

DOMINGO! HARTFORD

Street Festival Program Kicks Off June 26; Parts of Farmington Ave. and Park St. to be Closed to Traffic

BY DONNA SWARR

The City of Hartford, Hartford HealthCare, and Cigna have formed a partnership to support DominGo which will transform selected city streets into safe, vibrant, and healthy public spaces by making them temporarily vehicle-free. This will occur on four Sundays this summer: June 26th, July 24th, August 28th, and September 25th, from 9a.m-3 p.m.

DominGO events will be free and open to all, and everyone is encouraged to enjoy each neighborhood by walking, running, biking, exercising, and playing with friends in a family-friendly environment, providing opportu-

DominGo Public Input Meetings

The DominGO team will hold four open houses to discuss the initiatives, allowing residents and business owners to share feedback and ask questions.

- Tuesday April 12th from 5:00pm-7:00pm at Thomas Hooker Live (1 Sequassen Street, Hartford)
- Monday April 18th from 5:00pm-7:00pm at Parkville Market (1400 Park Street, Hartford)
- Tuesday May 10th from 5:00pm-7:00pm at EcoSpace (226 Farmington Avenue, Hartford)
- Monday May 16th from 5:00pm-7:00pm at Vibz Uptown (3155 Main Street, Hartford)

Preliminary Schedule

The planned locations and dates:

- June 26th, the route will include parts of Farmington Avenue and Park Street.
- July 24th, the route will incorporate parts of North Main Street.
- Routes for August 28th and September 25th are yet to be announced.

nities for healthy activity. Mayor Bronin said that it will “draw energy and attention to our distinctive neighborhood corridors, restaurants, and cafes, and help people explore a part of the city that they might not have experienced before.”

The City of Hartford is also working with neighborhood associations, business organizations, and our civic institutions to develop programming and activity that celebrates our community and provides multiple ways for people to experience Open Streets.

“AHNA, The Asylum Hill Neighborhood Association is thrilled about the DominGO program,” said Jackie McKinney, Chair of the Asylum Hill Neighborhood Association. “Farmington Avenue is the perfect street to inaugurate the

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Preview of Spring at Elizabeth Park

Martha Winslow snaps a photo of one of the thousands of flowers that were on display at the annual Elizabeth Park Spring Greenhouse Show, March 4 - 11. For more on upcoming events in the park, go to: <https://www.elizabethparkct.org/>.

Spotlight On This Month's West End Business: Devars-Phillips Florist Believes In The Lost Art Of Direct Buyer To Seller Relationships

BY DONOVAN WILSON & SUZANN BECKETT

Everyone in the West End has probably bought, or received, flowers from Bill Cusano, at some time or another. Cusano has owned and operated Devars-Phillips Florist & Antique Shop on Sisson Avenue since 1998, and it's an institution like no other. While he is best known for his floral arrangements, his building also houses a quirky antique shop where Bill displays items he has picked up over the years. It has been a remarkable 24 years.



Bill Cusano, owner of Devars-Phillips Florist & Antique Shop

Bill loves the direct buyer to seller relationships that he has, and enjoys getting to know each and every customer. He believes all of his customers are special and loves using his innate creativity and years of experience to prepare the perfect arrangement for them. Of course, truth be told, there may be some customers that are just a bit more special than others, as he reports he has had the pleasure of creating floral arrangements for Barbara Bush, Jane Fonda, Kevin Bacon and other well-known names. “I have a thank you note from Barbara Bush and that is one of my most prized possessions,” said Cusano.

Over the years, Cusano has been very

active in the floral community as well as the West End community. He has been a consistent supporter of WECA and the annual (pre-COVID) Dinearound, outfitting participating homes every year with extraordinary arrangements, pulling inspiration from the stately architectural details in each home. Every arrangement that comes from Devars-Phillips is exceptional.

He has served on various non-profit boards, and frequently participates in workshops offering his floral arranging knowledge and expertise to florists and lay people alike. His love of his work is contagious, and you'd be hard pressed to attend one of his workshops without coming away with an appreciation of the artistic vision that is so uniquely Bill Cusano. “I have a catchphrase and it goes ‘Flowers always serve a purpose, from maternity to eternity and everything celebrated in between’”, he says.

During the 24 years he's been in business, the floral industry has evolved and changed. “I remember when people had relationships

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You Oughta Know...

Traffic will be heavy in Downtown Hartford this Saturday, March 19, with two major events.

St. Patrick's Parade

Originally scheduled for last Saturday, March 12th, the Greater Hartford Saint Patrick's Day Parade was postponed due to inclement weather to this Saturday, March 19th. The parade will step off at 11 am from the intersection Capitol Avenue and Washington Street; continues east on Capitol to Main Street; continues north to Asylum Street; continues west on Asylum to Trinity Street; continues south on Trinity and ends at the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Arch. The parade had to be canceled in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Yard Goats Fan Fest

Just as the parade is winding down, the Hartford Yard Goats will hold its annual FanFest on Saturday, March 19th, from 1:00 PM-3:00 PM at Dunkin' Donuts Park. This free event is open to the public and will include behind-the-scenes tours of Dunkin' Donuts Park, arts & crafts, Yard Goats mascots Chompers and Chew Chew, and Fancy Pants the goat from Circle K Farm of East Hampton. Fans will also have the opportunity to test out the indoor professional batting cages. Fans may enter FanFest through the main gates on the corner of Main Street and Trumbull Street, and no tickets are required.

