

FREE

SHELTON *Life*

COMMUNITY & BUSINESS NEWS

APRIL 2022
VOLUME 28, ISSUE 1



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SHELTON COMMUNITY & BUSINESS NEWS

Greetings From the Mayor

Welcome from the Editor



Hello, my name is Bing Carbone, and I am the new Chairperson of the Economic Development Commission for the City of Shelton. Just a brief introduction: I have been a Shelton resident for 30 years and have two adult daughters that also live here. My company is Modern Plastics which I relocated from Bridgeport to Shelton in 2010. I would say we have come a long way since Shelton was incorporated as a city in 1919.

Today, Shelton, Connecticut is a thriving community and lovely place to live, go to school, work and own a business, as it continues to be the envy in the State of Connecticut for so many reasons. The *Shelton Life* newsletter highlights many of these aspects of our balanced community.

I am very transparent on social media such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc. I am also reachable by email at bcarbone@modernplastics.com or by cell at (203) 414-1559. I welcome your comments!

On behalf of myself and the Commission, we hope you enjoy this edition of *Shelton Life*. Please note it is available electronically on the City's website cityofshelton.org to download and share with your family and friends.

Shelton Life April 2022 Community & Business News

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In Memory

Fred Musante, Sr., (1922-2009)

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Dear Shelton Residents and Businesses:

Spring is around the corner; mask mandates are being lifted; and another Shelton Life newsletter is hitting the streets! Great news all around.

It is my pleasure to share another edition of the Shelton Life newsletter. This newsletter in particular recognizes some of our Valley's non-profits and their contributions to our community. In 2021, St. Vincent de Paul of the Valley, which has served our region for the past 40 years, distributed over 185,000 pounds of food and \$52,000 in grocery gift cards. Master's Table Community Meals, another Valley non-profit who just celebrated their 10th anniversary, is doing tremendous outreach and offering meals twice a month to people and families in need. Flags for Heroes, a first of its kind event being held at Veterans Memorial Park by the Derby-Shelton Rotary Club, focuses its attention on our heroes, whether they be Veterans, active-duty military, first responders, essential workers or family. Hats off to these non-profits for truly demonstrating the spirit of our community.

For the past three decades, the City has supported numerous open space land purchases, environmental cleanup programs and created miles and miles of walking trails throughout Shelton. Through this newsletter you will find a number of articles focusing on these important topics. For instance, the Housatonic Valley Association has contributed an article on the importance of wetlands and recognizes another milestone ~ the 50th anniversary of The Connecticut Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Act. You will also learn more regarding the city's 15th Annual Clean Sweep, which will run the week of Earth Day beginning on April 16th. This year, volunteers participating in Clean Sweep will receive an iron-patch featuring a red fox.

And, that's not all. Economically, the city continues to thrive. New businesses opened throughout the city confirming the attraction of our great and growing community. Featured in this issue are businesses located in every corner of Shelton. Please support these local businesses as their success is our success.

As always, I would like to acknowledge the City's Economic Development Commission and their exemplary work and welcome the new Chairman of the Commission, Bing Carbone.

On behalf of the entire City of Shelton,

Very truly yours,

Mark A. Lauretti
Mayor, City of Shelton



Sinsabaugh Heights Small Cities Grant Pays Big Dividends

The City of Shelton has received a \$410,000 Small Cities Community Development Block Grant to support much needed improvements to the Sinsabaugh Heights Elderly Housing complex. The Shelton Housing Authority, which manages Sinsabaugh Heights, was established on July 7, 1947 by a resolution of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Shelton. The purpose of the Housing Authority is to provide low-income housing to Shelton's seniors (62 yrs. and older) and disabled (certified disabled by Social Security or another Federal agency).

The Small Cities Grant, submitted on behalf of the City of Shelton by the Shelton Economic Development Corporation, will be used to support the Shelton Housing Authority's mission to provide affordable elderly housing for low-to-moderate seniors and disabled residents within the region and will extend the economic life and housing quality of the units.

The proposed improvements and upgrades will correct a number of life safety, accessibility, and infrastructure deficiencies. Additionally, all of the proposed improvements will be carried out in a manner that focuses on energy efficiency and environmental responsibility.

Madlyn McGowan, Executive Director of the Shelton Housing Authority said, "This grant will support our mission to provide safe, healthy and affordable housing for all seniors 62 and older as well as the disabled."

Specific components associated with the project include, but are not limited to, the following:

Fire Alarm System - Sinsabaugh II (40 Units)

The proposed upgrades will be the provision of a new, fully addressable fire alarm and call for aid system. The work will feature an addressable panel at the community room and a hard or wireless connection between buildings. This will

allow for state-of-the-art public safety response in the improved health and well-being of the residents.

Unit PTAC System - Sinsabaugh II (27 Units)

The proposed new system will include new, higher efficiency, PTAC unit for heating and cooling the residential units.

Storm / Screen Doors - Sinsabaugh I/Sinsabaugh II

All exterior storm/screen doors will be replaced with new integral, self-storing screen/storm doors and corresponding lever action hardware.

Miscellaneous Upgrades

Various minor upgrades that correspond to or support the above-mentioned major tasks will be carried out. Some of these upgrades may include limited electrical work, painting and replacement of trim.

McGowan added, "These improvements will extend the facilities usefulness for another 20-30 years."

The Shelton Housing Authority will develop specifications and plans for the proposed work over the Spring and will seek to receive bid proposals for the effort later this Summer with construction beginning shortly after. The Shelton Economic Development Corporation will administer the grant activities and help monitor the project. ♦



Sinsabaugh Heights, 187 Meadow Street

Master's Table Community Meals, Inc. Serving the Valley

Since 2010, Master's Table Community Meals, Inc. has been feeding more than physical hunger in the Valley. Started by James Fedak as an experimental meal program, Master's Table is a 501 (c)(3) volunteer organization that currently serves between 150-200 meals twice a

month to Veterans, seniors, homeless, near-homeless, and low-to-moderate income families regardless of race, sex, age, national origin, religious preference, social needs or income. When Mr. Fedak first began serving meals in October of 2010, they were held every fourth Sunday to meet the needs of families trying to stretch their monthly assistance to make ends meet. It was quickly evident that people were not just coming for the food and themed dinners but for the fellowship and to socialize with others. Thus, the inspiration to establish the Master's Table mission of providing a place where all are welcome and treated with respect



and kindness offering food, hope, and assistance to meet the needs of the community began.

In 2014, Master's Table served their first Thanksgiving meal on the Sunday before the holiday. By 2015, they moved their location from Christ Church to Church of the Assumption in

Ansonia, and, through the generosity of an anonymous donor, added an additional meal on the second Sunday of each month.

In 2018, they expanded their outreach by establishing the Emergency Food Bank, Community Assistance, and Disaster Assistance programs. Through these, Master's Table has been able to provide over 150 families with bags of nonperishable food items and gift cards for food, gas, and clothing. The Disaster Assistance Program also provided three \$500 gift cards to a local family to purchase clothing after losing everything in a house fire.

When the COVID-19 pandemic left so many members of the community in dire need, Master's Table responded by shifting their service to take-out and by providing a "giveaway table" stacked with food, desserts, clothing, and other items.

Currently, Master's Table serves two meals on the second and last Sundays of the month. Each meal is a full-course dinner that includes meat, vegetables, salad, bread, and dessert.

Mr. Fedak's vision for community support is still growing. Master's Table is working on providing a third meal and a school-age food program called Food 2 Kids Ansonia. Master's Table's work is sustained entirely by volunteers and private donors. With the needs of the community growing, donations are more important than ever.

For more information on becoming a volunteer, making a donation, or to participate in any of Master's Table's programs, contact (203) 732-7792, or visit their website at MastersTableMeals.org. ♦



St. Vincent de Paul Serving the Valley for Over 40 Years

St. Vincent de Paul of the Valley Thrift Shoppe and Food Bank has been dedicated to aiding people with hunger and food insecurity in a kind and welcoming way since 1982.

The year 2021 was a banner year as a record-setting 185,948 pounds of food and over \$52,850 in grocery gift cards—a food value of over \$557,800 was distributed! Over 1,500 families were helped, comprised of 1,851 adults, 1,060 children and 693 seniors. This incredible amount of assistance was only possible through the combined efforts of over 55 volunteers, five staff, and much support by a wonderful community of churches, the Derby Auxiliary Police food drive, socially engaged businesses, service organizations including the Valley United Way, local governments, and many, many individuals.

Purchases made in the bustling thrift shop partially fund the operations within the food pantry which, in turn, assists neighbors residing in Ansonia, Derby, Oxford, Seymour, and Shelton. The open-to-the-public shop is staffed by volunteers and stocked with a vast variety of donated goods. It offers a low-cost shopping alternative as well as a fascinating treasure-trove for thrifters, including clothing for women, men, and children, collectibles, jewelry, children's toys, books, home goods, and furniture at low prices. They are famous for their ever-changing stock that is priced to sell!

