

# The Gazette

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Crafted from the finest local ingredients since 1885

1406 Main Street, East Hartford, Connecticut 06108

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## A HERO COMES HOME

*Lost 81 years ago, East Hartford airman to be buried in Arlington April 24*

The remains of U.S. Army Air Forces Staff Sgt. Frank J. Tedone, a soldier killed during World War II will be interred April 24 in Arlington National Cemetery. Graveside services will be performed by Everly-Wheatley Funerals and Cremation, Alexandria, Virginia, preceding the interment.

A native of East Hartford and a graduate of East Hartford High School, Tedone was a gun-



SSgt. Frank J. Tedone

ner assigned to the 436th Bombardment Squadron, 7th Bombardment Group. When he enlisted he and his new bride

See **WWII HERO RETURNS**, pg 10

## R&B singer Chris Brown here Aug 23

Chris Brown, the R&B sensation behind hits like "No Guidance," is set to bring the heat to East Hartford's Pratt & Whitney Stadium at Rentschler Field August 23 with his Breezy Bowl XX Tour.

In response to what can only be described as unrelenting fan clamor, Live Nation confirmed the addition of the 40,000-seat stadium here as one of five venues Brown added to his Breezy Bowl XX tour.

Brown's Breezy Bowl XX World Tour promises to be more than just a concert; it's shaping up to be a star-studded affair in select cities, with performances by big names such as Bryson Tiller, Jhene Aiko, and Summer Walker.

While the Hartford gig is not confirmed to feature these artists, the hype is designed to build up the buzz for the shows - and spur ticket demand. Brown's career has been tinged with controversy and accusations of violence backstage both by the singer and by members of his entourage, an image that has become part of his persona. He has also sued Warner Bros. for harming his reputation.

Adding the East Hartford performance along with venues in Birmingham, Raleigh and Memphis will allow the two-time Grammy winner to bring the music directly to his fans.

Tickets go on sale for VIP Friday, April 18 and for the general public on April 22.

## Opening up career pathways

By Robert Kanehl

Town officials were invited to tour East Hartford High School's Career and Technical Education classrooms. This wing of the school offers students the opportunity to explore and even focus their education on various different career-oriented pathways.

Besides the traditional automotive and woodshop classrooms, there is an engineering lab, computer programing, classroom video production lab, culinary classroom and an allied health facility.

These programs are open to all students at the school, to take one class or multi-classes to advance their education.

"Taking one class and learning you don't like it is as important as finding a pathway to a career." Director of Adult Education and Career Education spokesman Mike Craig ex-



plained. He hosted the event to let town officials know what is available for hands-on learning at the school. He also hopes that parents of future students could learn of the many opportunities available for studying trades at EHHS.

Craig outlined his goals as

making all middle school students aware of these classes, and to extend an invitation for them to schedule a personal visit to see what the high school offers to ask questions about what East Hartford's career electives can do to help discover

See **CAREER PATHWAYS**, page 10



**CHECKING OUT CAREERS** - Top photo, Mayor Connor Martin looks over the chassis of an electric car, and East Hartford Police Chief Mack S. Hawkins, right, questions students about equipment they are using at EHHS.

## AROUND TOWN

# US & Japan Society plants cherry trees following ritual of international friendship

By Cathy Maldonado

In a successful display of community spirit, volunteers gathered on Sunday, April 13 at Rentschler Field in East Hartford to plant cherry blossom trees as part of a long-term cultural brought together by the US & Japan Society of Connecticut's initiative to plant 40 cherry blossom trees.

The event was originally scheduled for Saturday but due to rain it was moved to Sunday. But that did not discourage volunteers who still showed up on that cloudy Palm Sunday morning off Silver Lane.

Among the many returning participants was the Ohta family, a father and son duo who have made this event an annual tradition.

"We participate every year, we volunteer every year," the father, Cary Ohta shared proudly. Their ongoing commitment is a reflection of the lasting community bonds this project is creat-

ing.

Volunteers arrived early on that cold Sunday with hats, gloves and plenty of enthusiasm. Organized by Toshiko Uchino, who carefully staked out the location for every tree this was the second cherry tree planting she led at the field.

With shovels in hand, they worked side by side to carefully place each tree into the soil along the east side entrance of Rentschler Field.

Bottled water and snacks kept energy levels high, and smiles were everywhere as people dug, worked and enjoyed each other's company.

If you missed out don't worry, there are more events scheduled ahead for fall 2025 to get to that 250-tree goal. Sunday's turnout was a great start.

For more information about upcoming events or to get involved, contact Toshiko Uchino at (860) 983-1030 or [t.uchino7@icloud.com](mailto:t.uchino7@icloud.com).

## ANOTHER CHERRY TREE



A newly-planted cherry tree is mulched by a volunteer Sunday.

## MLK Initiative hosting performance

The Glastonbury MLK Community Initiative invites you to a Community Conversation on April 23 entitled "A Journey Toward Justice".

The event will feature Looking In Theater, a performance ensemble comprised of teenagers from the Greater Hartford area who explore socially relevant issues and create original theater highlighting these issues.

This free event will take place at the Riverfront Community Center at 300 Welles St., Glastonbury. A reception will be held at 5:30 p.m. and per-

formances will start at 6.

Looking In Theatre is an interactive theater ensemble. The teenaged actors, trained in the issues, create the scripts based on issues they are seeing and experiencing themselves. A performance consists of a series of short dramatic scenes followed by discussion with the audience in which actors answer questions as their characters.

The aim of the program is to highlight topics so audience members might begin to talk openly about these issues and better clarify their own values and social responsibilities.

## Rotary scholarship deadline Wednesday

Five East Hartford Rotary Scholarships will be given to students who reside in East Hartford regardless of where they attend high school. A sixth offering, the Gioconda B. McGettigan scholarship, is for any East Hartford high school.

