

LDF Issues Statement on Historic School Desegregation Case Settlement

On behalf of lead plaintiff, Elizabeth Horton Sheff, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF), the Center for Children's Advocacy (CCA), the American Civil Liberties Union, the National Center for Law and Economic Justice, and Horton, Dowd, Bartschi & Levesque, PC announced today that a final settlement agreement has been reached in *Sheff v. O'Neill*, a longstanding school desegregation case against the State of Connecticut that seeks to address the severe racial and economic segregation between students in the city of Hartford and its surrounding suburbs.

white and high- or middle-income schools in the surrounding suburbs on the other. Throughout the ensuing decades, a number of agreements between the plaintiffs and the state have established nearly 40 inter-district magnet schools, and a robust Open Choice program that allows Hartford students to transfer to suburban schools. Today, over 56% of Hartford students attend a magnet or Open Choice school.

If the proposed settlement is approved by both a judge and the Connecticut State Legislature, it will result in a permanent injunction enforcing the key terms of a long-term Comprehensive Choice Plan (CCP) intended to redress the con-

Historic "Conny" the Whale Searches for new home

BY JAKE H. DRESSLER



The *New York Times* correctly described West Hartford as a "suburb with an urban aesthetic." Part of the town's appeal for its increasingly young residents is the allure of a downtown area closely surrounded by the suburbs. As young professionals moving into the area seek new housing, a wave of developments has spread across the Hartford area targeting the younger generation's palate. Parkville Market, the bustling millennial hangout in Hartford, recently announced a \$6 million dollar plan to expand its vibrant event space to include rooftop partying while other large-scale projects are underway, like Lexington Partners LLC's 292-unit One Park apartment complex at Park Road and Prospect Avenue.

As developers focus on making West Hartford chicer

for young people, some cherished landmarks are being sacrificed. The most recent landmark to fall is the beloved "Conny" the whale, mounted in front of the historic Children's Museum which is currently relocating.

Founded in 1927 as a one-room natural history museum in The Pond House at Elizabeth Park in Hartford, The Children's Museum is the fifth oldest children's museum in the nation. It's been on Trout Brook Dr. since 1958, and has featured its iconic "Conny" the whale statue since the 1970's. The statue is a 45,000-pound concrete sculpture that was built by volunteers on behalf of the state to honor the sperm

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Cara McClellan addressing the press announcing settlement of the Sheff case. Attorney McClellan spoke to WECA members several times during the proceedings.

"I have always believed that when we push for quality, integrated education," said Ms. Horton Sheff, "we're fighting for all students – regardless of their race or background – to get the education they deserve. This settlement is a victory not just for Connecticut families, but for the larger cause of education equity across the country."

In 1996, the Connecticut Supreme Court ruled that the Connecticut State Constitution was violated by the extreme racial segregation between the predominately Black, Latinx, and low-income schools in Hartford on the one hand, and the overwhelmingly

sequences of decades of disinvestment and exclusion. Among other provisions, the CCP commits Connecticut to significantly expand the number of available seats for students from Black, Latinx, and/or low-income families who have been the victims of entrenched and systemic discrimination. Additionally, the agreement would require Connecticut's Department of Education to publicly report data on educational equity and to commit to greater diversity in its hiring practices.

"This settlement would repre-

Continued on page 6

Efforts Building to Save Brainard Airport

DONOVAN WILSON with SUZANN BECKETT

The Hartford City Council has, inexplicably, passed a resolution to close Brainard Airport, even though there is no clear vision as to what the land would be used for in the event of such a closure. On the other hand, the 100 year old Brainard Airport Association is leading a re-invigorated movement to keep Brainard Airport operating for generations to come.

Located in a former cow pasture in the southeast Hartford Neighborhood of South Meadows, Brainard opened in 1921. It is believed to be the 1st municipal airport in the United States. Among the facility's claims to fame are visits by some of the early 20th century's greatest aviators — including Amelia Earhart and Charles Lindbergh — who landed there to great acclaim. In recent years, it has been used for training and education, for Lifestar (the emergency helicopter used by Hartford Hospital), and flight schools.

The airport covers 201 acres, boasts three runways and two helipads.

"Most people think Brainard



Brainard Airport in Hartford's South Meadows is one of the oldest municipal airports in the country. Its rich heritage is evidenced by this vintage postcard from the 1930s. (Photo from the Tichnor Brothers Collection at the Boston Public Library)

airport is where people with airplanes hang out, but it's much more than that," said Michael Teiger, a member of the Hartford Brainard Airport Association.

Brainard Airport is, like many airports around the country, known as a general aviation airport which essentially means it is used by non-commercial and military aviation. While Brainard did once service Eastern Airlines, American Airlines, and others, as the planes

grew larger, it became more difficult to use Brainard both because of its shorter runways and the fog that frequently drifts from the River. Major airlines eventually relocated to Bradley Airport further north.

Brainard has a concerted focus on aviation education. Teiger said "About 50 percent of the flights out of Brainard are training flights." Brainard currently has three different flight schools on property.

