

# Orange Town News

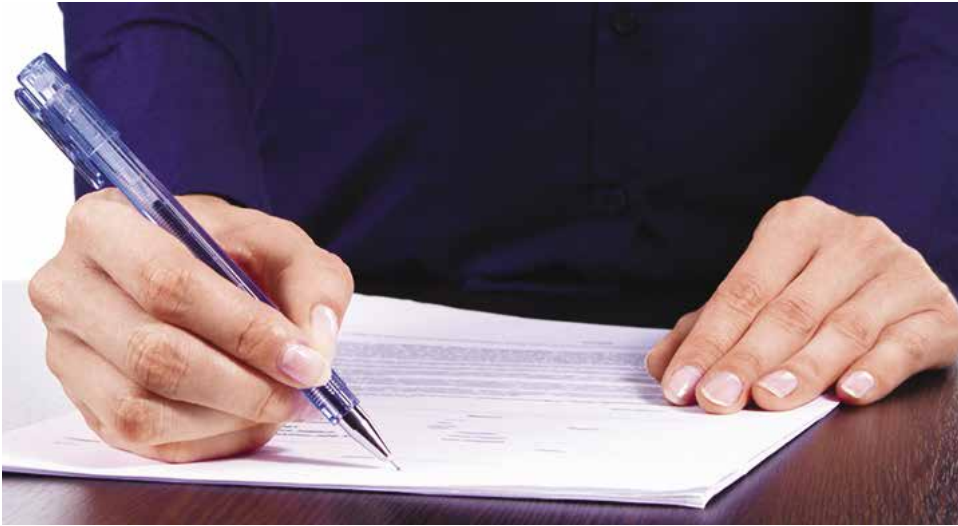


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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2021



## Board of Selectmen Takes No Action on Teachers' Contract

BY MELISSA NICEFARO  
ORANGE TOWN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

After weeks of negotiations during many late nights and early morning hours, the Orange Board of Education has reached a new contract with its teachers' union. With no comment or details shared after the executive session vote, the Orange Board of Education entered a new contract for the next school year at its November 15 meeting.

Board member Susan Riccio read the motion prior to the vote, "The Board of Ed hereby moves to provide funding for and to otherwise accept and approve the agreement between the Board of Education and the Orange Teachers' League for a successor collective bargaining agreement to begin July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2025."

The board approved with the new board members abstaining.

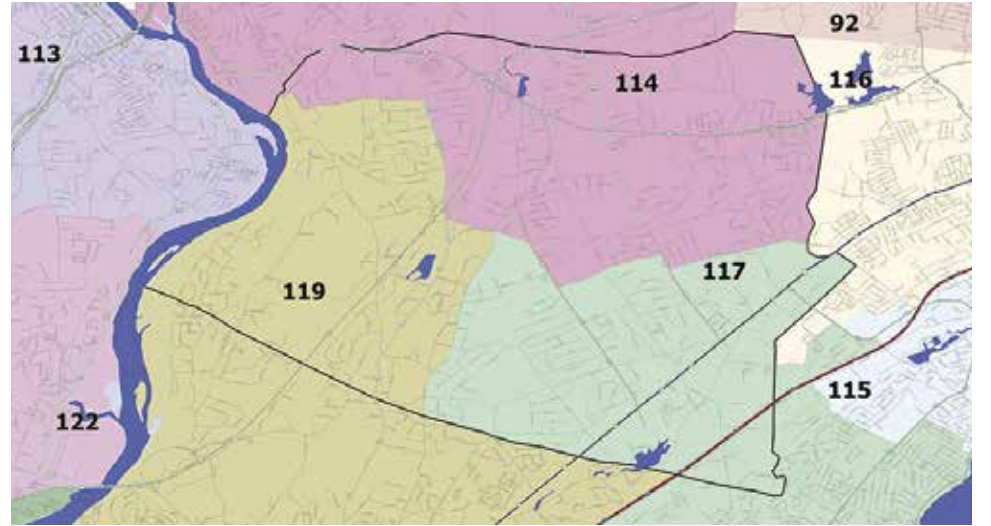
Next, the contract went to the Board of Selectmen for approval. "You have three options: you either vote to support it, you vote to oppose it, or you

take no action on it and it becomes law within 30 days. Take a look and don't worry about the grammatical things, let's just talk about whether you think the numbers are out of whack and if there are concerns that we should talk about," said First Selectman Jim Zeoli before the board vote.

"They have done a lot of switching of things – they have HSA health plans. One of our units that will be coming before us after the New Year for negotiations is looking at all of the options for health coverage because the health insurance prices that they pay as a copay are a percentage of what we pay and they're all driven by consumption," Zeoli explained.

Selectman Mitchell Goldblatt said he had some hesitance when it came to pay raises. "I've gone through it and I think it's fine because you can see the concessions that were made in healthcare and some other places. The only concern I have is looking at

See "Contract" On Page 2



## O'Sullivan: Voting District Lines Shift 'Ever So Slightly'

BY BETTINA THIEL  
ORANGE TOWN NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Town Clerk Patrick O'Sullivan presented a map showing minor revisions to the Orange voting districts at the December 8 Board of Selectmen meeting. For the last ten years, Orange residents have been represented at the state level through three Assembly districts, the 114<sup>th</sup>, the 117<sup>th</sup> and the 119<sup>th</sup> district. State Representatives currently serving are Orange's Mary Weland, 114; West Haven's Charles Ferraro, 117<sup>th</sup>; and Milford's Kathy Kennedy in the 119<sup>th</sup> District.

The southern border of the 114<sup>th</sup> district, which on the old map reached into the 117<sup>th</sup> district, has now been shaved back, forming several clean lines, with Hall Drive and Porter Lane separating the 114<sup>th</sup> and 117<sup>th</sup> district. To the west it reaches up and runs along Old Grassy Hill Road.

The goal of these adjustments, which are made at the state level, is to create fairly even voting districts, O'Sullivan said, with House districts

of some 20,000 registered voters and Senate districts of 90-100,000 registered voters.

The 114<sup>th</sup> District, traditionally the largest of the three voting districts in Orange, now is slightly smaller than it used to be, at least as far as Orange voters are concerned. However, the district itself stretches north, to encompass all of Woodbridge and reaches in its north-eastern corner into Hamden. The district also extends into parts of Derby.

It will mean that on Election Day the line of voters for District 1 may be a little shorter than it used to be, while those for District 2 and 3 may see more voters at High Plains Community Center.

The 14<sup>th</sup> senatorial district hasn't changed at all, O'Sullivan said. It consists of Orange, Milford and a part of West Haven, as well as a slice of Woodbridge south of Ansonia Road. The seat is currently held by Sen. James Maroney of Milford.

See "Redistricting" On Page 4



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“Contract” From Page 1

the salary schedules,” he said. “It’s a typical teachers’ contract which has steps and the movement on steps is significant. We’re approving contracts with raises in the 2% range and movement on these steps are in the 4, 5, and 6% range. And they added another step, which gives another 4.5% raise in 20 years,” Goldblatt said.

“When you look at the salaries, the schedule doesn’t change and that’s a good thing because they move up on the same steps. In year two, it’s 6% and in year three, it’s 7.3%. There’s some big movement and people should just be aware of it. I’m just a little bit perplexed as to why they did that in the end,” he said.

Zeoli agreed that the steps are big and says it will affect the Orange Board of Education budget. “That ultimately effects each of our residents and taxpayers and that is of concern, but the other side of the coin is that’s why we’re seeing so many people move to the area. Education is a very big part of the attraction,” he said.

Ralph Okenquist also agreed with Goldblatt, saying some of the numbers were on the high side. “I haven’t heard of any other town in the area that has had an increase like this,” he said. “We

can vote to turn it down,” Okenquist said. In that case, the contract would go back to the Board of Education and the teachers’ union for a re-negotiation and if they can’t come to an agreement, it would go to arbitration or mediation.

“If we vote on it, I would vote in favor, but I am concerned about the future and those increases. They could have some very real impacts on their overall budget. There is far more staff on the Board of Education side than the Town of Orange has. On the heels of that, you’ll probably have the other school system doing something similar soon and that all has very real impacts on your overall town budget,” Zeoli said. “Education is 67% of the budget and it’s not something we have any control over.”

Board member Judy Williams made a motion to take no action on the budget, in order to send a message that they did not fully support the increases. The motion wasn’t necessary and the board informally agreed to take no action.

Goldblatt said he didn’t want to vote against it, but also didn’t want to vote in favor of the sizable increases, adding that he has faith that the Board of Education worked hard to keep the contract competitive.

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# Holly Hill Thanksgiving

The true meaning of Thanksgiving was evident at Holly Hill Childcare and Learning Center in Orange last month. Thanks to the children and parents of the center, the staff and a generous donation of gift cards from town residents Liz and Wayne Gentile, 15 beautiful baskets filled with everything needed for a wonderful holiday dinner were given to local

residents. Debbie Manson Fedorko, director said, "Our Thanksgiving food drive is the perfect opportunity for our staff to teach our youngsters some very valuable lessons - the meaning of caring and sharing and the true joy of giving. We are so happy to be able to share with our neighbors by giving them a bountiful Thanksgiving feast.



