

SEASONS *of*

AUTUMN 2020

NEW HAVEN



SUCCESS ON TAP

ALISA BOWENS-MERCADO IS A
BREWING PIONEER

FUR-EVER FRIENDS

WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE
ADOPTING A PET

LOVE CONQUERS ALL

WEDDINGS IN THE AGE
OF COVID

Where customer focus meets community focus.



Serving you and the community. Today and tomorrow.

We offer personal and business banking, great lending rates, and online and mobile banking.

We help you look to the future with retirement savings and other services to help you thrive.

We volunteer over 14,000 hours annually. The Liberty Bank Foundation is all about giving back with grants, scholarships and funding for education.

We'd love to meet you!

Visit liberty-bank.com to learn more about us or call us to make an appointment at any of our branches across Connecticut.



LIVE YOUR BEST LIFE. *On Your Terms.*

TIME FOR A PLAN THAT FITS YOUR NEEDS
AND COMFORT LEVEL—IT'S ALL ABOUT CHOICE
WITH SEABURY AND SEABURY AT HOME!

Many things have changed over the past few months, but Seabury's commitment to community remains stronger than ever. We are ready for any situation, both on campus and off. While many new protocols present unique challenges, our staff, residents and members have come together to keep everyone safe, healthy and connected.

We're still welcoming new neighbors on campus and new members to our At Home program. We're observing social distancing with outdoor meetings, model homes designed exclusively for safe tours and promoting virtual tours. Most importantly, **no one is going through this alone.** As a Seabury resident or Seabury At Home member, you not only secure your future healthcare, you also become part of a community that bands together at times when it's most needed.

Join us in creating a new future with
Seabury or Seabury at Home.
YOUR LIFE. YOUR FUTURE. YOUR CHOICE.

Please call 860-243-4033 or
visit www.seaburylife.org for more information.

Your Choice. Home Or On Campus.



200 Seabury Drive | Bloomfield, CT 06002

(860) 286-0243 | (800) 340-4709 | www.seaburylife.org | info@seaburylife.org

For 95 years, we've been resilient to change.
Our students thrive, not simply survive, as they navigate the COVID-19 Pandemic.

For 95 years, we've been relevant in our community.
Our students engage in service projects that directly affect our neighbors.

For 95 years, we've had faith in your future.
Our students are supported by faculty and staff, the Falcon Family.



GET AWAY FROM IT ALL

HOTEL RATES STARTING AT \$69
Book your stay today at foxwoods.com.

FOXWOODS.COM ♦ 800.369.9663

WELCOME

EDITOR'S NOTE



Cara Rosner

Welcome to the fall issue of *Seasons of New Haven*!

This year has been anything but typical so far, but as usual we're shining a spotlight on the people, places and stories that make our region great.

In this issue, we sit down with Alisa Bowens-Mercado, the trailblazing owner of Rhythm Brewing Co. As one of the few female, African-American brewers in the state and nation, Bowens-Mercado

is seeing her business boom – thanks to her signature lager, called Rhythm – and has her sights set on a long future in the industry.

We also spend some time with newlywed couples who got married during the pandemic. And, with many people considering fostering or adopting pets in the Covid era, we're offering tips and things to think about before you take the pet-ownership plunge.

We also pay homage to area veterans, and delve into the ways – even some positive ones – the pandemic has so drastically reshaped life this year.

As always, I invite you to join the conversation by connecting with us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Happy reading,

Cara

Cara Rosner
Editor



SEASONS of
NEW HAVEN
MAGAZINE

Visit us online at
www.seasonsmagazines.com

Follow us on Twitter
[@SeasonsMag](https://twitter.com/SeasonsMag)

Like us on Facebook
[Facebook.com/SeasonsMagazines](https://www.facebook.com/SeasonsMagazines)



Seasons of NEW HAVEN™
is published by Seasons Media
James P. Tully, Owner/Publisher

Editor

Cara Rosner

Sales & Marketing Executive

Doreen Chudoba

Creative Director

Stacy Wright Murray

Cover Photograph

Winter Caplanson

For advertising information please
contact Doreen Chudoba
doreen@seasonsmagazines.com.



Connecticut's premier pool
and hot tub specialists.

rizzopools.com



RIZZO  **POOLS**



Celebrating Over 60 Years of
Quality, Service, Construction and Renovation.
Call us for a free in-home consultation.

860.666.1531

NEW 2.50%¹ Refinance Options

Refinance your home and convert to our Fixed Home Equity Loan, as low as 2.50%¹ if you apply before November 30.

WHY REFINANCE?

- **No Closing costs²**
- Available for first or first + second mortgages
- Up to 80% loan-to-value
- Terms as low as 5 years, up to 20 years

CROSSPOINTFCU.ORG • 203.288.1695 •   •  



1: Promotional rate is valid from 08/01/2020 to 11/30/2020. The 2.50% is the lowest possible rate for a five-year term home equity Loan when the CFCU will be in first lien position. Rate is based on credit worthiness and the loan term. Rate is discounted 0.25% and requires a direct deposit from a CFCU checking account. 2: Closing cost must be repaid if loan is closed within 2 years of origination date.

CONTENTS

FALL 2020

8 MEET

New Haven immigration attorney Glenn Formica works to ensure everyone has a fair chance at justice.

12 BUSINESS

Alisa Bowens-Mercado of local Rhythm Brewing is a pioneer in her field.

20 FEATURE

Ahead of Veterans Day, local service men and women share their stories and memories.

28 PETS

When adopting or fostering a pet, there's a lot to consider

30 FEATURE

What's it take to get married in a pandemic? Love, flexibility and creativity.

41 HOME

For those seeking to beautify their property, a greenhouse can transform a backyard into an oasis.

48 HISTORY

When women head to the polls this November, they can thank suffragists who mobilized 100 years ago for that right.

54 CAREER

In these uncertain times, a career change may bring new opportunities.

60 DELICIOUS

Tasty ways to boost your immune system this fall.

68 SPORTS

Amid the pandemic, golf has become increasingly popular.

77 FINAL THOUGHTS

In some ways, the spirit of Halloween has changed.



You can count on us.

Our team is committed to understanding your challenges and goals, and to developing customized, comprehensive financial plans that align with your hopes for the future.

Give us a call at **860-572-4040**, or visit **chelseagroton.com** to understand the benefit of working with seasoned financial advisors who will work with you every step of the way.

 **Chelsea Groton
Financial Services**



Investment and insurance products and services are offered through INFINEX INVESTMENTS, INC. Member FINRA/SIPC. Chelsea Groton Financial Services is a trade name of the bank. Infinex and the bank are not affiliated. Products and services made available through Infinex are not insured by the FDIC or any other agency of the United States and are not deposits or obligations of nor guaranteed or insured by any bank or bank affiliate. These products are subject to investment risk, including the possible loss of value.

JUSTICE FOR ALL

New Haven attorney fights for immigrants' rights

Written and Photographed by **FRAN SILVERMAN**

Glenn Formica's 11th floor law firm on New Haven's Church Street was full. He had clients in the lobby and a conference room crowded with volunteers working on research and documents to help his pro bono clients obtain legal status as immigrants.

Down the hall, in his office — where a portrait of Abraham Lincoln hangs on the wall along with his Boston University and Catholic University diplomas and a picture of his own immigrant relatives — he had gathered a group of advocates willing to discuss what's it's been like to be undocumented in Connecticut. The stories they told were full of pain. Carmen, a Norwalk resident, described how her husband, a construction worker who came to America from Mexico and never had any problems with the law, was randomly swept up in a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raid and taken to a detention center in Massachusetts three hours away. He was injured at the facility and fell ill. With the loss of her husband's income, Carmen, a home health aide, and her children were evicted from their apartment and forced to live in a shelter.

At first, Formica was hesitant to take Carmen's case — his pro bono load was full — but you realize pretty quickly that this man wouldn't sleep if he turned her family away. So he jumped in to help, driving the six hours round trip to Massachusetts several times to appear before a court judge to help Carmen's husband.

Formica, 50, has taken several high-profile cases in recent years as ICE has stepped up its efforts under the directive by the federal government to deport

immigrants, end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), and bar asylum seekers from entry.

"It's hard. I'm sort of cursed with the fact that there is a great need and I know how to help," Formica says. "If you know how to help, it's really hard to say you won't."

Formica didn't start his law career wanting to be an immigration attorney. He was in real estate, actually.

"I thought I was going to be preppy, wear L.L. Bean boots and work on zoning [issues]," he says.

A strange set of circumstances led him to this line of legal work. And it's also worth mentioning — and he does — that his family has its own immigration story to tell.

Formica's grandfather was a merchant marine from Sicily in the 1920s who jumped ship at a U.S. dock. His grandmother came to the United States on a visa and never went back. His roots also include ancestors from the Mayflower and founders of the New Haven Town Green, which his office overlooks. His wife of 20 years is an immigrant from Australia and became a naturalized citizen in 2016.

"I'm three-fourths Italian and one-quarter Swamp Yankee," Formica says.

Most citizens in the U.S., he points out, have relatives who came as immigrants, often as refugees and often without proper papers.

"Most people say their parents and grandparents came legally, [but] I would challenge that. There were very limited visas, and most were undocumented and 'illegal,'" he says. Attorney Formica's blood boils at defining any human being as "illegal."



Glenn Formica's downtown office overlooks the New Haven Green.

After four years and with no trouble with the law, his grandfather was able to become a U.S. citizen.

Until 1996, he says, immigrants were able to become U.S. permanent residents and eventually citizens, but a change in federal philosophy and policy, and Congressional unwillingness to pass comprehensive reform, set up difficult barriers for this generation of immigrants seeking a pathway to legal status and citizenship. Carmen's husband, who he was able to get freed from detainment, is a good example of the rigid policy shift and barriers attorneys face in helping them.

"It took 120 hours of work to get somebody out who should have been out with a phone call," he says, about Carmen's husband's incarceration. "What these stories emphasize is that these policies aren't abstractions. They really hurt people. The cruelty hurts."

Formica's first foray into immigration law came 20 years ago when he was working as an attorney for a real estate law firm in Cheshire. He was approached by a Franciscan priest, John LoSasso, pastor of Immaculate Conception parish on Gun Hill Road in the Bronx, New York. LoSasso, a friar, asked Formica to take a difficult immigration case of a 15-year-old Eritrean boy who was the nephew of a Franciscan brother.

Though he knew very little about immigration law,

Formica couldn't say no to helping the brothers and won the case after filing an immigrant juvenile petition. Over the years, LoSasso sent him more cases.

"People would just show up and say, 'Brother John said you could help,'" he says.

Formica found himself pivoting from his original career goals. In 2001, he launched his own practice in New Haven, focusing on immigration law.

Formica says he never learned how the priest got his name and never met LoSasso in person until last year. LoSasso was frail and in a wheelchair but came to help support a parishioner who was detained in New Jersey, and who was being represented by Formica in lower Manhattan's immigration court.

"What I found odd was that he seemed to know everything about my career," Formica recalls. "When I asked him how he found me 20 years ago, he would tell me, with a smile, that it was 'a secret of the Franciscan Order.' That last case turned into a drama as the immigration judge had first refused the parishioner bond, which we all thought meant he would be deported. Brother John was in and out of the hospital while the case was pending but would always manage to make it to the different Immigration Court hearings that were scheduled on his parishioner's case."



From left to right: ULA New Haven member Erick Sarmiento, ULA Norwalk branch founder Carmen Lanche, ULA volunteer Judith Paz, and Attorney Glenn Formica.

LoSasso died a week before the judge made a surprising decision in the case and released his client. At LoSasso's memorial service, Formica was given LoSasso's prayer beads.

"What I also learned at his memorial service was that his whole monastic career was dedicated to working with immigrants in the Bronx," says Formica.

There are times, he says, he has "questioned whether I am worthy of his gift."

To keep helping immigrants seeking legal status, his law firm, Formica P.C., also takes injury cases. The revenue helps him fund his pro bono and low bono cases. He has also stepped up efforts to help organize and train teams of volunteers around the state to help clients, including a group in Hartford and in the Guilford shoreline area. His clients also get help from a variety of immigrant advocacy groups like Unidad Latina en Acción (ULA), based in New Haven.

"I would like Americans to become aware of the importance of immigrants to our lives. Countries that don't accept diversity are countries that fade," he says. "People have to understand what it takes to be an immigrant is a very special human being. They are going to come into an unwelcome society, be treated like criminals, chased, and dehumanized – and despite all that, they will fight to raise their family here and our country will always benefit."

Carmen and her husband were able to pull their

lives back together with Formica's help and Carmen went on to establish a chapter of ULA in Norwalk.

"I like to see my clients empowered, not as victims," he says.

In recent months, with the COVID-19 pandemic bringing court action to a halt, Formica and his clients have faced new challenges – the government closed borders, fast-tracked deportations and tried to rescind university visas for foreign students. His defense motions were hampered by the logistics of phone-in court appearances, and clients were facing the danger of catching the virus in the facilities where they were detained.

"Right now, it's a very toxic environment. People are terrified. Terrified of the virus, terrified economically, and terrified of ICE," says Formica.

A bright spot came in June when the Supreme Court ruled against the Trump administration's efforts to end DACA. But he says the pandemic has caused a backlog of cases, bringing the wheels of justice that normally move slowly to an even worse crawl.

But Formica is far from giving up. That's because, he says, his work is spiritually fulfilling.

"I'm not a saint," adds Formica, a father of three who describes his workload as 24-7, "I've always received from my immigration clients more than I've given." 📖



Business Banking with your Community Bank

Essex Savings Bank offers the services you need to build your business.

- Commercial Loan Products – decisions made locally • Commercial and Non-Profit Checking
- Complete Online Banking Suite of Services • Business Savings Options
- A consultative approach to ensure we meet your needs • Over 165 years in your community

Talk to us today and see why Essex Savings Bank is a commercial lending leader in our area.