This scholarship is made available by a generous bequest from the Estate of Gioconda B. McGettigan. There is a common application for all six scholarships in the guidance offices. Only high school seniors are eligible. The applicant must have at least a C+ or 2.8 GPA to be eligible, and major consideration will be given to students who best exemplify the Rotary Motto "Service Above Self".

Over the past six years the East Hartford Rotary Club has awarded over \$100,000 to students based upon service to the community, family, academic record and how they uphold the Rotary motto - "Service Above Self". Applications are available in Guidance offices.

If not, go to [www.easthartfordrotary.org](http://www.easthartfordrotary.org)

Deadline is April 23.

## CLASSIFIEDS

**DID YOU DRIVE A SCHOOL BUS** in Glastonbury in the 1980s? We're looking to interview former drivers for a short film about childhood and memory. Earn a \$20 Stop & Shop gift card for approximately one hour of your time.

If interested, please contact Meredith at [meredithmillerphoto@gmail.com](mailto:meredithmillerphoto@gmail.com).

### LAW FIRM HELP WANTED

Growing EH office seeks f/t legal assistant for e-filing/legal processing.

Starts at \$19-\$20/hour.

Contact Adam Olshan at [aolshan@rubinrothman.com](mailto:aolshan@rubinrothman.com)

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**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.

## OUR 40 YEAR ANNIVERSARY!

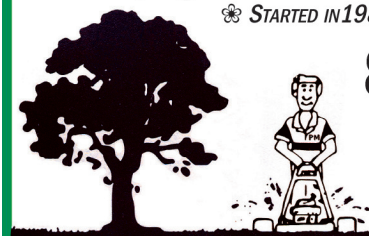
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# DESDE LA ESQUINA

by Carmen Maldonado

## ¡Una Semana Santa Pa' Reflexionar!

Estamos en Semana Santa, y para la comunidad latina/hispana, esta semana no es cualquier cosa. Muchas comunidades la dedican entera a la iglesia—ayunos, oraciones, procesiones. Otras personas la usan para descansar, viajar, o disfrutar del famoso Spring Break.

¿Y sabes qué? Celebra como te dé la gana... solo te invito a que tomes un momento para reflexionar.

Hazle una pausa al corre y corre, y reflexiona.

Piensa en lo que estas viviendo, pero también piensa en los demás. Porque, así como tú puedes estar pasándolo mal, hay otros que están igual... o peor.

Tal vez tu vida está super, tal vez la estás pasando brutal. ¡Mejor aún! Eso debería motivarte todavía más a detenerte un momento y pensar en los demás.

A veces el día a día nos lleva a las millas. El hustle, la sobrevivencia, las cuentas, el estrés... nos lleva corriendo sin ver lo que pasa a nuestro alrededor.

Que, si alguien te miro mal, no te enojos. A lo mejor está pasando un día bien difícil. Que, si nadie te abrió la puerta, aunque te vieron cargando mil bolsos, mira, quizás la persona tenía tantos problemas encima que te miro, pero ni te vio.

No sabemos lo que carga el otro. Así que no debemos andar en la mala pensando que todo lo hacen a mal. No te voy a mentir, hay veces que si lo hacen a mal. Pero yo prefiero vivir en un mundo donde le doy el beneficio de la duda a la gente.

Estamos viviendo en tiempos donde todo cambia tan rápido—política, economía, estabilidad—que mantener la paz mental se ha vuelto un lujo.

Así que, si hoy puedes hacerle el día a alguien, hazlo. Una sonrisa, una palabra, un consejito, no te cuesta nada y puede significar mucho para alguien.

Próximo:

¡Concierto de Cuerdas! En el auditorio de East Hartford High School a las 7:00pm el 24 de abril. No te lo pierdas.

East Hartford Lions Club tendrá una colecta de latas y botellas el sábado 26 de abril desde las 9:00am hasta la 1:00pm cerca del EH Lions Club en D'addarios Auto Service, 117 Burnside Avenue. Solo se coleccionarán botellas de plástico y latas de aluminio. No se estará aceptando

vidrio. Apoya a East Hartford Lions Club. Para más información comunícate a lionseasthartford@gmail.com o llama al 860-515-1551.

Escenas de Romeo y Julieta en Ingles y español. Este evento va a ser el 28 de abril. Puertas abren a las 6:00pm y comienza a las 7:00pm. Este evento es gratuito y serán solo las escenas más icónicas actuadas por estudiantes y recién graduados en español e inglés. Así que no te lo pierdas.

Conecta Conmigo:

cmaldonado8816@gmail.com

## Donate your cans

The East Hartford Lions Club will hold a townwide can and Bottle Drive Saturday, April 26 from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. at D'addarios Auto Service, 117 Burnside Avenue. Only plastic bottles and aluminum cans redeemable in Connecticut will be collected. No glass bottles, please. This collection supports East Hartford Lions projects providing scholarships, eye screenings for children, food baskets delivered to families in need, the Lions QUEST drug prevention program and many other civic programs.

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P.O. Box 380765

East Hartford, CT 06138-0765



Questions? contact Lion David at 860-944-5498 or Lion Roberta - 860-212-3229

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## SPEAKING OUT!, LETTERS

### Blumenthal, colleagues, chide VA for ending foreclosure avoidance program

Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Ranking Member Richard Blumenthal, Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Development Committee Ranking Member Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), and House Veterans' Affairs Committee Ranking Member Mark Takano (D-CA) today pressed Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Secretary Doug Collins to immediately reverse his decision to abruptly end the Veterans Affairs Servicing Purchase Program (VASP)—a VA program that helped veterans experiencing severe financial hardship avoid foreclosure and stay in their homes.