Volunteer work takes many different forms in the organization. Thrift shop volunteers sort through donated goods, stock shelves, price items, and operate the cash register. Food pantry volunteers collect

donations at the shop's drop-off area, pick up food at Connecticut Food Share and local grocery stores, bag and weigh outgoing food items, and distribute those bags to clients.

To be a recipient of food from St. Vincent de Paul, call the

office to complete a brief over-the-phone application and make an appointment. On arrival, a comprehensive list of food available that day will be presented so the client may choose whatever they need. Choices include frozen meats, fresh produce, dairy, bakery, and nonperishables. Recipients are welcome, by appointment, once per month, Monday through Friday.

The shop also runs huge, single-day, holiday food give-outs for Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas to help satisfy the additional need that occurs during these holidays. Homemade Easter baskets are provided to the children of St. Vincent de Paul families, as well as Christmas gifts from an (anonymously) funded wishlist. The amount of joy and gratitude all around is something to experience.

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DGN Custom Guitars The Tone You've Been Searching For

DGN Custom Guitars opened in the Conti Building in October, but luthier Dan Neafsey has been perfecting his craft for 15 years. Focusing on high-end repairs and custom builds for touring musicians, DGN Guitars is “the tone you’ve been searching for.”

His guitar shop started in 2007 as an at-home business focused primarily on repairs. When the pandemic hit in 2020 and he could no longer see customers in his home, he transitioned the business to focus on custom builds that didn’t require frequent, in-person customer visits. When he saw an ad for an open space in the Conti building, Dan jumped at the opportunity. “I just fell in love with the building and with the people. I love Shelton. Everyone is so nice and down-to-earth. There’s so much creativity and art in this area.” Dan says the transition from an at-home business to the Conti Building was the best move he’s ever made, and the additional space allows ample room for many materials and machines required to create the perfect guitar. Slabs of Cocobolo wood rest against the walls of the shop, waiting to be cut. South American Cocobolo wood, while expensive and hard to find, is Dan’s favorite to work with. “It looks and sounds the best,” he explains.



Luthier and owner Dan Neafsey

But guitars aren’t the only thing Dan can customize. A stack of custom tie-dyed tube amplifiers greets customers at the door, and his fully custom JGS single-coil guitar pickup, designed to replicate the sounds of Jerry Garcia, has been selling out. When the coiler he purchased to wrap the pickups didn’t work, he customized that too. The sander that skillfully winds around the odd shape of a guitar neck was built by Dan as well. “I love to tinker,” he says.

The guitarist Mihali for the Vermont-based jam-band Twiddle took notice of Dan’s craftsmanship, and it was
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LOCAL BUSINESSES

Doggie Styles Grooming

Pampering Our Four-Legged Friends For 20 Years

A lot has changed in 20 years but for Cheryl and Keith Patrick of Doggie Styles Grooming, it's what hasn't changed that matters. "We've always had a passion for dogs, and for people," says owner Cheryl, "The key to our success has been a long-standing love for our four-legged customers, our community, and creating a positive work culture." Cheryl and Keith, together with their youngest daughter Sadie Cabeleira, believe that it's not just about a beautiful groom.



(L to R) Cheryl, Keith and Sadie Cabeleira

When Doggie Styles opened in 2002, they were mobile-only and served 60 customers three days a week. By 2006, they'd opened a storefront on Center Street. Having quickly outgrown that space, they moved to their present location in White Hills Plaza in 2009, which currently serves 170 dogs per week, Monday-Saturday, employs 10 people, and holds a reputation of being one of the most trusted names in the business.

Cheryl and Keith credit their staff, whose love of dogs extends far beyond the grooming table, for their success with customers. Their grooming team includes a certified dog trainer, an award-winning groomer, and a staff who is interested in whole-dog wellness, giving their two-legged clients peace of mind that their babies are in the best hands. Cheryl attended the CT School of Dog Grooming and trained with renowned dog trainer Cesar Milan.

Cheryl, whose background is in human resources, knows the importance of culture on the long-term success of small businesses. "People underestimate how hard this job is, so it's important to us that this is a fun

work environment. If the groomers and bathers are happy, the dogs are happy." Doggie Styles features several employee incentive programs, including a Kudos program that allows groomers to earn prizes and rewards for receiving positive customer feedback.

A true family business, Grooming Manager Sadie Cabeleira first picked up a clipper at the age of 16 and started grooming on her own the same year. While still in high school, Sadie apprenticed the trade, and in the last 20 years has won two "Best in Show" titles at state-wide rescue grooming competitions, competed nationally at InterGroom, and trained and mentored other groomers to open their own businesses. For Sadie though, the best part of her job is still the dogs, especially the hard-to-love ones. Sadie is "magic" with clients like Humphrey, a Great Pyrenees-Shepard mix, who suffered from anxiety that prevented him from getting in the car. She started by grooming him in his own backyard until he was comfortable. "She turned an extremely reactive, fearful, crazy boy into the most gorgeous looking and smelling creature. She is absolute magic with dogs," said Humphrey's owner, Wendy.

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Gemma, our 10,000th client

The Naugatuck River Greenway Trail Reconnecting the Naugatuck Valley to its Namesake

A 40+ mile multi-use trail, The Naugatuck River Greenway (NRG) Trail, is taking shape along the Naugatuck River. Sections of the NRG Trail are open to the public, with several more under construction or being designed. The trail reconnects residents and visitors to the once shunned Naugatuck River and provides an opportunity for people to recreate and travel throughout the Valley.

The Naugatuck River has always been central to life in the region. It provided water and food to the original native inhabitants of the Valley and to early European settlers. The steep grade of the Naugatuck and its tributaries provided an ideal source of power for early mills, powering the production of textiles, metal and rubber products and driving the economy of the valley for generations.

The impact of that industry on the river, however, was devastating. For decades, the river was a dumping ground for sewage and industrial waste, and it became known for its odor and changing colors. The river stopped supporting aquatic life and became toxic to humans. Residents were physically separated from the river by a railroad, flood controls, and the Route 8 Expressway.

In the past several decades, however, the Naugatuck River has made a remarkable comeback. Clean water regulations reduced pollution impacts to the river and water quality improved. Fish, birds, and other wildlife



have returned, and the river is increasingly a destination for anglers, paddlers, and sightseers. With the river's restoration well underway, residents sought to reconnect to the once forgotten waterway.

In the early 2000s, Derby began working on a trail on top of flood control dikes along the Naugatuck and Housatonic Rivers. The Derby Greenway was completed in 2006 and was an immediate success. Other towns in the Valley took note and began thinking about developing their own trails, eventually coalescing around a regional vision of a trail following the river through all 11 valley municipalities from Torrington to Derby. These trails will provide a non-motorized transportation option, support tourism and economic development, and improve the health and quality of life of residents.

Open sections of the NRG Trail are once again harnessing the vitality of the river for the benefit of the region's residents. The Derby Greenway, part of the NRG

continued next page



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Water Pollution Control Authority We Need Your Help

The Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) is perpetually challenged to meet the demands of the city's residents and businesses alike while refurbishing and updating the infrastructural network. The WPCA addresses a host of situations ranging from common occurrences to large scale projects and strives towards maintaining and efficiently operating the sewer system which so many of us rely on. In order to keep a well-functioning system, businesses and residents can assist by only flushing toilet paper and "nothing else" (including but not limited to baby-wipes, paper towels, tissues, feminine hygiene products, nothing except toilet paper). Other items are not designed to disintegrate like toilet paper and can be detrimental to your home, business, city's pipes and



the sewage treatment plant.

Similarly, Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) causes many blockages and sewer back-ups. FOG residue puts a tremendous strain on the sewage treatment plant and the city's sewer pipes. This leads to back-ups, clogged pipes, and higher maintenance bills. Residents and businesses should not wash fats, oils, or grease down their drains, instead, dispose of small amounts in a container and throw the con-

tainer in the trash. Businesses should have their FOG by-products removed by certified haulers licensed by the State of Connecticut.

The success of the WPCA is attributed to the passionate, driving, support that Mayor Mark Lauretti gives the team. Also, the Director of Public Works, Paul DiMauro, provides insight and consistent guidance. Collectively this administration oversees and guides the WPCA - WPCP team to rise above any daily challenges. ♦

NRG, continued from page 7

Trail, is one of the most popular multi-use trails in the state, with over 300,000 trips taken on it every year. Completed NRG Trail segments in Ansonia, Seymour, Beacon Falls, Naugatuck, Watertown, and Torrington are also popular with trail users. Trail visitors can expect a wide, accessible paved trail ideal for walking, running, bicycling, or pushing a stroller, with incredible views of the Naugatuck River and wildlife, and new river access.

