

Woodbridge Town News



Woodbridge's Exclusive Newspaper

Mailed Free To Every Home in Woodbridge
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VOL. 12 – ISSUE 3

CIRCULATION 3654

FRIDAY, APRIL 7, 2023



State Rep. Mary Welander (center) and State Sen. James Maroney present a citation to outgoing Massaro Farm Executive Director Caty Poole (left)

Hugs and Citations Mark Farewell Party for Caty Poole

BY BETTINA THIEL

WOODBRIDGE TOWN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Massaro Farm supporters gathered under the new pavilion March 31 for a luncheon to celebrate and thank Executive Director Caty Poole on her last day in that role. After leading the operation for a decade, Poole has decided to step back from the day-to-day operations.

In a brief formal ceremony, State Rep. Mary Welander, and her counterpart in the Senate, Sen. James Maroney, presented a citation from the General Assembly, thanking Poole for her years of service; Board President Alan Tyma read a citation from Town Hall. Volunteers and other board members presented her with personalized gifts, including a beautiful large quilt

made by Massaro board member Sandy Stein, with a red barn motif.

Poole got a warm embrace from Farmer Steve Munno, who had started the farm operation a few years before Poole came on, and is now assuming the role of Farm Director. He said Massaro Farm consisted originally of two organizations – Massaro Community Farm and the CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) – that grew together and merged in 2019. This shift in leadership is a good time to complete that merger and evaluate next steps. He said more responsibilities will be spread among staff.

Massaro has about eight staff-mem-

See “Massaro Farm” On Page 3



Denver Broncos cheerleaders were visiting Beecher Road School recently, bringing a bit of glamour to the school's Read Across America Guest Reader Day. Principal Analisa Sherman and Assistant Principal James Sapia welcome them to the school.

Read Across America At Beecher Road School

For the first time since the pandemic, guest readers were invited back into the classrooms at Beecher Road School for Read Across America Day. To coincide with the school's Empathy Week activities, the special event took place on March 9.

The theme of Empathy Week this year was “Empathy towards newcomers,” and focused on the book “Wishes” by Muon Van Thi. According to the publisher, the book tells the story of a Vietnamese family's search for a new home. Told through the eyes of a young girl, the story chronicles her family's difficult journey to pack up what they can carry and to leave their world behind, traveling to a new and unknown place.

The PTO, which traditionally supports Empathy Week by donating books to each classroom, this year purchased a copy of the book for every student. Teachers were encouraged to include activities such as how to welcome a newcomer and introduce

alternative communication devices.

The school also planned a number of activities exposing students to different cultures, including, for example, foreign languages and Vietnamese music. Empathy Week culminated in an all-school art project.

Guest readers included State Rep. Mary Welander; Youth Services Director Nancy Pfund, Board of Finance member Susan Jacobson, Principal Analisa Sherman and Assistant Principal James Sapia, Librarians Katie McCollom and Larissa Crocco, PTO member Linda Christy, and PTO President, Ruchi Jain; Board of Education members Lynn Piascyk, chairman; Dr. Jay Dahya and School Supt. Vonda Tencza; also, district IT manager Anthony Billings.

As a surprise to the third and fifth grades, several members of the Denver Bronco cheerleading squad managed to visit the school and read to students as well. The visit was arranged through parent Jeremy Rosner.

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Rachel Anastasio 203-980-3283

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Karen Bogdanoff 203-605-9275

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Ross Cotianle 203-401-1993

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STUDENT NEWS

Dean's/President's List Baylor University

Waco, Texas - More than 5,100 Baylor University students have been named to the Fall 2022 Dean's Academic Honor List, which recognizes Baylor undergraduates for their outstanding academic work during each semester. Students honored on the Dean's List earned a minimum semester grade-point average of 3.70 with no grade lower than a "C" while enrolled in at least 12 graded semester hours. Bethany resident Christian Bruno, College of Arts & Sciences, has been named to the Fall 2022 Dean's List.

Champlain College

Burlington, VT - Annabel Kusnitz of Woodbridge, CT, has been named to the Champlain College Dean's List for the Fall 2022 semester. Students on the Dean's List have achieved a grade point average of 3.5 or higher during the semester.

Tufts University

Medford, MA - Tufts University recently announced the dean's list for the

Fall 2022 semester. Those students from Woodbridge earning dean's list honors are: Sam Epstein, Class of 2025; Dana Estrera, Class of 2023; and Tracy Lu, Class of 2024. Dean's list honors at Tufts University require a semester grade point average of 3.4 or greater.

Inductions

Quinnipiac University

Hamden, CT - Bethany resident, Jeremiah Schurman, Health Science Studies in the School of Health Sciences at Quinnipiac University, was inducted into Alpha Eta, the national honor society for the allied health professions, during a recent on-campus ceremony. To be eligible for induction, undergraduate students must have a grade-point average of 3.5 or higher and graduate students must have a GPA of 3.8 or higher and be in the top 20 percent of the graduating class. All inductees must show a capacity for leadership and achievement, show promise for their profession and be recommended by a faculty member or dean.

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“Massaro Farm” From Page 1

bers year-round, but that number grows to over 20 in the summer.

Poole joined the farm in 2012, first as a part-time outreach and development coordinator, but soon after as its executive director. She and Farmer Steve, along with committed volunteers from the community, helped the farm grow from “a whole big patch of weeds” into a regional powerhouse promoting organic agricultural practices and championing fresh and local produce for all.

In addition to growing healthy food and providing it in places where it is needed, the farm also developed a robust educational program, both for children of all ages as well as adults. Growth is not only outwardly visible by the number of greenhouses, the additional parking lot, the refurbished red barn; it also more than doubled the number of CSA program participants, up from initially 125 to 300. It increased its reach from initially a Woodbridge/Ansonia-based operation to involvement in all Valley towns, Hamden, Orange and Milford and West Haven.

The need for fundraising also led to a series of popular events, such as the Dinner on the Farm; concerts and movie nights and more. “We are responsive to the needs and interests of the community,” Munno said.

Massaro donates organic produce

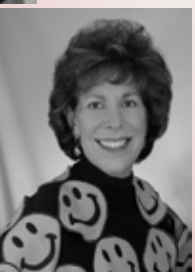
to a number of hunger relief organizations, including the Senior Center and the CT Food Bank. They deliver produce to local restaurants; they have a “drop” at the District Building in New Haven. They participate in Farmers Markets in the area.

Poole “retired” once before, about two years ago, when she and her newly-retired husband decided to travel. But that retirement didn’t last long, and she resumed her old role. “Please, no ‘retirement’ banner,” she said, only partly joking. What she is stepping away from, at least for now, is working full-time, every day. Poole, who enrolled in a Master beekeeping program, said she will continue to usher the beekeeping workshops at the farm, at least this season.

In her own remarks, she talked about growing up in suburban New Jersey, but with a backyard garden, a connection to the land that she experienced from her grandparents. She then went on to raise her children and make a living in corporate settings. “This job allowed me to put my passion for farming and my skills together,” she said.

Similarly, Munno said he will keep farming. “While my role will shift a bit with Caty’s departure, I’ll still have my hands in the soil here and my overall focus will remain on ensuring that our programs and offerings are delivering on our mission: keep farming, feed people, build community,” he wrote in a press release.

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Welcome Spring – the Season of Rejuvenation!

With spring weather, I always think about the start of baseball season. In Woodbridge, Opening Day is scheduled for April 29 this year. This will be the 51st opening day for the Beth-Wood Baseball League. There will be a player parade to kick off the event, scheduled to start at 10 am at the Town Green. League and local officials will be in attendance and the event will end with a barbecue lunch, hosted by the Woodbridge Volunteer Firefighter Association. If it rains, the event will be moved from the town green to the firehouse.

I'd like to share with you an incident involving our police and fire departments and a senior Woodbridge resident who suffers from dementia. Recently, an emergency call came into our 911 dispatch center. The resident was missing in the overnight hours, likely in a heavily wooded area. A comprehensive search began immediately, involving police, fire, emergency medical personnel, and a police K-9 unit. Two of the 25 Woodbridge volunteer firefighters who were on this call, Charlie "Chuck" White and Paul Konwerski, using a thermal imaging camera, were able to locate the resident after hours of searching. The resident was reunited with his family and was able to get necessary medical treatment. On behalf of our entire community, I thank our first responders for their extraordinary efforts.

The budget process has been extremely challenging. Our goal is always to balance the cost of the town's excellent schools with the need to provide

From the First Selectman

BY BETH HELLER

necessary services, without adding to the tax burden of residents. This year's original, overall budget request from departments, boards, and commissions would have required a 10.17% mill rate increase. With the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance review and recommendations complete, the increase has been trimmed to a 2.99% mill rate increase. Just as in your homes, private sector costs such as heating oil, natural gas, electricity, and insurance have all increased in the public sector. The impact of global inflation has had a direct effect on all department budgets.

The Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance met throughout February and March and reviewed both the Operating Budget and the Six-Year Capital Improvement Plan. This current reduced recommendation will be presented at the Preliminary Budget Hearing on Monday, April 24. The Preliminary Budget Hearing will be held at the Amity High School auditorium at 7:30 pm.

Following this hearing, the Board of Finance may make additional changes to its proposed budget, which will then be presented at the Annual Town Meeting on Monday, May 15. I encourage residents to pay careful attention to the budget process and voice their opinions. The most effective way for

residents to share opinions and/or ask questions is at the Preliminary Budget Hearing.

I am pleased to report that a 55+ housing proposal, which was approved by both the Town Plan and Zoning Commission and the Inland Wetlands Agency, is now underway. The project is located at the intersection of Litchfield Turnpike and Bradley Road. Toll Brothers estimates construction will be completed in about three years. This housing project will expand our Grand List with approximately 70 new homes.

In an effort to regionalize services, I recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding, approved by the Board of Selectmen, with the Town of Beacon Falls to provide animal control services in a monthly pilot program. Woodbridge is already compensated to coordinate and provide these resources for the towns of Bethany and Seymour.

Following financial approval by both the Boards of Selectmen and Finance, I'm happy to write that the necessary repairs to the Beecher Road School pool have begun. The pool filters have been ordered as well, and we hope the pool will be up and running in the near future.

WGATV-Channel 79 has a new program guide available for residents who do not use YouTube or the internet. Its

upcoming schedule will now run as a short post on the station following programming at 6 am, 12 pm, 6 pm, and 12 am. This information is also available on the Town's website.