"On April 3, 2025, you abruptly announced the closure of the Veterans Affairs Servicing Purchase Program (VASP), leaving tens of thousands of veterans at risk for foreclosure... We write today to urge you to immediately reverse this decision, and avoid foreclosing on veterans who simply wish to keep paying their mortgage and keep their home," wrote the lawmakers in a letter to VA Secretary Collins.

"...VA is taking a misstep that will push thousands of veterans into foreclosure. This is cruel, wrong, and runs counter to the benefits earned by veterans as led by the VA Loan Guaranty office - which always seeks to use foreclosure as an absolute last resort."

The VASP program was created as a "last-resort" option for VA to use for eligible veterans, family members following the expiration of pandemic programs coupled with rising interest rates, which increased the risk of foreclosure for thousands of veterans.

Currently, VASP is the only program of last-resort that exists for veterans facing immediate foreclosure, which has helped over 17,000 veterans

since the program launched in 2024. By not accepting any new veterans into the program after May 1, 2025, VA risks putting 80,000 veterans onto the streets and out of their homes.

The text of the lawmakers letter continued, "Furthermore, with the rising costs of housing and overall inflation, VA must ask itself: Is it more cost effective to allow veterans to lose their homes or help them? VA leaders, veterans service organizations, and housing organizations have all recently shared with Congress their concerns about ending VASP too soon... While past policies have assumed that veterans have been financially irresponsible for assuming mortgages they can't afford, today's financial and housing market puts veterans at risk of losing their homes in a much more vulnerable situation."

The lawmakers concluded: "Until better policy solutions are in place that provide for stronger underwriting, ending the VASP program abruptly will only harm veterans and their families. Congress, VA, and other stakeholders must work together and offer practical, cost-effective solutions that better serve veterans. Our veterans earned their home loan guarantee benefit, and they deserve a viable option to get back on track with payments and keep their homes."

The letter continued, "Since the inception of the VASP Program in May 2024, more than 17,000 veterans have been able to avoid foreclosure and remain in their homes. VASP was established as a last-resort option within VA's "Home Retention Waterfall" to help veterans impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. During this emergency, Congress and VA rightfully allowed borrowers to request for

bearance and allowed missed payments to be added to the end of the loan term. Upon expiration of this pandemic program, VA used its authority to end borrowers' ability to push missed payments to the end of the loan term and created VASP to help up to 80,000 veterans at-risk of foreclosure. Now VA is taking a misstep that will push thousands of veterans into foreclosure. This is cruel, wrong, and runs counter to the benefits earned by veterans as led by the VA Loan Guaranty office - which always seeks to use foreclosure as an absolute last resort.

"Furthermore, with the rising costs of housing and overall inflation, VA must ask itself: Is it more cost effective to allow veterans to lose their homes or help them? VA leaders, Veterans Service Organizations, and housing organizations have all recently shared with Congress their concerns about ending VASP too soon. All have testified that VASP is the only program of its kind that currently exists as the "last-resort" for veterans facing foreclosure.

"Critics of VASP who believe the program will incentivize veterans to purposely default on their loans to get a lower mortgage rate, grossly misunderstand and mischaracterize the sacrifices veterans and their loved ones have made in service to our nation. VA should learn from its past, when in the 1990s the Government Accountability Office found that VA-insured homes foreclosed upon was the most expensive option, costing VA an average of \$25,387, which is the equivalent of \$65,038 today. While past policies have assumed that veterans have been financially irresponsible for assuming mortgages they can't afford, today's financial and housing market puts veter-

ans at risk of losing their homes in a much more vulnerable situation.

"Even a straightforward solution, such as forcing veterans to sell their homes to cover their arrears, would not leave the veteran better off precisely because the cost of housing has increased dramatically in the past five years. Until better policy solutions are in place that provide for stronger underwriting, ending the VASP program abruptly will only harm veterans and their families.

"Congress, VA, and other stakeholders must work together and offer practical, cost-effective solutions that better serve veterans. Our veterans earned their home loan guaran-

tee benefit, and they deserve a viable option to get back on track with payments and keep their homes. Secretary Collins, you have repeatedly stated that the mission of VA is to serve veterans and that no benefits would be cut. We call on you now to follow your words."

No Republicans signed onto the letter criticizing Collins' decision to end the program.

*The above letter was signed by 22 Congressional Democrats and Independents, including U.S. Senators Blumenthal, Warren, Ruben Gallego (D-AZ), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Angus King (I-ME), Jack Reed (D-RI), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Andy Kim (D-NJ), and Lisa Blunt Rochester (D-DE).*

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# Everyone came to watch on the day the Hartford Bridge burned down

Did you know that the old wooden bridge burned to the waterline?

The fire, witnessed by over 20,000, was one of the largest in the river valley, ending the 76-year career of the wood-covered East Hartford to Hartford bridge.

But not everyone was sad to see the structure disappear. Constructed in 1819, the covered bridge replaced a lower structure which had been damaged by ice. Almost immediately it was the center of controversy over fares and competition from the state and town run ferries.

As the structure grew older, maintenance was not per-

formed, and its safety was questioned. This tongue-and-cheek 1888 Gazette editorial questioned the efforts of the Bridge Directors:

"The Editor would be greatly pleased to know if there are any directors of the Hartford Bridge Co., and if they have taken the slightest pleasure in riding over the so called Bridge Road within the last two or three months? The road had been in a horrible condition since the recent rains and we would suggest that the Company take the stone they have so carefully piled, at the head of the street, and sprinkle them on the rough surface of the road. We see no

## DID YOU KNOW?

*Looking back  
at East Hartford  
by Rob Kanehl*

need of their keeping these stones in the pile, for they will go into other hands before long and it might be well for the directors to retire with the good will of the community."

