

The Gazette

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Thursday, March 12, 2026

Crafted from the finest local ingredients since 1885

1406 Main Street, East Hartford, Connecticut 06108

860-289-6468

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CELEBRATING THE IRISH



THE TIERINNI FAMILY PROUDLY carries the town's banner Saturday in Hartford's St. Patrick's Day parade.

AI instruction coming to classroom near you

By Robert Kanehl

Meeting at Mayberry School, the Board of Education heard several updates concerning technology, professional development and the use of Artificial Intelligence, or AI, in school.

Grade 6-12 ELA Curriculum Supervisor Anna Capobianco told the Board that the district is progressing well concerning AI, in terms of both professional development as well as practical classroom deployment.

The new teacher evaluation allows staff members to establish personal goals and develop a program to meet those goals. Capobianco notes the District is still offering education programs which the teachers can opt to attend. But they are also allowed to seek out professional growth outside the District's in-

structional sessions. About 80 percent of teachers opted to attend the District's programs, she said.

Concerning AI education, Capobianco outlined steps the District has taken this year to evaluate curriculum and instruction. Teachers were informed about ethics as well as AI tools can make it easier to claim other's intellectual work as one's own.

In the future, the District will be increasing use of AI by both teachers and students. Capobianco concluded that, based on what she has seen across the state concerning bringing AI into the schools, "East Hartford is addressing this rapid change the best."

The Board also head from Benjamin Brown, Chier Information Officer of the East Hart-

See AI EDUCATION, page 10

Grant kick-starts new North End firehouse

by Bill Doak

The roof leaks over Lt. Cliff Barliss's cot, water trickles from the shower onto the tiny kitchen area, and the narrow stairs to the second floor feature a big outline of a body painted on the wall marking the spot where a firefighter fell as he raced down the twisting wood stairs to respond to a call, one of some 1,700 last year.

But firefighters who are stationed in the old brick structure at 1692 Main Street are not complaining. From all the faded, framed photos up on the thickly-painted walls, the circa-1939 building displays the pride and camaraderie of the fire service.

"I love the old buildings," says Chief Kevin Munson. But the equipment, science and training needed now surpassed the ability of the infrastructure to serve its occupants. That's why East Hartford has long planned to replace the building, but has struggled to find the right time to ask the taxpayers to support what could now be a \$12 million project. With a design in hand, and property purchased, obtaining state and federal grants will help defray the local cost. Congressman John Larson took the first step to help Tuesday presenting a \$1 million check to the town to help with the project.

See FIREHOUSE, page 10



CONGRESSMAN JOHN LARSON, left, presents check to Mayor Connor Martin and Fire Chief Kevin Munson.

AROUND TOWN

Rail bridge over river getting rehabbed

\$20 million in grants being issued to support freight rail safety and reliability

The state Department of Transportation announced East Hartford rail crossings will be upgraded as part of a \$20 million Rail Freight Infrastructure Program.

CT Southern Railroad (CSO) will receive \$4,463,668 for repairs to the bridge over the Connecticut River, a critical link whose rehabilitation will extend the life of the structure.

CSO will also replace four grade crossing surfaces here in East Hartford to enhance railroad and motorist safety, replace worn turnouts and rail in its Hartford yard to improve switching operations, and replace rail in Wethersfield to support more reliable train movements.

The awards will be supplemented by nearly \$4 million in private railroad investment.

The freight system helps reduce highway congestion and supports economic growth and freight mobility statewide.

"Connecticut's freight rail network is moving essential supplies and goods across the region that people and businesses rely on every day," said Governor Ned Lamont. "A strong economy depends on reliable infrastructure, and that's exactly what these investments deliver. These grants reflect our strong partnership with the freight railroads and our shared commitment to safety and reliability."

"Improving the state's freight rail infrastructure is a critical component of strengthening Connecticut's economy. Investments in freight rail make the supply chain more resilient, create jobs, and establish a strong system for future commerce," said Connecticut Department of Transportation Commissioner Garrett Eucalitto. "These improvements will allow more freight to be moved safely and more quickly, while reducing highway congestion and air pollution. I look forward to the continued partnership with the freight railroads as we keep the

state's and region's economy moving forward."

According to the American Association of Railroads (AAR), 2.6 million tons of freight originated in Connecticut in 2023, and another 1.6 million tons terminated in the state. Railroads in Connecticut move essential commodities including stone and aggregate, agricultural goods, municipal solid waste, construction materials, fuel products, metals, paper, heavy equipment, and intermodal containers.

Other Rail Freight Infrastructure Program grants awarded include the Housatonic Railroad Company (HRRC): \$2,636,382, Naugatuck Railroad (NAUG): \$4,571,673.30, the New England Central Railroad (NECR): \$1,563,689, Providence and Worcester Railroad (P&W): \$4,911,520 for work including replacement of rail on the Wethersfield Secondary, enabling it to accommodate 286,000 pound freight cars, the current national industry standard which will also replace four grade crossing surfaces in Wethersfield, and Pan Am Southern (PAS): \$1,853,047 for rail replacement, bridge tie work, upgrades to crossing warning devices, and turnout improvements to enhance both train handling and public safety while improving the long-term performance of the corridor.

Egg Hunt at McAuliffe Park

The Annual Egg Hunt hosted by East Hartford Parks and Recreation will be held at McAuliffe Park, 30 Remington Road, on Saturday, March 28, Rain Date is Sunday, March 29).

11:00 AM - Ages 3 and Under; 11:30 AM - Ages 4 - 6; 12:00 PM - Ages 7 - 10; 1:00 PM - Special Needs Division.

Each group will begin promptly at the scheduled time. Please arrive early, as hunts will not be delayed for late arrivals.

Ages 3 and Under and Special Needs Divisions will be al-

lowed one adult on the field with them. Participants should bring a bag or basket for collecting eggs and dress appropriately for the weather. Limited spaces are available in each division.

Registration is required for each child participating. This event is for East Hartford residents only. Registration is required and must be completed online at ehparks.org

If you have any questions, please call the Parks and Recreation office at 860-291-7160

Memorial Day Parade signup

East Hartford's Memorial Day Parade will be Monday, May 25 along Riverside Drive in front of the Goodwin University campus buildings and Fallen Star Memorial.

The parade steps off at 10 a.m. and concludes with a ceremony of remembrance at the Fallen Star followed by a celebration of East Hartford.

Family-oriented events will take place including food trucks, music, activities for kids, and local vendors. Any groups that wish to participate by marching are asked to register by Wednesday, April 1. <https://www.easthartfordct.gov/2026-memorial-day-parade-participant-registration>

Volunteers are needed as well. If interested sign up by

Monday, May 15. <https://www.easthartfordct.gov/2026-memorial-day-parade-volunteer-registration>

Sponsorship opportunities are needed to help defray the expenses of the parade. Local businesses and organizations wishing to be a sponsor or to offer in-kind services should go to

<https://www.easthartfordct.gov/2026-memorial-day-event-sponsorships> by Monday, April 27.