Essex, 35 Plains Road, 860-767-2573 • Essex, 9 Main Street, 860-767-8238 • Chester, 203 Middlesex Avenue, 860-526-0000
Madison, 99 Durham Road, 203-318-8611 • Old Lyme, 101 Halls Road, 860-434-1646 • Old Saybrook, 155 Main Street, 860-388-3543
Toll-Free: 877-377-3922 • essexsavings.com

Member FDIC Equal Housing Lender



The key to any IPA: hops.

Finding Her Rhythm

A local brewing pioneer sees business boom, even amid a pandemic

By CARA MCDONOUGH / Photography by WINTER CAPLANSON

Beer wasn't an acquired taste for Alisa Bowens-Mercado. It was always part of her life.

She remembers both her grandmothers drinking beer, lagers specifically. That might not seem the norm for grandmothers, but it was their norm. Beer was a tradition in Bowens-Mercado's family – and that memory became her inspiration.

"As a woman, and as an African American, to own a beer brand, it's paying homage to them," Bowens-Mercado says of her grandmothers, now passed. "They always told me if there's anything you want to do in life, you can achieve it."

Bowens-Mercado certainly proved them right. A few years ago, creating her own beer label was just a notion. Today she's the owner of Rhythm Brewing and a rising star in the brewing scene. They call her "Lady Lager."

She gets major props for her beer: it's a smooth-drinking, American-style unfiltered lager brewed with South

African hops, offered in an original version, "Rhythm Unfiltered Lager," and a light one, "Rhythm Blue Unfiltered Light Lager."

But there's more to this tale. Beyond crafting something downright delicious, Bowens-Mercado is also a rarity in the beer scene as the first female African American brewer in the state, and one of just a few in the country.

She's occupying a space held mostly by white men. For her, that lack of diversity provided one of many compelling reasons to go for it.

Bowens-Mercado remembers the day she first thought about brewing her own beer. She'd always loved it (ordering lagers in college while her friends got cocktails) and she and her husband have attended many beer festivals together. They were at one in Cape Cod several years ago when she realized that nothing she'd tasted that day was quite hitting the spot.

"We're in New England, IPA heaven," she says laughing, noting that IPAs – or India Pale Ales, the hoppy darlings of the craft beer scene – are so prevalent that they

Beyond crafting something downright delicious, Bowens-Mercado is also a rarity in the beer scene as the first female African American brewer in the state, and one of just a few in the country.





Fresh cans of Rhythm, a lager, come off the line, overseen by Chris Perry (left) the company's head of packing.

sometimes crowd out other varieties. “I just wanted something that tasted like beer.”

On their way home that day, her husband noticed how quiet she was.

“If I’m going to drink it, I need to own it,” she remembers thinking during the drive. Furthermore, she knew there weren’t many women or people of color in the beer industry, despite those groups consuming the product. She wanted more representation.

So, like many beer-lovers before her have enthusiastically declared, she decided she’d brew her own.

The difference is that Bowens-Mercado meant it, then got to work.

This was despite the fact that she was already a business owner with plenty to keep her busy. Bowens-Mercado runs New Haven’s beloved and successful Alisa’s House of Salsa, Studio of Latin Dance. The studio, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, offers salsa dance classes for all levels (including online classes during the pandemic) and houses a professional dance team, as well.

The name Rhythm, in fact, speaks to the importance of music and dance in her life.

The House of Salsa has expanded through the years, and Bowens-Mercado – who sometimes calls the business her “first child” – says she expects it to be around for years to come.

No matter, she’d find time for beer, too, and after plenty of careful planning, she concocted her first brew in 2018, using the facility at Overshores Brewing Co. in East Haven. She

moved from there to Armada Brewing, also in East Haven, and today she and Rhythm have found their home at Black Hog Brewing in Oxford. Bowens-Mercado is 100 percent owner of her business but gets plenty of help from her husband and mom, she says.

She didn’t open her own brewery right away, as a strategic measure.

“Let me see how this goes,” she recalls thinking. “Let me get demand out there without having to worry about a brick and mortar brewery.” It’s a decision she’s particularly grateful for today, considering Covid-19 temporarily shut down many breweries this spring.

Plus, she was right about demand. It was there. Now it’s growing – significantly. Bowens-Mercado sells Rhythm at a plentiful and increasing number of bottle shops, grocery stores, bars, and restaurants throughout Connecticut (you’ll find exact locations using the “Rhythm Finder” on her website). Consumers can purchase beer online from her website for pickup in New Haven, too.

“The demand for the brand right now is through the roof,” Bowens-Mercado says, adding that she’s in talks with larger brands looking to add the Rhythm label to their lineup. She’s proud of and pushing her timely message that: “America is finding a new Rhythm, one sip at a time.” That being said, she’s committed to the brand’s homegrown roots. She’s proud of the fact that you can call up the brewery and talk to her personally.

Bowens-Mercado believes that the unusual set of circumstances in our country this year – including coronavirus and

the resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement – has had a real impact on her story and her brewing label.

The pandemic, she believes, increased demand as beer drinkers looked to buy local, try something new, and purchase a product they could enjoy at home. She said that consumers drove across state lines to buy Rhythm beer, and that she’s forever grateful to her loyal and growing client base.

The public discussions surrounding race following the death of George Floyd mattered immensely to her personally and mattered to her business model.

“It really made people shift their thinking,” she says. “They said, ‘Why not support a company that looks like Alisa’s or has that mission?’ When there’s injustice, black businesses matter. And that’s coming from white folks, black folks, everyone. They were coming out and saying, ‘we support you.’”

In recent months, Rhythm has quadrupled its social media following and Bowens-Mercado is getting calls about the product from all over the world.

Of course, quality talks, too, she says: once consumers try her lager, they’re hooked.

“People know we are real and are doing this for the right reasons,” she says.

Phil Pappas, executive director of the Connecticut Brewers Guild, and Kat Manning, marketing and membership coordinator for the same organization, agree that having Bowens-Mercado on the Connecticut beer scene is incred-

In recent months, Rhythm has quadrupled its social media following and Bowens-Mercado is getting calls about the product from all over the world.

ibly important – and just plain fun.

“She’s honestly one of the most amazing people I have met in the brewing world,” says Manning. “She’s so personable and excited about what she’s doing. Her personality, plus being

a woman and a woman of color is really good for our community and brings awareness to the problem of diversity, as well as providing an easy-drinking lager.”

Manning adds that the Guild has seen a shift in habits at state breweries, with more women and people of color exploring craft beer. The organization is actively looking to diversify and expand access and education, including spearheading a “Brewing Science” program at Sacred Heart University and working with groups like the Pink Boots Society, a Minnesota-based organization formed to empower women in the beer industry, including providing scholarships.

“Alisa has just been so phenomenal and so easy to work with,” says Pappas. “Once you meet her, or see her in interviews or on social media, you realize she’s just a powerhouse, she’s crushing it.”

Both say that Bowens-Mercado’s energy and penchant for storytelling is irresistible at festivals and other events. She waits patiently to chat with every fan who pays her booth a visit, and is a “sales machine,” when it comes to the beer, says Manning.

“Her positivity is just radiating, and is benefitting everyone,” Manning says, noting that Bowens-Mercado’s focus goes beyond her own brand to promoting other local purvey-



Bowens-Mercado has found a home for Rhythm Brewing at Black Hog Brewing in Oxford. Here she poses with some of the Black Hog crew: (left to right) Nic (Maverick) Somerville, Chris Perry, Dustin Mello, Josh Mello, Mike Dryburgh and Tyler Jones.

This summer, Bowens-Mercado worked with Two Roads Brewing in Stratford, to create the “Black is Beautiful” imperial stout as part of a nationwide effort to raise awareness about injustice against people of color.

ors through partnerships and collaborations. This summer, she worked with Two Roads Brewing in Stratford, to create the “Black is Beautiful” imperial stout as part of a nationwide effort to raise awareness about injustice against people of color.

Among all this action, Bowens-Mercado remains rooted in her origin story. Her grandmothers, she says, are cheering from a world beyond.

“What they and my parents instilled in me has carried on,” she says. And she urges others inspired to start a business – or achieve anything, really – to go for it, especially now.

“If there’s any thought you’ve ever had, this is the time,” she says. “I tell people to take a leap of faith. If you’re thinking about it, you can live it.”

As for Bowens-Mercado’s future goals, she’s says she is “keeping steady” while excitedly looking forward to what’s next. For this enthusiastic entrepreneur, merging passion with the desire to make this a better world is not only her mission, but a true talent.

“Everyone who is out there protesting, they don’t want business as usual,” she says. “And they don’t want brands as usual. There’s room for the Rhythm brand to give them something diverse. If we can unify folks in the country through beer, I mean, bring it on. That’s my dream.” 🍺





*We're transforming our Village
to expand your horizons.*

ADVENTURE AWAITS.
Come with us and discover a world that will
exceed your wildest expectations.

We are expanding our Life Plan community, opening the doors to boundless opportunities, with security for life. Beautiful brand new apartment homes are being added to our nature filled campus. These spacious, maintenance-free residences will offer the latest in design trends and gorgeous views of Hop Meadow golf course. In addition, you'll also enjoy new first-class amenities, including exceptional

restaurant-quality dining venues, a state-of-the-art fitness center, secure underground parking, and an abundance of engaging educational and recreational programs. Become a Priority Plus member and you'll be among the first to secure your place in line for one of these bright and open one- and two-bedroom homes.

PRIORITY PLUS
PROGRAM

Learn more about PriorityPlus at McLean by calling **860-613-5831** or visit **ExploreMcLean.org**.
WE'RE INTRODUCING A NEW LOOK WITH THE SAME COMMITMENT TO YOU.

75 Great Pond Road
Simsbury, CT 06070

McLean



Recover from joint replacement
faster

How did we get Patty Reilly back in the saddle so quickly after knee replacement? With advanced robotic surgery techniques. And a personal nurse navigator who guided her through every step.

Don't wait. Care is ready when you are.

MiddlesexHealth.org/Faster

M+
**Middlesex
Health**

MAYO CLINIC
CARE NETWORK



Member

Home of the Brave

Local military veterans reflect and remember

Written and photographed by STAN GODLEWSKI

*W*e pass them on the street, stand behind them in line, live our lives side by side, unaware of the debt we owe them as they pass us by.

They fought in our stead in places like Normandy, Inchon, Loc Ninh, Al Anbar, and Helmand Province. Between the ages of 17 and 39, they put their comfortable lives and plans aside to risk everything in the mud and snow, heat and cold, the sand and the dirt of battlefields.

No matter how each of us may feel about any particular conflict, it is the veterans who shouldered the burdens, endured the losses, and carry the personal memories of our wars. The veterans acknowledged on these pages each have a connection to New Haven, and a connection to every other veteran across the country.

In acknowledging these five, we appreciate them all.

LANCE CORPORAL BIANCESCA RIVERA

Like most 17-year-olds, Biancesca Rivera started her senior year at West Haven High School thinking about her future. Then she did something about it.

In September of 2009, Rivera enlisted in the Marines as a reservist. She recalls that after talking with a recruiter, she thought: “I finally have a plan for after high school.”

“I always wanted to serve, but I didn’t know exactly what I wanted to do,” says Rivera, whose long-term plan was college but who needed help with tuition. “When my recruiter started talking to me about the Marines, I was like, ‘Oh yes, I want to do this because it’s the toughest. If I’m going to go in, I might as well go all the way.’”

A month after graduation, in July 2010, Rivera left for boot camp at Parris Island, S.C., followed by combat training. Then it was off to diesel mechanic school for five months.

Shortly afterward, she got a call. She was needed in Afghanistan. She said, “Sure, I’ll go,” and was assigned to the 2nd Marine Logistics Group serving at Camp Leatherneck in Helmand Province, Afghanistan from



Lance Cpl. Biancesca Rivera displays her certificate following her naturalization ceremony in Afghanistan in 2012.

September 2011 to April 2012. There, she was in charge of ordering, receiving, and distributing gear and repair parts to keep the diesel trucks running at the camp.

