



Milford-Orange Times

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Milford Reaches \$5 Million Settlement In Maren Sanchez Murder

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

The City of Milford has reached a settlement for \$5 million with the estate of a student who was murdered by a friend at Jonathon Law High School.

Maren Sanchez, 16, was stabbed to death by fellow student Christopher Plaskon in the school's hallway on April 25, 2014. She was attacked in retaliation for turning down his invitation to the junior prom.

The lawsuit, filed by Sanchez's estate in 2016, alleged two school counselors and a school nurse failed to follow school district protocol after Sanchez told them in November 2013 that Plaskon had threatened suicide and acts of self-harm by cutting himself with a knife and could be a danger to others.

Five months after Sanchez brought her misgivings to a guidance counselor, Plaskon killed her on school grounds.

The lawsuit, led by plaintiff attorney David Golub, alleged Plaskon "articulated express intent to harm Maren Victoria Sanchez" leading up to her death.

State law requires that school personnel who are informed of students who may be considering harming themselves or others to take certain actions, including report the information, interview the student and create a safety plan.

The guidance counselor did not comply with these requirements, the lawsuit said.

"In particular," it said, the counselor "did not report the information Maren Victoria Sanchez reported about Christopher Plaskon to the high school administration or DCF, did not cause Christopher Plaskon to be interviewed or evaluated by the school nurse, and did not create a safety plan."

The settlement still must be approved by the Probate Court but will not incur any out-of-pocket expense to the Milford Board of Education or the city. The settlement will be paid by the board's insurer.

Plaskon was convicted of murder after pleading no contest in June 2016 and is serving a 25-year prison sentence.

Donna Cimarelli, who is Sanchez's mother and executor of her estate, has used the tragedy of her daughter's death to build the Maren Sanchez Home Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to educating and empowering girls and young women to defend themselves against emotional, psychological and verbal manipulation and physical violence.

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Orange Selectmen Hear Contract Grievances From Police Retirees

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

Retirees from the Orange Police Department aired their grievances about contradictions regarding retiree benefits in their contracts at the Dec. 11 Board of Selectmen meeting.

Orange resident and former police officer George Geane took the stand during the public participation portion of the meeting and said he and other retirees from the department felt that several questions about their contracts had not been properly addressed. They argue that certain portions of the contract spelling out their life insurance and medical benefits are not being enforced properly.

He said that fellow department retiree Frank Esposito had sent the board a notice claiming an anticipatory breach of contract and had followed up in November, but that he had not received a response from the board since then.

"All we're asking is in good faith information on this," Geane said, "and we're requesting the board take a second look at this. We don't want this to go any farther than this board, and I don't think anybody else does either."

First Selectman Jim Zeoli said he thought that the retirees had received a response from the town's labor attorney on the matter.

"This document you refer to," Zeoli said,



Retired Orange police officer George Geane and several of his fellow retirees addressed the Board of Selectmen at their Dec. 11 meeting about an ongoing dispute over their contract benefits. Image courtesy of Orange Government Access Television.

"does not request that this go to the Board of Selectmen to be addressed at a meeting."

He pointed out that board had been advised about the complaint in an executive session, and that the retirees should already have received a letter from the town. Zeoli said that was the end of the discussion as far

as the Board of Selectmen was concerned.

Zeoli said one of the concerns relating to a deduction for Social Security was set at the federal level, not at the town level.

"Our contract says 'no cost to the employee,'" Geane replied, adding that the

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Milford Digital Billboard Measure Fails



The Milford Planning & Zoning Board at its Dec. 17 meeting narrowly failed to allow digital billboards along I-95. Photo by Dwight Burdette.

By Brandon T. Bisceglia

You won't see any of those digital billboards with rotating displays along I-95 through Milford - for now.

The city's Planning & Zoning Board failed by one vote at its Dec. 17 meeting to approve changes to the zoning laws that would have allowed the billboards.

The vote, though 5-4 in favor, failed because regulation changes require at least six votes to pass.

Attorney Kevin J. Curseaden of Milford-based Curseaden & Moore had brought the proposed change before the P&Z on behalf of his client, Dominic DeMartino, who owns an industrial building at 45 Banner Dr. that already has a non-digital billboard that faces the highway's northbound lanes.

At public hearings in November and December, Milford residents came out against the electronic billboards, arguing among other things that they would contribute to distracted driving and would

detract from the New England charm of the region.

Digital billboards allow for displays to change, often at a rate of around every 10 seconds. Though research has shown that such displays do attract drivers' attention to a greater degree than billboards with static images, there is little conclusive evidence to date that they have any impact on traffic safety.

In opening the discussion, P&Z Chair Jim Quish came out in favor of the of the

Continued on page 2.

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News & Events

Industrial Parcel In Orange Sold For Over \$7 Million

Acting as the exclusive listing broker, Fairfield-based Angel Commercial, LLC has sold a large parcel of industrial land totaling 23.35 acres in Orange for \$7,366,650.

“While actively marketing the property in its entirety, we identified an opportunity to maximize sales by subdividing the land which sold in four separate transactions,” company president Jon Angel said.

Previously owned by Indian River Road LLC, the property is located between Indian River Road and Edison Road and adjacent to PEZ Manufacturing. The site is situated in one of Orange’s prime commercial areas, near I-95 and the FedEx building currently under construction.

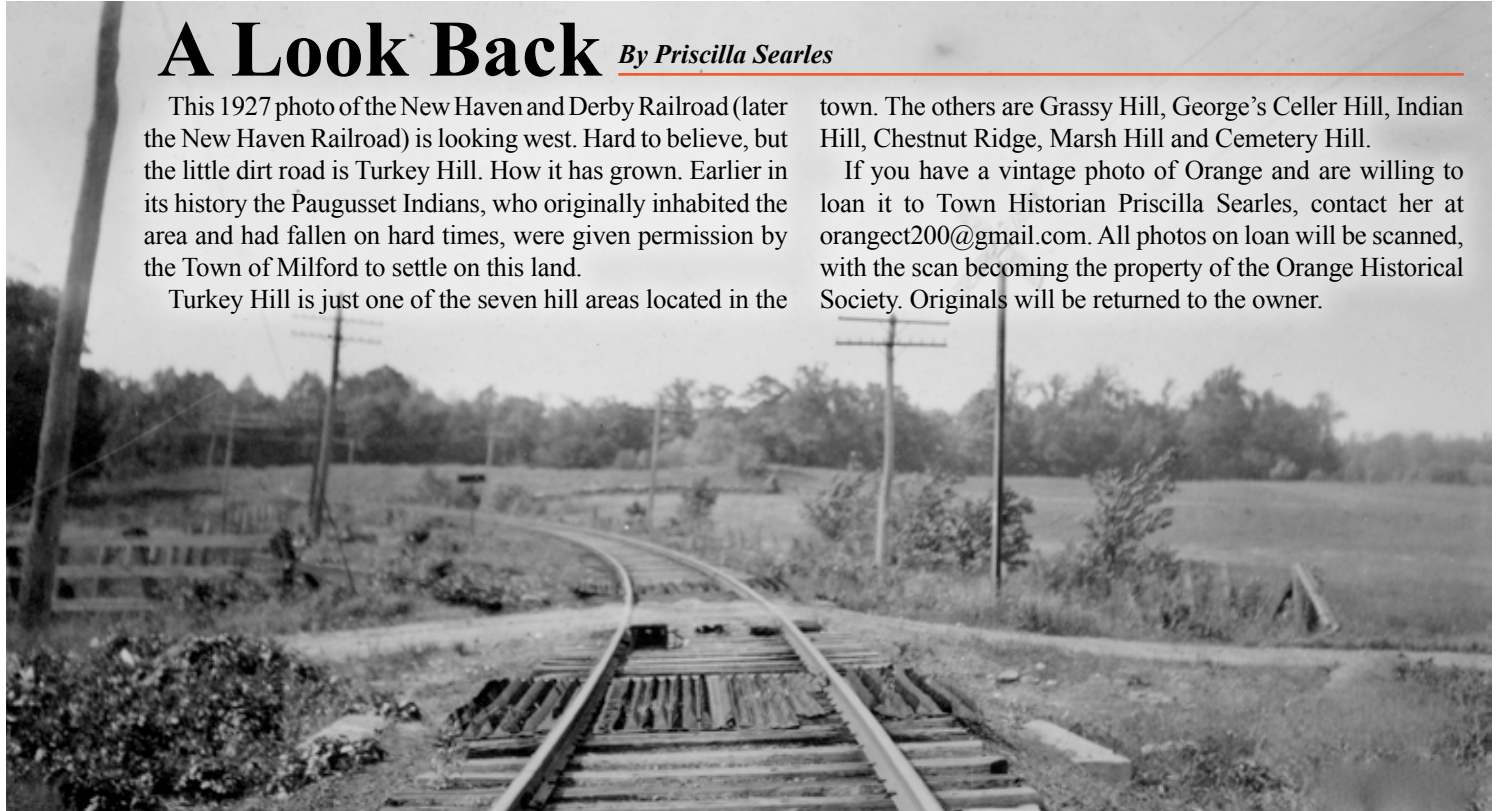
A Look Back By Priscilla Searles

This 1927 photo of the New Haven and Derby Railroad (later the New Haven Railroad) is looking west. Hard to believe, but the little dirt road is Turkey Hill. How it has grown. Earlier in its history the Paugusset Indians, who originally inhabited the area and had fallen on hard times, were given permission by the Town of Milford to settle on this land.

Turkey Hill is just one of the seven hill areas located in the

town. The others are Grassy Hill, George’s Celler Hill, Indian Hill, Chestnut Ridge, Marsh Hill and Cemetery Hill.

If you have a vintage photo of Orange and are willing to loan it to Town Historian Priscilla Searles, contact her at orangect200@gmail.com. All photos on loan will be scanned, with the scan becoming the property of the Orange Historical Society. Originals will be returned to the owner.



The New Haven and Derby Railroad in 1927. Photo courtesy of the Orange Historical Society.

Continued from page 1.

billboards. He said he had heard some of the arguments against them and rejected some of those that cited safety.

“The DOT allows them in cities and states all over the country,” he said.

Board member Tom Panzella concurred with Quish, saying it would increase tax revenue to the city and allow greater visibility for small businesses.

“You could have public service messages, amber alerts – it’s got a lot of good benefits to it,” he said.

Milford Digital Billboard Measure Fails

Board members John Grant, Robert Satti and Scott Marlow, however, all pushed back on the perceived benefits.

Grant said he always goes back to the purpose of zoning regulations when considering such decisions, and couldn’t find how allowing digital billboards served that purpose.

“It doesn’t do anything about protecting or promoting the public health, safety or welfare of the community,” Grant said. “It has nothing about preserving the existing

community or neighborhoods. It doesn’t promote new development. It doesn’t do anything for our open space. It doesn’t do anything for public facilities. There’s basically no benefit to this, other than maybe a little bit on the economic side.”

He also pointed out that because billboards are taxed as personal property, their taxable value declines over time.

Member Jim Kader said he had initially supported the regulation change but was moved by public testimony against the

billboards.

Kader described own experience driving along I-95 and seeing a sign for a concert that interested him. The sign had just changed, and he was watching it, waiting for the display to change back.

“I said, ‘What am I doing? I’m supposed to driving,’” he said.

Quish and Panzella voted for the change along with Carl S. Moore, Nancy Austin and Brian Kaligian. Grant, Satti, Marlow and Kader voted against it.

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News & Events

Wizards Swim Team Takes Close Defeat From Madison



Swimmers from the West Haven Wizards hold encouraging signs. Photo courtesy of Rebecca Charron.

The Wizards swim team, which includes members from Milford and Orange, lost a close meet to the Madison Marlins by a score of 310-349. They are now 2-1 for the season.

Despite the loss, 116 swimmers had personal best times in one or more of their events. Wizard swimmers won first place in 29 events and swept the top three spots in three events. One team record was also broken.