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“Redistricting” From Page 1

Orange registrars will be busy revising their voting lists and informing residents of the changes. O’Sullivan didn’t have an exact count of how many households would change from one voting district to another, but he estimated anywhere up to 100. The new maps will be in effect during the 2022 election season.

State law requires that Congressional and legislative district lines be

redrawn every 10 years. According to the Secretary of the State website, the districts must be based on the federal census and be consistent with federal constitutional standards.

A bipartisan Reapportionment Committee was charged with preparing the plan. The committee is made up of eight legislators, two from each party’s caucus in the Senate and House of Representatives.

Map can be found at <https://bit.ly/orangeredistrict2021>



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Great Holiday Gifts For Retirees  
Who Can’t Wait To Travel

Retirement provides a chance for adults who have worked throughout their lives to take a step back, relax and enjoy the fruits of their labors. Though the most indelible image associated with retirement might once have been a rocking chair, modern retirees like to get up and go, and holiday shoppers can take that joie de vivre into consideration as they look for the perfect gift for retirees who can't wait to fly the friendly skies or hit the open road.

**Maps:** It might seem simple, but roadmaps can be an ideal gift for retirees. A recent poll from RBC Wealth Management found that 63 percent of Americans age 50 and older say travel is an important retirement goal. Roadmaps of their own country or a foreign country can help seniors plan their dream vacations. Seniors can study maps and create their own routes as they visit popular tourist attractions and find lesser known locales along the way.

**Vouchers/gift cards:** Airline vouchers can inspire retirees to take to the skies and visit locales that have long taken up real estate on their bucket lists. If seniors prefer to take to the open road, hotel vouchers or Visa gift cards that can be spent anywhere that accepts credit cards can help pay for gas, meals or entry to popular parks and tourist attractions.

**Projector and portable screen:** Retirees may want to get away from it all, but that doesn't mean they have to leave everything behind. A projector

and portable screen can let on-the-go seniors enjoy movie night under the stars or watch their favorite teams even when they're far from home. This can be an especially good gift for retirees who are anxious to gas up their RV and leave home behind for a few weeks.

• **Lifetime pass to world-renowned parks:** All United States citizens or permanent residents are eligible for the National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Senior Pass, which provides access to more than 2,000 recreation sites across the country. Those sites are managed by federal agencies like the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Bureau of Reclamation, among others. A similar system is in place in Canada, where adults age 65 and up can gain unlimited admission for a full year to more than 80 Parks Canada locations across the country.

**Tablet:** Of course, retirees may still want to enjoy some of the comforts of home while they're off in parts unknown. A new tablet can help traveling retirees read the latest bestsellers and stay in touch with family and friends via video conferencing apps like Zoom. Many campgrounds and hotels now provide free WiFi to guests, so a tablet can be just what on-the-go retirees need to stay connected to life back home.

Holiday shoppers can make the season bright for their favorite retirees who can't wait to spend their newfound free time traveling the world.

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

Upcoming Issue Date	Issue Deadline
January 14   New Year’s Issue .....	January 7
February 11   Valentine's Day Issue .....	February 4
March 11   St. Patrick's Day Issue.....	March 4

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

FROM OUR READERS

Amity Problems  
are Not Unique

During this past year, I have read articles and watched news reports and public comments about all the problems at Amity High School. To be honest, as someone who has probably spent more time in that building during my more than 35 years of teaching than almost any other educator, I admit problems exist. They exist as they do in almost every high school in the country and are nothing more or less than a reflection of the communities in which we live. Amity is not unique in having such problems, they are not new, and they are not ignored in the hopes that they will go away. From the day that I joined the Amity staff in the 1980s there have been workshops, special training, counselors, parent meetings, seminars, but most of all continuous work with students individually and in groups to help them grow into respectful and successful adults.

Amity’s culture is one of high expectations for every individual. If you are sending your child to a public high school, I can think of few that are better, which is the reason my family moved into the District more than forty years ago. My children went to school here and now my grandchildren. I have worked with thousands of students during my career. Some have had problems and working with our support systems we addressed them. They became part of an extraordinary student body with the assistance of dedicated teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, office staff, custodians, and security staff. Amity graduates continue to contribute their skills and talents in all areas at the highest levels around the world.

In the few years since my retirement, I continue my relationship with Amity at sporting events, special programs in the arts and cultural events. I have spoken to hundreds of graduates and parents regularly who continuously express how grateful they

are for the education they received at Amity. Yes, there are always stories about teachers they did not like, kids that caused trouble, and things we could have done differently, but that is all part of life. I have never held back when I thought someone needed advice. Our communities are fortunate to have a school like Amity. It is time to get off social media, cease denigrating teachers and administrators, stop calling news outlets, take politics out of education, and deal with real identified problems directly with the people involved. Amity can be better than ever, but only with the support of our communities and positive parent involvement. In attending various school activities, I have witnessed the high levels of achievement by Amity students working together. Maybe the adults in our communities could better emulate the kids in that respect.

Hoping for a better future.  
Debbie Davis

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See “Letters” On Page 17



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or email: [letters@orangetownnews.com](mailto: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.

# WILEY ETTER DOYON ATTORNEYS

## All in the Family

With the holiday season upon us there may be many plans of traveling to relatives homes...or maybe not if multiple family members already live under the same roof. Several generations living under the same roof once was the norm in America. A variety of social and economic factors have led an increasing number of families to once again live together under the same roof. What's the best way to structure the arrangement legally?

**Issues to consider:**

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- Who will pay for "big" repairs or improvements to the house?
- Who will claim the income tax deductions?
- What will happen if someone in the older generation requires long-term care in the home or out of the home?
- What happens if everyone no longer is happy living together?
- Who makes decisions related to when and how to sell the home?

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# DOLLAR\$ AND \$EN\$E

## Making the New Year a Year to Share

BY ROBERTA L NESTOR

Parents share so much with their children and other family members. Whether it be a story about the past, a family heirloom, recipes passed down for generations or those special childhood memories - that is what families do, we share. We share our day-to-day lives, our health issues and brave families are even able to share their feelings about politics, the latest news and world events. In a nutshell, most of us don't have any issues when it comes to sharing our lives with our families. Let's put one caveat in the sharing. We tend to be willing to share everything and anything, as long as it does not have anything to do with money.

Why do families have so much difficulty talking about money? What is the downside to your adult children knowing about your finances? Why is it so hard to talk to them about your plans for when you pass or your intentions if you were to need long term care? Conversely, why do our children not want to know about our estates? How many times have your children said something like, "Mom, Dad, we don't care! Your money is your money, you can do what you want with it." And, then the conversation ends.

If nothing else, the past 2 years of the pandemic has made us more aware of our mortality. Most of us do think

differently. Many have been forced to rethink careers, and, for some, retirement is going to happen sooner than anticipated. We are planning our lives differently. Don't be afraid to have these discussions with your family. Make 2022 the year to have that important conversation. Make 2022 the year you put your estate plan in place, review it, and understand, but most importantly, share it.

Wishing our readers, a Happy and Healthy Holiday Season and only the best in 2022!

Roberta L. Nestor is a financial advisor practicing at 759 Boston Post Road in Milford, CT offering retirement, long term care, investment, and tax planning services. She offers securities and advisory services as a Registered Representative and 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.



## Did You Know?

Lights on a Christmas tree may seem like a relatively recent phenomenon, but people who can't wait to deck the halls each December may be surprised to learn that this beloved tradition dates all the way back to the late nineteenth century. Edward Johnson, a friend and colleague of Thomas Edison, introduced holiday light bulbs in 1882. Prior to that, candles were lit on trees and families would briefly gaze at this awe-inspiring bit of holiday decor before the candles

were quickly extinguished. Johnson is credited with being the first to suggest light bulbs, which were invented by his friend Edison, be used to light trees in place of candles. While many were impressed by Johnson's eight-bulb holiday display, it remained a novelty until the 1920s, when preassembled lights became more accessible. Since then, Christmas tree lights have taken hold as a must-have piece of holiday decor in households across the globe.

ORANGE EDUCATION ROUNDUP



## The Peck Place School Participates in Two Fundraisers

The Peck Place School kicked off the spirit of giving with a school-wide Pajama Day. Students and staff paid a dollar, or more, to wear their pajamas to school. The money collected will benefit children undergoing treatment for cancer at the Connecticut Children’s Medical Center.

In support of the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Great Bedtime Story Pajama Drive, The Peck

Place School community will be donating pajama sets for families in need. For every pair of pajamas donated, Scholastic Book Clubs will donate a brand-new book to give to a child facing adversity.

Students are pictured with some of the donated pajamas and a check representing the \$450.00 amount being donated to the CT Children’s Medical Center.