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CITY OF HARTFORD PUBLIC SAFETY STATISTICS

Hartford Police Department Part 1 Crime Activity: Week of Jan. 30 to Feb. 5, 2022 Northwest District

PART 1 CRIME	WEEK			28 DAY PERIOD			YEAR TO DATE			2 YR	3 YR	4 YR	PREVIOUS WEEK	
	2021	2022	% change	2021	2022	% change	2021	2022	% change	2020	2019	2018	2022	% change
MURDER	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0	1	0	0	0.0%
RAPE	0	0	0.0%	0	1	100.0%	0	1	100.0%	0	1	2	1	-100.0%
ROBBERY	0	2	200.0%	4	4	0.0%	5	6	20.0%	4	6	9	2	0.0%
AGG ASSAULT	0	2	200.0%	4	5	25.0%	10	5	-50.0%	5	9	19	2	0.0%
BURGLARY	1	1	0.0%	2	6	200.0%	3	7	133.3%	5	3	17	2	-50.0%
LARCENY	8	15	87.5%	29	39	34.5%	34	43	26.5%	37	38	47	8	87.5%
AUTO THEFT	0	1	100.0%	8	5	-37.5%	12	6	-50.0%	18	6	16	0	100.0%
TOTALS	9	21	133.3%	47	60	27.7%	64	68	6.3%	69	64	110	15	40.0%
SHOOT INCIDENTS	0	1	100.0%	0	3	300.0%	0	3	300.0%	2	3	5	2	-50.0%
SHOOTING VICTIMS	0	1	100.0%	0	3	300.0%	0	3	300.0%	2	3	5	2	-50.0%

Hartford Fire Department Calls For Service: 2021 Totals

Rescue Calls City-wide251 Westend20	Emergency Medical Services (EMS) City-wide19,789 Westend1,092	Fire Alarms City-wide2,246 Westend117
Hazardous Materials City-wide240 Westend17	Service Calls City-wide4,182 Westend220	Undefined Calls City-wide2,539 Westend126
Fires (All Types) City-wide572 Westend25	<i>Prepared by Leandro Cieri, Hartford Fire Department</i>	



From the House: Capitol Update

By Matt Ritter
State Representative, 1st District

Assistance for Essential Workers

One of the many things we all have learned during the COVID-19 pandemic is a renewed appreciation for essential workers such as health-care professionals, first responders, educators and grocery store employees.

Last June, the legislature authorized The Connecticut Essential Workers COVID-19 Assistance Fund for the purpose of helping to ease the financial burden on essential workers who became ill and were unable to work, or died, between March 10, 2020 and July 20, 2021.

This important program is now up and running and can assist with:

- Lost Wages – Unpaid leave and lost wages for an employee who was unable to work after contracting COVID-19, or due to symptoms later diagnosed as COVID-19.
- Out-of-Pocket Medical Expenses – For medical services related to contracting COVID-19 that were not covered by insurance.
- Burial Expenses – Burial/funeral expenses of \$3,000 for a family of an eligible essential worker who died from COVID-19.

Families can also apply for any combination of the three benefits on behalf of a qualified essential worker who died after contracting COVID-19. The program stands to help thousands of people who put their lives on the line to help Connecticut stay safe.

To check eligibility and apply, please visit <https://www.ctessentialworkerrelief.org>

You can also call 833-660-2503 or email ContactUs@CTEssentialWorkerRelief.org for more information.

The Fund has \$34 million available in assistance and is being administered by the Office of the State Comptroller. Program benefits are available to qualified essential workers on a first-come, first-served basis until all funds have been distributed.

If you or someone you know is eligible and in need of assistance, please apply and share the information about the Connecticut Essential Workers COVID-19 Assistance Fund with them so they can also get the help they deserve.

As your representative I am here to help and listen to your concerns, so please contact me if I can ever be of any assistance. I can be reached at Matthew.Ritter@cga.ct.gov, on Facebook @RepresentativeMattRitter or by phone at (860) 240-8489, if you have any questions or concerns.

Matt Ritter represents the 1st Assembly District (Hartford) in the Connecticut House of Representatives. He is also Speaker of the House.

Hartford Announces Grant Program Designed To Help Youth Recover And Heal From Pandemic

Mayor Luke Bronin and the Department of Families, Children, Youth and Recreation (DFCYR) recently announced the second round of its youth engagement grant program, called the "Hartford Unity Grant". The Hartford Unity Grant, made possible by American Rescue plan funds, is seeking applications for projects that will help Hartford's young people recover and heal from the isolation and disruption of the pandemic.

Programs should offer social/emotional development opportunities for youth and can focus on recreation, employment, and enrichment. Other examples of program components include mentorship, positive peer relationship building, sports and recreation, mental health and coping skills, basic life skills, financial lit-

eracy, or entrepreneurial/business development.

The Hartford Unity (Understanding the Needs In Today's Youth) grant program is targeted towards Hartford youth up to age 24, especially youth who are justice-involved, disengaged, or disconnected as well as adolescents in middle-school grade, young children under 5, girls under 18, youth living in high-need neighborhoods, and mental health and/or wellness services.

