Former CCW Property Update

It is with great disappointment that I write this month’s column to update residents on the former Country Club of Woodbridge (CCW) property.

I have consistently expressed my opinion that the Insite/Wernert proposal should go to referendum to allow the voters to decide whether approximately 60 acres of the former CCW site be sold for over 55 housing. I also committed to have a negotiated sales agreement available for voters to review prior to the referendum. An attorney with previous experience in this type of transaction was hired by the Town to negotiate the contract with the purchasers’ attorneys.

The contract negotiations were very complex, took many months, and focused on many issues the Board of Selectmen considered to be very important to Woodbridge.

Although I continue to believe over 55 housing on a portion of the CCW site is beneficial to taxpayers, I will never sacrifice the best interest of the Town to have an unfavorable transaction proceed. At our February 25 Special Meeting, the Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to cease any further discussions with the Insite/Wernert Group. While many of the contract terms were agreed to during negotiations, we were unable to resolve several issues. The most important area of concern was the purchasers’ request to have the ability to assign their ownership interest in the project to outside investors. This was unacceptable to all Board of Selectmen members, and in my opinion, contrary to the best interest of the Town.

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Going forward the Town will retain a land use analyst to help decide how to best use the approximately 155 acres of land. We are also exploring a solar land lease for a portion of the property, which would bring in much-needed revenue.

I plan on focusing my efforts on economic and community development. It is important that Woodbridge is fiscally, physically and civically attractive to residents, newcomers and new businesses, and we must continue to explore opportunities to save taxpayer dollars through greater efficiencies to reduce pressure on our mill rate. We will always continue to provide resources to maintain top quality schools, which is what attracts so many residents to our town.

In order to lower our mill rate and lower taxes for residents, we need to attract more development and retain and support our local businesses. I also believe we need to create more diverse housing options to attract new residents and retain current residents as they downsize.

Equally as important to increasing and diversifying revenue is our continuous effort to reduce expenses while delivering the same level of consistent, high-quality services to residents.

I am optimistic about our town and committed to listening to each of you as we move forward. As always, my door is open to you. If you have questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at bheller@woodbridgect.org.

— First Selectman Beth Heller

Mark Your Calendars

• Daylight Savings begins March 8 — remember to set your clocks as well as change batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

Visit the Town website for all upcoming community events: WoodbridgeCT.org

This is Only a Test!

All Woodbridge residents should receive a phone call this month through the Town’s reverse 9-1-1 system. The call (or text, TTY, and/or email) will be the first of two that residents will receive over the course of the year. The Police Department tests the system at the beginning and end of daylight savings time.

“It is important that we warn our residents of weather emergencies and other situations,” said First Selectman Beth Heller. “I would like to thank our Police Department for continuing to be proactive and testing this important communication tool.”

“In an emergency we want to reach residents and be confident and comfortable using the technology we have,” said Police Chief Frank Cappiello.

The message will be clearly labeled a test and it will encourage residents to use CTAlert.gov to update their contact preferences. Residents without a landline may not receive a message unless they have used CTAlert.gov to include their cell phone number. Residents may also include an email address and TTY information.

For non emergencies, please call 203-387-2511.

Upcoming Events

Save the date for Sustainable Woodbridge Day on May 2 at Town Center, 10 am to 1 pm. The event will feature ways to reduce, reuse and recycle.

On June 6 the Town is hosting Woodbridge Community Day, 10 am to 1 pm. This event will celebrate the many organizations, programs and businesses that make Woodbridge unique. Woodbridge-based community organizations and businesses are invited to participate! To participate, please contact Betsy Yagla at byagla@woodbridgect.org or call 203-389-3403.
Woodbridge Police warn of a new twist to elderly fraud scam. For years, numerous law enforcement agencies in our area and in neighboring states have reported a fraud, commonly called the “Grandparent” scam, which has at times resulted in elderly victims being defrauded out of large sums of money. Scammers usually contact their victim by phone and tell them that a family member needs bail money resulting from a fictitious claim that the family member was arrested, usually out of state. In some instances, the scammers have identified themselves with true names of local police officers to gain credibility.