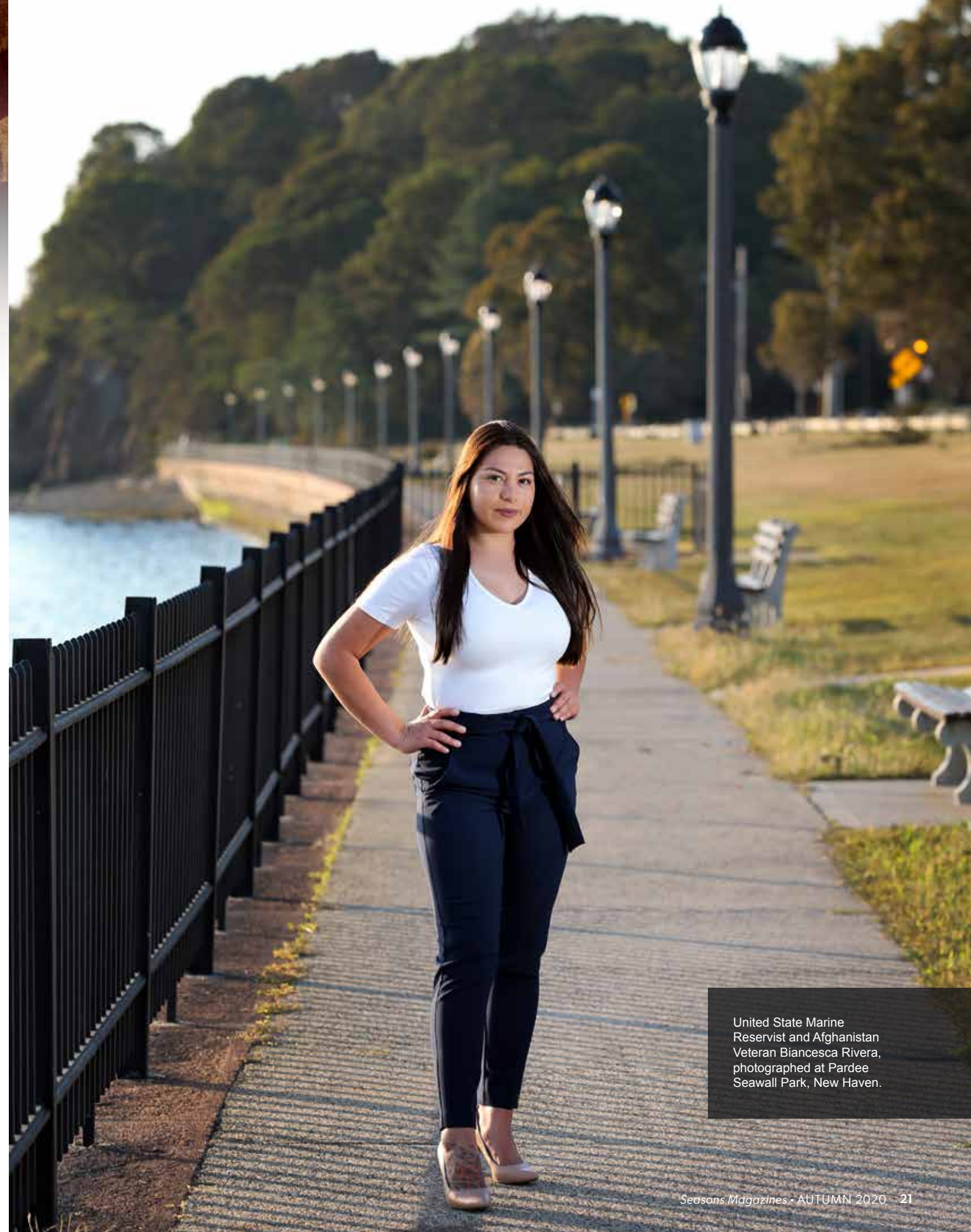
While deployed as a lance corporal, she became a U.S. citizen (she’d emigrated here from Peru with her family a decade earlier) at a naturalization ceremony at Kandahar Airfield in February 2012.

“I was excited when I learned I could get my citizenship overseas and surprised to see how many service members were there at the same time, getting naturalized during a combat deployment,” she remembers.

After her return, Rivera attended Southern Connecticut State University and graduated in 2016 with a bachelor’s degree in Spanish. She was deployed again to Albany, Georgia from July 2017 to July 2018 to assist with restoration of a Marine Corps logistics base after tornados

devastated the area. Not one to waste time, she went to Boston University that September to get her master’s degree in secondary education and teaching.

Rivera is still in the Marine Reserves, lives in West Haven, and is vice commander at American Legion New Haven Post



United State Marine Reservist and Afghanistan Veteran Biancesca Rivera, photographed at Pardee Seawall Park, New Haven.

210 and Jr. Vice Commander at Veterans of Foreign Wars New Haven Post 12150.

“Veterans Day is very special, and I try to spend it with other veterans,” she says. “I try to stay active within the veteran community. I appreciate veterans. I think I had it easy; I’ve seen what other veterans have had to deal with. The Marines show you how to be proud of who you are and the things that you do.”

U.S. ARMY RANGER CELESTINO CORDOVA



Celestino Cordova, on patrol in North Korea, 1951.

When Celestino Cordova was drafted in 1951, he’d spent most of his life on a farm in sunny Puerto Rico. Within months, he was an Army Ranger fighting in the unforgiving, frigid mountains of North Korea.

“We wore three pairs of gloves, two pairs of shoes, and a big parka,” Cordova says, gesturing to show how the front of the hood would cover their faces. He recalls one trip when his team was stuck on a mountainside there for three days and it “would hit 30 degrees below zero.”

Cordova’s unit of elite Rangers was fighting with the 65th Infantry Regiment. Nicknamed the “Borinqueneers,” for the original Taíno Indian name for Puerto Rico (Borinquen), the unit was made up entirely of soldiers from Puerto Rico. The unit scouted ahead of the infantry, often going deep into North Korea, finding enemy positions, removing mines and radioing back vital information. Cordova was a radioman and carried an M-1 Carbine and a sidearm.

Their missions were most dangerous when they were returning, usually before dawn, Cordova recalls. The enemy would have their own patrols out probing the U.S. lines so there was a danger of running into them, or of being mistaken for the enemy by their own troops as they approached home. Passwords were vital, as anxious

lookouts would shoot at anything coming toward them in the dark.

Once this team was caught between the U.S. and North Korean forces when an operation began, and they were stuck in the middle being shelled from both sides. “I was never so scared in my life,” he says.

Throughout the Korean War, June 1950 to July 1953, the Ranger casualty rate was extremely high as they were the ones who went into the fray first. The tour for Rangers then was only nine months, “because they didn’t expect you to live,” Cordova recalls.

Cordova chose the Rangers, in part, based on the gear. Weighing about 135 pounds at the time, and having had a taste of heavy, full Army gear during basic training, he liked the idea of the Rangers because they travelled light. Luckily, he survived his nine months on the frontline, although many of his fellow Rangers did not. He remembers the day he boarded the bus to return to Seoul, “Ohhhhh...I was so happy!” he says.

After a brief visit home to see his family, he was assigned to Fort Riley, Kansas where he was the only Puerto Rican and only Spanish-speaker on the base.

“I went to the PX and bought a (Spanish-English) dictionary,” he says, “and memorized the words I needed to know like ‘attention’ and ‘fall-in’ and ‘fall-out.’”

Cordova thought he’d be peeling potatoes for the next year, but the Colonel tapped him to be his personal driver, because — Cordova laughs and slaps the table with his hand — “he wanted to learn some Spanish!!”

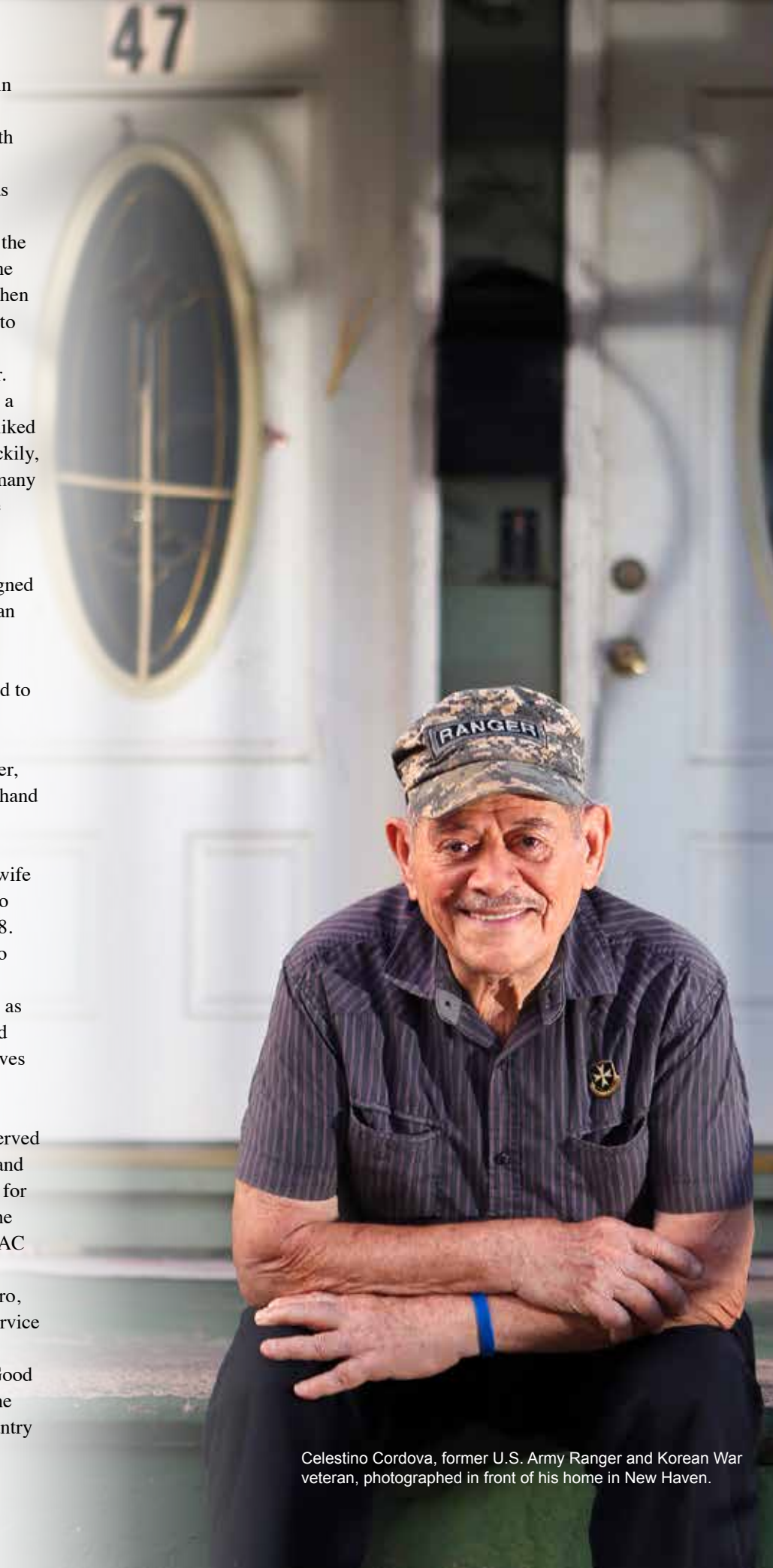
He would finish his army career training soldiers in post-war Korea in 1953, and then would bring his new wife Leonides, whom he’d known since high school in Puerto Rico, to Fort Sill in Oklahoma. He left the Army in 1958.

The couple, by then with two children in tow, chose to move to New Haven because he heard there was work there. To make ends meet, Cordova drove taxis, worked as a painter and even cut hair. Eventually, the couple would have six children, and the family built a life for themselves in New Haven becoming well-known members of the community.

Cordova founded the Spanish Cultural Association, served as the first elected city-wide selectman of New Haven, and became a member of the Knights of Columbus, JUNTA for Progressive Action, the Democratic Hispanic Caucus, the Peace Commission, the Urban Renewal Initiative, LULAC Headstart, and the Democratic Town Committee.

On June 7, 2010, U.S. Representative Rosa L. DeLauro, D-New Haven, recognized Celestino Cordova for his service to the nation, presenting him with four over-due medals and two badges: the Korean Service Medal, the Army Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the United Nations Korean Service Medal, the Combat Infantry Badge, and the Sharp Shooter Badge and Rifle Bar.

In June of 2014, Cordova received the Congressional



Celestino Cordova, former U.S. Army Ranger and Korean War veteran, photographed in front of his home in New Haven.

Gold Medal from President Obama in Washington, D.C. in honor of the service of the Borinqueneers.

Cordova still lives in New Haven and at 91, remains an active and proud man.

It’s been quite a journey for a farm boy from Yabucoa, Puerto Rico.

STAFF SERGEANT CHARLES M. PICKETT



Former Staff Sgt. Charles M. Pickett operates an MK18 Bridge Erection Boat on the Helmand River in Afghanistan in April 2011.

In 2006, the military raised the maximum enlistment age to 42, which gave Charles M. Pickett “the opportunity to serve my country just like my grandfather and father had done.”

“I was older than everyone ... all the time,” says Pickett, who enlisted at 39. “Basically, I joined the Army to serve my country during a time of war. I lived in Boston when the twin towers fell. Years later I remember thinking, ‘What have I done to help win these wars?’”

So, Pickett interrupted his life - he’d been working as a journalist, editor and writer — to join up. “While it was hard, it was one of the best things I have ever done,” he says, and it continued a family tradition.

His grandfather, 2nd Lt. John F. Pickett, Sr., served in American General Headquarters in

France in World War I, and his father, Lt. John F. Pickett, Jr. served in the U.S. Navy Judge Advocate General Corps in the Pentagon during the Korean conflict.

Charles M. Pickett's military career nearly ended soon after it started. In March 2007, during basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, he "totally tore my ACL out of my right knee during the bayonet course."

While recovering, and fearing he'd be medically discharged, Pickett convinced the physical therapy department to allow him back into Initial Entry Training (IET). He recalls, "To be honest, I really had fun in basic the second time around. By then, I was used to drill sergeants yelling all the time."

Three months after he finished, Pickett was in Iraq, where he was part of Operation Iraqi Freedom with the 814th Multi-Role Bridge Company. He was deployed from November 2007 to August 2008.

The engineer company conducted dozens of bridge missions in central Iraq, including the Baghdadi Bridge on the Euphrates River near Al Asad Airbase, over the Ramadi Canal, and outside combat outpost COP Carver in Salman Pak over the Tigris River, southeast of Baghdad.

From August 2010 to August 2011, Pickett was part of Operation Enduring



Staff Sergeant Charles M. Pickett (former), Afghanistan and Iraq veteran photographed at The Sound School, where he now teaches English.

Freedom doing the same kind of work – assembling and maintaining military and float bridges, rafts, and long-term, lines-of-communication bridges.

"Veterans Day is for everyone who served our country in the military," he says. "It doesn't matter if you served in wartime or peacetime, if you deployed or were stateside. If you served, this special day is your day. Veterans Day is a celebration of life, a recognition of shared service and sacrifice for a country we love, and an annual day to bond with our military family – our brothers and sisters in arms."

After serving five years in the U.S. Army, he moved to New Haven to attend Southern Connecticut State University on the Post-9/11 GI Bill in August 2012. He started teaching English at The Sound School in August 2015.