George Wright thought the structure worthy of poetry.

His lament was printed for

the 1908 Hartford Bridge dedication.

(The magnificent pink granite arched bridge we travel over today was not called Bulkeley Bridge until 1922 to pay tribute to the late Morgan G. Bulkeley, former mayor, senator, governor, business magnate and first president of the National Baseball League. - editor.)

*Farewell, old bridge! Thou  
monarch of the past.*

*Thy sheltering arms are  
laid to rest at last.*

*No more will travelers thy  
ancient roadway tread,*

*For thou art numberer  
now among the honored*

*dead.*

*Our fathers braved the  
winter's snow and summer's  
sun*

*To hew from the forest  
primeval, one by one,*

*The grand old sentinels  
that Time had long preserved*

*For the great purpose thou  
so well hast served.*

*They reared thee, with a  
just and honest pride,*

*To bear them o'er the  
swiftly running tide*

*That holds the Indian title,  
"River, Great."*

*And gave the name to our  
historic State.*

## Congressman Larson sings praises of Coach Auriemma

"Mr. Speaker, I rise today first and foremost to talk about the incredible achievement of Geno Auriemma and the University of Connecticut's Women's Basketball Team, the winningest program in the nation's history," said Larson. "They performed remarkably well throughout the tournament, and it is just a great honor and a tribute for the entire Connecticut delegation to recognize this outstanding achievement. Watching both men's and women's collegiate athletes compete, it reminds you of just how great of a nation we live in. And in this great nation it is equally proud to recognize the number one program of all time, that of the University of Connecticut, led by Coach Geno Auriemma."

UConn won a record-setting twelfth national title when they defeated South Carolina on Sunday, April 6, 2025.

With this win, UConn has set the record for the most national championship wins of any women's basketball team. After this season, Geno Auriemma became the winningest college basketball coach of all time, across both men's and women's programs.

"Mr. Speaker, I rise today first and foremost to talk about the incredible achievement of Geno Auriemma and the University of Connecticut's Women's Basketball Team, the winningest program in the nation's history.

"They performed remarkably well throughout the tournament, and it is just a great honor and a tribute for the entire Connecticut delegation to recognize this outstanding achievement. But, typical of Geno Auriemma: what he did before he accepted the award or said anything is he congratulated South Carolina and their coach on their achievements and the incredible season that they had as well.

"It is nice in athletics and sports to still see that class reigns in the recognition of contributions of student athletes. Watching the NCAA tournament, and watching both men's and women's collegiate athletes compete, it reminds you of just how great of a nation we live in. And in this great nation it is equally proud to recognize the number one program of all time is that of the University of Connecticut, led by Coach Geno Auriemma."

### Have something to get off your chest?

*The Gazette* welcomes signed letters on subjects of interest. Include your phone number, and e-mail to: [editor@ehgazette.com](mailto:editor@ehgazette.com)



Every Child Every Day

E  
H  
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S

## KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

### OPEN NOW!

Your child must turn 5 on or before September 1, 2025 to start kindergarten.

Children who turn 5 between September 2 and September 30, 2025 must apply for a waiver by March 30, 2025.

Children will be given an assessment to determine kindergarten readiness.

### ¡ABIERTA AHORA!

Su hijo(a) debe cumplir 5 años el 1 de septiembre de 2025 o antes para comenzar el Kindergarten.

Los niños que cumplan 5 años entre el 2 y el 30 de septiembre de 2025, deben solicitar una exoneración antes del 30 de marzo de 2025. Los niños recibirán una evaluación para determinar si están preparados para el Kindergarten.



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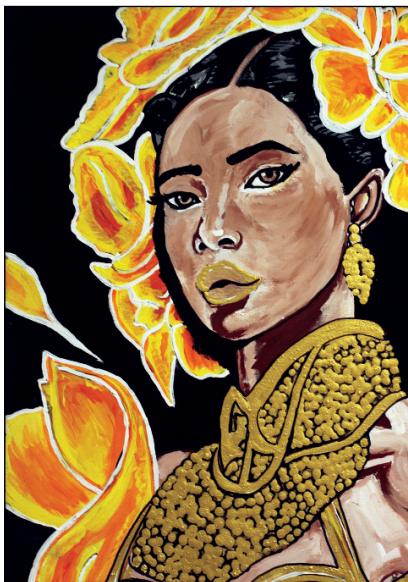
# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## Largest art show yet staged at InterCommunity Health Center

Friends, artists and art lovers packed The Gallery located in the halls of InterCommunity Health Care on Main Street to view the latest exhibit Thursday evening. The show entitles "ECHOES" is also the largest show The Gallery has ever staged, according to Tyler Booth, Executive Vice President and COO of InterCommunity Health Care.

Featuring work from 25 artists, it represents local talent as well as talent from New York and Massachusetts.

The theme of the show is representations of echoes. According to The Gallery, "an echo is a curious thing. As sound waves bounce off a surface, they come back to us, a repetition and yet - something



ings to mix media pieces, was selected by jury, for its ability to show this theme.

It is The Gallery's goal to provide the general public as well as clients an opportunity enjoy museum quality art. InterCommunity Health Care supports the use art as part of the healing process.