The annual Woodbridge Memorial Day ceremony will be held Monday, May 29 at 11 am at the VFW monument in front of the Center Building on Meetinghouse Lane. The keynote speaker this year will be Major General Thomas R. Bouchard, who is the Deputy Commander for Mobilization and Reserve Affairs, United States Special Operations Command, MacDill AFB, Florida. The program, led by Dr. Barry Josephs, will also include patriotic music, a memorial wreath presentation, the Woodbridge Police Department Honor Guard, and remarks by state and local elected officials. In case of inclement weather, the event will be held in the Center Building gymnasium.

Town Library staff will now be coordinating town-wide events like Earth Day 2024 and this year's Rid Litter Day, to be held Saturday, April 22. Participants will be able to pick up bags and maps at the library between 10 am and 5 pm. There will also be a Friends of the Library book sale!

Please remember to add the Amity Budget Referendum to your calendars. The referendum will be held Tuesday, May 2, from 6 am to 8 pm at the Center Building gymnasium. This is your chance to vote on the regional school district's proposed spending plan. Absentee ballot applications are available by request at the Town Clerk's office, (203-389-3424) or online.

Town Hall Hires from Within to Fill Openings

BY BETTINA THIEL
WOODBRIDGE TOWN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Two town employees left the Town Hall last year, and filling their positions has set off a game of musical chairs. Pat Swope retired last June from the Finance Department and Assistant Administrative Officer Betsy Yagla moved to another job in August. To fill Yagla's position, Budget Analyst Karen Crosby moved from the Finance Office into her own office next to the First Selectman's office. Instead, Finance Director Anthony Genovese recruited Gaye Mastrian-

na from the Beecher district office. She is now the payroll and benefits administrator. He also recruited Jim Franco, previously in the Recreation Office, to round out the team in the Finance Office.

"We do a lot of cross training of people," Genovese said, so people can cover for each other. Payroll in particular needs to be done every two weeks, no matter who is out or on vacation."

The Recreation Office is currently covered by John DeMayo. A permanent candidate has not been named yet.

Distracted Driving a Leading Cause of Vehicle Crashes

"U Drive. U Text. U Pay." Enforcement Period Starts April 1

Woodbridge PD will be participating in a statewide initiative to keep the roadways safe. April is National Distracted Driving Awareness Month, and starting April 1, the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) is launching the U Drive. U Text. U Pay., high-visibility enforcement campaign to crack down on distracted driving.

The national U Drive. U Text. U Pay. campaign is a partnership with State and local law enforcement, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). In Connecticut in 2022, there were nearly 5,200 crashes attributed to distracted driving.

Over the past decade, distracted driving has become one of the leading causes of vehicle crashes on our nation's roads. At any given moment across America, approximately 660,000 drivers are using or manipulating electronic devices while driving – a number

that has held steady for over a decade. According to NHTSA, in 2020, the last year of available national data, more than 3,100 lives were lost in crashes involving distracted drivers. Approximately 8 percent of all fatal crashes in 2020 involved a distracted driver.

The U Drive. U Text. U Pay. campaign will increase efforts to enforce distracted-driving laws across Connecticut from April 1 to April 30, 2023, to reduce crashes and keep people safe. Connecticut Department of Transportation Commissioner Garrett Eucalitto said, "If your attention is anywhere other than the road, you are driving distracted and putting yourself and others at risk of a crash, injury, or death. Distracted drivers often do not see the risk of their behavior until it's too late. We are counting on every single driver on our roadways to be a part

See "U. Drive" On Page 8

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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
May 5 Mother's Day Issue	April 28
May 26 Memorial Day Issue	May 19
June 23 Independence Day Issue.....	June 16

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

FROM OUR READERS

Time To Put the Friendship Back in Amity

On May 2nd, the BOW will hold our annual referendum to approve the proposed Amity Regional School District budget for the 2023-2024 school year. While this topic has caused some local contention in the recent past, I would like to share my perspective as a former educator and principal of Amity Regional High School, as well as a current very proud parent.

The Amity Regional School District is a place where amazing students have the opportunity to learn from passionate, engaged educators to prepare themselves for their lives ahead. The proof is in the pudding. In the past 20 years, Amity has, among its alumni, the first female Army Ranger, a current NPR international correspondent, a 2012 Olympic bronze swimming medalist, a Hasbro spotlighted inventor, entrepreneurs, teachers, doctors, entertainers, social influencers and numerous others who have left Amity with the skills necessary to lead successful lives and productively contribute to society.

Many of these alumni return to the BOW to establish themselves and

raise their families. In fact, multiple members of our Board of Education are Amity graduates who have children currently enrolled in Amity or in one of the elementary districts; many current Amity teachers are graduates of Amity.

Whether you used to have kids in the Amity schools, currently have children who attend, or have never had children attend Amity, you have benefited from what the district offers. You may have been one of the thousands of community members who saw Amity Creative Theater's rendition of Beauty and the Beast in March. Perhaps you have been one of the many professionals who has hosted an Amity senior during the annual unpaid experiential learning sessions every spring where they explore the working world, with many choosing to work in schools and businesses within our town. These are only a couple examples of the ways in which the Amity Regional School District benefits each citizen.

For years, some town leaders and constituents have cast doubt on the Amity administration, and even the educators who work so hard for our

See "Letters" On Page 14

Woodbridge Town News

WTN LETTERS POLICY

Submit your letters for our "From Our Readers" section to:
Woodbridge Town News, P.O. Box 1126, Orange, CT 06477
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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.

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OPINION

From the Democratic
Town Committee

BY ELLEN SCALETTAR
WDTC CHAIRMAN



Our Budget, Our Values

A budget is an essential guide for responsible planning and accountability. It is equally important as a statement of our community’s values. In Woodbridge we value education. It is what brought many of us to this wonderful Town and continues to attract new families. In many ways, education is the economic engine of our community.

On Monday, April 24 at 7:30pm in the Amity High School Auditorium, the Town of Woodbridge will conduct its annual Preliminary Budget Hearing. The Board of Finance will present its recommended budget for the 2023-24 fiscal year, which begins July 1, 2023. Community members will have the opportunity to ask questions about the priorities for our Town over the coming year.

In the proposed 2023-2024 budget totaling \$56M, our schools account for close to two-thirds of spending. This is almost evenly divided between Beecher Road School (\$17M) and the Amity School District (\$18M). You can view the Board of Finance’s recommended budget at <https://www.woodbridgetc.org/428/Annual-Budgets>.

For those of you who are new to Town or simply unfamiliar with the process, there are important distinctions between how the Beecher Road School budget is set and how the Amity School District budget is set. The Beecher budget is submitted by the Woodbridge Board of Education to the Town Board of Finance. It is within the purview of the Board of Finance to adjust the budget as submitted.

By comparison, the Amity budget is recommended by the Amity Board of Education and is voted upon at a referendum of voters in the towns of Woodbridge, Orange and Bethany. Our Board of Finance does not have the authority to change the Amity School District Budget.

The Amity School District budget referendum will be held on Tuesday, May 2 from 6:00 am – 8:00 pm in the Center Building Gym. It is important to vote in this referendum and make your voice heard. If you need an absentee ballot, contact the Town Clerk’s office at 203-389-3422.

But why am I choosing to focus so much attention on education in this month’s column? Because, like many of you, I believe that educating our children is a fundamental role of government and essential to the proper functioning of our democracy. Citizens must be educated in order to participate effectively in our civic life and exercise their right to vote in a meaningful way. Thus, the benefits of supporting our schools flow to all of us.

As Woodbridge becomes increasingly diverse, our schools also provide a safe space and essential resources to promote understanding and inclusion. At Amity, the Board of Education, as well as a DEI Coach, strive to ensure that Amity “nurtures a community of learners who embrace individual and cultural differences, valuing how differences enrich society.”

Since 2017, Beecher Road School has had a Community and Diversity Committee made up of parents, staff and members of the administration. The goal of the Committee is to support the mission of Beecher, a mission that includes “embracing diversity.” Beecher’s commitment in this regard has manifested itself in many ways, including the Woodbridge Board of Education’s 2022 adoption of a formal Equity and Diversity policy to guide the school district.

For Woodbridge residents interested in learning more about our increasingly diverse community, the Town’s Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion will host a community conversation on Wednesday, April 26 at 7:00 pm at the JCC, 360 Amity Road. Everyone is invited to learn about findings from the recent “Experiencing Woodbridge Survey” and consider how we can nurture connections across our diverse community.

And finally, a big shout out from the Woodbridge Democratic Town Committee to the Amity Regional High School Debate Team as it advances in the International Public Policy Forum Debate Competition!!! Kudos to these young people who have learned to love learning and to the teachers who helped them get there.

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

From Across the Aisle

BY CHUCK PYNE
WRTC CHAIRMAN



A Town-Wide, Well-Considered Plan – What A Capital Idea!

Capital budget planning is a critical part of every town’s long-term strategy. It requires evaluation of all infrastructure “needs and wants” from every constituency, prioritizing necessary projects before popular ones, and the discipline to schedule projects over time to make the costs manageable for taxpayers. In Woodbridge, unfortunately, capital planning has been haphazard at best for several years. We can and must do better by electing people who understand and can execute a comprehensive, practical and fiscally sound capital plan.

Examples of where we’ve gone wrong are numerous. A few years ago, the current Democrat leadership proposed to bundle a few projects together into a single capital bonding request for taxpayer consideration. Much-needed roof repairs at Beecher Road School would be bundled with a new storage building for the Fire Department and the demolition of the old Country Club clubhouse. When Republican Selectmen insisted that each project should be voted on separately, the Democrats balked, knowing that voters would approve the roof work but might reject the other projects. So where are we now? Somehow this administration made it a priority to identify funding for the storage building – now to be funded mostly by a state grant – but simply dropped any plan to address the Beecher roof. The result? There are literally buckets being placed in classrooms and halls to catch the water when we get a serious rain. This is inexcusable.

While the Beecher roof remained in budgeting limbo, the Democrats created a Community and Cultural Center Building Committee to renovate the old firehouse. The town obtained a two-million-dollar grant to renovate the old firehouse, though the question remains why the town’s capital planning focus was on the old firehouse rather than the Beecher roof. So, what does this committee propose? Renovate not only the old firehouse but the adjacent outdoor space. Estimated cost: five million dollars. You read that right – a five-million-dollar proposal for a project that was given a two-million-dollar budget. The Board of Selectmen has received the five-million-dollar proposal and has yet to tell the committee to pare it back. But must we say again – what about the Beecher roof?! Where are our priorities? The whole situation defies logic.