Hartford Schools Closed April 11 - 15

Hartford Public Schools and Capital Region Education Council (CREC) schools will be closed from April 11 - April 14 for Spring Vacation.

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CITY OF HARTFORD PUBLIC SAFETY STATISTICS

Hartford Police Department Part 1 Crime Activity: Week of Feb. 27 – March 5, 2022 Northwest District

	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	3	300.0%	2	2	0	2	-200.0%
RAPE	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0	1	100.0%	0	1	2	0	0.0%
ROBBERY	3	0	-300.0%	3	2	-33.3%	8	8	0.0%	7	9	16	0	0.0%
AGG ASSAULT	2	2	0.0%	10	10	0.0%	20	15	-25.0%	7	15	31	4	-50.0%
BURGLARY	0	1	100.0%	1	9	800.0%	4	16	300.0%	10	8	24	2	-50.0%
LARCENY	6	4	-33.3%	42	31	-26.2%	76	107	40.8%	94	80	84	7	-42.9%
AUTO THEFT	4	1	-75.0%	7	6	-14.3%	19	12	-36.8%	22	12	23	2	-50.0%
TOTALS	15	8	-46.7%	63	61	-3.2%	127	162	27.6%	142	127	180	17	-52.9%
SHOOT INCIDENTS	0	1	100.0%	2	3	50.0%	2	6	200.0%	4	6	5	1	0.0%
SHOOTING VICTIMS	0	1	100.0%	2	3	50.0%	2	6	200.0%	4	6	5	1	0.0%

Hartford Fire Department Calls For Service: February 2022

Incidents	Fires (All Types)	Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
City-wide2,092	City-wide.....25	City-wide1,404
Westend.....154	Westend1	Westend.....115
Rescue Calls	Service Calls	<i>Prepared by Leandro Cieri, Hartford Fire Department</i>
City-wide.....19	City-wide273	
Westend3	Westend17	
Hazardous Materials	Fire Alarms	
City-wide.....25	City-wide176	
Westend2	Westend9	

Political News & Notes

Republican Town Committee Meetings

Usually held the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m, but subject to change. Contact Ken Lerman at ken.lerman2012@att.net for the latest information.


Democratic Town Committee Meetings

Next regular meeting: Tuesday, March 22. There will be several meetings via Zoom for candidate interviews in April, so check the Facebook page for updated information.

Registrar of Voters Annual Canvass - Complete Your Card!

The Office of the Registrars of Voters in Hartford, conducts an annual Canvass of registered voters each year as required by law. By returning this card it will ensure that the information the Registrars have on the Official Registry List is correct and up to date. It will also allow the voter to have a pleasant experience at the polls on election day. Protect your right to vote. When you receive the "Notice of Canvass" card, we

ask you to fill it out, sign it and send it back to us at Registrar of Voters, Hartford City Hall, 550 Main Street, Hartford, CT 06103.



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ABRE INMEDIATAMENTE

NOTICE OF CANVASS / ANUNCIO DE ESCRUTINIO DE VOTANTES

IMPORTANT! THIS CONCERNS YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE IN THE NEXT ELECTION

The Registrars of Voters are conducting a canvass of voters as required by law. Please check the statement or statements which apply to you, sign in the space provided below, and immediately return this form.

My residence is at the address shown above.

I have moved, the address of my new residence is: _____

(If this new residence is in another town, you must register to vote in that town in order to vote the next election.)

I am in military service.

My name has been changed to: _____

Please record this change on the voter registry list.

Signature of Elector: X _____

AVISO IMPORTANTE (IMPORTANTE! ESTO SE TRATA SOBRE SU DERECHO A VOTAR

Los Registradores de Votantes están llevando a cabo una campaña de solicitud de votantes, según requiera por ley. Por favor, indique la declaración o declaraciones que apliquen a usted, firme en el espacio provisto más adelante y devuelva este formulario inmediatamente.

Mi residencia está en la dirección indicada arriba.

Me he mudado. La dirección de mi nueva residencia es: _____

(Si esta nueva residencia es en otro pueblo, usted tiene que inscribirse para votar en ese pueblo, para que sea elegible para votar en la próxima elección.)

Estoy en servicio militar.

Mi nombre ha sido cambiado a: _____

Por favor registre este cambio en la lista de votantes inscritos.

Firma del Elector: X _____

THE WESTENDER

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Contributing WritersMatt Ritter
.....Mike McGarry
.....Donovan Wilson
.....Bill Katz

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From the House: Capitol Update

By Matt Ritter
State Representative, 1st District

Making Children's Mental Health Needs a Priority

Meeting the growing mental health needs of Connecticut children is a top priority for me this legislative session. The Covid-19 pandemic has heightened concerns for parents, healthcare professionals and teachers who have all experienced frustration at the system's failure to adequately address the increasing mental health challenges facing our children.

I have been working on bipartisan legislation (HB5001) that takes aim at ensuring that every child that needs help with their mental health will get it. The bill addresses this crisis in a comprehensive way by increasing the number of providers and services available, including:

- License reciprocity for out-of-state mental health professionals
- Student loan forgiveness for eligible mental health workers who serve children
- Funding for hiring and retaining more child psychiatrists
- More follow-up telehealth visits and expanded DCF online listings of mental health services by region to assist pediatricians in referring patients to next-level care
- Grants to local school boards to hire social workers, school psychologists and enhance school-based delivery of mental health services
- A new position of "Trauma Coordinator" to oversee training and best practices for teachers, administrators, coaches, SROs, and staff in all school districts
- Requiring health insurers to cover certain services used to treat mental and behavioral health conditions in children
- Continuing Education program for pediatricians to help develop skills in treating behavioral health issues, and a new mental health screening tool for annual pediatrician visits

The pandemic has shined a spotlight on the pediatric mental health crisis across the country. In cities, suburbs and our rural areas, children desperately need access to mental health services and support. This legislation will help children and families get the care they need.