Macie Rascoll of Milford finished strong for the 13-14 girls in the 200-yard freestyle, earning a third-place finish by 4/10 of a second. Gianna Cassone of Milford finished strong for the 9-10 girls in the 100-yard

individual medley to win second by only 4/10 of a second. Aarya Mulmi of Orange made third place in the 11-12 girls 200-yard individual medley by 3/10 of a second, and Kaleigh Morton of Milford did the same for the 13-14 girls by 4/10 of a second. Mulmi again touched out her competition by less than 3/10 of a second to win the 11-12 girls 50-yard freestyle.

The closest race of the day was in the girls 15 and over age group. Kaya Vital of Milford finished third in the 100-yard breaststroke by just 6/100 of a second.

For more information on the Wizards, visit westhavenwizards.org.

Kindergarten Registration Open In Orange

If you live in Orange and your child is turning 5 on or before Jan. 1, 2021, it is time to register for kindergarten. Register by Feb. 28 on the Orange Public Schools website at oess.org. You can click on the pop-up for "Kindergarten Registration." Save the date for kindergarten parent orientation on Wednesday, April 22.

Milford Rotarian Receives Prestigious Award

The Rotary Club of Milford has chosen its own Bill Parry III as this year's recipient of Rotary District 7980's Norman K. Parcels Award. This award, presented each year in memory of Parcels, is given to a Rotarian who exemplifies his spirit of service above self, leadership, and dedication to Rotary and community initiatives.

During Parry's more than 13 years of membership in the Rotary Club of Milford he has been the assistant chair for the Milford Rotary Food Tent at the Milford Oyster Festival, works each year as a lobster

cracker at the annual Milford Rotary Lobster Bake and has helped to cook and serve meals at the Beth-El Center's soup kitchen. He was one of the founding members of the club's Blues, Brews, and BBQ event, and has been part of the team distributing dictionaries to third graders in the Milford schools. He currently serves as a member of the club's Board of Directors.

Parry is a lifelong Milford resident and is a local realtor with Joy Real Estate Services, located downtown on the Milford Green.

For more information visit milfordrotary.org.

Orange's Belfonti Chosen To Lead Amity BOE

The Amity Regional School District No. 5 Board of Education elected John Belfonti, an Orange resident, to serve as chair at its Dec. 9 meeting. Belfonti began his tenure on the Board of Education in April 2015. During his time with the board he has served on the Facilities Committee and has been chair of the Amity Finance Committee.

A 1990 graduate of Amity Regional High School, Belfonti earned a Bachelor of Science degree in mechanical engineering

from Worcester Polytechnic Institute and an MBA from Fairfield University. He is a Connecticut Registered Professional Engineer and currently serves as president of Environmental Engineering, Inc. in Milford.

At the same meeting Patricia Cardoza of Woodbridge was reelected as vice chair; Dr. Jennifer Turner of Bethany was elected as treasurer; George Howard of Orange was selected to serve as deputy treasurer; and Carla Eichler of Orange was chosen as secretary.



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Opinion & Editorial

Looking Back At A Successful 2019



STATE SEN. (D-14)
JAMES MARONEY

2019 was a year where great progress was made in several crucial areas. The advancements made in the previous year set a solid foundation for the road ahead. In this edition, I'd like to touch on some of the positive legislative moves made in 2019.

Something I am incredibly interested in and excited about are opportunity zones, or OZs. A recently established federal designation created by the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 incentivizes long-term investment, typically in lower-income areas, through certain advantages such as payment deferral. OZs are "challenged but promising" areas. Our state has 72 OZs spread across 27 municipalities.

Legislation I authored that we passed will layer state incentives on top of the federal incentives, strengthening the prospects of investing in our state's OZs, making them more attractive and drawing investments from out of Connecticut as well.

This legislation is already in motion. In October, a new website was unveiled which will enable investors and developers to search available projects with information updated by cities, towns and property owners. The site, cportunityzones.com, will include shovel-ready projects, transit-oriented development and pertinent facts about local geography in our state. Municipalities with OZs will also be able to post and promote projects as they become available. This legislation presents our state with the potential to unlock an estimated \$6 trillion in unrealized capital gains.

Health, wellness and security are important parts of a thriving community as well. Last year I am proud to have led passage of legislation that established an elder abuse registry.

Connecticut has one of the oldest populations in the country, making this legislation necessary to protect many state residents. According to the National Council on Aging, elders who have been victims of abuse have a 300 percent higher risk of death compared to elders who have not been abused. Additionally, in the last seven years in Connecticut, the number of elder abuse investigations has doubled.

The registry is a public, easy-to-find database that will be compiled from six other registries of offenders who have been convicted of assault or other forms of abuse. This user-friendly online tool will be maintained by the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection; the Department of Health will also publish it on its website. The Commission on Women, Children and Seniors will also provide a portal to the database on its website. You can view the repository at wp.cga.ct.gov/cwseo/registry-repository. The registry will give families peace of mind and a useful tool to ensure the safety of their loved ones.

I also authored legislation to assist our state's veterans in finding good jobs in the advanced manufacturing field via the Military to Machinist program. I worked with high school students from

New Laws On The Books Jan. 1



STATE REP. (R-114)
THEMIS KLARIDES

With the advent of the new year, Connecticut will log a number of new laws on its books. Whether they prove wise or wasteful remains to be seen and, of course, that is in the eye of the beholder. Let's hope your lawmakers proved sage in the past year – my guess is not in all cases. But there is always a new year and a new legislative session around the corner. Mark the first Wednesday of February on your calendar for the start of the session. It extends until the first week of May.

The state sales tax of 6.35 percent was expanded to some new goods and services not previously covered. For instance, it will cost more to park your car and launder your clothes this year. But if you are a small business owner, you will get a slight break on your overhead because the \$250 Business Entity Tax you currently pay for the privilege of just opening your doors has gone away.

Insurance companies will now be required to extend coverage for breast ultrasounds for all women over 40. Out-of-pocket costs for ultrasounds and mammograms will be banned. The legislature in 2019 also passed a law to expand coverage for hearing aids. Each person will get coverage increased to pay for two hearing aids within a two-year period, regardless of cost.

Lawmakers also saw fit to create greater safeguards against blighted properties that can pose hazards to neighborhoods and towns and cities. Courts can now appoint receivers, or people with interest in the abandoned properties to rehabilitate them. The structures must be uninhabited and exhibit at least three conditions that are of concern to localities such as blight. The new law applies to communities with more than 35,000 residents.

During the long sessions of five months that we conclude in June we typically pass as many as 400 pieces of legislation that become effective at various times of the year. This list just represents a sampling of the newest laws that may make a difference in your lives.

Maroney Continued

Jonathan Law High School to ban the usage of harmful polystyrene containers in our schools, I led passage of a bill which will add dementia training to the continuing education component for doctors and nurses, and many more important legislative moves.

I am also proud to be part of a caucus that passed the Time's Up bill. This will increase certain sexual harassment penalties, extend the time limits people have to file lawsuits for sexual assault, allow more time for criminal prosecution of sexual assault and require more employer-sponsored sexual harassment training.

These successes made 2019 a productive year which will improve the lives of Connecticut residents and working families. I am optimistic about what is to come in 2020 and as always, remain open to ideas and input from the community I am so proud to serve.

General Assembly Comes Together For State Hospitals



STATE REP. (R-119)
KATHY KENNEDY

In December, the General Assembly held a Special Session, to vote on an agreement reached between Connecticut hospitals and the state that settles a nearly five-year-old lawsuit that could have exposed the state to a roughly \$4 billion liability.

Milford Hospital was one of the affected hospitals in the lawsuit, and before the fiscal repercussions permanently damaged the state or the hospital it became clear to me that this agreement was the best way to rectify missteps taken by former Gov. Dannel Malloy and the previous legislatures. Ideally, we wouldn't be in this situation to begin with, but given that the hospital industry provides an essential service to our community and is one of the fastest-growing job sectors in the state, we in state government owe them fairness and transparency.

The hospital lawsuit dates back to a 2011 expansion of the provider tax to include hospitals. At that point, the entirety of the annual \$350 million paid by hospitals – plus \$50 million more – was returned to the industry.

But as the state struggled to recover from the recession and budget deficits grew, the user fee increased while payments to hospitals decreased, prompting the hospital industry to sue the state in 2015 for abusing its fiduciary responsibility and violating federal guidelines.

Gov. Ned Lamont announced earlier this month that the state had struck a settlement with the Connecticut Hospital Association, the state's leading hospital industry group and the plaintiff in the suit.

Under the agreement, the state will make a one-time payment of \$79.3 million in unappropriated monies and unpaid Medicaid payments to hospitals, as well as increase Medicaid reimbursement rates and decrease taxes on hospitals between now and 2026. Altogether, the agreement costs the state \$180.7 million over the next two fiscal years.

Both the House and Senate unanimously approved the agreement in a special session on Dec. 18.

The hospital settlement is an important lesson for the state, and we must learn from it going forward. The state must keep its commitments and not continue to kick the can down the road to avoid our budgetary problems.

There is a lot of mistrust of both state and federal government right now, and my hope is this hospital settlement will set us on a new path of fiscal responsibility in 2020 – not just more tax increases, tolls and more state spending as the only way to dig the state out of the fiscal mess that we find ourselves in each and every year.

If you have any questions, concerns or ideas please feel free to contact me by phone at 1-800-842-1423 or by email at Kathy.Kennedy@housegop.ct.gov.

MOT
Milford-Orange Times

Transportation, Budget On 2020 Legislative Agenda



STATE REP. (R-117)
CHARLES FERRARO

The 2020 legislative session is right around the corner, starting on Wednesday, Feb. 5. Compared to the odd-numbered years in the legislature, the even-numbered years are a short session generally focused on budgetary, revenue or fiscal matters.

The major issues that I believe we will be discussing next session will be transportation infrastructure, the legalization of sports betting and marijuana, the state's budget deficit and structural budget reforms – just to name a few.

Last year, Gov. Ned Lamont and legislative Democrats tried pushing through nearly 82 toll gantries throughout the state. The majority party, after public outrage, scaled back their plan and now are pushing for trucks-only tolling, "for now." The governor is insisting that there be a special session in January to vote on trucks-only tolling, but members of his party are saying he doesn't have the votes. My colleague on the other side of the aisle, state Rep. Bob Godfrey (D-Danbury) said in a recent article with Patch that he doesn't believe the governor has the votes for tolls.

"I think people and legislators don't trust Gov. Lamont and his proposals," Godfrey said. "I think that's a real issue in people's opposition to his proposal."

Godfrey said the commercial trucks tolls will make consumer items "more expensive" as a result of the additional shipping costs.

I think Democratic Rep. Godfrey and I see eye-to-eye on tolls and trucks-only tolling. I don't believe tolls are the answer and I will continue to speak out against them.

Lamont's budget secretary recently announced that the state is again looking at a budget shortfall of more than \$20 million and that "the governor is prepared to exercise rescission authority if necessary to mitigate against ending the year with an operating budget."

Once again, our state enters a new year with a budget deficit and little hope that we won't see one at the end of 2020.

I am urging the governor and the majority in the legislature to sit down with Republicans next session to find common ground and not rule our state by themselves.

I always remain optimistic about the future of our state and will be looking next year to find bipartisan solutions to move our state forward.

As always, feel free to contact me with any questions, concerns or ideas you may have at Charles.Ferraro@housegop.ct.gov or call 860-240-8700.

We Regret The Error

Two photographs on page 6 of the Dec. 19, 2019 issue for the Goodspeed Opera House's "A Connecticut Christmas Carol" attributed the wrong photographer. The pictures were taken by Diana Sobolewski.

Opinion & Editorial

Editorial: Billboards Illustrate Fine Line Of Progress

By *Brandon T. Bisceglia*

The recently-concluded debate over digital billboards along I-95 in Milford illustrates a perennial line that both Milford and Orange must walk between progress and preservation.

The argument on the side of progress says that municipalities benefit by encouraging new ideas and practices, not being too restrictive about who can come in or what they can do. You want to be open to innovation, because it attracts young people, businesses and other opportunities. Disruption may happen, but that's the price of admission.

