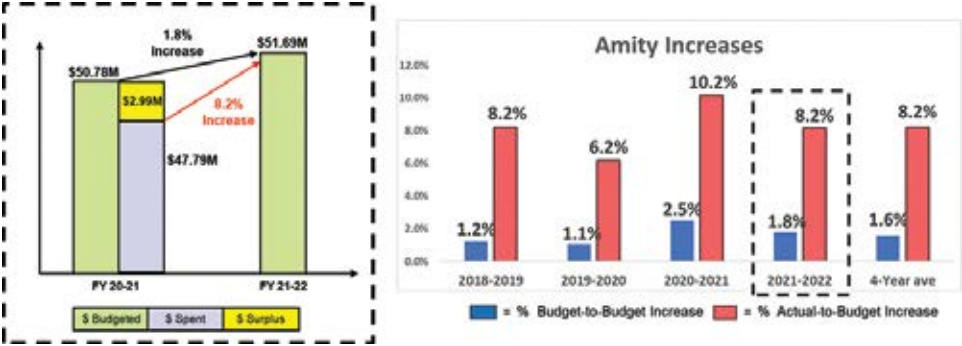
Whether we believe that Amity budget is accurate or not, once the Amity budget is approved by voters, the Boards of Finance in Bethany, Orange & Woodbridge must -- by law -- cover that request by increasing taxes. Or cutting funds to our local elementary schools. Or cutting funds to town services. Or both. We have no choice.

“The most important point is that Amity has highly excessive surpluses which lead to tax increases that we shouldn’t have to impose.” stated OBOF Chairman Kevin Houlihan. “We are expecting Amity to budget for what they need and not continually over budget.”

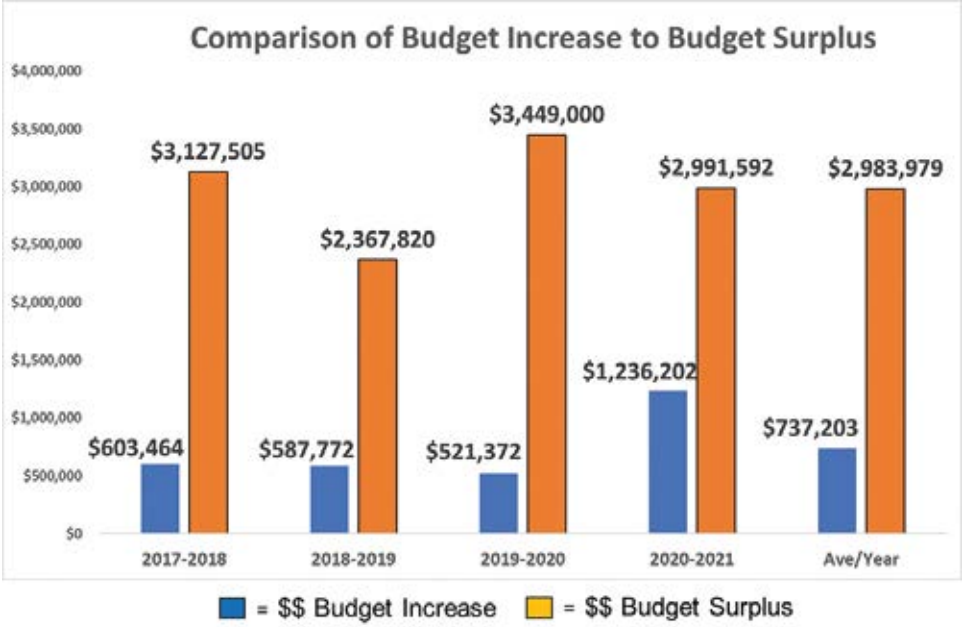
We should support the Amity Schools with the resources that it needs to provide the excellent educational opportunity that our students deserve. But it is imperative during these times that are difficult for both individual taxpayers and businesses, that Amity submits a budget request that accurately reflects its needs. The habitual over-budgeting that forces unnecessary tax increases on ALL Taxpayers in our community needs to stop.

Point 2: AMITY ACTUAL-to-BUDGET INCREASES ARE SHOCKINGLY HIGH. Somewhat quizzically, these surpluses exist even as Amity has had low percentage budget increases recently. You might be thinking out loud, “How can that be?”

Permit me to explain: in FY 21-22, Amity’s budget increase was 1.8%, a seemingly modest increase. However, with a surplus of \$2,991,592 in the prior year, the budget increase from ACTUAL SPENT to the new budget was 8.2%, over **4 TIMES HIGHER** than the requested amount. This trend has been consistent for over a decade but has become particularly excessive over the past 5 years.



Point 3: \$\$ SURPLUSES ARE SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER THAN \$\$ BUDGET INCREASES. I place this statement in the unique category of “beyond counter-intuitive” and wrote about it in an article last year (“Amity Overbudgeting Significantly Increases Taxes: Surpluses Reflect Overcharging” Orange Town News, 02-12-21). See the data below.



Permit me to explain. The BLUE bar is the actual amount of the Amity budget increase. The ORANGE bar is the SURPLUS in the SAME budget year. This chart should jump off the paper to the brain of Bethany, Orange and Woodbridge TAXPAYERS.

Let’s think about this. What this means is two-fold: (1) that Amity – in EVERY YEAR – has had more surplus, **FAR more Surplus**, in its budget than even the amount of the requested budget increase; and (2) therefore, that Amity – in EACH YEAR – did its job, could have had a **0% budget increase and still have a significant Surplus!** (the difference between the Blue and Orange bars)

“These surpluses are not a ‘one-time deal’ but consistent over time,” emphasized long-time OBOF member Kevin Moffett. “We have many things to fund in budgeting for the TOWN, not just Amity. And with inflation & high home heating costs hitting taxpayers, we need to ensure that all budgeted amounts truly reflect actual planned expenditures.”



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Student Wins Award in Cricket® Magazine Competition

Jane Liu of Woodbridge, age 10, received Second Prize in the October 2021 Cricket League art competition. For this contest, each entrant was asked to submit original art of a fantasy landscape. Jane's Artwork appears in the Cricket League section of the February 2022 issue and is posted at cricketmagkids.com/contests.

Cricket features the best short stories, poems, and articles by the world's finest children's authors and is illustrated by the best artists from here and abroad. In each issue, award-winning Cricket sponsors a different and unique writing or art competition, with hundreds of entries pouring in each time from enthusiastic CRICKET readers all over the world. Winners receive recognition and a certificate, and the best entries are published in the magazine and on its website for children: cricketmagkids.com/contests.

Founded in 1973, Cricket is published by Cricket Media, also publisher of Babybug®, the magazine for infants and toddlers ages 6 months to 3 years, Ladybug® for children ages 3 to 6, Spider® for ages 6 to 9, the nonfiction magazines Click®, Ask®, and Muse®, and the Cobblestone® line of history and world culture magazines for young people. Cricket Editorial Board members include Roger Sutton, Ann Thwaite, Katherine Paterson, Linda Sue Park, and Anita Silvey. Carolyn Digby Conahan is staff artist. Now available in both print and digital editions, for more information please visit www.cricketmedia.com.

Woodbridge Town News

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- Patricia



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MEGGIE KE 203.589.7162 WOODBRIDGE OFFICE
CHRIS LOVEJOY 203.671.5684 WOODBRIDGE OFFICE
ENILDA ROSAS 203.988.7393 WOODBRIDGE OFFICE

“Doubt thou the stars are fire, Doubt that the sun doth move. Doubt truth to be a liar, But never doubt I love.” — WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

TOWN DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES

Youth Services

BY NANCY PFUND



Left: This delightful and whimsical snow creation was included in last year's challenge. Make sure to enter the Snow Art Challenge
Right: Scott Driscoll presenting to AMSB 7th and 8th grade students on Internet Safety sponsored by Woodbridge Youth Services

Call 203-389-3429 or email npfund@woodbridgect.org for information or to sign up for programs. Like us on Facebook Woodbridge, CT Youth Services

Snow Art Challenge for Woodbridge and Bethany Families

Bethany and Woodbridge families who find themselves looking for outdoor fun this winter can express their talents by entering the Youth Services Snow Art Competition. Email a photo as an attachment of you and your family with your creation to youthone@woodbridgect.org. Prizes will be awarded for skill and creativity. Check the Town of Woodbridge website at <https://www.woodbridgect.org/160/Youth-Services> or see our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Woodbridge-Youth-Services-Woodbridge-CT-> for updates and prizewinners. Due date for photos is March 1, 2022. Sponsored by Woodbridge Youth Services and the Town of Bethany.