He is commander of the VFW New Haven Post 12150, the American Legion New Haven Post 210, and VFW Department of Connecticut District Two, and serves on the New Haven Mayor's Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee. He is still missing his ACL.



2nd Lieutenant Robert C. Hart (left) with his brother Kenneth, who was a radioman and machine gunner aboard B-17 bombers, when they had the chance to spend time together at Amiens/Glisy airfield in France in 1945.

SECOND LIEUTENANT ROBERT C. HART

The enthusiasm Robert C. Hart had for flying is matched only by the enthusiasm he has for life.

He flew 1,500 missions in the skies of Britain, France, and Germany during World War II, including his very first – on D-Day June 6, 1943.

Watching tracers from enemy ground fire rising through the clear night towards his C-47, Hart towed a glider carrying paratroopers over the Normandy coast and inland during Operation Overlord, codename for the invasion of

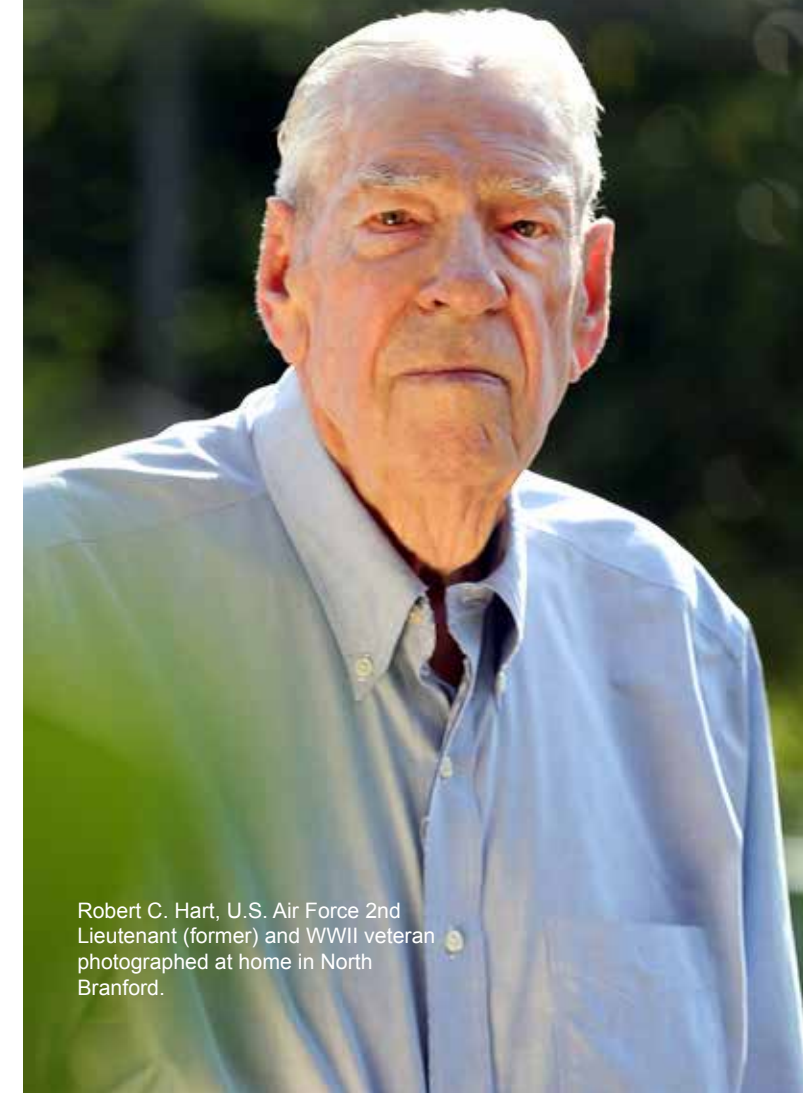
France that would eventually lead to the defeat of the Nazis in May 1945.

The glider detached to land in a field behind the front lines, and the paratroopers moved forward on foot to confront the Germans dug in near Saint-Lô.

Hart returned to his air base in England, to fly ammunition, food, even fuel for Patton's tanks throughout the rest of the war. On his return trips, he would often transport the wounded back to England.

At war's end, he flew a major to Germany. "On the trip back, they loaded my plane with French prisoners of war who had just been released and I flew them back to Paris. When we got there, a band was playing and all these guys piled out, and I just went down to the end of the runway and took off back to England."

During the war, he would sometimes get a pass to leave the base and was drawn to London. While in Hyde Park, a young woman reading on a park bench caught



Robert C. Hart, U.S. Air Force 2nd Lieutenant (former) and WWII veteran photographed at home in North Branford.

his eye. Her name was Marie and she was working as a translator after escaping Spain and the fascist regime of General Francisco Franco. He says, “She was beautiful.”

Hart returned home from the war in August of 1945, but in 1946 went back to England for Marie. They were married by a justice of the peace, and together returned again to America by ship. She would be his wife for 57 years until she passed in 2004. They would have one son.

Hart resumed his interrupted academic career at UConn and graduated with a degree in engineering in 1948. He designed machinery for the Pond’s Extract Company in Madison, and later worked as an engineer for the R. Donnelley & Sons printing company in Old Saybrook. He then became a land surveyor, self-employed until he was in his early 90s. Just after the war, he’d applied to the airlines to be a pilot, but he remembers, “They said, ‘Don’t call us, we’ll call you!’” After the war, there were a lot of pilots who still wanted to fly.

“I loved flying ... just loved it. I enjoyed the war. Not many people can say that, because I was doing what I wanted to do. In fact, if somebody didn’t want to go one night, I’d raise my hand and say, ‘I’ll go!’”

Hart was born New Haven in 1921 and moved to Madison at the age of 10. It was in Madison that he first took to the skies as a child, taking a ride in a biplane out of Griswold Field. It cost a dollar. Now 98, he lives alone in North Branford and drives, shops, cooks, meets the guys for lunch, reads, and plays pool.

SERGEANT VICTOR BINKOSKI

Victor Binkoski was a freshman at Boston University, on a football scholarship, when a close friend was killed in the Vietnam War. That’s when he made the decision to enlist.

“I couldn’t understand why I was home, going to college, and other people were dying in the war,” he says.

It was a decision that wasn’t particularly popular with many of his family or friends.

Not long after Thanksgiving 1967, he found himself in Loc Ninh, 75 miles north of Saigon near the Cambodian border, with the 1st Infantry Division (“The Big Red One”), 1st Battalion, 2nd Regiment. In his year of service there, which began Dec. 5, 1967, he would earn two Purple Hearts, the Bronze Star, and the Air Medal for 50 helicopter combat assaults.

Binkoski was also awarded the Distinguished Service Cross (second only to the Medal of Honor) for heroic action on Sept. 11, 1968 when, under heavy rocket-propelled grenade and automatic weapons fire, he carried a wounded machine gunner to safety, and upon returning to his platoon, found the platoon leader had been killed and the platoon sergeant seriously wounded. He regrouped the platoon and led a four-man team to rescue other casualties who were lying exposed to enemy fire. Using himself as a decoy, he allowed the other men to rescue two injured soldiers. After



Victor Binkoski in August 1968, about to establish the Night Defensive Perimeter outside Ben Luc, Vietnam.

providing covering fire for the rescue, he returned to the rest of the platoon and led an assault on the North Vietnamese position, forcing them to retreat, and capturing a recoilless rifle that is now on display at Fort Riley, Kansas.

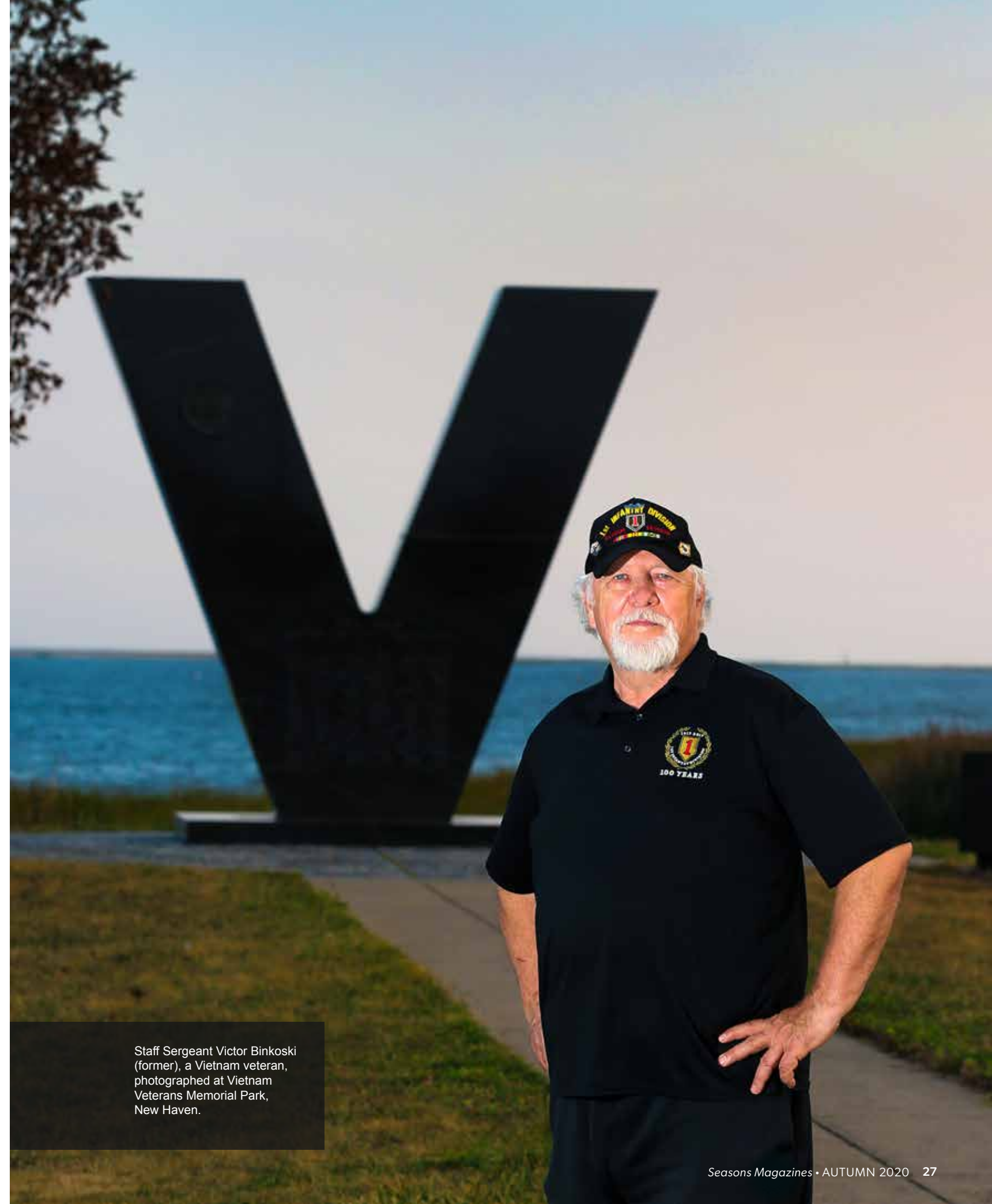
Upon returning home after his tour at the age of 20, he finished his service as a drill sergeant E-6, and was awarded the Outstanding Drill Sergeant Trainer Award at Fort Jackson, S.C.

After his discharge, he married his junior high school sweetheart, Donna Sweeney, who had sent him a letter a day throughout his 365 days serving in Vietnam.

They raised three children, while Binkoski worked as director of labor relations in New Haven, as director of personnel and civil service in Hamden, and as director of personnel at SCSU. Now retired, he lives in Bethany, volunteers at a soup kitchen, and helps fellow veterans who need rides or other assistance.

Some of his memories are painful – he lost a few comrades in Vietnam – but he says, “I would never give up one minute of the time I spent in the service. I would do the same thing again. On Veterans Day, we celebrate all those people who have served to protect our freedoms and the freedoms of people all over the world.”

Looking towards the Vietnam Veterans Memorial he helped to create, he says, “I spend Veterans Day here. I get here at dawn, say a prayer, and talk to my guys.” 🇺🇸



Staff Sergeant Victor Binkoski (former), a Vietnam veteran, photographed at Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park, New Haven.

Will You Love Me Forever?

When adopting or fostering a pet, there's a lot to consider

By RENEE DININO

When we're kinder to animals, we're kinder to people. I cannot take credit for that phrase, but I say it every single day. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, things were "normal" in the animal world. Shelters were open; rescues were fostering and doing their best to get animals adopted safely, and were watching out for neglect and abuse cases. Animal control officers were answering calls, picking up strays or dumped pets, arresting animal abusers – you know, "normal."

When the pandemic hit, it seemed as if a magic wand spread its reach across the state, edge to edge, over all municipal shelters, rescues, and pet adoption facilities. All dogs and cats were placed in homes or foster homes. And then, nothing. Absolutely nothing. In fact, calls to animal control reduced drastically.

When I spoke with several animal control officers across the state – Sherry DeGenova at Hartford Police Animal Control, Laura Burban at the Dan Cosgrove Animal Shelter, Roz Nenninger and Dana Natrillo at Wolcott Animal Control & Wolcott Police Department, and Deborah Monde at Wethersfield Animal Control and Police Department – they all said the same thing: in fact, even invoking the same phrase: "eerily quiet."

Everybody, it seemed, had room in their homes for pets, finally! An actual positive side effect of COVID-19. But one question rang through my brain, "Will you love me forever?"

It's certainly tempting to adopt a furry new best friend. You won't be alone; they'll keep you company. But it's oh so much more than that. A real concern for many animal advocates, and what we are seeing now, is the result of mass fast adoptions/fostering and the realization that the right pet may not have been put in the right home, whether it be for

personality, lifestyle, or financial reasons.