"We've dedicated a significant portion of our American Rescue Plan funds to helping our young people reconnect, recover and heal after all they've been through the past two years, and the Hartford Unity grant program is an important part of that effort," said Mayor Bronin. "We've got some great youth serving organizations

in our community, and this grant program helps give them the resources they need to reach more young people and do more for the young people they serve. From sports, employment opportunities, and entrepreneurial development to mental health services, life skills, and mentorship, we look forward to partnering with our community to support our kids in every way we can."

"The best way to overcome the disruption of the pandemic is to re-engage and re-connect," said Kim Oliver, Director of the Department of Families, Children, Youth and Recreation. "The Hartford UNITY Grant provides individuals and organizations the resources they need to help our children and youth succeed and thrive."



West End Civic Association Meeting Schedule

West End Civic Association (WECA) meetings are currently being held via Zoom. To get the link to join in, go to: <http://wecahartford.org/events/>

March, 2022

March 16th - Public Meeting - 7:00 - 8:30 /
Board meeting 8:30 - 9:00

April, 2022

April 20th - Board meeting only - 7:00 - 8:00

May, 2022

May 18th - Public Meeting - 7:00 - 8:30 /
Board meeting 8:30 - 9:00

June, 2022

June 15th - Board meeting only - 7:00 - 8:00

July & August, 2022

No meetings in July / August

THE WESTENDER

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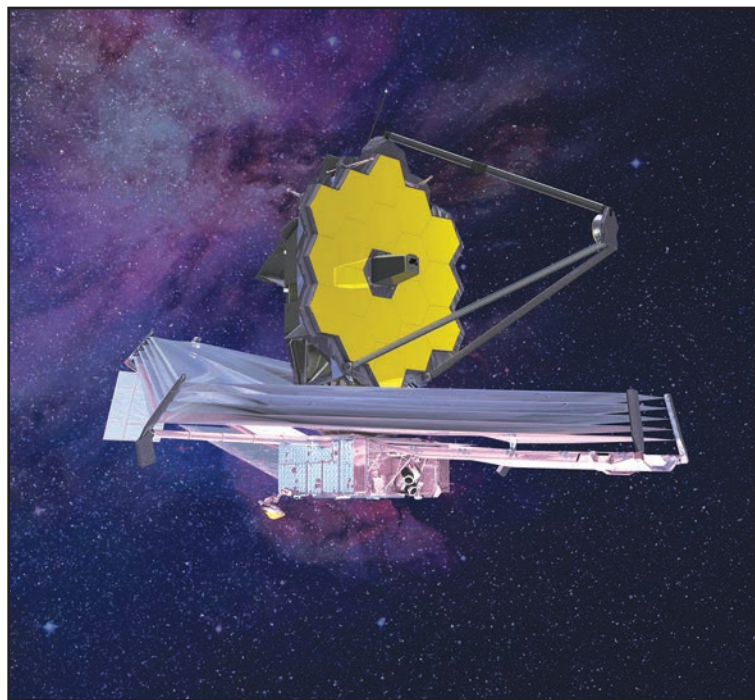
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The James Webb Telescope: A Little Truth in This World of Lies

COMMENTARY BY BILL KATZ

I am full of wonder of revelations to come from the James Webb telescope; many times more powerful than the Hubble telescope which was launched in 1990. I don't have learned tools to understand the complexity of science and the universe. My one astronomy class in Hartford High School often resulted in me closing my eyes to snooze soon after the lights dimmed in the observatory class. It wasn't because I was bored. On the contrary, I was filled with the unknown mysteries of the universe so much so that it lulled me to sleep. I anticipated this weekly visit because I was fully aware of the wonders of napping in the afternoon. But seriously, I am in awe. My daddy, who excelled in chemistry, once wrote in his 1931 Trinity College yearbook, "If the laboratory is your real test (for truth), then most philosophies and all art are no good." So I became an art dealer and a songwriter.

We are inundated with false representations of the truth every place we



poke our noses. The pretend search for truth in politics is oftentimes used to augment a false argument. We have recently seen this play out nationally with tens of thousands of lies expressed by the former commander-in-chief who turned the art of the deal into the art of the lie. And now we have the internet that spits out so many false diatribes on every conceivable topic including the horror of being vaccinated. Too many of us are lost sheep desperately seeking the Good Shepherd. The truth is, she doesn't exist.

Indeed, truth in advertising most often misrepresents truth unless you want to believe the tobacco industry that smoking is an anxiety relaxer, the sugar industry that their product doesn't make you fat or the pain pill pushing narcotic industry that sold a new and improved non-addicting narcotic to the medical industry in exchange for gifts and rewards. Often, everyone is in on the take. Even the Bible quote, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth will make you free" is a sham for other reasons.

The Webb telescope will reveal unblemished truths in the universe and it is certainly a good bang for the buck, pun intended, as its meager financing has been criticized yet compared to our huge annual military funding.

May the James Webb telescope bring us untold truths of the universe because nothing else is doing it.