Internet Safety

On Monday January 31st, all 7th and 8th grade students at Amity Middle School Bethany participated in an internet safety presentation given by Scott Driscoll of Internet Safety Concepts. The presentations provided students with information on how to safely use technology and how to best avoid the potential dangers of the internet. Social media safety as well as cyberbullying were also addressed. This presentation was sponsored by Woodbridge Youth Services.

Job Bank

It's snow season! Residents may call to hire teens to shovel or do odd jobs. Please plan for snow shoveling as

the number of teens is limited. Teens who want paid work should contact Youth Services to schedule an interview. The Job Bank is a referral service for residents who offer odd jobs to resident teens ages 13 – 18.

Valentine Wishes for Seniors

Bring some smiles to the faces of our senior residents by making a few valentines to show you care. Get creative and send a message of love and hope. Youth Services will distribute them to local seniors who may be lonely due to the pandemic and may lack the technology to stay in touch with family and friends. Please leave your cards in the Valentine collection box. Collection boxes can be found at Youth Services (4 Meetinghouse Lane), Amity Middle School Bethany, Amity High School, Beecher Road School or outside the Woodbridge Center gym. Please submit your cards by Monday 2/14.

Nominations for First Selectman's Youth Award Sought

If you know a Woodbridge youth (up to 18 years old) who has volunteered their time working to improve the Town of Woodbridge or its residents, consider nominating that deserving resident. Principals, teachers, fellow students, neighbors, group, and religious leaders, etc. are encouraged to make nominations. Parents or family members may not nominate a relative. Nominations are due to Youth Services by April 4. The winner will receive an award and a gift at a date to be determined later this spring. The nomination form can be found on the Town Website.

Pi Day Celebration



Woodbridge Youth Services will be holding an after-school program to celebrate Pi Day on March 14th at Amity Middle School Bethany. Students will

get to make their own individual pizzas! The cost to register is \$10.00. A permission form can be found on the Town website.

Recreation News



Spring Programs

Registration for Spring Programs begins on February 23rd. Programs include: bowling, basketball, Clay Date, Hip Hop Dance, gymnastics, Kumon, Kids Dig Farms, Little Scientists, Coding Club, piano lessons, Running Club, Taekwondo, tennis, and Ultimate Team Sports.

Most programs begin the week of March 28. Call 203-389-3446, or use the registration link on the Town website, WoodbridgeCT.org.

Adult Programs

Adult badminton for all skill levels, ages 16 and above, takes place every Wednesday, 7-9 pm, at Beecher Road School, South. Masks are required. Players should bring a racket; nets and feathered birdies are supplied. Winter

session in progress. Prorated memberships are available or pay a \$10 drop-in fee. Spring Session March 9 through May 25, and Summer Session June 1 through August 3.

Adult yoga and T'ai Chi classes are also available. Registration for all adult programs is ongoing.

Night Ice Skating Announced

Weather permitting, there will be night ice skating at the Town's ice rink located at the Tennis Courts at 149 Center Road, on February 19 through 22, and also on March 4 and 5. Details will be on the Town's website closer to the date. Call the Recreation Department Office at 203-389-3446 for more details.

HUMAN SERVICES

Local Masks and Test Kits: Woodbridge residents who are elderly, vulnerable, or disabled and those with non-licensed childcare (a child taken care of by a family member or nanny, but not at a licensed daycare center) may call to request a COVID-19 at-home test kit through the Human Services office at 203-389-3429. No walk-ins available; residents must call ahead. Residency required. Curbside-pickup only with appointment. N-95 masks are also available to all residents who call ahead for curbside pick-up- limited per household.

Ordering at-home COVID-19 tests: To order COVID home test kits, at no cost, go to covidtests.gov. This site is live and accepting orders for kits per household. Those without internet access or who need additional assistance with ordering can call 1-800-232-0233 (TTY 1-888-720-7489) to place their orders. Home test kits are best used when someone is showing symptoms of COVID-19. Someone with a negative result should re-test 24-48 hours later. Human Services may also provide referrals for PCR testing, vaccinations, and booster shots. Test kits are also available at some local stores. If you have health insurance through an employer or Marketplace, your insurance will refund you for 8 at-home tests each month for each person on your plan.

Blood Drive: An American Red Cross Blood Drive is scheduled on March 6 from 11 am to 4 pm at the Center Building Gymnasium. Appointments are required. Please visit redcrossblood.org and use sponsor code NDF or call 1-800-733-2767 to make an appointment. According to the American Red Cross, Connecticut has a critically low blood supply. Prior to the pandemic, a national surplus of blood products could be used to mitigate regional shortages. Currently, there is no national surplus. Every donation helps! This event is sponsored by American Red Cross and co-hosted by the Nicole Donzello Foundation

and Woodbridge Human Services. See article on page 11.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA): In partnership with the IRS and the Connecticut Association for Human Services (CAHS), the Woodbridge Center offers free tax preparation through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. The program runs Tuesdays from 9 am-12 pm beginning February 8. In this third tax season of the pandemic, taxpayers with low to moderate income, senior citizens, people with disabilities, and those with limited English now have four options to safely and accurately complete 2021 tax returns. 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 a drive-through or in-person appointment. For more details on Woodbridge VITA services, see the Human Services website here: <https://www.woodbridgect.org/223/Human-Services-Department>.

Energy Assistance Program: Human Services will accept appointments for residents to apply for the 2021-2022 CT Energy Assistance Program administered by TEAM, Inc. Income eligibility requirements must be met. For information, or to schedule an appointment, call Judi Young at 203-389-3429.

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 at 203-389-3429.

A bottle of Woodbridge Wines & Spirits. The bottle is dark with a red foil-wrapped neck. The label is white with black text and a circular seal in the center. The text on the label reads "2021 WINES & SPIRITS of WOODBRIDGE".

We deliver. Call your order in to
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**Valentine's Day
Special of the Month
Confetti (All Varietals), \$12.**



Alternatives to Common Valentine's Gifts

Millions of people are set to spend untold dollars on Valentine's Day gifts or experiences this year. Data compiled by InfographicPlaza.com indicates that individuals traditionally spend the most on jewelry, a night out, flowers, apparel, and gift cards on Valentine's Day. Fifty-two percent of people who buy Valentine's gifts will spend money on candy, particularly chocolate.

Though tried and true gifts never fail, those looking for something a little different this Valentine's day can consider these alternatives.

Traditional:
Candy/chocolate
Alternative: *Baked goods*

Bite-sized baked offerings can be a welcome change to boxed chocolates or chocolate-covered strawberries. Consider petit fours, which are tasty layered cakes about one to two inches in size. The popular franchise Nothing Bundt Cakes also offers Bundtinis™, which are slightly smaller than cupcakes and can be mixed and matched in a variety of cake flavors.

Traditional: **Bouquet of a dozen red roses**
Alternative: *Flowering plant*

Even well-maintained cut bouquets only last so long. A flowering plant can endure much longer. Beautiful interior flowering plants include African violets, Bromeliads, Orchids, Peace lilies, Amaryllis, Christmas cactuses, and Jasmines.

Traditional: **Dinner out**

Alternative: *Feed the needy*

Civic-minded sweethearts may appreciate the thought of donating the time and money they might normally spend on a restaurant meal by helping to ensure needy children and adults have access to hot meals. The Feeding America network is a nationwide network of food banks that secures and distributes meals. Individuals can learn more about volunteerism or how to make donations at feedingamerica.org/.

Traditional: **Lingerie**
Alternative: *Time spent together*

In a poll of more than 350 women, Business Insider discovered that lingerie was one of the gifts women did not want to receive on Valentine's Day. In fact, 97 percent of respondents weren't fans of receiving lingerie on Valentine's Day. Spending time together doing something couples are passionate about may be more well-received.

Traditional: Stuffed animal
Alternative: Adopted animal

There are only so many stuffed animals, particularly fuzzy teddy bears, an adult can collect. Instead, why not adopt a shelter animal or donate to an animal rights organization? Before gifting a pet, confirm the recipient is on board with the idea. A pet is a years-long emotional and financial commitment that requires forethought and planning.

Couples can look beyond the traditional when shopping for Valentine's Day gifts this year.

LOCAL SPORTS

Amity Hall of Fame Induction

The 2021-2022 Amity Academic Hall of Honor and Athletic Hall of Fame Induction ceremony will take place on April 28, 2022, at the Grassy Hill Country Club in Orange beginning at 5:00 P.M.

