

Orange Town News



Orange's Exclusive Newspaper

Mailed FREE to Every Home & Business in Orange

PUBLISHED EVERY THREE WEEKS

VOL. 9 – ISSUE 16 CIRCULATION 5964 FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2014



NEW GROUP GIVES "HOPE" TO CHILDREN & PARENTS

By Laura Fantarella - Orange Town News Correspondent

Free yoga and painting classes, panel discussions, fun family events and a supportive community for raising children are all among the goals of the new recently established Helping Orange Parents Excel (HOPE) group. The group, developed by Orange mom and attorney Tracey Russo, began as a way to help elementary-age children with special needs and their parents to connect with each other and share support and resources. But the original premise is expanding to include any local child and their families who want to participate in events outside of an academic setting and to share information and support about a host of parenting issues.

Russo has very personal reasons for founding HOPE. When her young daughter underwent a series of evaluations and tests to diagnosis delayed reading issues, the family was overwhelmed with unexpected emotions. "We were scared and confused," she said. "We were in a crisis and didn't know what to do." But when another mom who had had a similar experience reached out to Russo, it was a lifesaver. "She told

See "Hope" continued on Page 2



CHRISTMAS COMES EARLY FOR ORANGE FAMILY

By Laura Fantarella - Orange Town News Correspondent

Christmas came early this year for the Batista family and the one-of-a-kind gift was delivered by Ellen DeGeneres no less. It all began in the fall, while planning a winter family vacation to California. Jo-Ann Batista dashed off a quick note to the Ellen DeGeneres show, requesting tickets to be in the audience while they were there. "I just did it on a whim, it was only a few sentences," Batista said.

Though brief, the note was written from her heart as she penned that she loved Ellen and the show and the upcoming family trip was to be a 'dream vacation' for the family before her oldest son, Brandon left for college next year.

Shortly thereafter Batista was surprised to get a call from an Ellen staffer asking a few follow-up questions, like how many children she had and how often did she watch the show. A stylist at Andre Phillips salon in Milford, Batista replied that she watched the show every day except Thursday, as that was the day she worked a 12-hour shift at the salon. After an animated conversation, the staffer said she'd get back to her if tickets were available. Trying not to get her hopes up, Batista was elated a few days later when "Maggie from the Audience Department" called her

See "Ellen" continued on Page 5

Honor Roll
 Amity Regional Middle School - Orange Campus
 First Marking Period
 Honor Roll - Page 13

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"Hope" continued from Page 1

me it would all be OK. She'd been through it, and she was a resource for all our questions," Russo said. "That stuck with me and I realized if I can be that person to one other mom or dad then this is all worth it. Someone else can make a difference and can help you get through the day. I hope HOPE is a catalyst for parents to talk with each other and be a resource for those with questions."

The experience was just as daunting for Russo's daughter, who was affected socially as well as academically as she was routinely called in and out of class for various tests and services. It is HOPE's goal to get children together outside of school so their personas are not merely defined by academic success.

While the planned activities are always fun and free, HOPE seeks to introduce participants to an activity that also has educational and/or health-related benefits. "When we offer the painting class, we will have information about why creative arts are important for development," Russo said. "It's not only about having fun, the kids are learning something too." Painting and yoga are just a few of the activities that can contribute to building self confidence in a way that academics can't. "We watched our daughter come out of her shell when we realized it's not just about academics. We were surprised by how many parts of life academic issues touch when you are a kid," Russo said.

Russo was given the go ahead by the Board of Education, elementary school principals and the superintendent as well as \$500 loans from Turkey Hill and Peck Place and a \$500 gift from Race Brook School. Russo's law firm provided the rest of the start-up money that helps fund events and programming. "My husband and I felt very strongly that we would dedicate family resources to getting it up and off the ground in the hope that eventually it will be self-sustaining. We will be happy if it helps somebody," she said. She also has a team of parent volunteers including, Jessica Bakis, Jennifer Moffett, Jane Sender, Jill Querker, Nikki Katt and Melissa Mathison who contribute their varied skills to the group.

In the end, kids are kids and Russo gets a lot of satisfaction in just seeing them interact and have fun. "These kids are tied together at Mary L Tracey when they are in kindergarten and then they separate. When they see each other again at these events they have such a good time. Each school's PTOs do so much already, HOPE provides a bridge between the four schools to support what they are already doing," she said.

The first event, yoga, drew 70 participants in four classes and over 22 families and more than 50 adults at a "Mom's Night Out" in the fall. Some upcoming events include a panel discussion about how to keep kids safe on the internet and social media that will include law enforcement and educators; and an adult wine and bourbon tasting fundraiser sometime in the spring. For more information, visit orangehope.org.

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FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

It is hard for me to believe that we have completed our **9th year as "Your Hometown Newspaper"**, but time sure does fly when you are having fun! As we approach another year's end, I would like to take this opportunity to wish a **Joyous Holiday Season & Happy New Year** to all of our loyal readers. The **Orange Town News** has done its best to continue providing our readership within and outside of Orange, a diverse community newspaper that has something for everyone to enjoy. As our sister paper, the **"Woodbridge Town News"**, continues to grow, area residents have come to rely on our publications as their source for positive community news, events and happenings.

In 2014, the **Orange Town News** was once again proud to produce this year's **Independence Day Concert and Fireworks Show** when the New Jersey based **"British Invasion Tribute"** rocked the Orange Fairgrounds with a **"50 Year Anniversary Tribute to the Beatles"**, followed by another spectacular fireworks show from our friends at **"Zambelli - The First Family of Fireworks"**. In addition, we were equally proud to produce the **3rd Annual Labor Day Concert** and welcome into Orange, from Montreal, Canada - **"Dreamer - The Su-**



The Toronto based "Hotel California - The Original Eagles Tribute" will be making their Connecticut debut on the Orange Fairgrounds at the 2015 Independence Day Concert & Fireworks show produced by the Orange Town News.

pertramp Experience" - featuring **Emmy Award** winning vocalist **Phil Naro**. Plans are already underway to bring **"Hotel California - The Original Eagles Tribute"** to Orange, making their Connecticut debut for a **July 4th, 2015 concert & fireworks extravaganza!** Check these guys out at www.hotelcalifornia.ca.

I would like to commend our staff of professional writers and contributors at

the **Orange Town News - Laura Fantarella, Melissa Nicefaro, Bettina Thiel, Susan Noonan, Ginny Reinhard, Roberta Nestor & Ray Spaziani**. My editor **Marlene Silverstein** (who has been our editor since day one) and our production department of **Mike Kriz** and **Katie Carbone** continue to produce top notch publications for which area residents can be proud.

In addition, the **loyalty of our advertisers** and their continued support through their patronage of the OTN & WTN has not gone unnoticed. While the State & Local economies continue to suffer, we are committed to provide local businesses, large & small, an affordable means to promote their goods and services.

But most of all, my heartfelt thanks go out to the hundreds of **townspeople who submit their letters, articles, photos, bulletin board events and more**. While our paper has grown to as many as 52 pages, do not worry; we will continue to make room to publish your local news and events, **no matter how big or small**.

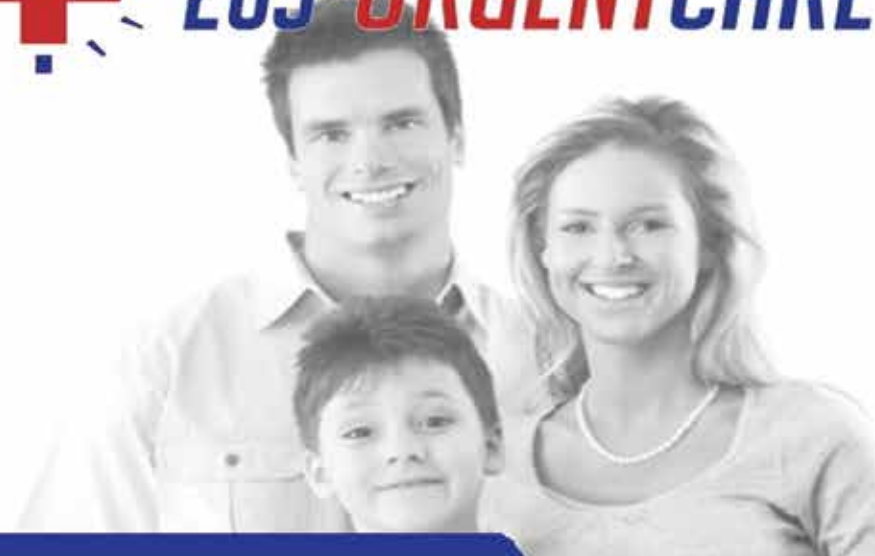

In addition, as we look towards 2015 we will be launching our **newly enhanced websites** for our publications at www.orangetownnews.com & www.woodbridgetownnews.com.

Lastly, I would like to personally wish you all a **Safe, Happy and Healthy 2015**. If you have any comments or suggestions, please always feel free to contact me at rocky@orangetownnews.com. Hope to see you all around town.

Sincerely,
Rocky Salperio - Publisher
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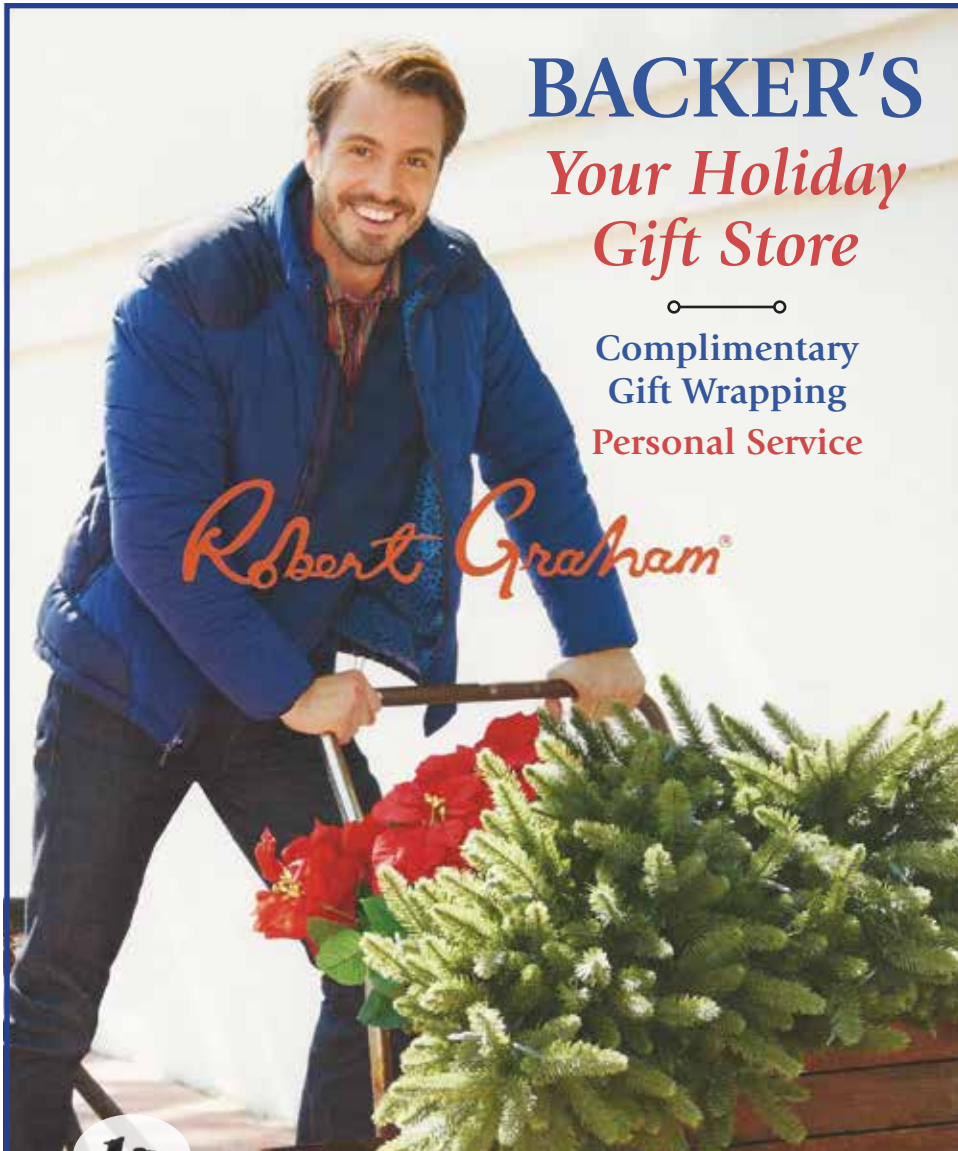


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RACEBROOK SCHOOL'S FOOD DRIVE A BIG SUCCESS

The Race Brook School Student Council under the leadership of teachers, JoAnne Escandon and Pam Galatioto, organized a food drive this fall to benefit Fish of Greater New Haven, Inc. and the Orange Community Center, a non-profit food pantry that serves New Haven and Orange residents in food crisis. Founded in 1968, FISH continues to help those who are homebound, elderly, disabled, unemployed or under employed. (www.fishgnh.org)

The message the Student Council sent out for the food drive was, "As you count your own blessings, please support our community food drive." The entire student body, with the help of their parents, participated in donating a tremendous amount of non-perishable food items, including macaroni and cheese, canned vegetables, soup and pasta, coffee, tea, and supermarket gift cards. After two weeks, Norman Choiniere, representing FISH, arrived at the school to collect the food. The council members proudly presented the donations on behalf of the school.

Attached is a photo of enthusiastic student members who dedicated their time and energy to collect the donated food items. The children from the town of Orange have proved time and time again how seriously they take their lessons about caring and sharing for those in need.

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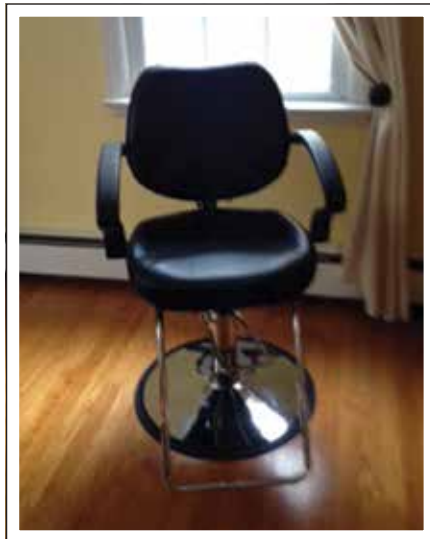
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“Ellen” continued from Page 1

at work. “She said, ‘Hi Jo-Ann, I hear you enjoy the show,’ and when I said “Yes very much, she said, ‘Well this is Ellen’ and from there it was just pandemonium!” Ellen personally invited her and a guest to come to the show, not during her family vacation trip, but the following week. So Jo-Ann and her husband Angelo flew out and sat in the audience.

As if that whole experience wasn’t enough, Batista was stunned when during the final moments of the show; Ellen replayed the clip of her call to Jo-Ann and called her onstage. “As soon as I saw the clip I started crying and Ellen said ‘tears of joy I hope!’” she said. But the best was yet to come. As Ellen told the audience that the only day Batista did not watch the show was Thursdays because of her long work day, she guided Batista to the side of the stage. To her disbelief, the door opened and a hairdresser’s chair with a large TV mounted to the back was wheeled onstage. Batista was floored and the audience was howling with laughter as Ellen said, “I can’t have you missing the show on Thursdays; you never know what you are going to miss so you are not going to miss a show ever again while you are at the hair salon! Their hair may not look as good when you are cutting their hair and watching the show but at least you are watching the show and it doesn’t matter because they won’t see the back of their hair anyway!” She also received a tee shirt that said, “My hairdresser was on the Ellen Show!” Days later the unique stylist’s chair was delivered to Batista’s Hemlock Hill Road home where it has a prominent place in her living room. The Batistas took the red eye back home and Batista drove straight to work at the salon where she watched the show air with the entire staff at Andre Phillips.



Still Batista does not know why the show singled out her letter from the millions it receives each year. “I kept asking, ‘Why me?’ I must have asked at least twelve times until the staff told me to stop asking,” she said. “I still don’t know the reason, maybe because I’m a big fan or they liked my story although it wasn’t much of a story, I’m just here living my quiet life.”

The experience is one she’ll remember for the rest of her life. “It was so unbelievable, it was a complete dream and I enjoyed every minute of it. I was just extremely lucky. She makes me laugh every day. I love her and love her show,” Batista said.

And if she ever thinks it was all indeed just a dream, Batista only has to peek in her living room and see the brand new leather hairdressing chair to remind herself it was all real.



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OUTSIDE THE BOX LIVING

The messages psychic medium Vanessa Squeglia delivers from loved ones in the spirit world to those they left behind may vary from person to person, but there are three words departed souls' ask her to pass on again and again – "please don't cry".



Laura Fantarella

Squeglia, an Orange native, is the owner of Nutmeg Healing Center and claims to have the unique gift of channeling messages from those who have passed. Now in her mid-50s, Squeglia knew she had a rare gift when she was just four years old and her grandfather died suddenly of a heart attack at age 54. As the family gathered together in grief, young Squeglia wondered what all the fuss and upset was about. "I saw him standing among everyone watching and he was perfectly fine," she recalled. When she told her relatives that, her mom bent down and looked her squarely and seriously in the eye. "Pop Pop is in heaven," she said. "I know," Squeglia replied. Realizing that no one else could see what she could, she made a conscious decision at a very young age to keep the gift to herself. "In my little head I understood that no one got it so why bother? I never even told my best friend I had this ability," she



Vanessa Squeglia

said. "I could see departed souls – not all the time, but when I tuned in." And what is clear to her is there is indeed a heaven where the skies are always blue and the diseases, petty jealousies, fears, pain and worries of this world disappear when the soul leaves this physical world. It is not the end of life, but another dimension where there are still lessons to be learned, higher levels of being to be achieved and ways of becoming a better soul.

To engage in a discussion with Squeglia is to enjoy a thought provoking dialogue about the afterlife from the perspective of someone who may have some inside information about life, death, being human and the soul's journey throughout many different lifetimes. She reports that when you "cross over"

See "LOtB" continued on Page 7

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"LOtB" continued from Page 6

from the physical to the spirit world, a soul will reconnect with generations and generations of its ancestry, whether or not they ever inhabited the physical world together. When she channels the spirits for others, the first and foremost connection is the spirits ask her to pass on the message that all is well. "The spirits are OK. They are more than OK. They are doing great," she said. "They really do reconnect with loved ones that have passed before them and even make new connections with other souls while they are there."

Though she had a career in a health care corporation for over 15 years, a debilitating illness sidelined her for several years and she was unable to keep her job. As she investigated holistic ways to return to health, she began a journey that ultimately led her back to the unique gift she'd hidden as a child. "The experience catapulted me in a whole different direction. My spiritual guides helped me to develop my gift and my own intuition and led me to open my own business," she said. In addition to her work as a medium, which also includes connecting to departed angels and pets; Squeglia offers psychic readings, and is certified in Yuen Energetics, Angel Therapy and Reiki. Though she had an office in Orange and later Milford for several years, she now operates out of a space in her West Haven home. She has over 6,000 clients around the world and has been featured on television, radio, and in print media. She is frequently invited to speak at hospitals, libraries, churches and private companies and has held group readings for large and small gatherings.