STUDENT NEWS

**Achievements**  
**Eastern Connecticut State University**

Willimantic, CT - Many Eastern Connecticut State University students are spending their fall 2021 semesters working as interns for a multitude of organizations. Interning in fields related to their majors, students are receiving real-world training to prepare them for their future careers. Among the students is Brooke Matyasovsky of Orange, a senior majoring in Communication and Business Administration who is interning at Mascola Group as a digital marketing intern. “I create content for social media calendars, do SEO research, assist in developing media campaigns, and other miscella-

neous work,” said Matyasovsky. “I have learned a lot more about social media as well as marketing in general. I feel a lot more prepared for my professional career since I have a lot of experience with writing and creating content as well as time management.”

**Dean’s List**  
**Stonehill College**

Easton, MA - Colton Varholak, of Orange, CT, a member of the Class of 2023, has been named to the Spring 2021 Dean’s List at Stonehill College. To qualify for the Dean’s List, students must have a semester grade point average of 3.50 or better and must have completed successfully all courses for which they were registered.



## Orange Preschool Blind Lottery

*“Limited Openings” for 2022-23 Community Peer/Tuition Based Program*

The Orange Elementary School System is now accepting names for the “Blind Lottery” for the 2022-2023 Preschool Program at Mary L. Tracy School. Our Special Education/General Education integrated preschool is looking for three- and four-year old children to enroll as community peers and positive role models. This program enriches each child’s social, emotional, physical, cognitive, intellectual, and creative abilities through early academic and social experiences. It is designed to prepare the children for early success and school readiness. By law, students with special needs identified with an IEP are placed in the Preschool Program by the Dept. of Special Services through the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) process and they do not participate in the lottery.

- In order to participate in the preschool all children:
- ✓ must be 3 yrs. old but not older than 4 years old by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022;
  - ✓ must be toilet trained to attend preschool;
  - ✓ must be a bona-fide Orange resident only;
  - ✓ if a child’s 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday is between September - December 2022, they will start on their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday.
- Parents need to provide transportation to and from school for their child.
- The Preschool Program follows the district’s school year calendar: the AM class is held from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and the PM class is held from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Each classroom has a blend of three- and four-year old

- children. Class sizes are limited to a total of 12 students per class, which includes our special education students.
- Community peer children are selected through the “Blind Lottery”. The total school year cost of tuition for community peers is \$3,250 paid monthly, \$325 per month. Our fee-based preschool is held 5-days/week, for 3-hrs/day. The blind lottery is conducted in two stages.
- ✓ all names are ‘picked out of a hat’ by age group for the “limited number of available spaces”, with the remaining names drawn and placed on a ‘waiting list’.
  - ✓ the 2<sup>nd</sup> drawing decides if your child will attend the AM or PM class to balance each classroom with an equal amount of 3-year old and 4-year old children.

If you wish to have your child participate in the Blind Lottery, please call the Special Services Dept. (203-891-8023) between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. to place your child on the list. We will be accepting names for the blind lottery up until 4:00 p.m., Friday, January 28, 2022. Parents will receive a letter in the U.S. mail of their child’s lottery results in February 2022.

If your child is selected and you accept the lottery result, a tuition deposit of \$325 will secure a space in the classroom for your child. Your deposit is the first month’s tuition for September 2022. Registration paperwork should be completed by April 2022. Any further questions call the Special Services Dept. (203-891-8023) at the Orange Board of Education.



# TOWN DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES

## Town of Orange Highway Department Snow Plowing Policy

There are over 110 miles of streets in the Town of Orange. Snow removal can cost up to \$2,500.00 per hour. Therefore, it is important for the Department of Public Works (DPW) to use its resources wisely with cooperation from the residents to minimize the cost.

**Plow Routes:** The streets are plowed and sanded in order of priority. Main (collector) roads are addressed first with special attention to steep hills, and difficult intersections. Side streets are done next, then dead-end streets. Side streets will remain unplowed if the main roads require repeat plowing due to heavy volume of snowfall. This may not seem fair to the residents of side streets or dead-ends. However, the main roads must remain open.

**Blocked Driveways:** All snow plows angle the same way; to the driver's right. While plowing, the plow will push the snow in front of a residential driveway. The homeowner is responsible for access to his/her driveway. The only way to avoid additional snow removal is to wait until DPW work crews have completed their final clean up of your road.

**Mailbox Damage:** The town repairs or replaces only those mailboxes and/or posts that are actually struck by the plow blade. Usually, a paint mark or tire tracks provide evidence of a mailbox strike. The Town does not repair or replace mailboxes and/or posts that fall from the force of plowed snow. Mailboxes and supporting posts must be installed to withstand the rigors of snow removal; including the force of snow pushed from the street onto the roadside. It is recommended that homeowners do not purchase and utilize plastic mailboxes and/or posts as they are subject to damage. DPW recommends the use of a 4" x 4" wooden post or 2" metal pipe with a metal mailbox.

**Private Plowing:** The Town of Orange prohibits private plow contractors from pushing snow from private driveways or parking lots onto Town streets. This practice is dangerous and impedes the Town's snow removal efforts. If there is no other alternative to pushing the snow into the street, the plow driver must plow off the windrow left across the street by re-plowing until the road is safe. This may not necessarily mean bare pavement, but certainly it should be no worse than when the driver began work.

**No Parking:** The Town of Orange Snow Removal Ordinance takes effect on November 1 of each year, and continues to April 1 of the following year. During this time, there shall be no parking on public roads during snowstorms. Should your vehicle be parked on the street causing an obstruction to snow removal vehicles, your vehicle may be ticketed or removed by the Town of Orange Police Department. The cost of removal and any other subsequent fees shall be borne upon the owner of the vehicle.

**Snow Stakes:** The Town of Orange Highway Department reminds Orange residents to install "snow stakes" now before the ground freezes. It is difficult to distinguish between the pavement edge and the edge of a lawn in heavy snowfall. Installing stakes along property edges as close to pavement as possible without interfering with traffic will help homeowners avoid unsightly lawn damage this winter, especially for properties with underground sprinklers or invisible fencing. Snow stakes should be 30-36" high and can be purchased at a local hardware store. If using wooden stakes, paint the top 3" of the stakes red to increase visibility against snow.

Residents who feel they have a legitimate complaint should call the Town of Orange Department of Public Works at (203) 891-4775.

## From the Fire Marshal



## Winter Fire Safety Tips

The winter months are generally the deadliest months of the year for home fires due to the increased use of alternative heating sources as the temperatures drop. Fireplaces and wood stoves provide warmth and enjoyment, but can also be a danger. Home heating is second only to cooking as the cause of home fires. The Orange Fire Marshal's Office suggests the following safety tips to avoid potential dangers from fires, carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning, and power outages that are associated with heating sources.

Do it yourself installations can lead to fires and injuries. Have fireplaces, wood or gas heaters, wood stoves and inserts, and pellet stoves installed by a qualified and insured professional and inspected annually. A permit may be required for plumbing, mechanical or electrical work. Please contact the Building Department for more information. Have the chimney inspected every year for cracks, leaks and blockages and have it cleaned and repaired as needed to prevent creosote buildup - the number one cause of chimney fires.

Before lighting a fire, check the chimney for nests or other obstructions. Be sure the flue is open and the hearth area is free of debris or combustible items. Use matches or commercial firelighters to start the fire. Never use flammable liquids.

Burn only dry, seasoned wood. Wet green wood can increase creosote and cause smoke and soot buildup. Do not burn trash, cardboard boxes, plastic, or Christmas trees as these items increase the risk of uncontrolled fires. Do not use artificial logs in wood stoves.

Glass doors should be open to allow enough air for complete combustion and to lessen the creosote. Keep metal mesh screens closed to contain embers.

Never leave a fire unattended. Make certain it is completely out before leaving the home or going to bed.

Be sure ashes are cool before disposal. Do not empty them into a trash can. Put ashes into a covered metal container which is at least 10 feet from any building. To prepare for a fire emergency, do family drills to determine the safest and fastest ways to exit the home. Arrange for a meeting place. Call 911 when outside.