Work to extend the NRG and connect existing sections throughout the Valley with parks, waterfront promenades, overlooks, and river access is underway. Two new sections of the trail will open soon. Waterbury has begun construction on the city's first section of trail that will pass through a new park directly on the river. Ansonia is completing a section of trail on the east side of the river atop a flood wall adjacent to downtown, creating a two-mile loop when paired with existing trail on the west side of the river.

Ongoing bicycle and pedestrian improvements on the Derby-Shelton Bridge will connect the Shelton Riverwalk to the NRG Trail. The bridge will soon offer Shelton residents a safe and scenic way to access the open NRG Trail sections in Derby and Ansonia - and, as progress to complete the trail continues - to the Naugatuck Valley beyond!

We look forward to seeing you all on the trail! ♦



Do We Need Wetlands?

By Jane Bakker, Housatonic Valley Association Special Projects Manager



Silent Waters in the Shelton Lakes Greenway.

This year we celebrate the 50th anniversary of The Connecticut Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Act (IWWA). Did I say Wetlands? You mean those swamps, marshes, bogs, fens? Ugh. Are they just water logged and disease-ridden areas.

No, they are not. While some people see them as such, wetlands provide many positive values for people, fish and wildlife. Actually it's amazing what a wetland does.

Which human organ can wetlands be compared to?



Wetlands improve water quality by filtering sediment and hazardous chemicals before they get to rivers, bays and beaches. They provide flood protection by trapping and slowly releasing surface water runoff

from pavements and buildings, as well as rain, snowmelt and groundwater. In addition, wetland vegetation reduces shoreline erosion by slowing flood waters.

Is your neighbor's wetland the reason your basement floods?



But beware. If you fill your wetland with dirt or fall leaves you can reduce its flood storage capacity and end up with a wet lawn or even water in your basement.

Wetlands also provide for recreational activities such as hunting, fishing, bird-watching and photography.

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Other benefits

Inland Wetlands are also a wildlife habitat for reptiles and amphibians such as fish, lizards, frogs, snakes, turtles, newts and salamanders. Their neighbors include invertebrates, such as crayfish, shrimp, snails, dragonflies and mosquitoes.

Are wetlands out-of-control breeding grounds for mosquitoes?



And let's not forget birds. Wetlands are staging sites of many migratory birds because they contain water and have many aquatic plants and animals which provide food and shelter. Some of these birds include loons, pelicans, cormorants, swans, geese, ducks, plovers, sandpipers, gulls, terns, herons, egrets, blackbirds, sparrows, warblers, swallows and wrens.

How many bird species need healthy wetlands in order to survive?



The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) notes that wetlands provide food for many animal species. Dead plant leaves and stems break down in the water to form small particles of organic material called

"detritus." This enriched material feeds many small aquatic insects, shellfish and small fish that are food for larger predatory fish, reptiles, amphibians, birds and mammals.



Pine Lake in the Shelton Lakes Greenway.

What would happen without them?

Without wetlands, cities would have to spend more money to treat drinking water, floods would be more devastating to communities, animals would be displaced or die out, and food supplies would be disrupted which would negatively affect livelihoods in areas that depend on them for fish, shellfish, blueberries, cranberries, timber and wild rice.

Another amazing wetland benefit – according to the EPA, wetlands' microbes, plants and wildlife are part of global cycles for water, nitrogen and sulfur. Scientists now know that atmospheric maintenance may be an additional wetlands function. Wetlands store carbon within their plant communities and soil instead of releasing it to the atmosphere as carbon dioxide. Thus wetlands help to moderate global climate conditions.

Can your backyard wetland help reduce the effects of climate change?



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How do humans destroy wetlands?

Common direct impacts to wetlands include filling them in to build homes, grading, removing vegetation, and installing sewer systems and plumbing.

How you can protect wetlands on your property?

1. Maintain a buffer strip of native plants along streams and wetlands.
2. Use pesticides and fertilizers sparingly or not at all.
3. Avoid non-native and invasive species of plants.
4. Avoid storm water run-off by minimizing paved surfaces, planting shrubs and providing proper roof drainage.
5. Don't pollute or fill in wetlands with anything.
6. Keep your pets under control.

Could that reoccurring puddle in your backyard be important?



The IWWA

Connecticut enacted the IWWA to require municipal regulation of activities affecting inland wetlands and watercourses. Every municipality has established an inland wetlands agency to implement and enforce the law which provides an orderly regulatory process that balances the need for economic growth with the need to protect our environment.

What is the most effective thing you can do to protect a wetland?



Are wetlands protected in the United States?



What is the most important function of a wetland?



The most important function of a wetland is to act as nature's nursery; filter and purify water; store flood water and reduce property damage; mitigate climate change; provide critical habitat for thousands of plants

and animals; and help reduce mosquitoes. You choose. All are equally important.

What HVA is doing?

Old or poorly-designed culverts (pipes carrying streams underneath roadways) act just like dams, blocking fish and wildlife from moving upstream. And they cause flooding in strong storms.

HVA is working with towns in the Housatonic watershed to redo storm water infrastructure to discharge water more naturally so wetlands can absorb and filter and slowly recharge clean water back into the water cycle.

When new roads are built or repairs are made, HVA is making sure they are built correctly and is prioritizing the worst and most dangerous crossings, so that limited resources are focused, first, on the biggest problems.

Any questions? Please check out hvatoday.org. ♦



The Housatonic Valley Association (HVA) works to protect the natural character and environmental health of communities throughout the Housatonic River Watershed including Shelton. To learn more, please visit hvatoday.org and sign up for updates. Also follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

Clean Sweep – Banishing Litter Doing Our Part on Earth Day

The 15th annual Clean Sweep will run the week of Earth Day 2022 beginning on Saturday, April 16th and ending Sunday, April 24th 2022.

The 2022 iron-on patch features a red fox. Residents can request free patches (while supplies last) after completing a cleanup on public property.

There are different ways to participate in Shelton Clean Sweep:

1. Join a cleanup or plan a cleanup in your neighborhood to remove litter from public spaces or waterways. The Conservation Commission encourages Shelton residents to organize cleanups in their neighborhoods. There are plenty of open space properties, waterways, roadways, and schools with litter problems. Clean-up event examples can be one person cleaning up their roadway, a neighborhood group cleaning up an open space property where litter blows in from the street, a scouting group cleaning up a park or school, and a business cleaning up a roadway. Two groups that have been organizing events open to the general public are: Shelton Clean Up Project (Facebook Group organizes clean-ups throughout the year) and the Housatonic River Clean Up (regional project each Spring).
2. Organize some volunteers to clean that location, or work alone, whatever works best for you. (A neighborhood flyer can be provided.)
3. Register your cleanup event as early as possible so others can see what areas you might plan to



clean up; thereby, avoiding multiple groups cleaning up the same spot. (If someone wants to clean up the same location as someone else, please choose a date AFTER the clean-up that was already scheduled). Please note that the Conservation Commission is flexible about dates chosen.

4. Residents can pick up bags and gloves from City Hall in the Conservation office (Room 102).

Please contact the city's Natural Resource Manager, Teresa Gallagher, to ensure she is in the office at 203-924-1555 x1315.

5. Clean up litter anytime during the week of Earth Day (April 22). However, if another time is more practical, residents still qualify for free bags, gloves, and Clean Sweep patches.
6. If necessary, Highways and Bridges can be contacted to pick up accumulated litter at 203-924-9277 during business hours. Note: Do not bring the trash home if you plan for Highways and Bridges to make a special trip - leave it along the nearest roadway.
7. File a Cleanup Report that lets everyone know how much you picked up. This gives the Conservation Commission a better picture of how many people have picked up litter throughout the city. If you didn't register, you can still file a cleanup report. It is encouraged.
8. For free iron-on patches, please send an email to conservation@cityofshelton.org. Include the area you cleaned and the number of patches requested. Patches can be mailed or picked up directly by arrangement. ♦



Earth Day is an annual event celebrated on April 22nd on which events are held worldwide to demonstrate support for environmental protection. It was first celebrated in 1970 and is now coordinated globally by the EarthDay.org (formerly Earth Day Network) including one billion people in more than 193 countries.

Centennial Watershed State Forest

940 Acres In Shelton Protect Drinking Water Supplies

Submitted by Teresa Gallagher, Natural Resource Manager



Means Brook, Centennial Watershed State Forest

Centennial Watershed State Forest is not your typical state forest. Most of its tracts are scattered across Fairfield County near drinking water reservoirs, but some parts of the 15,000-acre forest pop up in places like North Canaan in Northwest Connecticut. The state forest is mostly off-limits to the general public, with exceptions for hunting, fishing, and hiking in designated areas by permit. The primary purpose of the forest is watershed protection for drinking water supplies, with passive recreation opportunities a secondary goal.