Squeglia is aware there are skeptics but she pays them little mind, preferring to focus on the hundreds of people she's helped. Connecting with someone who has passed often provides closure and comfort to those left behind, particularly if the death was sudden or tragic. "I work from my heart and that's the energy I put out there. I love what I do and I help a lot of people. It's exhausting but very rewarding," Squeglia said. "People literally lose some of the lines in their face after a reading. Not everyone dies in their sleep. I never asked for any of this, it just developed. If you don't believe, don't come, I'm not here to convince you, I have other people I could be helping. Let's not waste each other's time." She

never worries that she won't be able to find the spirit the client wants to hear from, as they "always want to make a connection and always come through" – and they may present themselves at any age, not necessarily the age they were when they passed. "Sometimes the spirit and their voice is really clear, sometimes it's like a bad cell phone connection. Sometimes they do not talk, but they are present, just sending emotions," she said. "I'm just the one in the middle." In fact once she's done with a reading, she barely remembers what was said. But spirits are always around; if someone wants a sign from a loved one all they have to do is ask. "Just pay attention. It may be whoo whoo-ish – if you can't explain something that's probably a sign," she said.

She describes her most haunting clients as the parents who have lost a child and she is happy if the reading brings them some relief from their grief. "They all have the same emptiness in their eyes. They are rough to do and I don't have the answers as to why it happened," she said. "There are reasons for everything but I don't know them."

While she only asks for a first name when someone makes an appointment, on several occasions people have given her an alias instead to ensure Squeglia truly knows nothing about them. But she knows immediately when they meet because there is "no energy" when the client sits for the reading. "Some people think that is a way to prevent me from finding out any information about them, but honestly I am too busy to eat some days, I don't have the time or inclination to try to research anyone before they come," she said.

Though the popular TV show "Long Island Medium," features a medium who stops people in public and gives them a reading, Squeglia has no use for such theatrics claiming she can turn her medium energy on and off. "I would never walk up to someone and say 'your mom is here.' I can do that but I won't. Maybe someone is not ready for that or they want to be in a safe spot where there are tissues," she said.

One thing her unique job has taught her is to appreciate every day here on earth enjoying the human experience. "I like it here, it's a nice place to be," she said. "Enjoy today and stay in the moment." For more information about Squeglia and her upcoming book, "Heavens Guide to the Other Side," go to nutmeghealingcenter.com.



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Circulation of 5964.

Office Address: **653 Orange Center Road**

Mailing Address: **P.O. Box 1126, Orange, CT 06477**

Phone: 203-298-4399 | Fax: 203-298-9818

Office Hours: Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri. 10am-3pm · Closed Tues.

Published by Orange Town Newspaper, LLC

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All articles, photographs and letters must include your name, address and daytime telephone number for confirmation. The Orange Town News reserves the right to reject any advertisement, article, photograph or letter. Letters to the editor must be unique to the Orange Town News.

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Orange Town News

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

<u>Upcoming Issue Deadline</u>	<u>Upcoming Issue Dates</u>
January 9th	January 16th
January 30th	<i>Valentine's Issue</i> February 6th
February 21st	February 27th

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

FROM OUR READERS

Orange Town News

OTN Letters Policy

Submit your letters for our **"From Our Readers"** section to:
Orange Town News, P.O. Box 1126, Orange, CT 06477
or email: letters@orangetownnews.com.

Please limit letters to 500 words and include a daytime phone number in case we have any questions. *Letters must be exclusive to the Orange Town News for publication.* We reserve the right to reject any letter.

TOWN DEPARTMENTS

FROM THE YOUTH SERVICES COORDINATOR

By John Ulatowski



Youth Services High School Volunteers Can Assist with Orange Community Events

Orange Youth Services has a list of Orange High School youth who are available to assist their community with a variety of volunteer needs. Our volunteers have signed up with a parent with Youth Services to access opportunities in regard to attaining their necessary school volunteer credits. They are available for a wide variety of community, school, and organizations located in Orange. Contact John at Youth Services at julatowski@orange-ct.gov.

Area Residents Need Jobs Help? Youth Services Job Bank Can Assist

The Orange Youth Services Job Bank provides a service of pre-screened students, ages 13-16, who can be employed by area residents to do a large variety of jobs such as yard work, garden help, attics/basements, raking, snow shoveling, small painting, party helper, tutoring, clerical assistance, mother's helper...and more. For further information, please call John Ulatowski, Orange Youth Services Coordinator at 203-891-4785.

Youth Services Newsletter Online Featuring Current Photos & Events

Youth Services recent newsletter, The Youth Informer, is online on the Town website. The newsletter features many articles and photos of recent Youth Services programs and events. Featured in this edition are items on babysitting, Artist Colonies, the K-6 Children of Orange exhibit, the Living History Club, the Youth Services e-Parenting series, and Job Bank. The newsletter can be accessed by going to the Town website/click on Community Services, then Youth Services, then on the Youth Services Newsletter attachment.

Orange Town News

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ORANGE EDUCATION ROUNDUP

SURVEY OF AMITY ALUMNI FINDS THEM WELL PREPARED FOR LIFE

By Bettina Thiel – Orange Town News Correspondent

Measured by most standards, the Amity school system is doing what it set out to do, namely to “enable every student to become a lifelong learner and a literate, caring, creative and effective world citizen”. But how do those world citizens feel about their alma mater? Once in college, how do graduates stack up against students from other schools, other states? Did the education they received here help them transition to the next stage of life, whether college or military or other?

That’s what the Board of Education wanted to know, and it commissioned Futuristics Research to find out. A year ago, Futuristics started by contacting graduates of the last five classes, from 2009 to 2013, and asking them not only if they felt prepared for college and/or work, but also how, looking back, they feel about the quality of learning skills they were taught, the academic quality, the teachers and counselors, and about resources such as the library/media center.

Principal Dr. Charles Britton presented the results to the Amity Board of Education at its October meeting. He said some 338 responses came back, which translates to a response rate of about 15 – 20% and overall the responses were positive.

Of the 338 respondents, the vast majority attended a two- or four-year college after leaving Amity, and most (94.2%) felt better prepared or as well prepared as their peers. Only 5-8% did not feel as well prepared. Graduates of Amity’s higher-level courses (Level 1) felt best prepared, Dr. Britton said, while those in levels 2 and 3 weighed their experience more toward “same or less”.

According to the executive summary of Futuristics report, 57.2% Amity graduates were placed at a higher level course in college or were exempted out of coursework. At the same time, 15% were

required to take remedial English and 16.6% remedial math courses in college.

Only five of the respondents did not go to college and assessed their preparation for the world of work. According to the report, these graduates for the most part felt adequately prepared in the areas of communication skills (60%), technical skills (80%), mathematics skills (60%), thinking skills (80%), interpersonal skills (60%) and employment skills (60%).

Life skills: Though well prepared as far as reading, writing, math and technology are concerned, the report points to life skills as an area that could be improved upon. Life skills involve skills such as projecting and keeping track of credit card debt or a mortgage, college loans and making informed consumer decisions. This feedback could potentially inform future curriculum initiatives, Dr. Britton told the board.

Similarly, career and job resources and career explorations and planning services are mentioned as relatively weak. By contrast, alumni rated in-school counseling for course selection and schedule adjustments as being the department’s strong suit. Dr. Britton said the school’s career center, under the direction of Karen Waterman, has seen major growth of its senior internship program. For the last six weeks of their senior year, Amity students have the option to enroll in an internship of their choice instead of attending classes.

Last May and June, some 160 seniors took advantage of that opportunity, while five years ago the program had some 20 or 30 participants. Dr. Britton remembered his own experience being a high school senior, when he attended an internship at a law firm. It was then that he realized that this was not the right career choice for him. Instead, he became an educator. In addition, the school hosts a career fair, offers skills assessments and more to help students

decide on a career path.

Extracurricular activities: For the most part alumni felt inspired by the extracurricular activities. Drama, music and athletics rated “extremely favorably,” while publications and student government rated “favorably”.

The one issue that caught the school board’s attention was questions on smoking and drugs. A majority of respondents thought that drugs (63%) and smoking (55.1%) were problem areas while they attended Amity High. Dr. Britton did

not disagree. “If you ask me ‘is there a drug problem at Amity, a smoking problem, an alcohol problem?’ – Yes, of course there is,” he said in a phone conversation.

“The question is, is it worse than at any other public, private or parochial school?” he said, answering his own question with “not that we’re aware of”.

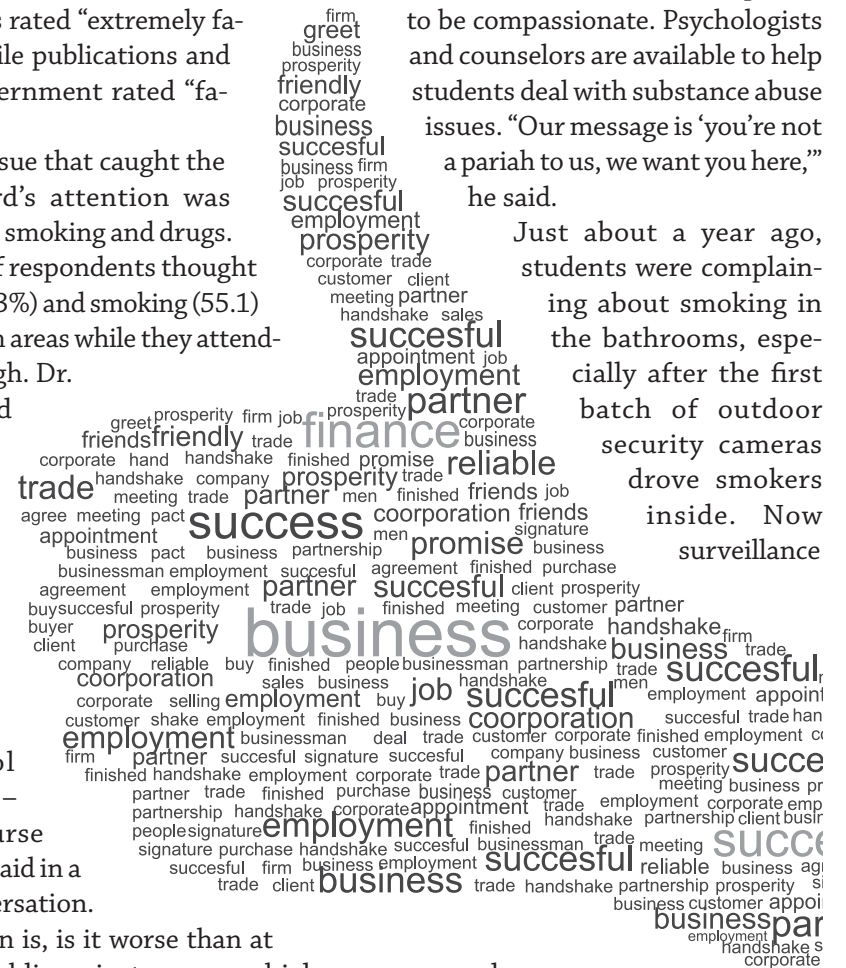
Several board members felt the question was too vague to yield useful information. The questions should have been whether students’ lives were negatively impacted by others smoking or drug habits, said Sheila McCreven, the board’s newest member from Woodbridge. She is serving out the term of Julie Altman who has moved out-of-town.

Dr. Britton said the district is not avoiding the issue. “We’re doing an awful lot to prevent it,” he said. The school deals with the substance abuse with both disciplinary and supportive

interventions. Faculty and staff are vigilant and the school has a resource officer to work with them to uphold the law.

Teachers and staff also are expected to be compassionate. Psychologists and counselors are available to help students deal with substance abuse issues. “Our message is ‘you’re not a pariah to us, we want you here,’” he said.

Just about a year ago, students were complaining about smoking in the bathrooms, especially after the first batch of outdoor security cameras drove smokers inside. Now surveillance



cameras also are indoors, presumably keeping a record of who goes in and out. The administration is swift in reacting to smoking in the bathroom when they become aware of it. “There used to be a problem, Dr. Britton said of the smoking. “No more.”

The Amity School Board was pleased with the survey results. “The board is always looking to glean indicators of how well our students are prepared as they go forward,” board chairman Bill Blake said when asked why the board had commissioned the survey. “There were no tremendous surprises in there, but we don’t want to assume anything.”

ORANGE PRE-SCHOOL PROGRAM FOR COMMUNITY PEERS

Mary L. Tracy School is known as a place where “the love of learning and the love of children are celebrated each and every day”! For some of our children that love of learning begins with our Pre-School Program. The Orange Elementary School System is pleased to announce that it is now accepting applications to participate in the blind lottery for the Mary L. Tracy School Pre-School Program for 2015-16.

Our integrated Pre-School Program includes special education students and general education community peers. By law, students with special needs identified with an IEP are placed in the Pre-School Program by the Department of Special Services through the PPT process. The Pre-School Program follows the dis-

trict’s school year calendar.

We have developed a Pre-School Program that enriches each child’s social, emotional, physical, cognitive, intellectual, and creative abilities through early academic and social experiences. It is designed to prepare each child for early success and school readiness. Children will be selected in a blind lottery to participate as community peers in our integrated pre-school, which is a fee-based, 5-day Pre-School Program. The total cost of tuition for general education community peers will be \$3,000. If a family qualifies for the State’s Free and Reduced Lunch Program, they may be eligible for tuition assistance. Parents of general education community peers will need to provide their own transportation.

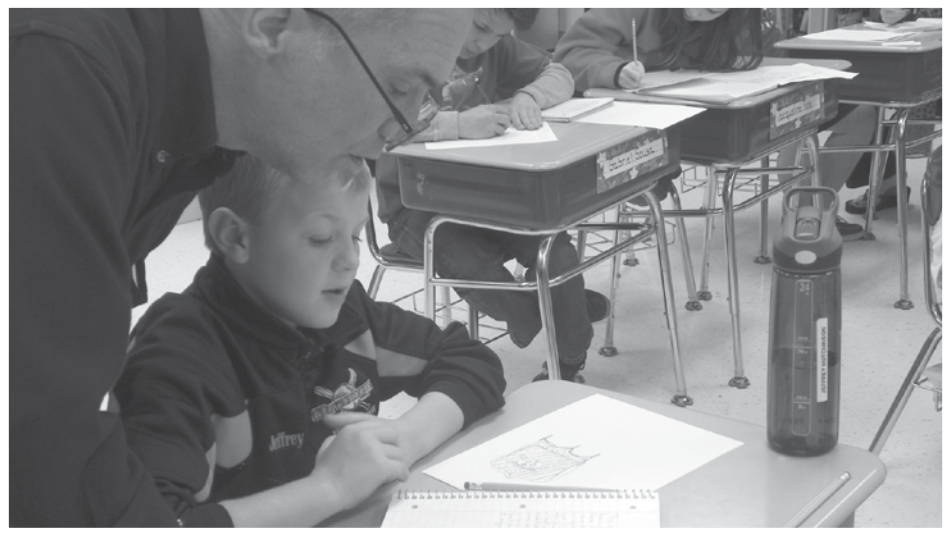
Students will be chosen to attend either the AM 3-yr. old Pre-School Program from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. OR the PM 4-yr. old Pre-School Program from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Class sizes are to be held to a maximum of 12 students per class, which includes the special education students and their general education community peers. In order to participate in this lottery your child must be three by September 1st, 2015 to attend the 3-yr. old program and must be four by December 31st, 2015 to enroll in the 4-yr. old program.

All children must be toilet trained and an Orange resident. If interested in this integrated Pre-School Program, please call the Special Services Dept. (203-891-8023) between the hours of 9:00 a.m.

and 4:00 p.m. to enter your child in the lottery. We will be accepting names to enter the blind lottery up until 4:00 p.m., Friday, January 23, 2015.

Parents will be notified of the lottery results by Friday, January 30, 2015. Registration forms and tuition deposit of \$300 are due no later than April 3, 2015. The deposit covers the tuition for September. Tuition payments are due on the first of the preceding month, e.g. tuition for October will be due September 1st. The last payment for the year (June) will be due on May 1st. Parents who have further questions may call the Special Services Dept. (203-891-8023) at the Orange Board of Education.

ORANGE EDUCATION ROUNDUP



PECK PLACE SCHOOL STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN VISUAL LITERACY

Well known story teller Tom Lee visited Peck Place School on Monday, November 10, 2014. Mr. Lee guided students through the thinking and discourse process of writing. Mr. Lee engaged students in retelling a myth taken from the Iliad, Book XVIII, "The Shield of Achilles". He invited students to sketch what they imagined their shield would look like. Students then used their drawings to write a description of their personal shields.

In addition, the fifth graders at Peck Place School observed works of art in a technique referred to as "reading a painting". The goal of this mini workshop

was to help students add more tools to their "writer's toolbox" and unlock the creative process of writing.

Research shows that when students observe and infer through rich conversation the next step is creation. According to Denise Cassano in Edutopia, "We don't know what the future holds for our students, but we do know that they will have to think critically, make connections, and communicate clearly." This approach to learning spans all writing modalities and genres.

Funding for this course was provided by the Jamie A. Hulley Foundation (www.jamiehulleyartsfund.org).



GILSON A FINALIST FOR STATE TEACHING AWARDS

Peck Place School fifth grade teacher Nicole Gilson is one of two CT state finalists for the Elementary Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, a high honor for teachers of mathematics and science. Awardees serve as models for their colleagues, inspiration to their communities, and leaders in the improvement of mathematics and science education.

"Ms. Gilson is just outstanding," says Superintendent of Schools Lynn McMullin. "It's a perfect example of teachers customizing Common Core. Orange teachers go above and beyond to adjust the curriculum to make learning fabulous for kids."

ORANGE SUPERINTENDENT TAKES JOB IN LITCHFIELD

Search for Replacement Underway

By Melissa Nicefaro – Orange Town News Correspondent

After three years at the helm of Orange Schools, Superintendent Lynn McMullin is stepping down and has accepted a position as Superintendent of Litchfield Schools.

In a letter to the community, she shared her "heartfelt appreciation for the opportunities you have afforded me."

"Litchfield is much closer to my home in Massachusetts and, with a K-12 school system, offers me a chance to return to my high school roots," she said. McMullin's last day of employment in Orange will be January 2, 2015.

According to Vice Chairperson of the Board of Education Jody Dietch, the board will look to hire an interim superintendent to have in place on or before Jan. 2. "A consultant will be hired to assist with the hiring of a new superintendent. We want that consultant to take the time to get to know Orange and what the community is looking for in a new leader," she explains.

"We want someone who will challenge the district," Dietch says. "The district is well-rounded and now we need someone to take us even further and continue advancing, especially in technology."

Under McMullin's reign, security at the schools was strengthened considerably, Common Core was implemented and a state-mandated teacher evaluation system was put in place.

"The district is in excellent forward motion with a strong leadership team in place," McMullin says. "We have a great staff and this ship is in forward motion. The district is in great shape."

Says Dietch: "Personally, I'm sad to see Lynn go. She did a lot for the district, especially after Sandy Hook and the flood at Peck Place. She handled a lot of issues while she was here and she made Orange a better place."

McMullin knows the district has made strides during her time here: "Orange's staff is exceptionally strong, and I have thoroughly enjoyed working alongside a leadership team with such outstanding vision and commitment. We have experienced so many unforgettable moments from the first day we climbed onto Peck's roof in January of 2012 to the endearing approach of the Orange Elementary Marching Band up Orange Center Road this past Memorial Day," she says.



Mr. Neil Holt, Assistant Principal, Mrs. Nancy W. Goss, School Library Media Specialist, Ms. Victoria Carnera, Community Educator, & Mrs. Bobbie Miller, Grade 7 Guidance Counselor

CYBER-BULLYING & SEXUAL HARASSMENT PROGRAM

Victoria Carnera, community educator from The Milford Rape Crisis Center in Milford, conducted presentations to grade 7 students on Tuesday, November 25th. The focus of her presentation was sexual harassment and cyber-bullying. Students learned the definition of sexual harassment. She made clear the difference between flirting and sexual harassment. Flirting is when both parties mutually accept the attention while sexual harassment is one-sided and unwanted by one party.