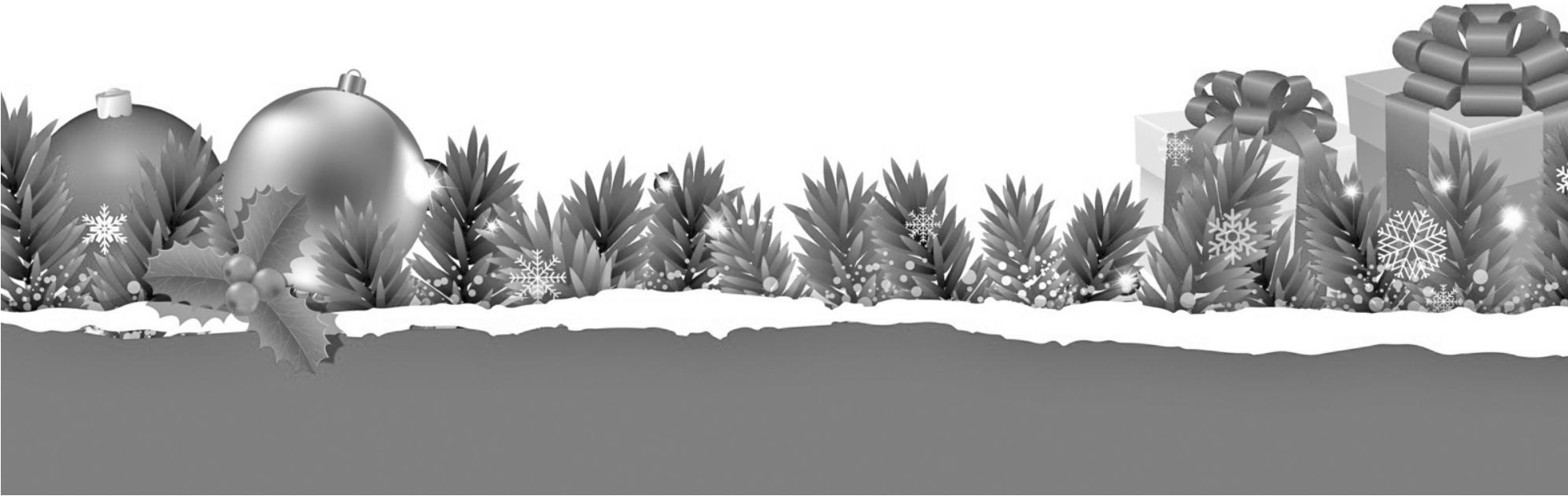
Do not close the damper until the embers have stopped burning.

Install carbon monoxide detectors and fire alarms in your home. Test them monthly and change batteries once a year.

For any questions or concerns, please contact the Orange Fire Marshal's Office 203-891-4711, visit the office at 355 Boston Post Road or go to the website at [www.orangefire-marshal.com](http://www.orangefire-marshal.com).



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# Tips To Keep Your Tree Fresh This Holiday Season

Christmas trees are often the pièce de résistance of holiday decor. Few things draw the attention of holiday guests quite like an awe-inspiring Christmas tree, especially when that tree maintains its fresh, healthy sheen throughout December.

Many families purchase fresh trees over Thanksgiving weekend or during the first weekend of December. Though the weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas Day may seem like a long time to keep a tree looking great, there are a handful of ways for holiday celebrants to help their trees maintain that undeniable appeal for the long haul.

Pick the right tree. Choosing the right tree is one of the simplest ways to keep a tree looking good throughout the holiday season. A freshly cut tree that buyers choose and cut down can reassure them that the tree is likely to stay strong throughout December. Trees purchased from a tree lot may have been cut down long before they made it to the lot, which can make it harder to keep them looking good until Christmas Day.

Cut an inch off the base of any tree that is not freshly cut. MSU Extension at Michigan State University notes that all Christmas trees are conifers, which means they have resin canals in their trunks. Once a tree is cut, the resin can block the pores and make it harder for the tree to take in water. Cutting

an inch off the base of a tree that was not freshly cut just before putting it in the stand can help ensure it gets the water it needs to stay healthy and firm. MSU Extension notes that this approach should be taken with any tree that was not cut within six to eight hours of being put in a stand.

Replenish the water supply every day. Fresh tree veterans recognize that Christmas trees can be very thirsty, especially within the first week or so of being cut and brought home. Fill the stand with water each morning and, if necessary, refill it each night before going to bed. The more water a tree gets and drinks, the more likely it is that the tree will look healthy all the way to Christmas Day. MSU Extension notes that many decorative or antique tree stands do not hold much water, so anyone with such a stand may need to replenish the water supply more than once or twice per day.

Keep the tree away from a heat source. For safety's sake, trees should be kept away from heating vents, fireplaces and space heaters. But keeping trees away from such heat sources, and ensuring they are not spending the daytime in direct sunlight, also decreases the chances they will dry out before Christmas Day.

A handful of simple strategies can help holiday celebrants keep their Christmas trees looking good throughout the month of December.



# Classic Holiday Films Families Can Enjoy Together

The holiday season is steeped in tradition. Few traditions may elicit more collective belly laughs than holiday movie night, a tradition in millions of households across the globe. Families can consider these classic holiday films as they plan family movie night this holiday season.

**"Miracle on 34<sup>th</sup> Street"** (1947): This classic is centered around a man named "Kris Kringle" (Edmund Gwenn) who claims to be the real Santa Claus after a successful stint as a department store Santa in midtown Manhattan. A trial to determine if Mr. Kringle is telling the truth soon follows. This version of the tale has earned a 96 percent rating on the popular film review aggregator Rotten Tomatoes.

**"A Christmas Story"** (1983): Though it airs all day long on Christmas on the cable television network TBS, families can get a head-start on that marathon and watch the film uninterrupted whenever they choose. Families can laugh together as 9-year-old Ralphie (Peter Billingsley) hopes to unwrap his official Red Ryder BB gun on Christmas morning. The film, which boasts an 89 percent on Rotten Tomatoes, includes a memorable performance by Darren McGavin, who plays Ralphie's father.

**"Babes In Toyland"** (1934): Also known as "March of the Wooden Soldiers," this nearly century-old classic stars the legendary comedy duo Laurel and Hardy as two helpful tenants liv-

ing in Mother Peep's shoe in Toyland.

**"How the Grinch Stole Christmas"** (1967): An animated version of the Dr. Seuss classic, this film has entertained scores of children since it was first released more than 50 years ago.

**"Holiday Inn"** (1942): Hollywood legends Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire star in this classic that is perhaps most remembered for introducing the Irving Berlin class "White Christmas" to the masses. The film boasts a 100 percent rating on Rotten Tomatoes and has something for fans of song, dance and romance.

**"Arthur Christmas"** (2011): Not all Christmas films date back to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This animated tale tells the story of Arthur (voiced by James McAvoy), Santa's youngest son who is thrust into the Christmas Eve business of delivering presents when his father fails to deliver a present to one child out of the hundreds of millions of kids on his list.

**"A Christmas Carol"** (1951): Many holiday season celebrants cannot imagine letting a season go by without watching at least one adaptation of Charles Dickens' classic tale. The 1951 version is widely considered the most faithful to Dickens' 1843 novella that recounts the story of Ebenezer Scrooge. Alastair Sim stars as Scrooge, and many consider his performance the best of any actor to take a turn as the notorious 19<sup>th</sup> century miser.

## ATTENTION ORANGE RESIDENTS!

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Classes at OCNS enjoyed Thanksgiving celebrations.

# ARTS & LEISURE



## Local Dancers Performed In The Pearl Harbor Memorial Parade

Orange residents Molly Blair and Greta Pedenski from the Amity High School Dance Team are two of more than 600 high school cheerleaders and dancers from across the country that represented the camp brands of Varsity Spirit in the Varsity Spirit Pearl Harbor Memorial Parade in Honolulu, HI from December 4-8, 2021.

The individuals invited to perform are part of a select group of cheerleaders and dancers chosen as All-Americans during Varsity Spirit summer camps across the country. All-Americans are selected via tryout based on either superior cheerleading or dance skills at camps operated by Universal Cheerleaders Association (UCA), Universal Dance Association (UDA), National Cheerleaders Association (NCA), National Dance Alliance (NDA), United Spirit Association (USA) or Urban Cheerleading Experience (UCE). Only the top 10% of the cheerleaders and dancers from Varsity Spirit camps earn the chance to march in a holiday parade of this caliber.

Greta and Molly performed with the Varsity Spirit All-Americans in an exclusive performance prior to the opening ceremony of the parade and then were a part of the parade before thousands of fans lining the streets of Waikiki Beach. This trip marks the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. The parade theme was “remembering the past and celebrating our future.” We honor our veterans and their families while recognizing that once bitter enemies can become loyal friends and allies.

Besides being able to perform for

true national heroes, athletes had the opportunity to meet cheerleaders and dancers from across that nation and enjoy a memorable trip to the Pearl Harbor Memorial and the USS Missouri Battleship.

For more information, visit [www.varsity.com](http://www.varsity.com) or contact John Calitri at (800) 238-0286 or [jcalitri@varsity.com](mailto:jcalitri@varsity.com).

Memphis-based Varsity Spirit, the driving force behind cheerleading’s dynamic transformation into the high-energy, athletic activity it is today, is the leading global source for all things spirit, including cheerleading, dance team and performing arts. A division of Varsity Brands, Varsity Spirit is a leader in uniform innovation, as well as educational camps, clinics and competitions, impacting more than a million athletes each year. Focused on safety, entertainment and traditional school leadership, Varsity Spirit’s employees have been dedicated to celebrating spirit through its brands since 1974. For more information about Varsity Spirit or Varsity Brands, please visit [varsity.com](http://varsity.com) or [varsitybrands.com](http://varsitybrands.com).

The Pearl Harbor Memorial Parade Committee has been commissioned to organize the Pearl Harbor Memorial Parade, commemorating the anniversary of the invasion of Pearl Harbor each year on December 7<sup>th</sup>. The Pearl Harbor Memorial Parade is proclaimed by the Mayor of Honolulu as the “Official Public Event Marking the Anniversary of the Attack on Pearl Harbor”. For more information about the Pearl Harbor Memorial Parade, visit [www.pearlharborparade.org](http://www.pearlharborparade.org).