There are questions about the old firehouse planning, by the way. One example, in the early 2000s the town planned to move the weight room/gym equipment into the old firehouse once the new firehouse was built. We were told at the time that the use of weights on the second floor of the Center Building potentially degraded the integrity of the Center Building, which was intended for classroom use not a gym. In contrast, the former garage space in the old firehouse would easily bear the weight of the equipment. So why wasn’t the committee instructed to move the two rooms of gym equipment into the old firehouse as part of its plan?

Now let’s consider the other building committees that have been appointed in town. The Democrat leadership created a Center Building Renovation Committee several months ago. Their charge includes yet another look at the Police Department’s perennial desire for improved quarters. Meanwhile, after much effort by the bipartisan Woodbridge Board of Education, the First Selectman has finally formed a committee to address Beecher’s leaking roof and other immediate capital needs. But that committee, led by Selectman Sheila McCreven, has yet to take the first step (advertise for an architect/engineering firm) in a many-months process that must be followed before repairs can begin. And with Beecher’s potential need for more space, should we put planning for the Center Building on hold until yet another BOS-created committee figures out whether Beecher might need some of the Center School’s space? Maybe it’s a good time to look at moving kindergarten and first grade back to Center School – after all, it was a school! That might take some stress off Beecher now and impact what a new Beecher looks like in the future. Unfortunately, we lack leadership from the top to end the siloed, blinkered approach to capital planning.

It’s sadly obvious that our town is operating without a comprehensive vision or long-term strategy for capital projects. Several committees are looking at different aspects of the town, but there is no leadership, no direction. This is not good for our town and voters will have a chance to improve the situation in November.

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Restoration Efforts Continue at Eastside Cemetery

A historic headstone for one of Woodbridge’s 19th century forefathers was replaced recently at Eastside Cemetery on Pease Road, thanks to the efforts of John Nolan of Hamden Monument, who donated the engraving and the replacement of the stone. The original stone for Allen Peck (dated 1837) had been missing for many years. The original was probably broken or deteriorated to such an extent that it might have been removed, said Todd Sasso, cemetery superintendent and member of the Eastside Burying Ground Association. Using cemetery records, they were able to determine the exact location and install the new stone in its original location.

The replacement is a piece of blue-stone curbing that was about to be discarded from a construction project on Railroad Avenue in Bridgeport, when Sasso was working there. Many pieces from the construction project were salvaged and saved for future replacement of stones.

Allen Peck’s brings to a total of 29 the stones that have been replaced over a four-year period. Many were paid for by the Eastside Burying Ground Association, two veterans’ stones were paid for by the Veterans Administration, and some by private donations. All the stones were engraved by John

Nolan at little to no cost.

The Association is reaching out to the community to support its efforts at historic preservation. People who are interested and able to donate toward the restoration of these special stones can reach board members through the website, www.eastsideburying-ground.org.

Over the last four years, the cemetery board has focused on repair and restoration work at the cemetery. Sasso has been repairing and restoring many of the broken stones in the old section of the cemetery. Some 70 headstones have been repaired.

While digging up the headstones for repair, they also discovered 28 footstones, some of which also required repair. All were matched with the headstone they belonged with and they can now be seen for the first time in many years.

Additional work consisted of cleaning of stones, repairing some of the iron railings, repair of the front entrance gates, pruning of trees and overall general cleanup. The condition of the cemetery has greatly improved and there are no longer any broken stones lying on the ground, said Stephanie Ciarleglio, who also serves on the board, along with Sheila McCreven and Chris Sorensen.

CAES Seeking Residents for Tick Management Study

The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station is seeking residents in the Towns of Bethany and Woodbridge to be involved in a 5-year Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-funded tick management study at no cost to them. We are testing the effectiveness of an extremely low-dose treated bait for white-tailed deer and white-footed mice in killing ticks feeding on them (a similar strategy to treating your pets for fleas and ticks) and impacts to tick reduction and tick bite exposure in your yards. As far as resident participation, we are seeking your permission to:

- › Distribute treated bait on your properties;
- › Remove ticks from your property to test treatment effectiveness and test for pathogens;
- › Live trap and gather data from small rodents on your properties;
- › Capture deer in fall/winter (if your property configuration permits);
- › Conduct surveys on your exposure to ticks and tick-borne diseases.

We will keep cooperating residents informed (via email) about study progress and ticks found/removed from your properties. There is no cost to being involved, you will just have to permit us access to your yards once a week/every other week from May-September, and maybe longer on deer-treated properties (residents need not be present when we visit unless you would like to). Residents who have participated in our studies previously (Canaan, Guilford, North Branford, Redding, Salisbury, Westport, Weston) have very much enjoyed being a part of a large, science-based, federally-funded tick management study that will aid in reducing health risks to the public while receiving free tick treatment for many years in a row. Landowners who have not previously treated their properties for ticks are eligible for participation. For any further questions about the project or to get involved, please contact Dr. Scott Williams at Scott.Williams@ct.gov.

HEALTH & FITNESS

Spring Yardwork Injuries: We’ve Got Your Back!

By KYLE BRANDAY MSPT

Thankfully it’s finally Spring! So much to do, so little time, back-breaking yard work – it adds up to possible lower back strain, muscle pulls, and joint dysfunctions. Advice: Take it slow and prepare yourself for outside chores with some simple exercises.

Raking requires upper body strength and endurance. Warm up to yard work by exercising your primary muscles that include biceps, deltoids, rotator cuff, forearm and parascapular muscles. Do it before and after raking or lifting piles of yard litter.

Simple exercises like arm circles, pendulums, forearm and upper trap stretching will help loosen these muscle groups. Proper posture while raking is a must. Stay upright, head up, shoulders back and don’t hunch forward. Good postural habits will prevent rotator cuff impingement, strain on neck and upper back and puts the upper body in position for the greatest mechanical advantage to create force and leverage. You’ll also use less energy. Once you’ve got those leaves raked into piles, now comes the real trial. The body’s trunk and core are being tested, requiring the lumbar spine and hips to generate force to move leaf piles. The strain is on your obliques, glutes, and hip rotators along with the lumbar extensor muscles. What that means is there’s a lot of muscle groups interacting to get those leaves moved. Never bend from the waist to pick up these mounting piles of leaves. It is vital to squat and bend your knees while you pick up leaves. Keep a flat back while you lift. This takes the stress off the lower lumbar spine eliminating the possibility of strains and sprains or worse injuries such as herniated discs and sciatica. Helpful, also, are warm up and cool down exercises such as hamstring, knee to chest, and trunk



Kyle Branday

rotation stretches. “Summerize” your body. Trunk rotation stretches, hamstring stretches, light weight workouts with dumbbells for biceps, triceps and deltoids are important in preventing serious injury. Squats with light barbells for your quads, hamstrings, and glutes strengthen these important stress absorbing muscles. For lower spine and back, prepare yourself with warm up knee to chest exercises, trunk rotations and quad and hamstring stretches. Proper exercise techniques, either at home or with a professional physical therapist or trainer, can keep you fit and in action throughout the spring and summer.

Kyle Branday, MSPT is a licensed physical therapist and partner at Amity Physical Therapy, founded eighteen years ago by Michael Dow MSPT CEO/Director with offices in Woodbridge, Hamden, Branford, Wallingford and Milford. Kyle is a graduate of Quinnipiac University with his Masters in Physical Therapy. He works with patients of all ages and ability levels, treating high level athletes with fractures and sprains to gait and balance dysfunction in the elderly. Kyle can be reached to set up an evaluation at (203) 389-4593 or visit www.amitypt.com

Howard Rohloff Celebrates 103

On March 20th, at Coachman Square in Woodbridge, longtime North Haven police commission and 60+ year North Haven resident, Howard Rohloff, celebrated 103 years surrounded by many politicians, friends and family! Rohloff spent a lifetime serving his country and community before he moved to Coachman Square.

After graduating with a degree in electrical engineering, he served in both the Army and the Air Force during WWII. He specialized in radar and became the only person assigned to radar at any one time. His military career

would take him all over the country and the world. While managing a radar post in Louisiana, he was able to compress his unit into the size of a 2½ ton truck so he could easily bring the technology to military bases across the country. For months, he even slept on a tugboat 13 miles south of the equator when his job was delivering rations between Panama City and the Galapagos Islands.

When he returned from the War, he served as the North Haven Police Commissioner for many years as well as a Scoutmaster.

CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS



Garden Club Members Receive Awards

The Garden Club of Woodbridge had several winners at the 41st annual Federated Garden Clubs of CT “Gateway to Springtime” flower show in February. Winners from the club:

- › Petite Design, Spring Mornings winners; Barbara Bosco, 1st place, Dewdrops-a Reflective Design; Leslie Martino, 1st place and Petite award, Robins Arriving-a Tubular Design; Cindy Marien, 2nd place, Rising Early-a Parallel Design;
- › Leslie Martino, 1st place and Elfin award, with a Mammillaria Elongata “Copper King’ plant;
- › Joanne D’Angelo, 2 Honorable Mentions in photography, “Come this Way” and “Hats off to the Garlic”;
- › Leslie Martino, 2nd place, Moonrise-a Creative Line Mass Design;
- › Mary Ann Tyma, 3rd place, Time for Gardening-a Featured Plant Material Design;

- › Mary Ann Tyma, Honorable Mention, a Bee Pin-Artistic Crafts.
- On March 7 President Cathy Wick opened the garden club meeting by welcoming members of the Spring Glen Garden Club. She announced that member Cindy Marien had become a Master Gardener. The guest speaker, Alisha Crutchfield-McLean from Bloom Florist in New Haven, customized several designs for the members. Alisha described Bloom Florist as a multi-concept gathering space consisting of a flower shop, gift shop, café, wellness room, workshops and an event meeting space. Her first creation used a basket with Oasis as the anchor for parrot tulips, roses, carnations, Gerber daisies, and tree ferns (Alisha generously lined the basket with plastic before inserting the soaked Oasis to prevent leaking). This design along with her other arrangements were raffled off at the end of the meeting.