Honorees Include:
Allison Barwise – Class of 2009
Athletic Hall of Fame
Soccer, Indoor and Outdoor Track & Field
Joseph Ciancola – Class of 2010
Athletic Hall of Fame
Hockey, Baseball

Sal Coppola – Class of 1987
Athletic Hall of Fame
Varsity Baseball Coach
Janice Ehorn – Class of 2008
Athletic Hall of Fame
Volleyball

Erin (McLaughlin) Guise – Class of 2005
Athletic Hall of Fame
Swimming
Gilbert Jennings – Class of 1991
Athletic Hall of Fame
Football, Wrestling, Outdoor Track & Field

Scott Klein – Class of 1988
Academic Hall of Honor
Journalist, Deputy Managing Editor at ProPublica

Robert Leonard – Class of 1987
Academic Hall of Honor
Entrepreneur, Business Owner of New England Brewing Co.

Mark Levine – Class of 1988
Academic Hall of Honor
Mechanical Engineer, Advocate Ambassador to others with Cystic Fibrosis

Michael Slomsky – Class of 1991
Academic Hall of Honor
Finance and Charity

Dinner tickets are \$55 in advance with a purchase deadline of April 11, 2022. There will be NO tickets for purchase at the door.

For **Athletic Hall of Fame** tickets, make checks payable to Amity Alumni Athletic Hall of Fame and mail to:

Amity High School Athletic Department
Att. Lori Bonney
25 Newton Rd.
Woodbridge CT 06525

For **Academic Hall of Honor** tickets, make checks made payable to the Amity Hall of Honor and mail to:
Amity District Office
Att. Cecelia M Castillon
25 Newton Road
Woodbridge, CT 06525



“To-Do List” From Page 1

ture – safety - and quality of life.

She came up with a list of sample goals that the Selectmen might want to consider. Those included:

- › The future use of the country club property;
- › Financial stability (growing Grand List);
- › Focus on diversity and ensured equity in town operations;
- › Promote affordable and senior housing;
- › Sustainability through energy savings, trash reduction, and alternative energies.

Housing opportunity: The Housing Opportunity Study Committee is working to suggest an affordable housing plan, as required by the state. The group most recently launched a Woodbridge specific survey, which is available on the town’s website, to get a better understanding of what type of housing options residents would welcome, and where. Its plan will tie in with that of the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCROG), which is working on a regional approach. The plan is due in July.

Potential Referendum I: Heller expressed hope the town will be able to resurrect certain building projects that last year’s Board of Selectmen was working on. Those projects include roof replacements at Beecher Road School; turning the Old Firehouse into a community center; and Senior Center upgrades.

The plan to conduct a public hearing in preparation for the referendum came to a halt after the town experienced technical difficulties trying to administer a virtual Town Meeting, and the subsequent in-person meeting devolved into an unproductive rumpus.

Potential Referendum II: As the town is engaging in talks with the developers of the suggested Arbor Haven proposal for the CCW, the First Selectman expressed hope that they will be able to pull together a proposal that can pass at referendum. “I expect the board will have continuing discussions about the CCW as we move through the first quarter of 2022,” she wrote. “A \$9,000,000 infusion of capital to the Town will fully pay off the outstanding CCW loan balance and

leave a significant amount for other important programs, including the most important program the Town offers, which is the education of our children. This will ultimately be up to the voters to make a choice.”

Town Center: Most recently Heller announced that the town successfully applied for a Department of Transportation grant, which will add sidewalks to connect the high school with the town center, and add lighting as well. Students often walk from the high school to the Town Library and currently walk in the street, while buses and cars are leaving.

There have been events when the town has used the High School parking lot for overflow parking, and having a walkway would increase the safety of pedestrians. The value of the grant is for \$600,000. The town also applied for signage and solar-powered speed awareness signs.

Center Plans: The town is continuing work on figuring out how to allocate federal dollars received through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). So far, they are suggesting to use those funds to improve outdoor programming space, in particular in the Grove next to the library. For example, the town could purchase a tent which can be used for a variety of events and by many departments. They are also suggesting HVAC improvements at the Center Building; playground and park maintenance due to increased use during the pandemic; and marketing of events in the business district.

Diversity & Inclusion: First Selectman Heller appointed an ad-hoc Diversity and Inclusion Committee last year, which is working to “identify and assess issues related to diversity and inclusion, or the lack thereof,” and recommend steps to improve on that score. This committee also is working on a survey, to better understand people’s living experience in Woodbridge and find out where the group needs to focus its work.

It is also sponsoring a book discussion on the 1619 Project February 24 at the Town Library.

Meanwhile the **Community Council** is planning to continue welcome coffees to help introduce new residents to the Town and answer their questions.

“Proposal” From Page 1

around the former clubhouse, in the hopes that it could be used as a banquet hall or similar commercial venture.

When asked what brought on the change in direction, First Selectman Beth Heller wrote in an email that she had received many calls and emails from residents who are in favor of this proposal and want to vote on this matter. “I believe having a referendum is the responsible thing to do, and let the voters decide,” she wrote.

The Conservation Commission in December had advised the Board of Selectmen of its opposition to large-scale development on the 150-acre property. In a memo dated November 18, 2021, it laid out in detail why it thought the proposal was a bad idea.

First and foremost, the conservationists point out that their mission is to “protect and actively manage the town’s natural resources,” as it reads on the town’s website; and “developing the largest piece of undeveloped property in town for high density housing is contrary to our charter.” The property contains wetlands, endangered species and extensive other wildlife that should be protected.

The memo also points out that the master plan for the Woodbridge Greenway — a trail system that connects open spaces and links into a regional trail system — will surround the town. “The country club property is a missing link in our Greenway system that is critical in linking other established contiguous Greenway spaces in Woodbridge, Orange and New Haven and should be protected,” the authors wrote.

In addition to the environmental impact of the project, the memo also brings up some of the more controversial aspects of the project. For instance, opponents have taken to referring to the property as the “Roger Sherman Farm” to stress its historic

significance, and, by extension, prevent development.

Although it is true that Roger Sherman — one of the founders of the United States — owned property in that area, he never actually lived there, according to Mary Dean, a history buff. Similarly, Kathy Hunter, a fellow member of the Woodbridge Housing Opportunity Study group pointed out that the historic significance with regard to the Woodbridge Country Club is that it was founded as a golf club for people of Jewish faith, who often were excluded from other area clubs. “That speaks to creating housing opportunity for everybody,” she said.

The Conservation memo, which was written by four board members, also disputes the developers’ assertions regarding potential tax income for the town. At \$625,000 for a two-bedroom, age-restricted, attached home, the projected sales prices are too high, they claim, calling into question the tax revenue that can be expected. The projected cost for schooling of additional school-age children moving into town are too low, the authors of the memo contend, coming to the conclusion that “this proposal only financially benefits the developer and not town residents.”

When asked about these points, the first selectman responded by saying she was planning to take the comments made back to the developers, so as to refine the proposal. In addition to the points made by the Conservation Commission, some 18 residents submitted letters in support of their position.

They speak of the loss of clean air and water and diminished quality of life. Many also bring up studies that speak to the economic benefit of conservation.

One neighbor, Abby Santamaria, wrote that for her and her family, as well as many neighbors, “the place is a sanctuary, and we can’t imagine living here with it gone.”



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HOUSES OF WORSHIP EVENTS

Congregation Or Shalom Happenings

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Staying Connected, While We Keep Our Distance
To Register for a Zoom event, call the office at (203) 799-2341 or email coshalom@sbcglobal.net

Join us for Our Weekly Services
Minyan Services
• Sunday 9:00 AM Zoomed
• Monday 8:30 AM Zoomed
• Thursday 8:30 AM Zoomed

Shabbat Services
• Friday 7:30 PM Zoomed & in person
• Saturday 9:30 AM Zoomed & in person

Virtual Learning This Month: “Zoom &..Learn!”
Wednesdays, 11am-12 noon, Beginning March 2-In Person or Zoom
The 5 Scrolls And The Seasons Of Our Lives

The Bible’s “Scrolls” or, “Megillot,” read in synagogue at various times of the year, have also been seen as responses to the different seasons of life. Indeed, they chart a path of healing for us as we move through the trajectory of our lives. Come and explore the timeless messages embedded in these five ancient scrolls!