# LOCAL BUSINESS ROUNDUP

## Wareck D'Ostilio Real Estate Welcomes New Agents

John Wareck and Frank D'Ostilio, Jr., partners of Wareck D'Ostilio Real Estate take great pride in welcoming four Realtors to the company.

### Richard P. Ballou

Ricky grew up in Woodbridge and attended Cornell University where he played varsity football. After graduation, Ricky went to work for a major national commercial broker, Marcus and Millichap, in Los Angeles for about 3 years. Ricky was named "Salesperson of the Month" twice within his first year as he was able to list \$20m worth of properties within his first seven months at the firm. He moved back to Connecticut and now lives in Southbury. Contact Ricky at 203-823-5509 or ricky.ballou@wdsells.com.



### Robert Potter

Previously in the restaurant industry, he owned and operated several popular and successful establishments including Prime 16 in Orange, CT. A graduate from CCSU with a BA in Marketing, Bob is an experienced commercial real estate investor. A resident of Milford, his goal is to match investors with properties that meet their criteria while developing and expanding the relationships with investors. He can be reached at 203-494-6752 or robert.potter@wdsells.com.



### Laura Hart

Originally from Stratford, Laura is a high school math teacher with a love and passion for real estate sales. She and her husband live in Woodbridge and have three grown children. She will work from the Woodbridge office at the Red Barn on Amity Road. Laura can be reached at 203-424-0785 or laura.hart@wdsells.com.



### Amir Glenn

A resident of New Haven, Amir has been specializing in multi-families and rehab homes since 2017. The areas he covers are New Haven, Woodbridge, Hamden, West Haven, Cheshire, North Haven, Bridgeport, and Stratford. His passion for the industry focuses on helping people build generational wealth. Contact Amir at 203-507-3457 or amir.glenn@wdsells.com.



"We are delighted to have these fine Realtors affiliated with Wareck D'Ostilio Real Estate," said John Wareck, Partner/broker.

"It is the combined efforts of all our agents that have enabled us to maintain a strong position. It is also what is nurturing our continued growth. Our upward movement, expansion into other markets and high presence is why Ricky, Bob, Laura and Amir joined our team," added Frank D'Ostilio, Jr., Partner.



Pictured from left to right: Paul Gehr (OEDC Treasurer), Debbie Clancy (OEDC President), Chief Vaughan Dumas, Mike Latella (OEDC Board Member), and Roy Cuzzocreo (OEDC Board Member),

## OEDC Presents Donation to the Orange VFD

The Orange Economic Development Corporation (OEDC) presented the Orange Volunteer Fire Department with a donation of \$2,500 on December 9<sup>th</sup> from the proceeds received at the OEDC's Annual Golf Tournament. The organization teamed up with the fire department at the tournament that took place on September 27, 2021. Chief Vaughan Dumas accepted the

donation, which will contribute to purchasing a gear extractor washing machine—used to wash the carcinogens from firefighter's turnout gear. The machine has not been replaced since 1999 and is much needed. The OEDC is excited to continue its partnership with the Fire Department at its next tournament, scheduled for September 13, 2022.

## CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS



Photo By Linda Bradford

## Beautifying Orange

The Garden Club of Orange designed wreaths to decorate town buildings for the holidays. Members brought clippings of evergreens and pinecones from their yards to embellish the wreaths.

If you are interested in learning

more, please call Nancy Beque at 203-795-9425.

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





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## 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Frosty Fest

BOWDAAC (Bethany Orange Woodbridge Drug/Alcohol Action Committee) hosted its first Frosty Fest! Frosty Fest is a chance for families and/or businesses to show off your community holiday pride! Decorated snowmen line the street in front of High Plains Community Center. This fundraiser is open to families, BOW-based businesses, organizations and clubs. Proceeds will benefit BOWDAAC and substance use prevention/mental health awareness programming for our local youth. Thank you to all who participated and Happy Holidays! Info can be found at [bowfrostyfest.eventbrite.com](http://bowfrostyfest.eventbrite.com).

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# The 9th Annual Rotary Club of Orange 5K Turkey Trot & Fun Walk held this Thanksgiving Day

*Photos by Shulley Xiaochun Wu.*





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# What To Get Young Professionals This Holiday Season

Holiday shoppers relish the moment when a loved one unwraps a gift and immediately smiles widely. Hitting the nail on the head in regard to a holiday gift is its own reward, and there's no shame in looking around for some inspiration to find a gift loved ones will truly cherish.

Shopping for young professionals this holiday season could be a little tricky, as changes sparked by the pandemic continue to affect work environments. However, shoppers can still find gifts to make young professionals happy this holiday season.

**Home office essentials:** Many businesses have welcomed workers back to the office, but some are taking a hybrid approach to being in the office. Many professionals who once went into the office five days a week are now spending one or two days a week at home. Others may still be working remotely full-time. Holiday shoppers can take this into consideration when shopping for young professionals and look for some basic home office essentials. A comfortable office chair, a monitor that can be paired with a company-issued laptop and even a single-serve coffee pot for young people accustomed to getting their morning coffee on the way into the office can help professionals seamlessly transition from the office to their home office during the work week.

**Messenger bag:** Looking the part

can boost young professionals' confidence as they begin their careers. A leather messenger bag is a stylish and sophisticated way for young professionals to carry their laptops and other workday essentials to and from work. Professionals working in especially formal environments may prefer a leather briefcase, which creates a more traditional look for young people who will be entertaining clients or shuffling from one business meeting to another.

**Business card holder:** Though they might not be as prevalent as they once were, business cards remain an effective way for young professionals to build their networks. An elegant, monogrammed business card holder can help young professionals make a strong first impression.

**Luggage:** Business travel may not be back to its pre-pandemic levels just yet, but many young professionals will undoubtedly still appreciate an upgrade over the luggage they used in college. If designer luggage is a budget buster, look for a sturdy, elegant alternative that young professionals will be proud to tote around on their first official business trip.

Business may still be unusual as the world continues to emerge from the pandemic. But shoppers can look to some old favorites as they search for the perfect gifts for the young professionals on their holiday shopping lists this season.



Home gym equipment can make for a great gift this holiday season.

# Gifts To Excite The Family Athlete This Holiday Season

Holiday shoppers know that few things can match the joy of finding the perfect gift for a loved one. Whether that loved one is a tiny tot who can't wait to unwrap this year's must-have toy or an adult hoping to find the latest gadget under the tree on Christmas morning, the thrill of giving a great gift is part of what makes the holiday season so enjoyable.

Friends and family members may fall into certain categories, and that can make holiday shopping a little easier. For example, loved ones who can't wait to sit down with a good book would no doubt appreciate a new e-reader or the latest bestseller. When it comes to gifting the family athlete, the following ideas can provide the inspiration shoppers need to put a smile on the face of fitness-minded friends and family members .

**Weighted vest:** Weighted vests have gained popularity in recent years. Available from a variety of manufacturers and for athletes of varying skill levels, weighted vests can be ideal for athletes who want to burn more calories and build strength during their workouts. This can be an especially useful gift for endurance athletes who want their training sessions to mimic the challenges posed by nature or difficult competitive terrains.

**Noise-canceling headphones or earbuds:** Many athletes relish their workouts not only as opportunities to zero in on their fitness goals, but also

as chances to block out distractions and clear their heads for an hour or two each day. Noise-cancelling headphones or earbuds effectively block out external noises, allowing athletes to direct all of their focus on their workouts and training sessions.

**Energy drinks:** Though it might not seem like the most exciting gift to unwrap on Christmas morning, energy drinks are vital to many fitness enthusiasts' athletic endeavors. For example, endurance athletes may appreciate a tub of Osmo Active Hydration Performance Drink Mix, which contains an optimal ratio of sucrose, glucose and electrolytes, helping athletes improve their endurance and power while reducing instances of cramping and fatigue. Energy drinks make for a perfect stocking stuffer.

**Home gym equipment:** Pandemic-related gym closures turned athletes into their own personal trainers, and some may not want to return to local fitness facilities even now that they've safely reopened. Home gym equipment can help athletes continue to build their own private home gyms, making items like kettle bells, dumbbells, weight benches, and resistance bands great items to put under the tree this holiday season.

It's never been easier to shop for the family athlete during the holiday season. A heightened focus on fitness ensures there's something for every type of athlete on your holiday shopping list.

“Letters” From Page 5

that is focused on ending drunk driving. In a new initiative called Decide To Ride, we are encouraging everyone to plan ahead for a safe ride home, before the celebrations even begin – because you can’t drive drunk if you don’t drive there.

For more than 35 years, Anheuser-Busch and its wholesaler partners have invested more than \$1 billion in responsible drinking initiatives and community-based programs to prevent underage drinking, impaired driving and other harmful uses of alcohol. At Dichello Distributors Inc., we’re proud to work alongside Anheuser-Busch to ensure that we keep our friends, families and neighbors safe by planning ahead for a safe ride home.