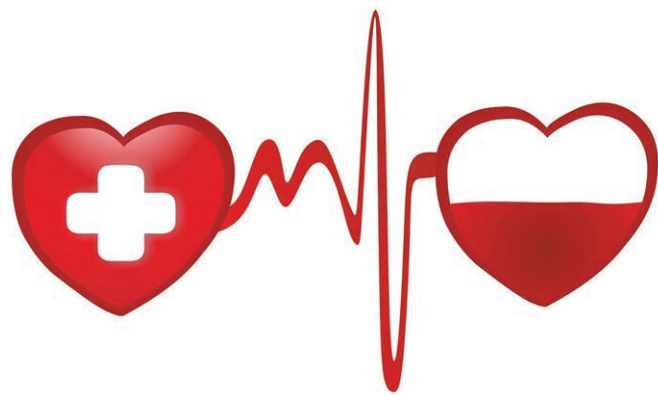
Sneak Preview of Spring at Elizabeth Park

The Elizabeth Park Conservancy (EPC) opens its Spring Greenhouse Show on Friday, March 4. The show's spectacular array of spring bulbs and plants provides the perfect antidote to the winter blues. The show is FREE and open to the public from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday, March 4 through Friday, March 11. In addition, EPC will follow the show with its annual Greenhouse Bulb & Plant Sale on Saturday, March 12, from 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM. (Hartford News file photo)

West End Civic Blood Drive April 3

On Sunday, April 3 (8am-1pm) The West End Civic Association (WECA) will be hosting a neighborhood blood drive at Noah Webster MicroSociety Magnet School in honor of its long-time supporter, WECA treasurer and friend David Klein.

David has been battling Acute Myeloid Leukemia (AML) since early 2021 and has required multiple blood transfusions as part of his treatment. This has highlighted that there is an ongoing critical blood shortage, in part because large companies cannot hold regular blood drives due to the



current COVID19 pandemic. WECA's goal is to make a significant contribution to the American Red Cross (ARC) with the blood drive here in the West End, while raising awareness on blood disorders such as AML and sickle cell disease.

WECA needs new and veteran blood donors, and it's not too early to sign up NOW! This is wonderful opportunity for our neighborhood to give where it matters most! WECA and the American Red Cross sure could use your help!

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Westender Seeks Delivery Workers!

The Westender is seeking local residents who would be able to deliver the paper on the 3rd Thursdays and Fridays of the month. Rates negotiable. For more information, Email to: TheWestenderLLC@gmail.com

New Era for RAW

Real Art Ways to Purchase and Renovate its Parkville Home

Like many residents of Hartford's Parkville neighborhood, Real Art Ways (RAW) has been a renter rather than an owner. But on Tuesday, November 16, 2022, the contemporary arts organization announced it is planning to purchase and renovate the building it has called home for over three decades.

Will Wilkins, Executive Director of RAW, said the organization plans to purchase the former Underwood Typewriter factory at 56 Arbor Street by the end of the

year for approximately \$4 million.

Its leadership is working with Providence, Rhode Island-based DBVW Architects on the renovation, estimated to cost \$14.7 million and anticipated to begin in the Fall of 2022 and be completed within two years.

"Real Art Ways has been a vital center of arts, culture, and community in the city of Hartford for decades, and it's an anchor institution in the Parkville neighborhood," said Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin. "Real Art Ways is already an oasis

for artists, creators, lovers of art, and just a whole lot of interesting people, and this expansion will establish Real Art Ways as a major center of contemporary art, arts education, music, film, and creative enterprise – not just for Connecticut, but for New England. This expansion is a part of the tremendous momentum in Parkville and will help strengthen Hartford's already strong and vibrant arts community."

The renovation of the building will generate approximately 120 temporary construction jobs from



Will Wilkins, Executive Director of Real Art Ways (RAW) announces that his organization will be purchasing and renovating the Arbor Street building where it has been located for 31 years. (Hart photo)

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all trades and generate jobs and opportunity long term. With its expansion, Real Art Ways estimates it will hire an additional nine full-time and 16 part-time staff members, for a total of 12 full-time staff members and 28 part-time workers. Other enterprises in the building, which is known as a creative hub, employ approximately 120 people. Real Art Ways is committed to supporting the building's tenant base, including the many artists and creative businesses who rent studios.

In addition to overall improvements to the building, including the addition of renewable energy, Real Art Ways will expand its footprint from 12,000 to 25,000 square feet. This will provide more opportunities for the organization to serve the community by presenting new independent films, visual art, music, literary events and educational programming.

Real Art Ways' expansion plans include:

- Four cinemas; resulting in an expanded schedule of independent and international films, film festivals and specialty programming
- Educational spaces for classes and workshops for young and old
- A theatrical space for performing arts events
- Renovated exhibition spaces, including a gallery for families
- A café and gathering space
- Renovated outdoor spaces for performances and events
- Rental space for events, studios and offices

This purchase and renovation are the largest capital investments in Real Art Ways' history. Real Art Ways will use a \$1 million grant approved by the State Bond Commission to support the project and will take an entrepreneurial approach to securing additional funding through state and federal tax credits, and fundraising from corporate partners, foundations and individual donors.

"Real Art Ways' commitment to the arts and creating more jobs,

both during the renovation and through the addition of staff to support its operations, is great news for Hartford," said Connecticut House Speaker Matt Ritter. "This project will bring substantial economic and social benefits not only to the city, but to the entire State of Connecticut."