Centennial Watershed State Forest was created in 2002 when the State of Connecticut, with help from the Nature Conservancy, sought to protect lands held by what is now the Aquarion Water Company. Previously known as the Bridgeport Hydraulic Company (BHC), the water company had been selling off surplus lands in the 1990s, including properties at Shelton Lakes and Birchbank Mountain that were purchased by the City of Shelton for open space. The State of Connecticut purchased 6,000 acres outright and protected another 9,000 acres via conservation easement for \$90 million. The Nature Conservancy contributed \$10 million towards the purchase, which includes recreation rights over most

of the new state forest tracts. These lands are collectively called Centennial Watershed State Forest.

Although 940 acres of the state forest are located in Shelton, many people are more familiar with the Saugatuck Reservoir section of Centennial Forest in Weston and Redding, which is a popular spot for fishing and hiking. The blue-blazed Saugatuck and Aspetuck Trail run for miles through the state forest. A hiker's "permit" consists of the trail map. No dogs are allowed in Centennial Forest.



In Shelton, Centennial Forest lands are centered around the three drinking water reservoirs: Trap Falls, Means Brook, and Far Mill Reservoirs. With a permit

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A short section of Nichols Trail passes through a corner of Centennial Watershed State Forest and over Nicholdale Brook.

from Aquarion, people can fish the shoreline of Far Mill Reservoir (aka Isinglass Reservoir) or bowhunt for deer in designated areas near the Means Brook and Far Mill reservoirs. There are no hiking opportunities in Shelton except for a short section of trail at Nicholdale Farm that passes through a corner of the forest under a special deed restriction that predates the creation of the state forest.

One of the goals of the state's \$90 million purchase was to increase recreational opportunities for the general public on lands that drain into designated storage reservoirs. In Shelton, Means Brook and Far Mill Reservoirs meet that designation. Their waters are piped to Trap Falls Reservoir, which is classified as a more critical distribution reservoir. (What people call the "bubbler" at Trap Falls is where the gravity-fed water from one of these secondary reservoirs forcefully empties into the larger reservoir.)

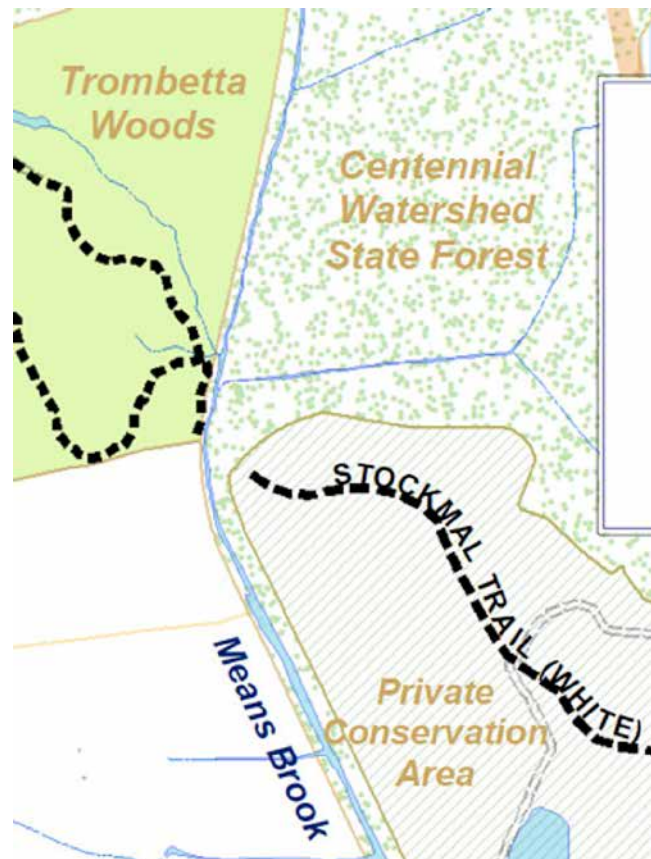
Management decisions regarding potential new recreational opportunities within Centennial Forest are made by the Conservation Land Committee. Three members are on the committee, one each from the Aquarion Water Company, the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), and the Nature Conservancy. New trails or other forms of recreation must be endorsed by a consensus of all three stakeholders, and then approved by the Connecticut Department of Public Health.

The City of Shelton is working to obtain permission from the committee to extend Stockmal Trail across a narrow strip of the state forest in order to

gain access to the city's Trombetta Woods open space, located along the Monroe town line. The trail, which currently ends at the state forest property line, would need to cross 150 feet of Centennial Forest as well as Means Brook. Once across the river, hikers would be able to complete a half-mile loop across the Trombetta property.

Permits to fish within Centennial Watershed State Forest may be obtained at Shelton City Hall in the Town Clerk's office. Hikers are required to carry a trail map (available online), which serves as their permit, and must

stay on designated trails (none are located within Shelton). No dogs are allowed. Application forms for hunting permits may be downloaded from Aquarion's website. ♦



The Shelton Historical Society Serving the City of Shelton for 50 Years and Counting!

The Shelton Historical Society was established in 1969 by a group of civic-minded individuals whose goal was to save historic structures during a time when suburban growth was rampant. They were successful in saving the circa 1822 Brownson House and the one room 1872 Trap Fall School, but the structures required relocation. Thanks to the generous donation by Wisner and Dorothy Wilson, these buildings were relocated to a one-acre lot that was once part of their farmstead on Ripton Road. These buildings along with an 1860s barn original to the site, which was also donated by the Wilsons, were the beginning of what is now the Shelton History Center. Two small out-buildings were later added to the complex. A sixth structure was added in 2007 to house horse-drawn vehicles, including a restored carry-all that once transported children to school.



The now renamed Wilson Barn was in derelict condition and its repair became an immediate priority. The structure was improved in 1997 and houses the award-winning Three Centuries of Shelton—From Farming to Industry and Beyond, a permanent exhibit that displays artifacts that illustrate the development of our city from its Native American and agricultural beginnings, through the Industrial Revolution, to modern day.

After several years of research and exploration, Shelton Historical Society transformed the Brownson House to depict the year 1913, when Harry and Gertrude Brownson lived there and farmed their land. While they were not influential on the state or national stage, the Brownsons were integral members of their community and the interpretation of a middle-class farming family in the early years of the 20th century is rare in Connecticut's historic houses that commonly emphasize the colonial era, high-style wealth, or a famous individual.

Before World War I, Huntington was primarily an agricultural community where little had changed since the Civil War. In contrast to these rural surroundings was the riverfront Borough of Shelton, an industrial powerhouse at its apex. With the 1913 interpretation, the Society explores the economies and symbiotic relationships of rural and industrial Connecticut. Other topics also explored as seen through the eyes of the Brownsons include life at the turn of the 20th century, the Industrial Revolution, immigration, women's suffrage, growth of labor unions, and the birth of the modern age. The impact of the Progressive Era's social and technological advances on the middle-class family is underscored in each building on the History Center complex.

Shelton's history may be explored either in person at Shelton History Center or by visiting the Society's newly launched website at www.sheltonhistory.org. Currently, on-site visits outside of scheduled events can be arranged by appointment. Please call the Society's office at 203-925-1803. ♦



The Brownson House was moved to its present location in 1971.

Join Us!

Volunteers support the work of the Society, whether you are interested in learning more about history, teaching what you've learned to others or helping with events such as our Annual Vintage Car Show, Autumn Tea, or Harvest Fun events.

Now is the perfect time to join as a member to support our work to preserve the community's history — because history matters!

LOCAL BUSINESSES

salt n rays®

Salt n Rays is a family owned and run boutique/gift shop located at 194 Leavenworth Road in the White Hills section of Shelton.

The business started in 2018 when owner, Christy



Christy LaSalle

LaSalle, was sitting on a beach in Barbados trying to find shade from the sun after having had too much already. Although she had been wearing a sun protective shirt she still

needed to borrow her husband's shirt for her legs. With her shins and feet still exposed and burning, she decided that she needed a towel made from the same material. So, she did the logical thing and tried to buy one online. When nothing came up, the concept of her store, Salt n Rays, began.

Christy was able to design, source and produce the UPF 50 Sol Wrap, a sun protective towel and wrap within a few months and started selling them online in July. The towel quickly gained momentum, and they started selling to retail stores on the east coast. They were also able to exhibit in a few trade shows and boat shows where they began taking orders for custom apparel and towels.

In January of 2020, Christy went full time with the towels, leaving behind her graphic design career of twenty years. The plan was to travel the boat show circuit and attend additional trade shows and grow the wholesale side of the business. Two months later, COVID had other plans and travel came to an abrupt halt. Christy had moved out of her basement and into a warehouse space where she had to figure out how to promote the towels and get through the pandemic. She started creating other custom products including apparel and accessories.