Experiencing Woodbridge Survey

Overview and Invitation to a Community Conversation

PREPARED BY THE TOWN OF WOODBRIDGE AD
HOC COMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY,
EQUITY & INCLUSION

We invite you to join us in a community conversation about our Experiencing Woodbridge Survey findings on Wednesday, April 26 at 7:00 pm in the auditorium at the JCC, 360 Amity Road. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to participate.

In Spring 2022, the Town of Woodbridge Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion conducted the “Experiencing Woodbridge Survey.” This anonymous survey was designed to help the Committee identify opportunities to better engage and serve all residents of our increasingly diverse community. All Woodbridge households received a mailed survey invitation, including a link to the on-line survey.

Findings from the survey offer a “temperature check” of how well we as a community are creating a welcoming environment and how our experiences may mirror or differ from those of our neighbors. However, it is not a representative sample. Findings should be interpreted as suggestive of Woodbridge community perspectives but not definitive.

Overall, 634 Woodbridge households (22% of our Town’s 2,935 households) provided responses. Some characteristics of the responding households are listed below:

- › Close to one-third (32%) were home to at least one person of color: 28% of Woodbridge residents are people of color;
- › Close to one-quarter (23%) had at least one member who is an immigrant to the United States: 20% of Woodbridge community members are immigrants;
- › One-third (33%) had at least one

member who is a person with disabilities.

Some broad takeaways from the survey include:

- › Woodbridge residents in general feel comfortable living here and engaging in most activities in the community;
- › Despite having a general sense of comfort in the community, nearly one out of six responding households (16%) reported having experienced some form of discrimination in Woodbridge. This included discrimination based on ethnic or racial identity, socioeconomic status, religious affiliation, disability status, gender/gender identity and political affiliation;
- › Noteworthy was that more than two-thirds (69%) of responding households were interested in deepening connections in our increasingly diverse community. A majority of respondents expressed support for participating in community events, such as the annual Woodbridge Like Me Day, and several endorsed a range of other ways Woodbridge can adapt to greater diversity.

The Town of Woodbridge Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion will be drawing upon learnings from the Experiencing Woodbridge Survey to identify and develop opportunities for greater community engagement across our many types of diversity. In addition to joining us at our upcoming Community Conversation, if you have questions about the survey, ideas for activities to increase community engagement, and/or would like to become involved, please email the Committee at woodbridgeDEI@gmail.com.

Woodbridge Town News

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“U. Drive” From Page 4

of the solution by paying attention to avoid putting everyone on the road in danger.”

Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection Commissioner James Rovella said, “Every state trooper has seen the horrible consequences of drivers not paying attention to the road. The results can be heartbreaking. A distracted driver is a menace to other drivers on the road. The sad part is that all distracted driving accidents can be avoided by simply ditching the distractions. If you must answer a text or a call, please pull over to a safe location,

such as a commuter lot or rest area.”

Connecticut law prohibits the use of any hand-held mobile electronic device while operating a motor vehicle. Drivers who are 16 or 17 years of age are prohibited from using a cell phone or mobile device at any time, even with a hands-free accessory. Violating Connecticut’s distracted-driving laws can be costly. Drivers who are ticketed are fined \$200 for the first offense, \$375 for the second offense, and \$625 for the third and subsequent offenses.

The public is reminded of the following safety tips:

- › When you get behind the wheel, be an example to your family and

friends by putting your phone away. Texting and driving is not safe behavior.

- › If you struggle to ignore your phone notifications, activate the “Do Not Disturb” feature or put your silenced device in your vehicle’s trunk, glove box, or back seat until you arrive safely at your destination.
- › If you are expecting a text message or need to send one, pull over and park your car in a safe location. Once you are safely off the road and parked, it is safe to text.
- › Give control of your phone to your passenger. Let them respond to

calls or messages.

- › Never engage in social media scrolling or messaging while driving.
- › Even when hands-free, do not stream or watch movies or videos.
- › If you see someone texting while driving, speak up. Tell them to stop what they are doing because it is dangerous. If someone catches you texting while driving and tells you to put your phone away, put it down.
- › Remember, when you get behind the wheel, U Drive. U Text. U Pay.

For more information, visit distraction.gov.

HUMAN SERVICES



A condenser for the new HVAC system in The Woodbridge Center is lifted by a crane over the Center Building. The condensers have been placed in proximity to the center in the central courtyard of the building. The Woodbridge Center’s current renovation should be completed in just a few short months. The Center will feature a new reception area, a consultation office, multi-use space for many programming options, and most importantly a modern and healthy ventilation system. Stay tuned for information about its opening.

Tick Control Study: Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, in conjunction with the Quinnipiac Valley Health District, is seeking residents in Woodbridge for a 5-year Centers for Disease Control and Prevention funded tick management study at no cost to participants. They will test the effectiveness of an extremely low-dose treated bait for white-tailed deer and white-footed mice in killing ticks feeding on them (a similar strategy to treating your pets for fleas and ticks), and the impact to tick reduction and tick bite exposure on participant’s property. According to the study coordinator, this will not negatively impact pollinators, birds, the environment, pets, or well water. For more information or to sign up, contact Dr. Scott Williams at (203) 974-8609 or scott.williams@ct.gov.

Masks and COVID Test Kits available: Contact Woodbridge Human Services if you would like to pick up a few medical or KN95 masks. COVID home test kits are also available. Please no walk-ins.

Drug Take Back Day: Too often, unused prescription drugs find their way into the wrong hands or can contaminate water and landfills. On Saturday, April 22, the Woodbridge Police Department will be participating in the Drug Enforcement Administration’s (DEA) Nationwide Prescription Drug Take Back Day. Residents are welcome to visit the Woodbridge Police Department to dispose of pharmaceutical controlled substances and other medications to law enforcement for destruction. The Rx Drop Box is in the lobby of the Police Department and is accessible to residents year-round.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

(VITA): VITA is a free tax preparation service available to low-income individuals, to people who have a disability, and to those who speak limited English. All in-person appointments have been filled, but we can refer you to other locations or to online tax preparation.

Energy Assistance Program: Human Services is accepting appointments for residents applying for the 2022-2023 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. Applications will not be accepted after May 1.

Food Pantry: Residents in need may call for access to non-perishable food each month. If interested in donating, the food pantry needs regular coffee, canola and olive oil, mayonnaise, jams/jellies, canned chicken, snack foods-crackers, cookies, granola bars, as well as deodorant, soft soap, and laundry soap.

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

Donations to earthquake victims in Turkey: Ilknur and Eser Akdeniz of Woodbridge are from Iskenderun in Hatay Province on the Mediterranean Coast of Turkey. In February 2023, the city was heavily damaged by earthquakes and subsequent floods and fires. Ilknur and Eser are collecting medical supplies, blankets, baby clothes, hygiene kits, feminine hygiene products, coats, socks, and thermal clothing. They will send all supplies directly to their region for distribution. Donation collection boxes are located inside the front entrance of Town Hall and at the Center Building gym entrance until April 7. To help, please contact: eser.ilknur@hotmail.com.

April is Alcohol Awareness Month: According to the CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, the goal of Alcohol Awareness month is to increase public awareness and understanding, reduce stigma, and encourage local

See “Human Services” On Page 16

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OPINION

Vote May 2 – Amity Budget Referendum

FACTS TO CONSIDER REGARDING THE AMITY BUDGET REQUEST

BY JIM LEAHY
VICE-CHAIRMAN, ORANGE BOARD OF FINANCE

One of the requirements of being a member of the Orange Board of Finance (OBOF) is to inform the public. In fact, I consider this an obligation of this elected position. What we are talking about is the spending of millions of dollars of hard-earned money of the people who reside in the Town.

Amity Budget Surplus Remains Unreasonable

Residents of the Member Towns are now fully aware that Amity continues to run unreasonable surpluses. This current year is no exception. Eight months into the operating year, February 2023 data, the stated surplus is \$1,379,237. To that we must add \$111,758 re-allocated this month to OPEB expense (Other Postemployment Benefits). Not only was this \$111,758 not in the budget that was passed but it was a “cut” made after voters rejected initial budget requests last spring. Now it’s back. Fully funded once again.

Then, you add to the surplus the historically over-budgeted Medical & Dental account, now projected to underrun by \$400,000. The Bottom-Line: another fiscal year where the surplus is now expected to be approximately \$2,000,000. And it could be higher.



The ABOE voted to approve a 2.25% budget increase which would increase spending \$1,200,000. Therefore, combining the \$2,000,000 surplus within the current FY 22-23 budget with the \$1,200,000 increase for FY 23-24 budget means that Amity is requesting taxpayers from the Three Members Towns to support an Amity budget that has a \$3,200,000 increase in spending.

In summary, the request to support a 2.25% budget asks taxpayers in the Three Member Towns to support \$3,200,000 in spending which represents a 5.99% spending increase from one year to the next.

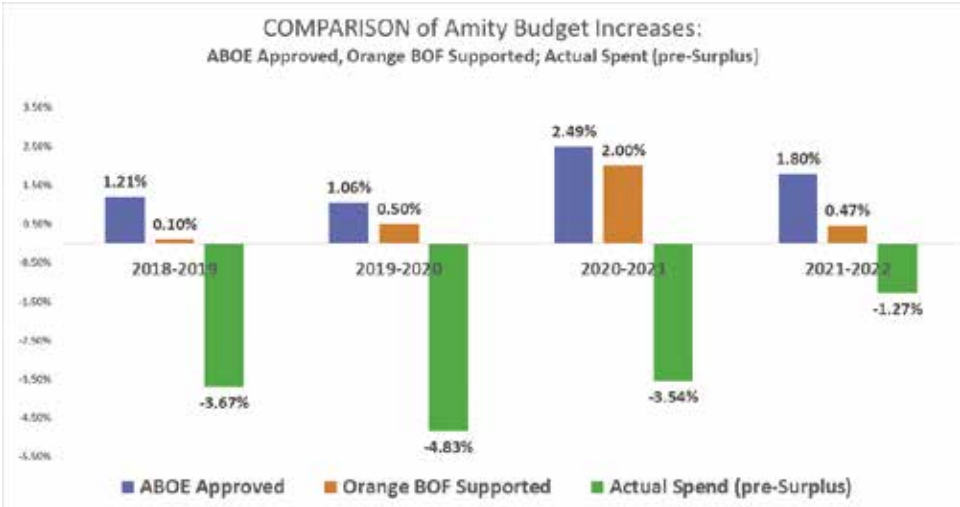
Amity No Longer Returns All Surplus Money to the Member Towns

More importantly, there has been a shift in policy at Amity regarding these

Surpluses. In the past, Amity returned ~ 80% of the surplus money to the Member Towns. So, while there was a major concern over budgeting that produced large surpluses, taxpayers realized that surplus money would be returned to the Towns for other uses such as roads or K-6 needs. Now, ALL surplus money is being retained at Amity and not being directly returned to the Towns.

