Updates & the Approaching Budget Process

The Town of Woodbridge has received two proposals from developers interested in purchasing land at the former Country Club of Woodbridge property. One is on hold, per the developer, and the other, from Arbor Haven, was presented to the public at an informational forum in September. The Arbor Haven team is now in the process of presenting their proposal to Town Boards and Commissions for discussion and suggestions.

The Arbor Haven proposal offers a $9 million purchase price for 100 acres of the former Country Club of Woodbridge and leaves the remaining 50 acres in Town ownership. They would build and sell approximately 140 homes with various home styles and sizes, including large single-family homes, moderate sized homes, affordable homes and age-restricted (over 55 senior) homes. They also offer to demolish the deteriorating clubhouse, create a Town pool, a park, walk/bike paths, rehabilitate the tennis and volleyball courts for town use, while saving as many trees as possible as they build.

I think this proposal is an important step toward two housing goals of mine: moving forward to begin to provide state-mandated affordable housing in town, and creating much-desired senior housing. The purchase price would eliminate our remaining debt on the property of around $3.5 million, and also provide funds the town could use for other projects and operating expenses. As the new homes are built, the Town will receive additional income from the property taxes we collect. Our grand list will grow, which will stabilize our mill rate, and potentially lower taxes.

One legitimate concern that has been raised, is what effect this project might have on our schools. Some items in the schools’ budgets are not directly impacted by the number of students, electricity rates and the number of support staff, for example. The number of teaching staff may or may not be increased by new students in the school system. Beecher Road School is not at capacity but is close, while Amity Regional District 5 has more flexibility. This is something that the Board of Selectmen is taking seriously, and we will continue to explore.

The Board of Selectmen also continues to discuss the federal American Rescue Plan Act funding. The Town is scheduled to receive a total of $2.6 million. The funding must respond to a negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. My priority is to install an air conditioning and ventilation (HVAC) system in the Center Building. This building houses our Emergency Shelter, our Senior Center, a daycare center, Town offices, the fitness center, and the Police Department. We are also interested in improving the Grove area (the outdoor space between the Old Firehouse, the Library and the Center Building) with a covered pavilion to provide a sheltered outdoor programming space; improve and update playgrounds and ballfields to encourage continued use of outdoor recreational opportunities; and market our business district and hold events there to bring in more visitors.

We are about to enter our Town’s budget season again. I urge all interested members of the public to attend budget meetings, in addition to individual board and commission meetings, where town department budgets are developed and then submitted to the Boards of Selectmen and Finance.

Our budget reflects our Town’s priorities, which I believe are to provide excellent schools, ensure public safety, and offer essential programs and services to our taxpayers. I am confident that we will make decisions on a budget that achieves a balance between the support of valued services and tax levels that are fair and reasonable.

Residents with questions or comments about any department’s budget should attend any or all board and commission meetings.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with questions or concerns. I can be reached at 203-389-3401 or by email at bheller@woodbridgect.org.

—First Selectman Beth Heller

Important Reminders!

- **Veterans Day (Nov. 11)**: Woodbridge Town Offices, Library & Transfer Station will be closed.
  - As a precaution during the pandemic, the annual indoor Veterans Day ceremony will not take place this year because of the lack of ventilation in the Center Building gym.
- **Thanksgiving Holiday (Nov. 25 & 26)**: Town Offices and the Library will be closed.
  - The Library will be open Sat., Nov. 27.
  - The Transfer Station will be **closed** Nov. 25 and **open** Fri. & Sat., Nov. 26 & 27 as a convenience for residents.
Fall Safety Tips from the Fire Department

Fall brings the start of the heating season and often has families spending more time indoors. Not surprisingly, the potential for structure fires and carbon monoxide incidents increases. It is important to be sure you have working smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors properly installed in the correct places in your home.

Install smoke alarms outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home, including the basement. On levels without bedrooms, install alarms in the living room (or den or family room) or near the stairway to the upper level, or in both locations.

Here are ten smart moves to make now!

1. Check around the furnace before turning on the heat for the first time.
2. Dress kids in light-colored clothing to help drivers see them on their way home from after-school activities.
3. Change batteries when you “fall back.”
4. Practice your family fire escape plan before the weather gets too cold.
5. Use space heaters safely. Remember to keep combustibles “three feet from the heat” or “a meter from the heater.” If you’re using a fuel-powered heater, open a door or window slightly to allow fresh air to circulate. Remember to turn off your heater if you leave the house and before you go to bed.
6. Buy your winter storm supplies now.
7. Add outdoor lighting to dark places.
8. Have your chimney inspected before using your fireplace.
9. Clean leaves out of your gutters every week in the fall.
10. Get your car ready for winter. Stock the trunk with a blanket, hat, gloves, a bag of salt, sand or non-clumping kitty litter for traction, plus extra windshield fluid and an ice scraper and shovel.