Victoria explained Title IX law. This protects students by obligating school systems to provide a safe school environ-

ment. If a formal complaint of sexual harassment is made, it must be investigated. If the complaint is found valid, the school must address the issue. Next, she explained that sexual assault is when someone puts hands on an intimate body part, the part of the body covered by a bathing suit, as she explained it to the students. Sexual assault is a police matter.

Lastly, Victoria stressed to students the need to seek a trusted adult if bullying, cyber-bullying, or sexual harassment occurs. She was very clear in stating that bullying is a deliberate act. The perpetrator needs to be held accountable.



Lynn McMullin



EDUCATION

BOARD OF ED TO CONSIDER CLASSROOM CELEBRATION POLICY

By Melissa Nicefaro – Orange Town News Correspondent

The Orange Board of Education's Healthy Lifestyle Committee has drafted a new policy that addresses classroom celebrations. The board vote did not pass a similar policy this fall as several board members felt the policy was far too restrictive.

The new proposed policy would apply to celebrations that take place in the schools from 30 minutes before school begins until 30 minutes after school ends, including 21st Century and school sponsored activities, during which children are not in the care of their parents. Classroom celebrations do not include school-sponsored or PTO-sponsored events held in the evening, on weekends, or at any other times when children are present with their parents.

The proposed policy says, "The Orange Board of Education understands the role of the schools in teaching and modeling a healthy lifestyle and therefore encourages all parents and staff members who are planning classroom celebrations to consider this important role and include healthy alternatives to high-calorie, low nutrient foods."

To assist parents in celebration planning, the board will provide a list of healthier foods, titled "Board of Education Healthy Foods List," as well as additional avenues (webpage links, newsletters, etc.) for finding creative non-food and healthy food celebration alternatives. The new proposal includes only three restricted items: candy, gum and soda.

"Cupcakes will still be allowed," says Superintendent of Schools Lynn McMullin. "What we are asking is that parents give teachers a 48-hour notice so that teachers can notify parents and give

them an option to send in an alternative snack." Such notice to the teacher will include the type/types of food being served. In place of popsicles, fruit-based frozen pops are healthier and therefore encouraged.

While non-food celebrations will be encouraged, all celebrations which do include food must offer children the choice of a healthy treat and bottled water along with any sweet treat being offered.

According to the proposed policy, all classroom celebrations, whether they include food or are non-food celebrations, must have the teacher's prior approval and parents will not be allowed to distribute food and/or gift bags in classrooms without the teacher's prior approval and such unapproved food or non-food items will be sent home. In addition, Student-of-the-Week celebrations must be food-free.

"Birthday celebrations would include one serving per child and there would be no distribution outside of the classroom," McMullin says. In addition, cultural celebrations and class curriculum-based activities will be planned and monitored by school room parents, classroom teachers, and/or school principals and parents and staff should encourage healthy and nutritious choices as these celebrations are an opportunity to teach children about interesting and varied natural and/or healthy foods. A list of ingredients would be required 48-hours in advance.

"As a society, we should care. There are so many additives today, that the level of unhealthiness is hitting earlier in life, as early as the 20s and 30s," McMullin says. "It's up to us to keep kids healthy."

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SENIOR CENTER

Call for Nominations for Living Treasure

Nominations are currently being accepted through March 13, 2015 for the 2015 Living Treasure Awards. Nomination forms are available in the Orange Community Services office, Town Hall, and can be printed from the town's website at www.orange-ct.gov, www.orangeseniors.org or Facebook/Orange Senior Center. The three individuals chosen will be honored at Pasta Festa! on May 15, 2015.

Holiday Cabaret

Monday, December 15, 1:30—3:00pm

Ashly Cruz will be performing the Holiday Music in her own passionate style. We will also have Al & Mary Errato as special guests with their player piano and the Orange Chorus will sing a few Christmas Carols. We look forward to seeing you there. Call to RSVP.

Come Join Us for the Racebrook School Choir - Open To All

Monday, December 22, 1:00—1:30pm

The Race Brook School Choir will perform selected holiday songs in the High Plains Community Center Café. Come enjoy and encourage them. Stay for desserts afterwards. Call the office at (203) 891-4784 to RSVP.

Teen Tech Talk

Teen Tech Talk, a partnership between the Orange Senior Center and Or Shalom, brings Amity Teens to the Senior Center to teach seniors how to use their iPhones, iPads, and laptops. The sessions are the 2nd Tuesday of the month, beginning December 9 at 4:00pm in the Sr. Lounge. RSVP to the office at (203)891-4784.

Flower Arranging Class

Come join us for a Flower Arranging Seminar before the upcoming holiday on December 19—Christmas/Hanukkah Theme; 10-12 in room 4; \$10 fee will be applied to cover the cost of materials. Call or stop by the office to register (203) 891-4784.

Zumba Gold

We now offer Zumba Gold 3 times a week! \$30 for 1 class, 2+ classes for \$60; Monday 11-12, Wednesday 11-12, and Friday for 10:30 - 11:30am in the gym. Stay fit this holiday season!

Transportation

The Town of Orange provides a transportation service for senior residents and handicap residents. This service runs Monday through Friday from 8:00am until 4:00pm. 24 to 48 hours notice is required. The program transports to Orange, Milford, West Haven, New Haven and Hamden, and tries not to go to New Haven or Hamden

after 3pm due to traffic. It is donation based—\$2.00 to Senior Center, \$4.00 within Orange and \$6.00 outside of Orange all round trip. Aides ride free. Call Kim Callahan (203) 891-4788 to schedule a ride.

2015 Trips

MAGGIE DIXON CLASSIC: UCONN WOMEN'S BASKETBALL at MADISON SQUARE GARDEN

Sunday, January 4, 2015

The Maggie Dixon Classic between UConn Women and former Big East Conference Rival St. John's. There is nothing like seeing a live game. Cost TBD. This no minimum trip includes transportation and tickets to the game. Lunch is on your own at MSG. Full payment due at registration.

HAPPY 80TH BIRTHDAY ELVIS featuring Jeff Krick @ the Hu Ke Lau

Sunday, January 11, 2015

We will sing Happy Birthday to the only KING of Rock N Roll at this exclusive matinee show at the Hu Ke Lau in Chicpee MA. Jeff Krick will amaze you with his talent and Elvis looks. Choice of Prime Rib or Baked Scrod; Cost \$71. This shared trip includes transportation, lunch, reserved seating, taxes and gratuities. Full payment due at registration.

ESCAPE TO SOME SUN @ MOHEGAN SUN

Wednesday, January 28-29, 2015

At Mohegan Sun every turn leads to a new adventure with an indoor 7-story waterfall, the world's largest and most spectacular planetarium dome and the awe-inspiring Wombi Rock. Cost \$163pp double. This no-minimum trip includes round-trip transportation, Hotel Accommodations, 2 Buffet Vouchers, \$20 free slot play. Full payment due at registration.

MOHEGAN SUN 2015 AAC WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

March 9-10, 2015

No minimum overnight trip. Cost \$223pp double. Includes transportation, hotel accommodations, AAC Final Game Ticket, 2 Complimentary Buffets, free \$20 Slot Play, taxes, gratuity and baggage handling. Full payment due at registration.

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 Valeria Yanqui
 Basim Zafar

First Honors 8th Grade

Jenna Aconfora
 Austin Agapiou
 Mounisha Anumolu
 Talia Barry
 Lani Beaudette
 Sophie Benjamin
 Emily Berkeley
 Katelyn Blake
 Alexandra Bonat
 Emily Bretthauer
 Jake Bronson
 Angelina Carlino
 Lindsay Carloni
 Hyunwoo Cho
 Marc Chodos
 Amanda Coscia
 Rachael Crow
 Cailey Esposito
 Marcelle Gagnon
 Payton Grande
 Alexis Halstead
 Jessica Hatrick
 Allison Hummel
 Izabella Jones
 Nicole Kisiel
 Hyunbeen Lee
 James Lee
 Thomas Lee
 Adam Leszczak
 Erin McCormack
 Diane Meng
 Jay Moon
 Kaitlyn O'Brien
 Kenneth Page
 Liam Palazzo
 Arianna Pargen
 Soo-Jin Park
 Dorothy Parniawski
 Jay Patel
 Madelyn Pickett
 John Poland
 Julia Potter
 Sandrine Pyne
 Lillian Querker
 Jonathan Schachter
 Kelly Shaw
 Spencer Shepard
 Julia Todeasa
 Anthony Tom
 Madison Tom
 Colton Varholak
 Tucker Wright
 Kevin Zheng
 Xian-Zheng Zhong

Second Honors 7th Grade

Katie Barretta
 Haley Cable
 Lauren Campos
 Caitlin Carlson
 Tess Csejka
 Angela Duro
 Maria Farace
 Carsten Fielosh
 Brett Hutchison
 Ryan Ignatowski
 Julia Lagoutis
 Bryan Laskowski
 Anna-Maria Marinescu
 Jillian Martin
 Caroline McNabola
 Sai Neelam
 Skyelar Poulimas
 Louis Richetelli
 Sophia Soldra
 Halle Syrop
 Kelly Thomas
 Jenna Walsh
 Nickolas Wawrzyniak
 Irene Zheng

Second Honors 8th Grade

Sara Basyouny
 Adam Booth
 Nelson Bordeleau
 Cole Bova
 Abigail Bowser
 Emily Byun
 Cameron Carre
 Gabriella Caruso
 Madelyn Ciskowski
 Molly Cox
 Paige DeGoursey
 Stephen Delaney
 Andrea DelVecchio
 Brian DiGiovanni
 Kayla Dixon
 Gina Driscoll
 Elaina Ferraro
 Mary Foley
 Lauryn Giuliano
 Sebastian Gonzalez
 Taylor Gourdiere
 Shiva Gowda
 Christopher Greco
 Nicole Gregory
 Lien Har
 Hannah Hayes
 Zachary Hochman
 Kaylee Huber
 Julia Hurlburt
 Robert Jaques
 Khaled Jarad
 Chloe Kehlenbeck
 Cole Kuchachik
 Gabriel Lipsitz
 Clarens Lopez
 Connor Marry
 Nicholas Mastrangelo
 Philip Mingione
 Amanda Moran
 Justin Moulder
 Carlee Mulherin
 Rakin Munim
 Luke Nemecek
 Brianna Oakley
 Sana Patel
 Jason Perrotti
 Jack Pletter
 Unaiza Rana
 Madeline Rosenberg
 Peter Spodnick
 Jared Sullivan
 Swetha Tadepalli
 Luke Tassiello
 Daria Torrenti
 Connor Visnic
 Clare Zorena



**Congrats
 To All The
 Honor Roll
 Students!**



Citizenship Recognition - 7th Grade

Evan Arovas	Avery Dillon	Keyana Miller
Alexandria Barnes	Lena Hildrich	Nicole Mongillo
Katie Barretta	Rachel Holden	Mattea Salati
Joseph Bierowski	Danielle Lee	Nico Semmonella
Cooper Blanchette	Jillian Martin	Henry Westgard

Citizenship Recognition - 8th Grade

Jenna Aconfora	Mary Foley	Liam Palazzo
Mounisha Anumolu	Marcelle Gagnon	Arianna Pargen
Alexandra Bonat	Lauryn Giuliano	Dorothy Parniawski
Abigail Bowser	Taylor Gourdiere	Jay Patel
Emily Bretthauer	Payton Grande	Madelyn Pickett
Jake Bronson	Christopher Greco	Jack Pletter
Angelina Carlino	Alexis Halstead	John Poland
Lindsay Carloni	Nicole Kisiel	Julia Potter
Carly Chervenak	Victoria Krzysztopik	Sandrine Pyne
Marc Chodos	Hyunbeen Lee	Charmaine Robichaud
Madelyn Ciskowski	James Lee	Kelly Shaw
Amanda Coscia	Adam Leszczak	Peter Spodnick
Molly Cox	Erin McCormack	Swetha Tadepalli
Rachael Crow	Tara Mohseni	Daria Torrenti
Gina Driscoll	Jay Moon	Connor Visnic
Cailey Esposito	Amanda Moran	Clare Zorena

CASE MEMORIAL LIBRARY EVENTS

Programs at the Case Memorial Library are free (except as noted for materials charges) and open to the public. Library hours are as follows: Monday and Thursday 10-8; Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday 10-5; Saturday 10-4. The Library will close at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, December 24 in observance of Christmas Eve. The Library will be closed on Thursday, December 25, Friday, December 26, and Saturday, December 27 in observance of Christmas and Thursday, January 1 and Friday, January 2 in observance of the New Year.

Registration is highly recommended for all Library events.

Weekly Storytimes

Come to our weekly storytimes to have fun, meet new friends, and set your child on the path to lifelong learning!

Lapsit Storytime

Our lapsit storytimes are for babies and toddlers up to 24 months and feature nursery rhymes, music, and movement. Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. Visit casememoriamlibrary.org/storytime.htm for upcoming dates.

Two-Year-Old Storytime

Our 2-year-old storytimes feature storytelling, music, and movement. Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. Visit casememoriamlibrary.org/storytime.htm for upcoming dates.

Three to Five-Year-Old Storytime

Our 3 to 5-year-old storytimes feature storytelling, rhymes, finger plays, and a craft activity. Mondays at 4 p.m. Visit casememoriamlibrary.org/storytime.htm for upcoming dates.



Case Memorial Library

176 Tyler City Road, Orange, CT 06477
203-891-2170

www.casememoriamlibrary.org

Events for Children

Holiday Teddy Bear Storytime

Monday, December 22, 6:30 p.m.

Bring your bear and blankie and your favorite stuffed animal. For children ages 2-5. Registration is required and begins Monday, December 8 in the Children's Department.

Drama Workshop: Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

Saturday, January 10, 1:30 p.m.

Join drama specialist Ingrid Schaefer and participate in a short play version of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory followed by fun themed activities including a donut on a string eating contest, M&Ms relay, golden egg relay, bubble blowing contest, and more! Finish by making your own ice cream cone and eating it! For children and teens ages 9 and up. Space is limited. Registration is required and

begins Saturday, December 27 in the Children's Department.

Events for Teens

Book Chat Café

Tuesdays, January 13 & February 24, 2:15 p.m.

Held in the Amity Middle School Media Center for teens who love to read and share their opinions over refreshments. Please see Mrs. Goss.

Events for Adults

Drop-In Tech Help

Held on the first and third Thursday of each month as follows:
Thursday, December 18, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Get the answers to your technology questions in this informal, drop-in session. Our experts will be there to answer your questions about how your device works, how to load things onto it, and how to solve those annoying little problems that we all have from time to time! Help is offered on a first-

come, first-served basis.

2015 Oscar Ballot Contest

Thursday, January 15-Saturday, February 20

Cast your vote in the Best Picture, Acting, Directing, and Screenwriting categories for the 2015 Oscar nominees. Correctly guess the most Oscar winners and you'll win an Oscar DVD of your choice!

Books & Breakfast: Morning Book Discussion Group

Tuesday, January 20, 10 a.m.

Join Books & Breakfast leader Carol Davidson for a discussion of *The Hare with Amber Eyes* by Edmund de Waal. Copies will be available for checkout at the Circulation Desk. Coffee, tea, and pastries served.

Film Buffs: Foreign and Independent Film Series

Tim's Vermeer - Thursday, January 22, 7 p.m.

Tim Jenison, a Texas-based inventor, attempts to solve one of the greatest mysteries in art: How did 17th century Dutch master Johannes Vermeer ("Girl with a Pearl Earring") manage to paint so photo-realistically - 150 years before the invention of photography? PG-13. 80 minutes.

Art in the Library

December: Artwork by Audrey Galer and her young students

January: Oils, watercolors, and acrylic/pencil by Barbara Wilson, Irma Nieto, Louis Rapuano, Lawrence Huza, and Patricia Tyrell. Reception: Thursday, January 8, 5-7 p.m.

February: Watercolor/ink and photography by Daniel Rosner and John O'Neil. Reception: Thursday, February 12, 5-7 p.m.

PROTECT YOUR HOME WHEN TRAVELING THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Many families travel during the holiday season, when gatherings with family and friends require individuals to pack up their vehicles and hit the open road to reconnect with loved ones. Such get-togethers are great ways to make an already festive season even more joyous, but being away for extended periods of time may leave your home vulnerable to criminals.

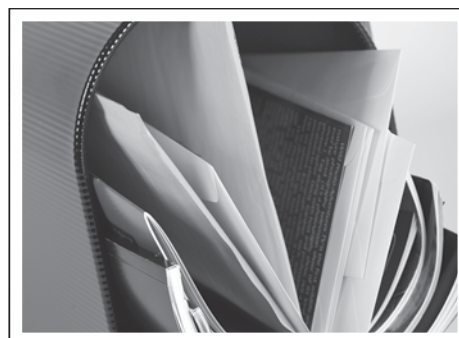
Alarm systems and neighborhood watch programs can provide some peace of mind to homeowners, but there are additional ways to protect your home when traveling this holiday season.

Use timers to make it appear as though you are home. Entertainment systems and even certain home lighting products allow homeowners to make it seem as though they are home even when they aren't. Criminals are likely to be deterred from burglarizing homes that are well-lit, and noise inside the home can give burglars the impression

that someone is inside. Use the timing device on your entertainment or sound system to play music at night, and make sure lights come on at the same time and stay on until the time you would ordinarily go to bed.

Don't allow mail to stockpile in your mailbox. A telltale sign that no one is home is mail that begins to stockpile in a mailbox. A mailbox overflowing with mail indicates to burglars that you're not home and also makes you vulnerable to potential identity thieves looking to peruse your mailbox for sensitive information. Whether you suspend mail delivery while you're away or ask a neighbor to pick up your mail each day, make sure letters are not allowed to accumulate in your mailbox while you are out of town.

Install motion detecting lights around your property. Families who routinely leave home for extended periods of time should install motion-detection devices around their properties. Such devices will



When traveling for the holidays, do not allow mail to stockpile in your mailbox, as a full mailbox may encourage criminals to burglarize your home or steal your mail in an effort to assume your identity.

immediately illuminate yards or areas around the home when movement is detected within their range. Lights flashing in the dark of night can deter burglars and may even earn homeowners discounts on their insurance policies.

Be cautious with social media. Today's criminals are tech-savvy, and some may

turn to social media to look for potential victims. When leaving home for an extended holiday vacation, do not broadcast your plans on social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter. Though you might be tempted to post photos of you and your family hitting the ski slopes or sitting poolside with grandma and grandpa, wait until you return from your trip to share such photos.

Hire a plowing service before leaving your home. Families who live in areas that are prone to heavy snowfall should hire a snow plow service before leaving. A driveway buried in snow for several days is another telltale sign that no one is home, so make sure you hire a plow service to remove snow from your driveway even when you are not home.

Travel is commonplace during the holiday season. Homeowners must take steps to protect their homes while they are away on vacation or visiting family and friends.

*Wishing a warm holiday season
to all our new and old friends!*

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Did You Know?

Gift Giving: Don't Let Your Family Stumble Into an Inadvertent Medicaid Eligibility Problem

Many people assume that the annual federal and state gift tax exclusion of \$14,000.00 per recipient also applies if you file a Medicaid application. That is not true! Gift tax rules are very different from Medicaid eligibility rules.