In the past several weeks, scammers have added a new component to their trickery and deceitfulness, and have sent a courier to pick up the money at the victim’s residence or at a location nearby. Although this new twist to the scam has not occurred in our community, residents are reminded:

• Promptly report any suspicious telephone calls or activity to police, 203-387-2511.
• Call your family directly at trusted phone numbers to verify what you have been told.
• Never wire money, send cash or buy gift cards for someone you have never met.
• Watch out for red flags. If you are being pressured to act immediately, do not!

To better serve the Town’s fire, medical, rescue and emergency needs, the Woodbridge Volunteer Fire Department (WVFD) works to keep the community safe by replacing, updating, and adding needed equipment. Additionally, 50+ members hold professional certifications from the State of Connecticut and various national accreditation organizations. There is also a Junior Corps for ages 15-17.

This past year, the WVFD:
• Responded to 535 incident calls.
• Added two new members and three junior members.
• Continued training to enhance structural firefighting capabilities.
• Continued specialized technical rescue training to accommodate call volume.
• Certified three new EMTs and recertified ten EMTs.

The Woodbridge Volunteer Fire Department serves the Town as first responders to fire suppression, rescue and medical emergency (EMT level), and hazardous materials 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Volunteer firefighters and their families make a tremendous commitment to their community. For more information and to learn about joining the department visit WoodbridgeFire.com and Facebook.com/WoodbridgeFire.
The Library welcomes back The Kerry Boys on Wednesday, March 11 at 7 pm. Get ready for a musical experience full of great Irish music, humor and audience participation! The year 2020 marks The Kerry Boys’ twenty-ninth year as Connecticut’s favorite Irish Balladeers. With their signature vocal harmonies and high energy instrumentation, The Kerry Boys are just plain Celtic fun!

Please register online or at the Library. This event is sponsored by The Friends of the Woodbridge Library.

March Adult Programs

Hummingbirds of the Americas with John Root
Naturalist John Root will present a lecture featuring spectacular images of hummingbirds from North, Central, and South America on Monday, March 16 at 7 pm. Topics discussed include myths and legends about hummingbirds in different cultures, special adaptations for flight, coevolution of hummingbirds and the flowers that they visit, courtship and nesting behavior, and migration. Information about attracting hummingbirds with feeders and hummingbird gardens will also be discussed. Please register online or at the Library.

Author Event: The Gift of Rudy
Sharon Ruchman, an American classical music composer, musician and author, will visit the Library on Monday, March 30 at 7 pm for an exciting presentation and author talk. Her book, The Gift of Rudy, chronicles the life and tragic death of her great uncle, Rudolph “Rudy” Fuchs, a musical prodigy in the early 1930s. A compelling story of two musical careers within the same family — Rudy’s ending at the age of 25 in a plane accident above the 1933 Chicago World’s Fairgrounds and Sharon’s blossoming in the 21st century after Rudy’s sheet music for violin and his prized viola find their way to her. Please register online or at the Library.

March Madness Adult Reading Challenge

How many books can you read in a month? You’ll have from March 2 until March 30 to read as many books as you can! For every five books you read, you get a prize! At the end we will pick a name at random for a big prize that anyone could win! Participating is easy, stop by the Information Desk in March to pick up review cards! Fill one out for each book you read throughout the month and give them back to the Information Desk. Good luck and happy reading!

Thursday Night Films
Join us at 7 pm in the meeting room; no registration required.

March 5: A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood 108 minutes; PG
March 12: Bombshell 118 minutes; R
March 19: Knives Out 130 minutes; PG-13
March 26: Ford v Ferrari 152 minutes; PG-13

Coming in April

The Connecticut Library Association is once again hosting a Library Passport program. Stop by the Library in late March to get your passport—prizes awarded at various levels of participation!