The preservationist impulse, on the other hand, argues that the higher priority should be to protect those who already have a stake in the community – the current residents and taxpayers. Especially in history-laden, forested Connecticut, people expect a certain small-town atmosphere, a New England charm. You don't want to drive those people out. It's

also fundamentally unfair, according to this attitude, to use the levers of power granted and funded by current residents to do things that might adversely affect some of them.

It's a tricky line to walk, though Milford has for the most part done it expertly. Take a stroll around downtown any time and witness the seamless integration of bustling businesses with duck ponds and waterfalls.

Still, that bucolic impression isn't likely what anyone passing through the city on I-95 is getting. What you see instead are the NRG Energy plant on one end as you cross over the Housatonic River and the Pilot truck stop as you pass exit 40. A quick trip off any exit puts you onto the highly developed Boston Post Road in front of a McDonalds or the Connecticut Post Mall. "Historic charm" isn't the first phrase that comes to mind.

The preservationist impulse won out in the case of the digital billboards, with the proposal narrowly falling to defeat before the Planning

& Zoning Board at its Dec. 17 meeting.

Board members who supported the billboards made the case for progress: it's done all over the country already; it generates additional, albeit limited, revenue; it provides businesses and the city itself new opportunities to advertise and communicate. They also pointed out that old-school billboards already tower over that stretch of highway.

Opponents, though, also made worthwhile points. Regardless of the safety implications – which are disputed in the scientific literature and appear minor if they exist at all – do we really need more messages bearing down upon us, especially when our focus should be on driving? The economic benefits are hardly make-or-break for the city. Is the sacrifice in the city's quality of life truly worth those small monetary gains?

Orange has had its own run-ins with these questions over the years. Most recently that town's zoning board turned down a proposal to

revamp the Firelite Plaza as a mixed residential development with multiple apartments because it was deemed too intense for the area. At the same time as they were rejecting that specific development, they cited their desire to accept more proposals of a similar nature.

That's the dilemma. Everyone recognizes that towns need to change, to remain dynamic. But no one wants to change too much too quickly.

Connecticut, with its 169 separate municipal governments and a longer buildup of local laws than most other states, already has some of the most difficult-to-navigate zoning rules in the country. They have helped at times to conserve the state's history and character. But they have also at times been an impediment to adaptability.

We probably don't need digital billboards. But we do need to be willing to shake things up once in a while. Without some short-term disruption, all you get is long-term stagnation.

The Book Club:

Vintage Rachel Maddow

Rachel Maddow, *Blowout*, Crow, 2019

For true addicts of Rachel Maddow, one hour every night is simply not enough. Her book supplies the boost needed for us to get through the long hours until her next show. The subject is the global oil and gas industry and how it crushes democratic governance, puts lives and health at risk and frustrates our ability to achieve a carbon-neutral energy balance.



PETER HECHTMAN

compelled to fold its tents and return to the U.S. All of Russia's campaign interference in the 2016 U.S. election was, according to Maddow, motivated by the need to install an administration that was committed to reversing the sanctions. Contributing to these efforts, of course, was ExxonMobil, which enriched Republican political action committees by close to \$200 million.

There are, in addition to the Russian story, quite a few other gems in this book among which the story of the politics of fracking in Oklahoma is really juicy.

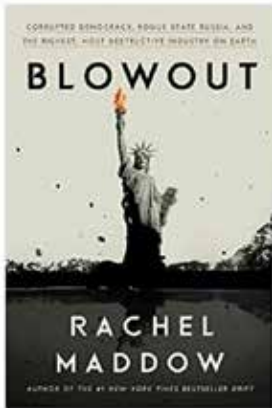
If you are particularly attached to Maddow's way of telling a tale you will not be disappointed. All her stories begin with documenting the banal details of ordinary lives before meandering around to significance, and all her stories are told with highly colorful epithets.

These include the following: "with the climate crisis bearing down like Godzilla over downtown Tokyo"; "The meek may inherit the earth, but the bold could certainly screw it up in the interim"; "When Sechin did smile, he looked like a fairy-tale ogre who had just swallowed a small tasty child"; and "Qorvis Communications, a public relations firm specializing in lipstick-on-a-pig operations."

No wonder oil is called "the excrement of the devil."

This is a journalist's book, not a scholarly exercise. That frustrates the attempt to find some sources for her statements.

Peter Hechtman is the founder and owner of The Book Maven. Peter can be reached at thebookmaven@sympatico.ca.



The book has many villains, but at the top of the heap is Vladimir Putin. Chief among the supporting villains is Rex Tillerson, former CEO of ExxonMobil and former U.S. Secretary of State.

The Russia that Putin intends to govern will be a petrostate in which the country's vast reserves of oil and gas are harvested and sold through companies that are either state-owned or owned by oligarchs whose fortunes are deeply tied to Putin. This process leads to unaccountable billions that are not derived from taxpaying citizens and so do not need to be employed in providing services or social and economic development. They simply enrich a gangster empire.

The problem is that Russian hydrocarbon reserves are locked in forbidding Siberian tundra or frozen Arctic waters and require highly advanced technology to recover – technology that only the West can supply. Enter Tillerson with a set of more up-to-date extraction toys. The collaboration produced one highly successful Arctic well whetting appetites in the world's oil boardrooms for more.

But politics reared its ugly head. Putin's land grab in the Crimea and encroachments in Eastern Ukraine resulted in a declaration of sanctions against Russia. ExxonMobil was

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Milford-Orange Times

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 Senator's Seat: Sen. James Maroney

- Columnists:**
- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| Christine Angeli, Milford Library | Thomas P. Hurley, Commentary | Carol Smullen, Orange Chamber |
| Cathy Bradley, Running | Barbara Lehrer, Real Estate | Raymond Spaziani, Wine |
| Joanne Byrne, Retirement | Annamarie Mastrangelo, Flooring | Pam Staneski, Milford Chamber |
| Cynthia V. Catapano, Local Wildlife | John Moffitt, Life Online | Hon. Beverly K. Streit-Kefalas, Probate |
| David Crow, Conversations | Amir Mohammad, MD, MPH, Health | Eric Tashlein, Finances |
| Pat Dray, Gardening | Trish Pearson, Insurance | Fern Tausig, Hypnosis |
| Richard Dumbrill, Rotary Club | Karen Quinn Panzer, Travel | Roger Tausig, Rotary Club |
| Steven P. Floman, Legal | Tedra Schneider, Interior Design | Michele Tenney, Health |
| Peter Hechtman, Books | Priscilla Searless, Town Historian | Trish O'Leary Treat, Profiles |

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Milford Announces Christmas Tree Pickup, Recycling

The Milford Public Works Department will pick up Christmas trees this year. However, Mayor Benjamin G. Blake is encouraging residents to recycle their trees. Anyone wishing to recycle trees can bring them to the Walnut Beach or Tri-Beach Parking Lots on Saturday, Jan. 11 from 9

a.m. to 1 p.m. The Department of Public Works will be there to chip the trees.

For those residents who choose not to recycle their trees, the Public Works Department will pick up Christmas trees throughout the month of January. Uncut trees should be left at curbside.

Arts Matters

“Arts expand the mind, the heart and the soul.” –Anonymous

By Patricia Miller

MILFORD ARTS COUNCIL (40 Railroad Ave. South, Milford) presents a laugh-inducing new comedy, *Four Weddings and an Elvis*, by Nancy Prick and directed by Tanya Feduck-Smith on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from Jan. 31 to Feb. 16 at the Eastbound Theatre.

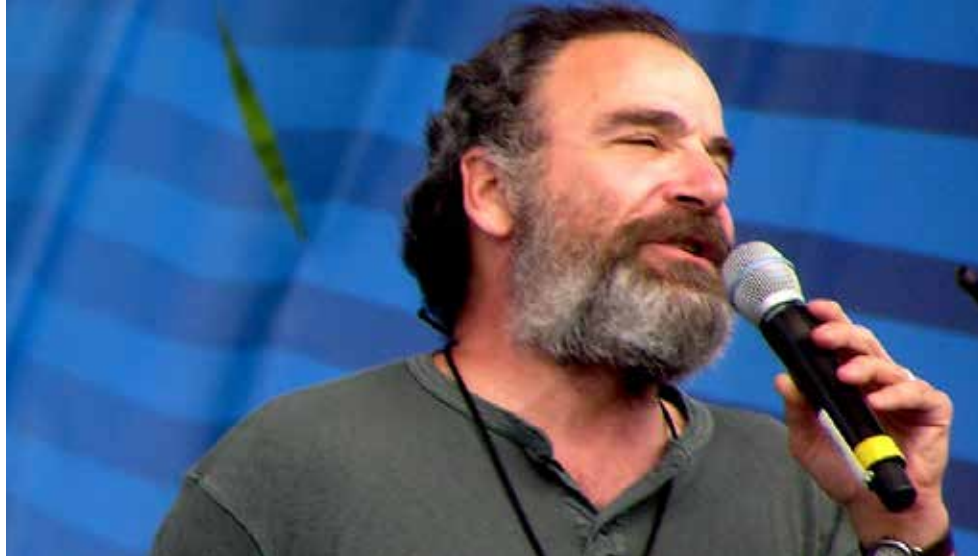
The action takes place in Las Vegas, where we meet the owner of a wedding chapel, who stages four hilarious weddings. Bev and Frank are getting married by the King, Elvis, as revenge on their exes. Vanessa and Bryan, aging stars, are getting married as a publicity ploy. Martin and Fiona, a gentle postal worker and a tough ex-con, are trying to get married before the police arrive. And the final wedding is the funniest of them all. Twists and turns of the plot will keep the audience engaged and humor suffuses it all. The cast includes Stephanie Jacobs of Stratford, Jennifer Ju of Milford, Cody Knox of Fairfield, Colleen Leary of Milford, Herman Livingston of Bridgeport, Nicky Nunez of Stratford, Thursday Savage of Stratford, Kevin Sisoonthone of Shelton and Paul Templeton of Orange. Ju, Savage and Templeton have all appeared in several Orange Players shows. Ju also served as co-president of the Orange Players.

Friday and Saturday night performances begin at 8 p.m. and patrons are encouraged to BYOEEE (bring your own everything, except entertainment). Concessions will also be available. The Sunday performances are matinees starting at 2 p.m. with traditional seating. For more information or tickets, call 203-878-6647 or go to milfordarts.org.

FRIENDS OF THE CASE MEMORIAL LIBRARY (176 Tyler City Rd., Orange) have scheduled two programs they are sponsoring at the library that are free and open to the public. The first is called “The Chocolate Wars,” which is all about chocolate delights. Nancy Brandif will demonstrate many classic chocolate desserts that will not be disastrous for one’s diet or lifestyle on Saturday, Jan. 26 at 2 p.m.

Brandif was interested in dessert cooking since her childhood. She was brought up in a Ukrainian household that featured Viennese-style pastries, tortes and pies. She decided that she would develop the recipes into versions that were lighter, healthier and more fitted to today’s lifestyle – but still delicious. To illustrate her thesis, there will be an audience taste-off to determine the winning version. There will be ample recipes and samplings for individual taste-offs as well.

Brandif graduated from the gastronomy program at the University of New Haven in 2011. In 2014, she traveled to Arles in Provence, France, to hone her dessert-



Mandy Patinkin will be appearing in concert Jan. 25 at the Schubert Theatre. Photo by Valerie Hinojosa.

making skills with a professional chocolatier. Her presentation will include a discussion of the kinds of chocolate available and how to work with them. She also will demonstrate the making of chocolate truffles.

The second program, a mellow and warm one, with be on Saturday, Feb. 8 at 2 p.m. featuring Richard “Cookie” Thomas and his trio. Artie Dixon, “drummer extraordinaire” and an Orange resident, will perform as well as Dave Daldario on bass and Joe McWilliams on keyboard. All are great musicians and have performed with musical icons Ahmad Jamal, Janis Ian, Michael Bolton and many others.