In one of my many conversations with DeGenova, she said, "One thing I always ask is, 'What is the plan when your life goes back to normal?'"

So, what do you need to know before you adopt or foster? There are some serious questions you need to ask yourself before offering to house a dog or cat.

"Are you willing to invest 12 to 15 years of your life to a dog? Do you honestly have the quality time to give to a dog? Does it make sense in your current living situation? Why do you want a dog?" asks Brian Rogers of Leash on Life LLC, who has been a K9 behavioral trainer for 25 years.

Monde, of the Wethersfield Police Department and K9 Solutions of Connecticut LLC, who is a certified search and rescue canine handler, offers tips for new pet owners bringing an animal into their homes for the first time.

"Allow the animal some time to figure things out safely," she says. "If you have another pet in the home, take as much time as needed to blend the animals into their new pack. This does not happen with one meet and greet. Consider training and teach the new pet the boundaries in the home."

Susan M. Wollschlager, marketing and communications manager at the Connecticut Humane Society, agrees.

"Have lots of patience and understanding," she says. "Give them calm and quiet as they

settle in." She adds, "We don't always know their backstories, so just be as understanding as possible as they try to learn your routines and their place in the family."

Also keep in mind when adopting a cat, there are differences between indoor and outdoor living arrangements.

There are many things to consider before taking in a pet, even in a foster situation.

"Fostering is so very important to the rescue cycle.

Without fosters, we can't rescue animals," says Shannon Lewie, volunteer and rescue coordinator at Kenway's Cause. "Fostering is a commitment, and often for an undetermined amount of time. As a foster, you play an important part of the adoption process because you are the most familiar with the animal's behavior, needs and wants."

Jody Smaglis, Kenway Cause's event coordinator, says foster owners "should be confident in knowing they can commit to the care and well-being of the pet until the pet is adopted. They should also be prepared to fall in love with the pet and become a foster failure." (Despite the negative name, foster failures refers to temporary pet parents or families who fall in love with their foster pets and decide to adopt them.)

People who foster pets are tasked with giving the animals as stable an environment as they can, says Rogers.

"You should also be able to understand behaviors so you can give a clear description of how the dog acts while fostering. Pack change is the hardest thing on a dog, in my opinion. The last thing we want to do is add more stress as a foster parent," he says.

And if there are already pets or children in the home?

"Transition slowly and establish rules and boundaries," advises Lewie. "With existing pets, it's important to make them feel that they are still equally as important and loved.

Do not leave them unattended until you feel it is safe to do so."

There are, of course, various expenses that come with taking in a pet, including vaccines.

"Vaccines and parasite prevention protocols should be tailored to the lifestyle and environment but should never be ignored or forgotten," says Dr. Joshua Atz of Manchester Veterinary Clinic, noting rabies vaccinations are particularly important for many.

On average, cat owners can expect to spend at least \$750 on a healthy kitten in the first year of its life, estimates Atz. That includes neutering, basic health testing, vaccines, and food. Basic needs for a dog can run between \$1,000 and \$1,500 in the first year. In subsequent years, if they're healthy, cats cost about \$400 annually while dogs can be between \$500 and \$1,500 depending on food choices and

levels of parasite prevention, he says.

"Except for breeding animals, [spaying or neutering is] always recommended for disease prevention, reproduction control, and avoiding behavioral issues," Atz says.

In all my years as a pet owner, I've always had a rescue in one way or another. Luke is my current dog – well, truth be told, I'm one of those people; he's my son. My four-legged, handsome son from the streets of Hartford, rescued by Animal Control Officer DeGenova. I can tell you with certainty, adopting a pet is rewarding and brings love and joy to your world, but it is not always picture perfect. You must work with your pet, with your spouse, children, or roommates to make it a positive and enjoyable living situation.

One thing to consider is whether you rent or own your home, and how much space you have.

"Pets should be obtained with considerations of your living situations. If you get a dog that requires a lot of exercise, then a condo may not be a good fit. Same with renting, as the landlords may have animal clauses in the lease that prevents certain animals," says Monde.

Jody Macrina of East Hartford-based Protectors of Animals notes, "Rescues should require landlord permission from the renter." She also suggests renters "should make sure their insurance carrier does not have restrictions on the number of pets or breed."

Like everything else, shelters, rescue groups, and foster programs have been affected by the pandemic.

"It was always busy, but since COVID-19 we have seen an uptick in the need for people to owner-release animals, and they need help financially for medical issues regarding their animals and they need pet foods," says Burban, director of Dan Cosgrove Animal Shelter and animal control officer for Branford. "I think the needs financially are increasing because people do not have the finances to care for the animals, and I think we will keep seeing the need for animals to be owner-released."

Burban adds she's seen an increase in the number of dogs, cats, and other critters being abandoned or dumped.

There's also an increase in animal abuse being reported across the state. Desmond's Army Animal Law Advocates have a full roster of court dates and cases to be the voice for the voiceless.

Dr. Alexis Soutter of Manchester Veterinary Clinic perhaps puts it best: "It's tempting to adopt a new pet right now, when social activities are so limited, and we are spending more time at home. But that will not always be the case! Do you have the appropriate time to devote to the species and breed you are considering? When thinking about this, consider the time needed to train the pet, play with them, and groom them, and not just now, but in six months or five years or 10 years."

So, I ask you again, on behalf of all would-be pets: Will you love me forever? 🐾



Renee DiNino and her dog Luke.





Love

In the Time of COVID

Engaged couples show
creativity and flexibility in wedding planning

Written by JOEL SAMBERG / Photographed by TODD FAIRCHILD

Planning a wedding has always been an emotional jumble of considerations and decisions. Where, when, how many guests, kids or no kids, band or deejay, buffet or table service, big or small bridal party...

Now throw a pandemic into the mix.

With the need for face masks, social distancing, state-mandated crowd restrictions, and other challenges, couples getting married today face a set of circumstances completely unlike those of friends and relatives who tied the knot even a year ago.

For more than half a year, engaged couples have had to deal with the threat of coronavirus and the menace of COVID-19. Various reports from across the country share stories of subcontractors who self-quarantine after every event and couples who require their guests to sign liability forms. One wedding planner in the Midwest predicts that weddings will evolve into superspreader events. A wedding in Maine, held in early August, was linked to 170 coronavirus cases, making the national news. For many, deliberations surrounding wedding plans have prompted frustration, anxiety, and even fear.

But in Connecticut, it appears that COVID-era weddings have a decidedly different effect: they've given young newlyweds a reason to celebrate their own spirit and resolve, with many couples in the Nutmeg State focusing on acceptance and positivity.

BACK TO NATURE

Nature lovers Jeffrey Morton and Rebecca Paquette became engaged in the summer of 2019 during a hike to a bucolic waterfall. It was a very Jeffrey-and-Rebecca thing to do. Which is why relatives and friends were not at all surprised when their original inspiration was to get married this summer in a rustic lodge on Lake George in the Adirondack Mountains.



Jeffrey Morton and Rebecca Paquette

The pandemic had other plans.

Rebecca's parents' house in Glastonbury, where she grew up, borders a heavily wooded forest, and their backyard became the venue for this summer's wedding. Jeffrey had already hand-made countrified decorations for the Adirondack affair – but those decorations were a perfect fit for the Glastonbury setting.

"In the early spring, we went back and forth so many times, trying to make a decision about canceling or keeping our original plans. Rules about the pandemic seemed to change by the day," Rebecca recalls. It soon became apparent that in the interest of safety, the guest list would have to shrink to a fraction of its original size. "There definitely were some tears, but once we made the final decision, we moved forward and went with our Plan B, which ended up being what everyone agreed was a beautiful and intimate ceremony."

They were always aware that their decision affected dozens of people, from guests – some of whom had already made Adirondack plans – to suppliers, some of whom had already taken sizable deposits. Rebecca and Jeffrey knew they stood a chance of losing money and disappointing friends. But all deposits were transferred to another date in 2021, in Lake George, where the couple will have what they’ll call a vow renewal ceremony. What’s more, they intend to invite everyone who came to the Glastonbury backyard and also those who had to be omitted from the original list.

Rebecca, a registered nurse, and Jeffrey, an aerospace mechanical design engineer, now live in Manchester and look back on their wedding as a success. “After all,” Rebecca muses, “there is no rule book for a pandemic wedding. But we pulled it off. We’re proud of that.”

TAKING CONTROL

When Margaret Thibault and Shawn Dyer look back on their late June wedding at home in Bristol, it is likely that two things in particular will stand out. First, how fun and intimate it was, and secondly, the weirdness of having one of the wedding officiates conduct the ceremony from an iPad several states away.

Both the bride and the groom work at the high-pressure, high-tech firm Pratt & Whitney – Margaret as a demand planner, Shawn as chief information security officer. So having a relatively low-pressure, low-tech event at home was a welcome change.

“The original plan was to have more than a hundred people at the Pond House in Elizabeth Park. Our decision to cancel was very emotional,” shares Margaret. “But once it was made, it felt like we took control over our destiny. It helped us remain optimistic, as if we had reached an acceptance phase after a period of grieving. That helped us realize that the most important thing was being married and spending our lives together.”

The Pond House was accommodating to the change in plans, as were most other vendors, with the exception of the cruise line on which they had booked an Alaskan honeymoon. Margaret and Shawn were offered only credit that has to be used by July 2021 to book a cruise departing in 2022, which, of course, is not a guaranteed option.

Every relationship has surprises. With the Dyers, it began on a mutual vacation in Bermuda a little more than a year ago. Margaret was admiring a blue lagoon, turned around to say something to her boyfriend Shawn, and saw him on his knees, holding a ring. The surprises continued 48 hours before their revised wedding when one of their out-of-state officiates learned that new travel restrictions forbade him from traveling to Connecticut.

“In life, sometimes you have to roll with the punches.



Margaret Thibault and Shawn Dyer

We got really good at adapting to the unexpected and maintaining a good sense of humor,” she says.

A CHANGE OF PLANS

Usually when the photographer calls before a wedding, it’s just to confirm a few details. When Cecilia Menendez and her fiancé Franz Michel received a call from their photographer seven weeks before their own event, it was to tell them about new CDC guidelines that would affect their plans.

The wedding ceremony took place at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Hartford, but the reception, which was to have included 200 people at the Madison Beach Hotel in Madison, was canceled entirely. Cecilia and Franz took several guests to Artisan, the noted bistro in West Hartford’s Delamar Hotel, which had outdoor seating.

“There were several times we had a screw it! moment, where we almost decided to elope. We thought we’d go to the church with two witnesses, and that would be that,” says Cecilia, who is originally from Avon and is now a Catholic outreach missionary for Brown University in Providence, RI. She and Franz, who grew up in Norwalk and works at Otis Elevator, are thankful that most of their vendors were gracious about the unprecedented change in their original plans and caused very few financial problems for the young couple. (The helpful photographer stayed on board for the revised blueprint.)

Cecilia says that prior to the re-envisioned nuptials, she and Franz prayed a lot and constantly spoke with family and friends for support and advice.

“A large part of my family was to have flown in from Argentina, so I’d love to have some sort of celebration with them in the future,” Cecilia muses. “But I wonder if it will feel odd in two years to put on a wedding dress again. Still, I’m open to it. And if there’s no risk then, maybe we’ll go

back to inviting 200 people!”

Even if that’s the case, though, one thing the pandemic taught the Michels is that simple is often better – and safer. “If we do something in the future,” she admits, “it will look different from the original plan. It will be much more casual.”

PUPPY LOVE

Jen Bunnell and Kevin Siegel will be Mr. and Mrs. Siegel in October, thanks to Andrew.

Andrew had nothing to do with the pandemic or the fact that the young couple decided to stick to their original wedding date. But without a doubt, he set the whole thing in motion.

Andrew is a springer spaniel. Kevin took the dog along on his first date with Jen, who fell in love with both of them.

Jen is a NICU nurse, and Kevin works for the veterinarian to which her family always bought their pets. It wasn’t long before fate intervened, and a wedding was being planned.



Cecilia Menendez and her husband Franz Michel



Jen Bunnell and Kevin Siegel. Below: Their springer spaniel named Andrew.



“After a while, there were so many things in place for this fall – so many ideas, plans, details, and confirmed participants – that it seemed as if 2020 was our year! COVID was not going to stop that!”

They moved the venue to her parents’ backyard in Wethersfield and pared down the guest list. The caterer, Matthew’s Catering, has remained onboard with face

masks and gloves, guests will be required to sanitize their hands at the beginning of the food line, and attendants will plate the food so that no one has to touch serving utensils.

“Our family and friends have been supportive,” Jen says. “They all expected these concessions from watching the news, and it’s no big deal.”

One thing that has changed is the honeymoon. They canceled their plans to go to Charleston, SC and instead

will spend some time alone in the Vermont home of a family friend. For them, it’s just another small concession. Despite the pandemic, Jen and Kevin never stopped believing that 2020 would be a special time in their lives. Especially since Andrew will be one of the guests.

JUMPING THROUGH HOOPS

Tanisha Vasquez and Chris Hayden used what might be called a logistical workout and a jolt of adrenaline to make their wedding plans work out just the way they had hoped. It makes perfect sense; after all, Tanisha is a gymnastics instructor for youngsters and Chris is a fire department paramedic. They know how to jump through hoops and keep things ticking.

The only change to their wedding – albeit a major one – is that it will be one year after the original midsummer 2020 date. The Wallingford couple will still get married at the Saltwater Farm Vineyard in Stonington with most of their original vendors and all of their original guests.

“We found a new date next year that everyone was able to commit to,” Tanisha reports proudly, “so we decided to go with it. If we stuck to this summer and scaled it down for the



Chris Hayden and Tanisha Vasquez

pandemic, it would not have been our dream wedding. I will say, though, that as the original date came close, it got tough for us, emotionally. So we still celebrated by going out to dinner that night and enjoying each other’s company.”