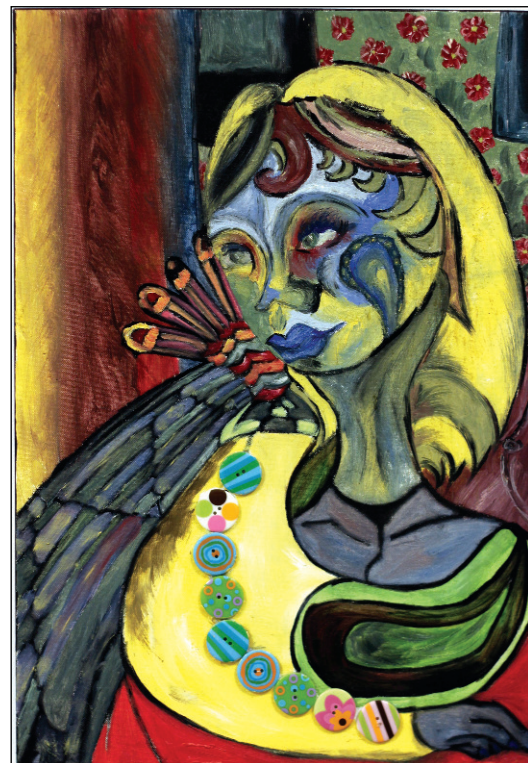
Open free of charge to visitors Monday through Thursday 8AM-6PM and Friday 8AM-5PM at 287 Main Street East Hartford, The Gallery show will run through June 30.

For more information about the Gallery, please contact [TheGallery@intercommunityct.org](mailto:TheGallery@intercommunityct.org) and visit [intercommunityct.org/the-gallery](http://intercommunityct.org/the-gallery).



new. But ECHOES are in the eye of the beholder as well; they can be reflection of 'the self,' a haunting presence of the past, or an interpretive illusion of our agency. In times of reflection, ECHOES can be reverberations of past events, or a reminder of the interconnectedness of existence highlight the woven complex nature of all things in the world around us. This exhibit uniquely points to the concept of an echo in both art medium and wellness."

The art, ranging from paint-



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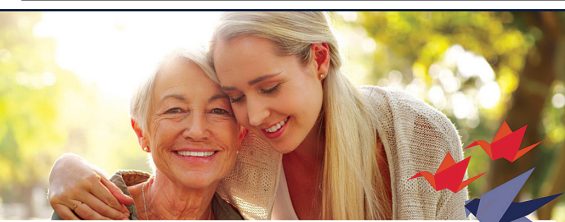
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# Society

## Kissi spent semester in Italy

East Hartford's Ama Kissi, a graduating senior at the University of Connecticut, was chosen to study for a semester in Italy as one of 8 UConn Gilman scholars. The prestigious, competitive Gilman Scholarship is congressionally-funded through the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs at the state department. It encourages global travel, intensive language study,

and an internship. Kissi who is an allied health sciences major, traveled to Italy to study Mediterranean diet and Tuscan cuisine in Florence. Upon her return each Gilman Scholar also was required to complete a service project with the goal of sharing the value of participation in study abroad and promoting the scholarship to prospective students.

## Euclid String Quartet in SW



The Euclid String Quartet will perform May 4 at 2 p.m. in the Evergreen Crossings Retirement Community, 900 Hemlock Avenue, South Windsor.

This free performance is sponsored by the South Windor Cultural Arts group.

The Euclid Quartet is a highly regarded chamber ensemble with an international flavor. Violinist Jameson Cooper hails from Great Britain, violinist Aviva Hakanoglu the United States, violist Luis Enrique Vargas is from Venezuela while cellist

Justin Goldsmith is also American. The quartet has performed from Carnegie Hall to school classrooms and over radio and television and was the first American string quartet to be awarded a top prize at the Osaka International Chamber Music Competition.

They will perform Mendelssohn's "Four Pieces for String Quartet, Op. 81"; Robert Paterson's "String Quartet No. 2"; and Beethoven's "String Quartet No. 8 in e minor, Op. 59, #2.

A reception follows.

## STILL FRIENDLY

**East Hartford High School Class of 2015** will be celebrating our 10-Year High School Reunion on Friday, November 28, 2025, at Elicit Brewery in Manchester.

We are also looking for sponsors to enhance the reunion experience while also providing valuable exposure for local businesses and organizations. We would love to partner with members of the community who have supported us throughout the years. We can provide a sponsorship packet with more details on how you or local businesses can contribute.

If questions or to help promote this event, e-mail [ehhs2015alumni@gmail.com](mailto:ehhs2015alumni@gmail.com).

## PACKING SOME HISTORY



**PACKING ITEMS AT THE BREWER HOUSE** are members of the Historical Society of East Hartford. Rooms are being temporarily emptied in advance of reconstruction of crumbling chimneys and window repairs. Pictured is Judy Hillmann at right, Ruth Shapleigh Brown at left with a chair, John Presutti at front, Alan Brewer in the hat, and Craig Johnson.

## FREE SEMINAR: Women and Money

**Tuesday, April 29, 2025  
6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.**

In-Person or Virtual

333 East River Drive, East Hartford

Light refreshments will be served.



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# EAST HARTFORD SPORTS

## Be a champion in your own life

We've crowned a women's basketball national champion, celebrated them with a rally at Gampel Pavilion and paraded them around downtown Hartford. Now I can take a breath and revisit a teaser I tossed out a couple of months ago about Gordie Howe and I dating the same girl and she married me. Sounds like a riddle, doesn't it?

It was really quite simple. When Gordie played for the Whalers we became good friends. When he retired as a player to represent the Whalers as a community liaison he requested that his seat in the press box be next to mine. For the remainder of his tenure with

### SCOTT GRAY on SPORTS

by Scott Gray



the Whalers my seat in the press box was #10 because, of course, you could only give Gordie #9. He and I frequently attended practices together and sat alone in the stands evaluating talent while he regaled me with many stories from his career. Sometimes, when I was hosting the evening talk show on WTIC and his family was out of town, Gordie would call. When I got off the air and we'd go to dinner.

In February of 1984 Gordie appeared on WTIC's Jimmy Fund Radiothon. When he was ready to leave the station he asked if I was going to that night's game at the Civic Center, Whalers and Bruins. I explained I couldn't, that I had some wrap-up work at the station before I drove my fiancé home to Lebanon. I didn't have a ticket for her and the game was sold out.