CLASSIFIEDS

LANDSCAPING- weekly mowings (\$45-\$55) spring cleanup, mulching, bush and hedge trimming, etc... call (860)985-6361 for a quote.

LEGAL NOTICES

ADOPTION OF THE 2026-2027 BUDGET

This is to certify that the East Hartford Town Council, in session on March 9, 2026, voted in accordance with Section 6.4(b) of the Town Charter to adopt the Mayor's Budget as amended:

Town Government Budget of	\$113,243,337
Board of Education Budget of	\$106,213,941
and a Debt Service payment of	\$10,656,963
and a Capital Improvement Budget of	\$1,401,500
for a total budget of	\$231,515,741

Tax Collection Rate 97.05%

Mill Rates of:

Real Estate and Personal Property	47.24
Motor Vehicles	32.46

Generating taxes of:

Real Estate and Personal Property @ 47.24 mills	\$146,937,026
Motor Vehicles @ 32.46 mills (incl. Supple. MV)	\$13,272,863
(Local Elderly, Veteran's, Revaluation Reserve)	(\$954,000)
Other Receipts	\$72,259,852
Total Revenue	\$231,515,741

Attest: Connor S. Martin, Mayor

Date signed: 3/9/2026

NOTICE: EAST HARTFORD REPUBLICAN TOWN COMMITTEE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that there will be a caucus of all enrolled Republican electors of the Town of East Hartford on **March 25, 2026 at 6:15pm** at Raymond Library 840 Main Street to select delegates for various Republican conventions. Any questions, please contact Anita Morrison 860-995-8651.
Anita Morrison, Chair

GAZETTE CLASSIFIEDS GET RESULTS
E-MAIL: ADS@EHGAZETTE.COM

LOST DOG? ITEM FOR SALE? - A \$12 ad in the Gazette makes more sense than spending for markers, staplers, etc to place ugly signs on telephone poles.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Clean-ups | <input type="checkbox"/> Koi ponds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aerating | <input type="checkbox"/> Grading |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overseeding | <input type="checkbox"/> Excavating |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hydro-seeding | <input type="checkbox"/> Stumps removed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Liming | <input type="checkbox"/> Clearing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rolling of lawns | <input type="checkbox"/> Demolition work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dethatching | <input type="checkbox"/> Mailbox posts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low-voltage lighting | <input type="checkbox"/> Fencing of all types |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patios | <input type="checkbox"/> Firepits |

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DESDE LA ESQUINA

by Carmen Maldonado

Mas que Limpieza

Con la primavera llegan esas ganas repentinas de abrir las ventanas y tirar todo por la ventana. Cambia la hora, el sol entra con más fuerza y, de momento, comienza a iluminar todo lo que durante meses paso desapercibido.

Ese polvo en las esquinas, las cosas acumuladas en las mesas, la ropa que ya ni utilizamos. Y entonces aparece ese impulso casi inevitable de hacer una buena limpieza de primavera.

Porque si algo tiene el sol de esta temporada es que no perdona... lo alumbrá todo.

Durante el invierno muchas cosas se quedan en pausa. Los días fríos nos invitan a quedarnos recogidos, más tranquilos, dejando para "más adelante" todo lo que requiere energía. Pero cuando llega la primavera, el cuerpo como que se activa otra vez. Dan ganas de estirarse, de salir un poco más, de moverse, de retomar esas cosas que dejamos a mitad de camino.

Y si todavía no tienes hobbies, esta es tremenda temporada para encontrarlos.

La famosa limpieza de primavera siempre se ha visto como algo de la casa: sacar lo viejo, organizar los armarios, quitar el polvo de esos rincones que uno casi ni mira. Pero quizás podemos verla de otra forma. Tal vez esta limpieza no debería quedarse solo en la casa o el apartamento.

¿Y si también fuera una limpieza para el alma?

La primavera puede sentirse como una puerta abierta. Una oportunidad para soltar pesares viejos, hábitos que ya no nos hacen bien o promesas que nos hicimos cuando empezó el año y que todavía están esperando su momento. A veces lo único que hacía falta era un poquito de sol para darnos ese empujoncito.

Desconectarse un rato de la locura del día a día y buscar algo creativo o activo también puede ser parte de esa limpieza. Tal vez sea salir a caminar más seguido, empezar a pintar, aprender a tocar un instrumento, sembrar algo en el patio o simplemente sacar un ratito para hacer algo que nos haga sentir vivos.

Porque limpiar no solo significa botar y recoger. A veces significa hacer espacio para nuevas ideas, proyectos y versiones nuevas de nosotros mismos.

Y quién sabe... tal vez esta primavera no solo terminemos con el clóset más organizado, sino también con la vida un poquito más ligera.

Eventos próximos que no te debes perder:

Ven y celebra St. Patrick's day en el Senior Center el 19 de marzo a las 5:30pm. Disfruta de una tradicional cena junto a un entretenido show por tan solo \$8.00. Este evento es para miembros del senior center.

Desayuna junto al Conejo de Pascua. Ven y disfruta de este evento para la familia. Desayuno seguido de fotos junto al Conejo de Pascua, el 28 de marzo a las 9:00am en el Senior Center.

¿Necesitas asistencia para el examen de ciudadanía? LEAD está aquí para ayudarte. Ofreciendo clases comenzando el 28 de marzo a las 12:00pm. Para más información comunícate al 860-357-4701

Conecta conmigo: cmaldonado8816@icloud.com

Senior jobs

Seniors Job Bank is introducing Next Chapter Success, a workshop series designed to help adults 50+ navigate career transitions.

Learn job search strategies, resume and LinkedIn optimization, interview skills and more.

These practical, interactive workshops are designed to strengthen local workforce participation, reduce long-term unemployment among older adults, and support economic resilience across our communities.

FMI go to <https://seniorsjobbankct.org/next-chapter-success-workshops/>

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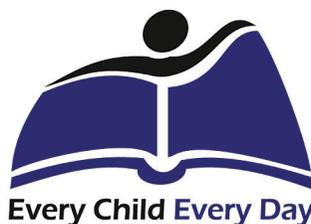
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Your child must turn 5 on or before September 1, 2026 to start kindergarten.

Children who turn 5 between September 2 and September 30, 2026 must apply for a waiver by March 30, 2026.

Children will be given an assessment to determine kindergarten readiness.

¡ABIERTA AHORA!

Su hijo(a) debe cumplir 5 años el 1 de septiembre de 2026 o antes para comenzar el Kindergarten.

Los niños que cumplan 5 años entra el 2 y el 30 de septiembre de 2026, deben solicitar una exoneración antes del 30 de marzo de 2026. Los niños recibirán una evaluación para determinar si están preparados para el Kindergarten.