Both Tanisha and Chris believe the pandemic will be with us for a while but remain cautiously optimistic that after a one-year delay, the wedding will come off as intended. They currently plan on having neither masks nor an occupancy restriction. Nevertheless, they will continue to count all sorts of blessings, one of which was meeting before the pandemic. Had that not happened, they may have never met at all. “Just going out with my fiancé is hard these days,” Tanisha acknowledges, referring to the fact that dating is quite a challenge today. “Movies? Bowling? No. I’m glad we started going out when we did!”

They may wish to thank the pandemic for waiting as long as it did to arrive (that’s one way of looking at it). But because of the one-year delay in their wedding, they’d have to jump through a lot of hoops in order to say something really nice about it. 🍷

Joel and his wife Bonnie will soon celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary, and their 10th as Connecticut residents. Joel, a frequent Seasons contributor, spent 10 years as a professional writer in New York and 20 in New Jersey.



Taylor Kemp Photography

SEASONS



Classic New England dishes
with a modern flair

279 Avon Mountain Road • Avon
Reservations Recommended: 860.269.0240
Facebook.com/AOFHRestaurant
SeasonsRestaurantAvon.com

CONVERSATION STARTS EVERYTHING.

Since 1992, Forum-goers have heard more than 400 brilliant, funny and provocative experts and celebrities give their take on a range of topics. From politics and technology to food and global affairs. It’s only by listening to different sides of the same story that a conversation can begin. And a community can come together for positive change.

CTForum.org — New conversations begin Jan. 14.



Conscious Decisions

Patients appreciate the benefits of “wide-awake” surgery

By CAROL LATTER / Photography courtesy of UConn Health

For the past four years, patients with hand and wrist pain or dysfunction have been able to find the relief they need at UConn Health – without the inconvenience or risk of complications often associated with sedation and general anesthesia.

Rather than using a traditional surgical approach, physicians Anthony Parrino, Joel Ferreira, and Craig Rodner – part of the “hand, wrist, and elbow” team at UConn Health’s Department of Orthopedics and Sports Medicine in Farmington – offer “wide-awake surgery” to many of their patients.

This technique, more formally known as WALANT (wide-awake, local anesthesia, no tourniquet), can be used to treat conditions like carpal tunnel syndrome, trigger finger, nerve compression, nail bed injuries, and arthritis. It can also be used to repair ligaments and tendons, repair bone fractures, and remove masses from the hand or wrist.

So how does it work? Prior to incision, the patient’s hand or wrist is numbed up with a small injection of lidocaine – a local anesthetic – and epinephrine, which extends the action of the lidocaine and acts as a vasoconstrictor to control bleeding. No tourniquet or IV is needed. Once the surgery is complete, the incision is bandaged, and the patient’s blood pressure is monitored for a short time before they head home.

Dr. Parrino, who sees patients in both Farmington and Southington, says performing the surgery without sedation or general anesthesia offers a number of important benefits. The first is convenience. Patients aren’t required have a physical beforehand, have preoperative bloodwork done, or temporarily discontinue medications like blood thinners. There’s no need for patients to stop eating or drinking at midnight the evening before their surgery – a huge plus for diabetics, since fasting can interfere with their blood sugar levels.

“I also tell patients that they have the option to drive themselves to and from surgery, if they like, so they don’t have to depend on a ride,” Dr. Parrino says.

There are other benefits, too. Compared with traditional hand and wrist surgery, patients generally have less bruising and swelling, need fewer pain medications, and find recovery quicker and less painful. And for patients with

medical conditions that make them high-risk for anesthesia, WALANT makes it possible for them to have procedures that they wouldn’t otherwise be medically cleared for.

Dr. Parrino says if the procedure involves fracture fixation or tendon repair, having the patient awake allows the surgeon to test the repair during the procedure. “For instance, during trigger finger surgery, I have the patient make a full fist to assess motion. If they have general anesthesia, I am not able to check that active motion and make any needed adjustment.”

The surgery itself is quick; patients are generally in and out of the facility in about an hour and a half. And because they don’t experience the common side effects of general anesthesia – like nausea, vomiting, and fatigue – healthy patients can return to their regular daily activities right after the procedure. Some can even return to work the same or following day, depending on the type of job they have.

Conservative approaches, like braces or injections, are generally tried first, but if those things fail, surgery becomes the next best option.

“And if you come to see us for a carpal tunnel or a trigger finger, 95% of the time, we’re going to recommend a wide-awake procedure for it, as opposed to going with general anesthesia or sedation,” says Dr. Parrino.

AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH

Wide-awake surgery is not common in the Northeast, and while it is available in some metropolitan centers like New York City, surgeons offering it in Connecticut are few and far between.

Dr. Parrino first began practicing the technique during a one-year fellowship at the University of Rochester in upstate New York, after completing medical school at Mount Sinai in Manhattan and his residency at UConn Health. As a resident, he says, “I didn’t really see any surgery where patients are completely awake, and the surgeons are just using local anesthesia.”

However, on the first day of his fellowship in Rochester, he found himself in the “wide-awake room,” where surgeons were doing 10 to 12 such procedures each day. “I would say half of the procedures I did there were wide-awake,” he says.

When he was hired by UConn Health after his fellowship,

UConn HEALTH



When Dr. Joel Ferreira (top) and Dr. Anthony Parrino (left) – who both trained as UConn orthopedic surgery residents – returned to join the faculty, they brought their fellowship training in wide-awake hand surgery to establish the procedure at UConn Health. Photos by Peter Morenus (top) and Stan Godlewski (left)

“one of the things that I wanted to do was to start a wide-awake surgery program. With the help of the orthopedic chairman and some of the staff in the surgery center, we were able to do that, and we’ve continued to build it up.”

His new position gave him the chance to work with Dr. Rodner, as he did during his residency, and with Dr. Ferreira, who got his medical degree at Boston University School of Medicine, and also completed his residency at UConn.

Dr. Ferreira recalls that while he did his hand fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, “I always wanted to come back and teach residents here.” He practiced in Pittsburgh for one year but when a job opened up at UConn, “I took it immediately.”

Today, Dr. Parrino and Dr. Ferreira – an assistant professor of orthopedic surgery – spend a half-day most Fridays conducting wide-awake surgery in Farmington, with each doing approximately 25 of these procedures each month. Dr. Rodner now performs this innovative surgery as well.

Dr. Ferreira says many patients, especially those with underlying conditions like diabetes or cardiac issues, find the opportunity to avoid general anesthesia ideal, “not only for the convenience, but for the safety, too.”

One patient who needed procedures on both hands chose to be asleep for the first surgery, but experienced significant nausea and vomiting afterwards. She chose wide-awake surgery for the second, and it turned out so well that “she was kind of kicking herself that she didn’t do straight local the first time,” Dr. Ferreira says.

WALANT is also less expensive than traditional surgery, since patients don’t require an anesthesiologist.

“IT WAS ABSOLUTELY AMAZING”

If you’re wondering what it would be like to be wide awake when your surgeon makes an incision in your hand or wrist and then gets to work correcting whatever has gone wrong inside, just ask patient Janet Smart of Coventry, who underwent not one but three wide-awake surgeries within a short period of time. She can’t say enough about how impressed she was with this new surgical approach. “It was absolutely amazing,” she says.

A few years ago, Smart found that her both hands were painful and numb. She tried hand braces, ice packs and massages, but nothing improved her condition. In early 2019, she finally complained to her primary physician, who told her she was actually losing muscle in her hands and would probably need surgery. Smart then visited Dr. Ferreira at his Storrs office, located about 10 minutes from her home.

After a nerve conduction study showed that she had carpal tunnel syndrome in both hands, Dr. Ferreira offered her the WALANT option. Recalling a bad reaction to anesthesia in her teens, she agreed.

“Dr. Ferreira explained it all to me and drew me a picture of what he was going to do. I love learning about medical things, so it was great being awake during the procedure,” Smart says.

Dr. Ferreira says team members do their best to help put patients at ease. “We have two nurses, Barbra White and Andréa Hunter, who are amazing. And Christine Moran is our wonderful surgical technician,” he adds. “They’re kind of our

unsung heroes, because they chat with the patients throughout the whole thing. They’re very calming for anyone who might be feeling nervous.”

Smart was awed by her wide-awake experiences. “The nurses are great. They have music playing in the background, they’re taking your blood pressure, and they’re talking with the doctor. It was just awesome,” she recalls. “Then you get up off the table, you walk down the hall, they monitor your blood pressure for a while, you get your discharge papers, and you drive home.”

She adds, “It was great. No pain. You take a Motrin before you go to bed and the next day, you’re fine.”

Smart’s positive experience is pretty much the norm, according to Dr. Parrino. Although some patients have “looked at me like I was crazy when I first suggested it,” once they learned about the rationale for WALANT and the steps involved, most have been willing to take the leap. “The overall reaction from patients has been very good,” he says, joking, “I have not had anyone run out of the room.”

Prior to surgery, patients are kept in the same general area, separated by curtains. “And even though they can’t see each other, they can hear the people coming back from surgery and realize they’re not in pain – they’re really very comfortable, and they’re talking and laughing. The response from patients after we’re done is, ‘That wasn’t bad at all.’ I haven’t had anyone say they would not do it awake again.”

Because numbing medication is injected only where it’s needed, patients retain full functionality of their hand or wrist, he notes. “They may be a little tingly, but the motion still works,” he says. Once the surgery is complete, the hand or wrist is placed in a padded wrap but it’s not very bulky. “We want them to move their fingers and use their hands for light, normal daily activities. And then on post-op Day 3, we typically will take the wrap off, switch to a Band-Aid, and have them try to get back into their normal routine.”

And what about the recovery period? “Depending on the procedure, there are usually some restrictions for 10 to 14 days until the stitches come out,” Dr. Ferreira says. At the two-week mark, “patients might still be a little sore, but they don’t necessarily have restrictions.”

While some patients may experience some discomfort for up to six weeks, Smart says her first carpal tunnel procedure restored so much function to her hand that she was able to get the other one done within a month. This summer, she returned for a wide-awake trigger finger release.

The surgeries have allowed her to return to her normal activities, after years of dysfunction and pain. “I work part time for the parks and rec department in our town. I clean and mop floors, and I do gardening over there and at home,” she says. “So it’s pretty much back to normal for me, thanks to my dear doctor.” 📸

Carol Latter is Seasons Magazines editor and a freelance writer living in Simsbury.

Hear more about wide-awake hand surgery from Drs. Ferreira and Parrino in the UConn Health Pulse podcast, <https://h.uconn.edu/wide-awake-podcast>



It’s now easier than ever to get the medications you need to manage your complex health conditions. The new Specialty Pharmacy at UConn Health offers unparalleled support and services, assisting you with everything from financial assistance to navigating through your insurance benefits, coordinating with your providers, and managing refills. We work closely with your health care team to support you and your care every step of the way.

We currently offer specialty pharmacy services for all UConn Health clinics. We have specialty pharmacy liaisons working hand in hand with our patients in the following clinics to provide full concierge service for your prescription needs:

Dermatology • Oncology • Pulmonary • Rheumatology • Sickle Cell • Endocrinology

Pick your medications up at our pharmacy, conveniently located near the UConn Health campus in Farmington, or have them delivered to your home at no extra cost.

270 Farmington Avenue, Suite 108
Farmington CT 06030

833-777-4276

Learn more at health.uconn.edu/specialty-pharmacy

**UConn
HEALTH**

Winter fun - just a click away!



Register online for programs now!

Available for
kids ages 3+, teens
and adults at
skisundown.com!

Purchase season
passes by Oct. 31st
and save up to
\$100 each!



OPEN UNTIL 10PM NIGHTLY • 100% SNOWMAKING COVERAGE • GROOMED 2X A DAY

New Hartford, CT / 860-379-7669 / skisundown.com

HOME



The greenhouses at Elizabeth Park are magnificent historic structures that date from the 1890s and have no automation.
Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Park Conservancy.

Growing Greener

The ins and outs of building your own greenhouse

Written by **JOEL SAMBERG**

One spinoff of the COVID-19 pandemic – beyond the mad rush on toilet paper – is a spike in puttering around the house, both indoors and out.

In addition to a heightened interest in home renovations, an increasing number of people have started gardens – both because they’ve found themselves with more time on their hands at home, and because of a desire to be more self-sufficient when it comes to their food supply.

Growing your own flowers and produce does seem like a no-brainer. Many people find that it’s relatively easy to manage a small garden by themselves or with the help of their kids, the supplies and materials are quite inexpensive, it seems like an environmentally friendly thing to do (as opposed to buying items shipped from hundreds or thousands of miles away), and it helps save

money that might otherwise be spent at nurseries and grocery stores.

But because Connecticut has a relatively short growing season, some folks have given thought to ways of extending it – in short, buying or building a greenhouse. And why not? In addition to allowing people to plant and harvest vegetables beyond the normal growing season (we fall into USDA plant hardiness zones 5-7), greenhouse owners can also get an early jump on cultivating flower seedlings that will add color and variety to any home landscape.

Rosemary Aldridge, consulting horticulturist for the Elizabeth Park Conservancy, frequently overhears visitors who pass by the park’s four greenhouses – which are accessible only to Conservancy volunteers and staff members and to City of Hartford personnel.



Richard and Lynne Creed's greenhouse in Farmington.

“People peek in and say how much they’d love to have a greenhouse of their own at home,” she shares. After all, when the park’s thousands of colorful flowers and ornamental bushes bloom during parts of the spring, summer and fall, there is no denying the feeling of peace and harmony that blooms right along with them.