Join a New Book Group in 2022!
Thursday February 17th at 7:00 pm
Florence Adler Swims Forever
by Rachel Beanland
Atlantic City, 1934. Every summer, Esther and Joseph Adler rent their house out to vacationers escaping to “America’s Playground” and move into the small apartment above their bak-



Congregation Or Shalom

ery. Despite the cramped quarters, this is the apartment where they raised their two daughters, Fannie and Florence, and it always feels like home. Now, Florence has returned from college, determined to spend the summer training to swim the English Channel, and Fannie, pregnant again after recently losing a baby, is on bedrest for the duration of her pregnancy. After Joseph insists, they take in a mysterious young woman whom he recently helped emigrate from Nazi Germany, the apartment is bursting at the seams. When tragedy strikes, Esther makes the shocking decision to hide the truth—at least until Fannie’s baby is born—and pulls the family into an elaborate web of secret-keeping and lies, bringing long-buried tensions to the surface that reveal how quickly the act. Contact the office at 203.799.2341 to get the Zoom registration link.

Social Action
Our Mitzvah of the month is collecting socks and mittens. We will be donating supplies to the Downtown Soup Kitchen. If you would like to donate, please contact the office 203-799-2341.

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

The First Church of Christ – Woodbridge

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

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

Live Stream
Sunday Service can be viewed on our website every Sunday at 10:00 a.m. A video recording of the live stream is featured for the entire week following the service. To view previous Sunday Services, visit our YouTube channel, using the link provided on all pages of our website. (Links, contact info, and a schedule of upcoming Services are listed at the bottom of this article.)

**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 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Mondays through Fridays.

Sanctuary Décor Restoration
The John Canning Company has completed the Phase One sanctuary restoration. Please attend a Sunday service and see the restored ceiling, rosette, cornices, and the north wall. The new décor is glorious.

Interim Minister
FCCW is pleased to announce that we have found a very qualified candidate to fill the position of the Interim Minister. The Rev. Susan Murtha started February 1, 2022. Visit the church office for more information. You can also read about her on our website or in our January newsletter. We are honored to welcome such an extraordinary individual!
**The Rev. Janice Touloukian has graciously offered to continue on as our On Call Pastor, helping with visitations and congregational needs when Rev. Murtha is not available.*

Weekly Bible Study
Bible Study meets at the Parish House each Wednesday, 10:00 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. All are invited!

Join the FCCW Choir!
New members are always welcome.



The First Church of Christ

Join us for rehearsals, Wednesdays at 6:30PM.

Boy Scout Troop #907
Regular scout meetings are held every Thursday, at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish House. Stop by with the young man in your family (ages 11-17 years old) and meet our great scouts! New members are always welcome. For more information go to www.troop907.org.

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 JoAnna Rubino at growfirstchurch@gmail.com.*

FCCW SUNDAY SERVICE MINISTER SCHEDULE

Feb. 6 th	Rev. Susan Murtha
Feb. 13 th	Rev. Greg Mobley
Feb. 20 th	Rev. Susan Murtha
Feb. 27 th	Rev. Glenn Dulko
Mar. 6 th	Rev. Susan Murtha
Mar. 13 th	Rev. Greg Mobley
Mar. 20 th	Rev. Susan Murtha
Mar. 27 th	Rev. Raquel Irizarry

Sunday Mass: 5:00pm
Contact us: 203-795-5076
ourladyofsorrowst@yahoo.com
Facebook: @OurLadyOfSorrowsTraditional
378 Spring St., Orange (off of Racebrook Rd)

HOUSES OF WORSHIP

Congregation Beth El – Keser Israel Events

In Person and Online

BEKI offers In-Person services twice daily, but requests that only vaccinated people come into the building and that they wear a KN-95 or better mask. Until the pandemic subsides, Shabbat morning services are also live streamed at www.beki.org on Saturdays at 9:15 am. Weekday morning and evening services are available on Zoom. To request the Zoom link, email office@beki.org.

Children’s Programs

Children’s Havura, K-2 Kehila, and Junior Congregation meet in person at 11 am on Saturday mornings. All children over age 2 should be masked. Saturday evening Havdalah programs on Zoom will continue through February. To receive her weekly newsletter, email Youth and Family Programming Director Annie Norman-Schiff at anormanschiff@beki.org.

First Friday at Five

BEKI Kabbalat Shabbat In-Person services will be at the kid-friendly time of 5 pm on Friday, March 4.

Melodies for Prayer

Ethnomusicologist Rachel Adelstein’s online class on the origins and evolution of tunes for Jewish prayers will meet on Monday, February 14 at 8:00 pm. Adelstein, who received her PhD in ethnomusicology from the University of Chicago, regularly offers classes at BEKI about Jewish music. To request the Zoom link, email office@beki.org. This course is provided with support from the Morris & Sara Openheim Fund for Sacred Music.

Book Talk

Author Jennifer Anne Moses will discuss her most recent book, a collection of short stories entitled *The Man Who Loved His Wife*, on Wednesday, February 23 at 7:30 p.m. This book, she explains, “is the result of my deep dive into Yiddish literature and my love of the Hebrew language.” Also, a painter, she is the author of six prior books, dozens of essays and articles; she currently writes a blog for *The Times of Israel*. To request the Zoom link, email office@beki.org.

Evacuating Afghans

Thomas Huddleston, who for the past 15 years has been a strategic ad-



Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel

visor for the Migration Policy Group, will speak Wednesday, March 2 at 7:30 pm. He organized studies and initiatives as part of Europe’s 2015/2016 “Refugees Welcome” movement for Syrian refugees. Now he is donating his expertise to help the Jewish Community Alliance for Refugee Resettlement (JCARR) recruit and train new volunteers to welcome an Afghan refugee family. To request the Zoom link, email office@beki.org.

COVID Research

Epidemiologist Dan Weinberger from the Yale School of Public Health will return for another BEKI Zoom Schmooze on March 9 at 7:30 pm. Professor Weinberger’s topic is “COVID-19, Where are we now? Data from the U.S. and Israel.” To request the Zoom link, email office@beki.org.

Purim Celebration

The reading of Megillat Esther will be at 7:00 pm in person and on Zoom Wednesday, March 16, and will be repeated at 7:30 am Thursday morning March 17. Costumes are encouraged for adults and children. A child-friendly Megillah reading, costume parade and light supper prior to the evening service will start at 5:30 pm on Wednesday, March 16.

Ethical Kashrut

As part of the congregation’s continued commitment to ethically-sourced products, all chocolate served at BEKI—including desserts at Kiddush lunches and gelt distributed at Hanukkah—now carries certification that it has been screened against child slavery. “This resolution reflects our continued commitment to Tikun Olam and ethically-sourced products,” BEKI President Yaron Lew explained.

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

Amity Physical Therapy Zooms in Again on Seniors

With ongoing virtual sessions for Woodbridge Seniors, Amity Physical Therapy continues its helpful advice towards healthy physical practices that can avoid debilitating injuries.

Recently, Kyle Branday, MSPT, a veteran clinician in the Woodbridge office, conducted his third zoom session, this time on the troublesome shoulder rotator cuff. Many active people of all ages at some point may experience this painful rotator cuff injury. Branday concentrated on the basic structure of the rotator cuff and its function, cause of injury, and the role of physical therapy to correct the condition that includes manual therapy, neuromuscular reeducation, and corrective exercises both in clinic and at home. He also covered the pathology of the rotator cuff and, in some cases, the possible need for orthopedic surgery and alternative intervention.

His virtual series has been attended by many Woodbridge Seniors through the town’s Senior Center and is anticipated to become a frequent program keeping seniors up to date on the latest physical therapy techniques that diagnose and prevent musculoskeletal



Kyle Branday

injury and neurological problems such as dizziness, headaches, and balance dysfunction.

Amity Physical Therapy was founded seventeen years ago by Michael Dow MSPT and CEO/ Clinical Director. The practice now has four offices in Woodbridge, Hamden, Branford and Milford. Kyle Branday can be reached at 203-389-4593 or visit www.amitypt.com to request an appointment.



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WILEY ETTER DOYON ATTORNEYS

Be Sure to Cover Your Estate Planning Basics in 2022

While no two estate plans are exactly alike, there are certain documents that should be included in almost everyone's estate plan. Here is a checklist to reference when reviewing your existing estate planning documents or taking steps to put these documents in place to protect what's important to you.

Durable Power of Attorney Instrument. A Durable Power of Attorney Instrument appoints a person (or people), referred to as an "Agent," who has authority to make financial decisions for you while you're alive but if you are incapable of acting for yourself. For example, if you are out of the country and financial transactions must be performed on your behalf, your Agent can make financial decisions and sign financial documents for you. Anyone over the age of 18 should have a Durable Power of Attorney Instrument in place.

Health Care Instructions. Health Care Instructions include: (1) your "living Will" which indicates whether or not you want life support in extenuating circumstances; (2) appoints your "Health Care Representative" to make medical decisions for you if you are alive but unable to express your medical wishes; and (3) specifies your wishes for organ donation, if any. Anyone over the age of 18 should have a Durable Power of Attorney Instrument in place.