It was then that her friend and boat neighbor, Lisa

Roberts, told her that there was retail space available in the White Hills Plaza and thought Salt n Rays would be a good fit for the shopping center. In May of 2022, with a leap of faith, Christy decided to give it a shot and with no retail experience, opened a store front complete with gifts, apparel, accessories, custom items and, of course, towels. Christy now wouldn't have it any other way. The response from the local community has been more than supportive and welcoming.

The store is continually evolving. The inventory is updated almost weekly to keep the small store fresh and seasonal. They carry everything from baby gifts and jewelry to custom blankets and apparel. Now that travel has resumed, you can still find Christy in the store most of the time, but may also find some good friends, her husband, her two sons, Colby and Gage, and several high school students behind the counter. Stop in to see a friendly face!

The store is open from Tuesday through Friday from 10:30 AM until 5:00 PM and on Saturday from 10:00 AM until 4:00 PM. You can call ahead at 203-427-8343 or visit their website at saltnrays.com. ♦



Flags for Heroes A Way to Remember Your Heroes

The Derby-Shelton Rotary Club recently announced its first annual Flags for Heroes event. In the first year, the club's goal is to display 150 flags on the Riverwalk in Shelton. It will be a stunning visual presentation and a significant way for people in the community to honor their heroes.

Individuals and organizations throughout the region are now invited to sponsor one or more flags to honor their heroes. Heroes honored will be Veterans, active service members, policeman, firefighters, or EMS workers. Heroes are those admired for their courage, outstanding achievements, noble qualities, or the way they practice random acts of kindness.

The flags will be displayed from May 29 through June 15, 2022. Sponsorship levels are available ranging from \$250.00 up to \$2,500.00. For \$60.00 one hero can be sponsored which will include the flag and one commemorative tag. All flags will be maintained and reused in future years by the Rotary Club; tags will go to each sponsor. Proceeds from Flags for Heroes will benefit the Derby-Shelton Rotary which supports the



community through special projects and grants to local organizations.

"Flags for Heroes is an opportunity to honor those individuals who have served our country, our communities, and our families. Other cities support this amazing event. These thoughtful tributes are nothing short of breathtaking," said Julie Blakeman, 2021-2022 President of the Derby-Shelton Rotary Club.

"What a wonderful way to show our love for those special people

in our lives and to join with 100+ others in such a moving and demonstrative way. I can't wait to see all the flags proudly waving in the breeze," said Linda Holmes-Hannon, member of the Derby-Shelton Rotary Club.

Please visit the Derby-Shelton Rotary Club website to download an order form or purchase sponsorships online at www.derby-sheltonrotary.org or contact Rotarian, Linda Holmes-Hannon at (203) 650-2391. The ceremony will take place on Saturday, June 11, 2022 from 11:00 AM until 2:00 PM. ♦



The Derby-Shelton Rotary Club

LOCAL BUSINESSES

Cece's Bubble Tea Café and Polaris Crystals

Shelton resident, Celia Jimenez-Lugo, owner of CeCe's Bubble Tea Café, is also a critical care nurse and believed bubble tea was a bright spot in a dark time and wanted to share this with her community. "It was, like, the one thing that made us happy," she said, speaking of the most challenging days of the pandemic for her and her colleagues at New York-Presbyterian Hospital. "We would all look forward to getting bubble tea, and we'd compare flavors. It brought us joy, and I wanted to bring that to Shelton."

Bubble tea is a Taiwanese, tea-based cold drink made with flavoring, sweeteners, and signature tapioca pearls called boba. While bubble-tea cafes have been gaining popularity in the United States, prior to CeCe's, the closest one was in New Haven. Celia and her husband Frank saw the vacancy at 434-438 Howe Avenue as an opportunity to bring a growing trend to downtown and opened both CeCe's Bubble Tea Café and the adjacent Polaris Crystals in early 2022. With a special boba machine from Taiwan ensuring perfect popping and tapioca boba, Instagram-worthy décor, and baked goods from Bethel-based Ana's Cake Studio, Celia says she envisions the Bubble Café as a kid-friendly hangout for families with something for everyone.

Daily specialty drinks are crafted by CeCe's resident bobalogist, Maggie Zhang, and can be found under the cleverly labeled sign "What's the Tea" in the café. One



of the first daily specials, the Chocolate Covered Strawberry, featured strawberry milk tea with a milk chocolate cap and strawberry popping bubbles. It was a hit with the café's first customers. In the future, Celia hopes to have outdoor music, Thursday night kid's karaoke, and offer birthday party packages.

Next door, Polaris Crystals invites you to raise your vibration and empower your manifestations. It's a one-stop-shop for hand-curated crystals, jewelry, and accessories, a longtime passion

of Celia's. When her online crystal shop gained over 10,000 followers on Instagram during the pandemic, Celia knew there was a demand for alternative healing. Polaris offers high-quality, fine crystals, gems, and stones as well as sound-healing sessions, tarot readings, and live music.

For more information, follow @CecesBubbleTea and @PolarisCrystals on Instagram, or stop in either location on Howe Avenue in Shelton. Celia and Frank look forward to meeting you.

Cece's Bubble Tea is open Monday – Thursday from 8:00 AM until 8:00 PM; Friday and Saturday from 9:00 AM until 9:00 PM, and Sunday from 9:00 AM until 7:00 PM. The store can be reached at (203) 712-7582.

Polaris Crystals is open Sunday – Thursday from 11:00 AM until 6:00 PM and Friday and Saturday from 11:00 AM until 7:00 PM. The store can be reached at (203) 541-5790. Celia and Frank look forward to meeting you. ♦



Polaris Crystals



Left Maggie Zhang, Bobalogist, and Brianna Branco

SHELTON COMMUNITY & BUSINESS NEWS

LOCAL BUSINESSES



On November 30, 2019, Phase Physical Fitness opened its doors in Shelton. Located at 48 Huntington Plaza, owner Chris Meskill decided to set up his business in a growing community with the opportunity to offer the best personal training and fitness education possible.

At the facility Chris works with a variety of people to provide the necessary training to help them meet their fitness and exercise goals. Chris offers individualized personal training and exciting/fun group classes. Whether your goal is to simply walk better or to improve in competition, Phase Physical Fitness can work with you to get you where you need to be.

Chris started out training at a larger gym in a bigger city but was not satisfied with the level of attention given to each member/trainee. Chris knew that a better option was available and just had to figure out how to make the dream happen.

"I knew that I didn't want to spend the rest of my life doing something I wasn't in love with." So Chris pursued this field to do exactly what he loves. "I love seeing people progress and achieve their goals. It is a permanent gift of knowledge, confidence, and health.

In establishing the business in a small community, Phase Physical Fitness provides a more unique, personalized approach to fitness.



Chris can be fun and at Phase we call our "clients" our "friends."

When Chris left the gym, he began looking for spaces to train. Surprisingly it did not take much time to find a home in Huntington Center. Chris is happy that



Owner Chris Meskill

he can now train without corporate restrictions limiting the personal aspects of doing business. Chris has reached out to two other trainers from his previous gym and offered to let them use the space to work with their clients. This opportunity was well received as they were excited to begin as well.

"We work excellently as a team and make decisions together. Each trainer runs and manages their own business allowing for flexible schedules. This method of training allows clients to work and communicate directly with their trainers," stated Chris.

With a great community supporting us, the facility has seen much success in producing uninterrupted, challenging, but rewarding workouts to people of all ages and levels of experience. Phase works with clients that may be just off physical therapy along with those invested in more competitive levels of fitness as well (sports, etc.).

For further information you can contact Chris at (203) 513-2443 or (203) 305-3572. Hours are subject to change based on appointments but someone is typically there from morning to night. Leave a message or email at inquiry@phasephysicalfitness.com. Convenient parking is available. ♦

LOCAL BUSINESSES



Bello's Barber Studio

Your Choice, Your Pride, OUR PERFECTION

Bello's Barber Studio located at 320 Howe Avenue, Retail 2 opened in October 2020 in downtown Shelton at the newly constructed Cedar Village at Carroll Apartments. For those that may not remember, this was the former location of Carroll's Home Improvement Centre, a staple in downtown for years.

Owner, Claudio Lobello said he is delighted to be part of the amazing rebirth happening in Shelton, especially in downtown. People are moving in, apartments are being constructed, and new restaurants and retail shops are being added to the mixture.

Bello's Barber Studio is a new haircut initiative.