Gift tax rules: The current annual federal gift tax exclusion is \$14,000 per non-spouse recipient. This means you may make a gift of \$14,000 (or less) to as many people as you want in 2014 *without being required to report* the gift (or gifts) to the Internal Revenue Service. You also may make gifts for tuition and medical expenses that do not trigger a reporting requirement. Connecticut, through the Department of Revenue Services, has a similar gift reporting requirement. If you exceed these amounts and are required to file a gift tax return, it does not necessarily mean you owe a gift tax. Whether or not a federal gift tax will be owed depends on whether your reportable gifts total more than \$5.34 million (2014 figure) during your lifetime. In Connecticut, if your aggregate reportable post 2005 gifts exceed \$2 million (2014 figure), a gift tax may be payable.

Medicaid rules: Gift tax rules have nothing to do with Medicaid eligibility rules. Filing a Medicaid application *requires you to report* all gifts made during the five years immediately preceding the date of the Medicaid application ("look back period"). Depending on the circumstances, any gift made during the look back period may result in a "penalty period." This was discussed in detail in our April, 2014 Orange Town News article.

So, don't get trapped into thinking that a gift to a family member for less than \$14,000.00 is Medicaid safe; it may not be. Although there may be ways to make a gift that complies with the gift tax rules and, at the same time, does not create a Medicaid eligibility problem, you need to be properly advised before doing so. The best way to strategize gift giving in a way that is right for you is to meet with a professional advisor who will ask the right questions, listen to what you say, and make recommendations individually tailored for you.

For advice specific to you, please contact the office. We would be glad to meet with you for a no hassle, no charge initial consultation, no matter how long it lasts.

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



Steven P. Floman & Allison M. DePaola

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UNIQUE FINDS

By Annamarie Mastrangelo Amore



As human beings, each and every one of us has our trials and tribulations that we experience and, hopefully, overcome in our lives. I feel that the knowledge and perspective we garner from these experiences should be shared with others to help them in their own journey.

For that reason, I would like to share my personal story. Recently, I went through a contentious divorce after a long marriage. This was a stressful time for me, with many life-changing decisions to be made. The prospect of navigating through the process was confusing, stressful and overwhelming. Fortunately, I was referred to Attorney Jacqueline F. Barbara, who represented me in my divorce. From the initial consultation through the conclusion of the divorce. I was impressed not only by Attorney Barbara's expertise, knowledge, experience and professionalism, but also by her compassion and attentiveness. Attorney Barbara always responded to

my questions, emails and telephone calls quickly and clearly addressed all my concerns. I knew that she truly cared about me as a person, not just as another client. As a result, I began to relax, knowing that I was in good hands. I felt confident with Attorney Barbara handling my case as she earnestly fought for my rights, informing and educating me every step of the way, as she expertly handled my divorce.

Attorney Barbara received her law degree from the University of Quinnipiac School of Law in 1991 and is fluent in Italian. She concentrates her practice in the following areas: Family Law, Divorce Mediation, Personal Injury, Workers Compensation, Real Estate, Wills and Criminal. In addition, Attorney Barbara participates as a special master in both Milford and Bridgeport courts. Attorney Barbara's Practice is located in Shelton. For more information, go to www.Jacquelinebarbaralaw.com.

WEDDINGS & ENGAGEMENTS



SAVARESE, JERMINE TO WED

Louis and Paula Savarese of Orange are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter Monica Savarese to David Jermine, son of Robert and Corrine Jermine of North Haven. Monica is a graduate of Southern Connecticut State University and is currently employed as a special education teacher in the Hamden school system. David is a graduate of Fairfield University and is currently employed as an Engineer at Covidien in North Haven. The couple have set a summer 2015 wedding date.

Happy New Year!





ORANGE CUB SCOUTS HOLD "TRI-PACK MEETING"

On Monday, November 24th, Cub Scouts from Orange all came together for their annual "Tri-Pack Meeting," which consists of Packs 922, 923, and 925. This year's Tri-Pack Meeting was a special one for the scouts, who all received a lesson on fancy pigeon showing and on racing pigeons. The Cubmaster from Pack 922, Jeff Cap, opened the meeting with a welcoming message and then shared a brief video, which was provided by the NPA (National Pigeon Association) and includes information on the pigeon hobby, facts about pigeon history, and explanations that pigeons are pets to tens of thousands of people in the United States, as well as in Europe. After the video Jeff Cap opened the presentation with sharing how he is a fancy pigeon breeder. He described how he started in the hobby at the age of eight years old when a racing homer become lost and flew into his neighbor's garage and he caught the bird and brought him home to share with his father. At that time his father had explained how he raised pigeons and even earned his Boy Scout merit badge for "pigeon raising" back then. Jeff and his father kept the bird and traced it back to the owner, as each pigeon is marked with a band number that shows the year of birth and then a serial number. Each band has a unique set of numbers.

The following guest speakers were Greg and Joyce Cap. Greg explained the importance of caring for the birds and about the hundreds of different breeds there are. The scouts were excited when Greg brought out of his carrier a few fancy pigeons. There were pigeon breeds that you would never see in the wild – breeds such as Jacobin, Ice Pigeon, Old German Owl, Classic Frill, Oriental Frill, African Owl, and White Racing Homer. Scouts and parents had many questions from the cost of pigeons, to how do you care for them, to how can they get one!

The next guest speaker was Jon Spodnick, who is a well-known racing pigeon hobbyist in Connecticut. Jon's father, Larry Spodnick, a former Scoutmaster Assistant for Troop 23 in 1969 was also in attendance, as well as Jon's nephew, Jason, who is a current Boy Scout with Troop 370 from Newtown, CT. Jon explained how the birds are trained and

spoke about the importance of pigeons helping during World War I and II. Some of the most famous military pigeons were Cher Ami, President Wilson, Big Tom, Colonel's Lady, Steady, Lord Adelaine, The Mocker, and Spike. Cher Ami was the last hope of a New-York battalion. Many pigeons were already killed. Cher Ami reached his loft although he was wounded very badly. He saved 194 lives of the "Lost Battalion". Once in America, he became the mascot of the Department of Service. Cher Ami was a registered Black Check male carrier pigeon, one of 600 birds owned and flown by the U.S. Army Signal Corps in France during World War I. He delivered 12 important messages within the American sector at Verdun, France. On his last mission, Cher Ami, shot through the breast by enemy fire, managed to return to his loft. A message capsule was found dangling from the ligaments of one of his legs that also had been shattered by enemy fire. The message he carried was from Major Whittlesey's "Lost Battalion" of the 77th Infantry Division that had been isolated from other American forces. Just a few hours after the message was received, 194 survivors of the battalion were safe behind American lines. Cher Ami was awarded the French "Croix de Guerre" with Palm for his heroic service between the forts of Verdun. He died in 1919 as a result of his battle wounds. Cher Ami was later inducted into the Racing Pigeon Hall of Fame in 1931 and received a gold medal from the Organized Bodies of American Racing Pigeon Fanciers in recognition of his extraordinary service during World War I.

Jeff Cap said that many parents, scouts and siblings were so amazed and fascinated at what they learned. To read more on pigeons, you can visit the local club's website www.FaircountClub.com and click on FAQs. You can also visit the NPA website at www.npaua.com.

Cub Scout Pack 922 meets once per month as a pack and has several fun and exciting activities planned for the pack each and every year. If your son is interested in joining cub scouts (grades 1st through 5th), you can visit Pack 922's website at www.OrangeCTscouting.com for additional information and to email the Cubmaster, Jeff Cap.

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DINING WITH SUSAN

By Susan Noonan



COUNTRY CORNER FAMILY RESTAURANT

I am always thrilled when I get a recommendation for a restaurant that offers delicious food and great service. My colleague and Woodridge resident, Cynthia Lamont, from New England Home Care is absolutely in love with the food, service and staff at The Country Corner Family Restaurant in Bethany. After my recent visit I definitely agree with her. This is truly a family operation as Mo Topciu, sister Qazi, along with dad Sam & mom Sandy, have owned Country Corner since 2000 where they have been preparing fresh, made from scratch, home-cooked meals, served in a family atmosphere. Dad, Sam has been in the restaurant business for 40 years and brings his wealth of experience with a wide range of specialties.

The location is known throughout the area for its oversized, overstuffed menu and friendly, family-oriented service. Country Corner is a great place for locals with plenty of large booths and tables for groups. Its dishes have met with rave reviews, as one loyal customer said "every dish offers homemade deliciousness and the generous portions will leave you well satisfied but not overstuffed"! Country Corner's friends (like Cynthia) and customers are definitely the key to its success. Its many regular customers comprise a combination of neighbors, business professionals, locals and even tourists stopping in for a meal.

All menu items are served all day offering a mix of breakfast originals as well as a variety of lunch favorites including sandwiches, wraps, melts, burgers and options for veggie lovers. Dinner can start with a choice of appetizer, followed by one of its country salads or homemade soups. Entrée choices are made to order with the menu spanning from Italian and Greek specialties to steaks & chops, seafood and its delicious "Chef Suggestions". Fresh homemade specials are offered daily with customers saying that it is like their Grandmother's comfort food. Many of Country Corner's ingredients are organic and are sourced from local purveyors. The desserts are amazing including homemade pies, cakes, rice, tapioca, & bread pudding. Milk shakes, root beer floats, & ice cream sundaes are also offered along with coffee, tea, hot chocolate, soda, etc. Wine by the glass or bottle and a variety of beers are also available.

I would like to share my lovely colleague Cynthia's comments about her favorite restaurant: "My all time favorite as the fish is fresh, truly fresh, is the Zuppe de Pesce. The marinara sauce for this dish is homemade, flavorful and not over spiced and simply delicious. It could be made spicy if you desire. French onion soup is homemade and one of the best I've ever had anywhere-I usually get Swiss instead of provolone. NY strip steak is tender and high quality. Stuffed mushrooms are delicious. Braised short ribs yummy. Wine selection lovely. Breakfasts...Blueberry pancakes outstanding. Homemade real hash browns. Great coffee. Breakfast served anytime. Service warm friendly and makes you want to go just for that!" Thank you Cynthia for your great feedback.

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FINAL NOTES: Make a visit soon to this charming & quaint hidden gem in Bethany. Moe and his family will certainly make you feel like one of the family while enjoying Country Corner's outstanding homemade comfort food for breakfast, lunch or dinner. Just a few miles down the road on Route 63. Please remember to support our local family owned businesses. Happy Holidays to all our faithful readers and thank you so much for supporting us all year long! If you have a favorite restaurant, e-mail susan@orangetownnews.com.

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The children from Orange Community Nursery School and their families participated in the food drive facilitated by staff at the High Plains Community Center to provide food for families in need for Thanksgiving. They were very excited to deliver our donation.



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www.OrangeTownNews.com



Girl Scouts from Amity Troop 60095 delivered cuddly pillows to the Ronald McDonald House. The scouts, along with 4H of Connecticut, sewed dozens of colorful pillow cases. The Ronald McDonald House will put them in welcome baskets to be given to families who move into the facility. For more information about Girl Scouts, visit GSofCT.org or call 1-800-922-2770.

Greetings of the Season!

Pulmonary Rehabilitation at Golden Hill Health Care Center

Enhancing Your Knowledge for Better Breathing

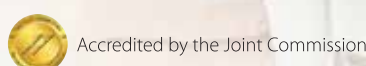
The Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program is a post-acute program for patients who suffer with chronic lung disease. The program is designed to address the needs of this population through a variety of specialty services and programs.

The goal of the Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program is to help residents achieve and maintain maximum recovery potential, increase their functional status and decrease hospital admissions and/or lengths of stay.

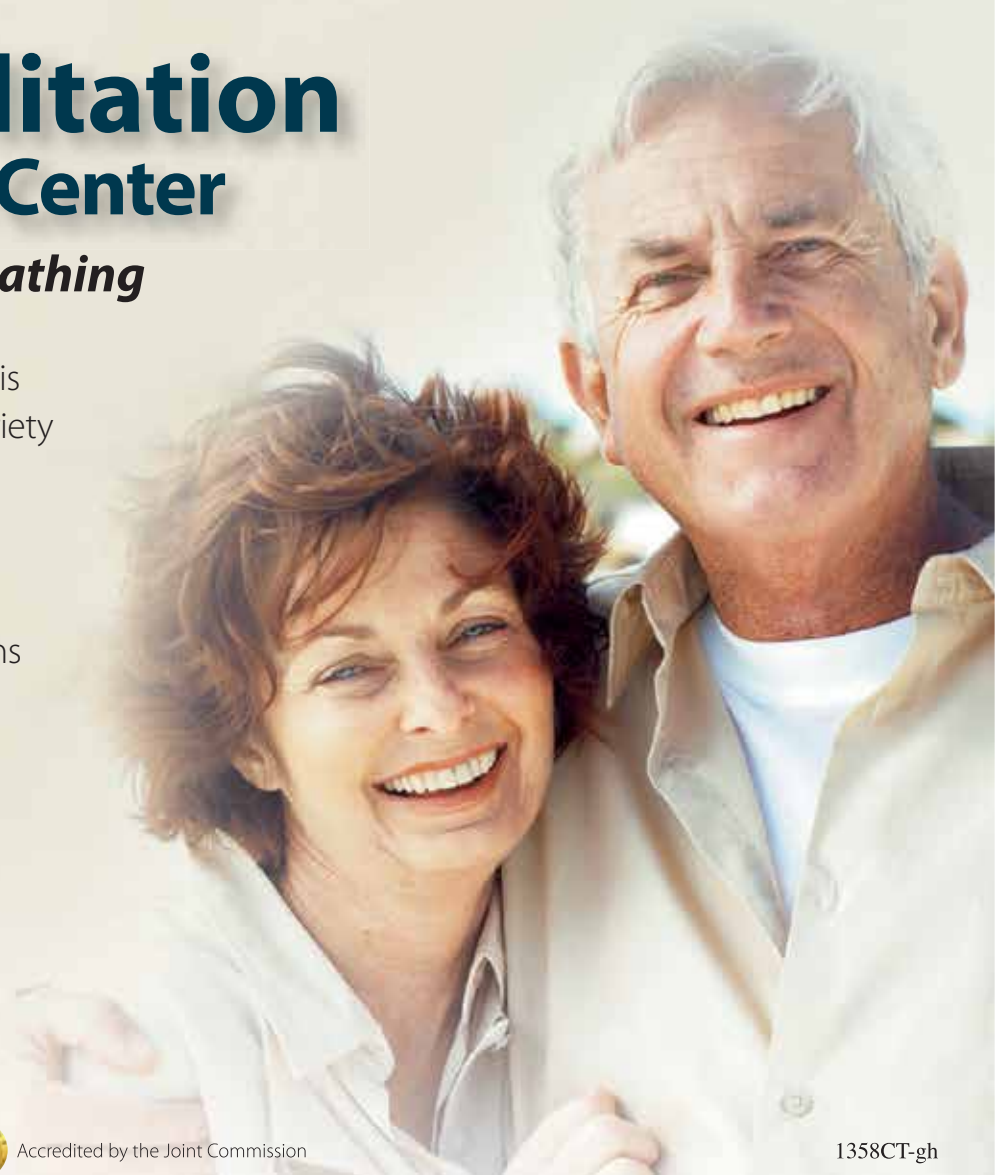
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1358CT-gh





Freddie Highmore in "Bates Motel"

Q: I am a huge fan of "Graceland," and I'm anxious to know if it will be back for another season. Can you give me any good news? -- Dana F., via email

A: I love being the bearer of good news: The USA Network has indeed renewed the crime thriller for a third season. Fans were getting a bit antsy for some news, since it seemed to take a bit longer than usual for the network to decide on the pickup. But we can all breathe more easily now, knowing that we won't be left hanging after season two's awesome cliffhanger finale. There's no word yet on a premiere date, but I'd look for it come summer 2015.

Q: I need my "Rizzoli and Isles"! — Gina D., Conyers, Georgia

A: Well, that wasn't really a question, Gina, but I think I catch your meaning. You're wondering when TNT's hit procedural crime drama will return from its midseason hiatus to finish out its fifth season, right? You have just a little while longer to hang on. Our favorite cop and doctor team (**Angie Harmon** and **Sasha Alexander**, respectively) will be back Tuesday, Feb. 17, at 9 p.m. ET/PT. If you're a "Perception" fan, you'll be happy to know that it also returns that same night at 10 p.m., right after "Rizzoli and Isles."

Q: My husband and I are fans of "Bates Motel." I would like to know if it's coming back and when. -- Gert B., Rochester, New York

A: A&E's mesmerizing adaptation of the classic **Alfred Hitchcock** movie will return for its third season this coming March. Expect 10 more spine-tingling

episodes of the **Vera Farmiga** and **Freddie Highmore**-starring thriller. Former "Sons of Anarchy" cast member **Ryan Hurst** joins the show for its third season, cast in the role of Chick Hogan, an ex-con who owns a bike shop and also runs an illegal firearms operation near Dylan's new farm. He will butt heads with Dylan's father, Caleb, who's played by another "Sons," alum **Kenny Johnson**.

Q: I am so happy that "Hot in Cleveland" has returned for another season -- it's hard to find a good, fun comedy these days starring such wonderful and hilarious actresses. My daughter told me that she heard that it won't be back after this season. Please tell me she's wrong. -- Genevieve G., via email

A: I am sorry to have to tell you that your daughter is correct: The folks at TV Land recently announced that the current 24-episode sixth season of the hit comedy will be its last. In a statement from TV Land: "After five incredible seasons of 'Hot in Cleveland,' the sixth season, currently in production, will be its last. It's been an honor to work with **Valerie Bertinelli**, **Jane Leeves**, **Wendie Malick** and the incomparable **Betty White**. We will continue to celebrate the show and are looking forward to a fantastic series finale."



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Dear Community and Friends:

Changes are imminent at Saxon-Kent. We are downsizing. We are moving next door (where the shoe store was) in the same shopping center, Hitchcock Plaza in Orange. Our address and phone number will remain the same.

Our hours will change. We will be open from Tuesday through Saturday. We will be closed on Sunday and Monday. Our new hours are as follows: Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 10am - 5:30pm, Thursday 10am-6:30pm, Saturday 10am - 2pm.

What won't change is our devotion to our post-breast surgery, wig and compression customers, the people we will continue to serve. Our fittings and billings and alterations will be done in the same professional and compassionate way as we've done these many years.

These changes are being made with mixed feelings. We are looking forward to the future, but will miss those customers we will no longer be seeing on a regular basis.

Thank you all.

Very truly yours,

Betty, Kim, Nola, Harriet and Lorena

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The 4 year old class at Orange Community Nursery School had lots of fun decorating their flat gingerbread houses. They did a beautiful job with them, each one a sweet unique creation. They could hardly wait for the end of the day so they can take them home to eat. Yum!



Three year olds at Orange Congregational Church Nursery School celebrate Native American culture by holding a pow wow before Thanksgiving.



To kick off the holiday season, in November Mary L. Tracy School hosted Clint Chartier, a representative of the Plains Indians. Mr. Chartier brought to life the Native American culture. Pictured here, preschoolers are learning about the traditions of the first American land-dwellers. This month, all students are continuing to learn about tradition by sharing personal family traditions.



A few children from the 3 year old class at Orange Community Nursery School enjoy a story in our reading loft. They love to climb in and sit in the bean bag chairs and have the teachers read them a good book. If you would like information about our program, contact us at 203-795-3869 or visit our website www.ocnskids.com.

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WHEN

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8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

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- Citizenship or immigration status and certificate of naturalization, if applicable
- Tax returns for previous years
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- Policy numbers for any current health insurance plans covering members of your household
- Information about employer-sponsored coverage you or someone in your household is eligible for

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With the children are staff members Nicole DeAngelo and Danielle Seeley, (far left) and Emily Campagna and Shirley Klinger, (far right).