Your Will. A Will is a document that instructs who will receive your assets after your death and names your Executor(s) (the person or people in charge of carrying out your wishes and probating your estate with the Probate Court). If you don't have a Will, you should consult with an attorney about drafting one. If you do have a Will, you should review your Will to be sure it clearly states your current intentions for who will receive your assets and who is named as your Executor(s). Additionally, if you have children under the age of 18, your Will should name who will be appointed as Guardian to care for those children.

Your Designated Beneficiaries of Non-Probate Assets. You should review the names of the primary and contingent beneficiaries listed on your non-probate assets, such as your life insurance policies, annuities, 401(k), 403(b), or IRA accounts, to be sure that the designated beneficiaries accurately reflect your current wishes for who will receive these assets after your death.

If you are interested in learning more about the estate planning documents you should have in place, please call the office to schedule your no-hassle, no-charge initial consultation, no matter how long it lasts.



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



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HEALTH & FITNESS

Shoveling Snow and Low Back Pain

BY ROB PRESTA DPT

Low back pain has become a top concern lately due to our increased time spent sitting, resulting in increased stress on the spine and reduced core strength. This sedentary lifestyle makes our spine more vulnerable when performing other tasks such as lifting. It becomes especially important around this time of year due to heavy snowfall.

Depending on how wet the snow is, it can get very heavy, especially when it's sitting on the end of a long lever such as a shovel. This can cause a lot of stress on our bodies as we attempt to clear the snow from our driveways and pathways. However, there are many tips that can be used to make clearing the snow easier and safer, reducing the chance of injury.

As with any lifting activity, posture is essential to reducing low back stress when shoveling snow. Bending at the hips and knees is required to reduce bending from the back. Flexing forward with the spine requires the muscles of the back to work harder and puts significantly more pressure on the discs, which can lead to disc herniation. To make this easier, remember to keep the knees bent, stick the buttocks back, and your chest out. This will help keep the spine straighter and shift the work load to the strong muscles of the legs. This helps with any sort of lifting tasks from picking up boxes to shoveling snow. Also, as with other heavy lifting tasks, try to avoid twisting the spine. Try throwing the snow forwards in front of you instead of rotating the spine to throw it over to the side.

There are also some points to keep in mind regarding what tools you use to clear the snow. The further you bend over, the more difficult it becomes to maintain good posture and lifting mechanics. To help with this, some shovels are made to include a bend to the shaft. This allows the hand furthest on the shovel to be higher when the shovel meets the ground, so you don't have to bend down as far to scoop up the snow. If you have the option, go with a shovel that has a bent shaft to make it easier to lift and scoop the snow.

Other recommendations are to determine which type of shovel is best for the situation. Shovels can be classified into either push or scoop



Rob Presta DPT

types. Push shovels have open sides, while scoop shovels have closed sides to prevent the snow from sliding off. Push shovels tend to be a bit wider to allow greater area of coverage. If the snow is light or if you can go outside several times throughout the snow fall, push shovels can save your back a lot of stress. Push shovels allow you to stand up straighter and push with the weight of your body instead of relying on your back to lift the snow off the ground. Scoop shovels, on the other hand, make it easier to lift the snow since they prevent the snow from sliding off the sides. Also, since they aren't as wide, it is easier to control the shovel when lifted off the ground.

Hopefully these tips will help to make clearing the snow a bit easier and safer. But if you do hurt yourself while trying to shovel, or already have low back pain to begin with, please see your local physical therapist. Not only can they help reduce your pain, but they can also help you practice good body mechanics for lifting and shoveling snow to prevent further injury.

Rob Presta received his Doctorate Degree from Quinnipiac University. He has worked with patients of all ages and various diagnoses, focusing on outpatient orthopedics. His special areas of interest include physical performance, strength and conditioning. Amity Physical Therapy was founded seventeen years ago by Michael Dow MSPT and CEO/Clinical Director. The practice has four offices in Woodbridge, Hamden, Branford and Milford. Rob Presta can be reached at 203-691-6248 or visit www.amitypt.com.



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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

Our NEW Hours and Holiday Closings: The Library will be closed Monday, February 21 in observance of Presidents Day. We have returned to our pre-pandemic hours: Monday through Thursday, 10 am to 8 pm; Friday and Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm. We hope to see more of you soon.

Library Information

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, audio-books, and DVDs;
- › Computers: one hour per user; 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 NOW OPEN! The study room is available for one-hour reservations; please call the reference desk to book your time. Seating throughout the Library is limited and no puzzles or children's toys are in use.

Call or email to place holds, ask questions, find out information, and more. You may need to leave a message if calling; please do so, we WILL call you back!

Department phones and emails

Adult Services/Reference: 203-389-3434; reference@woodbridgetownlibrary.org

Children's Department: 203-389-



WOODBRIDGE
TOWN LIBRARY

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Not sure who you need? Email ask-us@woodbridgetownlibrary.org

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

TikTok: [@woodbridge_town_library](https://www.tiktok.com/@woodbridge_town_library)

Library Events

Art Exhibits have returned to the Library's Meeting Room! February's exhibit features photographs of the treasures of the Amity & Woodbridge Historical Society. Stop by the meeting room during open hours see the amazing artifacts and antiques. See more information: <https://woodbridge.lioninc.org/events/art-exhibits/>.

March will feature Palette Art Studio—a long time exhibitor! We will be featuring a different artist every month; stop by and check out these talented artists. Interested in having your artwork displayed? Fill out the form here: <https://woodbridge.lioninc.org/events/art-exhibits/>. Contact Kira Edic at kedic@woodbridgetownlibrary.org for more information.

From Adult Services

Adult Winter Reading: There's still time to participate in Adult Winter Reading! Read books and complete challenges to win prizes through February 28th. For more information, call or email the Reference Desk.

NEW! Writer's Workshop—last Tuesday of the month, 3 to 5 pm. Are you a writer looking for inspiration, feedback, or support for your work? At the Woodbridge Writer's Workshop you can share your writing and get feedback from a friendly, positive group. We can also help you find the resources to make your writing journey easier. All genres welcome—poetry, stories, memoirs, fiction, journalism, etc. Please register at the reference

desk or via email: warmstrong@woodbridgetownlibrary.org.

It's Time to Pivot – February 23, 6:30 pm in the Meeting Room: New Haven author and documentary maker Steve Hamm returns to the library with a program aimed at fostering action on climate change. He will talk about the need for action and the forms it can take as he explored them to write his new book, *The Pivot: Addressing Global Problems Through Local Action*. The book follows the journey of Pivot Projects, a collaboration launched at the beginning of the COVID crisis aimed at helping the world—and communities—become more sustainable and resilient. Through his involvement in Pivot Projects, Steve also produced a documentary, *A River Speaks*, focusing on Connecticut's Mill River, and which he will screen at the library. Taken together, the book and video are a call to action: for society, to pivot to becoming more sustainable and, for individuals, to become climate activists.

NEW DATE! Mindless to Mindful Eating Makeover – Postponed until March 10 at 7 pm in the Meeting Room. Learn healthier behaviors and how to create goals for improved personal habits in relation to food. Registration required—visit our website or call the reference desk. (Originally scheduled for January 20.)

Wadsworth Athenaeum Museum of Art Virtual Tour: Women Artists—March 16, 1 pm. Co-hosted with The Woodbridge Center; held at The Woodbridge Center. More information to come.

Plant Swap! March 26, 10 am to 1 pm. Have plants that don't spark joy anymore? Extra pots laying around the house? Seeds you don't plan on planting? Drop them off at the library on March 24 or 25. Return on Saturday to find new (to you) items! There will also be a potting and pot-decorating station. All ages welcome! Register yourself and your plants on our

website, or by calling 203-389-3434.

From The Children's Department

IMPORTANT! Our indoor programming is canceled until the latest Covid surge decreases—including weekly morning story times and Monday/Thursday craft times.

A Valentine's Take-And-Make STEAM Activity will be available starting February 7th. First-come, first-serve. No sign-up required.

Take-And-Make Activities & Crafts to celebrate Black history will be available throughout February. First-come, first-serve. No sign-up required.

A library book scavenger hunt featuring Black authors, illustrators, and historical figures will be available throughout February. Complete the scavenger hunt during your next library visit and receive a prize from one of the children's librarians. No sign-up required.