Cheers to a safe, happy and healthy holiday season!

Tony Lota  
Alcohol Awareness Coordinator  
Dichello Distributors, Inc.  
Orange CT

Newly Elected Tax Collector Says Thanks

I, again, wish to express my thanks to the voters of Orange for the continued trust they have placed in me, before on the Amity Regional School Board and now as Tax Collector for the Town. In grand New England tradition, once again two candidates were presented to you for Tax Collector and

after a vigorous campaign with Mark Moyher, I was selected by you as your Tax Collector. His candidacy was in the finest traditions of the Town. With the retirement of Sandra Pierson on election day, I was immediately sworn in and put to work on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November to make sure services to you were continued seamlessly and uninterrupted and as I come up to speed on the town’s QDS tax system, I hope you will give me a couple extra minutes as I help you in the office. In the near future, I plan on having some more efficiencies introduced to the tax office and along with Sally Ferko, I will continue in the Town Tax Collectors’ fine tradition of service to you. For it is in doing my new job that makes all things possible in providing government and educational services to your families. For those of you that wish to pay your January taxes early for income tax purposes, we plan to be available to help you, but please do not wait until the last minute and for those of you who have purchased a vehicle in the last year we are planning on getting your supplemental motor vehicle tax notices out earlier this year to give you more time to decide on whether or not you want to pay this year or in January. Again, thank you for your indication of trust and I look forward to meeting you if you come to the tax office in Town Hall!

Thomas P Hurley  
Town of Orange Tax Collector

Ideal Hobbies For Busy People

Carving out some time for personal pursuits can provide a sense of achievement and a break from the daily grind. Hobbies also can improve physical and mental health in a variety of ways.

People with tight schedules may think that they’re too busy to engage in hobbies. In such instances, individuals should look for activities that don’t require too great of a time commitment.

**Photography:** Photos can be snapped just about anywhere and at any time, making photography ideal for busy people. Thanks to advancements in mobile phone cameras, individuals do not even need a high-tech or expensive camera to snap great shots.

**Cooking:** Everyone needs to eat, making cooking a very useful hobby. Many people who cook for pleasure also note how relaxing it can be to prepare a delicious meal.

**Curating music playlists:** People with a love of music can take advantage of the many music streaming services to curate their own archives. Discover new music or find old favorites and then make digital playlists for

the activities of everyday life, such as backyard barbecues or commutes into work. Various streaming sites allow users to make playlists public so they can be shared with others who enjoy the same musical genres.

**Reading:** The benefits of reading are numerous. Reading bolsters readers’ vocabulary, can teach them about current events, provides an escape, and also serves as exercise for the brain, potentially delaying age-related cognitive decline. Reading can be a solitary venture done in short or long periods of spare time. It also can be shared with others through book clubs and other reading groups.

**Scrapbooking:** Photographs are now routinely relegated to the cloud, where they linger in a sort of digital limbo. Scrapbooking inspires people to not only print their photos, but to get creative putting them together with designs, sayings and other mementos.

Busy individuals do not have to pass up on hobbies because they feel they’re short on time. Plenty of activities don’t require much time but still provide a host of benefits.

HEALTH & FITNESS

Hip Flexor Tightness and Why It Is Killing Your Low Back

By KYLE BRANDAY MSPT

All of us have woken up from a long night’s sleep with that nagging pain through your lower back. We pull our knees to our chest...no relief. We try and rotate our lumbar spine hoping for our pain to reduce...nothing. Maybe it’s that pesky piriformis muscle we all keep hearing about. But none of this is alleviating the pain we are having.

What if that pain is stemming from a place very few of people associate with lower back pain? We need to look outside the box in order to track down the illusive nature of our pain. Enter the iliopsoas muscle, better known as the hip flexor. The iliopsoas runs from the front of our lumbar spine and hip bone to the front and top of our femur. This muscle being tight and bound down not only pulls our hip bone forward, but also pulls our lumbar spine into a hyperextended position increasing the joint pressure. Hence that nagging low back pain we just can’t shake.

Pulling our knees to our chest or opening the rotation of our spine will have little to no effect on pain generated from this type of restriction. Think about the amount of time we spend these days sitting at our desk, in front of our computer, tablet, or cell phone. Our hips are naturally flexed, putting the hip flexor in a shortened position, allowing it to tighten down and put this tremendous amount of pressure on our spine. We have all heard or been told that changing positions during the day to stand up and get out of our chair will help to prevent soreness, stiffness, and back pain. Well, there is obviously a method to the madness here. By standing upright we are taking that hip flexor and putting it back onto a more normal, elongated position.

Cranking on our lower back to stretch out or performing only stability exercises such as pelvic tilts, crunches, or bridges can help out some aspects of lower back pain, but if you are not assessing your hip flexor mobility you could be missing the boat to fixing this problem. Core stabilization is a very



Kyle Branday MSPT

important part of treatment and will assist with maintain decompression for the long term, but only if you are concomitantly working to elongate tight and restricted soft tissues. One of the best exercises to stretch the hip flexor is the half kneeling hip flexor stretch. To perform simply attain a half kneeling position with the side to be stretched oriented directly under your trunk with the thigh pointed straight to the floor. The other leg should be bent up to a 90-degree position at the hip and knee. Next, slowly transfer your trunk forward onto the forward leg, allowing the kneeling leg to stretch rearward as shown in the image above. The stretch should be felt through the front of the hip and thigh.

Given that spine pain can have a wide variety of origin, you should seek out consultation from a trained and highly skilled physical therapist to assess and determine the direct cause of your pain. With physical therapists no longer needing a doctor’s referral to begin treatment since the enactment of the Direct Access act in 2006, seeing your PT is a great place to start.

Kyle Branday, MSPT is a physical therapist at Amity Physical Therapy with locations in Woodbridge, Hamden, Branford and Milford. To set an appointment he can be contacted at (203) 389-4593; [www.amitypt.com](http://www.amitypt.com).



# HOUSES OF WORSHIP EVENTS

## The First Church of Christ, Woodbridge

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

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



First Church of Christ Woodbridge

**Live Stream:** Sunday Service can be viewed on our website every Sunday at 10:00 a.m. A video recording of the live stream is featured for the entire week following the service. To view previous Sunday Services, visit our YouTube channel, using the link provided on all pages of our website. (Links, contact info, and a schedule of upcoming Services are listed at the bottom of this article.)

\*If you would like assistance gaining access to Sunday Services, please call us by Friday morning, at 203-389-2119, or email us at [office@uccw.org](mailto:office@uccw.org).

**Office Hours:** The Church office in the Parish House is open from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Mondays through Fridays.

**Events Update:** Our Lessons and Carols Christmas Eve Service will take place in the Meetinghouse at 5:00 p.m. on December 24<sup>th</sup>. Please join us for this annual FCCW holiday tradition. Visitors are always welcomed!

**Weekly Bible Study:** Bible Study meets at the Parish House each Wednesday, 10:00 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. All are invited!

**Join the FCCW Choir!** New members are always welcome. Join us for rehearsals Wednesdays at 6:30PM.

**Boy Scout Troop #907:** Regular scout meetings are held every Thursday, at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish House. Stop by with the young man in your family (ages 11-17 years old) and meet our great scouts! New members are always welcome. For more information

go to [www.troop907.org](http://www.troop907.org).

**Sanctuary Décor Restoration:** The John Canning Company has completed the Phase One sanctuary restoration. The scaffolding is removed, the organ reassembled and tuned, the Christmas decorations and poinsettias displayed, and normal church activities have resumed. Please attend a service and see the restored ceiling, rosette, cornices, and the north wall. The décor is glorious (Luke 2:14).

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

**For More Information:** Visit our website at [www.uccw.org](http://www.uccw.org) for resources such as our calendar of events, monthly newsletter, ministry and volunteer opportunities, photo galleries, scout info, and much more! Follow us on Facebook and stay up-to-date with parish happenings, including memorials and baptism announcements.

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

FCCW Sunday Service Schedule		
Dec. 12 <sup>th</sup>	Rev. Karl Duetzmann	
Dec. 19 <sup>th</sup>	Rev. Janice Touloukian	
Christmas Eve Service		
Dec. 24 <sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m.		
	Lessons and Carols	
	Rev. Walter Pitman	
Dec. 26 <sup>th</sup>	Rev. Raquel Irizarry	

## Congregation Or Shalom Happenings

**Join Us For Weekly Services**

**Morning Minyan**

- › Sunday 9:00 AM – Zoomed
- › Monday 8:30 AM – Zoomed
- › Thursday 8:30 AM – Zoomed



Congregation Or Shalom

**Shabbat Services**

- › Friday 7:30 PM – Zoomed & in person
- › Saturday 9:30 AM – Zoomed & in person

(Please call the synagogue office at 203-799-2341 for more information).