Howard Sovronsky, Chief Behavioral Health Officer at Connecticut Children's Medical Center called this bill "bold, historic and transformative," and I'm committed to helping it become law.

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 by email at Matthew.Ritter@cga.ct.gov, on Facebook @RepresentativeMattRitter or by phone at (860) 240-8489, if you have any questions or concerns.



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/>

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



Give to Ukraine

For the past few weeks, the Ukrainian National Home (UNH) of Hartford has been accepting and packing thousands of donated items that are needed in their homeland as it continues to resist a Russian invasion. 596 Ukrainian civilians have been killed in the fighting according to the United Nations and approximately 2.8 million people have had to leave their homes. On Saturday, volunteers (including Natalie Korzhneva and Irina Bezsonova, above) gathered at the UNH to pack up the last of the donated items, which filled four large containers. Donations ranged from non-perishable foods and medical supplies to stuffed animals. UNH is no longer accepting donated items at this time, but monetary donations are still needed to pay the cost of shipping. If you wish to make a donation, make your check out to Ukrainian National Home and write Ukrainian Relief on the memo line and mail to Ukrainian National Home, Attn: Cathy, 961 Wethersfield Avenue, Hartford CT 06114. If you wish your donation to be tax deductible, make the check out to the Ukrainian American Youth Association (or UAYA Hartford) and write Ukraine Humanitarian Aid Fund on the memo line. Mail to Ukrainian National Home, 961 Wethersfield Avenue, Hartford CT 06114.

Was This Ukraine Invasion a Forgone Conclusion? No.

COMMENTARY BY BILL KATZ

This massive destruction of Ukraine is totally unnecessary. It was not complicated to avoid. NATO or the US could have simply stated for the record what Putin wanted to hear; that Ukraine was not a suitable candidate for membership. Then, after the Putin era ends which is not unrealistic to suggest 15 years or so, the issue of membership could have been revisited. End of story. Human history is long. We could have waited. End of debate. No war. No thousands of deaths and billions of loss property along with untold environmental damage. However, the human species (in this case the US and NATO) imperfect as it is, tabled that solution. Some would call it appeasement to have acquiesced to Putin's demands. And appeasement has frequently been compared to British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's appeasement of Hitler to avoid war in 1938. Yet maybe Chamberlain made the right decision at the time; an attempt to avoid war. It didn't work. Is this historical lesson applicable to all future attempts to avoid war? I think not.

Hitler was a reactionary populist product of the punishment inflicted on post WWI Germany. Putin is a product of nationalist glory mixed with a perception of NATO encroachment and he has an argument. After all, how would America respond if a nearby nation installed missiles, such as in Cuba? Oh my gosh, you don't say. We might threaten to start WWII. But that's water over the proverbial damn.

Now it's about subjugation and annihilation of a people. This invasion has a no good ending, I'm afraid; meaning massive loss of life. It's already a Shakespearean tragedy. Either Ukraine recognizes the loss of territory to Russia or NATO enters the war to salvage what remains of a people. And let me say this unequivocally; Ukraine has become the sacrificial lamb in this nightmare. It didn't need to be. It could have been avoided. It's an example of the accumulation of human ignorance.

Let's not forget that Putin is Donald Trump's pal. Oh ya, did you forget? The guy who's worse characteristic was not telling tens of thousands of lies. It wasn't cheating on his taxes or ripping off any contractors stupid enough to do business with him. It wasn't even Trump as a traitor to this nation. No, his worst doings was to foster a sense of hatred among neighbors, among fellow Americans. The Uniter (as every president should be), became the Divider-in-Chief.

So now we need to unite to save Ukraine. I spent Monday afternoon and evening at the Ukrainian National Home in Hartford delivering food donations and helping crate a mountain of goods to be airlifted to Poland and on into Ukraine. As I packed a crate, I whispered to a woman working next to me that one of my grandparents was Ukrainian. She answered that today, I was all Ukrainian. I knew she would say that.

THE WEST INDIAN CELEBRATION APPROACHES 60 YEARS OF CELEBRATING CARIBBEAN HERITAGE

BY DONOVAN WILSON

It will be here in no time! We may be thinking Saint Patrick's Day this week but the West Indian Independence Celebrations, Inc. is working hard on their annual West Indian Celebration which will happen again this Fall. The festivities are organized by volunteer board members who lead the efforts to hold the annual one-day event. The celebration typically includes a street parade and music festival, which showcases everything West Indian from the culture to the music and, of course, the people.

The West Indian Celebration starts as a parade that begins in the North End and travels through the City to Bushnell Park. This year's parade expects to feature 30 bands / musicians,

This celebration originally started as a standing committee of the West Indian Social Club in 1962, before becoming its own entity in 2000. The celebration was originally to commemorate just how many years West Indian workers had been in the area, working tobacco in Windsor and other places, but as the years have gone by, more countries have been added and now include Haiti, the Dominican Republic; Cuba; Jamaica; Trinidad & Tobago; Guyana and Barbados; The Bahamas; Grenada; Dominica; Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the

Grenadines; Belize, Antigua, St. Kitts, Nevis and more. The Celebration is more all-encompassing and includes the independence from Britain.