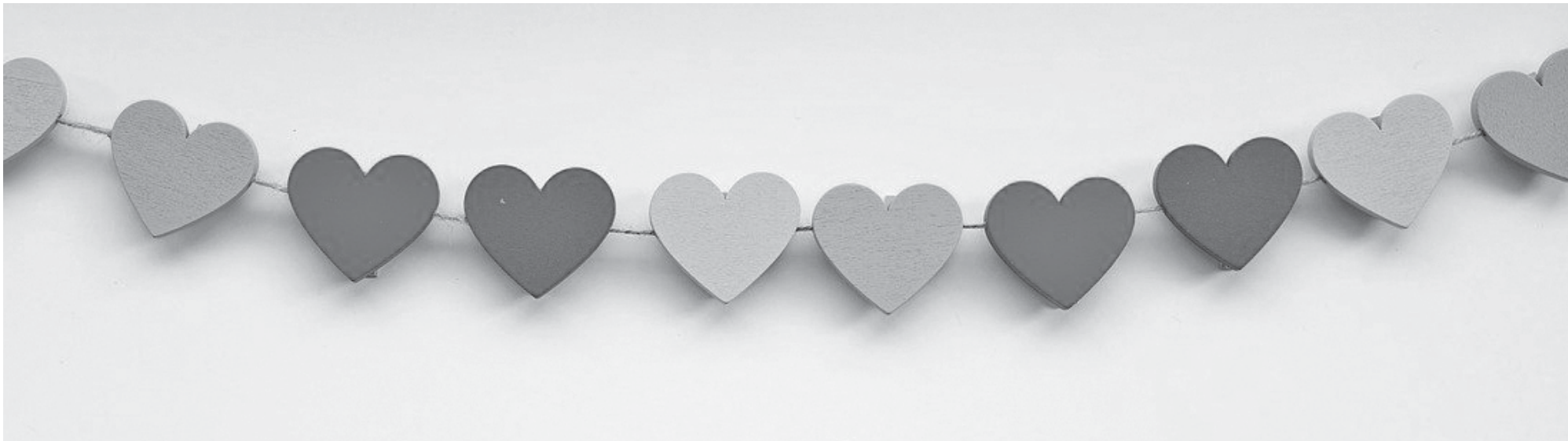
Winter Craft Kits: Available every 2 weeks now though the end of March. Participants must sign up online for each date they wish to receive a craft kit; registration is on a first come, first served basis. Kits will be held for one week for pick up in the children's department.

NEW! Eager Readers K-2 at home book discussion group. Our popular reading program moves home Pick up the book, discussion questions, and a simple craft to do together at home with parents or caregivers. This program is for students in K-2 only. Register online monthly.

News From The Friends Of The Library

The Friends Bookstore Alley is open anytime the library is, with ever-changing displays and fresh inventory. We can't wait to see you! We are also accepting donations of your gently used books, DVDs, CDs, etc.

You can also lend support by shopping on Amazon via Amazon Smile, and selecting Friends of the Woodbridge Library as your designated charity. The Friends also accept donations via PayPal. Supporting the Friends supports the Library—thank you!



“Letters” From Page 5

the recent changes to the zoning regulations that now allow major residential development with unprecedented density in every neighborhood.

Refer the matter to the 2021 Housing Committee. Otherwise, why have it?

Fully consider other proposals for use of the property including the offer from the Woodbridge Land Trust and the Woodbridge Park Association to purchase a conservation restriction.

The BOS was wise in deferring consideration of the Arbor Haven proposal pending a reasoned evaluation of potential development of that and other properties in Town. One wishes that they would stand by that pledge.

Al Smith

Al Smith is an environmental and municipal law attorney, born and raised, and still living in Woodbridge. He has served as Town Attorney and Special Counsel for many Connecticut municipalities. Al was Chair of Woodbridge’s Charter Revision Committee and has been a member of its Plan and Zoning Commission and Ethics Commission.

50 Year Resident Supports Arbor Haven Proposal

After reading the most recent Woodbridge Town News I thought I’d add a few comments. I fully agree with the need now for a referendum regarding the sale of the old WCC property. I’ve been a Woodbridge resident for almost 50 years and now have seen too many friends who have been Woodbridge town residents who, when they chose to downsize, have been forced to move to adjacent communities.

I’ve reviewed and strongly favor the Arbor Haven proposal. I believe it is absurd suggesting that this land should be preserved as open space in part because in the distant past it was once owned by Roger Sherman who to my understanding as a northerner from CT would not vote against slavery. Also, as a former member of the WCC I can assure you that no one including myself ever thought of the county club property as being on sacred land. I also feel that it is wrong for the WLT and WPA to try to block the sale of this land when our town has more than enough trails and open space. I feel that these organizations should stay out of town politics. As a side note, I will no longer support these two town organizations.

The comment frequently made that the former WCC property is currently used for outdoor activities is a gross exaggeration as in all the times that I’ve passed the old WCC property I’ve never seen it being used other than for sleighing after a snowstorm. Besides, this property is an eyesore in our community.

The cost to this town of carrying the WCC property is a burden to all of us and when the Arbor Haven proposal comes to a referendum, I will support it and be happy to display a sign on my front lawn in favor of the proposal.

Samuel Bobrow, MD

Woodbridge – We Can Do Better

I strongly support the proposal from Arbor Developers for the Woodbridge Country Club (WCC) property. I believe that it preserves the best aspects of Woodbridge’s environment while enabling us to be responsive to state and federal requirements, provide affordable housing and be a strong regional partner.

Woodbridge is situated in a richly diverse region - economically, socially, politically and racially. New Haven County offers a plethora of recreational, educational, religious, and cultural experiences and opportunities. We benefit greatly from being a part of this larger community, but we do not share in addressing the regional problem of providing affordable housing opportunities.

As a resident of Woodbridge, I have walked with friends and family and by myself on Woodbridge’s myriad trails - among them the WCC property. Additionally, I access the Regional Water Authority’s properties and other neighboring towns’ parks, trails and open spaces. We are fortunate to be surrounded by abundant recreational areas. Given this “wealth” of recreational and open space available, the plan for the WCC responds to the need for regional affordable housing while retaining much of the beauty of the existing WCC tract.

As an environmentalist, I appreciate Arbor’s focus on preserving the natural beauty of the property - retaining walking trails, extraordinary old growth trees, and the beautiful little pond while providing diverse and affordable housing. The thoughtful placement of multi-family housing integrated into the landscape is impressive and laudatory.

I was surprised by recent arguments against the Arbor proposal that raise the concept of historical preservation of the land because it was once the site of Roger Sherman’s farm. I believe that we would better honor his memory and legacy, given Sherman’s strong abolitionist stance and his belief in the dignity and equality of all humans, by promoting Woodbridge as an open community seeking to become more diverse both economically and racially.

Let us strongly consider adopting the proposed plan for the WCC land.

Sally Connolly

A More Beautiful Woodbridge

I have lived in Woodbridge with my family for almost 21 years, and in that time we have enjoyed the outstanding school system, open spaces and natural beauty, and proximity to New Haven. Woodbridge is, in many ways, a lovely place to live and raise a family, and I feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to do so. Many other families would also like to live in Woodbridge, but they cannot because of the lack of affordable housing here. At present, nearly all of the Town’s land area is exclusively reserved for single-family

homes on large lots. This means that many hard-working people, who seek the same opportunities that our family has had, have been excluded from our town. The Arbor Haven proposal to develop the property at the former Woodbridge Country Club would offer these deserving families the opportunity to live in Woodbridge.

Opponents of change often cite the need to preserve the beauty and “rural quality” of Woodbridge. But the Arbor Haven proposal, which offers open space for all residents of the town, would not destroy the beauty of Woodbridge. In fact, it would enhance it. After all, what makes a town an appealing place to live? It’s not just the trees and hiking trails and waterfalls. It’s also the way it feels to live there. In Woodbridge, we love our outstanding schools and the opportunity to commute to New Haven or other neighboring towns, but we don’t always seem to recognize what we are missing when our community lacks diversity. The people who might take advantage of more affordable housing in Woodbridge include hospital workers, small business owners, preschool teachers, and those who work for non-profit organizations. In short, hardworking taxpayers who just want for themselves and for their children what we in Woodbridge also want: a safe place to live that offers high-quality education and the opportunity to enjoy the beauty of the region.

What makes a town beautiful? In my opinion, a town is beautiful when it welcomes people of different economic, cultural, racial and educational backgrounds. A town is beautiful when it offers its young people the opportunity to interact with others who may have a different perspective on life. By offering affordable housing, Woodbridge has the opportunity to grow and change in the best possible ways. I strongly support the proposal to develop the former country club. It is Woodbridge’s best chance to become a town that is even more beautiful, in every way.