"Connecticut is incredibly fortunate to have an organization like Real Art Ways that not only provides residents with access to arts and culture, but that also serves as a gathering place that helps to strengthen connections between people from different backgrounds and areas of the state," said Connecticut Secretary of State Denise Merrill.

For 46 years, Real Art Ways has been an influential and innovative force in the world of contemporary art. It has presented the work of 40 MacArthur Fellowship winners, believed to be more than any other arts organization in the entire United States. This remarkable achievement is possible because of Real Art Ways' ability to identify, nurture and support up-and-coming artists who demonstrate tremendous potential. The MacArthur Fellowship is awarded each year to individuals in the U.S. who demonstrate originality, insight and dedication in their creative endeavors.

"Connection and community are at the heart of Real Art Ways. The purchase and renovations will enable us to support more artists and creators, including those who have studios and offices at 56 Arbor Street, and to engage in creative ways with our community," said Will K. Wilkins, executive director of Real Art Ways. "Real Art Ways is also dedicated to maintaining strong ties with its Parkville neighborhood and the entire city. 56 Arbor Street will be the most important creative incubator in Central Connecticut."

Real Art Ways began in the fall of 1975 when a group of artists set up a live-work space in downtown Hartford. The organization has grown into one of the country's best-respected contemporary art spaces, with support for artists and connections with community as core values.



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School & Youth News

West End Teacher Is Grateful

Anna Alferi has lived in the West End for five years and has taught 7th and 8th grade English for four years at Watkinson School, Hartford's oldest independent school also located in the West End.

For nearly 30 years Watkinson's 8th graders have participated in Shakespeare Day, an academic rite of passage Alferi inherited from her predecessors. Alferi, who grew up in West Hartford, expresses gratitude for the opportunity to live and work in the West End. "Watkinson is a great place to work, and Shakespeare Day is a wonderful tradition. I began my teaching career in Florida teaching AP literature to high schoolers; invariably, they were anxious and scared about studying Shakespeare. While I start my 8th-grade course of study with a social



justice unit (students read The Other Wes Moore while simultaneously studying civil rights in history), studying Shakespeare as we head into the winter gives the kids context and language to dig into some of the 16th Century ideas that are offensive today. I am so grateful

that this sturdy piece of curriculum takes an approach that is age appropriate and can instill a love of exploring and dissecting high level literature without any pressure to be expected to know everything already." Learn more at watkinson.org/blog.

Renbrook Student is Making His Mark in Caring for the Environment

CJ Glooch is an eighth grader at Renbrook School and a budding environmentalist. As part of the Trustee Scholar program at Renbrook, CJ chose to make a difference in his community and in the world by doing something good for the planet. The Trustee Scholar Program is student-initiated service learning designed to fulfill an identified need within the school or the community while fostering personal growth and leadership skills. Students in the Trustee Scholar Program choose a project, present a proposal to the Board of Trustees, volunteer a minimum of 15 hours with an organization, and deliver a final presentation about what they learned from the project to their peers and the Board of Trustees.



waste—they don't belong in the trash. Food scraps can be put to work to create nutrient-rich compost that makes plants, flowers, and especially food grow healthier, stronger, and tastier.

CJ shared his thoughts about the damage coffee pods are doing to our environment and what can be done about it. "The rise in popularity of Keurig

and Nespresso machines are good for coffee drinkers, but bad for the environment. Most of their pods are thrown away, ending up unnecessarily in landfills and incinerators. Every year, U.S. landfills are filled with 140 million tons of waste, a major contributor to global warming. I think we can reduce this problem, with your help. These coffee pods can be recycled, and their grounds composted, if done properly. I am partnering with Blue Earth Compost to collect these pods, empty the grounds into the compost, and recycle the packaging with TerraCycle."

The recycling and composting project not only benefits the environment but has also been a great learning experience for CJ. He says

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News & Updates from Classical Magnet School

- Classical's Mock Trial team is finalizing preparations for competitions this winter.
- Middle school theater students performed A Christmas Carol in December, while our high school theater students performed The Refugee Women, an adaptation from Euripides The Trojan Women, in which girls living in a refugee camp from different countries put on a production of The Trojan Women with the help of an aid worker.
- Our Theater students are excited for our spring musical, The Addams Family.
- Winter athletics is in full swing with basketball, swimming & indoor track. Sign-up for spring sports are soon for anyone interested in playing varsity baseball, softball, outdoor track or tennis.
- Leadership skills are being honed through the Bridges Program where students develop leadership and advocacy skills for social justice. Students are excited to participate in Camp Anytown where students collaborate with teens across the state to create inclusive, just and prejudice-free schools.
- The Classical Scholar magazine is back in production to showcase student work including articles, photography and artwork.