But an informal survey of several homeowners in Connecticut who already have a greenhouse, or have considered it, shows that for the most part, having one in the backyard or attached to the house isn’t always as peaceful or harmonious as it may appear. For better or worse, that’s because of the maintenance and expense involved.

“It’s a wonderful idea to have one, but you must go into it with your eyes open because it’s a huge commitment in time and money,” Aldridge cautions.

To be run properly, greenhouses require constant sources of water, electricity for cooling in the summer and heating in the winter, a solid foundation, fans, a humidifier, window shades and other functional and mostly automatic

components – more components, in fact, than most amateurs realize are required.

The greenhouses at Elizabeth Park are magnificent historic structures that date from the 1890s and have no automation. Aldridge is quick to remind anyone who wants to volunteer for the Conservancy that they can do so, and get a first-hand look and feel of what working in a true-blue greenhouse is all about.

Many homeowners who have a greenhouse (while not always of Elizabeth Park vintage, they’re usually from long ago) let their structures remain on their properties even though they rarely, if ever, use them as real greenhouses. In some cases, they’re turned into sunrooms. Why people keep the structures around is often a case of historical pride: there are many greenhouses that are just too beautiful to relinquish. Sometimes, a homeowner will even find a source of financial income, albeit small, to warrant holding onto their distinctive glass shelters.

Richard and Lynne Creed of Farmington check many

of those boxes. Richard, who owns a manufacturing company, and Lynne, a retired CPA, have a greenhouse that was built in 1927 on the former Winchell Smith estate on the Farmington River. Their gorgeous greenhouse is a timepiece, a reminder of how much care used to go into the design of such garden centerpieces. But the couple did have to replicate quite a number of components due to the structure’s age. According to Richard, every decision was made with enormous care so that the original architectural and aesthetic character was maintained.

In the old days, Richard explains, greenhouses like his required the full-time care of what were often called “yardmen” who had to attend to them seven days a week. “Everyone thinks they would love to own a greenhouse – until they do,” Richard says. He mentions the need to periodically replace the soil, to keep up with pest control, to be vigilant to avoid frozen pipes in the winter, and enough additional responsibilities to make anyone wilt.

“Lynne and I choose our battles wisely in terms of how far to go to sustain our greenhouse in the manner in which it was originally intended. Generally, we use it now primarily in the spring to cultivate very forgiving leafy greens. In truth, these days it’s not much more than a very expensive lawn ornament, and it’s not for the faint of heart.”

One idea that made it just a little more enjoyable recently for the Creeds was when they found a commercial gardener who wanted to use their greenhouse to prepare hundreds of unique flowerpots. The gardener paid a small fee for the privilege, and would have returned to do it again, but she moved to a local farm when her business grew to include crops.

Nora Howard is aware of many Connecticut home

greenhouses from the past, including the one she grew up with in Avon, owned by her mother, Elinor Oakes.

“My mom always had flowers in the house, many of which were nurtured in the greenhouse. I never actually worked in it myself – it was totally mom’s thing – but I loved the humidity and the feel of the soil and all the scents of everything growing. It was very special,” she says.

The greenhouse was heated by oil. When oil prices climbed precipitously in the 1970s, Oakes decided to cut back. But Howard remembers it with fondness. While still standing, it is now used only for storage.

Howard’s familiarity with greenhouses has its roots in her work with garden clubs and historical societies. Currently the historian for both the Town of Avon and Avon Congregational Church, she is past president of the Garden Club of Hartford and former director of the Avon and Wethersfield Historical Societies. She has documented several homes that have greenhouses for the Smithsonian Archives of American Gardens.

Howard also has friends with old greenhouses, some of whom gave up on them when the maintenance became too much, and others who, like Richard Creed once did, rent them out. She doesn’t think she could be convinced now to build one of her own, though she most certainly feels a strong connection because of all her research.

It is commonly believed that greenhouses got their start in Italy. Several accounts assert that about 2,060 years ago, the emperor Tiberius was very particular about the fruit for which he yearned, and his minions developed a way to satisfy those anytime/anywhere cravings. The early storage units they built did not look like today’s greenhouses, mostly because they had wheels and were transported like a





J.C. van der Spek Greenhouse Services in Windsor Locks is home to this gorgeous greenhouse structure.



Hans van der Spek of J.C. van der Spek Greenhouse Services mostly sells and services commercial greenhouses. His few residential customers live in or near New York City and Boston.



Nora Howard grew up in a home with a greenhouse owned by her mother, Elinor Oakes.

would leave their greenhouses vulnerable to disorder and disrepair unless they hired someone to take care of them. That's why greenhouses have ceased to be front and center in Connecticut domestic living.

Despite all this, Hans van der Spek of J.C. van der Spek Greenhouse Services in Windsor Locks, stays very busy – although it must be noted that the greenhouses he sells and services are massive structures unfit for most suburban homes. In business for more than 35 years, van der Spek says his few residential customers live in or near

New York City and Boston. “They’re the kind of people who want to give everything a try,” he concedes, “even something as involved as a greenhouse.”

But van der Spek also adds that more people today, particularly since the pandemic began, are starting to be creative in their home gardens without the use of greenhouses. Many more homeowners, he has noticed, are starting to grow herbs and vegetables for the first time. “Many of us are being more creative in our backyards than ever before,” he says. “Now what’s needed is some more education so that people do it correctly. And we all need to find more time and energy to devote to this very special kind of activity.”

The end result of something like what van der Spek suggests may be three seasons – between April and October – of lush garden delights and sensations all around the state, and one season – between November and March – that perhaps is exactly the way New England winters were always meant to be. For better or worse. ■

Joel Samberg has landscaped his Avon home with raised beds, walkways and bordered gardens using only materials found around the property, which he says is a great option, given today's cost of living.



Since the pandemic hit close to home, many people have begun growing their own vegetables and herbs as a way to become more self-sufficient when it comes to their food supply.

From Unfinished... To Unbelievable!



Scot Haney

"These Guys
Are Great!"



Partners of the
Hartford Yard Goats

Connecticut's #1 resource for custom finished basements



229 Christian Lane · Berlin

860-829-8587

www.betterbuiltbasements.com



CT HIC-0674237 VISA

up to **\$5,000 off**
take 10% off your total purchase
Max. value \$5,000

With this coupon, Must be presented at time of estimate and will be honored with contracted work. Not valid with any other offers, specials, already contracted or previous work. Offer expires 10-15-20.

DA

Better Built Basements Brings Homeowners' Visions to Life

We're all spending more time at home these days and, for many, that means taking stock of what areas in the house could use upgrading or updating.

Maybe it's a newly inspired project, or maybe it's something that's been lingering on the to-do list for a while: whatever the motivation, renovating the basement is a great way to refresh a home, add instant value, and increase its livable space.

Homeowners may look at an unfinished or outdated basement and see a bare-bones space. The professionals at Better Built Basements see limitless potential – for basement renovations, bathrooms, stairs, custom bars, game rooms, home gyms, home offices, in-law suites and more. Their knowledgeable staff strives to bring customers' visions to life, even better than imagined, and they can design for all tastes and budgets.

"They turn unfinished into unbelievable," says WFSB Channel 3 meteorologist Scot Haney, who endorses the business. "They're a great company doing some really nice

work in people's homes. Very punctual, very professional, and they make a great basement."

Headquartered in Berlin, Better Built Basements was founded in 2008 James and Deborah Tranmer and Randal Michalek, who remain its owners today. Coming from home improvement backgrounds, they know firsthand the headaches that can plague renovation projects: dealing with contractors and designers, scheduling logistics and navigating miscommunication. Better Built Basements alleviates the stress, putting projects in the knowledgeable hands of professionals that will guide homeowners every step of the way. It's a one-stop shop for home finishing needs.

The company, which serves Connecticut and parts of Massachusetts, is increasingly popular with consumers and plans to continue expanding but remains true to its guiding vision – to transform basements, using superior products and workmanship to achieve 100% customer satisfaction.

The basement of your dreams is just a call or click away with Better Built Basements.



Call 860-829-8587 Today!

CONNECTICUT SUN



CONNECTICUTSUN.COM |  Mohegan Sun Arena



A Seat at the Table

A suffrage parade in 1916 in New Haven. Photo courtesy of Connecticut State Library

100 Years Ago, Female Trailblazers Fought For Their Right To Vote

By CINDY SIMONEAU

They wrote letters. They lobbied politicians. They conducted meetings.

They argued with friends and family members. They went on hunger strikes. They held rallies.

They were jeered by opponents. They marched down the streets of Connecticut's cities and towns. They were arrested.

Such were the actions of the Connecticut's suffragists, who like many of their sisters in solidarity across the United States, spent decades demanding local, state and national legislation providing women the right to vote.

More than 100 years ago their hard-fought efforts paid off with passage of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing women voting rights. While the national movement was launched decades before in the 19th century by the women's suffrage movement, it was action by the U.S. Congress in 1919 that helped proponents see that an end to the fight was near.

The start of the fight for women's suffrage often traces

its roots to the "Declaration of Sentiments" drawn up at the women's rights conference in Seneca Falls, N.Y., in July 1848 with Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott as leaders. The first woman suffrage amendment was introduced in Congress in 1878 by California Sen. Aaron Sargent. It was defeated but later reintroduced each year, often as the Susan B. Anthony amendment, until it was passed in 1919.

GRASSROOTS BEGINNINGS

The Connecticut Woman Suffrage Association (CWSA) was organized in Hartford in October 1869 by John Hooker and his wife, Isabella Beecher Hooker; her sister, and author, Harriet Beecher Stowe; another sister, Catharine E. Beecher; and Frances Ellen Burr.

Early CWSA efforts under the leadership of Isabella Beecher Hooker focused on letter writing and informational meetings. A more aggressive approach followed the election of Katharine Martha Houghton Hepburn (mother of the later famous actress) as head of CWSA in 1910.

Connecticut had its first suffrage parade in 1914 in Hartford attended by thousands of supporters.

Hepburn was followed by Katharine Ludington, portrait painter of Old Lyme, from 1918 until the organization was disbanded in 1921. Ludington went on to be a founding member of the League of Women Voters in the state.

The Connecticut Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage was holding its own rallies and meetings, including one at Hotel Taft in New Haven featuring statewide and national speakers.

On May 21, 1919 the U.S. House of Representatives passed the 19th Amendment, followed by the Senate, 56-25, two weeks later.

The role of the Constitution state in the constitutional fight for suffrage was marred by political control to the extent that the state finished in the race to ratification as the plus-one. With 36 states needed to reach the ¾ majority required to ratify, Connecticut finished No. 37 after Tennessee's action in August 1920 made the amendment the law of the land.

The first three states to act were Wisconsin, Illinois and Michigan, all on June 10, 1919.

POLITICAL OPPOSITION IN CONNECTICUT

In Connecticut, it was more a case of who was the holdout, rather than what was the hold up, in this state moving forward as a leader in ratification.

"Opposition was more political than ideological," explains University of Connecticut political science professor Ronald C. Schurin.

The delay in action was in the hands of then-Gov. Marcus Holcomb, of Southington, who refused to call a special session of the General Assembly before its planned January 1921 session. Backing Holcomb was a small group of fellow Republicans known as the "Big Six."

There was no bigger decision-maker for state political actions at the time than the powerful John Henry Roraback of Canaan. Roraback was the Republican State Central Committee Chairman from 1912 until his death in 1937 and Republicans dominated the state legislative political



The 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution:
"The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation."

J. Henry Roraback (left) at the 1932 Republican National Convention in Chicago with Daniel E. Pomeroy of New Jersey and Charles D. Hill of New York. (AP photo/ Courtesy Connecticut State Library Archives)



John Henry Roraback. Photo courtesy of Falls Village Canaan Historical Society.

[Bailey was elected chairman of Democratic State Central Committee in 1946, and later head of the Democratic National Committee] was a time when legislators very rarely broke with the party line and leaders,” says Schurin.

Despite appearances, Schurin says Roraback was known also as a good listener within party ranks and led more in step with others rather than in a dictatorial style.

Ideological opposition to women’s voting rights largely centered around family and social issues, including child labor laws, religion and Prohibition. The Connecticut Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage argued that much of the social progress gained by women in prior decades created additional burdens for women and that the responsibility for voting only added to these burdens.

After Tennessee’s action in August 1920, Holcomb finally called for a special session on Sept. 14, for the limited purpose of setting up a voting process for women in the 1920 presidential race. The legislators took matters in their own hands and pushed for ratification of the 19th

landscape, including control of the governor’s office.

“At that time, Connecticut was a very ‘Boss’-driven, dominated state. No Republican legislator would speak out in opposition to any party policy or practice in those days,” says Schurin, who has served as analyst and speech writer for the federal government.

From the perspectives of Roraback and Holcomb, the Republicans had plenty of voters and controlled state politics, so they had no need to add more, or even double, to the ranks by allowing women to vote.

In addition, Schurin points out that state political control was comprised of the many rural and farm communities of the state. Roraback was from a family of lawyers who dominated Litchfield County. Adding women might swell the voting ranks, thus the political power of the cities.

“During the Roraback years on into the shift to the John Bailey-led Democrats



Roraback (left) at the 1932 Republican National Convention, talking with James E. Davison of Michigan and Sen. Simeon Fess of Ohio. (AP photo/ Courtesy of Connecticut State Library)



Secretary of State Denise Merrill, dressed as a suffragist, addresses a town hall launch of the Centennial Women’s Suffrage in the House Chamber of the General Assembly at the State Capitol in Hartford on Sept. 12, 2019. Merrill and Lt. Gov. Susan Bysiewicz, seated, co-chaired the Connecticut Women’s Suffrage Centennial Commission with Annie Lamont, the governor’s wife. (Photo courtesy Sec. State’s office)

Amendment. Among some concern the step could be illegal, the General Assembly met again in a second special session to verify the vote.