SCAN THE QR CODE FOR MORE INFORMATION & TO BEGIN THE REGISTRATION PROCESS
ESCANEE EL CÓDIGO QR A CONTINUACIÓN PARA OBTENER MÁS INFORMACIÓN Y COMENZAR EL PROCESO DE REGISTRO

The Gazette

Thursday, March 12, 2026

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Advertising: ads@ehgazette.com

TESTIFYING FOR EDUCATION AID



EAST HARTFORD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS attended a hearing in the State Legislative Office Building last week to request a change in the state's Education Cost Sharing formula, which has not kept pace with inflation.

Submit local funding requests

Congressman John B. Larson's office is accepting applications for Fiscal Year 2027 Community Project Funding requests. He also slammed the Republican majority's ban prohibiting funding for organizations that conduct stem cell research or provide women's reproductive and transgender health care.

"Over the last five years, I have worked hand-in-hand with local leaders and organizations to secure nearly \$80 million in federal funding through the Community Project Funding process," said Larson.

"These projects include an active shooter training facility for law enforcement in Bristol, a new water treatment plant in Southington, and a community healthcare academy to train and equip nursing assistants. My office is now accepting requests for Fiscal Year 2027, and

I urge all municipalities and eligible organizations to apply. It is shameful to see Republicans insert their extreme anti-abortion agenda into this year's process. Democrats, led by Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro, stand united against these restrictions cutting off funds to women's organizations and health care providers that serve the trans community. I will continue to work on a bipartisan basis to advance new investments in our communities and fight back against any of the Republican majority's attempts to restrict access to health care."

For more info on the application process and eligibility for funding, visit Rep. Larson's website.

In Fiscal Year 2026, Larson secured \$16.9 million for 15 projects across Connecticut's First District.

When our community speaks up for education, we all benefit

Dear Friends,

Thank you to the families, students and community members who joined us for the Board of Education's family dinner and meeting at Mayberry Elementary School this week.

This opportunity allowed the community to engage directly with Board members and district administrators about their experiences and why Mayberry School is such a special place to learn and grow. The pride in the room was unmistakable. Conversations like these help ground our work and remind us that our schools thrive when the entire community is engaged and invested.

This month we celebrated the joy of reading during our annual Read Across America activities. In partnership with United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut, dozens of volunteers visited our kindergarten through third grade classrooms. It is truly inspiring to know these individuals took time out of their busy days to travel to our schools, read with our students and answer their questions. Their presence sends a powerful message to our children that their education and their futures matter to our community. Thank you to everyone who was a part of this impactful annual event to promote literacy and nurture a lifelong love of learning.

We'd also like to highlight the East Hartford High School students who represented our community at

WHAT'S WELL FROM WELLS HALL



Thomas Anderson
Superintendent of Schools



Tyron Harris
Chair, EH Board of Education

the Connecticut State Legislative Building last week. Four EHHS students joined Superintendent Anderson at the capitol to advocate for more state funding for public education. The students testified at a CT Education Committee public hearing and spoke in favor

of proposed bills that would update the state's education cost-sharing formula for the first time in 13 years. These proposals would increase funding to cities and towns for schools and reduce the pressures on municipalities to cover education costs locally or reduce student services.

Our students' voices were thoughtful, informed, and passionate. They demonstrated not only what they are learning in our classrooms, but also the confidence and civic responsibility that come from being part of a strong school community. It's evidence that when a community supports its schools, our students grow into leaders who will shape the future for all of us.

Finally, as we close out the winter sports season, kudos to all the teams and continued luck to the those competing in state playoff competition! We appreciate your support.

If we can be of service to you, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Anderson's office at 860-622-5107 or superintendent@easthartford.org or Mr. Harris at 860-622-5017 or harris.tv@easthartford.org.

With East Hartford Pride!

Tyron V. Harris
Board of Education Chairman
Thomas Anderson
Superintendent
East Hartford Public Schools

East Hartford's historic connection to the broad leaf tobacco trade

Did you know according to the Connecticut Valley Tobacco Museum, of Windsor there is no more tobacco crops grown in the state.

Connecticut at one time was a leading producer of the crop used not just in cigarettes, but for snuff and, of course, cigars. In fact, Connecticut tobacco was considered one of the best in the world for the outer cigar wrapper. It was exported around the world, even to the Cigar Capitol, Cuba, for use to coat the famed Havana cigar.

East Hartford was a major producer of tobacco both shade and broadleaf in the late 1800s into the mid-1900s. The two different crops were used for cigar filler and wrappers. Besides farming the crop, the town was also the shipping depot for the tobacco industry. Large warehouses were located here where tobacco was prepared and stored for distribution.

The Edward King Tobacco Museum, formerly housed on the second floor of the Raymond Library, no longer exists. It was dismantled during renovation of the library in 2014. Large items from the museum were then stored in the old Hockanum School building, or Hockanum Library, which is still closed off to the public. However the town recently donated those larger historic pieces of tobacco machinery to the CT Valley Tobacco Museum in Windsor.

Tobacco was so big that at

one time you could travel up Route 5 from East Hartford to the Massachusetts state line and see only producing tobacco fields all along the way. The tobacco industry was one of the largest summer employers in the valley. Yearly thousands of junior high, high school and college students, including Martin Luther King as well as my mother, and thousands of Puerto Ricans and Jamaicans came to the hot and humid shade tobacco fields of Connecticut to help harvest this highly-profitable but labor-intensive crop.

DID YOU KNOW?

Looking back on our East Hartford

By Robert Kanehl

Hollywood came to Connecticut in the late 1950s. The major motion picture called Parrish was set in the Hartford and

East Windsor area with the tobacco industry the motivating backdrop. It starred Karl Malden, Claudette Colbert and teen heartthrobs Connie Stevens and Troy Donahue.

The Windsor museum's information outlines the steady decline of crop production. Starting in 1921 it traces planted acreage for both shade and broadleaf grown here and Massachusetts.

From 1921's 30,800 acres the listed numbers continually decrease except for in the early 1990s when a cigar craze sparked a small rebirth in to-

bacco farming. In the 1950s, Connecticut was harvesting 14,700 acres, falling to just over 700 acres by 1992. The rebirth brought nearly 3,000 acres under plow by 1996. But twenty years later the state was producing only 700 acres again. By 2023 the museum presents zero acreage planted of shade tobacco.

In East Hartford, farms grew tobacco from Colonial days. By the mid-1800s it was grown throughout the town, not just along the Route 5 corridor, becoming the leading economic concern in the town. In the 1920s East Hartford was the fourth largest tobacco producer in the state with nearly 3,000 acres producing. Most of this crop was broadleaf.