Interest-Free Home Repair Loans Available

The Town of Woodbridge Housing Rehabilitation Program provides funds for low and moderate income homeowners to make needed repairs to their homes.

One of the benefits of this program is that the money goes out as 0% interest loans. Loans are not due and payable until the house changes title. For homeowners who cannot obtain funds through bank loans, this program is a wonderful option that requires no out of pocket costs. The program also allows the Town to establish a revolving loan fund in perpetuity to provide assistance to additional residents who need home repairs. Over the years we have replaced failed furnaces, roofs, windows, and septic systems, as well as entrance ramps and bathroom modifications.

Please contact Pat Crisco, Town of Woodbridge Tax Collector, at 203-389-3425 for applications and further information.
Introducing a New Section!
Adult Graphic Novels—not your childhood comic books!

If you’re browsing near Adult Fiction, you might notice that we’ve added a new section: Adult Graphic Novels. No, graphic novels are not just for kids! Everyone can enjoy the artwork and fast-paced plot that graphic novels have to offer.

The Library likes to support different reading styles, plus graphic novels have started becoming increasingly popular among adults over the years. We have a variety of genres and topics, including biographies, nonfiction, fiction, and classic literature. There’s something for everyone!

**Parable of the Sower**
by Octavia E. Butler

An adaptation of Butler’s dystopian novel, where the characters come to life on the page. The year is 2024 and environmental and economic disaster has struck America. Follow Lauren Olamina as she travels outside the walls of her community and experiences the horrors of poverty and violence. Having grown up a preacher’s daughter, Lauren starts to explore her own belief system through her journals, and gathers followers along her journey to freedom and safety.

**The Secret to Superhuman Strength**
by Alison Bechdel

In this graphic memoir, Alison Bechdel (Fun Home) recounts her journey with exercise through the lens of fitness fads. As she approaches 60, she sees herself still putting in the work of working out, but getting slower. Why? Hilarious, witty, and contains an introspective look at what the actual secret to superhuman strength is.

**Sweet Tooth**
by Jeff Lemire

A cross between Bambi and Cormac McCarthy’s The Road, Sweet Tooth follows the innocent journey of a young boy with deer features who is suddenly thrust out into a postapocalyptic world. No one can explain these human-animal hybrids; the young boy sets out to find a sanctuary for people like him with the help of a stranger. Now a Netflix TV series!

Here are some current staff favorites:

**Parable of the Sower**
by Octavia E. Butler

**The Secret to Superhuman Strength**
by Alison Bechdel

**Sweet Tooth**
by Jeff Lemire

**CONTACT US**

**Adult Services/Reference:** 203-389-3434
reference@woodbridgetownlibrary.org

**Children’s Department:** 203-389-3439
childrens@woodbridgetownlibrary.org

**Circulation/General Info:** 203-389-3433
circulation@woodbridgetownlibrary.org

**Not sure who you need?**
askus@woodbridgetownlibrary.org

**Socialize with us!**
Facebook: @woodbridge.town.library
Instagram: @woodbridgetownlibrary
TikTok: @woodbridge_town_library

**Expanded Hours, Including Saturdays!**

**New Hours**
- Monday: 1 pm to 7 pm
- Tuesday: 10 am to 5 pm
- Wednesday: 10 am to 5 pm
- Thursday: 10 am to 7 pm
- Friday: 10 am to 5 pm
- Saturday: 10 am to 5 pm

**November Holiday Closings**
- Veterans Day: Thu., Nov. 11
- Thanksgiving Day: Thu., Nov. 25
- Day After Thanksgiving: Fri., Nov. 26

**The Library WILL be open on Saturday, November 27 from 10 to 5 pm**
Town Calendar

Woodbridge Happenings

Registration may be required. For event details go to: woodbridgect.org

11/2 Woodbridge Business Happy Hour, 5pm
hosted by the Economic Development Commission
at Crest Lincoln & New England Brewing. RSVP

11/5 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 11:30 am
for ages 60+, virtual tour with Julie Averbach

11/7 Daylight Savings Time Ends
remember to turn back clocks

11/11 Veterans Day
Town Offices, Library & Transfer Station closed

11/12 African Cultural Program, 11:30 am
Center Building gym

11/13 Christmas Bazaar & Craft Fair, 9 am
hosted by Our Lady of Assumption Church

11/15 AAA Driver Improvement Class, 9 am
for ages 55+, The Center café

11/18 Thanksgiving Drive-thru Luncheon, 12 pm
for ages 55+, The Center Building portico

11/20 Drive-thru Thanksgiving Food Drive, 11 am
at Our Lady of Assumption Church

11/23 Thanksgiving Centerpiece Workshop, 11 am
for ages 55+, The Center café

11/25 Thanksgiving Holiday Weekend

11/26 Town Office closed; for Library & Transfer Station weekend schedule see Important Reminders, p. 1

Town Calendar events will be highlighted here.
Woodbridge businesses and organizations are encouraged to add events to: woodbridgect.org/calendar.