“Cookie” began his career in the 1950s in Philadelphia, where, at the age of 14, he opened for B.B. King. It is said that King was wowed by the young singer’s voice. Today, his performances are filled with classic standards. He draws inspiration from King, Frank Sinatra and Johnny Hartman. You will hear of bit of each of these vocal stylists when he sings. He has appeared throughout New England, including appearances at Foxwoods, the Levitt Pavilion in Westport, the Palace in Stamford, the Silvermine Tavern in Westport and the Jackie Robinson Festival. He has also appeared in New York City at the Carlyle, the Waldorf-Astoria and the 21 Club. His melodious speaking voice can be heard on corporate videos made for Piney Bowes, St. Vincent’s Hospital, the Connecticut Science Center and General Electric.

To register for either event, call the library at 203-897-2170 or go to orange.lioninc.org/.

JORGENSEN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS (2132 Hillside Rd. Unit 3104, Storrs) will host a musical tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on Thursday, Jan. 13 at the University of Connecticut’s

Storrs Campus. Producer and musical director Daniel Sneed presents “We Shall Overcome” to celebrate and honor the legacy of King. The Storrs performance is a stop on the 40-city national tour. The musical event features African American musical traditions interwoven with words from King’s recorded speeches.

Call 860-486-4226 or go to Jorgensen.uconn.edu.

THE BRUCE MUSEUM (1 Museum Dr., Greenwich) will grow into the New Bruce Museum, as it is now in the early stages of renovation and expansion. The \$45 million project will double the museum’s size to 70,000 square feet. There will be a dedicated auditorium and four galleries for permanent collections. Education is a focus too, and an extra classroom or two will allow the Bruce to host about 50,000 students a year, about twice the number it can accommodate now. There will also be four times as much space for special exhibitions.

The areas of the old museum being renovated this winter will be open to the public on Feb. 1. The project will continue with an expected date for the opening of the new Bruce in the summer of 2022.

The new museum director, Robert Wolterstorff, says that the focus of the new Bruce will be more on Connecticut, and he hopes that the collections will allow Connecticut to be seen in the context of the world. The new Bruce will enrich Connecticut’s artistic scene.

SHUBERT THEATRE (247 College St., New Haven) offers an array of shows. On Saturday, Jan. 18, it’s *Angelina Ballerina*, a family-friendly show based on one of Katharine Hubbard’s books. There are shows at noon and 3 p.m.

Mandy Patinkin appears in concert on Saturday, Jan. 25 at 8 p.m. The acclaimed

actor, singer and storyteller performs his favorites from Broadway and other American songs.

The National Ballet of Odessa performs the ballet *Romeo and Juliet*, which tells the tale of the star-crossed lovers in dance on Saturday, Feb. 1.

For tickets, go to shubert.com, go to the box office or call 203-562-5666.

LONG WHARF THEATRE (222 Sargent Dr., New Haven) presents “I Am My Own Wife,” the inspiring true story of Charlotte van Mahsdorf, an openly transgender Jewish woman. She bravely survives both the Nazi and the Communist regimes of East Germany with her unique blend of strength, savvy, and grace. It is a powerful and life-affirming masterpiece, and this is the first major revival of this work in a decade. It promises to leave audiences speechless.

For tickets, call 203-787-4282 or go to longwharf.org.

NEW HAVEN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (500 College St., New Haven) does not have a Classic Series concert in January. The next Classic Series concert is Thursday, Feb. 6 at 7:30 p.m. at Woolsey Hall. The program will include Haydn’s Symphony No. 4 and Mozart’s Symphony No. 38. Also included are two dramatic works for solo violin orchestrated by Arvo Part and Aaron Kernis. The concert master and violin soloist will be David Southorn. The NHSO will be conducted by Music Director Alasdair Neale.

For tickets, call 203-782-4282 or go to newhavensymphony.org. To reserve a seat on the bus from High Plains Community Center in Orange, call 203-878-7417.

WARNER THEATRE (68 Main St., Torrington) is holding a performance of MOMIX in honor of its 40th anniversary on Saturday, Jan. 18 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, Jan. 19 at 2 p.m.

MOMIX sprang from the creative genius of Moses Pendleton, artistic director and founder of the famed Pilobolus dance troupe. MOMIX is a company of dance-illusionists who create a world of surrealistic images. Pendleton leads the company, using props, lights, shadows, humor and the use of the body in ever-startling ways.

MOMIX 40 is a collection of the troupe’s most iconic pieces from five different shows, plus some pieces from their new show. For tickets, call 860-489-7180 or go to warnershow.org.

Have an event, an idea or a comment? Send it to patmiller605@sbcglobal.net.

MAC Gets State Grant For Bench Project

The Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development’s Office of the Arts has awarded the Milford Arts Council one of only 28 project grants for 2020. These grants encourage and support arts-based projects exhibiting artistic excellence aligned with the state arts initiative.

The MAC’s project grant, titled “Meet Me at the Bench,” calls for creatives, artists, and craftsmen to create and install six unique benches reimagined as artistic and community experiences throughout downtown Milford. The MAC is reaching beyond its pool of artists to equitably challenge, engage and hire individuals or groups of engineers, architects, woodworkers, metal-forgers, tile-layers, masons, craftsmen and artisans for

the project.

This grant comes as the MAC is headed toward celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2021.

“To see art outside, up-close, tangible and accessible to so many people is very powerful,” said Paige Miglio, the MAC’s executive director. “To be granted the ability to produce six such experiences is immeasurable and very important to our organization’s mission to grow and impact our community through our vision. We couldn’t be prouder or more excited to bring this project to fruition, leading us into our 50th year. The MAC has started planning exciting events to celebrate our anniversary and we will begin to roll them out next year,

culminating with a gala in September 2021. The bench project is just the beginning.”

A committee of local artists, city representatives, downtown businesses, and service organizations will review submissions and match them to sites. Six locations have been suggested as bench sites.

The committee members include state Sen. James Maroney; Milford alderman Bryan Anderson; Milford Public Library director Christine Angeli; Beth-El Center executive director Jennifer Paradis; Tracy Bonosconi, owner of LOVET Shop and Downtown Milford Business Association chair; Carol Kuryla, Metro Star marketing director; Nell Moll of the Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce; Curran Bishop, pastor of Christ

Presbyterian Church; Bill Bevan, parks commissioner; local artist and muralist Brec Morgan; George Amato, local artist and founding MAC board member; and Miglio.

The deadline for submissions is Feb. 21. Final selection by the committee will be awarded by late March, leaving four months for fabrication. Installations by the city will take place during the summer and early fall of 2020. Projects must be designed to withstand the elements and public use for at least three to five years, with little or no maintenance.

Visit milfordarts.org for details, requests for proposals, project narrative and artistic inspiration. Questions may be sent to executivedirector@milfordarts.org.

Beatty Joins Board Of Boys & Girls Village



Milford Alder Dr. Ellen Russell Beatty has joined the Boys & Girls Village Board of Directors. Photo courtesy of Boys & Girls Village.

The Milford Boys & Girls Village announced Dec. 18 that Dr. Ellen Russell Beatty had joined its Board of Directors. This addition brings the total number of BGV board members to 13.

The nonprofit organization provides mental health treatment, permanency planning and educational services to Connecticut's most vulnerable youth and their families. With additional locations in Norwalk, Bridgeport and Waterbury, the organization has been serving the needs of the state's at-risk children and families for over 77 years.

"We welcome Dr. Beatty to the board and look forward to adding her extensive

leadership talents to our team," said Kim Shaunesey, president of BGV. "She brings a wealth of experience and expertise that will be instrumental in helping us continue to grow and meet the changing needs of those we serve."

Beatty has had careers in nursing and higher education in addition to her experience serving as a three-term alder in Milford. She has served in many educational, health care and business capacities throughout her career, including as Vice President of Academic Affairs at Southern Connecticut State University. Beatty earned her masters and doctorate degrees in education from Columbia University and also holds a Master of Arts degree from New York University.

"I am eager and honored to join hands with board colleagues dedicated to the mission of Boys & Girls Village," Beatty said. "The 77-year history of BGV serving youth and families on their path to successful futures is to be applauded."

To learn more about Boys & Girls Village, visit BGVillage.org or call 203-877-0300.

Orange Foundation Awards Scholarships, Grants

The Orange Foundation, which supports residents of the town, has awarded its annual student scholarships and grants to community organizations.

Four students were awarded scholarships: Spencer Shepard, who got \$2,600 from the Charles Flynn Fund; Olivia Pisano, who received \$2,600, \$100 of which came from the Thomas Birmingham Fund, \$609 from the Harry Haynes Fund, \$776 from the Downey Foundation, and \$215 from the Vincent Timmons Fund; Jacob Lettick, who got \$2,600, \$971 from the Charles Flynn Fund, \$319 from the Vaughn Fund, \$592 from the Benedict Giangarra Fund, and \$718 from the Susan Lewin Fund; and Joseph Szweczyk,

who received \$9,710 from the Horbal Fund.

Grants were awarded to the American Legion, Camp Cedarcrest, the Orange Fire Marshal, the Orange Conservation Commission, the Orange Senior Center, the Amity Teen Center and the Orange Arts and Culture Council.

Members of the Foundation Distribution Committee include chairman Robert Archambault, Frank Bailey, Katalin Baltimore, Carla Birmingham, Paul Davis, Jaqueline Koral, Santo Galatioto, Jr., Patricia Miller and John Wesolowski.

For more information about the Foundation, including the establishment of a fund or application for funds, call Archambault at 203-795-3716 or go to theorangefoundation.org.

Orange Legislators To Have Office Hours With Constituents

House Republican Minority Leader Themis Klarides (R-114) along with state Reps. Charles Ferraro (R-117) and Kathy Kennedy (R-119) will be holding a legislative office hour in Orange for constituents on Thursday, Jan. 30.

The coffee hour will take place from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. at Orange Town Hall in the Lower Meeting Room at 617 Orange Center Rd.

The three legislators that represent the Town of Orange want to hear from their

constituents and encourage them to talk about any issues, questions or concerns related to state government. Residents are encouraged to bring their ideas forward for possible consideration. The 2020 legislative session begins on Feb. 5.

For anyone who is unable to attend but would like to talk to their state representatives you can contact them at 1-800-842-1423 or send an email to Themis.Klarides@housegop.ct.gov, Charles.Ferraro@housegop.ct.gov, or Kathy.Kennedy@housegop.ct.gov.

Mental Illness Group To Hold Meeting In Milford

The National Alliance on Mental Illness will hold its monthly meeting at Bridges Healthcare in Milford Feb. 4. The organization holds its meetings on the first Tuesday of every, with alternative dates

in cases of inclement weather or holidays. Meetings begin at 5:50 p.m. and end at 7 p.m. Parking and entrance are at the rear of the Bridges building, located at 949 Bridgeport Ave.

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Real Talk: You Ask, A Pro Answers

Start The Year Off Right

If you are thinking about moving at all, then why not sit down with the right agent and review the pros and cons of selling your property?

There are many parts to this puzzle and the perfect person to help you will have an assortment of skills. Besides sale skills, this professional always builds a relationship with the client first. In order for you to be comfortable and feel there is a solid foundation between you, you should research both an agent and an agency. Review the product expertise of the realtor who may become your representative; this is one of the moving parts. Business plans and trust are always intertwined. Is this person a good listener? Is he or she committed to the

The Garden Spot

long term and experienced with your needs?

Perhaps there are reasons why now is not exactly the right time to move. Your family, along with the market expert, can set expectations that are realistic. For example, if you have elderly parents who need to move, where will they go? Is their property ready to market?

Planning, problem-solving and decision-making skills are all specialties of the agent. A good agent will be aware of the challenges in front of you and pick up on emotional strains that can go along with the process no matter how we try



BARBARA
LEHRER

to avoid them.

As a homeowner you will partner with the listing agent you choose. By doing this, you both share a process that is continually changing. Whether it is the climate, holidays, personal situations, or just the day-to-day busy stuff, you need a buddy, the one person who has been through these issues hundreds of times. That kind of confidence, that straightforward discussion about the complete future of the transaction, will help you decide if you want to give it a go.

How many years has this idea been on your mind? And yet it seems too complicated.