The industry then fell on hard times. During the Great Depression, area farm output declined and warehouse complexes suffered as sales dropped. By 1939 tobacco was no longer the leading economic base of town. Lee Paquette's town history notes that by 1940 the value of industrial and business properties surpassed agricultural and residential property values.

By the 1950s less than 1,000 East Hartford acres were producing tobacco, and today the crop has all but disappeared. The latest State Agricultural statistics of 2023 show less than 2,000 Connecticut acres being farmed for tobacco, none of that shade.



Registrars of Voters canvass now underway

The town announced Friday, March 6 that the Registrars of Voters has begun canvassing electors by mailing out postcards to those who they believe may have changed their address.

The canvass is mandated by the state. If you receive a Notice of Change of Address you have 30 days to return the canvass letter using the postage-paid return envelope.

Confirm or correct any information, sign and date the letter and return it by April 9.

If questions call 860-291-7280 or e-mail the registrars of voters at Town Hall at ehvoters@easthartfordct.gov

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ARTS & EVENTS

Yoruba World display at Atheneum



INSTALLATION VIEW OF YORUBA WORLD featuring Wole Lagunju's Study of a Python Crested Figure (2021).

MARCH 19: PUBLIC LECTURE - Honoring the Yoruba Great Mother! The Gelede spectacle in Africa and its Carryovers in the Americas with Dr. Babatunde Lawal at the Wadsworth Museum of Art, 5 p.m. 6 lecture. Free with reservations encouraged. Dr. Lawal,

Professor of Art History at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia and renowned scholar of African art, examines the visual culture of the Yoruba and their influences in the Americas. Lawal illuminates the Gelede Spectacle—a popular Yoruba

community festival of masquerade, dance, and song—as a launching point for exploring broader aspects of Yoruba history and art. Performed by men as a way of honoring the spiritual power of women and female ancestors, the festival ensures community harmony, fertility, and social order within Yoruba society. Stop by The Amistad Center galleries before the lecture. \$3 parking at the Front Street South garage, 62 Front St. Bring ticket to museum for validation..



TAPESTRY PROJECT - Sewing away in Raymond Library this weekend was this group of ladies working on the America's Tapestry as part of the 250 Celebration of the nation. The Tapestry will be constructed of 13 hand-embroidered panels, representing historical events from the 13 original colonies. The Connecticut panel worked on at the local library features the likeness of Hannah Bunce Watson (below), publisher of the *Connecticut Courant*. During the Revolutionary War, she oversaw the paper as well as rebuilt her East Hartford paper mill destroyed in a wartime fire. Pictured working on the tapestry are: Janis Bidwell Burnham Waine, Roxanne LeRoy, Brett Martin, Nancy Caruso, Carol Schmartz and Tina Pesola. Di-



Cheney Rail Trail 2 mile Treasure Ride

Sat., May 30th 9-11am

Registration 8:30am



A free family walk or bike ride with a scavenger hunt!

- Music
- Cycling Without Age Rides
- Bike/Walk Event
- Meet Manchester Pet Mayor
- Town Historian Guided Tour
- Giveaways



Park at Cheney Hall, Manchester

Register here



Cheney Rail Trail 2 mile Treasure Ride

If riding, bring your helmet, bike and water bottle. All are welcome.

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FRIDAY HAPPY HOUR SPECIALS!

OPEN SUNDAYS

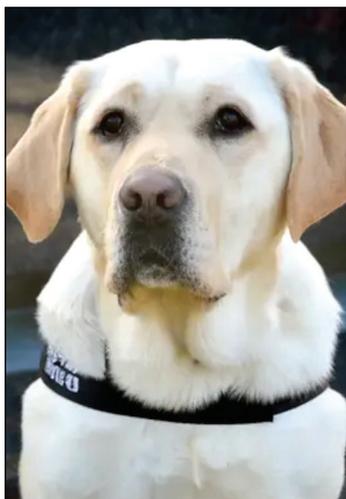
*Dine-in only. Must present coupon, valid thru March 15, 2026

386 PROSPECT ST., EH - 860-528-0111

Society

AT THE LIBRARY

Read with Beacon the Dog, Thursday, March 26, 5:30-7 p.m. at the Raymond Library Children's Dept., 840 Main St. Meet Beacon and Officer Caruso in a new library partnership with the East Hartford Police Department! Children can read aloud to Beacon, EHPD's community engagement dog, in short, one-on-one sessions that build confidence and fluency. Bring a favorite book or borrow one from the library. For children ages 5 and up. Register in advance to receive a reminder. Sign up in person for a reading timeslot on the day of the event. <https://easthartfordct.libcal.com/event/16309786>



Beacon

Kindergarten registration time

Kindergarten Registration in East Hartford is now open!

East Hartford Public Schools is excited to welcome our new Kindergarten students and families! Parents are encouraged to register their student by June in order to prepare for the upcoming school year. For the 2026-2027 school year, your child must turn 5 on or before September 1, 2026 to start kindergarten.

Children who turn 5 between September 2 and September 30, 2026 are eligible for a waiver. Families must apply for the waiver and fully complete the registration process by March 30, 2026 to be eligible.

Children will be given an as-

essment to determine kindergarten readiness.

Assessment does not equal admission: The assessment is to ensure the placement is developmentally appropriate and does not guarantee a waiver for kindergarten entry.

All children turning 5 after September 30, 2026 will enter kindergarten in the 2027-2028 school year.

The registration process begins online. For more information on kindergarten at EHPS and how to register visit [easthartford.org/kindergarten](https://www.easthartford.org/kindergarten)

https://www.easthartford.org/kindergarten/sign_up_for_kindergarten

EAST HARTFORD GARDEN CLUB

First meeting Monday, March 23

The East Hartford Garden Club will meet Monday, March 23 at 6:30 p.m. at the Hillstown Grange, 617 Hills St. Gardeners are welcome to listen to this month's presentation on Connecticut Butterflies with Pam Cooper from the UConn Home and Garden Center. Pam will offer helpful tips and advice about ways to attract more butterflies to your yard. Admission is free to all. New members always welcome to join this great East Hartford club as it continues to pursue productive pathways to elevate the flowers, plants, birds and bees in our town.

Connecticut Horticultural Society continues its 2025-2026 season of speaker meetings on Thursday, April 16 at 7 p.m. with "The Past, Present, and Future of the Keney Park Sustainability Project" with Herb Virgo. His presentation will be in person at CNTR (725 Main Street, Middletown) and broadcast live via Zoom. The presentation will conclude with a Q&A. The talk is free for members and \$10 for non-members. FMI go to cthorth.org.

MORIARTY HONORED BY FIRST DISTRICT



THE EAST HARTFORD FIRST DISTRICT DEMOCRATS honored lifelong East Hartfordite, Moriah Moriarty, with the Frank Fitzgerald Distinguished Democrat Award, at their annual St Patrick's Day Dinner held at the Manchester Country Club on March 8, International Women's Day. Seated are Robert Fitzgerald, former East Hartford Assistant Corporation Counsel, with his son, Patrick; and honoree Moriarty. They are surrounded by members of the Fitzgerald family.