Owner Claudio LoBello

Claudio, a graduate of the well-known Tony and Guy's Haircutting Academy, specializes mainly in scissor cuts but also has significant experience with fades, styles and also shaves. The Shelton native and third generation barber has continued in the family tradition of cutting hair. For Claudio this was a chance to follow in the footsteps of his great Uncle Filippo and cousin Simone – both of whom are barbers back in Italy. The wall of his shop features three photos – one of his uncle, another of his cousin and one of himself cutting his grandfather's hair. Claudio said he first got the "barbering itch" when his brother began cutting his hair

when he was in high school. That, along with the family history, prompted Claudio to go to school to master the craft.

Claudio is joined by fellow classmate, John Fernandes, a skilled barber specializing in all hair types. Together they are building their clientele by providing quality, affordable cuts for all people in a family-friendly environment. "The goal is to give each client a professional consultation that fits each individual according to their lifestyles, personalities, etc., stated Claudio. We believe it is your choice, your pride and OUR PERFECTION."



Barber John Fernandes

"We are booked out weeks," Claudio said, adding that he will be bringing in more barbers to handle the demand. "It's exciting to have this business downtown. I'm proud of what we've done so far, and I know my family is proud of me, too."

You can visit bellosbarberstudio.com for more information. Studio hours are Monday 9:00 AM until 1:00 PM; Tuesday through Friday 9:00 AM until 6:00 PM; Saturday 8:00 AM until 4:00 PM. Feel free to call ahead at (203) 513-8164.

Excerpts reprinted with the kind permission of hearstmediact.com, Brian Gioiele. ♦

Sanjana Jain The Road to Success

Sanjana Jain, a junior at Shelton High School, is one of the shining stars in the class of 2023. She surely is on the road to success with her plan to work hard and aim high. Her many qualifications for distinguished acclaim includes being a member of the SHS Girls Swim Team for 3 years, the SHS Robotics-Team 230 the Gaelhawks-for 3 years, the Deca Club for 3 years and presently the Co- Vice President, Class of 2023 secretary and elected High School Representative to the Shelton Board of Education presently serving in her 2nd year. Additionally, Sanjana organizes volunteers from the Robotics team for community and school events including Shelton Day and Back to School Nights. She is an exemplary student who was recently honored by United States Senator Chris Murphy for her essay on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Sanjana was one of 15 Connecticut Students who were selected as winners in the Sixth Annual Essay Challenge on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

More than 2200 entries from elementary, middle and high school students across the state submitted essays. Three students from each of the state's five Congressional districts were selected and honored at a special ceremony held in Waterbury. Sanjana represented the 4th Congressional District and was also recognized at the March meeting of the Shelton Board of Education. Superintendent Ken Saranich stated that " having known Sanjana from an early age in the Shelton Public School System, this honor was not a surprise and well deserved. She has always been a caring, kind and driven student who is empathetic to others in her community. We are very proud of her".

Sanjana is keenly invested in her interests in law and public policy and is now focusing on being selected to the Connecticut State Board of Education as a Student Member for 2022-2023. A student who aims high and works hard, Sanjana has the right ingredients for success and is surely on the roadmap to attaining it.

On the next page is Sanjana Jain's winning essay for your reading pleasure. ♦



Sanjana Jain is honored by Senator Chris Murphy

"Sanjana Jain represents the best of youth today. Sanjana is ambitious, intelligent, dedicated, and a pleasure to be around. She cares deeply about her school, her classmates, and our community. Sanjana is involved in a variety of school and community activities and has already made significant contributions to a variety of organizations. We are proud that Sanjana was recognized for this honor and look forward to the continued positive impact she will make on those around her."

~ Kathleen M. Riddle, SHS Principal



Sanjana receives her award from Superintendent of Schools Ken Saranich and Board of Education Chair Kathy Yolish

Sanjana Jain's Winning Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Essay

As I looked up at the white marble statue towering over me, I was filled with admiration. The intensity of Dr. Martin Luther King's resolute gaze over the tidal basin reminded me of the importance of persevering to fight for a change in society. As I heard the tour guide explain the symbolism of the monument during my eighth grade field trip to Washington D.C., I could not stop asking myself, "How can I make a difference?"

For as long as I can remember, I have volunteered to help underprivileged families in my community. Seeing Dr. King's monument motivated me to begin my own initiatives, from providing free tutoring to elementary school students struggling in school to running a nonprofit addressing educational inequality by providing students with free standardized exam prep books. Working with these kids opened my eyes to many more disparities in my community. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March 2020 and healthcare providers around the country transitioned to only telehealth visits, I realized many patients do not have access to camera-enabled devices. This disproportionately affected elderly and low income communities, as these communities have the highest rates of chronic diseases that need regular checkups, and have the lowest rate of smart device ownership.

Recognizing that this is a disparity affecting many patients, I joined Telehealth Access for Seniors, a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing elderly and low income patients with free camera-enabled devices to ensure they can connect with their providers. As the Connecticut State Lead, I raised \$10,000 from local organizations and grant applications. I arranged successful drop offs to numerous community clinics and veteran hospitals. These experiences inspire me to look beyond my daily life and continue to find solutions to problems affecting our society like how Dr King did.

Dr. King saw a problem affecting many in the world and decided to take action. His undeterred commitment to equality led to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This profoundly impacted the lives of African Americans throughout our country.

After speaking with healthcare providers across the state, I realized that telehealth was just one of many healthcare disparities that low income patients faced. To uncover the extent of these disparities and to call on policy makers to address these issues, I became a research assistant for Dr. Daniel Wiznia, Yale School of Medicine. I was astonished to find the poor healthcare treatment low income patients encounter. From less acceptance to higher prices to lower triage rates, there is a large inequality in healthcare treatment in America.

Working with the nonprofits and research team, I am inspired to show courage and take action towards improving my society. As Dr. King once said, "Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase." I am excited to take the first steps entering my undergraduate years to continue my research and find solutions to provide equal access to healthcare regardless of socioeconomic status.

A Win-Win for Students & Community Emergency Services Program Offered at SIS

It is said that when opportunity knocks, seize the moment. And that is exactly what Shelton Intermediate School Principal John Skerritt did when contacted by Shelton Fire Chief Fran Jones and EMS Director Joe Laucella. The twosome developed an Emergency Service Public Safety Program to be introduced to eighth grade students at SIS. This program would encompass lifesaving skills during a span of 8-16 weeks during the students' one hour weekly flex time period. It would introduce the students to the EMS and Firefighting profession while learning lifesaving skills such as CPR, Fire Extinguisher use, and Bleeding Control. Additionally, the students would learn about Fire/ EMS apparatus, safety equipment as well as equipment used during every day emergencies. The students would be involved in hands-on activities in many of the weekly sessions and the trainees would be Fran Jones, Fire Chief; Joe Laucella, Director of EMS; Training Coordinator for Echo Hose, Pat Lahaza; and, EMT trainer, Cindy Vitale.

A nearly equal amount of girls and boys signed on



Students practice CPR with Joe Laucella

to the exciting new club offering - 25 in all! At first the Public Safety Club was to be held for eight weeks but after the enthusiastic enrollment number, the program was extended to 16 weeks.

The 16 week program focuses on a specific topic and includes:

- An introduction to Shelton Emergency Services
- Introduction to EMS/Fire apparatus and equipment
- Introduction to Emergency Management



Students being instructed



Joe Laucella and Pat Lahaza demonstrate CPR

SCHOOL NEWS

- Adult/ Child Hands Only CPR
- Fire Suppression/Hydrant Dressing/Extinguisher Training
- Bleeding Control/Bandaging & Tourniquet use
- Extrication (extricating the patient)
- Person Protective Equipment/BSI
- Live Demonstration (Mountain Bike Incident)
- Fire Science (ULxplorer Labs)- 2 weeks
- Emergency Dispatch/ 911 Center
- Water/ Pool Safety
- STEM- Lithium Battery (ULxplorer lab)
- Trauma - MVA
- Live Demonstration- car extrication

The purpose of the program is to begin to have students explore an interest in future opportunities in Emergency Services. It is hopeful that this interest can build into a program at the high school level whereby students may entertain a possible career opportunity or voluntary service in Public Service. The City of Shelton offers students and residents, 16 years and older, an opportunity to volunteer in the Shelton Fire Department or at Echo Hose Ambulance. High school students, at least 16 years old, can presently take an Emergency Medical Technician course and volunteer at Echo Hose Ambulance and/or join one of the four Shelton fire companies as a Junior Firefighter. Many former SHS students have joined both the Fire Department and Echo Hose while in school.

When asked about the program, a very proud Fire Chief Jones commented: "The Shelton Public Safety Pathways Program is a joint venture to provide a pathway to volunteering and future employment within the EMS and fire services. The training provided will assist Shelton's students with the knowl-

edge, skills and abilities to help challenge themselves in any profession. It will also assist them in everyday life issues such as residential water leaks, electrical safety, pool safety, fire prevention, as well as basic first aid and CPR in an emergency. We are extremely pleased to have the full support of Mayor Lauretti, Superintendent Saranich, Principal Skerritt, Principal Riddle and the Board of Education in this endeavor at SIS and SHS. In addition, the program will assist our volunteer organizations in recruiting new members that have obtained their certifications as EMT and Firefighter while attending high school. This is a tremendous collaboration of all services working together for the community".