"Where's your fiancé?" Gordie asked and I explained she was working the phone bank in the conference room. "Nobody's going to stop me from bringing a guest to the game", Gordie said, proposing that he take her and I could meet them there later.

All eyes turned in Gordie's direction when he entered the conference room and I said to Laurel, "If you want, my friend Gordie can take you to the hockey game and I can meet you there later."

Gordie seemed like a nice enough gentleman and my fiancé agreed. They walked to the Civic Center together. When I caught up with them in the press box the PR director was walking up and down the rows explaining to the media, "She's Scott Gray's fiancé."

Gordie's son Marty was working the radio broadcast with Chuck Kaiton across the ice. As soon as the first period ended he hustled around the arena and approached his father who looked up and said, "She's Scott Gray's fiancé."

Marty looked at me. I shrugged and smiled and he returned to the broadcast location.

"You're friend Gordie's a really nice guy". Laurel said to me on the way home. And everyone treated him like he was really special."

Never a hockey fan, until our grandson became a fan of the Wolf Pack and Rangers, she really didn't know who he was. He was just my friend Gordie, a really nice guy.

That was the night Gordie Howe dated Laurel Palmer, a first grade teacher from Lebanon, Connecticut.

I got the girl.

## Little League celebrates 75<sup>th</sup> season April 26 at Gorman

by Jenilee Tedesco

As they kick off the Spring 2025 season, East Hartford Little League is stepping into its 75th year of offering programs in our town.

Little League programs started across the nation in 1939, and EH jumped on the bandwagon in 1950. It all got started with volunteers from town giving their time, knowledge, and supplies to helping create a baseball field at McAuliffe Park. As the program grew over the years, you could find kids playing baseball and softball all over town, in some parks who have since changed their purposes, or don't exist at all anymore.

Gorman Park, Labor Field, McAuliffe Park, Woodland School, Willowbrook School, and Dwyer Park, to name a few. Players, volunteers, and families gathered to watch games, while passing the hat to collect donations for the program.

The town has changed quite a bit in the past 75 years and now the great-grandchildren of those original volunteers are hitting the fields. Thanks to countless hours of fundraising and securing grants, EHLL has



been able to make capital improvements (with more to come) at Gorman Park and keep registration fees at some of the lowest in the state. Affordability for families is important to keep the program's numbers up but, more importantly, to allow as many kids as possible the chance to play. They are extremely grateful to the Gorman Park improvements that the Town of East Hartford has made happen: A pipe dream for the league, new fencing and dugouts helps to provide the children with a safe place they can be proud to play in. There is a dedicated team of Board of Directors who work tirelessly behind the scenes, to keep the program running. The

entire program is volunteer run and its success for the past 75 years is absolutely thanks to those who have stepped up to the plate, to give back to the community.

It would be impossible to thank everyone who has dedicated their time to the program over the years. At our Opening Day Ceremony, they will be honoring a few of those countless individuals. There will also be a short ceremony, dedicating a new tree at the stadium, in honor of EHLL Alumni Samuel Alejandro who passed away in October 2024.

**Please consider this your formal invitation to attend our Opening Day Ceremony on Saturday, April 26th, 10 a.m.**

The Opening Day ceremony will be held at Gorman Park which is located on May Road. They encourage past and present EHLL families, players, volunteers, umpires and Board Members to attend. The morning will be filled with memories of EHLL past as the future of our program, the children, take the field for their first official games of the season!

*If questions, please reach out to President Jenilee Tedesco, at [President@ehll.org](mailto:President@ehll.org)*



**LOOKING BACK ON EAST HARTFORD LITTLE LEAGUE** - Above, Peter Bonzani - EHLL Softball President in the 1990s and in the front row, 3rd from right: Jenilee Tedesco - Peter's daughter and current EHLL President.

## OBITUARIES

## Beverly (Spurio) Bezzini, 94

Beverly Jean (Spurio) Bezzini, 94, of East Hartford, beloved wife of the late Joseph Bezzini, passed away peacefully at her home on April 13, 2025. Beverly and Joe shared 64 years of marriage, building a life full of love and devotion to family.

Born in Hartford on August 4, 1930, Beverly was the only child of Italian immigrants Francis

Spurio and Marion (Gullotta) Spurio Paul. She attended East Hartford Public Schools and graduated from Mount St. Joseph Academy in West Hartford, class of 1948, marrying Joe shortly after graduating. Together they built their forever home in East Hartford, where they raised their family.

Beverly was a lifelong communicant of St. Christopher Church. She enjoyed her career with Connecticut Bank and Trust Company, retiring to care for her grandchildren. She was the person everyone could count on - dependable, loyal and always ready to lend a hand or take charge. She was a steadfast presence in the lives of her children and grandchildren - never missing a game, recital, or school event. She was selfless, and a model for others to strive to become.

Beverly's love for travel brought her to destinations such as Italy, Florida, cruises and the family's treasured annual trips to Misquamicut, Rhode Island. She had a passion for gathering family near, especially embracing the Christmas season. Bev was a New York Yankees and UConn Women's Basketball fan. She was a member of the Red Hat Society, the CBT Alumni Club, and the East Hartford South End Senior Center, where she enjoyed friendship, laughter, and a vibrant community.

In recent years, Beverly was blessed with the devoted care and companionship of Eseta and Michelle, whose compas-



Beverly Bezzini

sion, warmth, and love brought her immeasurable comfort and peace. The family extends their heartfelt gratitude to them for lifting Beverly up with dignity and grace each day.