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EAST HARTFORD SPORTS

Patrick Agyemang homecoming?

This summer marks a special birthday. The United States celebrates a quarter-millennium of independence. A cornerstone event of the celebration may set the stage for the climactic chapter in a "Local Boy Makes Good" story for a former East Hartford High soccer player when the U.S. hosts the World Cup.

Despite establishing himself as one of the outstanding players in program history, when Patrick Agyemang graduated from East Hartford in 2018 he'd only received a couple of division III college offers. He accepted one close to home and family and scored thirty goals in two seasons at Eastern Connecticut, earning Lit-

SCOTT GRAY on SPORTS

by Scott Gray



tle East Rookie of the Year honors and twice being named to the all-league first team. In his second year he was the Offensive Player of the Year and a third team All-American. His division III dominance led to a number of division one offers. He again opted to stay close to home and spent two years at the University of Rhode Island, scoring 19 goals and earning All-A-10 first team honors both years before beginning a professional career that included stops with three east coast clubs over three years, producing 32 goals.

Then came the turning point. In 2025, against the advice of many friends and colleagues, Patrick listened to the person who mattered most, himself, and, believing in himself, he accepted an offer to play for Derby County despite many prognostications that he wouldn't be a proficient goal scorer at the extreme level of the English Football League. He scored ten goals with Derby and earned his first call-up to the U.S. National Team for two "friendly" matches, both wins, Patrick scoring goals in both.

Last summer he was selected for the U.S. CONCACAF Gold Cup team and he scored his first two international goals, including the game winner in a win over Haiti in the final group stage match on the way to a runner up finish in the Gold Cup tournament.

In 12 games with the U.S.M.N.T. Patrick has scored five goals. That, and his performance in the Gold Cup, have made him a prominent player in projected rosters for the U.S. for this summer's FIFA World Cup. While not yet a confirmed player Patrick is a consensus "top contender" by international soccer analysts.

If they're right buttons will be busting in East Hartford with Patrick on the international stage for America's historic birthday.

Meanwhile, the UConn women's basketball team put the pressure on the NCAA selection committee by winning another Big East Tournament title Monday to finish the season 34-0. They've been ranked #1 all season and decisively handled every challenge, ranked and unranked. Even as a statement on the weakness of the Big East, the selectors have no legitimate reason to deny UConn the number one overall seed when pairings come out Sunday.

As for the UConn men, the loss to Marquette in the regular season finale dropped them to number two, behind St. John's, in the Big East Tournament seedings. UConn's only hope now for a number one seed is to win the Big East Tournament.

Hornet boys magic carpet ride in state tournament continues

Zasheem 'Dougie' McCoy hit a three-point shot from the Hornet logo Monday to give his team a 54-53 win over Bloomfield in a CIAC Division II boys basketball tournament game at Bernie Dandley Memorial Gym.

The shot made ESPN Sports Top Ten and rocked the rafters as fans streamed the court to celebrate the state-ranked No. 3

Hornets (23-3) to a quarterfinal matchup tonight versus Newington, a contest of two heartbreakers at 6 p.m. Newington (19-5) also won on a buzzer-beater the same night.

The Hornets were down by two late after the Warhawks hit two free throws with 8 seconds remaining. That set up the improbable finish for East Hart-

ford. Malachi Hymes handed off to McCoy off a screen, who squared up and hoisted a shot off the backboard. He finished with a team-high 21 points, 11 coming in the fourth quarter.

Bloomfield and East Hartford went back and forth in a testimony to two tough, scrappy teams as the lead changed nine times. Kehari Walker had 13.

Pat's the way they like it - uh huh-uh-huh!

By Henry Bushnell
THE ATHLETIC

As he neared the biggest leap of his soccer life, Patrick Agyemang saw "a whole lot of nonsense."

He heard critiques and doubt as he packed up a Charlotte apartment last summer and prepared to leave MLS for Derby County. He heard opinions, including that of Dean Smith, his Charlotte FC coach, who told him he shouldn't go. He saw fans saying he'd "never even score a goal" in the English Championship, and those who questioned why he'd venture toward unknowns less than a year before the 2026 World Cup. "I knew it was gonna be a risk," Agyemang told *The Athletic*.

But risks don't deter the 25-year-old forward. He talked with his family, prayed, and then did what he's done at every stage of his remarkable rise from a Division III college to the U.S. men's national team: he bet on himself. He moved an ocean away to England's East Midlands and, over the past few months at Derby, he has proved himself right. With 10 goals scored and countless opponents run ragged, Agyemang has helped propel an unlikely push for promotion. He has endeared



THE CHEERS AND CROWD CHANTS are creative in Derbyshire for East Hartford's Patrick Agyemang, but America will welcome him loudly.

himself to local fans, a thousand of whom recently turned up for a four-hour autograph signing session. They'll occasionally chant "U-S-A, U-S-A!" They even serenade Agyemang with his own song: "A-gye-mang, uh huh uh huh, I like it! Uh huh uh huh" — to the tune of KC and the Sunshine Band's "That's The Way (I Like It)."

Some have started mimicking his signature goal celebration, dialing an imaginary phone and holding it up to their ear. The routine, Agyemang explains, dates back to his high school soccer days. The message: "Call me when you need me... I'ma pick up."

It's a message that feels apt with a World Cup approaching. Agyemang, who earned his first USMNT call-up just last year, has willed himself firmly into roster contention. After battling

through groin pain for much of 2025, then recovering from hernia surgery, he is now playing "stress-free" and often without thinking. "Everything," he says, "is going the way I was hoping for." His path, on the surface, sounds linear. But it wasn't.

Derby came in with a roughly \$8 million transfer offer to his Charlotte team. "I wanted to really test myself," Agyemang says. "I told myself I'd be kicking myself if I never gave myself the chance." Then he realized: "Dang, I have to pack up my apartment. I have to literally move to a whole new country by myself."

It was scary, he admits. But what he found in Derby was a club ready to embrace him and, more broadly, a city obsessed with the club. "What I like about it," Agyemang says, "is the culture behind the game."

OBITUARIES

Helen (Ferland) Morin, 99

Helen (Ferland) Morin, 99, passed away peacefully at home on March 4.

Born in Detroit, Michigan September 29th, 1926 she was a daughter of the late Alphonse and Marie Marthe (Delisle) Ferland. Helen was predeceased by her husband of almost 60 years, Romeo Morin, brothers and sisters:

Raymond (Gabrielle) Ferland, Jean-Paul (Giselle) Ferland, Henry (Teresa) Ferland, Real (Louissette) Ferland, Monique (Gerard) Lavigne & niece Francine Lemke Lavigne.