Action Taken

The Orange Board of Finance unanimously – both Democrats, Independents, & Republicans -- supported up to a 0.46% increase for Amity’s FY 23-24 budget, noting that a more modest increase, or in fact a ZERO increase, would not hurt Amity at all. As seen in the comparison in the graphic, the OBOF position has been FAR more accurate – compared to Actual Spending -- than ABOE approved budgets. Moreover, even the OBOF’s positions have been far HIGHER than the ACTUAL SPEND needed at Amity in each of the past 4 years.



(Reading the Graphic: example, 2021-2022, ABOE approved a 1.80% budget increase; Orange BOF supported 0.47%, and Actual Spending (pre-Surplus) was -1.27%, actual spending being less than the prior year’s budget.)

The Amity Board of Education REJECTED the Orange BOF position opting for a 2.25% hike which would result in a taxpayer-funded spending increase of \$3.2 million.

YOUR VOTE ON MAY 2 COUNTS. Mark your calendar:

- ✓ With a **YES** vote: You Approve of the way Budgeting is being managed at Amity.
- ✓ With a **NO** vote: You Disapprove of the way Budgeting is being managed at Amity.

If the Amity budget is rejected, the budget would go back to Amity to be reduced. After that, there would be a new vote on a revised budget. Amity would continue to be fully funded at the prior Fiscal Year rate until a new budget is passed.

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AT THE WOODBRIDGE CENTER



Left: Award winning Chef Toni of The Linden shares her talents during the March Cooking Demo. The demonstration (with samples) included homemade hummus and flatbread, grilled chicken with pasta carbonara, and chocolate-avocado mousse. Right: The “Lunch Bunch” group enjoys a delicious meal at Carmines di Vega. Join the next outing in May to Gabriele’s Ristorante Italiano.

Celebrate the 60th Anniversary of Older Americans Month (OAM) this May!

Led by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), OAM is a time to acknowledge the contributions and achievements of older Americans. This year’s theme, Aging Unbound, exemplifies those who participate at The Center with activities such as art to embrace creativity; aerobics, Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance, and pickleball to support healthy aging; educational opportunities through Lunch & Learns to continue lifelong learning; and participation in groups like craft, card playing, and sponsored events to form connections through socialization and engagement in the community.

Join in The Center’s activities and events to help change the dialogue of

what it means to age unbound! Call The Center 203-389-3430 with any questions or for information about the programs listed below.

Sponsored Lunch (for Woodbridge residents 60 years of age or over):

Mother’s Day Drive-thru Luncheon
Thursday, May 11, 12-1 pm
In front of main entrance of The Center

Everyone is welcome to celebrate all mothers at the Mother’s Day Drive-thru Luncheon. Enjoy Quiche Lorraine, fresh fruit, and dessert sponsored by Visiting Angels of Woodbridge and Elim Park Health Care and Rehabilitation. Also enjoy a special treat provided by Hamden Rehabilitation and Health Care Center. No charge. Please RSVP by May 4.

Upcoming Programs

Spring Paper Flower Craft

Tuesday, April 18, 11 am – 12 pm
Library Meeting Room

Learn how to make paper flowers to enjoy throughout springtime and beyond. All materials and instruction provided by Hamden Rehabilitation and Health Care Center. Please call 203-389-3430 to RSVP.

Lunch & Learn: Energy Saving\$

Thursday, April 20, 11:30 am – 12:30 pm
Library Meeting Room

Do you want to save money by conserving energy? Are you struggling to pay your utility bill? Join representatives from United Illuminating and Southern Connecticut Gas (UI/SCG) (subsidiaries of AVANGRID) to learn how to make your home or business more energy efficient, and how you can

catch up on your utility bills if you’ve fallen behind. Lunch will be provided, courtesy of UI/SCG. Please call 203-389-3430 to RSVP.

Lunch & Collaborative Art

Friday, April 28, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm
Library Meeting Room

Collaborate with a (small) group of Amity High School Students to create a unified work of art to be displayed in the community. Guess what the finished picture will be as you work together utilizing various colored stickers to create beautiful mosaic artwork. A delicious lunch will also be served. Artistic talent is not required. This free program is sponsored by Woodbridge and Orange Youth Services, and The Woodbridge Center. Please RSVP with The Center by April 21 at 203-389-

See “Woodbridge Center” On Page 15



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TOWN DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES

Youth Services

BY NANCY PFUND



Nancy Pfund teaches Home Alone Class

Woodbridge First Selectman’s Youth Award Deadline Extended

It’s time to recognize our wonderful young residents who share their time to help others and their community. If you know a Woodbridge youth (18 or under) who has worked to improve the Town of Woodbridge or has assisted its residents, please nominate that deserving youth for the First Selectman’s Youth Award. School counselors, peers, school principals, and group leaders are encouraged to make nominations. Parents and family members may not nominate relatives. Nominations are due by April 10. Find the nomination form at the Town’s website for details.

All nominees receive an invitation to a volunteer celebration where the award will be presented to the winner. Send nominations to Youth Services and make a difference in a child’s life.

Home Alone Class

Students, ages 9 – 12 may join the Home Alone Class on Wednesday, April 12 from 10:00 am to 12:30 pm in the Woodbridge Library meeting room. Children learn what to do in an emergency and when to answer the phone or the door. Guidance is offered regarding house rules, nutritious snacks, and internet safety.

Cost is \$20 payable to Woodbridge Youth Services. Permission form and advance payment are required. Call 203-389-3429 to register. Discount is offered for siblings. Space is limited. Healthy snacks are provided. Bring your lunch if you like.

Babysitter Training

Two-day class covers all the basics to get you ready to babysit. For teens, ages 12-17, the course will be held on Saturday, April 22 and 29, 9 am-12:45 pm in the Woodbridge Center Building, Room 16. Must attend both days.

Snacks provided. Students may bring lunch. Fee is \$65, \$70 for non-residents (discount for siblings). Call Youth Services at 203-389-3429 for more information.

Woodbridge Job Bank Seeks Teens Who Want Work

The Job Bank in Woodbridge offers occasional jobs to teen residents (ages 13 – 18) who would like to work for Woodbridge residents to earn money. Youth Services provides an opportunity to learn about the interview process, safety on the job, and how to negotiate pay. Improve your communication skills and gain experience. Do snow shoveling, yard work, spring clean-up, babysitting, dog walking, etc. Call for an interview at 203-389-3464 or e-mail npfund@woodbridgect.org. Masks and social distancing may be required.

Teens Need Jobs

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

Bethwood Spring Party for 7th & 8th Graders— Save the Date

Seventh and Eighth Grade residents of Woodbridge and Bethany and all current Amity Middle School students are invited to a party on the evening of May 19 at Amity Middle School-Bethany. Details to be announced. Event is sponsored by Woodbridge Youth Services and the Town of Bethany.

Volunteers Needed

The Woodbridge Youth Advisory Board makes recommendations for

See “Youth Services” On Page 13

Recreation News



Woodbridge Recreation Summer camps will run June 26 through August 4, 9 am - noon at Beecher Road South School for campers entering grades 1-8. Camp offers a wide range of activities including arts and crafts, drama, fitness, and more. The CIT program is for those going into 9th grade \$650 for residents and \$700 for non-residents. The Volunteer program is for those going into 10th grade. Limited spots available in both the CIT & volunteer programs. Priority registration given to those that were enrolled in camp last summer. Register for camp online at woodbridgect.org, click recreation registration. Volunteer and counselor applications are also available online at woodbridgect.org.

Camp (Grade 1-8)	Resident	Non-Resident
6 Weeks:	\$600	\$650
5 Weeks:	\$550	\$600
4 Weeks:	\$500	\$550
3 Weeks:	\$450	\$500
2 Weeks:	\$375	\$450
1 Week:	\$275	\$400

2023 Summer Concert Series

They will be held on Tuesday Evenings in July, from 6 to 8 pm, at Woodbridge Town Green. The first concert will be held on Wednesday, July 5th due to the 4th of July holiday. July 5 is

the Elvis Presley tribute show “Lamar Peters”, featuring music from an Elvis Presley tribute artist. July 11 features “Jukebox 45 Show Band” CT’s Premier 50s & 60s Oldies Doo-Wop Show Band. July 18 features “West Rock” – Classic Rock. July 25 is the “Rumrunners” (Party Rock/Classic Rock). In case of inclement weather, check the Town website woodbridgect.org for rain date information.

Tennis Permits

For use of all Town public tennis courts for the playing of pickleball or tennis, please contact the Woodbridge Recreation Department for a no-cost permit to reserve your times. (Multiple times and days can be reserved for up to three weeks.) Permits are available from April 15th to November 1st - three weeks in advance. Permits for court times can be reserved by Woodbridge residents and registered nonresident pickleball players only. Contact our Department at (203) 389-3446, Monday through Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm. Pickleball and tennis permits will be emailed to you. Once reserved you must have your permit with you while you are playing. This will be proof you have reserved that court for that specific time period.





AnnaMaria Mauhs instructs youth in Babysitting

“Youth Services” From Page 12

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

BOWDAAC-Let’s Talk Prevention

BOWDAAC (Bethany, Orange, Woodbridge Drug/Alcohol Action Committee) is a grant-funded Local Prevention Council serving the com-

munities of Bethany, Orange, and Woodbridge. Its mission is to reduce underage drinking and substance use by promoting awareness through educational programs and community collaborations. New members are welcome. For more information or to join our committee, email info.bowdaac@gmail.com or check out our website www.bowdaac.org.

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



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“Letters” From Page 5

children. Knowing what I know from my 22 years serving the district, it breaks my heart to hear their efforts and motivations called into question. Our educators are demoralized, they are tired, and they need us now more than ever. Continuing the discord will not benefit our community in the end. It is our responsibility as citizens, parents, and neighbors to work together, to support the systems that are the foundational aspects of our towns to not only benefit our community, but to set a positive example for our children and our future leaders.

It’s time to work together to show our educators and our educational leaders that we are here for them. Amity means friendship; let’s start to show everyone what Amity really can be. It’s time to take a stand to support our children, our educators, and our town - I hope you’ll join me and the many other members of our community who value our public education system by voting Yes for Amity on May 2nd.