Applications are open until February 28. Any families interested in personal tours of Classical Magnet may contact Principal Bethany Sullivan at sullb001@hartfordschools.org

Lastly, check out PBS's Cutline Special titled, "Sheff Vs O'Neill: Striving Toward Education Equity," Classical Magnet School is featured! CUTLINE Special | Sheff v. O'Neill: Striving Toward Education Equity • Connecticut Public Television

School Calendar & Events

Watkinson School

2/18/22: PD Day, No Classes
 2/21/22: Presidents' Day, No school.
 2/22/22: The Middle of the Middle: A virtual event for 7th-grade parents
 2/23/22: Prospective Parent Event -Virtual
 2/25/22 & 2/28/22: Winter play, Durang Shorts

Renzulli Gifted & Talented Academy

2/21/22: Presidents' Day, No school.
 2/22/22 - 2/25/22: Intersession (School closed)

Annie Fisher Montessori Magnet School

2/21/22: Presidents' Day, No school.
 2/22/22 - 2/25/22: Intersession (School closed)

Noah Webster Microsociety Magnet School

2/21/22: Presidents' Day, No school.
 Tuesday, Feb. 8, 2022 evening, 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM
 Wednesday, Feb. 9, 2022 afternoon – early release

Classical Magnet School

2/21/22: Presidents' Day, No school.

Board of Ed Regular Meetings

March 15th; April 19th; May 17th; June 21st

Regular meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. at Weaver High School. Most meetings are streamed live by J. Stan McCauley on his youtube channel. Agendas can be found at: <https://go.boarddocs.com/ct/hartford/Board.nsf/Public>

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DEADLINE MARCH 7TH

Conny the Whale

Continued from page 1

whale, Connecticut's state animal. Michael Werle, the executive director of the museum, said it could cost \$200,000 or more to move the sculpture, which isn't financially feasible for the museum to achieve at this moment. Although Conny hasn't found a new home yet, Werle and his team are optimistic that she'll be placed in the right location. "The whale was built on this property by the substation society of CT in celebration of the fact that the state adopted the sperm whale as its state animal." Werle told the Westender, "As such we think it belongs to the state, not the state government but the state so we're

trying to work with many different organizations that have expressed vested interest in the welfare of that artifact and are trying to come up with consensus opinion of what's the right place to put it."

As far as the actual museum location is concerned, Werle says his team should have a temporary location announced soon and is hopeful to announce a permanent location within a month. "We are moving towards a temporary location and hope to have that decision finalized in a couple weeks, its fairly nailed down." Says Werle, "We're doing layouts and seeing what works and what the costs would be, and we have a couple options from. In terms of permanent location, we hoped to finalize by end of December but couldn't close the conversation so that's dragging out. We hope within the next 30 days we can have an announcement. All the places are around the Hartford location, within 8-10 mins of where we are now."

New Horizons

Werle, who has been a resident of West Hartford for over 40 years, says that despite the museum's relocation, the city is changing for the better. "There's been a monumental change in the city over the years. Downtown West Hartford has

become very active, the town is rated one of the best places in the country to live. You always have worry about new developments, but the town has managed to be very careful about its efforts. The town manages those reasonably well. My sense as a resident and a taxpayer is that its doing ok. It's a very densely populated area, and unfortunately there's no room for us" Says Werle, "To some degree we view the move as an opportunity. We've been in this building for over 60 years so it's showing its age a lot. There's the idea of finally bringing the facility up to standards and actually create a net zero energy facility as a demonstration site. We're looking at this in an opportunistic sense."

For the museum's clients, the move is uncomfortable but not overly concerning. Werle's team is hoping to conduct a seamless transition into their new, close-by home so their services will face minimal disruption. "We haven't had any negative feedback," says Werle, "obviously our clients don't want to see our service disrupted so we have a goal and a plan to minimize disruption through the move, the clients we service want to see us survive and see us survive on a continual basis."

Sheff Case Settlement

Continued from page 1

sent a significant movement toward educational equity and the proper enforcement of laws against racial and economic segregation in the Hartford area school system," said LDF assistant Counsel Cara McClellan. "The challenges of today require leaders who are committed and understand that we all must work together to achieve true racial equity."

"This settlement would lock-in a commitment to racial and economic integration by the State of Connecticut," said Martha Stone, the executive director of the Center for Children's Advocacy, who has represented the plaintiffs in this case since 1989. "For the first time since this case was filed, this settlement would include a guarantee that any Hartford student who wants to attend a quality integrated school or program can do so. That guarantee would be backed by funding and a plan."

Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation's first civil and human rights law organi-

zation. LDF has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights. LDF's Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF. Follow LDF on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

Center for Children's Advocacy protects the legal rights of children who are dependent upon the judicial, child welfare, health and mental health, education, and juvenile justice systems for their care. CCA is the largest children's legal rights organization in New England, with offices in Hartford, Bridgeport, on site at Yale New Haven Hospital, Connecticut Children's Medical Center, and Yale Child Study Center. More information about CCA can be found at cca-ct.org

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Brainard Airport

Continued from page 1

According to Teiger, many of these students end up becoming airline pilots, and are hired by both major airlines and private operators. Brainard's educational efforts have a nationwide impact.

In addition to pilots, Brainard has

plans to close Brainard. The impetus behind the City Council's actions seem to have come at the behest of Jimmy Sanchez, an MDC employee and City Council member who, in some other Cities and Towns, might have recused himself from discussions about an issue



Brainard Airport in Hartford's South Meadows.

a state run training facility called Ct Aero Tech which is located in the field at the end of a runway at Brainard.