Jean Molot

Resident Supports Affordable Housing in Woodbridge

I believe in affordable housing in Woodbridge. I believe we have a responsibility to New Haven County and the state to do our fair share to provide affordable housing opportunities to people who need it. New Haven, a place where many of us work and entertain ourselves, is facing a crisis with an extreme shortage of housing that people can afford. Across the state of Connecticut, we are lacking more than 135,000 affordable housing units to meet our citizens’ needs. Our town is currently in violation of fair housing laws, the Zoning Enabling Act CGS Sec 8-2 and Planning Mandates Sec 8-23.

My belief in affordable housing in Woodbridge is based on the knowledge that our country is segregated because of historic and continuing racist hous-

ing policy at all levels of government and business to keep people of color out of white middle- and upper-class neighborhoods. I am grateful for the educational opportunities that Beecher Road School and the Amity School District have given my children, and I want all children—ALL children—to have such opportunities. The lack of economic and racial diversity in our school systems dramatically detracts from our ability to prepare our children well for the world.

It is disheartening, then, to have the Arbor Haven proposal, which includes open space for town use, market rate houses that would help our tax base, and affordable housing units that would help us meet our mandated requirement to offer affordable housing in Woodbridge be seen as so controversial. Our town is already fully 25% protected open space. What is more, those arguing for protected open space may also consider themselves environmentalists. It is better for the environment for people to live in multi-family housing units such as those affordable units proposed in the Arbor Haven proposal. With this perspective, our quest for even more open space in the town seems narrow minded.

The Town Plan and Zoning Commission recognized the need for Woodbridge to provide more affordable housing and in 2021 made changes to the zoning code, including loosening restrictions on accessory dwelling units, two-family, and multi-family dwelling units. But because of the current lack of public water and sewer, we will still have a hard time reaching the additional 400 to 1000 units needed to meet our fair share of affordable housing in the next ten years. The country club property, with its sewer and water amenities, offers a great opportunity to add a modest number of affordable housing units to our town.

While 37% of our town’s acreage is open space, in contrast, 1.2% of our housing is affordable. I like walking the trails all over Woodbridge just as much as any resident. What makes me even more joyful though, is knowing such a great town could be made available to more people from diverse backgrounds, by opening our hearts and minds.

Alana Rosenberg

Town Leadership Should Be Commended

We are writing to commend the stewardship of the Town of Woodbridge by First Selectman Beth Heller and the Board of Selectmen, especially in these difficult and unpredictable times. In particular today we want to recognize the extraordinary efficiency with which the Covid test distribution was handled by Jeanette Glicksman and the Human Services Department; Betsy Yagla and the Town’s administrative team; Police Chief Frank Cappiello and members of the Woodbridge Police Department; and WVFD Chief Sean Rowland and members of the WVFD.

“Letters” From Page 26

(And, of course, a shout-out to First Selectman Heller for being part of the second distribution team!)

It was heartening to see on Monday when the line of cars stretched far from the Town Center all the way up Newton Road to Amity Road, that Woodbridge residents remained patient and courteous throughout.

Once again, we are fortunate to live in this Town!

Bob & Ellen Scalettar

Four Reasons Why Arbor Haven Makes Sense for Woodbridge

I was very happy to read that the Board of Selectmen will be putting the Arbor Haven offer to purchase the old Country Club of Woodbridge (CCOW) for \$9M to the voters of Woodbridge for a decision. The Arbor Haven development makes good financial and social sense for Woodbridge. Here are four reasons why:

Reason #1 The sale of the CCOW will significantly improve our town’s balance sheet and avoid raising our taxes. The \$9M purchase price would completely wipe out the remaining town debt of \$3.5M related to the town’s purchase of the CCOW. It leaves our town with \$5.5M which we can use to retire other debt or fund projects that would have required raising our taxes without this sale.

Reason #2 Arbor Haven will increase our annual revenue net of expenses, again help to avoid raising our taxes. The project builds 145 housing units with an expected tax revenue for the town of \$2.7M. 72 of these homes are not age restricted and could have school age children. Both of the Arbor Haven proposals grossly overstate the actual ratio of school children per household. They said that they did this to be conservative, but it has caused some real confusion as to how many additional students we could expect in Woodbridge schools. 2020 US Census data shows that Woodbridge school age children are 17.4% of our population or a bit more than half a child per household. This is slightly higher than the Connecticut percentage of school age children in the population which is 15.3%. If we multiply the 72 homes that can have children by 0.6 a realistic estimate of additional students in the school system is 43 more students. Using the highest estimate of per child school cost I have seen in these discussions (\$20,000 per child) our school cost rises by \$860K. Our net annual gain to the town is over \$1.8M per year.

Reason #3 This project gets us on the road to complying with our required share of affordable housing. Woodbridge has a legal requirement to offer more diverse and affordable housing options. A percentage of these new homes will be priced to be

affordable at 60-80 percent of our area median income (AMI). Moving forward demonstrates our commitment to meeting our obligation to provide affordable housing in our community. The project also has smaller homes designated for seniors, which give current residents an opportunity to stay in town and downsize from their larger homes.

Reason #4 Woodbridge already has hundreds of acres of farm and forest land protected from development. The proposed development site has a dilapidated structure from the 1970s on a failed country club with an unmaintained golf course – not a colonial farm with historic buildings or a pristine forest. Even with the new proposed housing development, 50 of the 150 acres come back to the town as open space with trails and amenities for the community.

Robert Sharrer

Land Trust & Park Association Presidents State Position on Housing Options in Woodbridge

We were dismayed to read a recent letter suggesting that the Woodbridge Land Trust and the Woodbridge Park Association are attempting to thwart diverse housing options in Woodbridge by proposing to protect the Roger Sherman Farm located on the Country Club of Woodbridge property. The goal of our organizations is

to protect a historic, ecologically and environmentally significant parcel of open space land, a precious, finite natural resource. We do not believe that protecting open space and promoting diverse housing are mutually exclusive. Our town can, and should, do both.

The State of Connecticut recognizes the importance of both of these goals, and does not place them in conflict with one another. The State actively encourages towns and non-profit land trusts to protect open space, recreational, and agricultural lands by funding this protection with many millions of dollars every year through grants awarded by the Department of Agriculture (DOAG) and the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP).

We in Woodbridge are fortunate to have a few remaining large open space land parcels. Many towns, especially those so close to a city, don’t have the same ability to preserve open space. Providing housing opportunities is about more than building homes, it is building them in communities where people want to live. Let’s not squander the opportunity to preserve this priceless vanishing asset for the benefit of all members of our community – present and future.

Sincerely,
Bryan Pines, President,
Woodbridge Land Trust
Chris Dickerson, President,
Woodbridge Park Association

Public Invited to Book Discussion

The Town’s Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity & Inclusion, in partnership with the Woodbridge Town Library, invites residents to participate in a series of facilitated book discussions called “Mosaic: Woodbridge Reading in Community.”

The goal of the series is to enrich residents’ understanding of the current and historical diversity of our community, our state and our nation. Participants will be encouraged to participate in book discussions led by Woodbridge resident Reverend Antona Brent Smith. Reverend Smith, who created a similar book discussion series in her home state of Missouri, led the book discussion at Woodbridge Like Me Day in October. “Reading in community increases our understanding of our shared humanity,” Reverend Smith said.

The first event of the series will be

held on Thursday, February 24 at 7 PM. Reverend Smith will lead a discussion of Nikole Hannah-Jones’ recently published book, The 1619 Project. The event will be virtual: a link to participate can be found on the Town website, woodbridgect.org, and the Town’s Facebook page, Facebook.com/WoodbridgeCT.

“First Selectman Beth Heller created our Ad Hoc Committee as a follow-up to the Black Lives Matter event held in Town in 2020. Our committee felt it was in keeping with our mission to start the book series with the much talked about

The 1619 Project, an in-depth look at the legacy of slavery in America,” said Diversity & Inclusion Committee Chair Ellen Scalettar. “We hope that ‘Mosaic: Woodbridge Reading in Community’ will offer an opportunity for residents to have thought-provoking conversations with their neighbors that deepen our understanding of each other and the diversity of our community.”

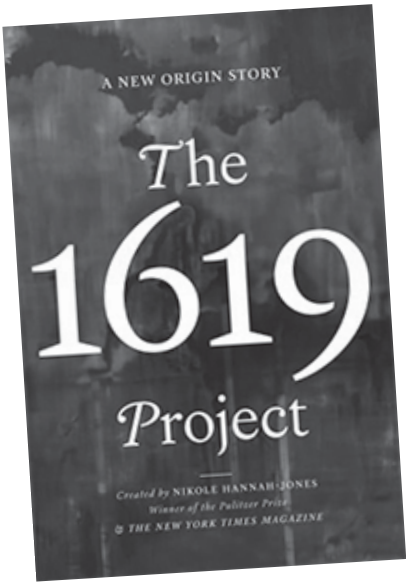
“I am pleased that the Diversity & Inclusion Committee is providing residents the opportunity to have meaningful conversations and engage in difficult topics,

including the lasting impacts of our nation’s history of slavery,” said First Selectman Heller. “I hope residents take advantage of this community resource.”