**Virtual Learning This Month**

**The Rabbi's Wednesday Morning "Coffee &.. Learn" Class: IN-PERSON & VIA ZOOM**

11am-Noon

TOPIC: THE BIBLE'S TOP TEN MOST IMPORTANT VERSES

In this course, Rabbi Wainhaus will explore Judaism's most important ideological contributions to human civilization. The course is based on the idea that the essence of the Bible's message can be discovered in 10 key verses. All Welcome! Current masking and social distancing will be in place if you attend in person. Email [coshalom@sbcglobal.net](mailto:coshalom@sbcglobal.net) or call the synagogue office at 203-799-2341 to receive the ZOOM link.

**JOIN A NEW BOOK GROUP IN 2021!**

7 PM, Thursday, December 16

**Led by Caryl Winter**

INSTANT NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER - "Utterly gripping with richly drawn, hugely compelling characters, this is a first-class thriller with heart." —Lucy Foley, New York Times bestselling author. A beautiful young couple's disappearance on a gor-

geous summer night, and the mother who will never give up trying to find them. On a beautiful summer night in a charming English suburb, a young woman and her boyfriend disappear after partying at the massive country estate of a new college friend.

One year later, a writer moves into a cottage on the edge of the woods that borders the same estate. Known locally as the Dark Place, the dense forest is the writer's favorite area for long walks and it's on one such walk that she stumbles upon a mysterious note that simply reads, "DIG HERE."

Could this be a clue towards what has happened to the missing young couple? And what exactly is buried in this haunted ground? With her signature "rich, dark, and intricately twisted" (Ruth Ware, New York Times bestselling author) prose, Lisa Jewell has crafted a dazzling work of suspense that will keep you on the edge of your seat until the final page.

To receive the link to register in advance for the Book Discussion, please email the synagogue at [coshalom@sbcglobal.net](mailto:coshalom@sbcglobal.net)

**Social Action**

**MITZVAH OF THE MONTH**

Our monthly mitzvah for December is collecting blankets and socks. You can drop of these items off at the Synagogue

Orange Town News

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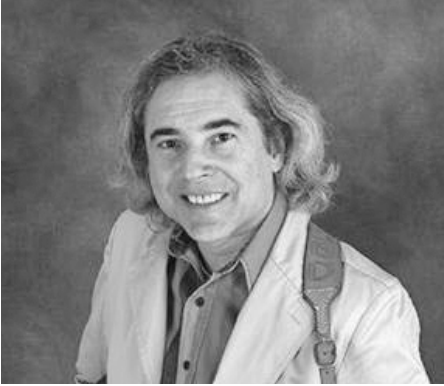
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# HOUSES OF WORSHIP EVENTS

## Congregation Beth El – Keser Israel Events



Stacy Phillips

### Bluegrass Music

The Bluegrass Characters Revue will present “A Tribute to Phil Zimmerman and Stacy Phillips” at BEKI on Thursday, December 23 at 7:30 pm. Also performing is Kol Kahol, a group of young musicians drawing inspiration from bluegrass musicians like Phillips, as well as contemporary Jewish bands such as the Klezmatics, the Moshav Band, and Nefesh Mountain.

When Phillips died in June 2018, his band, which had been called Stacy Phillips and His Bluegrass Characters, continued the tradition of this annual concert, led by Phillips’ longtime collaborator and bandmate Phil Zimmerman, but Zimmerman died in April 2021. This year’s performance by the remaining Characters will be a tribute to both Zimmerman and Phillips.

One of the members of Kol Kahol, violinist, bassist, and vocalist Sofia Chiarandini, was Phillips’ student and a veteran of the annual Bluegrass Characters concert. A classical as well as



bluegrass violinist, she is a graduate of the Berklee College of Music.

The doors to BEKI will open when the hall is ready for seating, around 7 pm. Masks are required for all audience members; no food or beverages will be allowed. There is no charge for admission, but the musicians will pass the hat.

### Melodies for Prayer

Ethnomusicologist Rachel Adelstein will offer a 6-part program on Mondays at 8:00 pm, starting January 10, focusing on the origins and the evolution of tunes for Jewish prayers. Adelstein, who received her PhD in ethnomusicology from the University of Chicago, regularly offers classes at BEKI about Jewish music. Tune in

for some or all of the sessions, provided with support from the Morris & Sara Oppenheim Fund for Sacred Music. To request the Zoom link, email [office@beki.org](mailto:office@beki.org).



### Tu Bishvat Seder

BEKI will celebrate Tu Bishvat, the New Year for Trees, on Sunday, January 16 with a Zoom Seder from 6:30 to 7:30 pm. To fully participate, prepare a glass of wine or grape juice and a dish of three things that grow on trees, such as almonds, walnuts, cashews, oranges, apples, pears, or olives. The program will



offer songs, conversation, and videos to keep both adults and children engaged. This is one of BEKI’s Synagogue Vegan Challenge events, supported by Vegfund. To request the Zoom link, email [office@beki.org](mailto:office@beki.org).

### Bruce Oren Art

The current exhibition in the BEKI galleries, “Entropy Warriors,” presents sculpture, photography and paintings by New Haven artist Bruce Oren. A direct carver of stone, Oren begins carving without preconception, maquette or plan, letting the stone initially dictate its form. After the stone is roughly carved, “the rock reveals its images hidden inside,” he explains. “It’s nothing cosmic. It’s like seeing shapes in clouds — a variety of natural gestalt closure.” Some of his work plays on one’s mind seeing figurative images in random or abstract shapes.



The community is welcome to participate in a conversation with the artist on Saturday, February 5 at 12:30 pm; Sabbath rules will be observed. The snow date is February 12. Oren’s art is on display until February 26. To arrange a time to visit the galleries, call the BEKI office at 203-389-2108 x114.

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

## Orange Congregational Church Events

Orange Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, invites you to join us at 205 Meeting House Lane in Orange for worship, or on YouTube at Orange Congregational Church, UCC for our livestreamed services. Our regular in-person Sunday worship is at 10:00 a.m. Christmas Eve worship will take place in-person on Friday, December 24, 2021 in our Sanctuary at 3pm & 5pm There will be intergenerational worship and at 10pm. We will have a traditional candlelight service with the choir singing. Registration in advance is requested to ensure room for all who wish to attend; please call 203-795-9749, email [occhurch@snet.net](mailto:occhurch@snet.net), or visit our website at [orangecongregational-church.org](http://orangecongregational-church.org) and fill out the attendance form. Masks are also required. The Christmas Eve 3pm & 10pm worship



Congregational Church

services will also be livestreamed for those at home.

We are an Open and Affirming Congregation, which means we welcome all people into the full life and leadership of the church regardless of race, class, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, or family type. No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here!

## Last-Minute Holiday Shopping Tips

Some people thrive by doing all of their tasks early. Others seem to do their best work when faced with a time crunch. The methods individuals use to manage their time at work and play may extend to the ways they approach holiday shopping as well.

There’s no right or wrong way to handle holiday shopping tasks, though Christmas Eve crowds at malls and throughout shopping districts suggest that there’s more late comers than there are early birds. The following tips can help those who typically wait until the last minute to check names off their lists.

Utilize free shipping services. Shoppers who shop for gifts online at the last minute run the risk of gifts not arriving on time. Many online retailers charge a premium for expedited shipping. Try to stick to shopping at online retailers that offer free shipping even in the eleventh hour.

Create a budget. When rushing around from store to store, it may be easy to spend more than you want to. Make a list of how much you want to spend on each person, and stick to that limit for each person. Move on to the next store if you didn’t find what you need in your price range.

Establish a time limit. Stores have strategies in place to keep shoppers in their establishments longer, hoping you’ll make impulse buys. These tricks include scenting the air with inviting

aromas, putting necessities at the rear of the store, failing to display the time, and putting discounted items by the registers or door to attract shoppers. Set an alarm on your watch or phone for each store so you get what you need and get out on time.

Subdivide bulk gifts. Think about purchasing bulk gifts like gift baskets from wholesale clubs and then breaking them down into individual gifts. This way you can gift several people on one purchase and save time in the process.

Choose one-size-fits-all gifts. Think about a gift that can be purchased for mul-

multiple people so you can save time shopping for individualized gifts for everyone. For example, print a personalized photo calendar for several members of your family. You also can purchase multiple subscriptions or memberships to zoos or magazines for people on your list. Streamlining gifting in this way may save money as well as time.

Choose in-store pickup. Rather than scouring various aisles, you can shop a retailer’s website and then pick up items in the store. You’ll save on potential shipping fees but still benefit by avoiding crowds.

Some people wait until the last minute to do their holiday shopping. A few tricks of the procrastinator’s trade can make last-minute shopping go smoothly.



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Tips For Traveling  
With Gifts In Tow

"There's no place like home for the holidays." The popular Christmas tune says it best, and millions of people support that notion every year by heading back to their hometowns to spend the holidays with friends and family.

The Bureau of Transportation Statistics points out that the Thanksgiving and Christmas/New Year's holiday periods are some of the busiest times for long-distance travel. Around Thanksgiving, the number of trips to and from a destination 50 miles or more away increases by 54 percent. During the December holiday period, the number rises by 23 percent.