This facility trains students to become aviation mechanics. According to an article published by Travel Weekly, "In 2020, the FAA issued 30% fewer new mechanic certificates than it did in 2019, a drop-off that the Aviation Technician Education Council described as "devastating" to its 2021 Pipeline".

In January of 2022, the Hartford council voted unanimously to decommission Brainard and in February 2022 will be attempting to convince the state legislature to remove the airport from the Connecticut Airport Authority, or CAA. The CAA was an establishment introduced to oversee state owned airports and help to maintain and improve them.

Without this organization's oversight, it could open the door to closure although to what purpose or benefit remains unclear. The CAA has repeatedly stated that it has no

affecting his employer. Instead, he has been frequently quoted as supportive of the closure. In 2006, the MDC introduced a plan to essentially move the trash to energy plant to open waterfront access and develop residential buildings. There are no known updates to this plan, and the MDC is believed to have been unsuccessful in finding funding towards implementation of its plan, but it is also believed that it remains interested in closing the airport so as to utilize the land for its own interests.

The Hartford Brainard Airport Association (HBAA) is a grassroots 501c (3) movement created in response to the City Council's resolution and other political forces moving rapidly to close Brainard Airport. This group, and many in Hartford and surrounding towns see Brainard as both a gold mine and part of the uniqueness of the City, that should be expanded, invested in, and appreciated as the gem that it is. HBAA can be found on Facebook at @FriendsofBrainard Airport for more information.

THE WESTENDER 2022 Publication Dates & Deadlines

The Westender is published on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. Deadline for ad and copy submissions is the 2nd Wednesday of the month.

- DEADLINE DATE
- PUBLICATION DATE

FEBRUARY							MARCH								
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Renbrook Student

Continued from page 5

that the process has not always been easy. He has had to work at developing professional communication


skills, being organized and reliable, and persevering when some of his initial plans didn't take shape as he hoped.

At Renbrook School, teachers

bring learning to life for students every day. Service to the school and to the community is emphasized throughout the grades, from the youngest children to the oldest.

Students at all grade levels have opportunities to be helpers in their communities and stewards of the campus. The eighth-grade leadership program supports students in

using their skills and talents to serve while developing understanding and empathy. CJ has certainly demonstrated those skills.



Westend Real Estate Transactions

Dec 13. 26 South Whitney Street, Jonesbank Acquisitions to Bretnie Bruno. \$290,000.

Dec 13. 217 - 219 South Whitney Street. Keith Ahronheim and Stephen Goldstein to BD Asset Co 8 LLC. \$187,500.

Dec 17. 133 Westerly Terrace, Robert B. Simpson Jr and Kathleen J. Simpson to Derek E. Brusin and Victoria R. Pache. \$625,000

Dec 20. 158 South Whitney Street. Yvonne Forte to Timothy L. Mclean. \$130,000.

Jan 3. 90 Goodwin Circle Lot 90, William C. Popik and Alexis R Poplik to Celestino Cialfi. \$392,500.

Jan 10. 135 Elizabeth Street, Denise W. Merrill and Stephen J. Leach to Ashley Horn and Rachel Moskowicz. \$515,000

Jan 11. 40 Oxford Street, Anna M Stafford and Jesse C Dennehy to Elizabeth A. Kaczmarczyk and Peter J. Avenia. \$360,000.

Jan 14. 448-450 Prospect Avenue Winston C Douglas Sr. and Gary J Greene to Robert F Ladd and Christine Ladd. \$365,000.

Jan 14. 444-446 Prospect Avenue Winston C Douglas Sr. and Gary J Greene to Robert F Ladd and Christine Ladd. \$360,000.

Jan 24. 100 Prospect Avenue, 100 Prospect Gp BD Tic to 7 Hart LLC. \$4,220,000

Jan 24. 358-368 Prospect Avenue, 366 Prospect BSD LLC to 7 Hart LLC. \$750,000

Jan 25. 530 Prospect Avenue, Hickory Properties LLC to Cassandra Lehr and Adam Fruin. \$302,000.

Jan 29. 121 Girard Ave, John Anderson and Thomas Carbone to Creighton Randell and Chiara Noetzel. \$375,000

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Attorney Suzann L. Beckett

Suzann Beckett is CEO and Founder of Beckett Law LLC. We are locally owned and operated, right here in the West End of Hartford.

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Now that the pandemic is reaching its end, you may find yourself behind on your mortgage or bills. Don't play ostrich - we may be able to help you save your home. Call us for more information

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Rhythm & Blooms to Highlight CT Flower Show

BY MIKE MCGARRY

This year's Connecticut Flower & Garden Show will be held at the Connecticut Convention Center in Downtown Hartford from February 24 – 27. The show attracts approximately 40,000 people each year. For tickets and other information, please go to: <https://ctflowershow.com/>.

The theme of this year's show is "Rhythm & Blooms" and among the musical groups performing will be the Cathedral of Saint Joseph Choir. The choir will entertain the crowds on February 24, 25 and 27, this year, times to be announced.