The best realtors do 40 transactions a year. Over 30 years that is a lot of experience. Find someone you can trust and maybe you will give it some serious consideration in 2020.

We live in an area that is very desirable. Orange and Milford set the stage for the New Haven County community. With interest rates down, there are droves of buyers looking to get into our towns. Study the market. There is no obligation when you pick the brain of a specialist. Perhaps that trusting feeling you need is right around the corner.

Best of luck, and happy New Year. Be well.

If you need more information on these issues, email Barbara.Lehrer@cbmoves.com.

Plan Ahead To Grow These Winter Beauties

Now that most of the garden has gone dormant, I like to take the time to admire what I consider the winter beauties.

It's a challenge for those of us in New England to keep color and visual interest in the winter garden after all the fall color is gone, but the season doesn't have to be a time of a colorless landscapes. Some of my favorites for the winter garden are winterberry, red twigged dogwoods and witch hazel. Planting these in the garden along with any perennial grasses will give your garden color and interest until the early spring flowering bulbs pop up.

You've probably noticed bare-branched shrubs with bright red berries. These are a type of holly called winterberry or *Ilex verticillata*. Winterberry is a deciduous holly shrub that is native to the eastern U.S. and produces bright red berries that last through the entire winter. Not only do the bright berries add important

color to winter landscapes, but they also attract birds that love to eat them. Remember, this is a native shrub, so it supports the insect and pollinator ecosystem in our area. Winterberry is easy to grow and remains compact. It's a dioecious plant, which means there are separate male and female plants, so you should mass several females with at least one male together to give a pop of color in the garden.

Another winter favorite is the red twigged dogwood shrub, not to be confused with a dogwood tree. Although both are in the plant genus *Cornus*, the shrub will never grow into a tree. It will, however, grow quite tall and wide if you don't prune it annually. Its branches are green while there is foliage and



PAT DRAY

turn bright red after the leaves drop. Like the winterberry, it has berries in the fall which the birds love to eat. It will do well in wet areas and likes to be cut back in the spring, removing any branches that did not turn the bright red color. I like to cut some of the branches around the winter holidays to add drama in floral designs. It's a real standout against the snow.

Witch hazel is another great choice in the garden. The name may be familiar to you since they have been used for centuries for medicinal purposes, such as treating insect bites and soothing burns. One of the native varieties is *Hamamelis virginiana*, which has rust-colored flowers in October and November. A later blooming native is *Hamamelis vernalis*, which will bloom bright

yellow in December or January. Both of these natives have a strong pleasing scent that will attract pollinators. They are pretty much care-free shrubs that just need a sunny location. As with the red twigged dogwood, they can grow quite large, so manage them with a little spring pruning.

Although it's a little late for planting these beauties to enjoy this winter, plan for them to go into the garden as a backdrop to your lower growing plants in the spring and enjoy the full beauty of them next winter.

If you'd like to learn more about design and horticulture, consider joining a garden club. The Garden Club of Orange will be celebrating its ninetieth year in 2020. We just keep on growing.

Pat Dray is a past president of the Orange Garden Club.

Room 911

When To Consider A General Contractor

Sometimes I have clients who ask me to help them on a design/decorating project that is pretty straightforward. We pick out furniture, a paint color and artwork arrangements.

Other times, it becomes apparent that a general contractor may be the way to go. This is especially the case when a client wants to really overhaul an existing bedroom, bathroom or expand and add structural elements to a room. Increasing the bathroom space by borrowing space from a closet or expanding a closet into a walk-in closet would be examples.

If you use a general contractor, you should vet them and do due diligence before employing them. Visit business bureaus or ratings on certain websites – even actually go and inspect their work. Many people want a quick answer, a free estimate, but I guarantee you that number will not be accurate.

Paying someone for pre-construction costs based on plans from an architect or designer is far more realistic. Some clients I have had said, "What's the big deal? We'll put a sink here and a bathtub there," only to find out that a professional such as a general contractor will know that plumbing lines may have to be moved and electrical outlets reconfigured and more technical aspects have to be considered.

The general contractor will purchase building materials and hire laborers or subcontractors that they have worked with before. Their reputation is based on how well these subcontractors do the job. The tile person, the mason, the plumber, the electrician, the millworker – all get involved. Here is the beauty of a general contractor: they coordinate and sequence



TEDRA
SCHNEIDER

when a worker is needed. Their work is inspected. They are held accountable. That alone is worth its weight in gold.

How much does this service cost? It depends if you have the plans or the general contractor's company has a designer on staff, the cost of the building materials, coordination of workers (thus taking a percentage of their fee) and the actual labor of putting this project together.

All general contractors will ask for a percentage upfront before the work is started. Often 25 percent of the project cost is a number you'll hear. That is going to the purchasing of some of the materials and starting the project. From there on in, you will pay incrementally as aspects of the project are completed. Usually, there is a warranty on the project – a year or more.

Most often, the general contractor, who knows your house well, will turn out to be someone you will call years from now when you have ice dams or a leak emanating from the bathroom sink. To this day, I have peace of mind because I can still turn to my original general contractor who built an addition for me 20 years ago. He has been a life saver.

One caveat: too often we hear of people giving sums of money to someone who calls himself a general contractor or handyman or whatever, only to have these people disappear. People are scammed – especially the older population that may be more vulnerable.

Do your homework, and the general contractor can save you hours, weeks and months of aggravation. After all, you're worth it.

Tedra Schneider can be reached at: restagebytedra@gmail.com

Retired and Rejuvenated

Gratitude: A Catalyst To Aging Well

Thanksgiving, Christmas, Chanukah and Kwanza have come and gone, but it may not be too late to stop and take a second out of your day to say, "Thank you." In fact, it might be a great New Year's resolution to put more gratitude into our lives, and even go one step further by telling others just how much we appreciate who they are and what they do. These simple gestures could go a long way in making this world we live in much more "user-friendly."

Gratitude, it turns out, could be another one of those ever-elusive keys to aging in the right

way. But can a simple "thanks" really change your life and help you age for the better?

A lot of people seem to think so. There has been a growing trend in positive psychology research that consistently links gratitude with greater levels of happiness and, in some cases, more positive health outcomes. Being thankful, experts argue, allows you to feel more positive emotions, better equips you to deal with adversity and may



JOANNE
BYRNE

even help you formulate stronger relationships. All of these things are important not only when it comes to aging, but when it comes to life.

A study by Robert A. Emmons of the University of California, one of the world's leading scientific experts on gratitude and positive psychology, asked participants to write a few sentences each week. One group wrote about things they were

grateful for that happened during the week, while another group wrote about things that annoyed them each day. A third group wrote about events without any emphasis on them being positive or negative. After 10 weeks, those who wrote about what they were grateful for reported feeling better about their lives, exercised more and had fewer hospital visits over that time period.

Sometimes we hear about those gratitude journals where you write each day those things for which you are thankful. This

Continued on page 9.

On Your Mind

Why Bother Making New Year's Resolutions?

I'm not sure if anyone still goes through the process of writing down resolutions anymore, but I'm encouraging it, even if you choose not to keep them. I hope this inspires you to consider mindfully putting a few down on paper.

I'm reminded of an old Chinese proverb: "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." It doesn't matter how long the list of resolutions is or how difficult the goals are; it's the start that stops most people.

If you are making resolutions, you are setting goals and identifying areas of your life that you would like to improve. If you are doing this you are being mindful and taking inventory of your life. That alone is a worthwhile activity. That is the first step in your journey.

Always begin by creating images in your mind of how you're going to look and feel and sound when you have already accomplished

your goals. Many people begin by imagining or recalling a time in the past when they failed. They therefore plan to fail again and either don't bother or quit.

Remember, you can't fail unless you quit. Failure doesn't exist unless you quit. Challenges and setbacks are only feedback or life lessons. If you learn from a mistake, it's not a mistake. The most successful people in the world have had the most failures, but they don't call them failures. Yesterday's experiences do not have to be an indication of future successes.

The New Year is the perfect time to do this. Another good time is your birthday. It's another beginning of another year.

As a former teacher, one of the best parts of the job was that it ended every year and



FERN
TAUSIG

I was able to begin every school year with renewed energy, new kids and new goals for how I would do better in the new year.

If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail.

Resolutions can be about improving your relationships, improving your habits, improving your attitude, giving back in some way or finding areas of your life that you feel need improving.

Even just getting rid of clutter, one room at a time, can have a profound effect on your emotional health and attitude. These are the most common types of resolutions, but you can get creative.

Every client that comes to me has a goal they haven't been able to accomplish without help. Generally, all I need to do in hypnosis is uncover the positive intention

behind the unconscious mind's reason for the struggle. For example, when someone comes for smoking cessation, the part of them that wants to smoke isn't trying to kill them. That part believes it's helping them to cope with their stress. When they establish coping skills without smoking, that part no longer needs to smoke. The same applies with every other bad habit. There is always a positive intent in the subconscious mind to comfort or to protect you against danger, real or imagined.

Have I inspired you enough to put pen to paper and take inventory of your life? Are you willing to jot down a few things? I'd love to hear from you. It could be the best five minutes of your day.

Fern is a certified hypnotist, life coach and health educator. She can be reached at www.myhealinghypnosis.com.

Here's To Your Health

Here's To Your Health

If I could change one thing in my industry, I would have the word "fitness" replaced with the word "wellness."

I have said that we are a spirit that has a soul that lives in a body, and all three of those components need to be healthy in order for us to live a life of wellness. This time of year, the gyms are crowded, the shakes are in the blender and we are determined to get in shape. I'm all for being charged up for a new you in 2020, but let's take a look at what that really means.

Most people will set their goals way too high, like training to run a marathon in 10 weeks. Then they will quit their training by week three. Some people will self-abnegate sugar and carbs and then eat an entire sheet cake because they "deserve" it, feel guilty, eat some chips and ice cream to comfort

themselves and throw in the towel altogether by week four.

What if the only resolution we had for the year 2020 was to simply make better choices for our health? Choices like getting our 10,000 steps a day, eating two more servings of vegetables a day, drinking less wine and more water, getting a full night's sleep and spending 10 to 30 minutes a day praying, meditating or sitting on a park bench by the water to lower stress levels.

Those are things which will absolutely change your life one day at a time. They're also sustainable and if continued long enough will become a lifestyle change.



MICHELE
TENNEY

What if we made a decision to turn off our smartphones during key times of the day such as dinner or two hours before bedtime? I've got another great idea: how about we mark time on our calendars every week to actually speak over the phone, have lunch or coffee with a friend we haven't seen in a long time or go to dinner with someone who could use a hug?

There are so many ways we can achieve better health and wellbeing. Trash your gym membership if you're not using it and get creative with ways to exercise that you like and will be committed to. Each day make a decision to be more mindful and eat better.

There is one thing on this earth we cannot

buy, and that's time. Live in the now, love your neighbor, spend time touching the lives of others, even if it's a simple smile to someone you pass on the street. Be the change our world so desperately needs. It's already in you. Love is the greatest gift we have been given and we were created to pass it on. Wellness is way more than getting buff for the beach friends. It is three-dimensional. You are worth every bit of effort you put into it.

Happy New Year! Here's to your health.

Michele Tenney is a Certified Personal Trainer and Nutritionist & Wellness Coach. She is the Chair of the Healthy Lifestyles Committee for the Orange Elementary School System and is a member of the Orange Board of Health. She can be reached at 203 668 2969 or email of Hmgbrd3@gmail.com.

Travel Matters

Puerto Vallarta: Jewel of the Pacific Riviera

Every year since 1991 I have visited our favorite place in the sun on the Mexican Riviera: Puerto Vallarta.

Once a sleepy fishing village, Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor changed all that back in the 60s when they had their romantic tryst on location for the movie "The Night of the Iguana." Suddenly, Puerto Vallarta became a jet-setter romantic destination.

In fact, the old town is called Zona Romantica. Now home of many art galleries, trendy boutiques, theaters and fabulous restaurants offering all types of cuisine, the Romantic Zone is where many expats from Canada and the U.S. live either part-time or full-time.