Anna N. Mahon

Former Amity Finance Committee Member Cannot Support “Bloated Amity Budget”

When the Amity Finance Committee was formed more than twenty years ago, its purpose was to provide taxpayers comfort in that the three towns would be represented. After the financial crisis at Amity, it was the only way to pass the Amity budget after 17 failed referendums. For most of those years the system worked well and I remained on the committee until recently when I resigned.

For many years Amity had budget surpluses, but in recent years they have ballooned into multiple millions of dollars. With an understanding with the Amity Board of Education those surpluses were returned to the towns for their use. Recently, the board decided to retain these multi-million-dollar surpluses to be used at their discretion, starting with the first million dollars being placed in a reserve account. The rest of the surplus would be retained by Amity for their own use and if there is any left, they would return it to the three towns. As you prepare to vote on the Amity budget, please keep in mind that multi-million-dollar budget surpluses are over taxation of the taxpayers in Bethany. Orange, and Woodbridge. Allowing Amity to retain these surpluses causes the three towns to formulate their own budgets and eliminate items that benefit the taxpayers. This money belongs to the taxpayers and should not be hoarded by Amity.

I find it disgusting that year after year the Amity Budget is bloated by millions of dollars. It just can’t be a coincidence that every year Amity has millions of dollars of unspent taxpayer provided funds. I know of no other school district with this amount of left over funds. So, as you decide whether or not to support the Amity budget

keep in mind that millions of dollars of taxpayer provided funds are being retained for Amity’s use. I want to vote for a solid accurate budget that does not have millions of dollars to place in a slush fund. For this reason, I cannot in good conscience vote for the Amity budget until they stop these ridiculous surpluses.

Matthew Giglietti

Woodbridge Can Do Better

As a resident of Woodbridge for 22 years, and as a retired teacher who worked at Beecher Road School for 16 years, I wish I could say that I was surprised to read in “A ‘Missed Opportunity”” that elected members of a Woodbridge town board, in this case the Woodbridge Board of Education, are opposed to robustly continuing to support Open Choice, a state-wide program that allows urban students to attend public schools in nearby suburban towns. Sadly, this type of attitude and behavior seems to have become the norm in our town. As Bettina Thiel notes in her article, the town is already facing a lawsuit for its refusal to follow the Fair Housing Act, preferring instead to preserve decades-old zoning restrictions that prevent lower-income families from moving here. Now we have Board of Education members pretending that issues of funding are at the heart of their decision to cut the number of Open Choice students who may attend Beecher Road School. It’s truly mind boggling that a member of the Board actually believes that the Beecher is “diverse now”. By what measure? According to the Census Bureau, Woodbridge is 82.8% white, has a median household income of \$171,652, and a median value of owner-occupied housing units of \$462,300. The fact that Woodbridge zoning laws have for decades denied homeownership to lower-income people who would like to live here is disturbing enough, but now the Board is actually going to whittle away at a program which offers children from neighboring urban communities an opportunity to attend our award-winning schools? The argument that Open Choice students all require costly special education services is disingenuous and deceptive, a pitiful way to justify cutting the program. Eliminating spots in Open Choice is the wretched accomplice to refusing to adapt exclusionary zoning laws; both actions send the same message: Keep Out. Woodbridge, do better.

Jean Molot

Supporting the Amity Budget is Investing in Our Children’s Future

On May 2, voters in Woodbridge will be able to vote on the Amity Budget. Historically, referenda measures do not have a very high voter turnout. However, our students, teachers, and administrators rely on our participation to ensure they have what they need. I urge everyone to vote in favor of the proposed budget.

The Amity Budget is critical to

maintaining high-quality education in our community. By supporting this budget, we can ensure that our educators and administrators have the resources they need to provide the best possible education for our children.

Furthermore, the Amity Budget allows us to provide our children and teachers with the programs and tools they need to succeed. The budget supports the diverse needs of our students and helps prepare them for the future.

As we all know, our children are the future of our community. By supporting the Amity Budget, we are investing in that future and ensuring our children have the skills and knowledge they need to thrive in the years ahead. It is up to us to ensure they have the best possible education and opportunities.

I urge everyone to vote in support of the Amity Budget on May 2. Please make the time to come out and vote to invest in our children and their futures. The election will be held at The Center Gym from 6 am until 8 pm. Absentee ballots are also available.

Alison Valsamis

Resident Supports Board’s Decision Relating to Open Choice Program

I am writing in response to the backlash the town of Woodbridge has received for not accepting two students into the Open Choice Program due to New Haven’s failure to remit proper payment. I am particularly concerned with the accusations the town is trying to segregate as well as the allegation Woodbridge is moving in a backwards direction. I would like to impart I am in support of the Board of Education’s decision not to permit admission of two students into the Open Choice Program given the financial consequences. Financial remuneration is a medium of exchange, and if one party does not uphold their aspect of the exchange, the deal becomes null. This is true of any standard transaction, and I do not believe this should be any different even though it pertains to education. It behooves those in leadership positions to honor the interests of the taxpayers of this town, especially because these constituents cast votes to elect officials. Furthermore, since the same ideologies underscore the issue of affordable housing, I am expressing the following opinion.

To begin this topic of discussion, we should review the fundamentals of zoning laws and municipal zoning regulations. Regulations do not see color, nor does their existence preclude individuals from residing in a particular area. Zoning regulations govern the use of land, not actual people who utilize the land. Additionally, zoning laws are not in control of the purchase and sale of land. Ergo, zoning laws impose no restrictions on one who is purchasing land or a home. There is no point throughout the zoning approval process where the identity beyond the name of the applicant is even known, let alone considered. Rather the merits

of the development proposal are considered within the confines of existing law. The sole purpose of zoning regulations is to preserve property values, as well as historic, and environmental resources. Zoning regulations do not impose bias or prejudice.

I respectfully ask individuals to consider the ramifications of decisions and for people to exercise judgement and caution when expressing unexamined “opinions” about this subject. A principal concern with legislation 8-30g is out of scale buildings being approved, thereby ruining the scale by which other residents had to abide when purchasing their own homes. I implore these developers to consider whether or not they would appreciate multiple-story buildings adjacent to their single-family homes, overshadowing other residences.

This statute is also fraught with other unsettling concerns, such as inadequate parking, increased congestion due to traffic, the presence of dumpsters for waste removal visible from peoples’ dwellings, as well as the nuisance of noise. Unfortunately, this legislation disables the authority of zoning commissions, and permits developers to build maximum density to yield a greater profit, with only 1/3 of the units being affordable. This suggestion is tantamount to reverse-gentrification. Furthermore, the very basis of rendering a judgment indicating low-income individuals need financial assistance to achieve success is the antithesis of equity and is inherently prejudicial. Frankly, this mentality perpetuates disparity, rather than disabling it.

My husband and I relocated to Woodbridge, CT, with our two young daughters to enjoy the history and sanctity of the town, as well as the esteemed education system. We earned the privilege of purchasing a home here through hard work and gumption. The rural feel, with a great deal of greenspace, as well as the ability to enjoy biodiversity are the most appealing characteristics of this beautiful town.

Shouldn’t everyone be held to the same standard/expectation? Please do not misconstrue my opinions. I am simply exercising my first amendment right to freedom of speech, and though I may not align with your opinions, I would vehemently protect your right to express them.

Marissa Jacko-Jones

Woodbridge Board of Education

Dear Members of the Beecher Road School Community and Residents of Woodbridge,

Each year the Woodbridge Board of Education (WBOE) votes on whether to accept new students into the Open Choice program. As you may be aware from recent media reports, a majority of the WBOE voted at our regular January 17 meeting to not accept new students from New Haven into our

“Letters” From Page 14

school community through the program for the 2023-2024 school year. The reason for this was financial.

For more than a year, leaders from the Woodbridge School District attempted to work quietly and in good faith to secure full reimbursement from the City of New Haven for certain Open Choice student expenses, consistent with state guidelines. Unfortunately, our efforts failed to yield a response from appropriate New Haven officials.

A recording is available of the Open Choice discussion that took place at the January 17 WBOE meeting (beginning at 44:52 minutes), and we encourage you to listen to it. What a majority of us concluded following our robust conversation was that—irrespective of our level of support for the Open Choice program—we have a responsibility to the Town of Woodbridge to ensure that our school is fairly compensated for the services we provide.

We have no control over the response to this decision by our neighboring City’s officials. We were disappointed at their unwillingness to engage in collaborative dialogue to resolve the financial issue. Regardless, we would like to provide several reassurances to our community:

We are committed to our current Open Choice learners. Beecher Road School has welcomed young learners through the Open Choice program for nearly 25 years. They and their families have always been essential members of our community and have been fully entitled to the best we have to offer.

That will not change. Our current Open Choice learners will remain with us until they graduate from Beecher Road School.

We are committed to celebrating the growing diversity of our school community. At our February 27 WBOE meeting (beginning at 40:12 minutes), Principal Analisa Sherman shared a detailed portrait of how much more diverse our school has become and how our school community supports and builds upon that diversity every day. This growing diversity almost entirely reflects the decisions of diverse families, including those of several WBOE members, to make Woodbridge their home.

We are committed to continued conversation with our New Haven neighbors. We remain open to engaging in respectful discussion of our learning communities’ shared interests and priorities. Woodbridge is a very special community and, from our perspective, Beecher Road School is the heart of the community. We will continue to do our best to support Beecher’s educators and administrators to ensure that all of our learners are well prepared for the exciting, diverse world that awaits them.

Members of the Woodbridge Board of Education
Lynn Piascyk, Chair; Dr. Maria Madonick, Vice-Chair; Sarah Beth Del Prete, Secretary
Dr. Jay Dahya, Brooke Hopkins, Jeff Hughes, Steven Lawrence, Dr. Michael Strambler, Erin Williamson

Pray For Our Leaders!

A significant number of Jews in

Israel and in the Diaspora, are quite unhappy about Israel’s newly elected government. Some rabbis have chosen, as a result, to change the wording of the traditional “Prayer for the State of Israel.” One rabbi, whose words, I’ve abridged below, explained it as follows:

“I’ll never cease supporting the cultural, social and spiritual richness of Israel’s beloved Jewish society. In fact, we should intensify our support for Israel. We should visit Israel. We should redouble and re-triple our efforts to know our Israeli brothers and sisters. We should support them in their very real challenges.