The festival is intended to provide a place for all of those from the Caribbean ancestry to celebrate and share their heritage and culture.

West Indian Independence Celebrations, Inc. has a small but mighty group of volunteers who all wear multiple hats. One of the Board members, Natasha Samuels, stresses how deep the pride runs in this community, and how important this celebration is to Hartford's strong West Indian community. Many of the people directly involved in the

Celebration, as well as visitors, proudly wear brilliant and colorful outfits which represent their unique heritage. It's always a fun, family friendly day for everyone to enjoy.

The weekend before the actual Celebration, on August 6th, you'll find the Taste of Caribbean festival at the Riverfront. This event is a wonderful precursor to the August 13th main event – the Taste of Caribbean focuses specifically on highlighting and enjoying the delicious foods of Caribbean cultures.

This year's Celebration will happen on August 13th, 2022 – mark your calendar as you won't want to miss it.



HISTORIC HOMES REHABILITATION TAX CREDIT VIRTUAL INFORMATION SESSION

Does your upcoming house project qualify for a 30% rebate?

JOIN US TO FIND OUT:

- How the program works;
- Which pre-approved, historically appropriate renovations qualify for the program;
- How to navigate the application and approval process; and
- Learn from your neighbors who have gone through the process.

This presentation brought to you by the WEST END CIVIC ASSOCIATION Architectural History and Resources Committee

7:00 PM MARCH 24

<https://www.meetinginfo.org/meetings/1833>



ERIN FINK

Architectural Preservationist
State Historic Preservation Office



info@wecahartford.org



<http://wecahartford.org/>

Little League Registration

Mayor Mike's Little League

Registration for Mayor Mike's Little League 2022 Baseball season will start this Monday, February 28. The free league is open to boys and girls ages 5-12 (as of August 31, 2022). Registration will end April 4. The season will start on Apr 15th and end on June 30th. Games are played at Hyland Park. Go to the website to sign up and get more information: <https://mayormikepetersbaseball.leagueapps.com/>.



Northend Little League

Registration for the Hartford Northend Little League. You can register online at www.HNL.org now. Registration is \$60. per person. In person registration will be held between 6 PM - 8 PM at the Parker Memorial Center on March 31st, April 1, 7, 8, 14, 15, 21, 22. Required: Copy of birth certificate and application signed by parent or guardian. Tee Ball 5-8 years old, Little League 9-12 years old, Pony League 13-15 years old. For more information call: Lewis Kelley President (860) 649-5529 or Anthony Lilley VP (860) 752-4844.

Hartt 100 Beyond the Performance:

Diversity in Arts and Action Festival: March 21-26

A continuation of the Hartt 100 Celebration, The Hartt School is pleased to present a weeklong festival featuring a lecture series, composer/performer series, and concerts. See full schedule at: hartford.edu/hartt100-festival

**Hartford Art School
Koopman Chair
Exhibition: Feb. 24-March 26**

This year's Hartford Art School's annual Koopman Chair exhibit features illustrations by John Jude Palencar and in memoriam Floyd Cooper in the Joseloff Gallery through March 26. For gallery hours and more details visit: hartford.edu/gallery

**The Hartt School
Garmany Series Concert:
Ryan Speedo Green:
March 24**

Grammy Award winning bass-baritone and UHart alum Ryan Speedo Green will perform on March 24 at The Hartt School

BEYOND THE PERFORMANCE
DIVERSITY IN ARTS AND ACTION






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Holidays in the Workplace Webinar Series on Religious and Cultural Diversity

Create Inclusive Workplaces to Attract and Retain Top Talent

Is your workplace ready for the major religious and cultural holidays of 2022? Prepare by learning about some of them before they arrive. With its decades of experience supporting religious diversity, Hartford International University for Religion and Peace (HIU) has developed a series of short and informative webinars that will help workplaces create an atmosphere of safety and belonging.

"This webinar series is a must for leaders and human resources professionals," Katy O'Leary, Director of Executive and Professional Education at HIU, said. "Recognizing an employee's religion as part of their identity is important to an organization's bottom line. People stay where they feel supported and understood."

Each series will begin with a presentation from top scholars in the field and end with an interactive Q&A session.

The series will launch on March 30, with a webinar on "Islam: The Two Eids in Context." Engage with two top Muslim scholars around questions such as: What is the history and spiritual meaning of Ramadan, the month when Muslims fast from sunup to sundown? How do Muslims feel coming to work during this season? What do Muslims want us to know about their practice? What are the best ways to accommodate Muslims and have them at ease in the workplace during Ramadan?

On June 15, two stop Black scholars will look at "African American and Black Heritage: The What, Who, and Why of Juneteenth and Kwanzaa." Learn the importance of Juneteenth, our newest federal holi-

day, and find out more about Kwanzaa and its relative significance. We'll address how these two holidays can serve as a bridge to better empathy and understanding across difference – in the workplace, and in general.

On Sept. 14, we'll turn to "Judaism's High Holiday Days, Plus a Passover Primer." Important questions include: What is important to know about Jewish

observance and accommodations during the calendar year? What are the various holy day greetings you might offer?

On Dec. 7, join us for "When Is Christmas? 'The Holidays' for Christians." We'll look at

why and how various branches of Christianity observe Christmas differently, including some who celebrate in January. What does this mean for holiday greetings? Christmas parties? How might you rethink "the holidays," bringing innovation and inclusion to your workplace? Two prominent Christian scholars will lead this session.