CHILDCARE CENTER MAKES SENIOR THANKSGIVING BASKETS

Thanks to the generosity of the children and parents of Holly Hill Childcare and Learning Center, several senior residents of Orange enjoyed bountiful Thanksgiving baskets filled with everything needed for a wonderful holiday dinner, along with a grocery gift card. Debbie Manson Fedorko, assistant director said, "The Thanksgiving food drive is the perfect opportunity for our staff to teach our young people a very valuable lesson...the meaning of caring and giving."

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Anthony Coscia, Daniel Olson & Kyle Marieb.

TROOP 925 SCOUTS COMPLETE EAGLE PROJECTS

A Boy Scout Troop 925 Eagle Court of Honor was held for two Amity High School students, Anthony Coscia and Kyle Marieb, and a Christian Heritage School student, Daniel Olson. The ceremony was held on November 9 at the Holy Infant Guild Hall. The three Orange residents completed their Eagle projects within the town. The ceremony included four additional Eagle Scouts in attendance, joining the three awardees in the Eagle Charge, led by Scoutmaster, John Wesolowski. The young men were also presented with citations from the Town of Orange by First Selectman James Zeoli and a State of Connecticut legislative citation by Representatives Paul Davis and Themis Klarides.

Anthony Coscia's Eagle project was to build a 14x14-foot observation deck with railings and a concrete landing pad on the back of Camp Cedarcrest's small camp office. The deck provides additional space for meetings in a natural setting and a beautiful view of

the pond. Anthony honored his father, Tony Coscia, by selecting him as his Mentor.

Kyle Marieb's Eagle project was to coordinate the acquisition of materials and supervise the construction of twenty additional wooden benches for the Orange Country Fair. The benches matched the current ones and were distributed throughout the fairgrounds to provide resting places for fairgoers. Kyle selected fellow Troop 925 Eagle Scout, Frank Kachmar Jr., as his Mentor.

Daniel Olson's Eagle project involved the conservation of bats, which have been threatened by the White Nose Virus. Working with the Orange Conservation Commission, Daniel installed several bat houses on local green space and included a QR code to raise awareness. Daniel selected two fellow Eagle Scouts for his mentors: his grandfather, Richard West, and David Kraus of the Orange Conservation Commission and Yale School of Forestry.

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CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS



OCW presents ShopRite gift cards to Orange Community Services.

ORANGE COMMUNITY WOMEN HELP NEEDY FAMILIES

Orange Community Women (OCW) donated nine (9) \$30 ShopRite gift cards to Orange Community Services to help needy families in Orange during the holiday season. Pictured above are Susan D'Orso (left) and Maureen Boian (right) of OCW presenting the gift cards to Kim Callahan (center) of Orange Community Services department.

Orange Community Women is a community service organization which seeks to unite the women of Orange and surrounding areas to participate in community service. Some of the activities we undertake throughout the year include: hosting gatherings with the Tracy Bunch, providing holiday gift certificates to families in need, hosting gatherings for the seniors at Silverbrook Estates, supporting Girl Scout and Boy Scout service projects, providing an Amity Scholarship to a graduating senior each year, and participation in town events such as Relay for Life.

New members are welcomed! Please contact Donna Wesolowski if interested, 203-799-3519.

GIVE ONE LAST GIFT THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

The American Red Cross encourages eligible blood donors to give one last gift this holiday season and discover the true meaning of giving by donating blood. Busy holiday schedules and seasonal illnesses, like the flu, can often mean fewer donors giving blood. But for patients with cancer or other illnesses or injuries requiring blood transfusions, the need for blood is constant and doesn't get a holiday break. The gift of a blood donation only takes about an hour and can give patients a chance to celebrate more holidays to come.

To encourage donations and show appreciation, all those who attempt to donate blood December 24 through January 4, 2015, will receive a long-sleeve Red Cross T-shirt, while supplies last. Eligible donors with all blood types are needed, especially those with type



O negative, A negative or B negative. To learn more about donating blood and to schedule an appointment, download the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visit redcrossblood.org or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

The following sites in our area are participating:

- December 24, 2014: 8 a.m. - 1 p.m., New Haven Jewish Community Center, 360 Amity Road, Woodbridge; and
- December 26, 2014: 11 a.m. - 4 p.m., 203 Urgent Care Center, 109 Boston Post Road, Orange.



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THE OSBORNE HOMESTEAD MUSEUM

The Garden Club of Orange, once again (for the fourth season) will be participating in the holiday event at the Osborne Homestead Museum in Derby, CT. The theme is "Holidays at the Symphony". Approximately 9 area garden clubs participate in the celebration. Each club is assigned an area or room with a suggested theme. This year The Garden Club of Orange is responsible for decorating the kitchen and pantry. And our theme is percussion instruments - drums, bells, etc. Thank you to participating members Marion Rizzo, Violet Nastri, Sandy Horling, Diane Geary, Diana DeFillippo, Elly Torello, Nancy Bartel, Patti Logioco, and Nettie Bartocetti.

The event will be open to the public (at no charge - donations are welcome) from November 28th through December 20th, Thursday through Sunday, 10 AM - 4 PM. For further information call 203-734-2513.

The Garden Club of Orange is a member of The National Garden Clubs, Inc., The New England Region of Garden Clubs, Inc., and The Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut, Inc.

MANY HAPPENINGS AT THE GARDEN CLUB OF ORANGE

December is a busy time for members of The Garden Club of Orange. We did our annual decorations for The Case Memorial Library's rotunda in Orange on November 24th. On December 2 we made wreaths for all public buildings in Orange. Our big event coming up is the "Home for the Holiday" House Tour on Sunday, December 14, 2014 from 12 noon to 4 PM. Tickets are \$25.00 per person which includes the tour of five homes and the tea from 2:30 to 4 PM. This is a major fundraiser for The Garden Club of Orange. With your support we are able to continue with our beautification of Orange. Tickets are available by calling Pat Dray at 203-877-7092 or email Holidayout@optonline.net.

The Garden Club of Orange is a member of The National Garden Clubs, Inc., The New England Region of Garden Clubs, Inc., and The Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut, Inc.

Visit our website at www.OrangeTownNews.com

The Garden Club of Orange

presents



Sunday, December 14, 2014
12:00p.m. - 4:00p.m.

ENHANCE YOUR HOLIDAY SPIRIT!

Tour five homes beautifully decorated by Members of the Garden Club of Orange.

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Questions? HolidayTour@optonline.net

The Garden Club of Orange is a member of The National Garden Clubs, New England Region, and The Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut.

CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

DECEMBER & JANUARY EVENTS AT THE JCC

All events take place at the Jewish Community Center, 360 Amity Road, Woodbridge unless otherwise stated

December Events

Movie Night

A Rugrats Chanuka

Thursday, December 18, 4-6pm

Gather 'round for a free family movie every Thursday in the JCC Living Room. We've got a great lineup of free flicks & popcorn so you can just drop in and watch with your friends and families! Everyone welcome. Contact: Anne Grant, (203) 387-2522 x300, anneg@jccnh.org.

Happy Feet

Thursday, January 1, 2015, 4:00-6:00pm

We've got a great lineup of free flicks & popcorn so you can just drop in and watch with your friends and families! Everyone welcome. Contact: Anne Grant (203) 387-2522 x300.

Anastasia

Thursday January 8, 2015, 4:00-6:00pm

We've got a great lineup of free flicks & popcorn so you can just drop in and watch with your friends and families! Everyone welcome. Contact: Anne Grant, (203) 387-2522 x300, anneg@jccnh.org.

March of the Penguins

Thursday, January 15, 2015, 4:00-6:00pm

We've got a great lineup of free flicks & popcorn so you can just drop in and watch with your friends and families! Everyone welcome. Contact: Anne Grant, (203) 387-2522 x300, anneg@jccnh.org.

Senior Self-Defense Workshop

Friday, December 19, 12-1:30pm

Join visiting instructor Bob Paul for a free self-defense workshop for seniors in our Living Room December 19th at

noon! Bob offers self-defense instruction with a side of humor. Contact: Anne Grant, (203) 387-2522 x300, anneg@jccnh.org

December Vacation Programs

Full day childcare available 9:00am-4:00pm; extended care available 7:00-9:00am and 4:00-6:00pm; Kosher morning and afternoon snack provided, swimming, crafts, outdoor play and more.

Friday, December 26

Come watch James and the Giant Peach; \$42

AfterSchool/Kids Klub; \$52 Member/\$62 Non-member

Monday, December 29

Come run through the obstacle course; \$45. AfterSchool/Kids Klub; \$55 Member/\$65 Non-member.

Tuesday, December 30

Hands on Animals with Curious Creatures; \$45. AfterSchool/Kids Klub; \$55 Member/\$65 Non-member.

Wednesday, December 31

Come to our annual New Year's Eve Ice Cream Party & Balloon Animals by Evan Gamberdella. NO PM CARE AVAILABLE. \$45. AfterSchool/Kids Klub; \$55 Member/\$65 Non-member.

Bagels and Books!

Sunday, January 11, 2015, 10:30am-12:30pm

This monthly breakfast schmooze provides a comfortable and welcoming space for families of all backgrounds and denominations to come together and celebrate Jewish values through an interactive story-time, singing, dancing and craft activity! Ages 2-5. Contact: Laura Ross, laurar@jccnh.org, 203-387-2JCC.

January Events

Movie Night

Happy Feet

Thursday, January 1, 4-6pm

Gather 'round for a free family movie every Thursday in the JCC Living Room. We've got a great lineup of free flicks & popcorn so you can just drop in and watch with your friends and families! Everyone welcome. Contact: Anne Grant, (203) 387-2522 x300, anneg@jccnh.org

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Vacation Program (K-8)

Friday, January 2, 9am-4pm

Magic Show by Evan Gamberdella; \$45. AfterSchool/Kids Klub; \$55 Member/\$65 Non-member. Download form and give it to Kari McNerney, JCC AfterSchool Program Director: (203) 387-2522 x236, karim@jccnh.org.

Tuesday, January 6, 8:30am-4pm

Make your own slime! Full day childcare available 8:30am-4pm. With extended care available 4-6pm. Kosher morning and afternoon snack provided, swimming, crafts, outdoor play and more.

\$44 AfterSchool, \$55 Member, \$65 Non-member All students must register by Thursday, January 2nd. Registrations after January 2nd there will be a \$10 late fee. Download form from [http://www.jccnh.org/after-out-of-](http://www.jccnh.org/after-out-of)

school and give it to Kari McNerney, JCC AfterSchool Program Director: (203) 387-2522 x236, karim@jccnh.org.

Monday, January 19, 7am-6pm

A variety of creative, fun, stimulating activities in a friendly atmosphere. Swimming, crafts, outdoor play and more. Full day childcare available 9am-4pm. Extended care available 7-9am and 4pm-6pm. Kosher morning and afternoon snack provided. Contact: Kari McNerney, karim@jccnh.org, 203-387-2522.

Live Jazz with Blue Plate Radio

Begins Wednesday, January 7, 2015, 5:00pm on a weekly basis

Join us in the Living Room for free Live Jazz Series, taking place on the first and third Wednesdays of every month from January through April 2015. We'll be listening to local jazz musicians brought to us through Blue Plate Radio, a popular online jazz station. Future Dates: January 21, February 4, February 18, March 4, March 18, April 1, and April 15. Contact: Anne Grant, (203) 387-2522 x300, anneg@jccnh.org.

Preschool & Kindergarten Open House

Sunday January 11, 2015, 12:00-2:00pm

Explore Yeladim Early Learning Center's dynamic hands-on learning environment. Meet our experienced staff, spend time in our classrooms, learn about enrichment programs, and tour the JCC spectacular facility. Children of all faiths and backgrounds aged 3 months through kindergarten are welcome. Contact Director Lynn Bullard at 203-397-7415 or lynnb@jccnh.org.

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HOUSES OF WORSHIP EVENTS

OUR LADY OF SORROWS CHURCH CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

Our Lady of Sorrows Church announces its upcoming Christmas Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve: Midnight Mass (12:00am), with schola choir and violin.

Christmas Day: 9:00am and 1:00pm

The church is located at 378 Spring Street in Orange (Racebrook Rd to New Haven Ave.)



Our Lady of Sorrows

ORANGE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH HOLIDAY SERVICES

Longest Night Service:

December 17 at 7:00 pm.

This service is a reminder that the time leading up to Christmas is a time for us to pause and reflect on the joy that will come. It is also a time for those who find this year challenging to join in a quiet, contemplative service of hope and healing.

The Joy of Christmas:

December 24, 4:00 pm

The Annual Christmas Pageant for Children and Adults 'An Instant Pageant'

December 24, 10:00 pm

A Service of Lessons, Carols, and Candlelight

Weekly Worship Services:

8:00 am in the Chapel

10:00 am in the Sanctuary

We invite you to join us each Sunday for worship and a cup of coffee afterwards.

Good people! Inspiration for living!

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!



Orange Congregational Church

TEMPLE EMANUEL ADULT EDUCATION SERIES

A film, "The Territory", directed and produced by Dmitriy Khavin will be presented as part of the Temple Emanuel Adult Education Series at 4 pm on December 13. Khavin will be at the showing to discuss the film and share his insights. It is an intimate look into the lives of Israelis from the former Soviet Union who have made their new home in the West Bank settlements. Some residents have moved looking for cheaper housing, some are motivated by Zionist ideology, and all are influenced by their experience of being an oppressed minority in the Soviet Union. "The Territory" (running time 42 min.) is in Russian, Hebrew and Arabic with English subtitles. The trailer: vimeo.com/50307975. Temple Emanuel is at 150 Derby Ave., Orange.



Temple Emanuel

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST COMMUNITY CAROL SING

Community Carol Sing, Sunday, December 14th at 3:00 p.m., at the First Church of Christ, Meetinghouse Lane, Woodbridge. Bring family and friends to join us at the church sanctuary to sing favorite Christmas carols. A reception will follow in the Parish House.



CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

The Church of the Good Shepherd is busy preparing for Christmas and invites you to enjoy one of our upcoming services. On Sunday, December 14, we will celebrate the Eucharist with Rev. Canon Tim Hodapp. Tim is the Canon for Mission Leadership with the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut and works with parishes, like ours, who are in transition. Immediately following the 9 a.m. service, Tim will discuss the process ahead for the Church of the Good Shepherd as we select our next Rector.

On Sunday, December 21, we will celebrate two services. The early morning service at 7:45 a.m. is for all those early-birds who still have holiday shopping to do. At the 10:30 a.m. service, the Christmas Pageant will be showcased for children of all ages. Immediately following the Pageant, we will host our Annual Cookie Swap and Wassail Party. On Christmas Eve, Wednesday, December 24, our Choir will begin singing at 4:30 p.m. and our service will begin at 5 p.m. We are honored to have the Reverend Dexter Cheney celebrate Christmas Eve with us, as well as on Sunday, December 28, when we resume our regularly sched-

uled services at 7:45a.m., followed by the Children's Service with the JAM Band at 9 a.m. and concluding with a Choral Eucharist with the Choir at 10:30a.m. In addition to celebrating the Eucharist each week, we offer a community rich with fellowship.

This can be enjoyed on Saturday, December 13th when Pageant rehearsals begin at 9a.m. All are welcome to participate in this year's Pageant. You can never have enough angels and shepherds. On Saturday, December 20th, our Church ovens will be on and all interested bakers are invited to help bake cookies for our Annual Cookie Swap that will take place on Sunday, December 21st immediately following the 10:30a.m. service. If you prefer to bake at home, then please bring 3-4 dozen of your favorite holiday cookies to share with others at the Cookie Swap and Wassail Party.

For more information, please call the Church Office at 203-795-6577 or email us at thegoodshepherd@optonline.com. Our office is located at 680 Racebrook Road and is open Monday through Friday, 9a-12noon. For ongoing announcements, please visit the Church of the Good Shepherd's Facebook page.

ST. LAWRENCE CHRISTMAS CONCERT 2014

St. Lawrence Church is pleased to announce that its annual Christmas concert will take place on Sunday, December 21st at 2:00pm. This year's program of holiday favorites features several wonderful guest artists from the area, who have performed nationally and worldwide: organist and pianist Jean Pierre Dumont, violinist Kate O'Brien, Kathy Bizub on trumpet, Barbie Harger, soprano, and the St. Lawrence Choir. The performance is led by Orange resident, Cantor/Music Director/tenor soloist Gary Harger, who has been featured on Broadway, National Tours, and with international opera houses and symphonies.

St. Lawrence Church is located at 505 Shelton Avenue in Huntington, CT. The concert is free and open to the general public --- all are welcome!

HOUSES OF WORSHIP

CONGREGATION OR SHALOM EVENTS

Coffee & Learn! Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m. New topic each week. Please join Rabbi Wainhaus.

LATKES & MAGIC - Friday, December 19th (following the regular Friday night Service). Join us for this fun filled evening. We will light the menorah in the lobby at 7:00 pm and then gather in the Sanctuary for a brief Friday night service, the Oneg Shabbat will feature a magic show, latkes and gelt!



Congregation Or Shalom

ZUMBA GOLD at Congregation Or Shalom on Tuesday and Thursday nights at 7 p.m. Classes are easy to follow, lots of fun and no experience needed. Burn lots of calories and meet new friends. For information, call Robin at 203.314.8176, or temple office at 203.799.2341

Congregation Or Shalom is located at 205 Old Grassy Hill Road in Orange.

HANUKKAH AT TEMPLE EMANUEL OF GREATER NEW HAVEN

Come join the fun and celebrate Shabbat Hanukkah at Temple Emanuel. On Friday, December 19, we will welcome Shabbat with a music-filled service led by Rabbi Michael Farbman with the TE Band, the TE Childrens' Choir and the newly-formed TE Intergenerational Choir. We will fill the sanctuary with the light of our chanukiot and enjoy a delicious latke dinner with family and friends. All are welcome to participate in this joyous annual event. The service begins at 6pm; dinner reservations are required, and can be made by calling the TE office or going to our website. Not a member of TE? Come check us out. Temple Emanuel is located at 150 Derby Ave. (Rt. 34) in Orange. For more information about this and other services and events at Temple Emanuel, please go to www.templemanuel-gnh.org, or call the TE office at 203-397-3000.



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DOLLAR\$ AND \$ENSE

A TRUE GIFT

By Roberta L. Nestor

Gift-giving in its traditional sense rarely has strings attached. When you purchase something for someone, and they don't like the gift because it is the wrong size, color or brand, they can return the gift and or exchange it for something else they do like. Once you give the gift, it is a completed transaction. Gift-giving money is somewhat similar. You can give someone the gift of cash, but you can't tell them what they can or cannot do with the cash. There are many myths surrounding "cash gifts" and what you can and can't do.

How much can you give?

You can give the gift of cash in any amounts. There are no limits on how much you can gift. There is, however, a limit on how much you can gift without incurring a gift tax or without having to file a federal gift tax return. That limit is set each year and in 2014 (and 2015) you can gift up to \$14,000 to each individual. A husband and wife could collectively gift a child or individual family member \$28,000 and not have to file a gift tax return. This is called the gift tax exclusion.

Are there tax advantages to gifting each year?

In short, no. Despite what many believe, there are no individual tax advantages to the donor – the person giving the gift. If you are gifting amounts over the \$14,000 (for example, a home, larger cash gift or a business) you should be filing a federal gift tax return. While there may not be any tax implications, the IRS is tallying up gifts to make sure they don't exceed the lifetime gift tax exemption. This is the total amount that can be given away by an individual over his or her entire lifetime to any number of people that would be tax free. The lifetime gift exemption is indexed for inflation and for 2015 will be \$5.43 million.

Will I have to pay any state taxes for gifting?