“But we should shun the incoming government of Israel. It deserves whatever small protest we can offer from afar. Here is mine, ‘We will continue to pray that Israeli society succeeds. But we will not pray that this new government succeeds.’”

The opening sentences of the prayer the rabbi and others find unacceptable is reprinted below. I’ve italicized the two sentences they reject:

“Rock and Redeemer of the people Israel: Bless the State of Israel, with its promise of redemption. Shield it with Your love; spread over it the shelter of Your peace. *Guide its leaders and advisors with Your light and Your truth; help them with Your good counsel...*”

I, many rabbis, and many supporters of Israel – both Jewish and Christian – utterly disagree with the decision to alter the traditional prayer for Israel. We find it misguided and ill-advised. The prayer for the modern State of Israel, inspired by the age-old Jewish “Prayer for the Government,” is a prayer for the welfare of the country.

That is to say, in praying for the heads of state, we pray that those who govern make decisions aligned not with their own biased interests, but with biblical values – values that urge them to promote *the welfare of all the country’s inhabitants*. Indeed, we’ve all invoked the Prayer for America during administrations we both liked and disliked. Yet, the opening paragraph of that prayer, found in many Jewish prayer books, still remains: “We ask Your blessings for our country, the United States of America – *for its government, for its leaders and advisors, and for all who exercise just and rightful authority... May they administer all affairs of state fairly, that peace and security, happiness and prosperity, justice and freedom may forever abide in our midst...*”

Well, shouldn’t that hold true with regard to our prayers for Israel’s government? Shouldn’t we pray that her leaders “administer all affairs of state fairly, that peace and security, happiness and prosperity, justice and freedom abide in Israel’s midst?”

And speaking of the welfare of Israel and all her inhabitants, don’t Israel’s leaders need our prayers now more than ever? The sense of divisiveness in the Jewish State these days is, in some ways, even deeper than the divisiveness we currently experience here in the United States! To my mind, there’s no better time than now to collectively pray: *Guide Israel’s leaders and advisors with Your light and Your truth; help them with Your good counsel...*”

Which is why we continue praying for Israel’s leaders at our congregation! Rabbi Alvin Wainhaus
Congregation Or-Shalom

“Woodbridge Center” From Page 11

3430. Space is limited.

Lunch & Learn: Staging 101 – Enjoy your home now and when you are ready to sell

Friday, May 5, 11:30 am – 12:30 pm
Library Meeting Room

Did you know 85% of staged homes sold for 5-23% over their listing price? Join the Holli Shanbrom Real Estate Team for some quick tips and tools on techniques that will allow you to enjoy your home more now and potentially increase value when you are ready to sell. Lunch will be provided courtesy of the Holli Shanbrom Real Estate Team. Please call 203-389-3430 to RSVP.

Lunch Bunch to Gabriele’s Ristorante Italiano

Wednesday, May 10
Van leaves The Center at 11:30 am or meet at Gabriele’s at 12 pm

Join in a social outing to lunch at Gabriele’s Ristorante Italiano in Orange. Self-pay for your meal at the restaurant. \$3 per person for transportation (or meet at the restaurant). Call The Center to RSVP by May 5.

Regular Programs

Not sure if a class is right for you?

Try a complimentary class first!

Aerobics Class with Laura Richling

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10-11 am
(no class April 13, April 18, or May 2)
Center Building Gymnasium

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

Indoor Pickleball

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

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

Outdoor Pickleball

Every Day
Outdoors on the Town Courts

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

Bridge

Wednesdays, 1-4 pm
Library Meeting Room

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

Craft Group

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

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

Painting for Pleasure with local artist Carole Abbate

Monday, 10 am – 12 pm
Library Meeting Room

Create your own paintings as Carole helps inspire beginners to intermediates to paint with acrylics or watercolors. Paint the subject of your choice- bring in a note card or photo for inspiration. No experience necessary. Call to sign-up for this 6-week, \$36 class. Class will be prorated.

Pinochle

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

Anyone interested in playing pi-

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

Services offered

(for Woodbridgeresidents only):

Computer Lab

Multiple computers and laptops are located in room 11 of the Center Building Human Services corridor, which is open Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, 10 am - 2 pm. Printing is available (first 5 pages free).

Friendly Visitor Program

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

Medical Loan Closet

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

Job Bank

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

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

The Friends of the Library Seek Student Volunteers

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

Peeps in the Library Diorama Contest

If you're participating in this year's contest, please drop off completed dioramas by Saturday, April 8th. Dioramas will be displayed in the library starting the week of April 10th, so make sure to stop by and vote for your favorites!

Read, Recycle, Repeat – Earth Day Book Sale: Saturday, April 22

The Friends of the Library have received fabulous donations in the last few weeks: armloads of beautiful art books, an avalanche of clean books for younger children, including some reprinted Hardy Boys and Nancy Drew, several boxes of CDs, many jigsaw puzzles and board games, and language books from a multitude of cultures. We have also been able to weave into our collection books that the Library has weeded from theirs, including several book club selections.

On Saturday, April 22, as part of the Library's Earth Day celebration, the Friends will hold a book sale in the beautiful Woodbridge Room on the Library's Mezzanine from 10 am to 3 pm. The inventory now stored in our workroom, will be moved out onto tables in the Woodbridge Room. The books that are now in the Bookstore Alley will also be on sale. Prices will be



WOODBRIDGE TOWN LIBRARY

at the usual rock-bottom level: paperbacks are three for a dollar, children's hardcovers are \$1, and adult hardcovers and puzzles are \$2. Remember that, as always, teachers are invited to shop free, for any materials for their classrooms.

Our wonderful student volunteers from Amity High School will help us set up the sale and will be available to assist you in finding books on the day of the sale.

Now for sale: Totes with Notable Quotes!

Support the Library by purchasing a tote bag. \$20 each, 2 for \$35. Six different bags, each with a different quote. Examples: "A book must be the axe for the frozen sea within us." Franz Kafka; "No need to hurry. No need to sparkle. No need to be anybody but oneself," Virginia Woolf. Thanks to the Friends of the Woodbridge Library for their support.

Online Card Registration Available

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

Do we have your email address?

Sign up for our email newsletters to receive notifications about events, new offerings, and library hours/closings. We typically only send one email a week. Join our mailing list by visiting our website and entering your email

address in the form provided. That's it! (You can also give us your email address while in the building.)

Need a Notary?

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

Library Information

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

Department phones and emails

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

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From Adult Services Author Talk:

Sharon Ruchman
Friday, April 14 at 11 AM

Join us for a talk and performance with author and classically trained pianist Sharon Ruchman. She will be discussing her book, "The Gift of Rudy," which is a memoir about Sharon's journey of discovery through the life and

music of her father's uncle, a young violinist who died in a tragic plane crash in Lake Michigan during the 1933 Chicago World's Fair. For more than 25 years, she traced the life of Rudy Fuchs, a musical prodigy whose life would have a major bearing on her own career as a musician. Please register online or at the library.

The History of Beekeeping and Connecticut's Role in Apiculture

Tuesday, May 2 at 6:30 PM
How did the Honey bees' get here? Are Honey Bees native to the United States? Who is L. L. Langstroth and why was Connecticut so important to him? Learn how the Langstroth Hive came to be and the Honey Bee's importance to Agriculture! This lecture is presented by Catherine Wolko of The Humble Bee Honey Co. Please register online or at the library.

4 Critical Components to a Successful Retirement

Tuesday, May 9 at 6 PM
Learn how to get the most out of your retirement with these 4 critical components: Inflation, Social Security, Taxes Now & In Retirement, and Market Volatility & Income Needs. This workshop is presented by USA Financial. Please register online or at the library.

Library Skywatch ends mid-April

Every Monday & Tuesday, conditions permitting (dark & clear), a reference staff member will assist the public in identifying and viewing celestial objects with our new Zhumell 1114mm refracting telescope. Join us on the Library lawn, from where we can see the Moon and the larger and closer planets. Telescope viewing starts 1/2 hour after sundown. Reservation not needed; walk-ins welcome. Contact Bill at warmstrong@woodbridgetownlibrary.org with questions.

Woodbridge Writers Workshop

Every second and fourth Tuesday of the month, from 3 to 5 pm. Gather with area writers as we read and critique our works in a friendly atmosphere.

See "Library" On Page 17

"Human Services" From Page 9

communities to focus on alcoholism and alcohol-related issues. Facts about alcohol you may not know:

1. 75% of esophageal cancers are attributable to chronic excessive alcohol consumption;
2. Nearly 50% of cancers of the mouth, pharynx, and larynx are associated with heavy drinking;

3. Chronic alcohol consumption is associated with 10% increase in a woman's risk of breast cancer;
4. Heavy chronic drinking contributes to approximately 65% of all cases of pancreatitis;
5. Among emergency room patients admitted for injuries, 47% tested positive for alcohol and 35% were intoxicated; of those who were intoxicated, 75% showed signs of

- chronic alcoholism;
6. As many as 35% of heavy drinkers develop alcoholic hepatitis;
7. As many as 36% of the cases of primary liver cancer are linked to heavy chronic drinking;
8. Alcoholics are 10 times more likely to develop carcinoma than the general population;
9. Accidents related to alcohol use are among the leading causes of death

for teens.
Alcohol use may have increased during the pandemic. To check if you may have a problem visit alcoholscreening.org and answer a few questions about your drinking habits or those of a friend or family member.
According to the CDC, reducing the amount of alcohol you drink can improve your short and long-term health. Even small changes can make a big difference.

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“Library” From Page 16

phere. Register online or at the library. More information on our website or call the reference desk.

Woodbridge Scrabble Group
Wednesdays at 11 AM

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

Indoor Film Screenings
Thursdays at 7 PM

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

April 13: The Whale
April 20: A Man Called Otto

April 27: Missing

Due to technical difficulties and staff illness, we canceled our March 16 & 23 film screenings Spoiler Alert and The Inspection—they will be shown in May. Stay tuned for the complete schedule!

Saturday Morning Meditation

Every Saturday at 10:15 am, one hour of silent Vipassana (mindfulness) meditation is hosted by experienced meditation instructors. Registration suggested, but walk-ins welcome too!

**Especially For Teens
Teen Volunteers needed!**

Check out our teen page on our website to see what volunteer opportunities are available, or email Emily

Cantor, Head of Children's: ecantor@woodbridgetownlibrary.org.