Visit hartfordinternational.edu/holiday-series-2022 for more information and to register for each session. Discounts are available for groups.

About Hartford International University

Hartford International University for Religion and Peace is unique among theological institutions across the globe — both in approach and history. Founded in 1834, Hartford International has built an interreligious environment like no other and proven an ability to prepare leaders for the complex, pluralistic world in which we live. Learn more at hartfordinternational.edu



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School & Youth News

Spotlight on Talcott Mountain Academy



A school on top of a mountain sounds like something out of a dream. Head in the clouds and views as far as the eye can see—the world seems vast yet incredibly within reach. For students at the Talcott Mountain Academy of Science, Mathematics and Technology, a school for bright and gifted students in kindergarten through eighth grade, this isn't a dream. It's their reality—and they wouldn't have it any other way.

Nationally and internationally renowned for their expertise in gifted education, the school is widely recognized for their mastery in teaching STEM subjects that are fully-integrated into the curriculum at all levels. A division of the Talcott Mountain Science Center for Student Involvement, Inc., the Academy also has the added benefit of utilizing Science Center teaching staff, facilities and equipment -- including Connecticut's largest teaching planetarium and multiple telescopes for daytime and nighttime observing.

But, despite its moniker, the Talcott Mountain Academy of Science, Mathematics and Technology also emphasizes education in the arts and humanities. With a music program that embraces teaching string instruments to all students beginning in kindergarten; to foreign language programs that allow stu-

dents to choose from an array of offerings – including French, Spanish, Chinese and more; and a robust art program that often has students looking to nature for inspiration, students have ample opportunities to find their passions and pursue them.

In fact, this spring, Academy students received more than a dozen awards from Connecticut Student Writers for written and artistic expressions submitted to their annual competition. The competition is sponsored annually by the Connecticut Writers Project at UCONN. Three literary works and two art pieces received the highest honors – platinum awards – and will be published in the upcoming edition of CSW Magazine, which was established to honor excellence in writing by students from kindergarten through high school.

The mountaintop location for this gem of a school somehow seems appropriate given their commitment to helping children 'reach for the stars.'

Want to learn more? The Academy is hosting Interactive Virtual Visits for parents who are interested in learning more about the school, its curriculum and the Talcott community. View upcoming dates and register online at talcottacademy.org/visit-tma, or call 860-677-0035.

Bags That Give Back

Noah Webster Micro Society Magnet School PTA Selected to Benefit in Big Y Community Bag Program Designed to Give Back in Local Communities

NOAH WEBSTER



MICROSOCIETY MAGNET SCHOOL

Reduce single-use plastic in the environment and give back to those in need in the local community, all while running routine weekly errands at the local Big Y. Noah Webster PTA has been selected by local Big Y store leadership as the benefiting non-profit in the Community Bag Program from April 1 to April 30.

Big Y Community Program is an easy way for shoppers to give back to the local community and the environment as part of the regular shopping routine. Every \$2.50 reusable Community bag sends a \$1 donation to a non-profit local to the Big Y in which it was purchased.

Every month at every Big Y location a different local non-profit is selected to benefit from the sale of the reusable Community Bag. Noah Webster PTA was selected as the April beneficiary by local store leadership at the 772 North Main St., West Hartford CT store.

Noah Webster PTA will receive

a \$1 donation for every \$2.50 reusable Big Y Community Bag purchased at this location in April.

"It's more important than ever to help reduce single-use plastic in the environment," said Nealie Newberger, Secretary of Noah Webster PTA. "Non-profits at the local level, like us, are in need of community support. This program offers the perfect solution to multiple issues of the world today. We hope you'll support us in April by purchasing one – or two! – Big Y Community Bags at our local Big Y!"

Noah Webster PTA is a non-profit based at our local Noah Webster school. Learn more about Noah Webster PTA by visiting the Noah Webster MicroSociety PTA facebook page at <https://sites.google.com/hartford-schools.org/nwmms/families/pta> or contact Nealie Newberger at nealnewberger@gmail.com

Budding Westend Writer at Watkinson

Watkinson School sophomore and West End resident Nik Cooper is an accomplished and passionate writer. Nik is among the group of Watkinson 10th Graders who have applied to Watkinson's Global Studies Program. Here is an excerpt from Nik's piece entitled *The Corn*. To read the piece in its entirety, visit watkinson.org/creative-writing

The corn bent and shifted in the wind. A long dirt road ran alongside the fields. Roger crouched in a shallow ditch on the side of the road. He craned his neck and squinted. The corn rustled behind him. He eyed the road for an oncoming car.

The road was dusty and didn't have clear edges. Pebbles were scattered on it, and when a car drove over it they leapt up and pattered the underside with a sound like rain.

Roger fingered the bottle he held in his left hand—his father's bottle. He tipped it into his mouth. A single drop rolled onto his tongue and he scrunched his face up and spat it out.

Rearing back he threw the bottle at the dirt road. It shattered, and shards of glass scattered among the pebbles.

"Home run!" he said.

He saw a cloud of dust forming down the road. The rumble of an engine came from the distance, the bumpy put-put-put-put and the rainstorm of pebbles growing louder. Roger retreated back into the corn to watch.