Over the last decade, the few states that imposed stand-alone gift taxes have been largely abandoning them. In 2001, there were only four states that imposed true gift taxes; of course, CT was one of them. However, the other three states (Louisiana, North Carolina and Tennessee) have since repealed their gift tax.

Connecticut remains the only state that imposes a gift tax for gifts exceeding \$2 million. That is unified with our estate tax with a top rate of 12 percent and also an exemption of \$2 million. Of course, this only applies to gifts that exceed the federal exemption amount of \$14,000.

In summary, the rules are simple: There are no tax benefits to receiving or giving gifts of cash, and there are no tax implications of gifting cash unless you exceed the lifetime exemption of \$2 million for the state of CT and \$5.43 million for federal taxes. So, why do people give the \$14,000 gift of cash each year? Some parents reach a stage in their life when they feel like they will not outlive their savings and perhaps won't even be able to spend it all. They may see their adult children struggling and in need of funds for many reasons, college for the grandkids comes to mind. Gift-giving can also be a means of removing assets from your estate. This usually comes into play when there is a potential long term care situation, you don't want the nursing home (or state) to get your home or savings, so you start a pattern of gifting each year.

Whatever the reason, you truly need to understand federal and state gift tax rules especially if it involves a long term care situation. Gift-giving a home or assets bring upon different rules and tax implications; you should always consult an attorney, tax advisor or financial advisor if you are unsure of the implications of gifting, especially as it relates to long term care.

Happy Holidays to All and Best Wishes for the year ahead!

Roberta L. Nestor is a financial advisor practicing at 491 New Haven Avenue in Milford, CT offering retirement, long term care, investment and tax planning services. She also offers securities and advisory services as an Investment Adviser Representative of Commonwealth Financial Network – a member FINRA/SIPC and a Registered Investment Adviser. Fixed insurance products offered through Nestor Financial Network are separate and unrelated to Commonwealth. Commonwealth Financial Network or Nestor Financial Network does not provide legal or tax advice. You should consult a legal or tax professional regarding your individual situation. Roberta can be reached at Nestor Financial Network, 203-876-8066 or roberta@nestorfinancial.com.

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HISTORY CORNER

By Ginny Reinhard



Did They Have Black Friday Then?

Let's go back for a minute to view New England's war on Christmas. For the first two centuries of white settlement, most people did not celebrate Christmas; in fact, the holiday was suppressed by Puritans during the colonial period and ignored by their descendants. It was actually illegal to celebrate Christmas in Massachusetts between 1659 and 1681 with a fine of 5 shillings. By the middle of the 19th century, Christmas did gain legal recognition as an official public holiday in New England.

The Puritans had two reasons for the lack of a celebration on December 25th. They often pointed out that the date was incorrect for the birth of Christ and the fact that in past celebrations, it involved offensive behavior with rowdy public displays of excessive eating and drinking, mockery of the establishment, begging in the streets with invasion of the wealthier families. Caroling took on the form of begging with a song requesting pear wine and without being served, windows would be broken and other offensive acts.

So, fast forward to Christmas Eve, 1822 when Dr. Clement Clarke Moore unveiled what can be said is the most popular Christmas poem of all time. A note about Orange here...it was in 1822 that the Town of Orange was born - two great events in one year. Going on. Moore wrote his poem for the enjoyment of his children but a listener sent it to the Troy Sentinel the following December for publication, anonymously. As a writer of rhymes and poems, Dr. Moore was embarrassed by "A Visit from Saint Nicholas" but by 1844 and its success, he took ownership of it.

Up to this point, gifts were in the form of special celebratory food and family celebrations involving homemade items, and non-materialistic gift giving. As merchants both in Europe and America delved into a better way of life, the idea of buying and selling for the holiday began to take on a life of its own. Some people have the opinion that the United States put the "C" for commercialism in Christmas. But let's not sweep us all with the same sentiment.

In the first part of the 20th century, gifts were a great deal simpler than they are today. Clothing was common for adults and children with the kids being given a toy or two, yes two, for their enjoyment. In 1903, the crayon was "born" giving rise to the artistic talents of children while the teddy bear, four years later, was created by Morris and Rosie Michtom. The couple got the idea from a cartoon of the day, showing a hunting trip taken by President Theodore Roosevelt where the president had refused to shoot a bear that had been tied up for him.

Mrs. Michtom made a small stuffed bear and her husband displayed it in the window of his store with the cartoon. President Roosevelt gave the couple permission to market the bear as

the Teddy Bear. With the teddy bear snuggled in the arms of the children another toy emerged in 1914. Can you guess? It was a building toy, no not Lincoln Logs, Tinker Toys!...I still have mine. Raggedy Ann dolls followed in 1918 becoming one of the more popular dolls of that time.

Imagine, she was more popular than the porcelain dolls that were manufactured in Germany and are now worth hundreds of dollars. Checking EBay, there are not many examples of the earliest dolls as she was cloth and well loved and yes, I still have mine!

Despite the Depression of the 1930s, toy manufacturers came up with new and innovative toys, affordable to the middle class. This toy is somewhat popular today and the ones produced by Duncan are valuable indeed...ah you're right...the Yo-yo. Early Duncan's are valued at about \$35.00. After the nation made it through the Depression and World War II, the country began to prosper with more jobs, better pay and gifts were affordable, especially toys.

In the late 1940s and 50s science fiction toys were popular and Flash Gordon made the youngsters aware of life in outer space. Howdy Doody was all the rage and no I didn't get him for Christmas but another marionette from the Small Fry Club...

ok I still have him too. The Howdy Doody show, with its array of characters, spawned puzzles, stuffed animals, comic books, paint sets, sewing kits and Howdy himself as a puppet and marionette. It was not until the 1990s that I bought myself a "real" Howdy Doody marionette for \$110.00.

Toys of yester-year only gain in value both monetarily and emotionally. What is considered the first doll portraying an African-American was the Jackie Robinson doll in 1950. Who can forget the joy in the faces of the boys when receiving a model train set made by Lionel, American Flyer or Marx? Are you waiting for me to tell you that I had a train for Christmas? No, I didn't but my Uncle George let me play with his standard gauge train for several years in the 50s, set up on my basement floor.

I can still hear my Dad telling me not to go into the cellar because he had machinery down there and I might get hurt walking around. I don't remember even wanting a train, but I must have because my Dad went to great lengths to set up the 1940s track and refurbish the engine. I played with that set for hours

and wish I had it today.

As the years rolled on, more and more toys appeared on television making children's Santa Claus list longer and longer with letters to Santa more sophisticated than before. 1954 was a big year for Buck Rogers, but by the next year he was outdone by Davy Crockett, with a whopping \$100 million in

Crockett-related items. What else did we Baby Boomers want for Christmas? Well, let's see. Silly Putty, Frisbees, hula hoops, Mr. Potato Head, slot cars, Betsy Wetsy dolls, Lego blocks...yes they are not today's new toy, pogo sticks, Game of Life, matchbox cars and the Chatter telephone from Fisher Price.

Although Barbie debuted in the 1950s, she appeared in a Sear's catalog for the first time in 1961 and has engaged children ever since. Of course the boys had G.I Joe, but he was shelved at a time when the nation had doubts about our involvement in Southeast Asia, but he made a comeback in the 1980s. The 1960s brought us lunchboxes of our favorite T.V. character, Hot Wheels, the Super Ball, Tonka trucks, Twister and a myriad of board games: Clue (my favorite), Monopoly, Risk, Candyland, Go to the Head of the Class, Scrabble, Operation, Yahtzee, Cooties,

The Mousetrap and others still on store shelves today. Although the original games remain popular, some have taken on a modern twist to entice today's youngsters to try their hand at an "old" game.

Who can forget the Cabbage Patch Dolls, Nintendo, Coleco Vision, Atari and the ever-popular Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles? Although the Smurf's have made another appearance, the original

characters were more benign. In contrast to the innocence of Howdy Doody came Bart Simpson with books and clothes that parents, squeamish at best, succumbed to their children's demands.

With all of our efforts to please our children, none of us can forget the expensive toy that was played with for a brief time and gave way to the one without noise or batteries but one that energized their imagination.

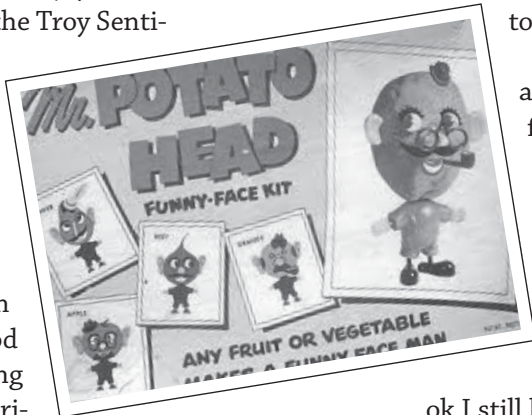
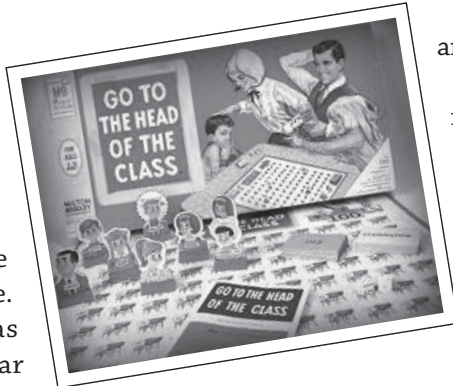
Happy Holidays to you all.

Avoid the crowds at the mall and shop at the Academy Antique and Collectible Shop at 605 Orange Center Road in Orange.

The Historical Society is showcasing unique items that are sure to please those "hard to shop for" family and friends. Open every Saturday from 10-3, society staff members are on hand for tours of the historical Academy in addition to helping you choose just the right gift.

Old toys, china, glassware, oil lamps, dolls, silver, iron kitchen collectibles, artwork, vintage jewelry and more are available at reasonable prices. For those of you who have collected the Wade animals, come see what's available at the Academy.

For information call 203-795-3106.



ENTERTAINMENT

TOP 10 MOVIES

- 1. Dumb and Dumber To (PG-13)**
Jim Carrey, Jeff Daniels
- 2. Big Hero 6 (PG)**
animated
- 3. Interstellar (PG-13)**
Matthew McConaughey, Anne Hathaway
- 4. Beyond the Lights (PG-13)**
Gugu Mbatha-Raw, Nate Parker
- 5. Gone Girl (R)**
Ben Affleck, Rosamund Pike
- 6. St. Vincent (PG-13)**
Bill Murray, Melissa McCarthy
- 7. Fury (R)**
Brad Pitt, Shia LaBeouf
- 8. Nightcrawler (R)**
Jake Gyllenhaal, Rene Russo
- 9. Ouija (PG-13)**
Olivia Cooke, Ana Coto
- 10. Birdman (R)**
Michael Keaton, Zach Galifianakis

TOP 10 RENTALS

- 1. Neighbors (R)**
Seth Rogen
- 2. Live Die Repeat: Edge of Tomorrow (PG-13)**
Tom Cruise
- 3. Hercules (PG-13)**
Dwayne Johnson
- 4. Sex Tape (R)**
Jason Segel
- 5. A Million Ways to Die in the West (R)**
Seth MacFarlane
- 6. Deliver Us From Evil (R)**
Eric Bana
- 7. Maleficent (PG)**
Angelina Jolie
- 8. Godzilla (PG-13)**
Aaron Taylor-Johnson
- 9. The Fault in Our Stars (PG-13)**
Shailene Woodley
- 10. Transformers: Age of Extinction (PG-13)**
Mark Wahlberg

CHART BUSTERS

Top 10 Pop Singles

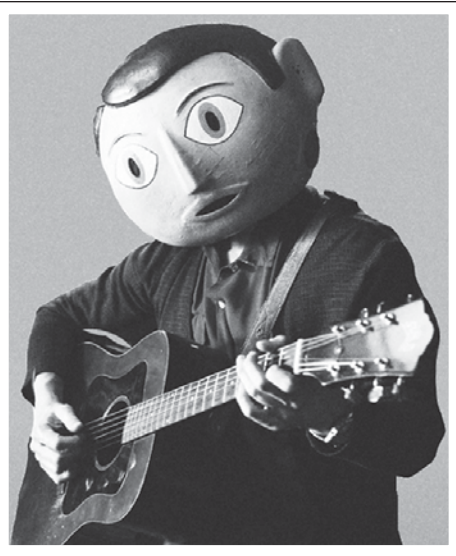
- 1. Taylor Swift**
"Shake It Off"
- 2. Meghan Trainor**
"All About That Bass"
- 3. Maroon 5**
"Animals"
- 4. Tove Lo**
"Habits (Stay High)"
- 5. Jessie J, Ariana Grande & Nicki Minaj**
"Bang Bang"
- 6. Bobby Shmurda**
"Hot Boy"
- 7. Ariana Grande & The Weeknd**
"Love Me Harder"
- 8. Hozier**
"Take Me to Church"
- 9. Iggy Azalea feat. Rita Ora**
"Black Widow"
- 10. Jeremih feat. YG**
"Don't Tell 'Em"



Carrie Underwood

Top 10 Country Singles

- 1. Carrie Underwood**
"Something in the Water"
- 2. Jason Aldean**
"Burnin' It Down"
- 3. Sam Hunt**
"Leave the Night On"
- 4. Little Big Town**
"Day Drinking"
- 5. Blake Shelton**
"Neon Light"
- 6. Keith Urban**
"Somewhere in My Car"
- 7. Tim McGraw**
"Shotgun Rider"
- 8. Maddie & Tae**
"Girl in a Country Song"
- 9. Florida Georgia Line**
"Dirt"
- 10. Frankie Ballard**
"Sunshine & Whiskey"



Michael Fassbender as "Frank"

EDITOR'S NOTE: DVDs reviewed in this column will be available in stores the week of Dec. 8, 2014.

PICKS OF THE WEEK

"Guardians of the Galaxy" (PG-13) -- Peter Quill (Chris Pratt) -- or "Starlord," as he tries to get people to call him -- is an aspiring space bandit who stumbles into possession of the All Powerful Space Gem. Well, it turns out that a merciless alien warlord really needs that space gem for his space genocide. The Galaxy's best hope lies in Starlord and his reluctant allies: an ill-tempered raccoon-hybrid (Bradley Cooper), a green assassin lady (Zoe Saldana), a rampaging alien who doesn't get figurative language (Dave Bautista, also known for pro wrestling

and MMA) and a talking tree guy (Vin Diesel).

It's everything you want from the Marvel super-summer movie, with enough of a twist so it doesn't feel like a recolored Avengers. If you missed it on the big screen, it's still well-worth picking up before the inevitable sequel.

"Dolphin Tale 2" (PG) -- In the last movie, a dolphin named Winter received a second chance thanks to a prosthetic tail fin and a group of dedicated humans. This time around, Winter loses her tank mate, and it's up to a pair of teenagers (Cozi Zuehlendorff and Nathan Gamble) to care for Winter and help find her a new companion. There's some human-based drama, too, but the real draw lies in the sea creatures, the struggles to care for them in the right way, and the aquatic photography.

Some critics have panned it as a little too saccharine-sweet. It's certainly sentimental, but there is drama enough to entertain without stealing too much screen time from the pretty animals. This is a feel-good flick that families and aspiring biologists can enjoy together.

"Frank" (R) -- An eccentric and inspiring musician spends his life wearing a cartoony paper-mache head and writing music in a notation system that he invented himself. By Frank's side are his soul-mate (Maggie Gyllenhaal) and a somewhat bewildered young drummer (Domhnall Gleeson). This oddball semi-adventure follows a brilliant-yet-bizarre frontman whose character is drawn from several real-life rockers with complicated or unique personas. Oddest of all was the decision to cast Michael Fassbender in a role that hides his face for the duration. If you've got an urge for a flick with some spunk and a skewed perspective, give Frank a chance to weird you out in a good way.

1. What was the title of Freda Payne's 1970 Motown hit?
2. Who was "Ethythe Wayne"?
3. Why were photographs of Angelo D'Aleo often missing in snaps of Dion and The Belmonts?
4. Which 1965 pop hit uses the melody from Bach's "Minuet in G major"?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "Now I've got a guy and his name is Dooley, He's my guy and I love him truly, He's not good lookin', heaven knows, But I'm wild about his crazy clothes."



1. "Band of Gold." The song tells of a couple on their honeymoon who end up sleeping in separate rooms.
2. This was the pseudonym of three Motown writers (Lamont Dozier, Brian Holland and Eddie Holland), who weren't allowed to write under their real names due to a legal dispute.
3. D'Aleo was in the Navy and wasn't always able to get back for photo shoots.
4. A Lover's Concerto, first recorded by The Toys. The only difference is the meter.
5. "Pink Shoelaces" by Dodie Stevens (born Geraldine Ann Fasquale) in 1959. In the song, "Dooley enlisted in the 'fightin' corps" but objected when they tried to put him in a uniform. He wanted tan shoes, pink shoelaces and a polka-dot vest.

Sudoku answers on page 38

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

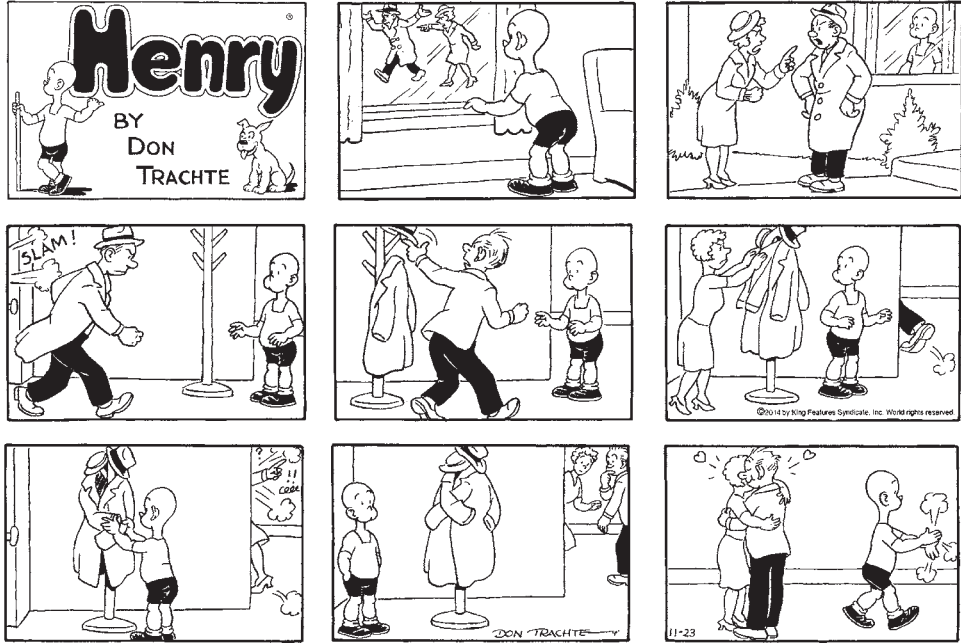
3	4			8				7
		2			9			5
	5		7			6		
1					7	9		
		6		4			7	3
	3		2		6			8
		8	1					2
	6			5				1
5			9		2	4		

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ★

★ Moderate ★★ Challenging
★★★ HOO BOY!