CONCERT: From Ella to Aretha Jazz to Soul Showcase with Rhonda Denet and the Silver Fox Songs Trio. Tuesday, April 7 at 7 pm. Sponsored by the Eckhardt Fund.
Library News

Young Children’s Events

No registration required for any of these events.

Baby Rhyme Time (0-18 months)
Every Wednesday, 10:30-11 am
Songs and rhymes, fun for little ones.

Rhythm and Rhyme (18-36 months)
Every Thursday, 10:30-11 am
Find out how talking, singing and reading build vocabulary and a love of books!

Preschool Storycraft (3-5 years)
Every Saturday, 11-11:30 am
A literature-based program and art project, especially for this age group.

Children’s Programs

Playdoh Palooza
Saturday, March 7 from 1 to 4 pm
Drop in and use your imagination to create a cute critter — the possibilities are limitless. All ages are welcome to enjoy an afternoon of creativity.

littleBits Workshops
Saturday, March 7 and 21 at 3 pm
Drop in to explore the world of circuitry and see what you can build. Create a circuit that buzzes, beeps, and blinks! Workshops are for ages 7 and up.

Nutmeg Book Club
Thursday, March 12 at 5:30 pm
Pick up a copy of Fuzzy by Tom Angleberger and Paul Dellinger and come ready for a discussion! We will have a snack and a craft related to the book, for grades 4 to 7. Please register online or at the Children's Desk.

Nonfiction Club
Thursday, March 19 at 5:30 pm
Check out a nonfiction book about this month’s theme (Ancient Rome) and come ready to discuss what you learned! Enjoy a snack and make a craft too. For grades 3 to 6. Please register online or at the Children's Desk.

Jay Mankita’s Playful Engineers
Friday, March 20 at 1 pm
Spend your day off from school designing, building, and testing your own contraptions. The Playful Engineers is a traveling makerspace for ages 5 and older with parents/caregivers. Register online or at the Children’s Desk.

Save the Date!
Bubblemania
Wednesday, April 15 at 2 pm
Join the fun when Casey Carle brings his amazing bubble show to our Library! Learn about the fascinating science behind the magical world of bubbles. Registration required and will open on March 16.
Spring Cleaning?

If you are looking for a community service opportunity while doing your spring cleaning, consider repurposing clean, new or slightly used items for a tag sale to benefit The Center during the town-wide Sustainable Woodbridge Day. No clothes, shoes, or pocketbooks will be accepted. This sustainability event will be held on May 2, 10 am - 1 pm around the Woodbridge Library grounds.

Items can be donated to The Center to sell or you may purchase a tag sale space for $10 ($15 with a table). RSVP required, please contact The Center at 203-389-3430.

March Lunch Menu

Lunch is served Tue. and Thu. at The Center café at 12:15 pm. Cost is $3 for dine-in meals, $4 for take-out. RSVP required by noon one day prior. Meals include bread, juice, coffee/tea and dessert.

3/3 Mardi Gras! Split pea soup, chicken marsala, rice pilaf, chopped spinach, chocolate brownie
3/5 Butternut squash soup, stuffed cabbage, mashed potato, steamed carrots, pineapple upside down cake
3/10 Ginger carrot soup, cilantro lime salmon, sesame noodles, blueberry cobbler
3/12 Five onion soup, meatloaf with gravy, mashed potato, broccoli, garlic bread, apple pie
3/17 St. Patrick’s Day: Corned beef, cabbage, carrots, potatoes, soda bread, Shamrock cookies & cake, $6
3/19 Italian wedding soup, spaghetti with meatballs, sautéed zucchini, garlic toast, rice pudding
3/24 Escarole and bean soup, oven fried chicken, baked potato with sour cream, broccoli, lemon pound cake
3/26 Vegetable soup, turkey with gravy, baked yam, collard greens, mint brownie
3/31 Five bean soup, baked fish with lemon wine sauce, rice pilaf, steamed carrots, chocolate pudding

If dining-in and taking left overs, please bring a container. Each to-go container is $.50.
**Nosh & Knowledge Lecture Series**

The Woodbridge Center’s monthly lecture series continues with valuable information, 10 am at the Woodbridge Library. RSVP to 203-389-3430.