She leaves behind her sister living in Quebec Lise (Fernand) Goulet & sister-in-law Gisele, also of Quebec as well as many nieces & nephews in Quebec & Ontario. Locally, Helen leaves behind nephew Joseph (Alain) Lavigne, great niece Nicole Lavigne, husband David & their son Dawson Garrison, nephew Roger and his wife Michelle & great nieces Renee, Rachel and Menno Lavigne from Harrisburg, PA. Close cousins



Helen Morin

Julienne & Michael Ferland & close friends Anne Williams & Giselle Turgeon, along with countless local friends in the greater East Hartford community.

Helen was a communicant of Our Lady of Peace Church & Saint Christopher Church in East Hartford. She enjoyed

life and made the best of every day. Helen was very grateful for the loving doctors and providers at Smilow Cancer Center in Glastonbury & Family Medicine Center in East Hartford.

Visitation time will be held on Thursday March 12, from 4 - 7 pm, at Newkirk & Whitney Funeral Home, 318 Burnside Ave, East Hartford. The family will gather at Newkirk & Whitney on Friday March 13, at 9:30 am before processing to St Mary's Church on 15 Maplewood Ave, East Hartford for an 11am funeral mass. A committal service will follow at St Mary's Cemetery.

Vergie N. Hooks, 86

Vergie N. Hooks, 86 of East Hartford, CT, departed this life peacefully on February 14, 2026, after a brief illness. She was born to the union of the late Eloise R. Kirksey and Nathaniel Kirksey on September 3, 1939, in Seneca, SC. Vergie graduated from Weaver High School in Hartford, CT, in 1957.

She was a professional hairdresser for several years before joining the United States Postal Service, where she remained a loyal and dedicated employee for over thirty-six years. Vergie was an avid cook and loved baking. She loved displaying her skills at holiday dinners, but her greatest joy was being a mother and



Vergie Hooks

grandmother.

Vergie leaves to cherish her love and memories, her son Dwayne C Hooks, of East Hartford, CT, and daughter Dawn Hurdle (Dammie) of Windsor, CT, her much adored grandchildren, TyShawn J. Hooks, of East Hartford, CT, and Anisa A. Hooks, of Virginia Beach, VA, Daylen Hurdle, of Windsor, CT, and

Dante Hurdle, of Raleigh, NC. She also leaves her husband/friend, Ray L. Hooks, of Hartford, CT; her loving brother, James N. Kirksey (Susie), of Charlotte, NC; life-long friend, Joan Harris; Julia Arter; and numerous nieces, nephews, relatives, and friends.

Keri Renner, 61; school Paraprofessional

Keri Ann Renner, 61, of Windsor passed away peacefully at Hartford Hospital on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, surrounded by her family.

Keri was born on April 23, 1964, in Easton, Pennsylvania, to the late Warren and Caroline (Hughes) Buzzard. Keri was the youngest of six children. She attended Pen Argyl High School. Keri moved to CT in 1999. In 2015, she continued her education at Manchester Community College, graduating with a degree in Speech and Language Pathology, during her



Keri Renner

time at Manchester College, she was a devoted member of Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society. Keri worked as a Special Education Para in East Hartford Public Schools for over 20 years. She was well respected by staff and loved by all students.

While working in the school system, she met her best friend, Lori Gosselin.

She was an avid Girl Scout and was the Juliette troop leader to her daughter, Aylssa. During her time as a troop leader, she was the camp direc-

tor at Camp Merrie-Wood in Manchester for 8 years. During the summer of 2026, a flag ceremony will commence in Keri's honor for the love and dedication she had for all the girls who attended, as well as the camp itself. Keri was extremely creative; she loomed many blankets, hats, and "shark" mittens.

She is survived by her husband, Mark Renner of Bolton, CT. She was the loving mother of Alyssa (David), Tyler, and Nainie to Caroline and Leo.

A celebration of Keri's life will be held on Saturday, March 14, 2026, at 11:30 a.m. in Bolton United Methodist Church, 1041 Boston Tpke, Bolton followed by a potluck luncheon.

William Blau, 91

William Blau passed away peacefully on March 1, 2026 at the age of 91. Bill was known for being a passionate movie and music buff, and for riding his bike to work at Pratt and Whitney every day from his home of 58 years in East Hartford through the 1970s and '80s. Voted "Class Wit" in high

school, Bill loved to entertain, sharing jokes, stories, puns, funny faces and movie showings at the Wil-Mar Theater.

Bill's greatest love was the one he described as the most beautiful woman in the world, his treasured wife of 61 years, Margie. He was always supportive of his daughter, Robin

Greenwald, of Marlborough and grandkids, Emily, Jacob, and Anna and he never failed to tell them they were smart, capable, beautiful, and loved. We are blessed that Bill lived his whole life, right to the end, as the clever, patient, appreciative, one-of-a-kind person we always knew and loved.

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The Gazette

publishes obituaries of those connected to East Hartford free of charge.

Grant for Firehouse 2

From Page One

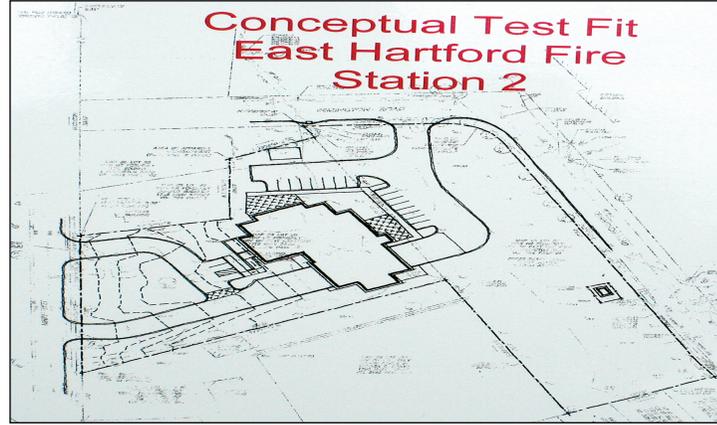
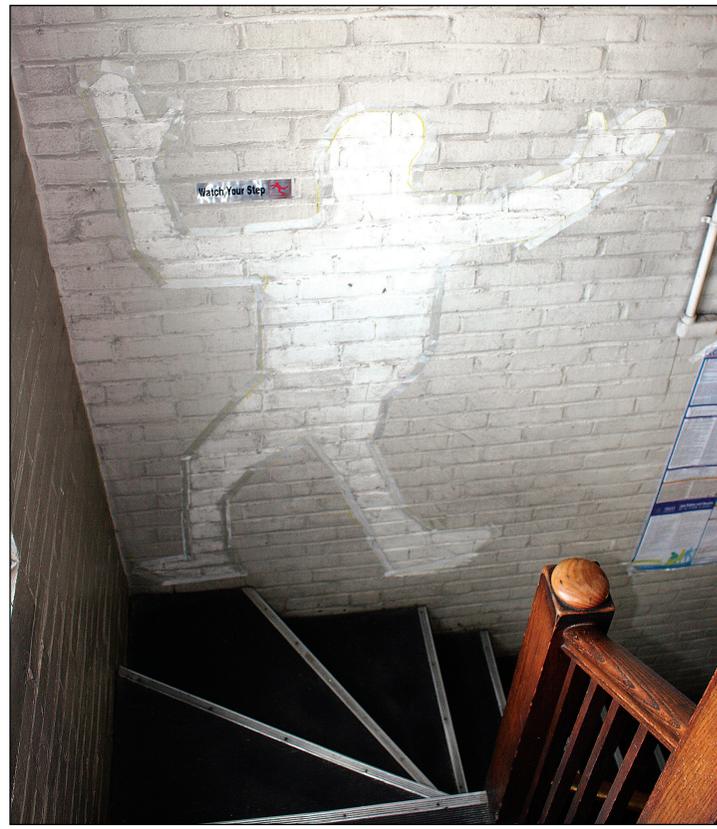
"Our firefighters work hard every day to keep our communities safe," said Larson. "As co-chair of the Fire Services Caucus, I have been proud to deliver more than \$3 million for the East Hartford Fire Department over the past five years to ensure our first responders have the equipment and training they need. The funding we announced today will fund the replacement and modernization