Puerto Vallarta is known as the Jewel of the Pacific Riviera, as it is located in the middle of the Sierra Madre mountains and the sea, on the same latitude as Hawaii, and offers the most incredible sunsets I believe

I've ever seen. Weather is just about perfect.

The Malencon (ocean walk) offers sculptures by artists such as Sergio Bustamante every 100 yards or so. An ever-changing variety of sand sculptures rivals the permanent sculptures by well-known artists. There are art walks in two different areas of town, very festive events with refreshments and local musicians.

Puerto Vallarta also happens to be the culinary capital of Mexico – a true foodie destination. Cafe des Artistes, the renowned restaurant founded by Thierry Blouet, is considered the finest by most. It serves French cuisine, Mexico inspired. There are hundreds of restaurants with breathtaking locations ranging from beachfront to beautiful villas in the hills



KAREN
QUINN-PANZER

overlooking the lights of Puerto Vallarta.

Did you know that Caesar salad was invented in Mexico by Caesar Cardini, an Italian-American who arrived in Mexico in 1924? As a result, the best Caesar salads we have ever tasted have been in Puerto Vallarta. Many restaurants prepare them tableside for you with the freshest ingredients.

Lest you think this resort is all food and art, rest assured there is so much to do for active vacationers as well, especially for those into sport fishing, parasailing and snorkeling. Plus, you can go horseback riding on the beach, explore the second largest blue-footed booby bird population outside of the Galapagos at Marietas island, take an ATV tour of the Sierra Madres and zipline in the jungle,

including in the midst of the former film location of The Terminator movie.

All the top hotel chains, and many boutique hotels, offer accommodations stretching from the Mismaloya beach backdrop for "Night of the Iguana" south of town, up through Nuevo Vallarta that offers broader beaches but is further away from the lively cultural scene of the Malencon and Romantic Zone. Some of our favorites include Garza Blanca, Hyatt Ziva and Grand Fiesta Americana (the last two are all-inclusive resorts).

There is a new expanded cruiseport in town and Puerto Vallarta is now a regular port of call for Mexican Riviera cruises from California. Did I mention the great shopping for silver jewelry and tequila?

Karen Quinn-Panzer is the owner of Dream Vacations Quinn Panzer Travel. She can be reached at kpanzer@dreamvacations.com

Retired and Rejuvenated - continued from page 8.

exercise sometimes feels like a lot of work. Perhaps it might be better to keep a mental journal on what brings you pleasure, because this is what you should focus on. What was the most amusing thought you had today? What made you smile today? Those are the things that make a difference.

Keeping a sense of curiosity alive by connecting gratitude with a sense of humor gives us a more hopeful outlook and can

help fend off negative emotions. By savoring life and living in the present you may be able to increase your energy, reduce stress and strengthen social bonds – all important aspects not just for aging, but for life.

Another study from the University of California San Diego's School of Medicine found that people who were more grateful experienced better heart health, with less inflammation and healthier heart rhythms.

A sense of gratitude and humor has nothing whatsoever to do with age and has everything to do with the sort of attitude you bring into the room. The most important bottom line is that humor and gratitude are all about kindness, a thing we just need more of in the world.

Gratitude isn't a cure-all remedy, but a little bit of optimism, playfulness and a sense of humor might not be bad ingredients to add to

your recipe for successful aging. It just might be a great way to start 2020 by bringing a greater sense of gratitude, thankfulness and humor into the world around us.

Joanne Byrne served as Senior Services Coordinator for the Town of Orange. She is now actively and happily retired. Email her at joannebyrne41@gmail.com to share your thoughts on retirement.

How UNH Saved My Life

By Jessica Esposito

Special to the Milford-Orange Times

Everyone gets asked the same question when they are in high school: Where do you see yourself in five years?

My answer today would be, “finishing my degree in criminal justice and procuring a career as a probation officer.” However, if someone told me in high school what my life would look like in five years, I would have laughed and probably called them crazy.

When I graduated Amity Regional High School in 2014, I knew I was going to go to the University of New Haven for a criminal justice degree. I chose to go to UNH because my family has a history with the school. My father, Frank Esposito Jr., graduated from UNH in 1984 with a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice. He worked for the Orange Police Department for 23 years, and after retiring in July 2004 began working at the university. He is retiring this month after working there for 16 years.

My brother, Anthony, graduated from UNH in 2015 with a bachelor’s degree in fire science and was employed between 2010 and 2013.

I knew that UNH was where I would end up because I wanted to follow in my family’s footsteps.

When school started in the fall of 2014, I was lucky enough to get a job as student worker. I had the honor to work for the late Dr. Richard Ward in the Henry C. Lee College of Criminal Justice. After his unexpected passing in 2015, I had the opportunity to work for Dean

Dr. Mario Gaboury and Assistant Dean Dr. David Schroeder. I was fortunate to meet some extraordinary people and make professional friendships with the full-time faculty. I was grateful for the opportunity to work there, because in December 2017 my life would change forever.

At the end of October 2017, I thought I was getting a virus. One day in early November, I was leaving my house and heading to school. As I started driving, I felt very weak, like I was going to pass out. I turned around and had my mom called 9-1-1.

When the paramedic arrived, I was in my car, sweating with clammy hands. My blood pressure and oxygen levels were low.

I went to the hospital for tests, but we left with no explanation as to why this happened. I followed up with my primary care doctor, who determined that it was a fluke.

About a week later my legs felt heavy and like pins and needles. I went back to the doctor to run some blood tests. As you can imagine, I was frustrated because I had no idea what was going on, but I knew something was not right. My family was also frustrated and worried.

A few days later I got a call from my doctor. He told me I most likely had an autoimmune disorder, but more testing had to be done and I would need to see a rheumatologist.

Between then and the time I saw the rheumatologist in December, I became extremely weak, unable to lift even five pounds. I lost 25 pounds. But I was still going to school and was able to finish the semester

with A’s and B’s.

On Dec. 21, 2017 I was officially diagnosed with Sjogren’s Syndrome. There is no cure for this disease, only medication to help cope with symptoms.

Over the holiday break my parents suggested that I take a semester off to focus on my health. I told them absolutely not. After talking with my doctors I decided to change my status from full time to part time. Through the many hospital visits in 2018 and 2019 and all of the symptoms, I still found the strength to continue as a student worker and take courses to finish my bachelor’s degree. In the fall of 2019, I decided to apply for the master’s investigation degree.

This is not your typical M.S. program; the courses were only seven-and-a-half weeks long. I knew it would be a lot of work, but I was determined to do it because I was not able to obtain a full-time job.

I just finished my master’s degree this month. In the summer, as my schoolwork was coming to an end, I was getting nervous because I knew I would not be able to obtain a full-time job. One day, my father ran into Gaboury, who was concerned for my situation, and asked if I would consider teaching for the criminal justice department. My father was told I was offered the position due to my work ethic and academic achievements.

I would be reunited with my criminal justice family again. This was not where I thought I would be after finishing college. People have a plan and set goals they want



Jessica Esposito. Photo courtesy of Joyce Esposito.

to achieve, but sometimes life has different plans. We have to learn to adapt to curve balls that are thrown our way.

I am so grateful for my family that has been there for me through the good and bad times. They have been my backbone through all of it. I am also grateful for all of our friends who have been there for us through the past few years. I’m thankful to everyone at UNH who have helped me succeed these past few years, and for the amazing opportunity that I will be embarking on soon.

Never take anything for granted, because you do not know what your future is going hold.

Service Above Self On Display In Orange

By Richard Dumbrill

In 1989, the Rotary organization formally established “Service Above Self” as its principal motto. Ever since, it has conveyed the philosophy of unselfish volunteering to those in need in local communities in the U.S. and throughout the world.

Inspiration for this motto originated at the second Rotary convention in 1911 in Portland, Oregon when the delegates responded enthusiastically to the idea that service came before self. The motto became a mini-mission statement that encompassed Rotary’s evolving beliefs.

The world today is not the same as it was when Rotary began in 1905, nor in 1989. Demographics have shifted, the pace of change has accelerated, and technology has created new opportunities for connections and service. What hasn’t changed is a need for the values that define Rotary: service, fellowship, integrity, diversity and leadership.

Every year, Rotary clubs develop actions

plans that honor our past and embrace our future. They guide our organization, our members and supporters toward projects, opportunities and activities. A club’s to-do list is open-ended. The Rotary Club of Orange is no exception. We evolve and keep Rotary not only relevant but thriving.

A case in point was November’s lead-up to the Thanksgiving weekend. The celebrations are now past, yet memories of this most favored of family weekends still linger. So do the memory of the occasions when a diverse group of Orange Rotarians assisted local residents in three different humanitarian and community activities, all with a Thanksgiving flavor.

On Nov. 20, five Rotarians (including Cathy Bradley, Don Lewis, Bob Sigler and Ned Martin) served dinner to 65 veterans, widows of veterans and relatives at the American Legion Post 127 in Orange. Earlier, Sharon Ewen had helped plan the dinner, bought various paper goods and donated candle holders and flower arrangements for the tables.

The evening was a resounding success thanks to a variety of individuals who contributed their time to a worthwhile enterprise. Harry Garafalo, owner of the Milford ShopRite, generously had the food cooked and delivered to the post. Ewen’s daughter-in-law took pictures of the table settings and Steve Cooper of Milford Rotary took photos of the gathering. Orange Rotary and the veterans appreciate and thank ShopRite and others for their outstanding contributions.

Three days later, Orange Rotarians Baxter Walsh, Ned Martin and Richard Dumbrill were among 150 volunteers who participated in the Food in Service to the Homebound, or FISH, of Greater New Haven Thanksgiving turkey drive. Almost 350 individuals received a turkey plus extra trimmings for their later celebrations. They too were grateful to receive their gifts. This Saturday is the biggest day on FISH’s 2019 calendar.

On the following day, a cold and wet Sunday, six Orange Rotarians – Sharon

Ewen, Roger Tausig, Trish Pearson, Karen Quinn-Panzer, Robin Cavello and Richard Dumbrill – encouraged customers entering the Stop & Shop in Milford to purchase an item for the community pantry at the Senior Center in Orange. We collected \$165 and a \$25 coupon in donations. Many received an Orange Rotary shopping bag for their generosity in this annual food drive.

Never was “service above self” better exemplified than on these three occasions. For a Rotarian they were opportunities to give back. As the saying goes, “You may make a living by what you earn or get but you will make a life by what you give back.” Helping people less fortunate than oneself is a noble activity.

As president of the Rotary Club of Orange, I take pride in volunteering alongside these and other redoubtable Rotarians. I invite you to put “service above self” into your own life. Come and explore Rotary. Yours will be a life-changing experience. I speak from personal experience. You can call me at 203-298-0402 or reach me at richard@dumbrill.net.

Getting To Know You

The Fine Art Of Standing In Line

No one likes it, but we all do it from time to time. We have to do it because that is the way the world works. In fact, we’ve all just been through a season where we do it more than at any other time of the year.

What am I talking about? Standing in line, of course.

I was standing in line at the bank the other day with seven or eight other people. I didn’t like it, but I couldn’t come up with a way to avoid it. So I made a face of grim resignation, which was the same face everyone else in line at the bank that day was making, and took my place at the end of the line. Once I got my spot I did what everyone else was doing and whipped out my cell phone to do nothing in particular but distract myself from the fact that I was standing in line.

As happens from time to time with lines, this one was not going anywhere in a hurry. A couple more people came in after me and (I assume – I had my nose buried in one of my six to ten email accounts) made that same face

of grim resignation and got in line behind me.

Then a woman behind me said, “Happy holidays.”

I didn’t look up immediately because I was lost in cyberspace, so she said it again. I looked up this time. I didn’t recognize her as anyone I knew, but I nodded to her and returned her greeting. That’s when she offered me a peppermint candy. I felt myself smile as I said, “Thank you” and took the candy.

While I popped it in my mouth, she began passing out candies to all the other people standing in line.