**Mar. 25: Chronic Disease Management**
with Cary Carpino, R.N., Griffin Hospital Senior Health & Wellness Coordinator. This lecture may be followed by a 6-week class: *Live Well with Chronic Health Conditions*.

**Apr. 29: How To Simplify Your Financial Life For You And Your Heirs**
presented by Stephen Archer, retired Certified Financial Planner.

Woodbridge Town employees wore red to raise awareness to help the American Heart Association support critical research and education for heart disease in women. In addition to wearing red, the Town employees made monetary donations to the American Heart Association.

**New to Medicare?**

If you want to know how Medicare works and learn which options might be best for you, come to an informational presentation at the Agency on Aging of South Central Connecticut (AOASCC). The AOASCC is a non-profit organization with certified CHOICES counselors who are trained to provide accurate, impartial, clear, and free information on Medicare and its options.

Presentations are held on the first Wednesday of every month at 4 pm at the AOASCC, 117 Washington Ave. (Route 5), North Haven. If you’d like to reserve a seat, please call Jon at 203-785-8533 x3282.

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**Ongoing Programming**

Calling all poker, canasta, scrabble and spades players — call The Center and share your interest. The Center will put a group or a game together!

**T’ai Chi** with Bill Banick, Fridays 10-11 am in the Center Building, Rm. 16 (beginner, intermediate levels). Next session begins 3/13. Fee will be prorated for those joining late. This class is designed to increase balance and stability, prevent falls and help manage arthritis. Ten weeks for $50.

**Gin Rummy**: Thursdays, 1-3 pm, in The Center café, no reservation needed.

**Weekly Craft Group**: Thursdays, 10 am - 1 pm, in The Center lounge. Calling all knitters and crocheters to join the group. No RSVP necessary. **Consider donating your unused, clean yarn and circular knitting needles (sizes 6, 7, 8) to The Center.**

**Yoga for Healthy Aging Class** meets Fridays, 11:45 am - 1 pm, in the Center Building, Rm. 16, with instructor Julie Luciani. New session begins 3/6 and runs 12 weeks for $75. Fee will be prorated for those joining late. Class combines seated and standing postures and is safe for all.

**Mahjong**: Mon. & Fri., 10 am, Center Building, Rm. 13 for advanced players; Rm. 11 for beginner and intermediate.

**Exercise with Laurie**: Workout includes a combination of strength training, cardio, flexibility and balance. Bring weights if you have them. Class meets in the Center Building gym on Tue. and Thu., 10-11 am. No need to sign up — just pay a drop in fee of $2.

**Book Club: (Note Change!)** Book club meets the 1st Tuesday of the month, 11 am at the Library. The next meeting is March 4 and the book is *Woman of Troublesome Creek* by Kim Michele Richardson. New members welcome.

**Art Class**: Class meets each Wed., 10 am - 12 pm, in The Center café. The class is taught by local artist Graham Dale. New session begins 3/18. Ten classes for $60; fee will be prorated for those joining late.


**Thursday Movies**: Oldies, musicals, classics following lunch in The Center lounge, 1 pm.

**Ask the Nurse**: 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month, 11 am - 12:30 pm, blood pressure screenings and conversation with a registered VNA Community Healthcare Nurse in The Center lounge. No reservations needed.

**Duplicate Bridge**: Mondays, 9:30 am - 12:30 pm, in The Center café.

**Bridge**: The Center’s Wednesday bridge group invites new members! Join in for a friendly card game, no reservations — just come to The Center café, 1-4 pm.

**Pinochle**: Mon., Wed. or Thu., 1-4 pm, in The Center lounge. Come any day — the group looks for new players and is willing to bring rusty players up to speed!