on every day. Facilities like our fire stations are what make it possible for our firefighters to reach homes across town in less than four minutes. So, this funding really ensures we can continue delivering that level of service and keeping our community safe."

Larson requested funding for East Hartford's new fire station as part of this year's Community Project Funding (CPF) process, securing \$850,000 in federal funds.



ABOVE, LT. CLIFF BARLISS. at top right the outline on the stairwell marks where a firefighter fell. The concept for a new station would move Station No. 2 farther north on Main Street.



Tax programs

The town is accepting applications for the following programs: State option for Elderly/Disabled Homeowners, Town of East Hartford Local Option for Elderly/Disabled Homeowners, and additional State and Local Veterans programs. Elderly/Disabled Homeowners must apply between February 1 and May 15, 2026. The qualifying criteria for such relief are as follows: Owner or spouse must be 65 years of age as of December 31, 2025. Homeowners with 100% total disability from Social Security are qualified regardless of age. This program is based on income limits of \$56,500 for married couples and \$46,300 for singles.

The Town will also be accepting applications for its Local Option for elderly/disabled homeowners. The application window for the local option for elderly/disabled homeowners is also February 1 through May 15, 2026. This program is based on income limits of \$71,500 for married couples and \$61,300 for singles. Residents must qualify for State Elderly/Disabled program.

In addition to meeting the State criteria, eligible homeowners shall not have individual or joint assets (other than their principal residence and any tax deferred retirement investments) for more than \$100,000. Veterans may apply for additional State and Local benefits between February 1, 2026, and October 1, 2026.

of Fire Station 2 and connect our firefighters with up-to-date training they to better combat intensifying house fires. I will continue to work with our local leaders and Chief Munson to support our firefighters and equip them with all the necessary tools to stay safe on the job and serve the entire community well."

"I would like to thank Congressman Larson for his continued support of East Hartford and for securing this hugely impactful federal investment to help replace Fire Station 2, one of the Town's oldest fire facilities," said Martin. "This crucial investment helps us move forward with our next major infrastructure priority. Investing in local infrastructure is critical because it supports the essential services our residents rely

AI in the classroom

From Page One

ford Public School's Information Technology department. Brown addressed changes brought to the IT department since his hiring last year. He outlined how his 16-person department has streamlined maintenance. As of Monday, Brown noted, his department has cleared over 6,000 computer maintenance tickets.

Future goals for IT are: Provide a life expectancy list of computers and other hardware to help plan for replacement; monitor cyber security needs; and support advent of an AI-based curriculum.

The Board officially accepted as 'complete' the East

Hartford High School Library/Media Center HVAC roof unit replacement project, finished last year. Approval is part of the state requirement for East Hartford to receive state reimbursement. It was noted this project served as a state model showcased with a rooftop visit by state officials, including Lieutenant Gov. Susan Byciewicz. East Hartford anticipates receiving \$181,000 from the state, funds which go into the town's general budget.

Finally, the Board voted to approve three annually required acts: The 2026-2027 Head Start Selection Criteria, and two state Healthy Foods certifications.

LEGAL NOTICES

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

ESTATE OF
THOMAS J. PAUL
(26-00075)

The Hon. Richard P. Gentile, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of East Hartford Probate Court, by decree dated **March 6, 2026**, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim.

Tobi Dolan, Assistant Clerk

The fiduciary is:

David A. Paul
c/o Donald P. Cianci, Esquire;
Donald P. Cianci, P.O. Box
210, Columbia, CT 06237

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

ESTATE OF BARBARA JOAN
VANDERBURGH, AKA
BARBARA J. VANDERBURGH
(26-00068)

The Hon. Richard P. Gentile, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of East Hartford Probate Court, by decree dated **March 10, 2026**, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim.

Tobi Dolan, Assistant Clerk

The fiduciary is:

Bradley J. Vanderburgh
c/o Robin Murdock-Meggers,
Esquire; Falkenstein Meggers
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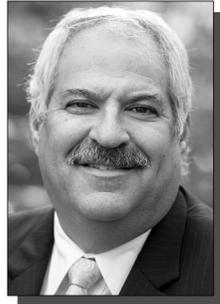
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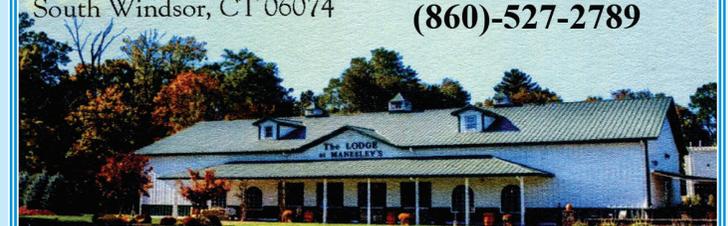
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WHERE THE ACTION IS!

BY CORINNE HORAN

CRIBBAGE, Mondays at 7 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 1831 Main St. Enjoy a fun time with other local cribbage players. Players of all age and ability welcome. Daily prizes, season honors and lifetime awards. We're part of the American Cribbage Congress, a national organization of roughly 200 clubs across the country that make up the ACC's Grass Roots division. Being part of the ACC means the club plays by a standard set of rules, so if there are any questions about how something should work there is always an easy way to get questions answered. FMI contact Phil Martin, 860-768-2681, philm298@gmail.com

MARCH 14: CAT AND DOG FOOD COLLECTION at South Congregational Church for Protectors of Animals Pet Food Pantry. Drive into our parking lot at 1301 Forbes St. Saturday between 10 a.m. and noon with contributions. You do not even need to get out of your car! Any donation appreciated, however, you may also visit poainc.org for specific recommendations. Thank you for supporting our four legged friends in this community!