That’s when a strange thing happened. Everyone stopped making that face of grim resignation and we all put away our cell phones. Smiles were exchanged. Then, very cautiously, a conversation broke out. First we just commiserated about having to stand in line, agreeing it wasn’t our favorite thing to do



DAVID CROW

during the holidays but couldn’t be helped. With the ice broken, people began to chat more amicably. The line quickly bent into a knot of people all facing one another and conversing. More people came in, and after receiving their candies joined the knot of chatting people. Suddenly standing in line didn’t seem like such a chore.

It seemed that I got to the front of the line sooner than I expected. I was a little disappointed that it was my turn to go to the window to conduct my business, because it meant stepping out of the knot of people and the bubbling conversation. After I finished my business, I went back to the knot to say goodbye. As I walked to my car, I didn’t really remember what we talked about but I knew I enjoyed my time in line. I also admonished myself a bit that a person who enjoys conversations like I do had missed so many golden opportunities to talk

to new people because I had viewed standing in line as, at best, an inconvenience and at worst some kind of cosmic test of character.

Because of Sara the economics major who wants to pursue an MBA or maybe go to law school, I’ve got a pocket full of peppermint candies and I’ll be leaving my cell phone in my pocket as I take my place at the rear of the line. I’ve resolved in 2020 to relearn the fine art of standing in line. So if the bald guy behind you says “hello” and offers you a peppermint candy, don’t get creeped out. Just smile and we’ll help each other pass the time.

Until next time, y’all come out!

David Crow lives in Orange with his wife and three children. He practices law and he asks everyone to call him “Dave.” Only his mother and his wife call him “David,” and only when they’re mad at him. You can contact Dave at Sit.a.Spell.and.Visit@gmail.com. He’ll always find a half hour for a good chat.

Orange Girls Win In Basketball Tourney



The Holy Infant Lady Orange grades 6 and 8 girls basketball teams recently competed in the InSports Holiday Tourney, capturing the championships in their grade levels. The grade 6 girls defeated Monroe in the championship 40-15. Players on the team include Fiona Curis, Mackenzie Smith, Lily Simons, Addy Pivovar, Ava Storz, Sarah Donegan, Sienna Murphy, Nina Nardecchia, Marlee Lyons and JJ Kirck. Meanwhile, the grade 8 girls defeated Trumbull 30-29 on a three-point buzzer beater by Jill Barnes. Players on the team include Mackenzie Martin, Vivian Cain, Jillian Barnes, Bridget Lowder, Grace Cavallaro, Tatiana Bell, Lucci Dottori, Grace Launder, Kylee McLain and Meghan Kirck. *Photos courtesy of Holy Infant Lady Orange.*

OCC Nursery School Hosting Open House

Orange Congregational Church Nursery School will be holding an open house for fall 2020 on Sunday, Feb. 9 from 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. Come and learn about the program, tour the classrooms and meet the teachers.

The nursery school has served Orange for more than 50 years and is open to all faiths. The school day runs from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., with 3-year-olds attending twice a week, and

4-year-olds three days a week. The school also offers a five-day program for returning students.

Follow the balloons at 205 Meetinghouse Ln. in Orange. The snow date will be Feb. 23 from 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m.

For more information about the school or to schedule a visit with your child, email ocns@yahoo.com.

Orange Selectmen Hear Contract Grievances From Police Retirees

Continued from page 1.

town should therefore be reimbursing the retirees.

Geane said he had never received a response letter. Zeoli said he would get him a copy.

Fellow retired officers Mark D’Onofrio and Bill Hendrick echoed concerns about the contracts.

D’Onofrio said that Esposito had suggested it be shared with the board. Zeoli reiterated that the selectmen had heard the claim and didn’t intend to act on it further.

Town Attorney Vincent Marino interjected that the proper procedure would be for the retirees’ attorney and the town’s labor counsel to continue their discussion and see if they could come to a resolution that could then be brought before the selectmen for consideration.

“There’s a legal process,” he said. “This body at this moment has nothing before it to consider, because it’s currently pending with labor counsel and Mr. Esposito’s lawyer.”

Zeoli said there is continuing dialog between the lawyers for both sides.

“So our opinions don’t matter anymore?” D’Onofrio asked.

“Once you chose to retain counsel,” Marino responded, “that changed the posture of the table. This table has to operate through its labor counsel.”

D’Onofrio said that only Esposito – not he or the other retirees – had hired a lawyer.

“We did not know that this board reviewed our labor contract, and we didn’t know what the outcome of that executive meeting reviewing our contract meant for this board or to us,” he said.

Marino said if D’Onofrio or the other

retirees had any new information they wanted to present to the labor attorney, they could approach Marino or Zeoli to deliver it – but that they couldn’t act on it outside of that process.

Hendrick said that his grievance began because of the dental portion of the contract. He said he never received a line-by-line comparison for the dental plan between two policies. Zeoli said the coverage plans had been compared, and the current plan was negotiated with the police union.

“They negotiated new things. We weren’t there,” Hendrick said. “A line-by-line comparison would show you that – that we are getting an inferior plan compared to the one I had in 2005. Based on the work I had done on my teeth, I found out the hard way. Something was covered, it was covered, it was covered... all of a sudden, boom – it wasn’t covered.”

Selectman Mitch Goldblatt said he was “kind of in a vacuum” because he had not been given any documents about the ongoing legal discussions.

Marino said, though, that the board would not receive information about the day-to-day interactions.

Selectman John Carangelo cautioned against the board prematurely discussing anything that might involve potential litigation. He did, however, echo Goldblatt’s concern that the retirees had not received the town’s response letter.

“They’re saying they didn’t receive it, and that’s not good. So we need to work on that to make sure that they get the letter and get the respect that they deserve, because they’ve been here multiple times. That’s not fair to them,” he said.

AMSO Students Recognized For Good Character



Amity Middle School in Orange has recognized students (pictured from left) Kristin Feuerstein, Bella Louros, Colin Spoerndle, Ryan Slugoski, Jillian Barnes, Agatha Freitas, Todd Evans and Dante Hardt for displaying the Jackie’s Nine character trait of justice in their interactions with peers and adults. These students consistently treat others fairly and are passionate about doing what is right for the school community. The school has been using Jackie Robinson, the first black man to play professional baseball, as a role model for the students in a program called “Jackie’s Nine.” Robinson lived by nonviolent actions and by values that the teachers, staff, and administrators at Amity use today as an example for the student body. *Photo by Aleisha Zawadski.*

Milford’s St. Mary School Announces Honor Roll

St. Mary School in Milford recently released its honor roll for the recent semester.

Grade 8 High Honors: Andrew Benjamin, Molly Ciuci, Aida Ehlers, Fayrose Hussain, Alexi Paranal, Maya Pinto, Atiana Tandon, Margaret Wetmore and Amanda Zurolo.

Grade 8 Honors: Joshua Aspden, Chase Bryant, Danielle D’Avignon, Christopher DeProfio, Griffin Fisher, Chloe Franke, Christopher Harry, Daniel Kron, Taylor LaFountain, Max Lula, Claire Moulton, Derek Rainey, Michael Roney, Gabriela Santiago, Matthew Savo, Abigail Savoie, Peter Swanson, Tim Swanson, Will Swanson, Andrew Tkacs and Leni Wisniewski.

Grade 7 High Honors: Lily Baird, Gabriella

Grande, Caden Piselli and Alyssa Zinker.

Grade 7 Honors: Sara Andreesen, Ava Bottino, Faith Doyle, Jackson Doyle, Isabella Eyler, Suixan Gonzalez, Charlotte LaVecchia, Jackson LaVecchia, Jack McInnis, Aubrie Nichols, Tyler Nicholenko, Mackenzie Pelosi, Kaleigh Richards, Mackenzie Richards, Tatum Santos, Megan Vella, Bridget Vitti, Audrey Voges, Madelyn Wolfe and Bohdan Zazulak-Collins.

Grade 6 Honors: Layla Alogna, Ava Aspden, Robert Baird, Reese Caterbone, Katelyn Coleman, Kaitlyn Dzialo, George Ganim, Molly Gunning, Addison Harry, Clare Hayes, Bianca Maciel, Hannah Newman, Eli Ssenyange and Josh Tandon.

AMSO Students Raise Money For Central American Families



Students at Amity Middle School in Orange raised over \$800 selling items to benefit Central American students and families through the Pulsera Project, a fundraiser facilitated by an advisory group led by Stephanie Sanchez, an eighth grade Spanish teacher. Artisans from Guatemala and Nicaragua sent handmade bracelets and cross-body bags to be sold to help provide education, clean water and housing to the people in those countries. Top row, from left: Erica Manandhar, Paige Boguniecki, Caroline Tirolo, James Morrin and Charlotte Pellegrino. Bottom row, from left: Christopher Nam, Hayden Chetwynd and Kenneth Ganun. *Photo by Stephanie Sanchez.*

Milford Reaches \$5 Million Settlement In Maren Sanchez Murder

Continued from page 1.

The foundation has been growing in its offerings across Connecticut and launched a fundraising effort this past autumn to build a national profile. It partnered with the

Bridgeport Sound Tigers on Nov. 29 for a “Maren Sanchez Home Foundation Night” at the Webster Bank Arena in Bridgeport, with a portion of ticket revenue from the game donated to the MSHF.

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Insuring Your Future

Unexpected Medical Bills: Not The Kind Of Surprise You Want

You go to the doctor, describe your symptoms, she orders some tests – perhaps an x-ray or an MRI. Two months later, you receive a bill from the diagnostic facility for several hundred dollars. Surprise!

This scenario has become far too common and has created a lot of financial burden, putting people in a position of having to choose between recommended medical care and affordability. There are ways to manage these expenses without having to sacrifice proper medical care.

First, ask the doctor what the test or procedure could cost. Medical providers try to avoid such questions by responding “it depends on your insurance” or “it is not in my control.” If the test or procedure will be done at a separate facility, that is a fair response, but you can contact the diagnostic imaging facility or the lab or the surgical center and ask them for an estimate of what it

will cost. Know the medical code and description of the test(s). Also make sure that the facility is in your insurance network. If the estimate seems high, call other facilities to compare costs.

Second, understand the details of your insurance plan. Are there upfront deductibles? To what do they apply? In some plans the deductible applies to all medical costs, and in others it only applies to certain procedures such as outpatient surgery, inpatient hospital stays and certain tests such as MRIs and CAT scans.

Know the difference between a copay and coinsurance. A copay is a flat dollar amount for which you are responsible – that is all you should pay. Coinsurance is a percentage of the cost and vary over a wide



TRISH PEARSON

range. It is important to know what the negotiated rate will be to determine how much you will have to pay. This is more difficult to determine in advance, and is in many cases how surprise bills occur. Your final cost is based on the amount the insurance company allows, not what the doctor, hospital or facility bills initially.

Sometimes the bill arrives to the patient before it has gone through the insurance company.

Do not pay any bills until you receive the explanation of benefits from the insurance company. If you need help interpreting those documents, call your insurance agent or the customer service/claims department or the provider.

Third, avoid the emergency room if

possible. Costs for care at a hospital are two to three times as much as at a freestanding facility like a walk-in clinic or surgery center. This is true for most medical care. Try to use non-hospital connected facilities if possible. It is less expensive and can provide the same care or results.

Medical care is one of the most expensive services we can use. But unlike other large purchases where we would get two or three estimates such as replacing a car engine or renovating a home, we often just go where we are directed without considering the cost. We should be as savvy consumers when it comes to medical care as we are to most other large expenses.

Trish Pearson is a licensed independent insurance agent and certified long term care specialist. Contact her at 203-640-5969 or trishpearson281@gmail.com.

Wine Talk

Champagnes And Other Sparkling Wines

Champagne and sparkling wines: what is the difference?

Champagne is a wine made in the Champagne method and from the Champagne region of France just outside of Paris. This is generally considered to be the finest sparkling wine in the world. It is high quality, can be a complex wine and will age well.

The Champagne method used to produce this wine is labor intensive and difficult, and as a result very expensive. The secondary fermentation must take place in the bottle. The winemakers must introduce some yeast and sugar to cause a second fermentation after producing a still wine. They put a temporary cap on that looks like a beer cap. When the wine has completed the secondary fermentation, the debris left over is referred to as the lees.