Classical Magnet Updates

- Classical's Mock Trial team competed in a state-wide competition, winning their trial against Valley Regional High School in Deep River, CT
- Come join us on March 26 at 2:00 and 7:00 for performances of the Addams Family musical
- Girls varsity basketball had a great season, making it into the state tournament and West End resident, Reilly Fournier, earning a CRAL scholar athlete award for the league
- Boys varsity basketball is competing in the state tournament for Division 3 and won second place for sportsmanship for the league
- E-Sports electronic gaming teams are starting this month, competing against teams from other high schools
- Spring Sports Sign-ups- Baseball, Softball, Outdoor track & Tennis



Hartford Creative Contest

An Annual Exploration of Hartford Through its Children's Eyes

The deadline for this year's Hartford Creative Contest passed this week and what a great response from our children! An extraordinary group of essays, poems and artwork was submitted by Hartford students (and non-Hartford students attending Hartford Schools) in grades 4 through 12. More than 100 submissions were received from at least 14 Hartford schools including: Berkshire School, Breakthrough Magnet North, Classical Magnet, Connecticut International Baccalaureate Academy, Environmental Sciences at Mary Hooker, Grace Academy, Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts, Kinsella Magnet, Kingswood Oxford, Martin Luther King, Jr, Montessori Magnet at Annie Fisher, Renzulli, Talcott Mountain Academy, Trinity College Academy, and more.

Students used their creativity to answer one of the 3 prompts for this year's contest: Where do I find beauty within Hartford? What does cultural diversity mean to me? If I could travel anywhere, where would I go and why? We are so pleased to have seen some schools work the Contest into their curriculum this year, particularly in the art submissions.

Jane Torrey, the Chairman of the HCC Committee said "Every year the entries get better and better. The children's work this year has been the best we've seen!". The Judges now have the difficult task of choosing 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners for each type of work, and each age group (4-6; 7-9; 10-12). Winning entries will be showcased on the Hartford Contest Facebook page and their website: HartfordContest.com. The Grand Prize winner will be announced in next month's edition, and the awards ceremony will be held at the Mark Twain House in May, 2022.

Domingo

Continued from page 1

program. We have joined forces with WECA, the West End NRZ, to create an event not to be missed. We are organizing around a planned artist exhibition to showcase the work of our amazing neighborhood artists. There will

also be food, children's activities, music, activity stations, opportunities to meet police officers and firefighters and learn about careers in public safety, and a whole lot more."

For more information on DominGO! Hartford, please visit www.domingohartford.com, or follow @domingohartford on Instagram.



Jackie Mckinney, Chair of the Asylum Hill Neighborhood Association



Apply Now for CRIA Youth Advisory Board

Are you part of an immigrant or refugee family and between the ages of 16 and 24? Would you like some experience in helping affect policies that support immigrants and refugees in the Greater Hartford area?

The Commission on Refugee and Immigrant Affairs (CRIA) is seeking applicants for its youth advisory board. Members will meet once a month with mentors appointed by CRIA commissioners, and four times a year with CRIA commissioners to inform them of the issues and concerns of immigrant and refugee communities in the Hartford area. CRIA commissioners are volunteers, whose mission is to be a voice for immigrant and refugee concerns, enhance newcomer civic engagement, assess how city policies and programs affect immigrants and refugees, and issue recommendations to the city. See more at <https://www.hartfordct.gov/Government/Boards-and-Commissions/Boards-Commissions/Commission-on-Refugee-and-Immigrant-Affairs-CRIA>.

Interested applicants should come from immigrant or refugee families, and be involved in their respective communities. If you or someone you know is interested in applying for a position on the CRIA Youth Advisory Board, contact us at hartfordcria@gmail.com with your name, contact information, and statement on why you (or your nominee) would be a good candidate. Please also send a copy of the email to Janet Bauer (janet.bauer@trincoll.edu) and Indira Petoskey (drindirapetoskey@gmail.com).

Brainard Airport Association

The Hartford Brainard Airport Association (HBAA) is a grassroots movement in response to significant concerns that political forces in the state of Connecticut are moving rapidly to close Brainard Airport. There is an existing 501 (C) 3 non-profit corporation dedicated to keeping the airport (known as KHFD) open and thriving for tomorrow's aviation professionals! For more information on this important effort, check out their Facebook page Friends of Brainard Airport - Group and @FriendsofBrainardAirport

Tax Revaluation Details

BY MIKE MCGARRY

Many Hartford properties have increased in value, therefore, taxes on homeowners may increase dramatically. But you may have options.

- **Tax Relief for the Elderly:** Income-restricted; \$500 credit available (\$1,500 for four-family homes) through the assessor's office, Feb.1 - May 1.
- **State Homeowner and Rental Rebate:** Amount varies by income and status. Call 860-418-6406 for details.
- **Veterans' Exemptions:** A typical vet can get \$334.00 in tax savings. There are similar programs for the disabled and low income persons through the assessor's office.
- **If you feel your property is over-valued:** appeal to the City of Hartford Board of Assessment Appeals. You must submit your appeal before March 20. You will get an appointment. Hearings are held in April. Our suggestion is to get the appeal form online or from the assessor's office at Hartford City Hall. Experience tells us that delivering it in person and getting a time-stamped copy eliminates most chances for any errors (by yourself or the city).

Below are some excerpts from the public Zoom discussion on the tax revaluation that was held on January 20, 2022 between Mayor Luke Bronin, City Treasurer Adam Cloud and Hartford Tax Assessor John Philip. For a full video of the discussion, use passcode +4rFST9D.