An opportunity used wisely can change a life forever, and this opportunity is a definite win-win for both our students and our community and may certainly have an affect on many lives in more ways than one. ♦



Fran Jones demonstrating defibrillator



Introduction to Fire and EMS apparatus

Plumb Memorial and Huntington Branch Libraries

As spring signals a rebirth to the environment, Plumb Memorial and Huntington Branch Library are experiencing a renewal as well.

At the Huntington Branch, new windows surrounding the library have been installed. This makes the library more energy efficient and allows more light to come in to this inviting space.

At Plumb Memorial Library, Phase 3 of the renovation of the historic part of the library is 99% complete. The area has been cleaned, polished and painted, and new flooring and lights have been added. It is truly gratifying to see the area restored to its former glory. Please stop in and see why Plumb Memorial is on the National Registry of Historic Places.

The planning for Phase 4 of the renovation is currently underway, and this will complete updating the entire library. The Main Library, now almost 50 years old, has not had any refurbishing since its inception. Once the city installs the new HVAC system, the renovation should be complete.

In addition to the physical changes in these structures, staff is delighted to be returning to the services and programs that were in place pre-Covid. In addition to having an excellent compilation of books at both libraries, there is also a vast medley of DVDs, music CDs, audiobooks and magazines. The library is increasing their collection of Playaways, which are complete novels that fit in the palm of your hand. It can be carried around as you hike, or can be played in your car as you travel.

The pandemic certainly increased the library's database usage. With a Shelton library card, you can download books, movies, tv shows, music, comic books, information – the list goes on and on. In many cases you can check out the items just like a book and then it goes off your device or computer after your check out period has ended.

Programs are also going to be offered once again after restrictions are lessening. While some services, like curbside pickup on request and "Make and Take" crafts that began in Covid are remaining, planning has begun to offer some of the programs the library patrons have requested. Weekly Tai Chi classes for both adults and children in the coming months are



The Children's staff from Plumb on Take Your child to the Library Day. (L to R) Judy Siemieniewicz, Maura Gualtiere, Children's Librarian, Debbie Semonioch, Library Assistant and Rebecca Incerto, Library Assistant

starting, along with new individualized computer and device help offered weekly by Mr. Joe in Plumb's reference department. Miss Maura will be holding her Connect ELL Conversation Cafes and outdoor Library Storytimes at the Rotary Pavilion throughout the spring as well. Please check the library's online calendar or stop into Plumb for details.

The Friends of the Library invite you to join their organization. While they were not able to hold their traditional book sales during the pandemic and the renovations, they do have an ongoing book sale every day in the Reading Room at the Plumb Library. They are always looking for new members, and a membership form can be found at: <https://sheltonlibrary-system.org/> or by stopping at the circulation desk in either library.

The new group "Junior Friends of the Library" is a high school volunteer group that has been meeting monthly and are doing good works throughout the community. In addition to programs provided for children, they recently held a coat drive to benefit the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Connecticut. They have also collected food for Spooner House and plan to raise money for local animal shelters.

Director Joan Stokes stated "She welcomes input from everyone about the changes taking place along with suggestions for future changes." ♦

LOCAL BUSINESSES

Mike Putnam founded Whitney Cabinet Painting to provide a quality, affordable alternative to expensive new cabinet installation. A true devotion to the craft stems from an intense satisfaction of turning conception into reality. His service is all about the reveal. He simply executes his customer's vision.

When the opportunity was presented to move his business to downtown Shelton in the Conti building, Mike jumped on it! The location was perfect ~ convenient to Route 8 and Route 110. The community is growing particularly in downtown and the timing felt just right.

Why cabinets? Because cabinets are easily one of the most important components in a kitchen. However, they can look worn from years of wear or simply the color is outdated. The cost of replacing cabinets can be exorbitant so Whitney Cabinet Painting offers refinishing options, including full door replacement.

Whitney Cabinet spray finishes for a smooth look free of brush strokes or roller marks. Although some people may choose to take this project on themselves, it isn't always a great option. Without professional spray equipment, it is almost impossible to get the smooth "factory finish" look of new cabinets.

Mike explains the process in the following steps:
Disassemble: The process begins with the removal of the cabinet doors and drawer fronts. All the hardware is removed as well.



Masking: The kitchen is completely masked with either masking paper or plastic so paint can be sprayed on the base cabinets. The kitchen is "tented off" with a vapor-barrier plastic containing any dust or odors.

Preparation: All surfaces that will be painted get cleaned, degreased and "scuffed". Scuffing is a quick,

light sanding to remove the top glossiness of the existing finish. This allows primer to bond better and also allows for any light repairs such as deep scratches, etc.

Prime: The next process before painting. Whitney Cabinet uses a top of the line wood coating primer called Aniolac.

Surface, Review, Sand, Prime: Everything is inspected, sanded again if necessary and then applied with a second coat of primer resulting in cabinets smooth as butter.

The Reveal: The paint has been applied and at last the finished product can be viewed! All paper, plastic and equipment is removed and the whole area is sparkling new.

The Whitney Cabinet Painting showroom featuring both doors and color samples is open by appointment (203) 820-4754 or visit their website at whitneycabinetpainting.com.

Mike will be happy to show you his work and is proud to be home to the Shelton community! ♦



Lanna Thai 2 Under New Ownership



(L to R) Bua Chatchavan, Jonathan Quint and Bee Chatchavan

Bua Chatchavan's culinary journey has been a long one, but he and his wife Bee are excited it has brought them to Shelton. Having learned to cook in his native Thailand, Bua honed his culinary skills as the co-owner and chef of Thai restaurants in New Hampshire, Maine, and Massachusetts. Lanna Thai 2 is Bua's first solo venture, and his enthusiasm is contagious. Bua bubbles over with pride talking about his dishes and the menagerie of beautiful plants that fill the restaurant.

Notorious for his green thumb, Bua's botanical expertise and attention to freshness lend themselves to his dishes, which are immaculate. "I love to cook anything," he says, explaining that his favorite meals are the ones that make people happy. He has a contagiously joyful personality built for service and is known for bending over backward to give all of his customers the best possible experience.

With the help and guidance of Bua's best friend Jonathan Quint, the couple have undertaken a complete remodel and menu change of the original Lanna Thai and

reopened the restaurant in Santos Plaza in February of 2022. Bua, Bee and Jonathan were so thrilled to welcome their first customers, a Shelton couple named Stephen and Sherry, that they beam with pride as they share photos of them. "They loved everything," Jonathan says.

Lanna Thai 2 offers a great combination of Thai dishes served with only the freshest and finest ingredients. Everything is cooked to serve fresh in-house by Bua himself, and customers have already noticed the quality. Shelton resident

Scott, who has stopped in to pick up his second to-go order of the week explains "This food is just delicious, that's why I keep coming back."

Lanna Thai 2 is open for lunch and dinner in the Santos Plaza at 495 River Road, Monday through Friday, 11:00am – 9:30pm, and Saturdays and Sundays from 12:00pm to 9:30 pm. To peruse their menu, or learn more about take-out, delivery, and catering options, visit LannaThai2CT.com or call (475) 269-5463. Bua and Bee can't wait to meet you! ♦



Former UConn Player Maria Conlon To Open Shelton Business



Maria Conlon

Connecticut basketball legend Maria Conlon will be bringing some star power to the downtown business scene.

Conlon, who played on the University of Connecticut's women's basketball team that won three national titles during her four years from 2000-04, plans to open her latest venture, Steady Habits, a high-end tasting lounge, in April in space in Cedar Village at Carroll's.

"I wanted to create something unique and different. And downtown Shelton, with its beautiful views of the rivers, its revitalized downtown, was the perfect spot to start," said Conlon, who also is a champion high school basketball and AAU coach and financial advisor at Maffe Financial Group on nearby Bridge Street.

Steady Habits will be a spot for people to stop, enjoy some wine and spirits, all from wineries or distilleries based in Connecticut, as well as fresh foods from area farms.

"I really want to keep this casual, with a lounge type feel," Conlon said. "It's important for me to foster this market."

She said weekends will feature these tastings — with selections rotated regularly — but the weekdays will offer opportunities for seminars, luncheons and small business gatherings, plus a podcast she plans to hold featuring all things Connecticut, from business to entertainment to sports.

"I look at this as a great addition to the growing restaurant offerings downtown," Conlon said, adding that Steady Habits will not have a full menu. "This will be a place to stop by to enjoy some fine wine and other products from distilleries or breweries in the state, then go out to dinner in downtown."