The 1619 Project began as a New York Times Magazine award-winning series that put slavery and its legacy at the center of American history. The book expands on the magazine series and includes 18 essays, 36 poems and several works of fiction.

The discussion will pay particular attention to Chapter 1, then move to Chapters 7 and 8, time permitting. These chapters focus on democracy, politics, and citizenship, but residents will be encouraged to discuss any part of the book.

Towards the end of the event, participants will discuss possible selections for the next meeting, which will be held in the Spring.



“I’ve realized that although Valentine’s Day can be a cheesy money-making stint to most people, it’s a day of expressing love across the world. It doesn’t have to only be between lovers, but by telling a friend that you care, or even an old person that they are still appreciated.” — REEVA STEENKAMP

Real, Meaningful Mental Health Reform is Needed

STATE SENATOR JORGE CABRERA
17TH DISTRICT (ANSONIA, BEACON FALLS,
BETHANY, DERBY, HAMDEN, NAUGATUCK,
WOODBRIDGE)

“Burnout, Done, Exhausted.” These are just some of the words mental health professionals used to describe how they are doing. I spoke to many social workers, psychologists and psychiatrists about their work and what they are experiencing on the front lines of a mental health crisis made worse by a once in century pandemic. What they shared with me and what a myriad of surveys show is that these dedicated professionals are too often left to navigate a fractured, byzantine mental health landscape that does not have the capacity to meet the ever growing mental health needs of our residents. Their stories were heart-wrenching. During our conversations it was evident that they all cared deeply about their patients, wished they could do more to help but felt unsupported, underpaid and under-appreciated. While state government has done much to address the mental health needs of our residents in the last legislative session it became crystal clear to me that more must be done. Here are a few of the areas the mental health professionals I spoke with recommend need addressing. First, we must begin, with the understanding that the mental health crisis we are dealing with is one that has existed in the shadows for years—one clinician stated for at least 10 years! The pandemic shed a light on the problems with our mental health infrastructure and made it worse. One silver lining from the pandemic is that, as a culture, more people are speaking more openly about their mental health challenges and seeking help. The bad news is they can’t find the help they need. Every person I spoke to had a very long wait list of patients waiting for services. Most can’t keep up with the demand and as a result the profession is experiencing a high number of people exiting the field leaving even more patients unable to find help and putting additional stress on an already stressed system. Many expressed the

need for more well paid social workers. The legislature should explore how to get more into the field by considering tuition and licensing assistance, grants and other mechanisms to get a talent pipeline going as we battle large case loads. And, we need to give them a raise! If we are going to groom, attract and keep talented social workers in our state we need to be competitive and that means better compensation. Additionally, many expressed frustration over the lack of an adequate continuum of care. Too often many patients, many of them children and young adults, are caught in a revolving door between the ER, home, hospital and school. One psychiatrist told me that the communication and coordination between the array of mental health service providers is abysmal and it often seems like each system is operating in its own silo. This leads to dangerous gaps of care, intensifies conditions and the loss of precious time that makes improvement for their patients all the more elusive. We should take a close look at the mental health landscape and seek synergies in order to remove these harmful structural roadblocks. They also shared with me the dire need for more funding for school based clinics, advocated for the permanence of tele-health, expressed frustration regarding restrictive rules often set by state boards and financial and insurance challenges that create roadblocks to accessing care. It was a sobering series of conversations and one that opened my eyes to the funding and structural challenges these dedicated professionals encounter every day. My hope is that we have learned from this pandemic valuable lessons that will lead us to tackle and transform our mental health care infrastructure. The good news is we are armed with record budget surpluses, a maxed out rainy day fund and a ton of federal dollars. Let’s work together to meet this historic moment and heed the call to make meaningful, structural improvements to our mental health infrastructure that will improve the lives of those in need and prepare us for any future crisis. The time for meaningful change is now.

DEATH NOTICES

Frederick E. Finkenauer

Frederick E. Finkenauer passed away at the age of 82 after a long illness on December 1, 2021 in New Haven, CT. Fred was born on September 28, 1939, in Detroit, MI, the son of Margaret Button and Frederick J. Finkenauer. Fred graduated from Cornell University, class of 1961, where he was a member of Chi Psi fraternity. Before continuing his education, Fred served as a second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army from 1961-1963. He then attended Harvard Business School receiving an MBA in 1965. Fred began his business career with Citibank in New York City, and ultimately became CFO of Caspari Inc. headquartered in Seymour, CT. A resident of Woodbridge, CT for 36 years, Fred was active in community affairs, serving on the board of The Woodbridge Land Trust. A member of the First Church of Christ, he was a deacon, headed the stewardship committee, and acted as treasurer for five years. He concurrently sat on the board of the Kazanjian Economics Foundation. His love of numbers and spread sheets coupled with honesty and integrity served him well in all

these positions. Fred held a special place in his heart for the island of Bermuda and the Wild West of Montana and Wyoming. His love of ocean cruising to many ports of call was surpassed only by his love for his family. Fred was a loving husband to Sharon, his wife of 51 years, and a proud and devoted father to his two sons, Ted and Jonathan. Attending all their sporting events, he was truly a dedicated “Hockey Dad.” Fred will be remembered for his passion for good food and love of cooking, his quick wit and groan-producing puns, but mostly for his kind, gentle manner and being the perfect host at any party or gathering. Fred is survived by his wife Sharon, their two sons Ted of Jackson, WY and Jonathan and his wife, Caroline of Bozeman, MT. His sister Ann Pettitt Webber of Vero Beach, FL, his nieces Julie, Laura and Jennifer and his nephew Peter, his brother-in-law Scott Stickle and wife, Carol of Wells, VT. A memorial service will be held at a later date at The First Church of Christ with Zoom options for friends and family who are not able to attend in person but would like to join in the celebration of his life.

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“How did it happen that their lips came together? How does it happen that birds sing, that snow melts, that the rose unfolds, that the dawn whitens behind the stark shapes of trees on the quivering summit of the hill? A kiss, and all was said.” — VICTOR HUGO

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‘Hidden Treasures’ Exhibited at Library

BY BETTINA THIEL
WOODBRIDGE TOWN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Due to winter weather, The Amity and Woodbridge Historical Society delayed the opening reception for its newest venture, an exhibit of photographs and items of historical significance at the Town Library. It is now scheduled for Friday, February 11, 4-7 p.m.

On view in the Library meeting room are photographs of rare, unusual and never-seen items from the Society’s collections, including, but not limited to, fabrics and clothes from bygone eras. Because some of these items — especially the fabrics — are frayed or may deteriorate when handled, they will be introduced through photographs. Photographer and Woodbridge resident Kenneth Mull, in conjunction with his wife, the textiles specialist Nancy Mull, made the exhibit possible.

“The Historical Society had wanted to share some of the things that are in the Thomas Darling House, and that people don’t always see,” said Nancy Mull in a telephone conversation. “The photographs are little works of art,” she added.

For the reception, they will also haul some display cases into the meeting room to display some of the historic artifacts. For example, a picture shows an embroidery sampler done by Mary

Darling, daughter of Thomas Darling III, and in a display case people will be able to admire the handstitched corset of the same Mary, from 1840.

The Whitlock Family donated the wedding gown of their grandmother, as well as her Christening gown, showing the handiwork that was done to celebrate major milestones in one girl’s life.

In the middle of the room will be tables with artifacts from Simon Donato’s collection of Native American arrowheads he found in this area. It includes a stone-grooved ax head. “I have no idea how old it is, but it must be prior to the year 1600,” she said.

One photo-



graph shows the leather fire bucket that was owned by John Marshall Lines. Before the town had a fire brigade, people would keep a dedicated fire bucket at hand to grab and help their neighbors when needed. We know who owned it, because the initials are marked in the leather. Although

Lines’ fire bucket survived, his mansion did not. It burnt down in 1929, but the carriage house still exists on Pease Road.

“There is a lot of history here,” Mull said, and each item talks about the lives of those who lived here before. A dedicated group of volunteers worked to research and write accompanying historical details for each item.

“This is one way we can show many things, she said. “You will be swept away with what’s there.”

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