When traveling for the holidays, suitcases and other baggage tends to be filled with gifts, decorations and other items like food. Packing for travel can become a little more complicated during this time of year. But these suggestions can help ensure holiday items make it there and back relatively easily.

airlines charge fees for extra baggage, which can quickly add up with bulky holiday gifts. Instead, ship gifts to their destination, trying to plan accordingly so that someone will be there to receive them when they arrive. Pick a shipping rate that fits your budget.

Make a "small gift" pact

Speak with family members and agree to a set gift size (and/or dollar value). A theme, such as limiting gifts to gift cards, perfume/cologne or food, can make this more manageable. Try to avoid delicate items which can break during transit. Small gifts are easily stashed in luggage or boxes to bring home, saving everyone a little stress.

Remove packaging and wrapping

While they may not look as pristine as carefully wrapped boxes, wrap soft clothing items right in wrapping paper or tissue paper to save on space so gifts will take up less space. On the return trip home, break down clothing boxes and remove toys from their cardboard and plastic packaging to make them easier to transport.

Wrap them there

One way to preserve the integrity of holiday gifts and ensure they look attractive rather than crushed or ripped is to wrap items when you arrive. Build extra time into holiday travel so that you arrive a day or two early. Seek out a quiet spot and get your wrapping done.

Ship them there or back

Depending on your mode of travel, there may be limited cargo space in the trunk or back of the SUV. Also, if you're taking a long road trip that involves rest stops or even staying over at a hotel, gifts left in a vehicle may attract the attention of thieves. Lugging them into the hotel may not be practical, either. In addition, many

Bring along an empty piece of luggage

Much like on vacation, you'll probably return home with a few more items than you arrived with during the holidays. Plan ahead with an empty piece of luggage for stowing the new gifts. Nest soft or foldable items into other gifts to save on space. Shirts rolled into shoes can save significant space.

Millions of people travel for the holidays. A plan to get gifts to and from can make trips go smoothly.


DEATH NOTICES

Orange Town News

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](mailto:edit@orangetownnews.com)

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The Benefits Of In Person Holiday Shopping

The 2020 holiday season was unlike any other. The COVID-19 pandemic was still affecting daily life across the globe over the final months of 2020, prompting many families and individuals to alter holiday traditions they'd embraced for decades. That included how people shop. Many people avoided in person holiday shopping in 2020. However, the successful rollout of various COVID-19 vaccines has made in person shopping safe again. That's good news for local businesses and great news for shoppers, who may have forgotten just how much they can benefit from shopping in person.

In person shopping is convenient. Much is made of the convenience of online shopping. And it's undeniable that the ability to shop at all hours of the day and night is convenient. How-

ever, in person shopping, especially when shopping for others, is much more convenient than shoppers may realize. When shopping in person, shoppers can get a feel for an item, size it up and even inspect its quality prior to purchasing it. That can save shoppers from that disappointing feeling of receiving an item in the mail only to realize it's poorly made or oddly sized and therefore unlikely to fit its eventual recipient.

In person shopping isn't all about shipping. Shipping speed is a significant factor for online shoppers, and that may affect just which gift they give come the holiday season. According to a Dotcom report titled "How Fast Delivery and Quality Packaging Drives Customer Loyalty," 87 percent of shoppers surveyed indicated shipping was

a key factor when deciding whether to shop with an e-commerce brand again. That's an important consideration, as shoppers may be more inclined to buy an item from a retailer simply because of their shipping speed capabilities and not because of the quality of the item and whether or not it's what they want to give to their loved one. Shopping in person removes shipping from the equation, ensuring gift givers will give a gift they truly want to give and not just the one that will arrive on time.

In person shopping allows for more accessible browsing. Within minutes of entering a store and walking around, shoppers may see a handful of gifts that will ultimately be great for various people on their lists, even if they had no idea what to get prior to entering. That ability to browse is more difficult

when shopping online, especially when buying from online retailers with massive inventories of a range of products. Such sites often require visitors to pick a category to streamline their searches. That's not always easy or enjoyable for shoppers who cherish the opportunity to uncover hidden gems or more unique gifts that aren't available all over the internet.

In person shopping gets shoppers out of the house. Since the onset of the pandemic, people have spent more time than ever within the confines of their homes. The 2021 holiday shopping season provides a great opportunity to get out of the house and disconnect from devices. Shoppers can even do so alongside friends and family members they weren't able to see last holiday season.

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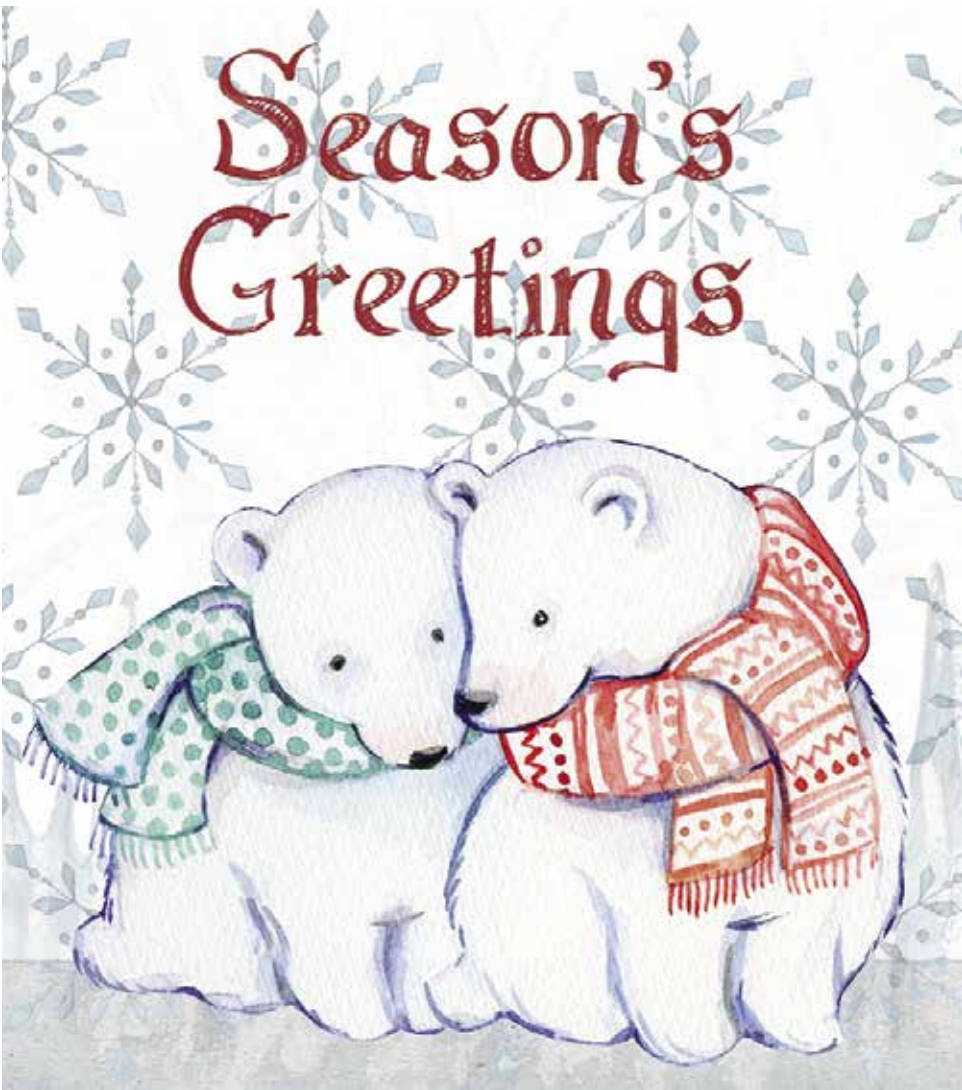
## Payne, Percy Wed

The marriage of Miss Katharine Colonna Payne, daughter of David Robert Payne and Sally Wool Pearson to Dr. Andrew Percy, son of Craig Percy and the late Jayne Percy of Westlake Village, CA (formerly of Woodbridge) took place on Saturday, November 6, 2021 at the Tredegar Iron Works in Richmond, VA. Dr. Robert Horton of Jonesville, VA officiated.

Katharine is the granddaughter of Roberta Holt Curtis and the late Joseph Craig Wool Jr. and Mrs. Sheila Payne and the late Dr. Charles Franklin Payne of Virginia Beach, VA. Andrew is the grandson of John and Jane Percy of Westfield, NJ and Gerard and Judy Kornblum of Bellmore, NY.

Following the ceremony, the bride's parents hosted a reception at the Tredegar Iron Works. The groom's father hosted a brunch at the Kent -Valentine House in Richmond, VA the day after the wedding.

The bride is a graduate of King William High School and North Carolina State University, and she received her Masters Degree from Johns Hopkins University in Environmental Science and Policy. She is currently Account Manager at Solenis Corporation. The groom is a graduate of Amity High School and Bates College. He received his medical degree from VCU School of Medicine in Richmond, VA, after which he completed his pediatrics residency at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, and he is currently a pediatric critical care fellow at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. The couple resides in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



BY GINNY REINHARD

He, Andros, read his commission as governor and demanded the charter and Governor Treat followed with



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