Conlon, head coach of the Notre Dame-Fairfield girls basketball team, said sports — for which is best known in the Valley — will also be part of the menu. She plans to one day host high school players and coaches for collegiate athletic letter-signings.

"I envision this as a great place to bring clients, to hold those real estate closings, for financial meetings," Conlon said.

The idea was born two years ago, Conlon said, when she was participating in the state's winery passport program — designed to promote the Connecticut Wine Trail and the state's farm wineries.

"There are so many cool wineries and distilleries," Conlon, a Derby native who starred on the Seymour High girls basketball team before committing to UConn, said. "I started to wonder how I could give people the chance to enjoy them all. I needed a place where people could come and be able to sample several options in a sitting."

"All these great spots are tucked away in different areas of the state. Here I can bring them all in one spot," she said.

Once she had the concept, the name was next. After some research she learned that Connecticut has for centuries been tabbed the Land of Steady Habits. Thus, the name was born.

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SHELTON COMMUNITY & BUSINESS NEWS

COMMUNITY NEWS

Doggie, continued from pg. 6

For the Patricks, supporting the community has been one of the most rewarding parts of owning a business in the Valley. Since 2002, Doggie Styles has partnered with Nancy Gzailli of Sarah Rescue, Inc., a non-profit, special-needs animal rescue. They're also a collection site for the Shelton Animal Shelter, donating countless items to local dogs in need. "It's a testament to the generosity of our customers," Cheryl said, "We're just the intermediary."

In November of 2021, Doggie Styles celebrated their 10,000th client, a boxer named Gemma. Gemma received a free groom and was featured on Doggie Styles social media. "Knowing she's with people who truly care about her the way we would, is what brings us back every time," said Gemma's owner, Jessica.

Owner Keith, who's overseen the daily operations of Doggie Styles since 2009, is proudest of the family part of the family business. It's not uncommon to find Sadie's youngest son, Elliot, at a desk in the lobby, or her oldest son, Connor, cleaning, and organizing. Everyone has a role at Doggie Styles, and every customer and employee has a place in their family. In two decades, that hasn't changed at all.

For more information on Doggie Styles Grooming, visit them on Facebook, at [DoggieStylesGrooming.com](https://www.facebook.com/DoggieStylesGrooming), or call Monday – Saturday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, (203) 929-0075. ♦



Sadie Cabeleira

St. Vincent, continued from pg. 4

It should be noted that during the height of the pandemic from March to June 2021, the thrift shop was closed, and with it, a major source of income. Thanks to the amazing community support of food and monetary donations, along with some government assistance, the pantry was able to continue with distributing pre-selected and bagged food to more families - between 12-15 a day – in a modified and safe way.

The supportive Board of Directors meets monthly to review the workings of the thrift shop and food pantry while developing longer-range goals. Many new initiatives emerge from the board, to better meet the needs of the community while extending reach. Before the pandemic, St. Vincent de Paul began an outreach program that provided food for those living in the Housing Authority apartments in Derby and Ansonia and is now poised to work with the Shelton Housing Authority. Additionally, there is increased awareness of the challenge of transportation for many who need food assistance, so the board is working to further develop some mobile distribution events and collaborate with other agencies poised to meet this need.

Also this year, The Valley Parish Nurse Program provided health screening during food distribution at housing authority apartments, and Massaro Farms has provided fresh produce. St. Vincent de Paul also

collaborated with other Valley food banks to identify further food needs, information-share, and develop best practices. St. Vincent de Paul was thrilled to continue a pre-pandemic relationship with Massaro Farms, which included monthly cooking classes and samples of fresh, nutritional ingredients to the pantry recipients.

Volunteerism is a big part of what St. Vincent de Paul promotes. Success is bound to the volunteers as the organization simply could not do what they do without their time and efforts. They are always looking for able-bodied volunteers to come and share in the warm and welcoming shop and pantry. It is amazing what volunteers committing to a few hours a week can do giving their lives purpose, meaning, and a sense of community and friendship, all while helping Valley neighbors in need.

There are so many ways to become involved in the good work done at St. Vincent de Paul and to help keep the mission going and growing! Check Facebook updates on food needs, weekly thrift sales, and holiday outreach projects. Donations of food are welcome Monday through Saturday, 9:30 AM to 2:30 PM (call for summer hours). Also welcome are monetary donations, thrift shop item donations, and of course your time as a generous volunteer. Please contact the director, Remy Kocurek, for more information or to discuss how you can get involved at (203) 734-7577 or email stvincentshoppe@sbcglobal.net. ♦

Community Calendar

PARKS & RECREATION

Community Center Hours:

Monday-Friday 6:30 am - 9:30 pm

Saturday 7:30 am - 3:30 pm

Pool Hours:

Monday-Friday 6:00 am - 8:45 pm

Sunday 8:00 am - 3:30 pm

Saturday 7:30 am - 3:30 pm

Information is posted on the city website: www.cityofshelton.org.

Information/Cancellation Hotline
203-331-4120 • 41 Church Street

SHELTON SENIOR CENTER

The Center provides a wide range of social, educational, health, financial, and recreational programs for residents 55 years of age and older. The Center sponsors parties, BBQ's, special events, day/overnight trips and casino trips.

Transportation to the Center is provided for Shelton residents (FREE MWF) including free shopping bus to local stores for members on Wednesdays. For more information regarding any of these programs, please call the Center at (203) 924-9324.

SHELTON YOUTH SERVICE BUREAU

The Youth Service Bureau was established in 1988 by the City of Shelton for the purpose of developing, planning and coordinating services for the youth of the city and their families. The Youth Service Bureau works cooperatively with the schools, police, youth, parents and other community resources to encourage our youth to strive for their full potential. The Bureau provides programs for both youth and parents on issues of importance in today's society. It also provides information and referrals for parents and youth in need. For more information, please call the Youth Service Bureau at 203-924-7614 or email: SYSB@cityofshelton.org

SHELTON LIBRARY SYSTEM Plumb Memorial Library

65 Wooster St. 203-924-9461

Huntington Branch Library

In the Community Center,
41 Church St. 203-926-0111

Cover: the courtyard of the Merion Riverwalk Apartments located at 185 Canal Street, Shelton with the Housatonic River in the background.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Shelton City Hall (203) 924-1555

Shelton Board of Education

(203) 924-1023

Shelton Community Center

(203) 925-8422

Shelton Highways and Bridges

(203) 924-9277

Shelton Animal Control

(203) 924-2501

Shelton Libraries:

Plumb Library (203) 924-1580

Branch Library (203) 926-0111

Shelton Police Dept. (203) 924-1544

Shelton Probate Court

(203) 924-8462

Shelton Registrar of Voters

(203) 924-2533

1ST WARD ALDERMEN

Anthony Simonetti (203) 926-0922

Porter C. McKinnon

portermckinnon32@gmail.com

2ND WARD ALDERMEN

Eric McPherson (203) 924-5862

Michele B. Bialek (203) 645-0735

3rd WARD ALDERMEN

John Anglace (203) 929-1515

Cris Balamaci (203) 922-1639

4th WARD ALDERMEN

Lorenzo Durante (203) 623-3060

Bernie Simons (203) 925-8499

STATE LEGISLATORS

State Senator Kevin Kelly

(860) 240-8826

State Representative Ben McGorty

(800) 842-1423

State Representative Jason Perillo

(800) 842-1423

CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATION

Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro

(New Haven office) (203) 562-3718

Congressman Jim Himes

(Bridgeport office) (866) 453-0028

U.S. SENATORS

Senator Richard Blumenthal

(Bridgeport office) (203) 330-0598

Senator Chris Murphy

(Hartford office) (860) 549-8463

DGN, continued from pg. 5

through conversations with him that Dan was inspired to create his signature Kalos electric guitar. At a show at College Street Music Hall in New Haven, Mihali told Dan about the guitar of his dreams. Dan stayed up until 4:00 AM, melding Mihali's vision with one he'd had for years. The result, a hollow-body model braced like a violin inside, which is still the one he's proudest of. The prototype sits in his shop in the Conti building. He has since made several more custom pieces for Mihali, and his website offers four different custom guitar models. After all these years, Dan says, "I'm just so thankful to be doing what I love."

When he isn't working on a custom build at DGN Custom Guitars, Dan is the guitarist for the band Alligator. DGN Guitars can be found online at DGNCustomguitars.com, or in their space in the Conti Building at 415 Howe Avenue, Monday through Friday from 10:00 AM until 6:00 PM. Please feel free to call Dan at (203) 292-5821. ♦

SHELTON COMMUNITY & BUSINESS NEWS

Shelton Economic
Development Commission
c/o City Hall
54 Hill Street
Shelton, Connecticut 06484

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Silent Waters, Shelton, CT