COMICS/CROSSWORD/HOLLYWOOD



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Church section
- 5 Pump up the volume
- 8 Blue hue
- 12 Columns' crossers
- 13 Grazing land
- 14 Crooned
- 15 One use for a GPS
- 17 Tresses
- 18 Boredom
- 19 Volcanic spewings
- 21 Faucet problem
- 24 Squid squirt
- 25 Mexican money
- 28 Transaction method
- 30 Eisenhower
- 33 X rating?
- 34 Point of view
- 35 Yuletide beverage
- 36 — carte
- 37 Novice
- 38 Exchange premium
- 39 Bookkeeper (Abbr.)
- 41 Winter forecast
- 43 Two-piece suit
- 46 Marconi's medium
- 50 Actress Falco

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- 51 Controversial oil-extraction method
- 54 Landlord's due
- 55 Enjoyment
- 56 Always
- 57 Lady —
- 58 Still
- 59 Stupefy
- DOWN**
- 1 Johnson of comedy
- 2 Smutty matter
- 3 Graceful bird
- 4 Portuguese pre-euro money
- 5 Foreman foe
- 6 Chaps
- 7 Senate staffer
- 8 Pale
- 9 Duck-speak
- 10 One
- 11 Taj Mahal city
- 16 White wine cocktail
- 20 Leave at the altar
- 22 One way to stand by
- 23 Bosc and Bartlett
- 25 Sch. org.
- 26 Conger, for one
- 27 Between-meals
- 29 Soon
- 31 Pond carp
- 32 Id counter-part
- 34 Musial of baseball
- 38 Blew reveille
- 40 Michelangelo masterwork
- 42 Killer whale
- 43 Floating ice mass
- 44 Notion
- 45 Unsettled
- 47 Prima donna
- 48 Don Juan's mother
- 49 Shrek, e.g.
- 52 Regret
- 53 Pismire

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King Crossword Answers on Page 38

HOLLYWOOD

By Tony Rizzo



Meryl Streep

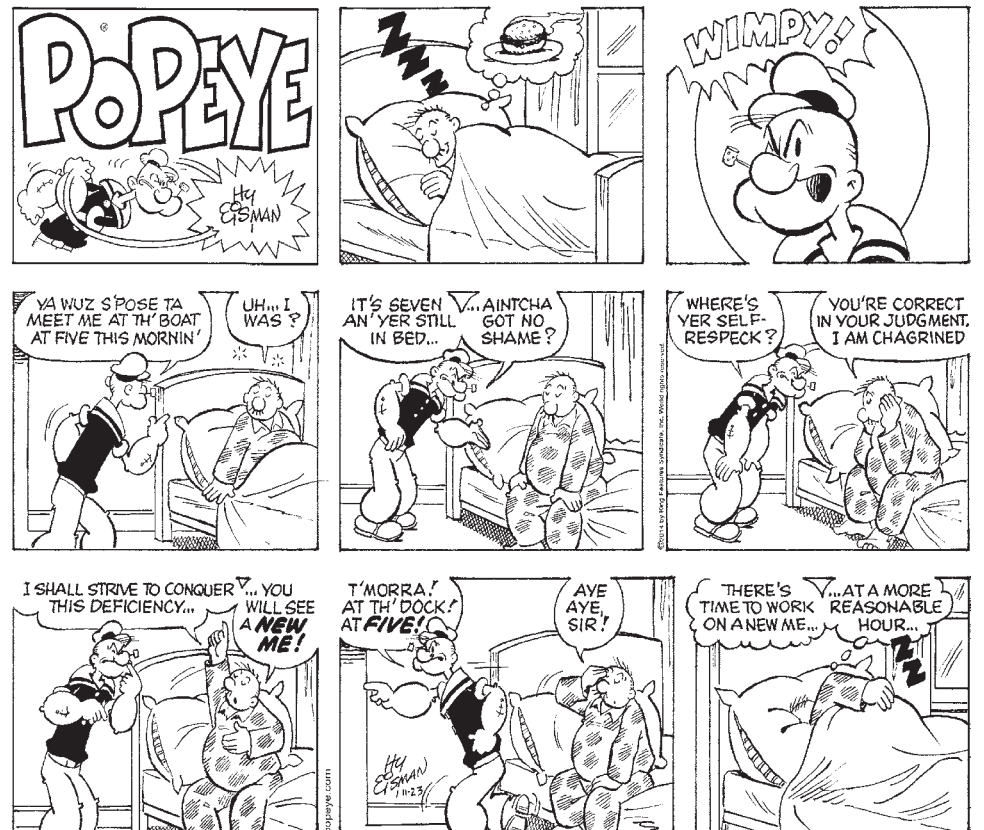
HOLLYWOOD -- Meryl Streep will transform herself into an opera singer, opposite Hugh Grant, when they start shooting "Florence Foster Jenkins" in May. Director Stephen Frears ("Philomena" and "The Queen") will turn Meryl into the real-life heiress/socialite, who lived from 1868-1944. She was a soprano known and ridiculed for her lack of rhythm, pitch, tone, aberrant pronunciation and generally poor singing ability. Meryl should have a field day with this one!

Stephen Collins, the pastor patriarch of "Seventh Heaven," recently made headlines when his wife of 27 years, actress Faye Grant, released marriage-counseling session tapes that allegedly revealed Collins' inappropriate behavior with two young girls some 30 years ago. No charges were ever filed, but when she leaked the tapes to the media, Collins was fired from the sequel to "Ted" and a recurring role on "Scandal." Despite monthly spousal support of \$13,000, Grant has been angling for a bigger share of the \$12 million Collins has amassed from his TV and film work. But the laugh is on her, because her second set of divorce lawyers have asked her to find other representation. The couple has already spent more than \$1 million in legal fees.

We're sad to report the passing of Carol Ann Susi, from cancer, at age 62. She was the voice of Howard Wolowitz's mother (mostly off-screen) on the top-rated CBS comedy "The Big Bang Theory." Ironically, her first acting job also was my first acting job, on the series "Kolchek:

The Night Stalker." In the 1974 episode titled "They Have Been, They Are, They Will Be," I played Leon Van Heusen, a TV repairman by day and a seeker of UFO's by night who goes into the woods with communication equipment to contact aliens. Carol Ann played Monique Marmelstein, Darren McGavin's secretary in many of the episodes that followed. I turned to photography and writing; she went on to appear in many shows, including "Grey's Anatomy," "King of Queens," "Seinfeld" and the film "Death Becomes Her" with Meryl Streep and Goldie Hawn.

James Maslow, who starred for four years on "Big Time Rush," dazzled us on season 18 of "Dancing With the Stars" and has danced himself into the new Sony Crackle series, "Sequestered," with Patrick Warburton and Jesse Bradford, and the upcoming thriller film "Wild is the Night." He can sing, dance and act, and he's only 24. That's what we call fancy footwork.



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UNTIL NEXT TIME: HOW TO PACK YOUR HOLIDAY DECORATIONS

Soon it will be time to bid farewell to another holiday season. By now the gifts have been unwrapped and the last of the turkey leftovers are long gone. The only task that remains is to put away all of those holiday decorations that have been decking the halls since Thanksgiving.

Although packing holiday decorations may not be a favorite task, the following strategies can save both time and effort.

Get motivated. The first supply you need when putting holiday decorations away is a healthy dose of motivation. It's easy to put off the taking down of lights or rolling up of holiday garlands, but the earlier you start the more quickly you can move on from the holiday season. Plan a day when you can pack away decorations, and do not schedule anything else for that day.

Purchase storage bins. Stock up on storage bins as they go on sale. Even if you end up with extra bins you ultimately don't need to store holiday decorations, you will no doubt find another use for them. Choose bins of various sizes and don't be afraid to use takeout containers, which can hold smaller items and be stacked inside of larger bins to keep everything neat and organized. Zip-top storage bags are also handy for ornament hooks and other small trinkets.

Find cushioning material. Fragile ornaments will need to be packed in some sort of soft wrapping to prevent breakage. Tissue paper, newspaper, old dish towels, and even faux polyester "snow" can be used to line bins and boxes. Label accordingly so you can isolate the breakable items.

Start with the tree. If you have a live tree, this should be the first item you remove. The longer the tree dries out,

the bigger the mess it creates. Take down the lights and spool onto an empty paper towel tube or package into individual plastic bags to avoid knots and kinks. Thread a tree bag over the top of the empty tree and scoop around the bottom to contain as many pine needles as possible. Drag the tree outdoors and dispose or recycle according to neighborhood collection guidelines. Vacuum up any fallen needles. If you have an artificial tree, take the same steps, but store the tree away for next year.

Divide your home up into quadrants. You likely use the same decorations in the same places each year. To make decorating easier next year, dismantle holiday displays and pack them up according to specific areas of the home. For example, store all picture window decorations in one bin and label thusly. Continue to store decorations

according to the room where they are hung. Items that are used strictly for outdoors can be grouped together and stored in the garage.

Use a giftwrap organizer. Under-the-bed storage containers are ideal for storing gift wrap and assorted accessories. You also can use a hanging shoe organizer to store bows, tape and name tags. Wrapping paper rolls also can be stored horizontally over rafters in the attic or garage.

Be especially careful with candles. Pack candles separately from other items, as candles must be kept in a relatively cool area so they do not melt when temperatures rise.

Keep an empty bin handy. Use this bin to store any gifts or decorations you buy throughout the year. This way you won't forget where you stashed them.



DEATH NOTICES

Betty (Bray) D'Ostilio

Betty (Bray) D'Ostilio, 80 of Oronoque Village, Stratford, wife of Frank D'Ostilio Sr., died peacefully in her home on Thanksgiving Day after a long illness. Born in Bridgeport, December 29, 1933, she was the daughter of the late Clarence and Edith Bray.

Betty lived most of her life in Orange and Stratford. She had many longtime friends and loved to have them and their families over to the family swimming pool in Orange for picnics and parties. It would infuriate her if it was a beautiful sunny day and nobody was using the pool. She truly enjoyed when her boys and their friends were playing in the yard and pool.

Besides, her husband of 53 years, she is survived by her sons Frank (Mary) D'Ostilio of Woodbridge and Robert (Alyssa) D'Ostilio of Cheshire, and grandchildren, Andrew, Mark, Luke, Lily and Christina.

A funeral Mass on Saturday November 29, 2014, was held at Our Lady of Assumption Church, 81 Center Road, Woodbridge. Burial was private. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the charity of one's choice in honor of Betty. To offer online condolences, please visit www.Larsonfh.com.

Natalie Livolsi Rossi

Natalie Livolsi Rossi, 96, of Orange passed away peacefully with her family by her side on November 29, 2014. She was the beloved wife of Alfred Rossi for 74 years. In addition to her husband, Mrs. Rossi is survived by her children Louise (the late Peter) Durante, Alberta (Bill) Girasuolo and John Rossi, four grandchildren Denise (Robert) Wentworth, Peter (Tina) Durante, Carrie (Joe) Lucibello, Billy (Milo) Girasuolo and 8 great grandchildren. She was predeceased by 2 sisters Mary Tarini and Vera Severino and four brothers Larry, Sammy, Joe and Tony Livolsi.

For Natalie, her family came first. She loved music and dancing and was noted for her sewing and crochet skills. She enjoyed trips to NYC to see the latest Broadway musicals. In later years, her travels included a very special trip to Italy.

A special thank you to her aides at Orange Health Care for the compassionate care she received.

Arrangements were handled by the West Haven Funeral Home at the green. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated in Holy Infant Church at 10 o'clock. Burial was in Mt. St. Peter's Cemetery. Should friends desire, contributions may be made to Alzheimer's Disease Research Unit, 1 Church Street, Suite 600, New Haven, CT. 06510. To leave an online remembrance, please visit www.westhavenfuneral.com.



Natalie Rossi

DEATH NOTICES

The Orange Town News will publish Death Notices for Orange families free of charge as a service to our readers. Family members please email notice (limit 250 words, please) to: edit@orangetownnews.com

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Joanne B Ruggiero to Shijie Jia \$370,000
- 254 WILSON ROAD**
Albert J Hansen to Wesley Zebelman \$350,000
- 864 SHAGBARK DRIVE**
Alex Filipowich to Ryan Miller \$250,000
- 318 GOOSE LANE**
Sunrise Hill Estates LLC to Robert McNulty Jr \$496,098
- 123 CHERRY HILL ROAD**
Christopher J Vendola to Kenneth R Waldo Jr \$540,000
- 127 SUNRISE HILL CIRCLE**
Sunrise Hill Estates LLC to Phyllis J Grabinski \$373,597
- 483 FERRY ROAD**
Peter A Persano Jr to Kevin Carrano \$349,000
- 637 SOUTH GREENBRIER DRIVE**
Gino Alfaro to Peter A Persano \$469,900
- 38 SKYVIEW ROAD**
Thomas L Hutchison to Gino E Alfaro \$945,000
- 483 HALLIWELL AVENUE**
National Residential Nominee Services In to Deepa Shirali \$277,500
- 305 GOOSE LANE**
Sunrise Hill Estates LLC to Kevin J Hadlock \$512,786
- 368 GRASSY HILL ROAD**
Craig Calistro to Robert Gambardella \$302,000
- 1057 BEECHLAWN TERRACE**
Krzysztof Boddanowicz to Roberto Hipolito Rivera \$245,000

WANTED

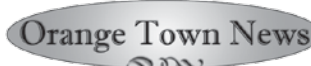
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Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

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5	1	3	9	7	2	4	8	6

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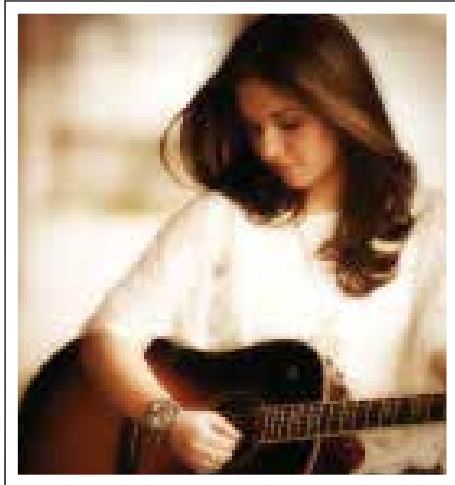
By Laura Fantarella - Orange Town News Correspondent

Chestnut Hill Road resident Tracey Saxe says he's a "sucker for a CD" so when he saw a stack of singer/songwriter Marla Morris' release, "Ready For The Rain" on the counter at Chip's Family Restaurant he immediately purchased it. Not only did he love Morris' voice and the country lyrics, he saw she was living in Nashville – the destination where Saxes' New Haven law firm, Saxe Doernberger & Vita was planning an upcoming corporate event.

As the wheels started turning about whether he could snag the country crooner to be a headliner at his firm's Nashville event, Saxes' wife Heidi realized there was actually a local connection to the singer. Marla is the daughter of Orange natives Dena (Napoli) and Michael Morris who grew up in Bethany and graduated from Amity High School.

Unsure of how to reach her, Saxe called the firm's venue, the well-known Nashville "Listening Room," and asked if they could find her. "They said 'Sure, she's played here a few times and we love her!'", Saxe said. For the 22-year-old Morris, the booking was a mystery until the night of the event when she met Saxe during the sound tests. "My friend from the Listening Room had contacted me about playing at a private event, but he didn't have much information except that it was a law firm and I had no idea who had requested me," she said. She was further intrigued when another Orange connection, former resident Nancy Mingrone Alletto called Morris' dad Michael and said her husband Ray would be a guest at the event.

On the evening of the event, Morris finally "connected the dots" and was



Marla Morris

happy to deliver a rousing show to more than 375 people who attended the annual Construction Insurance Risk Management Convention. "She put on a helluva show, people were dancing and having a ball," Saxe said. "The music was great and she was yelling 'Go Connecticut!' She writes all her own songs and she is a very impressive songwriter. I could not believe how much presence she had on stage. She's a young kid and she looks like she has been doing this for years."

It was a great gig for the 22-year-old Morris who has been performing around the country since graduating from Amity and more recently, Belmont University in Nashville. "The Listening Room was packed, which was really great -- artists rarely get to perform for that many people in Nashville very often," she said.

Morris has been hard at work writing songs and recording her latest CD, "While the Streetlights Shine" which comes out today. Visit marlamorris.com for a copy or to hear her music.

THE BROADWAY BOYS HOLIDAY CONCERT TOUR

The Broadway Boys Holiday Concert tour is coming to Fairfield University's Quick Center for the Arts on Saturday, December 20, 2014 at 7 pm. The concert will feature holiday songs from their newly released CD, Hark!, and a mix of Broadway show tunes. The concert benefits the Jamie A. Hulley Arts Foundation, www.jamiehulleyartsfund.org. Tickets are \$35 and \$40. Call the Quick Center Box Office at 203-254-4010 or purchase online at quickcenterforthearts.secure.force.com/ticket.



Matthew Dicks, AHS Students, Amy Miller and Cara McConnell.

CONNECTICUT AUTHOR VISITS AMITY REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

Matthew Dicks is a local teacher and author of the novels *Memoirs of an Imaginary Friend*, *Something Missing* and *Unexpectedly*, *Milo* and the rock opera *The Clowns*. Matthew visited Amity Regional High School on November 25th at 7pm in the AHS Library. The evening was full of laughter and fun. Matthew discussed how he became a writer, gave away prizes and answered questions. The event was hosted by the Jamie A. Hulley Foundation and AHS Young Adult Book Club.

GALLERY AT TOWN HALL FEATURE ARTIST

Patricia Brundage, MNEC will be the January/February feature artist at the Gallery at Town Hall.

As an artist and a self-taught photographer my mission is to produce a pleasing image with each click of the shutter which can be translated into a work of art either as a unique and original image, painting or combination of the two. The choice of printing medium for each image is also a major factor in the final presentation. The majority of my images are printed, matted and framed in-house after use of various software programs to enhance the original images.

I have served the photographic community as President of the Greater Bridgeport Camera Club, a Director of the Connecticut Association of Photographers, member of the Milford Arts Council, a member of NAPP and the PSA. I am currently an active member of the Shoreline Art Alliance, Nature Photographers' Network, Stratford Arts Guild, New Haven Camera Club and the Fairfield Photographers' Network. I serve as a judge and successful participant in local, national and international competitions. The New England Camera Club Council honored me with the title of master member for my photography skills and for my service to the camera club community. The numerous seminars in the area help keep me up-to-date on new methods and processing.

The adventure of the search, the variety of subjects, post processing techniques, the company of good friends and the pride in the result keeps me in the constant pursuit of new and more unique images.



LOCAL SPORTS



AMITY POP WARNER CHEERLEADERS TO NATIONALS

The Amity Pop Warner Pee Wee Cheerleaders have been practicing hard since August 1st and their hard work paid off when they came in First Place on November 15th at the New England Region Pop Warner Cheer and Dance Championship in the Pee Wee M1 category. The Pee Wee team is composed of 20 girls, aged 9-12, from Bethany, Orange and Woodbridge. During August they practice 4 or 5 nights a week and once school starts they practice three times a week and cheer at Pop Warner football games on Sunday. Their quest to go to the National Championships began in October when they competed at-and won-the Southern Connecticut Pop Warner Championships. This allowed them to compete at the Regional Championships where again they came in first.

The final stop on the road is the National Championships. They will be competing on December 9th at the ESPN Wide World of Sports complex at Walt Disney World in Orlando along with 400+ other cheer teams. Amity Pop Warner last won a National Trophy in 2010 and they are hoping to bring another trophy back home this year! Pop Warner emphasizes scholastic achievement and the girls must maintain a good academic record to be allowed to participate in the program. But, even though they are busy with school work and practice, they are spending a lot of time fundraising. Keep an eye out for these athletes as they will be out and about, holding bake sales and shaking the can at various locations or visit <http://www.gofundme.com/fk2a40> and make a donation today.