From The Children's Department
Wednesday, April 12 at 2 pm: Blue Moon Raptors

Special Spring Break program! Advance registration required, no walk-ins day of event.

Monday, April 17 at 6:30 pm: Animal Facts Club

Ages 7+. Registration required; meets monthly. This month's theme is desert animals!

Saturday, April 22 at 3 pm: Earth Day Craft

Ages 5+. Celebrate Earth Day at the library with an eco-friendly craft!

Tuesday, April 25 at 6:30 pm: Graphic Novel Club

Ages 9+. Come discuss the graphic novel Zita the Spacegirl by Ben Hatke and do a fun activity relating to the book! Online registration required.

Recurring Programs

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

- › Mondays at 10:30 am: Baby Group (newborns to 18 months)
- › Wednesdays at 10:30 am: Storytime (infants to age 3)
- › Thursdays at 4 pm: Afternoon Craft Time (Ages 3+)
- › Fridays at 11:30 am, ending promptly at noon: Morning Craft Time (Ages 3 to 5, perfect for preschoolers and homeschoolers!)

HOUSES OF WORSHIP EVENTS

Congregation Beth El – Keser Israel Events

Children’s Programs

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

Classes with the Rabbi

Current learning opportunities with Rabbi Eric Woodward include a discussion of the weekly Torah portion on Thursday mornings and study of the Philosophy and Talmud study (Chapter 2 of Tractate Shabbat) on select Sunday mornings. Details at beki.org.

Rabbi Woodward will also lead a conversation entitled “Yom HaShoah and Yom HaAtzmaut: A New Omer?” via Zoom, Wednesday, April 26 at 7:30pm. The mourning practices of the Omer commemorate a plague in the second century CE. But what if a new, reinvigorated Omer commemorated the contemporary Jewish observance of the time between Yom HaShoah and Yom Ha’atzmaut? What would be involved in making this move theologically and halakhically? Email office@beki.org to request the Zoom link.

Passover Services

For the schedule of Passover holiday services, consult beki.org. BEKI offers in-person services twice daily, led by Rabbi Woodward and congregants. Weekday services also are on Zoom.

Professor Uriel Abulof

BEKI’s Israel Discussion Group will host a talk by Uriel Abulof, Associate Professor of Politics at Tel Aviv University, on the topic “Suicidal democracy? On the moral and emotional dimensions in Israel’s moment of truth.” He will discuss current politics and judicial reform in Israel on Sunday, April 9 at 10 am. The author most recently of *The Mortality of Morality of Nations*, Prof. Abulof studies political legitimization and violence, focusing on nationalism, revolutions and ethnic conflicts in, and

beyond, the Middle East. Email office@beki.org to request the Zoom link.

Yom HaShoah Program

BEKI’s annual commemoration of Holocaust Remembrance Day will be on Zoom Tuesday, April 18 7:30 pm. Starting with the lighting of yellow memorial candles, the program will include songs, poems and personal reflections. Email office@beki.org to request the Zoom link.

James Berger Poetry

Poet and Professor James Berger will read from and discuss his 3rd book of poetry, *The Obvious Poems and The Worthless Poems*, on Saturday May 6. Berger, who is a Senior Lecturer in English and American Studies at Yale, published this latest book in November 2022. Details at beki.org.

Courtyard Campfire

Monday evening May 8 is Lag BaOmer, the 33rd day of the Omer. The folk-custom is to sing around a campfire at a “kumsitz,” meaning “come” and “sit.” BEKI’s program in the courtyard will feature niggunim—which have no words—as well as traditional American songs and Hebrew songs, all led by congregant Max DuBoff. Song sheets will be provided. Details at beki.org.

Art by Dganit Zauberman

An exhibit by Israeli-born artist Dganit Zauberman, titled “Land in Flux,” will be on view in the BEKI Gallery from April 15 through June 14. Based in a studio at New Haven’s Erector Square since 2016, she has exhibited in galleries located throughout Pennsylvania, Ohio, New York, California and Connecticut, including at the Institute Library and ArtSpace in New Haven. Zauberman will discuss her work on Saturday, April 29.

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

Upcoming Events at Temple Emanuel

Special Events

Friday, April 28 at 6:30 pm – Israel@75, a special Kabbalat Shabbat service with music by the Temple Emanuel band, followed by an Israeli dinner and dancing. Please go to the TE website to sign up for dinner.

Regular Weekly Services

- › 6:30 pm on the first Friday of the month, Family Shabbat service
- › 7:30 pm on all other Fridays, Kabbalat Shabbat Service

Other Regularly Scheduled Events

- › 10:00 am on most Saturdays, Torah Study

All of these events are held in person and can also be attended online. Please check the TE website or contact the TE office for links to Zoom and YouTube. All listed services and events are open to both members and non-members.



Temple Emanuel

Masks are required during indoor services and gatherings when we are singing. Please wear a surgical mask, KN95 mask or something similar. Surgical masks are available in the lobby. Masks are optional at other events.

For more information about services and celebrations at Temple Emanuel, and to register or purchase tickets for special events, please go to the TE website, www.tegnh.org or call the office at 203-397-3000. Emanuel is located at 150 Derby Avenue in Orange.

Document Shredding Event at Temple Beth Sholom

Date: Sunday, May 21, 2023

Time: 9am-12pm

Location: Temple Beth Sholom, 1809 Whitney Avenue, Hamden (in the parking lot)

Cost: Small Copy Boxes (18 x 12 x 12 inches or smaller) - \$10 per box; Large Banker Boxes (18 x 18 x 24 inches or larger) - \$20 per box

Also Available:

- › Hard Drive Destruction & Computer Recycling - \$20 each
- › CRT Computer Monitors - \$20 each

- › Hard Drive Only - \$10 each

All items should be in a box that can easily be picked up. Paper items only. No trash bags, paper bags, etc. No trash or non-paper items. No CDs, X-Rays, etc. Paper clips and staples CAN be shredded.

On-site shredding truck provided by Affordable Solutions, LLC. Questions? Email fundraising@tbshamden.com.

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



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HOUSES OF WORSHIP EVENTS

Events at the First Church of Christ

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

Interim Minister

The Rev. Susan Murtha is the Interim Minister at FCCW and has made quite an impact. Plan a visit to see what is "happening." You can also read about her on our website. We are honored to have such an extraordinary individual here with us at First Church!

Kid's Church has begun again at First Church!

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

Weekly Bible Study

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

are invited!

Boy Scout Troop 907

Troop 907 has been busy since our February ski outing. During our weekly meeting, older scouts continued to work on their First Aid Merit Badge, which is a requirement for Eagle. Younger Scouts worked on getting their Totin' Chip so they could work with sharp materials.

Connecticut Yankee Council recently hosted Merit Badge College at Easton Country Day. This month-long commitment gave scouts ranked First Class or higher an opportunity to earn at least three eagle required merit badges. Scouts were also exposed to new experiences!

We had a great time at our February camp out at Camp Whiting. We camped out Friday, February 24th through Sunday February 26th. On Saturday, we hosted Webelos 2 from a West Haven Cub Scout Pack. This gave them the opportunity to experience a Boy Scout camp out.

On March 2nd Troop 907 had a great time at On Kart Racing in Wallingford.

Scouts and our leaders raced, bringing out our competitive sides! Even more importantly, created even closer bonds within Troop 907.

Troop 907 is a robust, active, outdoors oriented troop chartered by the First Church of Christ in Woodbridge. The Troop meets Thursday evenings at 7:00 PM and is always interested in welcoming interested scouts and families to check them out. More at troop907.org.

Upcoming events "STICK TOGETHER" - Family event

Sunday, April 23 at the Parish House from 1:30 - 3:00 pm.

Music Concert in The Afternoon

Saturday, May 20th at 4:00 p.m.

There will be a concert in the Sanctuary featuring Trio Ondata, a New Haven based classical music ensemble composed of violinist Michael Ferri, cellist, Miriam Liske-Doorandish, and pianist Anthony Ratinov. These three began playing together during their graduate studies at the Yale School of Music in 2021. More information on the program to follow. Join us afterwards for a reception to meet these talented musicians. Suggested \$15 donation. For more information, call the church office, 203-389-2119.

Strawberry Festival

The 2023 Strawberry Festival will be held on Friday, June 9th from 5:30 to 8:00 pm. Again, this year we are joining with Boy Scout troop 907 who will be taking care of the grilling and meal service and helping with set-up and clean-up. As always, we will be asking for volunteers from the congregation to help with biscuit baking, berry hulling, cream whipping, shortcake serving, set-up and clean-up. So, save this date and also June 8th if you are a biscuit baker. Details will follow in upcoming editions of the Parishioner

and announcements in church.

Zoom Option

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

Office Hours

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

Join the FCCW Choir!

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

Pre-school space is available

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

For More Information

Visit our website at www.uccw.org for resources such as our calendar of events, monthly newsletter, ministry and volunteer opportunities, photo galleries, scout info, and much more! Follow us on Facebook and stay up to date with parish happenings, including memorials and baptism announcements.

Feel free to email us or call the office with all your questions. We are happy to hear from you!

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

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

Happening at B'nai Jacob

Bread & Torah

Saturday Mornings 9:00am-9:45am

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

Shir Hadash

Saturday, May 6 at 9:00am

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

Prayerful Shabbat Morning Walk on the Blue Trail

Saturday, May 20 at 8:30am
(weather permitting)

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

Shabbat Lunch & Learn Author Discussion

Saturday, May 6 after
Kiddush at 1:00pm



Congregation B'nai Jacob

ELIZABETH EDELGLASS Frankly Feminist

The first-ever anthology from Lilith magazine, Frankly Feminist is a unique amalgam of fine writing and activism that comes right out of Jewish women's lives today: transgressive loves, deepening connections, political turmoil, abortion, fear of loss, struggles with fertility, with body and soul, with finding community, and with decoding family life. Elizabeth Edelglass will lead us in a discussion of her story in the book along with several other stories.

Unless otherwise noted, all services, classes and events are in person at B'nai Jacob, located at 75 Rimmon Road, Woodbridge.

For more information: Call: 203-389-2111, Email: office@bnaijacob.org, visit our website, bnaijacob.org.



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A unique collection of more than 65 local boutiques, national brands, cafes, restaurants & attractions with convenient parking in historic downtown New Haven. Plan your experience at [TheShopsatYale.com](https://www.TheShopsatYale.com).