Interested in placing an ad in this newsletter?
Call 203-389-3489 or email tbelensti@woodbridgect.org.

Library News

From the Children’s Room

Wednesday outdoor story time & Thursday outdoor drop-in crafts will continue as long as the weather stays fair, hopefully into early November. Please join us when you can!

Outdoor Storytime: Every Wednesday, 10:30 - 11 am. Meet at the picnic tables in the grove; no registration required. Feel free to bring chairs or a blanket. Suitable for babies through Pre-K. We’ll meet until it is too cold (below 50*); rain cancels.

Fall Drop-In Crafts: Thursdays between 3 and 4 pm. Outside in front of the library. Now through mid-to-late October. Ages 3 and up. No registration required! Rain cancels.

New Books:
Stop by and check out the latest additions to our Native American and Indigenous picture book collection.

Come see us any time for book recommendations and to see what's new in picture books, juvenile fiction, nonfiction, and graphic novels. Boris the dragon will be glad to help! Follow us on Instagram @woodbridgectownlibrary to see what Boris recommends! Recently recommended: A Song of Frutas by Margarita Engle; illustrated by Sara Palacios. This vibrant picture book tells the story of a young girl visiting her abuelo in Cuba, helping him sell frutas, singing the name of each fruit as they walk.

Attention adults: Keep an eye out for the return of special take and make craft kits for kids ages 3+! Something to do at home to keep your young ones busy…

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203.298.9700
www.visitingangels.com/woodbridge
The Resident Assistance Fund (RAF): In an effort to better assist Woodbridge residents in need, the Human Services Department has updated the Food and Fuel Fund with a new policy and a new name. The new guidelines were developed to improve the description of the fund’s use. The fund may be used for categories such as food and fuel but also may assist residents in need with miscellaneous services that are necessary but are not typically funded by outside agencies. The RAF, funded entirely by local donations, is not an entitlement; it is an emergency program only. As always, the Department is grateful for local support of this fund and the important work it accomplishes.

Medicare Open Enrollment: The Medicare program can be challenging to navigate. If you have questions or need information, please call Human Services to speak with certified CHOICES counselor Judi Young. Open enrollment continues until Dec. 7. CHOICES is Connecticut’s program for health insurance assistance, outreach, information and referral, counseling, and eligibility screening. Counselors provide Medicare recipients with non-biased, free health insurance counseling. Changes take effect on Jan. 1, 2022.

Energy Assistance Program: Human Services is accepting appointments for residents applying for the 2021-2022 CT Energy Assistance Program administered by TEAM, INC. Income eligibility requirements must be met. For information, or to schedule an appointment, call Judi Young at 203-389-3429.

Holiday Basket Program: If you would like to donate to the Holiday Basket Program, please contact Human Services with donations of gift cards no later than December 2.

Medical Open Enrollment: The Medicare program can be challenging to navigate. If you have questions or need information, please call Human Services to speak with certified CHOICES counselor Judi Young. Open enrollment continues until Dec. 7. CHOICES is Connecticut’s program for health insurance assistance, outreach, information and referral, counseling, and eligibility screening. Counselors provide Medicare recipients with non-biased, free health insurance counseling. Changes take effect on Jan. 1, 2022.

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Holiday Basket Program: If you would like to donate to the Holiday Basket Program, please contact Human Services with donations of gift cards no later than December 2.
Virtual Art Tour of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Nov. 5, 11:30 am - 12:30 pm: This virtual tour will highlight the vast collections spanning across cultures and centuries, ranging from Ghananian textiles and French painting to Japanese pottery. Encounter new artworks and revisit familiar favorites from artists including Renoir, Michelangelo, and Pollock. No fee. Call for Zoom link. Don’t use Zoom? Call 203-389-3430 to register to view tour in The Center café—space is limited.

Painting for Pleasure class, Nov. 8, from 10 am - 12 pm: All levels are welcome to join this class in The Center café on Mondays, 10 am - 12 pm. This session will be led by local artist, Carole Abate. Come paint your choice of subject with acrylics or watercolors. There is a $36 fee for the full 6-week session.

African Cultural Immersion Program, Nov. 12 from 11:30 am - 12:30 pm: Ugandan native, Rita Wagener (Kabali) came to CT by way of Fairbanks, AK. Rita shares fashions and dances from her homeland, along with her experiences from living in two very different cultures in this captivating one-hour show that will take place in the Center Building gym. The Center and the Library have collaborated to offer this program at no charge. RSVP: 11/10.

Woodbridge Center clients enjoy a virtual tour of the Museum of Modern Art given by Julie Averbach on Oct. 22.