Upcoming programs at the World War II Legacy Foundation Museum: **SUNDAY, MARCH 15TH**, 3 p.m. - We are commemorating National K-9 Veterans Day by presenting a program on the war dogs of WWII. We will profile one Marine featured in our museum who trained war dogs followed by a documentary about the U. S. War Dog Program of WWII. **SATURDAY, MARCH 21ST**, 3 p.m. - We will be showing a documentary about one brave Marine and his experiences after joining the Marines and while serving in the Battle of Iwo Jima. "In the Shadow of Suribachi: Sammy's Story" is about a young Jewish boy from New London and is someone you will never forget. **SATURDAY, MARCH 28TH**, 1 p.m. - "Victory at the Battle of Iwo Jima" commemoration ceremony. The 36-day battle ended on March 26, 1945. Pay tribute to those who fought in one of the worst Pacific battles of WWII. The WWII Legacy Foundation Museum located at 102 Pitkin St. FMI call Gary Roy, 860 - 810-8736.

THURSDAY, MARCH 19 - IRISH DINNER AND A SHOW at the East Hartford Senior Center, 15 Millbrook Drive - Join us for a night of fun as we celebrate the Irish Culture with Food and Music. Special Irish Meal: Corn Beef and Cabbage, including Beverage & Dessert, cooked by Wayne Domins. After Dinner, Pierce Campbell will entertain us with music from Ireland! Cost: \$8 (Members Only) Dinner is at 5:50 p.m. and music starts at 6 p.m.

MARCH 22 - SUPPORT OUR SOLDIERS - CT Easter-Spring collection Sunday, March 22 from noon to 2 p.m. at Hillstown Grange hall, 617 Hills Street. Donations of Easter candy, Peeps, & drawings of spring flowers needed. Donations can be dropped off that Sunday, 3/22, by noon or by special arrangement. Volunteers are always needed & appreciated to help sort and pack items. FMI please

call Michelle DeDominicis, 860-558-4688 or e-mail kma.dedominicis@gmail.com or Jen Marino 860-558-5897. This is a wonderful event supporting our troops stationed away from home during the Easter holiday. Organizations interested in helping, please contact us. Shipping packages costs about \$900 so monetary donations are also needed to help defray postage expense. Checks should be made payable to "SOS CONNECTICUT" and mail to SOS-CONNECTICUT, C/O Michelle DeDominicis, 56 Hills St., East Hartford, CT 06118.

MARCH 22: THE SHELEST PIANO DUO performs at 2 p.m. at Evergreen Crossings, 900 Hemlock Ave, South Windsor. The free concert is presented by South Windsor Cultural Arts, and donations will be welcomed. Reception follows. The program will in-

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clude Leonard Bernstein's "Overture to Candide"; Aaron Copland's "Variations on a Shaker Melody from Appalachian Spring"; Zoltan Almashi's "Carpathian Song"; Cécile Chaminade's "Pièces romantiques, Op. 55"; Camille Saint-Saëns' "Danse macabre"; Theodore Akimenko's "Six Pièces Ukrainiennes"; and Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue". FMI, SWCA Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/SouthWindsorCulturalArts/>

MARCH 26: DECODING SHAKESPEARE'S HAMLET - To be, or not to be? That isn't the only question. Behind the world's most famous play lies a web of conflicting versions, ancient blood feuds, and a world on the brink of radical change. Join University of Hartford President Emeritus Humphrey Tonkin for a four-week deep dive into the heart of Denmark. We won't just read the play; we'll investigate the "collision of worlds" at its core—where medieval honor clashes with modern philosophy. Discover why Hamlet remains the ultimate mirror for the human soul. Thursdays, March 26, April 2, 9, 16, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m. Sponsored by President's College. Lifelong Learning at the University of Hartford. Visit Hartford.edu/pc. Questions? Email pcollege@hartford.edu or call 860.768.4495.

MARCH 28 - BREAKFAST WITH THE RABBIT, AKA the Easter Bunny! At the East Hartford Senior Center, 15 Millbrook Drive, beginning promptly at 9 a.m. Tickets must be purchased in advance for \$5 with kids 12 and under free and only \$3 for members of the Senior Center. Gather up the kids and grandkids or a guest for a delicious breakfast of French toast, sausage, etc. followed by pictures with the Easter Bunny! Tickets are at the Senior Center front desk in advance; not at the door. So hop on down and we will see you there!

MARCH 29: COLOR EGGS at South Congregational Church, 1301 Forbes St. starting at 11 a.m. until noon. This Egg Coloring Extravaganza features multiple egg coloring stations. All materials, including hard boiled eggs, will be provided. Light refreshments. Free and open to all, but if you plan to attend to ensure enough supplies are on hand contact Lisa at community@southucc.org, or call 860-568-5150. Also, South invites the community to stop by the Lenten Cross which is displayed on the front lawn of the church at 1301 Forbes St. All are welcome to visit, say a prayer, or simply meditate for a moment, and then leave a ribbon tied to the structure as a visible sign of your sacred Lenten journey. You may bring your own ribbon or take one from the container next to the cross. The cross will be in place through Easter Sunday, April 5th.

MARCH 30: PHILOSOPHICAL LESSONS ON RESISTANCE - Widespread unemployment, poverty, and the shadow of totalitarianism defined 1930s Europe. But amidst the chaos, a group of brilliant philosophers — including Walter Benjamin, Hannah Arendt, Simone Weil, and Jean Amery — were asking a radical question: What does it mean to resist?

Professor Benjamin Berger leads this three-session exploration into the strategies and ideologies used to counter oppressive regimes. Mondays, March 30, April 6, 13, 2-3:30 p.m. Sponsored by President's College. Lifelong Learning at the University of Hartford. Visit Hartford.edu/pc. Questions? Email pcollege@hartford.edu or call 860.768.4495.

CENTRAL CONN HORSESHOE CLUB 50 Oakland St. is for people interested in playing horseshoes. E-mail debbiescully@comcast.net; 860-778-1057.

GET A FREE CHECKUP - The Malta House mobile health care van parks on the 2nd and 4th Monday mornings at St. Mary's Church.

VISITING NURSE AND HOME HEALTH SERVICES are looking for Hospice volunteers to provide companionship and support to patients. If interested, please contact John Roush at jroush@ech.org or 860-682-3405.

MY SISTERS' PLACE: Help provide affordable housing and services for families. Mail donations to Community Housing Advocates, 221 Main St., 4th Floor, Hartford, CT 06106. FMI call 860-808-2048.