Mayor Bronin: Thanks to the NRZs and Hartford NEXT [for hosting this discussion]... Every town and city in the state is required to revalue [its properties] at least every five years. The biggest issue is big changes in the real estate market. Home sale prices are up, and there are some decreases in commercial properties. This shift creates challenges for the Grand List (the value of all taxable properties), which is currently taxed at 70% of value for commercial properties and 36% for residential (one to three units).

Assessor Philips: We have to set the new values at full and fair value as of October 1, 2021 by state law. The process started 18 months ago. We relied most heavily on sales from October 2020 to October 2021. Tyler Technologies was hired to do most of the detail work.

So values of single-family homes went up an average of 30%, some much higher, some static; two-families, 38%, three-families 46%. Commercial property values are down 10%. However, apartments went up close to the 46% number.

Also, the statute of 2011 will push the homeowner rate up 3% to 36.75%. Hartford's commercial rate is 74.29 mills. Even with the 36.75% for one to three units, [Hartford's] homeowners' rate is below many of our neighboring

towns. The Board of Assessment Appeals form for appeals is available on Hartford.gov or from our office. You must appeal between March 1 and March 20 for the hearings in April. The Grand List may increase, if so the mill rate may decrease.

Mayor Bronin: We hope to lower the mill rate, but we won't be able to do it so much that it will solve the increase in value problem. That means taxes [on homes] will go up.

The problem with putting this off is that commercial properties could go down in value even more. Another option is a phase-in, only on increases, not decreases, affecting the potential of a mill-rate decrease.

Question From Audience: The sale price was inflated, not worth the price it sold for.

Mayor Bronin: A house is worth what someone will pay for it. We can't base our judgements on what might happen in the future.

Question From Audience: Is this an effort to increase city revenue?

Mayor Bronin: We only plan on a 1% increase with some property [values] increasing and some decreasing, this will be different.

Question From Audience: Will the ratios change?

Mayor Bronin: We must be fair to homeowners, small businesses and commercial property owners, not looking to shift the burdens. However, we may simplify the whole system to make it easier to understand.

Question From Audience: What about non-taxable properties?

Treasurer Cloud: The PILOT (Payment In Lieu Of Taxes) is never paid in full, but last year, the city got an additional \$22 million in PILOT funding.

Question From Audience: How does flooding affect valuation?

Assessor Philips: It may affect land values. but values are based on recent sales. Unique problems are addressed with appeals.

Question From Audience: If we stopped giving tax breaks to developers, would it help?

Mayor Bronin: It's virtually impossible to get new development at a commercial rate of 74.29 mills. Every new developer pays some increase, but to attract such, usually a phase-in is called for.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Many other issues were covered in this long discussion. The mayor's office can offer copies of the full transcript or you can watch the whole video.

The city and the state will have many options to mitigate the situation: reduce spending (bond capital improvements); sell property (takes a while); increase the PILOT (must be approved by state legislature); and increased development (also takes a while).

So, call your elected officials if you have suggestions or complaints. The actual mill rate will not be set until May 2022.

EXTRA! EXTRA! 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



SPRING PLANTING CHART			
	Early Spring	Mid-Spring	Late Spring
40"			
32"			
24"			
16"			
8"			
Mulch			
5"			
8"			
soil			
	Snowdrops Crocus Anemone Blanda Muscaria Greigii Tulips Fosteriana Tulips Mini Daffodils Hyacinths Single Early Tulips	Daffodils Narcissi Mid-Season Tulips Double Daffodils Fritillaria Imperialis	Late Tulips (longstemmed) Lilyflowering Tulips Lilies Dutch Iris Allium Giganteum

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Historical Society Hosts Events For All Ages Throughout April

BY DONOVAN WILSON

The Connecticut Historical Society Museum & Library's April schedule is full of events for the whole family.

Saturday April 2nd will kick off the month with free admission to the galleries all day as the society offers every month in a program called free first Saturdays. Also, in the morning, there will be an earth day themed celebration full of games and crafts with a special magic show by Cyril The Sorcerer for family's.

Families will also be invited down to enjoy a movie night on April 8th which includes a showing of the Disney Pixar movie Inside Out with popcorn included. Then, on April 12th, there will be an event called "What makes you smile?" which will feature two separate times for workshops where



kids represent what brings them joy through arts & Crafts.

On April 14th, there will be an event called

"Museum Sleuths" where kids will first decorate their magnifying glasses any way they want and then go throughout the museum and use those magnifying glasses to see hidden symbols in historic items. Much like the previous event, this will also run at two separate times on the same day.

Other events may be scheduled for April so keep your eyes on their website, chs.org, to see if any other events pop up. Also visit this website for any other information such as the specific times of events, the address, admission fees, etc. Keep your eyes open for similar events in May, June and the rest of the year to follow.

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 Micro-Society 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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First Week: \$15; \$10 for each following week
(Ads must be no more than 30 words)

Tag Sale

Dec 18 from 9 - 3. Everything must go. Furniture, men's clothing, housewares, art, etc. 2010 Toyota Highlander. 20002 VW Jetta (does not start). No reasonable offer refused. Masks required for entrance into house. 11 Lowell Road, West Hartford.

YOUR AD HERE!