Yale Alzheimer’s Disease Study with up to $600 Compensation

If you are at least 55 years old and have early stage dementia, and you have a child that is at least 18 years old, you and your child may be eligible to participate in a free and confidential study to understand your experience coping with dementia together. Interview and interaction sessions can be completed over the phone, by mail, or on the computer.

To learn more or see if you are eligible to participate, please contact Kathleen Williams at (203) 641-5373 or email kathleen.williams@yale.edu.

Ongoing Activities

Pickleball takes place Mon. through Fri., 12:30-3:30 pm in the Center Building gym as well as 7 days/week on the outdoor courts. Advance court sign-up is required for indoor and outdoor play. All levels welcome. Call for more information. Targeted Strength Training is offered on Mondays, 9-10 am, in the Center Building gym. Led by Michele Tenny, this exercise class uses exercise bands to focus on strengthening specific muscle groups to help increase balance, stability, and flexibility. Bands are available for purchase through the instructor. The class fee is $40 for an 8-week session, and will be prorated as needed.

Zumba Gold: Who says exercise can’t be fun? Join instructor Amanda Aranzullo for this fun “dance party” as she introduces easy-to-follow Zumba choreography that focuses on all elements of cardiovascular health, muscular conditioning, flexibility and balance. No prior Zumba experience required. Classes are held Fridays, 9-9:45 am in the Center Building gym. The fee for a 6-week session is $30, prorated as needed.

Virtual Programs:
AAA Defensive Driving Course offered virtually every Tue., 10 am - 2 pm. Free for all. May qualify you for an auto insurance discount, www.AAA.com/DefensiveDriving.
Youth Services News

Call Youth Services for information: 203-389-3429. Email npfund@woodbridgect.org or youthouse@woodbridgect.org.

Toys 4 Kids

TEAM, Inc. supports Woodbridge families and surrounding towns to provide holiday toys to those in need. Financial support is desperately needed to purchase toys for children and gift cards for those 8-12. To donate, please visit TEAM’s website at: https://teaminc.org/toys-4-kids-2021/.

To apply for toys, keep watching TEAM’s website for online application and requirements or call Youth Services for more details.

Toy Collection boxes will be available in the Town Library and in Youth Services until November 30.

Sarah Pearson
Youth Program Coordinator

Youth Services welcomes Sarah Pearson to the staff to plan programming for youth and families. Sarah’s education includes a Master’s degree in Social Work, and a Bachelor’s degree in Sociology. She may be a familiar face to some through her recent work as a teacher assistant at Beecher Road School. Please welcome her as you interact with us, and call to offer comments or ideas for youth programs.

Food Pantry Volunteers Needed: Masks will be required. We approve community service hours. Call ahead to schedule.

Home Alone Class

Youth Services Director Nancy Pfund and Woodbridge Police Officer Vinny Lynch recently presented a Home Alone Class to students ages 9-11. Topics included house rules, answering the door and phone, nutritious snacks, emergencies, calling 911, and internet safety. Participants received an information pack to share and discuss with parents.

Job Bank

Raking season is upon us. Teens who want paid, outdoor work should contact Youth Services to schedule an interview. Residents may call to request student workers. Schedule helpers now for snow shoveling later.

Recreation 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.

Road Race & Fun Run

The 39th Annual Woodbridge Road Race took place October 2. After the event’s 2020 hiatus, the 5K Race and Fun Run were welcomed back by Woodbridge residents. The overall 5K Race winner was Jeffrey Townsend at a time of 17:43 (above right). Laura Pierce was the overall female winner at 18:32 (above left). The top three male residents to finish were: Jeffrey Townsend - 17:43, Brad Taylor - 19:39, Daniel Manning - 20:05. The top three female residents were: Laura Pierce - 18:32, Kathy Jackson-20:33, and AnnMarie Merril - 24:12.

The Fun Run top three boys were: Sam Vincent-6:49, Truman Kaczmarczyk-7:22, and Seamus Oliver-8:20. The top three girls were: Kate Vincent-7:08, Ava Ruszkowski-7:25, and Carrisa Parker 8:04.

Fitness Room Schedule

The Fitness Center is now open two weekday mornings—Mondays and Thursdays between 9 am to noon. The Fitness Center will continue to remain open Tuesday and Thursday evenings, 6-8:45 pm, and Saturday and Sunday, 8 am to noon. Appointment are no longer necessary. Masks are required.

Winter Registration at New Office

Registration for winter programs will begin November 8. Check our website for a complete list of winter offerings.

For online registration go to woodbridgect.org, or stop by our new office to register. Enter through the Beecher South School side entrance as we relocated to our former office in the building. Office hours are 8 am to 4 pm, Monday through Friday.

New Adult Tai Chi takes place Thursday evenings at 6 pm. Registration will be ongoing.
I dreamed she went to Lock Stock & Barrel.