Joe Biondi '15 Signs to Play Lacrosse at Florida Southern; Evan Lumpinski '15 Signs to Play Baseball at UMass-Amherst

LOCALS BIONDI & LUMPINSKI SIGN TO PLAY COLLEGIATE SPORTS

Two Notre Dame of West Haven student-athletes made college commitments in their respective sports in front of family and friends. Joe Biondi '15 signed to play lacrosse at Florida Southern, while Evan Lumpinski '15 will take his baseball talents to UMass-Amherst.

Biondi, who hails from Orange, has been a three-year stalwart on the Green Knights lacrosse team. A midfielder, Biondi was named co-captain for the 2015 lacrosse team. He also had a stellar summer playing for Team Connecticut and Unparalleled Lacrosse in several prestigious tournaments, including the Brine National Lacrosse Classic in Maryland. "Joe is a do-it-all midfielder," said Notre Dame Head lacrosse coach A.J. Alessi. "He is a tough kid, who is an offensive threat, can shoot with both hands, and a key face-off guy for us. He had a great summer and I am excited for this college opportunity for him."

Biondi, who also plays hockey for Notre Dame, chose Florida Southern for a pair of reasons. He said, "It's a great academic school which has a unique human movement performance academy that will help me achieve his goal of becoming a physical therapist. Plus, it has had a lot of recent lacrosse success and I am looking forward to continuing that."

Biondi added, "I am thankful for my family, who helped me immensely with this process as well as all my coaches and teammates who have helped me get to this point. While I am looking forward

to my college experience, I can't wait to get both my senior year of hockey and lacrosse seasons underway."

Meanwhile, Woodbridge resident Evan Lumpinski '15 signed to play baseball at UMass-Amherst. A key contributor on last spring's Notre Dame state champion baseball team, Lumpinski is a great hitter who can play multiple positions, including outfield and first base.

Lumpinski led Notre Dame with 22 RBI's and 2 HR's last season. His .300 batting average was fourth on the team while he was second with five doubles and third on the team with 24 hits. He also had the go-ahead RBI single that gave Notre Dame the lead for good in Notre Dame's 9-2 championship-game win over Masuk last June at Palmer Field.

"I liked the coaches at UMass a lot," said Lumpinski, who will serve as a tri-captain for the Notre Dame baseball nine this coming spring. "I wanted to go to a big school, it's close to home, and I feel like I have a chance to contribute right away. They offer my major as I want to study environmental science so the combination just felt like the best fit for me."

"Evan has a great swing and had some big hits for us last year," said head coach Lou Kessler '77. "He is a strong kid, who can hit for power but go to the opposite field as well. Hitting is not easy but he can make it look easy at times with his sweet swing. He is someone you want at the plate with runners in scoring position."

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LOCAL SPORTS



Left to right: Bottom row: Kelly Thomas, Leia Foyer, Meadow Blakeslee, Jillian Martin, Jenna Walsh. Top row: Asst. Coach Bridgett Foyer, Asst. Coach John Walsh, Emily Brown, Jenna Van Hise, Catherine Thomas, Abby GaNun, Head Coach Robyn Martin, Asst. Coach John Blakeslee.

**AMITY FORCE GIRLS BASKETBALL
7TH GRADERS ARE BACK**

The Amity Force Girls Basketball 7th graders started off their preseason with taking home the winning trophy in the Milford Preseason Basketball Tournament. This is just the beginning of the basketball season and the girls are already looking strong and will be a Force to be reckoned with as the season progresses. Under the instruction of Head Coach, Robyn Martin, the girls played 5 games to bring home the trophy. Great job to all the girls and the coaches!



Billy Panzella with Joe Bonsangue of Mr. Kold Kuts in Orange.

**LOCAL STUDENT COMPLETES
EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT**

Billy Panzella, 15, is a sophomore at Joseph A. Foran High School. A Scout for nine years, he is currently under the guidance of Troop 1 Scoutmaster, Mark Krom. This holiday, Billy decided to develop and coordinate a special collection drive to benefit the local non-profit organization Boys & Girls Village, Inc. (BGV). This project will support earning an Eagle Scout designation – a first in Billy’s family.

Billy shared his reason for choosing Boys & Girls Village, Inc. as a beneficiary, “I believe BGV is a great organization that does wonderful things to help less fortunate children and families and give these kids a chance to be better and more productive citizens in their communities.”

Among the businesses hosting this special holiday collection drive are: Mr. Kold Kuts and Orange Ale House, both on Boston Post Road in Orange; The Milford Bank branches, Wines and More West, Anthony D’s Bar, Stonebridge Restaurant, Off the Hook Restaurant, all in Milford. Those wishing to donate can drop off a new unwrapped toy until December 12th. Small donation cans have also been set up at various businesses around the City to collect monetary donations.

When asked what it means to him personally to achieve Eagle Scout rank, Billy shared, “When someone reaches the rank of Eagle Scout it says something about them as a person. It shows what you are capable of doing, if you are determined and put your mind to something. It helps to teach you to be a responsible, productive member of the community.”

Project Details

Billy describes the project: “I decided to do this project because I wanted to do a service project for the Boys & Girls Village. I approached Mr. Joseph Tramuta, Co-Chair of their Board of Directors with this idea, and he paved the way for me to move forward. I have set up donation boxes in various locations around Milford and Orange. Once collected, my plan is to deliver the toys to BGV, and assist with wrapping and distributing the presents to the children. I am getting the word out to friends and family to get passed on for many to hear. I have placed posters with the boxes at the drop off locations to announce the toy drive. I was very pleased when The Milford Bank agreed to let me place boxes at their branches since they are so spread out throughout the city that it will be convenient for anyone in Milford to get to their nearest branch.”

According to the BSA’s website, Eagle Scout is the highest advancement rank in Boy Scouting. To earn the rank a Boy Scout must, progress through all other ranks in proper order, earn 21 merit badges, serve 6 months in a troop leadership position, take part in a Scoutmaster conference, plan and develop a service project and successfully complete an Eagle Scout board of review.

For more information on Troop 1 visit Troop1milford.org, or Boys Scouts of America, Connecticut Yankee Council. For more information on Boys & Girls Village, Inc. visit www.bgvillage.org.

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Sarah and Lindsay Buteux

TRADITIONAL IRISH MUSIC AT ST. GABRIEL PARISH HALL

The P.V. O'Donnell Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann session of traditional Irish music will feature Lindsay (concertina) and Sarah (fiddle) Buteux from Rockland County, New York on Thursday, December 18, St. Gabriel Parish Hall, 26 Broadway, Milford, 7:45 pm. Their father, Chris Buteux, will accompany them on guitar. Admission to the session is free. BYOB. Musicians, dancers, singers and guests are welcomed.

Sarah is an under-18 all-Ireland fiddle champion. She won first place in August 2012 at the fleadh in Co. Cavan, Ireland. Sarah and Lindsay will also be bringing handmade soaps for purchase for last minute Christmas presents!

Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (CCE), founded in 1951 in Ireland, promotes Irish traditional music, song, dance and language. Today there are 415 branches worldwide and over two million people attend Comhaltas functions each year.

For more information on the session call Tim Quinn at 203-257-8737.

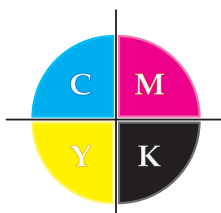


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BARK BYTES...

By Vicki & Richard Horowitz

Keep the Holiday Season Fun and Safe for Your Dog

In planning for this season's holiday festivities, it is important to keep your pets in mind. While most of us welcome the sights, sounds and smells of the season, holidays can also be chaotic—especially for dogs. Holiday festivities can interrupt a dog's routine and present a potentially unsafe situation. But by following a few common-sense tips, the holidays can be cheery for everyone—including the family dog.

Holiday foods can be harmful

- Many holiday foods can be harmful to canines, causing symptoms as mild as an upset stomach or as severe as vomiting and diarrhea. Avoid giving your dog fatty or spicy foods, bread dough, fresh herbs, alcohol beverages, caffeine and sweets of all kinds—especially those with chocolate or xylitol, an artificial sweetener.
- Particularly dangerous are cooked poultry bones. Cooked bones easily splinter, and the bone shards can cause choking, get stuck in your dog's gums or possibly damage his intestines. Instead, treat your dog to "dog bones" specifically designed for him to chew. Ask your veterinarian for suggestions.
- Discourage your dog from foraging in the garbage—secure lids on all trashcans.
- It's natural that you'd want to share holiday treats with your dog. While a little taste of turkey or sweet potatoes can make your dog happy, don't overdo it—too much of a good thing can make him sick.

Decorations are not playthings

- Keep your pet away from holiday plants, many of which are poisonous, such as holly, mistletoe, poinsettias and amaryllis (a type of lily). Also be sure all potpourri is out of your pet's reach.
- Snow globes can contain antifreeze, which is toxic to dogs. Whether in the garage or in a snow globe, keep antifreeze products away from your happy, tail-wagging dog. If there is an antifreeze spill, keep your dog out of the room while you clean up the liquid. Dilute the spot with water and floor cleaner to ensure your dog does not lick the area later.
- Keep electrical wires and batteries out of your pet's reach. Chewing or biting anything electrical can cause him shock or burns.
- Don't leave lighted candles unattended. A lit candle knocked over by a swinging tail can burn your pet or cause a fire.

Christmas trees can be hazardous

- Anchor the tree to the ceiling or wall to prevent it from tipping over.
- Hang non-breakable ornaments near the bottom of the tree.
- Avoid putting tinsel on your tree. If ingested, tinsel can twist in your dog's intestines and be deadly.
- Don't let your dog drink the Christmas tree water. The water may contain preservative chemicals, which can trigger severe indigestion in dogs. Stagnant plain water can breed bacteria and cause nausea or diarrhea to the pet that imbibes.
- Regularly sweep up fallen pine needles, as they can puncture holes in a dog's intestines if ingested.

Help your dog feel safe and relaxed

- Most dogs get very excited when guests arrive. To help your dog be calmer, exercise him prior to the festivities. After 30 minutes of walking or playtime, your dog will more likely be relaxed or want to nap.
- As a general rule, don't allow the family dog to greet unfamiliar guests since unusual activities and commotion can cause him extra stress.
- Give your dog a break from the hubbub by putting him in his crate or in a quiet room with his doggie bed. Allow him to rejoin the festivities after guests have arrived.
- Pets stressed by unfamiliar events typically pant more, so keep your dog's water bowl filled with fresh water.

Pets like presents too!

- Help your dog stay busy and out of the holiday trimmings by giving him fun, safe gifts.
- The Buster Cube™ and Kong™ are virtually indestructible puzzle toys that reward your dog with treats and keep him well entertained.

Please don't give a pet as a surprise gift!

A cute puppy might seem like the perfect gift choice, but many of these holiday presents end up at animal shelters. Owning a dog takes a genuine commitment of time and responsibility, and adoptive owners must be ready to participate in training and other activities. If someone you know seriously wants a dog, consider giving a leash and collar, or a dog training certificate from Bark Busters along with a note saying a dog of the recipient's choice comes with it. This helps ensure the lucky person gets just the right pet to bring into the family.

Following these simple tips will help make the festivities safe and happy for your whole family, including your canine companions.

Vicki and Richard Horowitz, of Woodbridge, are dog behavioral therapists and trainers with Bark Busters, one of the world's largest dog training companies. For more information, call 1-877-500-BARK (2275) or visit www.dog-training-new-haven-ct.com.

Salome's Stars

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) That change in holiday travel plans might be more vexing than you'd expected. But try to take it in stride. Also, it couldn't hurt to use that Aries charm to coax out some helpful cooperation.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Your Bovine determination helps you deal with an unforeseen complication. And, as usual, you prove that when it comes to a challenge, you have what it takes to take it on.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Although a romantic theme dominates much of the week, all those warm and fuzzy feelings don't interfere with the more pragmatic matters you need to take care of.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Best not to ignore those doubts about an upcoming decision. Instead, recheck the facts you were given to make sure nothing important was left out. A weekend surprise awaits you.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) No time for a catnap -- yet. You might still have to straighten out one or two factors so that you can finally assure yourself of the truth about a troubling workplace situation. Stay with it.

VIRGO (August 23 September 22) News from an old friend could lead to an unexpected (but nonetheless welcome) reunion with someone who had once been very special in your life. Be open to the possibilities.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) It might be time for a family council. The sooner those problems are resolved, the sooner you can move ahead with your holiday preparations. Don't let the opportunity pass you by.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) Take some time out to give more attention to a personal relationship that seems to be suffering from a sense of emotional neglect. Provide that much-needed reassurance.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) Cheer up. That unusual circumstance that might faze most people can be handled pretty well by the savvy Sagittarian. Look at it as an opportunity rather than an obstacle.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) Someone you believe has hurt you in the past might now need your help. Reaching out could be difficult. But the generous Goat will be able to do the right thing, as always.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) Prioritizing is an important part of your pre-holiday scheduling. Try to give time both to your workday responsibilities and those personal matters you might have neglected.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) With the vestiges of your anger about that painful incident fading, you can now focus all your energy on the more positive aspects of your life, including that personal situation.

BORN THIS WEEK: You have a way of bringing your own strong sense of reassurance to others and encouraging them to hope.

Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



LAFF - A - DAY



MISTER BREGER By Dave Breger



HUBERT - - By Dick Wingert



"Hi, Doc! Betcha I WON'T need new glasses like you seem to think..."

"Isn't that a shame?! And just the day you're home sick from the office, too."

top ten

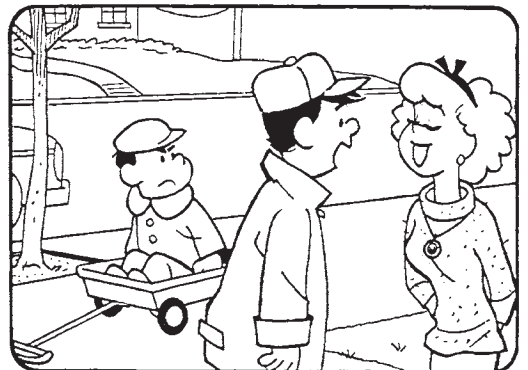
"Dutch" phrases

1. Double Dutch
2. Dutch uncle
3. Dutch treat
4. Dutch courage
5. Dutch auction
6. Dutch comfort
7. Dutch bargain
8. Dutch defense
9. Dutch gold
10. Dutch sauce (Hollandaise)

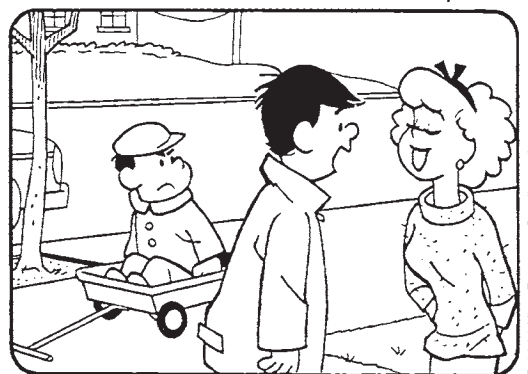


Source: The Phrase Finder

HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



DIFFERENCES: 1. Path is missing; 2. Collar is different; 3. Wagon handle is different; 4. Cap is missing; 5. Collar is missing; 6. Pendant is missing.

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ARTHRITIS IN DOGS

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: My mixed-breed dog "Artie" recently was diagnosed with age-related arthritis. He has to take a pain pill every day, but he still walks stiffly. Is there any other way I can help him? -- Bill in Tulsa, Okla.



DEAR BILL: Talk to Artie's vet to make sure the medication he's been given is helping with his joint pain and stiffness.

And yes, there are several things you can do at home to help make his life more comfortable. Get him a new, nicely padded doggie bed and place it away from cold drafts or air-conditioning vents. Consider taking him to a pet massage therapist -- and when you do, ask the therapist for massage techniques you can use on Artie at home, between sessions. Daily massage increases blood flow to the joints and can help relieve stiffness.

Feed Artie a good diet. If he has a weight problem, work with his veterinarian to put together a diet that will help slim him down without depriving him of important nutrients. Consider adding supplements to his diet such as glucosamine and chondroitin, which claim to help lubricate joints and ease arthritis stiffness. Again, the vet can recommend the best supplement and dose for your dog.

Exercise is very important for dogs suffering from arthritis, but some movement can be difficult. If Artie has trouble getting down the steps outside, consider installing a ramp along the side of the stairs or in another spot so he can walk down more easily. The amount of exercise Artie should get depends on how advanced his condition is, his age and other health factors -- and of course, on how much exercise Artie WANTS to get.

Send your questions or comments to ask@pawscorner.com.

The Garden Bug



Propolis

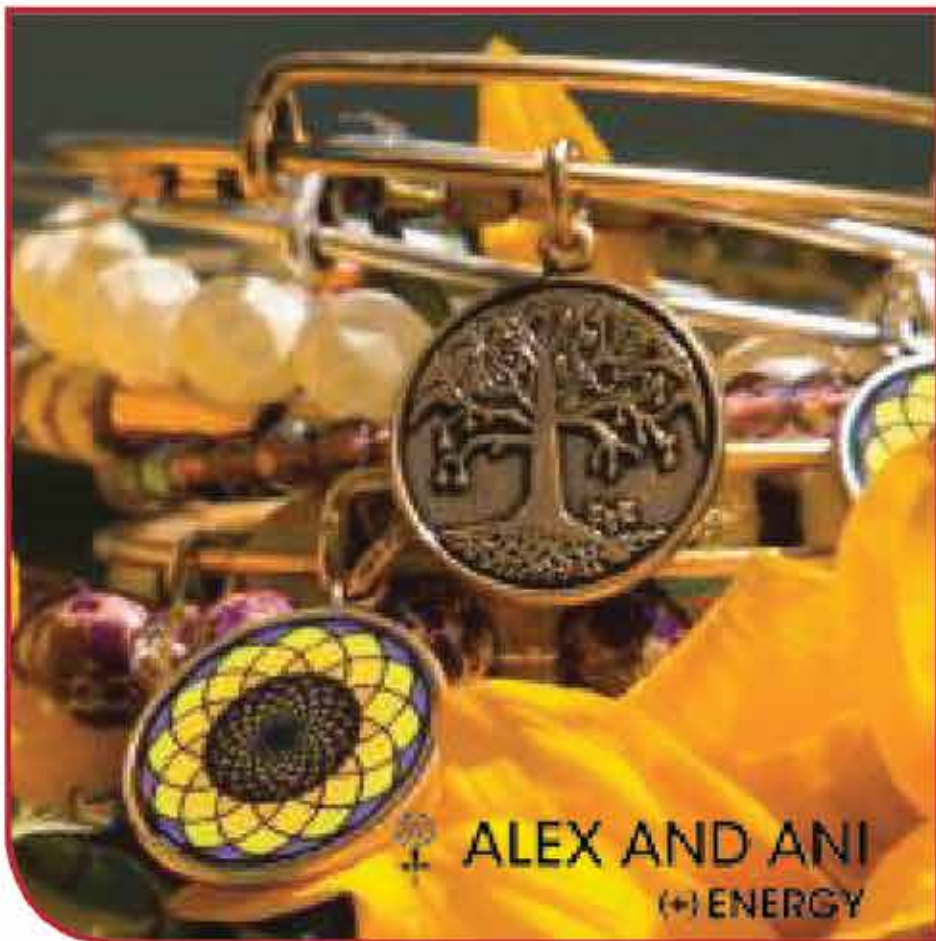
Propolis is a resin collected by honeybees from tree buds, used to fill crevices in their hives and to seal and varnish honeycombs. It has a long history of medicinal uses -- Greeks and Assyrians used it for healing wounds and tumors, and Egyptians used it for mummification. It is still used by traditional practitioners for its anti-inflammatory, anti-bacterial and immune-boosting properties.

- Brenda Weaver

Source: www.webmd.com

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