The third day of the show, Saturday, February 26, has been designated "Irish Day" to honor the Irish immigrants who built the Roman Catholic Church in Connecticut in the mid 19th Century. From 4 – 6 pm, the following musicians will perform.

Jeanne Freeman & Claudine Langille

Jeanne Freeman (fiddle) and Claudine Langille (mandolin, banjo, vocals and guitar) have played together for many years at sessions and performances around Connecticut, and teach at the Connecticut Academy of Irish Music. Their warm friendship and shared love of Irish music shine forth to create a joyous and memorable performance.



Jeanne studied with the late Donegal fiddler P.V. O'Donnell, with whom she played for many years, and she founded the Connecticut Academy of Irish Music, where she teaches fiddle and serves as Director. Jeanne

has been featured on Connecticut Public Television, was the Irish fiddle soloist with the Hartford Symphony Orchestra at the Bushnell Theatre, and performed at many other festivals and venues throughout the region. She frequently hosts traditional Irish music sessions around Connecticut.

Irish Traditional Music has been Claudine's focus since she lived in Galway, Ireland. She has played and recorded with Touchstone (2 Indie Award winning albums), Gypsy Reel, and The Fiddletree, and is on the faculty of the Connecticut Academy of Irish Music. Claudine has also performed at Celtic Connections in Glasgow, Scotland, and has been an instructor at the highly regarded Swannanoa Gathering in North Carolina.



The Carroll Sisters

The Carroll Sisters - Emilie (16 years old) and Nora (14) have loved and played Irish music since they were toddlers. Playing together as a duet, they are most known for their lively traditional tunes, beautiful harmonies, intriguing counterpoints, and unique musical arrangements. The Carroll Sisters have generously shared their music in settings in CT as well as larger events like Sober St. Patrick's Day in New York City (2018) and the Boston Celtic Music Festival (2022). The Carroll Sisters' 2022 debut album, Daybreak, reveals both their old soul connection to the Celtic tradition and their youthful energy and creative arrangements.

EXPLORING THE WESTEND 37 Lorraine Street

BY PATRICIA S. BECKETT

Early in the 20th century, Mr. Ryle Stocking Peck established the RSpeck Printing Company in Hartford. It went on to be so successful that Mr. Peck, Sr. brought his two sons, Hubert and Charles, into the business with him.

The brothers were close and decided to build houses near each

other in the West End of Hartford. Charles Peck bought the property at 37 Lorraine Street, Hubert bought the property on Sherman Street directly behind his brother's lot, and both built their homes there. Hubert and his wife Maple raised their three children in their house on Sherman Street. Charles and his wife Ethel raised two daughters, Alice and Eugenia, in the house on Lorraine Street.

Some lovely features in the house were a large built-in mirrored buffet



porch was the site of many happy gatherings on a hot summer day or evening. Often in summer neighbors could hear Eugenia playing the piano as an accompaniment to her friends singing. The sound drifted out across the yard to the sidewalk where passersby were treated to frequent impromptu song fests – an early precursor to the West End Porchfest almost 100 years later.

The front yard had a very large distinctive white birch tree that was a well-known landmark. It grew over the years to probably be one of the largest, if not the largest white birch tree in the state.

Unfortunately, Ethel died at a rather young age. Her sister, Blanche, who had been widowed, came to live in the house and help to manage the children and become the housekeeper for the family. Later, when her daughter, Irene, became widowed, she came to join her mother, bringing her daughter, Merrill.

Around the same time, the RS Peck Printing Company regrettably caught fire and burned to the ground. Nothing was salvageable and ironically and sadly, in what was then the "insurance capitol of the world" the Pecks had not purchased fire insurance. They didn't have the money to rebuild, and fell on hard times.

The Great Depression was raging across the land, leaving them with few options. In true Yankee fashion, the family pulled together and helped support each other. Charles rented one of the bedrooms on the second floor to a single man, Irene went into business with her cousin, Alice. They formed the Alice and Irene business. Alice had always been artistic and started designing customized clothes and Irene was an expert seamstress who helped to fit the custom orders to exact specifications. One of the rooms upstairs of the house became the fitting/dressing room. Charles's younger daughter got divorced, moved back home, and contributed her salary as a section manager at G. Fox & Company Department Store downtown to help support the family.

Mr. Peck died at his home at the age of 89. The house was sold shortly thereafter.



MONTHLY MEETING

February 19, 2022
10-11:30AM ET

SHEFF MOVEMENT

Quality Integrated Education For All Children



Featured Guest: Renita G. Ezell

RSCO/CREC Family Resource Specialist
& Open Choice Enrollment Coordinator
Capitol Region Education Council (CREC)

Discussion on the Open Choice Program

MEETING DETAILS

Saturday, February 19, 2022
10AM - 11:30AM (Onboarding will begin at 9:45AM)

Join Zoom Meeting At

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81635677243?pwd=c3dLUiVZODFkbCtjCjFdEaFBveHREdz09#success>

Meeting ID: 816-3567-7243 • Passcode: 494333
Dial-in Number: 929-205-6099

MEETING AGENDA

I. Welcome

Introduction of Speaker- Patti Beckett

Presentation on Open Choice- Renita G. Ezell

Sheff Agreement Update

Sheff Movement Updates