Beverly is survived by her grateful and loving children, Michael Bezzini and his wife Denise, Joyce Mazzadra and her husband Aldo, and Nancy Guzy and her

husband Skip; her grandchildren, Scott Bezzini, Jason Bezzini and his wife Crystal, Kristin Bezzini, Matthew Mazzadra and his wife Gina, Tyler Mazzadra, Alexandra Guzy, Kyle Guzy; and great-grandsons, Leo and Dante Mazzadra.

Bev will be remembered for her boundless heart, her enduring faith, playful sense of humor and her unwavering commitment to family. Beverly's legacy lives on in the values she taught and the beautiful memories she created.

Funeral service will be Monday, April 21 at 11 a.m. from the D'Esopo East Hartford Memorial Chapel, 30 Carter Street, East Hartford with a Mass of Christian Burial celebrated at 11:30 am at St. Christopher Church of North American Martyrs Parish, 538 Brewer St. Burial will follow at Silver Lane Cemetery, (Section C).

Beverly's family will receive relatives and friends on Monday morning from 9:30 - 11 am at the funeral home chapel.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in Beverly's name may be made to Connecticut Children's Medical Center Foundation, 282 Washington Street, Hartford, CT 06106 or East Catholic High School Development Fund, 115 New State Road, Manchester, CT 06042.

For on-line expressions of sympathy to the family, please visit [www.desopoeh.com](http://www.desopoeh.com)

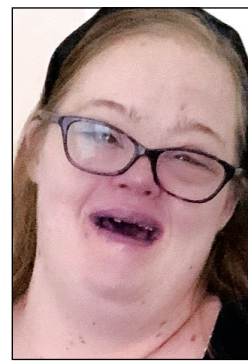
## Laura McCaffery-Meyer, 37

Laura McCaffery-Meyer, 37, of East Hartford, beloved daughter of William Meyer and Elizabeth McCaffery-Meyer passed away on April 9, 2025.

Laura spread joy, love, laughter and happiness to all the people in her life lucky enough to have known her. She had a great love and passion for music, art, dancing, movies, fishing and anything Disney.

She was a proud member of the MARC, INC. family for 17+ years. She especially loved spending time with her family and coaches Mary Jean and Brittany Martins.

Laura was a graduate of the Class of 2009 at East Hartford High School. Laura had many milestones and accomplishments over the years. One notable one was her winning the Very Special Artist award for the state of Ct for her artwork "Laura Doodles with Poodles" in 2005. Her work was displayed across the nation on a tour of all the winners of



Laura McCaffery-Meyer

the award as well as its feature in the Bank of America calendar and a chapter opener in a special education college textbook.

Her win also led her to throw out the first pitch at a Rockcats opening day as their Hometown Hero.

Laura leaves scores of people to mourn her passing. Her adoring sister Sarah Bryan, her "bro in law" Dennis, her devoted nieces Emily and Abigail Bryan. Her sister-in-law Kelly Ta(Hieu), favorite aunts and uncles, Kathy Caruso (Michael), Donna Topham (Roger), Robert McCaffery, Mark Meyer (Lynda), Michael Meyer (Alan) and many loving cousins and special friends.

Laura was predeceased by

grandparents, Alexander and Alyce McCaffery and Samuel and Margaret Meyer as well as her Aunt Maggie Meyer and many other aunts, uncles and cousins.

Laura's family would like to thank all of the teachers, para-professionals and care givers who helped shape Laura and take care of her over the years. Laura's special light will be remembered and cherished by all who knew her.

A celebration of her life will be held at the family's discretion. D'Esopo East Hartford Memorial Chapel has been entrusted with the care of the arrangements. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in Laura's name can be sent to MARC Inc, Manchester, CT <https://marcct.org/ways-to-support/donate.html>

For on-line expressions of sympathy to the family, please visit [www.desopoeh.com](http://www.desopoeh.com).

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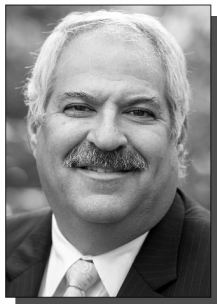
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# WHERE THE ACTION IS!

BY CORINNE HORAN

**GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 18,** 2 - 4 a.m. at South Congregational Church, 1301 Forbes St. Open to all. Visit the sanctuary for quiet prayer and meditation. Pastor Kevin will be available for individual prayer near the stained glass window in the front from 2 to 2:30 p.m. and from 3 to 3:30. Jeff Cregeur offers meditative piano from 2:30 - 3 and 3:30 - 4.

**SUNRISE SERVICE - SUNDAY,** April 20, 5:45 a.m. Gather at the cross in front of South Church to welcome the dawn of Easter.

**SUNDAY, APRIL 20, 10 A.M. EASTER WORSHIP.** Celebrate the resurrection with uplifting music, joy, and the good news that Christ is Risen! Handicapped accessible. FMI 860-568-5150.

\*\*\*

**APRIL 24: EAST HARTFORD SCHOOLS ALL-TOWN STRINGS CONCERT,** 7 p.m., auditorium of EHHS.

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**APRIL 26: CAN AND BOTTLE DRIVE** Saturday, 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. by the EH Lions Club at D'adarios Auto Service, 117 Burnside Avenue. Plastic bottles and aluminum cans only - no glass. Supports the many East Hartford Lions civic projects. FMI e-mail lionseasthartford@gmail.com, or call 860-515-1551.