The next step is to riddle the wine. The person riddling the wine makes a one-quarter turn per day with the wine upside down. When all the lees are located in the neck of the bottle and sufficient time has passed for the lees to add complexity to the wine, the neck is frozen and the wine is disgorged. The beer cap is removed and the bubbles forced out of the frozen neck with the debris from the secondary fermentation. Then the winemaker tops the wine with a dose of wine and sugar and caps it.

This method is used in other parts of the world, but if it is not being done in the Champagne region it is called the traditional



RAYMOND SPAZIANI

method or méthode classique.

Many other sparkling wines are made in the tank method. This is also referred to as the Charmat method. This is much less expensive than the classic method. They do a secondary fermentation in a large stainless steel tank. Rather than having wines that stress richness and complexity, they make wines that are easy to drink and youthful. They are much less expensive. This is how most Prosecco is made, as well as several California sparkling wines.

There are other ways to make sparkling wines. There is a transfer method that takes parts of both the Champagne and Charmat methods. There is also the continuous method, which is how the German Sekt wines are produced. The carbonation method is another, in which they make a large vat of still wines and zap it

with carbon dioxide, similarly to how soda is made. The wines are not considered of good quality, and generally the bubbles disappear rather quickly.

Some great sparkling wines include Vivet Cloket brut, at about \$54 a bottle. Castell Roig Brut Cava is \$13, Agrapart Jess Brut Champagne is \$44 and Schramberg Blanc de Blanco 2015 is \$34.95. Try these and other sparklers and let us know the ones you like.

Ray Spaziani is chapter director of the New Haven Chapter of the American Wine Society. He has taught wine appreciation classes at Gateway Community College, the Milford Board of Education, at Maltose wine and beer making suppliers and is a member of the International Tasting Panel of Amenti del Vino and Wine Maker magazine. He is an award-winning home wine maker. Email ray with your questions and wine events at realestatepro1000@gmail.com.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday January 18th



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Corvettes
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DOO WAP REVUE

With Opening set...Roy Orbison Tribute!

January 25th - Frank Sinatra & Dean Martin Show
With 7 Piece Orchestra

February 8th - "DizzyFish" Sounds of the 70's

February 15th - "Dirty Deeds" Tribute to AC/DC

February 21st - "Gold Rush" Ultimate Neil Young

February 29th - "The Eagles Experience"

March 28th - "Motley 2"

April 3rd - "Lords of 52nd Street"
The Original Billy Joel Band!

May 16th - "No Quarter"
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From The Bar

Keep Your Estate Planning Up To Date

The 2019 session of the Connecticut legislature made significant changes to Connecticut law concerning trusts, including revocable trusts (also called “living trusts”). Here are just a few important changes:

Change 1: The state adopted the Uniform Trust Code, a statute previously adopted by many other states. The UTC became effective Jan. 1, but many of its provisions will apply to trusts that were signed before that date. The UTC will govern the way trusts are created, administered, and terminated. The UTC contains detailed rules concerning notice to beneficiaries, non-judicial settlement agreements, liability of trustees, claims by creditors, time limitations for contesting the validity of the trust, and time limitations for contesting the administration of the trust, as examples. The person creating the trust (called a “settlor”) can opt out of certain parts of the UTC by expressly saying so in the trust document, but other parts of the UTC, including provisions about notice to beneficiaries, are mandatory.

Change 2: A second change was the adoption of the Connecticut Uniform Directed Trust Act. The act recognizes the fact that different people have different skills. It allows a settlor to divide responsibilities, naming one person to make distribution decisions, while a different person is named to make investment decisions. For example, a professional, such as the family’s accountant, might be named



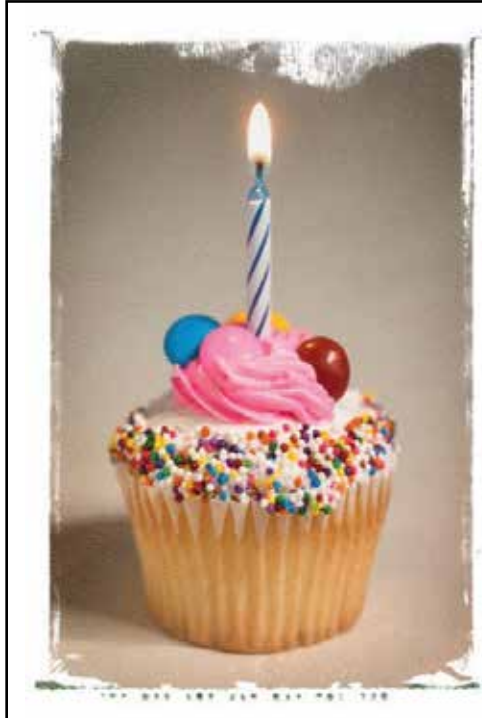
STEVEN FLOMAN

to make investment decisions, while a family member, such as a sibling, might be named to make distribution decisions.

Change 3: A third change was the adoption of the Connecticut Qualified Dispositions in Trust Act. This allows a settlor to put assets into an irrevocable trust in a manner that protects those assets from the claims of many (not all) creditors of the settlor. Many other states have adopted these “asset protection trusts.” Connecticut now

joins that group. Previous cautions about myths and truths concerning revocable trusts remain. Even with a revocable trust, you still need to file a Connecticut Estate Tax Return with the probate court, you still are subject to statutory probate court fees, the assets in the trust remain “available” to you if you need help with long-term care costs, and the trust, by itself, does nothing to reduce estate taxes.

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



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The Milford Chamber of Commerce

**Celebrating Success
One Year In**

Happy New Year! Have you seen the lineup for 2020? Our Chamber of Commerce schedule for January alone is chock-full of activities you won't want to miss.

The new year marked 12 months that I have been with the Milford Regional Chamber of Commerce. I would like to be really profound about my first year, yet the words are not coming that easily. It's been a whirlwind of a year. Our team has worked hard to fulfill the chamber's mission statement by supporting businesses, promoting tourism and working toward quality of life in our community.

No one person can take credit for these accomplishments; everybody gets credit. This chamber has been blessed with extremely dedicated and caring business leaders who ensure the success of our business community. I am enormously grateful to be a part of this organization.

Chamber activities in 2019 brought businesses, residents, visitors and dignitaries together to celebrate and support the progress in our area. The enthusiasm of our board members, ambassadors and business members was contagious, and the breakfasts, lunches and networking events were very well-attended.

2020 will be just as exciting a year for the chamber. There are new chamber initiatives coming and new ways for you to stay engaged. Learn how to increase your bottom line by either increasing your market share or reducing your costs. There will be many opportunities to maximize the benefits that accrue to you through chamber membership.

If you are not a member yet, don't fret



**PAM
STANESKI**

- the chamber will continue to advocate on behalf of the business community this coming year.

Other initiatives that we will continue to promote include:

- Awarding scholarships from the Scholarship Program to the graduates of our area high schools;
- Continuing to grow our chamber by increasing membership;
- Offering high-quality events, such as the new monthly Lunch

and business-to-business networking opportunities;

- Enhancing our partnerships with other business groups and nonprofit organizations that promote our community and its quality of life.

Don't miss out. If you are new to the community or to doing business in our region, we welcome you. Please introduce yourself to me, other board members and our staff. We want you to feel welcomed and included. Call us at 203-878-0681 to get started. Business is our business.



The Orange Chamber of Commerce

**Social Media Can't Replace
Chamber Membership**

There are many reasons why social media cannot replace Chamber of Commerce memberships. People think a chamber membership is only about networking and they perceive it as being out of touch. They think they can just meet other businesspeople online and it's not necessary to join the chamber.

That perception will not help their business growth.

Saying that participating in social media programs for business replaces the need for a chamber membership is like placing a nickel in your coin jar and claiming to have a retirement plan. Sure, the two are kind of similar, but you'll never get the same amount of return from that social media as you will from a chamber membership.

Chamber participation ensures you will have a connection with the community and a marketable designation. The chamber is a well-respected community organization. Most people see it as comparable to the Better Business Bureau. Your membership lets customers know that you intend to stay in the community for a long time. Being a member of a social media group is not a reputation builder. Chambers will hold ribbon cuttings when



**CAROL
SMULLEN**

you launch a new business, open a new location for your business, celebrate a milestone anniversary or some other accomplishment. The chamber will be there with a social media mention, perhaps an article, help on a press release and draw attention to your business venture.

The chamber also provides opportunities for business leaders to meet and have a dialogue with state legislators. Many businesses forget this valuable opportunity. Most businesses can't afford their own lobbyists, but membership in the chamber is affordable.

Social media programs can be extremely helpful with your marketing to the general public. However, they will never cover everything your chamber can do for your business. There really is no need to choose between them. A comprehensive approach is the best one for business growth. Multiple tools and expenditures are required, and chamber membership is an excellent investment.



Recycling Tip

It's that time of year: flu season, colds, coughs. What are you using to blow your nose or cover your mouth? A cotton handkerchief? That's fine. Kleenex? Okay, but how are you disposing of it? In your toilet? That's not a good idea. There's the potential to plug your drains and septic tanks and create expensive plumbing problems. Put them with your trash - don't recycle them. Or better yet, compost them. Disposable tissues are paper and, like paper towels, can be composted.

Wipes are a bigger no-no for toilets. Companies who make them claim they are "flushable." Sure, anything that fits in your toilet is flushable. Remember trying to get that rubber toy your two-year-old flushed? Put wipes in your trash. Wipes can really create havoc with your septic tank.

All parts of paper towels are recyclable: the plastic wrap goes to participating retailers or the transfer station, the cardboard roll in your recycle bin, and used paper towels in your home compost bin.

White or brown paper napkins can also be composted at home. Composting is another way of recycling. Let's keep as much out of trash as we can.

For more, visit orangerecycles.com.



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Obituaries


Full obituaries and pictures (if provided) of the deceased are on our website at www.milford-orangetimes.com and are published at no cost to residents of Milford and Orange.


 **William Balamaci**, age 76, of Milford, entered into eternal life on Monday, December 30, 2019.


 **Francesca Makusevich**, 93, of Milford, entered peaceful rest on Dec. 18, 2019.


 **Robert C. Booth**, 92, of Milford, died peacefully on December 25, 2019.


 **Joseph A. Mazziotti** 82, of Orange passed away on December 23, 2019.


 **Myron Russell Brochinsky ("Bro")**, age 92 of Orange, died January 1, 2020.


 **Muriel Ann McManus**, 94, of Orange passed away peacefully on December 15, 2019.


 **Phyllis H. Davis**, 79, of Milford, passed away December 21, 2019.


 **Matthew Leo Musante**, 55 of Orange, passed away December 28, 2019.


 **Antoinette Melone Del Prete (Mema)**, 85, of Milford, passed away on Saturday, Dec. 28th.


 **Herbert Edward "Bert" Paradis**, 82, of Milford, passed away on Dec. 29, 2019.

 **Mary A. Falcone**, 93, of Milford, entered eternal rest on December 17, 2019.


 **Elaine S. Pavlik**, 82, of Orange, CT, passed away on December 28, 2019.


 **Patricia Callahan Galligan**, 95, of Orange, passed away on December 31, 2019.


 **Barbara C. Pepe** died peacefully on Thursday, December 26, 2019.


 **Margaret (Anziano) Harry**, 88, passed away on Wednesday, December 25, 2019.


 **Catherine C. Porcu**, 86, of Milford, passed away on December 26, 2019.


 **Victoria "Jo" Kapral**, 85, of Milford, passed away on Sunday, December 22, 2019.

 **Bob Tomczyk**, 68, passed away on Thursday, December 12, 2019.

 **Norman Joseph Stafford Kraft**, 78 of Milford, passed away on Thursday, December 12, 2019.

 **MaryAnn L. Wilcock**, 74, of Milford, passed away on December 17, 2019.

 **Erwin H. Levine (Earl)**, 77 of Orange, passed away peacefully on December 24, 2019.


 **Donald D. Yarson**, 66, of Milford, passed away on December 27, 2019.



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