**Pickleball**: Meets Mon.-Thu. in the Center Building gym for group play, 12:30-2:30 pm and Fri., 12:30-3:30 pm. Paid annual members may arrange playing times with others. Annual membership is $20 for Woodbridge residents and $25 for non-residents and is due in January. Stop by the office to make payment.
Youth Services News

Do You Know an Outstanding Woodbridge Youth?

Consider nominating a Woodbridge youth for the First Selectman’s Youth Award. Any youth, age 18 or under, who has worked to improve the Town of Woodbridge or to assist its residents is eligible. The Nomination Form can be found on the Youth Services page of the Town website or call 203-389-3429 for more information.

Principals, teachers, fellow students, neighbors, group leaders, etc. are encouraged to make nominations. Parents or family members may not nominate a relative. Nominations are due by March 13.

The winner, who will be chosen by the Youth Advisory Board’s selection committee, will receive the honor from First Selectman Beth Heller at the Human Services Volunteer Tea on April 23.

Let’s acknowledge contributions of our younger citizens as they are the future of our Town.

Babysitter Training

Red Cross Babysitter Training is offered Fri., April 17 from 9 am to 4:30 pm for ages 12 to 17. Call for 203-389-3429 to register. See Town website under “Youth Services” for details.

Recruitment News

Call Recreation at 203-389-3446 or email Recreation@WoodbridgeCT.org. Register at WoodbridgeCT.org. Select Recreation Registration at the homepage on the Town website to register and view the lineup of program options.

Fitness Center

The Fitness Center offers a variety of equipment and knowledgeable staff—simply stop by for a tour of the facility. Stair Master, stationary bikes, treadmills, Nautilus equipment and free weights are available to help meet fitness goals.

The new Live Well Senior Program provides access to the Fitness Center and the Town pool. The program offers seniors dedicated pool times with experienced staff. Fitness Room Supervisor Sue Falcone explains that weight-bearing exercise and a cardio regimen can help seniors keep their bodies strong, maintain independence and reduce the risk of certain health conditions. Also, socializing with peers has a positive impact on emotional health. Sue is pictured demonstrating one of the fitness room machines.

The Fitness Center, located at 4 Meetinghouse Lane, is open daily, 9 am to noon including weekends and Monday through Friday evenings, 4-9 pm. Memberships are available, or pay a daily drop in fee. Call the Woodbridge Recreation Dept. at 203-389-3446 for more information.

Spring Program Registration

There is still time to register for spring programs including: swim lessons, bowling, basketball, Clay Date, flag football, gymnastics, Kumon, Kids Dig Farms, Little Scientists, Coding Club, piano lessons, Running Club, Amazing Athletes, Taekwondo, woodworking, Zumba and tennis. Adult programs include badminton, yoga T’ai Chi, and a new Zumba class.

Most programs begin the week of March 30. Call 203-389-3446 or use the registration link on the Town website, WoodbridgeCT.org.

Camp CIT &Volunteers

Summer Camp CIT and Volunteers registration begins Mon., March 30 for those enrolled in summer camp last year. For any remaining spots, open registration begins Mon., April 6. Interested individuals must apply at the Recreation Office.

As Summer Camp runs June 29 - Aug. 7, priority will be given to those able to attend all six weeks. Week one is mandatory. The CIT fee is $550 for Woodbridge residents, and $650 for non-residents. For details, please call 203-389-3446.

8th Graders Meet at Mardi Gras Party

Bethany, Orange and Woodbridge 8th graders received an introduction to Amity High School at the Mardi Gras Party last month. The DJ played pop tunes for dancing, and ran games. Along with a Best Hat Contest, students vied for raffle prizes like a drone and an action camera. The Selfie Station was a big hit as teens took memorable photos with friends.

Special thanks go to the Woodbridge Police Union for sponsoring the drone, and to Dip-Top for the gift card. Thanks also to the volunteers who so generously shared their time and talent to create such an awesome evening for our teens.
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