Tag Sales; Buy/Sell; Apartments to Rent; Home Improvement Services; Employment & More



Westend Real Estate Transactions

Feb 8: 31 Woodland Street, 5E, Sharad Kothair to Lisa Lettieri, \$125,000

Feb 18: 31 Woodland Street, 9A, Mary F. Hennessey Estate and Maura h. Shaw, to Dacy Real Estate LLC \$97,500

Feb 18: 28 Cone Street, John Q Gale to Nathaniel J Gale and William T. McNair, \$168,000

Feb 22: 247 Terry Road, Melvin E. Johnson and Marjorie E. Johnson to Richard M. Cabrey and Cathryn E. Cabrey, \$500,000

Feb 24: 903 Asylum Avenue, 903 Asylum Ave, LLC to Asylum Buyers LLC \$500,000

Feb 24: 911 Asylum Avenue, 911 Asylum Ave, LLC to Asylum Buyers LLC \$2,300,000

March 14: Hartford College Property, University of Hartford to Hartford Gardens LLC (Ohad Meishar).

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Attorney Suzann L. Beckett

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PROBATE

if you've lost a loved one, let us help you navigate the probate process.

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We work with families of all types, to protect loved ones when you're gone, as you protect them while you are alive and well. Whether you are young, seeking to name a formal guardian for your children, or older and looking to pass your hard-earned assets to the next generation, we're here to help you accomplish your desires. Working to help families organize their loved ones estate & assets after passing. Lifting the burden of probate off of families.

BANKRUPTCY

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



PEACE OF MIND. NOT A PIECE OF PAPER.™

Devars-Phillips

Continued from page 1

with their florists as they did with their doctors," said Cusano. Online flower shopping was already becoming more common, but exploded during COVID. That hurt small floral shops like Devars-Phillips because there's nothing like the personal touch that comes from a direct conversation between buyer

and seller as to exactly what's desired. For example, Cusano's customers will never have the experience of seeing a photoshopped image online that looks nothing like the arrangement actually delivered a few hours later. With Cusano, you get exactly what you ask for and you never have to worry that the recipient won't love the delivery.

One of his frustrations is that people have gradually become used to buying flowers at the grocery store rather than at a specialty shop like his. "Trader Joes is food with flowers on the side", says Cusano. While he understands the convenience of one-stop shopping, a shop dedicated to floral arrangements like Devars-Phillips will have much better quality flowers than those

available at a grocery store -- which means his customers can enjoy the beauty of their arrangements long after the ones picked up at the grocery have withered and died.

Of course, that high quality comes at a price. The supply and demand shortages that you hear about in construction in recent years has affected his business too. Shipping costs are skyrocketing, all

of which means that the cost of high-quality flowers are 20% – 40% higher than they were a year or 2 ago. He's had no choice but to increase his prices, too. "Customers often don't understand that the price has gone up for me also, but I try to maintain the best prices I can". His business model remains one where he deals directly with his customers whenever he can, and he believes both sides benefit. When he avoids having to pay a middleman like 1-800 Flowers or absorb the cost of a delivery service like Doordash, Cusano's happy. He doesn't have to give up a chunk of his profit, and he likes knowing that he can give his customer the full benefit of his creativity, which can sometimes get stifled when orders come in from the internet and he has to match a cookie cutter offering.

The COVID pandemic has been challenging for Cusano, as it has been for so many of our West End businesses. Devars-Phillips hasn't been open to the general public since March, 2020, which has created challenges and a direct impact on the bottom line. "I have customers that miss coming in and wandering around to find a hidden treasure," said Cusano. He looks forward, as we all do, to COVID being fully in the rear-view mirror so that he can reopen the antique shop and welcome walk-ins once again. "I do love the West End community and I have established many great relationships", said Cusano. Here's to another 24 years, Bill!

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SHEFF MOVEMENT
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MONTHLY MEETING
March 19, 2022
10-11:30AM ET

Greater Hartford's Magnet School System

Featured Guests:
Julie Goldstein, Ed.D.
Principal
Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy
Region 1 Director
Magnet Schools of America
Salvatore Menzo, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Goodwin University Magnet School System
Sarah Vocca, Ph.D.
Assistant Superintendent of CREC Schools
Capitol Region Education Council (CREC)

Discussion on the Greater Hartford Magnet School System

MEETING DETAILS

Saturday, March 19, 2022
10AM - 11:30AM (Participants may begin joining at 9:45AM)

Join Zoom Meeting At
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81635677243?pwd=c3dLUiVZODFkbCtJcFdEaFBveHREdz09#success>
Meeting ID: 816-3567-7243 • Passcode: 494333
Dial-in Number: 929-205-6099

MEETING AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Sheff Agreement Update
3. Introduction of Speakers
4. GH Magnet School System
Julie Goldstein, Ed.D
Salvatore Menzo, Ed.D
Sarah Vocca, Ph.D

Sheff Movement Updates

Library to Unveil Suffragist Sculpture March 29

An original sculpture in honor of the Women's Suffragist Movement will be held on Tuesday, March 29, at 5 pm in the Hartford History Center at Hartford Public Library, 500 Main Street, Hartford.

In December of 2020, the Hartford Public Library was awarded a grant from the Edward C. and Ann T. Roberts Foundation through its "Creation of New Work" program to support the development of a sculpted piece by artist Marilyn Parkinson Thrall. The sculpture will be on permanent display in the library's Hartford History Center.

"The Roberts Foundation established the Creation of New Work grant in 2003 to encourage excellence in the arts by fostering collaborations between artists and arts organizations in the Greater Hartford area," said Lisa Curran, the foundation's executive director. "For 2020, we wanted to celebrate the Year of the Woman and the 100th anniversary of the Nineteenth Amendment by showcasing the work of a local female artist. Hartford Public Library's exceptional proposal gave us the opportunity to support Marilyn Parkinson Thrall's incomparable talent as well as fund an art piece that will embody a pivotal episode in Hartford's history."