\*\*\*

**APRIL 27: IWO JIMA SURVIVOR** SSgt Joseph Caminiti and Neal Supranovich recently returned from a trip back to the island of Iwo Jima as part of the Reunion of Honor. Mr. Caminiti is a 100-year-old WWII Marine who served in this iconic battle while part of the 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion during 1945. During the trip, they took part in the joint American and Japanese annual ceremony commemorating the battle and remembering those nearly 28,000 men from both sides who lost their lives on that tiny island. Caminiti also walked the beaches where he operated an AMTRAK. They will show photos and discuss their trip of a lifetime. The presentation takes place in the newly opened Connecticut World War II Museum, Research & Education Center located at 102 Pitkin St. This new museum is the only World War II museum in Connecticut. Join us on Sunday, April 27 from 1 until 3 pm. as we welcome Caminiti and Supranovich back from Iwo Jima. Presented by the World War II Legacy Foundation, Inc., a nonprofit, all volunteer organization. Please email sosiwo-jima@yahoo.com or call Gary Roy at 860-810-8736 to reserve your spot. Refreshments. Donations gratefully accepted to support the mission of the museum. See us on Facebook or go to WW2LegacyFoundation.org.

\*\*\*

**MAY 3: PANCAKES!** Surprise mom with an early Mother's Day breakfast at Hillstown Grange Saturday, 8:30 to 11 a.m., at 617 Hills St. Special pancake of the month: Lemon with blueberry topping. Chocolate chip 'kid-cakes'. Pancakes, sausage, bottomless cups of coffee, tea and juice just \$6, children under 14, \$3. Visit the Grange hall library and gaming area. Books available for a donation to the historic Grange Hall building fund. FMI call Frank at 860-690-2845 or e-mail hillstowngrange@aol.com.

\*\*\*

**MAY 14: WICKHAM DAY QUILTERS OF EAST HARTFORD** from 1:30-3:30 pm at the Wickham Library meeting room at 656 Burnside Avenue in East Hartford. Like to sew? Interested in quilting? Not a fan of driving at night? Attend a meeting to see if you would like to join us. Any skill level welcome. We meet the second Wednesday of the month. Wickham Day Quilters is a chapter of the Greater Hartford Quilt Guild. The May program is instruction in making your own portable design board. Any questions? Email us at Wickhamdayquilters@gmail.com

\*\*\*

**MAY 15: FARMER'S MARKET POP UP** at Hillstown Grange #87, 617 Hills St., Thursday from 4-7 pm. Local gardeners, artisans and vendors will offer their garden plants, local honey, soap and crafts for sale. Free seed packages while they last and bring

they can be recognized for their service on the 80th anniversary of the end of the war. Complete the form online. Lt. Gov. Susan Bysiewicz will host a ceremony to recognize all living World War II veterans who served from December 7, 1941 to December 31, 1946. Ceremony takes place May 19 at 11 a.m. at the State Armory, 360 Broad St., Hartford.

\*\*\*

**JUNE 7: AN EVENING OF WORSHIP, STORIES & SONGS WITH DAVE PETTIGREW** at Burnside United Methodist Church, 16 Church St., 7 p.m. Free. An offering will be taken. A graduate of Berklee College of Music in Boston, with majors in music business and arranging, Dave uses music as a vehicle to speak on behalf of the poorest of the poor, each of his shows gives his audience the ability to sponsor a child and save a life. Join the "There Is Hope" movement. FMI go to dave@davepettigrew.net

\*\*\*

**JUNE 14: THROUGH THE GARDEN GATE TOUR**

- Grab your hat and join Perennial Planters Garden Club of Manchester for their biennial garden tour. See six diverse, beautifully designed and landscaped private sanctuaries, pocket-sized gems to large, manicured plantings. Visit an inspiring vegetable garden and pass through a moon gate to a meditation garden, see a fairy garden and beach glass stream as well as perennials and shrubs. Tickets are \$25 in advance and \$30 the day of, Saturday June 14, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. rain or shine. [https://www.manchestergardenclubs.org/perennial\\_planters.htm](https://www.manchestergardenclubs.org/perennial_planters.htm)

\*\*\*

**CENTRAL CONNECTICUT HORSESHOE CLUB** has moved to 50 Oakland St. (off Park Avenue). Interested in playing horseshoes indoors? E-mail debbiescully@comcast.net; or call 860-778-1057.

\*\*\*

**VETERANS COFFEE HOUR** at the Senior Center, 15 Milbrook Dr., 10 a.m. third Tuesday of the month. For East Hartford residents only.

\*\*\*

**MY SISTERS' PLACE:** Help My Sisters' Place provide affordable housing and services for families by sending a donation to: Community Housing Advocates, 221 Main St., 4th Floor, Hartford, CT 06106. FMI call 860-808-2048.

\*\*\*

**FOSTER FAMILIES** needed for children in DCF care in every town in CT. FMI or to register for a meeting, contact Annie C Courtney Foundation at 475-235-2184. Annie C works with the Dept. of Children and Families to find foster parents for over 3,000 children. FMI see [www.anniec.org](http://www.anniec.org)

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**INTERVAL HOUSE** helps victims of domestic violence, advocacy, legal rights. 860-527-0550.

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**SOCIAL DANCE TUESDAYS AT FIRST CHURCH:** Gentlemen, It's Time to Become James Bond! Imagine walking into a room with confidence, charm and style - just like James Bond. What's his secret? Presence. Poise. And the ability to sweep a lady off her feet. Tuesday Nights, First Congregational Church, 837 Main, Lessons 7 and 8, dance 9 p.m.

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**MAY 22: CONNECTIKIDS "BOTANICAL BALL"** Thursday, May 22 at 6:30 p.m. at the Pond House in Elizabeth Park, West Hartford. Dinner, dancing and fun. Tickets \$100 at [givebutter.com/CTKBall](http://givebutter.com/CTKBall) or contact Kaleitha Brown at 860-522-8710 x12. FMI visit [www.ct-kids.org](http://www.ct-kids.org)

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**KNOW A WORLD WAR II VETERAN?** State officials are seeking help from residents throughout the state in finding living World War II veterans, so that