WOMEN ASCEND TO ELECTED OFFICES

The 1920 presidential election, the first in which women could vote, was won by U.S. Sen. Warren G. Harding, a Republican, who defeated Gov. James M. Cox, a Democrat. Both men were from Ohio.

That year Connecticut elected its first women to the General Assembly: Emily Sophie Brown of Naugatuck and Lillian S. Frink of Canterbury, both Republicans; Helen A. Jewett of Tolland, a Democrat; and Grace I. Edwards of New Hartford, an Independent.

The first woman in the State Senate came four years later when Alice Merritt, a Hartford Republican, was elected.

Connecticut was in the national political spotlight in 1970 when Ella T. Grasso, a Democrat from Windsor Locks, became the first woman in the country elected in her own right (not succeeding a husband). Grasso had a storied leadership until she resigned after being diagnosed with ovarian cancer in December 1980.



UConn Associate Prof. Ronald Schurin.

The U.S. Congress approved the 19th Amendment on June 4, 1919. It was finally adopted on Aug. 18, 1920 after 36 states ratified the amendment, ending decades of battling over the movement which began in the mid-1800s.

Here are the states (in order), whose ratification votes helped make this law:

Wisconsin, first state to ratify	June 10, 1919
Illinois	June 10, 1919
Michigan	June 10, 1919
Kansas	June 16, 1919
New York	June 16, 1919
Ohio	June 16, 1919
Pennsylvania	June 24, 1919
Massachusetts	June 25, 1919
Texas	June 28, 1919
Iowa	July 2, 1919
Missouri	July 3, 1919
Arkansas	July 29, 1919
Montana	Aug. 2, 1919
Nebraska	Aug. 2, 1919
Minnesota	Sept. 8, 1919
New Hampshire	Sept. 10, 1919
Utah	Sept. 30, 1919
California	Nov. 1, 1919
Maine	Nov. 5, 1919
North Dakota	Dec. 1, 1919
South Dakota	Dec. 4, 1919
Colorado	Dec. 15, 1919
Kentucky	Jan. 6, 1920
Rhode Island	Jan. 6, 1920
Oregon	Jan. 13, 1920
Indiana	Jan. 16, 1920
Wyoming	Jan. 27, 1920
Nevada	Feb. 7, 1920
New Jersey	Feb. 9, 1920
Idaho	Feb. 11, 1920
Arizona	Feb. 12, 1920
New Mexico	Feb. 21, 1920
Oklahoma	Feb. 28, 1920
West Virginia	March 10, 1920
Washington (state)	March 22, 1920
Tennessee (making women’s suffrage legal)	Aug. 18, 1920
> Connecticut	Sept. 14, 1920
> Vermont	Feb. 8, 1921
Delaware	March 6, 1923
Maryland	March 29, 1941
Virginia	Feb. 12, 1952
Alabama	Sept. 8, 1953
Florida	May 13, 1969
South Carolina	July 1, 1969
Georgia	Feb. 20, 1970
Louisiana	June 11, 1970
North Carolina	May 6, 1971
Mississippi	March 22, 1984

Alaska, Hawaii were not yet states



Secretary of State Denise Merrill (right) attends a Westport Library event Oct. 17, 2019 to discuss an exhibit on 19th Amendment suffrage history. (Photo courtesy Secretary of the State’s office)

One twist to Roraback’s political role in Connecticut’s legacy is the feminist and civil rights legacy of his own great-niece, Catherine “Katie” Roraback. She was the daughter of the Rev. Albert E. Roraback, and granddaughter of Alberto T. Roraback, a prominent politician from North Canaan and Chief Justice of the State Supreme Court.

Catherine Roraback, who died in 2007, was inducted into the Connecticut Women’s Hall of Fame. She was the only woman in her Yale Law School class of 1948. Among her legal achievements in a 50-year career, she successfully defended a case against Estelle Griswold and Dr. C. Lee Buxton, who were arrested for opening a New Haven birth control clinic. Connecticut had one of the strictest birth control laws in the nation, which she was able to successfully challenge in Griswold vs. Connecticut.

With a presidential election on the horizon, current Secretary of State Denise W. Merrill had hoped for a year-long celebration leading up to the November 2020 election until all plans for public events were derailed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Merrill and Lt. Gov. Susan Bysiewicz joined with Annie Lamont, wife of Gov. Ned Lamont, to co-chair the Connecticut Women’s Centennial Suffrage



Among other conclusions, the report found that when women run for office, they win at the same rate as men.

Commission. In January the commission issued a report, “Fifty Years of Women Candidates,” studying women in statewide elected office.

Among other conclusions, the report found that when women run for office, they win at the same rate as men.

“The hope,” says Merrill, “is that this report will start a conversation about how far we’ve come in terms of women’s representation, where we are now, and what’s left to be done. Even today, only 35 percent of candidates in Connecticut are women – we need to change that. So, to those women contemplating a first run for office, or a second or a third or a fourth, consider this your official ask: run for office.”

Political Pioneers

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment, the office of Secretary of State Denise W. Merrill and the Connecticut Women’s Centennial Suffrage Commission issued a report on 50 years of women candidates in the state. They plan to update the chronicling of women candidates after each election.

The report says, “only in the last roughly 50 years have women started to build political power and achieve higher political office. We have much further to go, but with more visibility of women in elected office we can be role models and mentors for future women.”

The state women candidate “firsts” included:

Emily Sophie Brown (R-Naugatuck), **Grace I. Edwards** (Independent-New Hartford), **Lillian S. Frank** (R-Canterbury), and **Helen A. Jewett** (D-Tolland): first women elected to General Assembly in 1920.

Alice Merritt (R-Hartford): first woman elected to state Senate in 1924.

Sara B. Crawford (R-Westport): first woman elected Secretary of State in 1939.

Ella T. Grasso (D-Windsor Locks): first woman elected governor in her own right in the United States; inaugurated in 1975.

Margaret Morton (D-Bridgeport): first African American woman elected to state General Assembly in 1972 and in 1980 to State Senate.

Florence D. Finney (R-Greenwich): first woman elected president pro tempore of State Senate in 1973.

Joan Kemler (D-West Hartford): first woman to serve as state treasurer, appointed in 1986.

Maria Colon Sanchez (D-Hartford): first Hispanic female elected to state General Assembly in 1988.

Clarine Nardi Riddle (D-New Haven): first woman to serve as state attorney general, appointed to vacancy in 1989; also first female attorney general to argue before the U.S. Supreme Court.

Denise Nappier (D-Hartford): first African American woman elected state treasurer in the United States in 1998.

Moir Lyons (D-Stamford): first woman to serve as majority leader and speaker of General Assembly in 1999.

Themis Klarides (R-Derby): first female to serve as Republican minority leader in General Assembly in 2007.

The Road to Success

**Hit an unexpected pothole in your career path?
It might be time to switch gears.**

By **JOEL SAMBERG**

In a matter of months, the U.S. has gone from experiencing historically low unemployment to an historic number of layoffs, leaving millions of people out of work. But abrupt career changes are not confined to a global pandemic. Even in good economic times, people may be unceremoniously let go, may need a line of work that better accommodates

family or other commitments, or may just secretly yearn for a new career that they are certain they'd find more fulfilling. Fear not. Switching gears is not only possible but eminently doable – provided you take time to reflect on what you'd like your next adventure to look like and take advantage of the available resources to help you succeed.

“By failing to prepare,” Benjamin Franklin once said, “you are preparing to fail.”

But for all his astonishing insight, Franklin was unable to consider the fact that companies in the future might let go of long-term employees at a moment's notice, leaving them little if any room to prepare.

For three decades, Sandra Long of Westport worked as a top sales executive for Pitney Bowes, including one stretch as a vice president of sales. A few years ago, there was a major restructuring that suddenly hastened the end of her career at the technology giant.

Having lost her job with the company after 30 years, you might think that Pitney Bowes was the last name she'd have preferred to hear mentioned on any given day. But after founding Post Road Consulting, a LinkedIn marketing advisory firm, she now counts Pitney Bowes as one of her most important clients, and that's because she kept in close contact with a network of former colleagues.

That's just a single tale of many that show how the world

of exchanging careers – as opposed to merely changing jobs – can be full of surprises. But as a stroll down Exchange Lane will prove, it can also be full of challenges and opportunities, not to mention anxiety and excitement.

“Now I work with companies, universities, associations, and individuals, teaching them how to turn LinkedIn into the most effective sales and career tool,” explains Long, whose book, “LinkedIn for Personal Branding: The Ultimate Guide,” covers many career tips. “When you're looking for a new profession, former colleagues can make all the difference in the world. My client list is comprised of people I worked with years ago. Everyone should stay in touch with their network.”

It's an important tip for any successful career-switching scenario. Ben Franklin would approve.

Tom Truitt of Fairfield had a similar experience – with an interesting twist. In his case, former clients of his photography business actually sparked the idea for his next professional endeavor.





Sandra Long of Westport

Truitt spent 15 years as the proprietor of T-Square Productions, a corporate and children's fashion photography business. Among his subjects were dozens of medical professionals in New York. But he had grown disgruntled with the frequent schedule changes, chasing bills, creative clashes with clients...

"I had fallen into a niche that was artistically stifling, plus I wasn't making enough money to support a Fairfield County lifestyle," Truitt



Tom Truitt of Fairfield

recalls. "It was giving me more stress than I could handle." He began to contemplate putting T-Square behind him but had no idea what to replace it with. Then he recalled all the conversations he had overheard at hospitals and health care facilities about the growing need for qualified doctors. So, with a friend, Truitt founded Alpha Medical Group, a company that facilitates the placement of physicians at hospi-

tals and medical centers. He sold his share in 2017 and built a new one, Clear Staffing Solutions.

"When I was a full-time photographer, if I didn't work, I didn't get paid," Truitt says. "So the idea of having a business with employees that can keep producing, even if I have to go somewhere or step away for a while, was very appealing."

He was scared at first; he had no fiscal stability when he opened the first agency. Fortunately, he found his footing and the business began to prosper. Truitt now advises people who are looking to switch professions to create a plan of action that includes a way to survive in the interim. Plus, he adds, it always helps to have some passion for what you want to do.

Marie Simons of Branford couldn't agree more. "When it comes to a career," she says, "my first objective is to work with people who want a positive outcome. Without that, I wouldn't even want a career."



Marie Simons of Branford

Simons spent several years as an internal sales specialist for Fujifilm Medical Systems, formerly of Stamford. Like many large corporations, Fujifilm experienced major changes in recent years, and when departmental shuffles triggered her exit, she decided to return to an industry of which she had been a part more a dozen years earlier. She is now a real estate agent with an office of the William Raveis agency in her hometown. She had left

WRITING HIS OWN TICKET

Over the years, Chris Knopf has observed a handful of dramatic career-switching scenarios that may be worthy of a book.

"I've seen some flame-outs by people who just weren't ready to make the change they were determined to make," says Knopf, who recently traded a career in advertising and public relations for one in mysteries and plot twists.

Knopf is the former chief executive officer of Mintz & Hoke, a marketing communications agency in Avon. In an intriguing variation on the theme, Knopf in his newer role occasionally finds himself tapping into decades of agency experience to use as fictional fodder for his writing. His published works include the popular Sam Acquillo detective series, such as "Deep Dive" and "Back Lash."

Knopf traces his passion for writing to childhood. What he did, in essence, was to turn an enduring hobby into a full-time career, not long before he would have closed the book on his former occupation anyway. As a lifelong lover of fiction, Knopf already had absorbed quite a bit about the role of a full-time novelist before he actually became one, which probably made the switch a bit easier than it might otherwise have been.

"Before you make a change, take some time to figure out a way to have some sort of safety net during the transition," the author advises. "On the other hand, don't just sit there and marinate in frustration when you're doing something you really don't want to do. That's not healthy, either."

that field when home sales nationwide went into a serious decline and didn't think she'd ever return.

"I was getting used to a career in medical equipment and never thought I'd go back to real estate," Simons shares. "But sometimes you just have to use the skills and talents you already have for whatever works best for you. I applied mine to a new career and then just let even more passion grow from there."

Simons enjoys helping people realize their dream of owning a new home, and now admits that going back into the field after more than a decade away was an easy switch.

But it isn't *always* easy. After all, not everyone has an effective network or an earlier career to return to. Sometimes the process requires a deep dive into internet research, more schooling, or career counseling.

The Gordon Career Center at Wesleyan University in Middletown works with many alumni who have been out of school for a while and are now trying to determine what kind of post-graduate study to pursue. "The most important thing when seeking a new career, especially in a new field, is to have a professional and personal narrative that helps prospective employers understand what transferable skills you have, and why you're looking for a new role," counsels Sharon Belden Castonguay, executive director of the Gordon Career Center. "The emphasis should be on why you're moving



Lisa Natcharian of Simsbury

toward something, not on why you're walking away from what you did before."

According to most experts, confidence is also an imperative ingredient.

Before founding the Storyteller's Cottage in Simsbury, local resident Lisa Natcharian had been a teacher, public relations consultant, and freelance writer who, by her own admission, was never entirely satisfied with her professional life. She came across a membership-based store down south that was devoted entirely to video game players, and also had a cafe and rooms to rent for private events. In her mind's eye, Natcharian, an unabashed book lover who was already looking for something new, replaced video games with books and realized she suddenly had a business model for her own idea. She opened the Storyteller's Cottage in 2017.

"When I was describing what I wanted to do to some of the people I

According to most experts, confidence is also an imperative ingredient.

hoped could help me create the cottage, I made sure I sounded confident, even if I may have had a little skepticism,” Natcharian admits. “I discovered that confidence and courage are invaluable.”

The Storyteller’s Cottage, which had been housed in an old Victorian home in the center of town, had become well-known throughout north-central Connecticut for its uniqueness. Book lovers had gone there to read, listen to authors, participate in creating storytelling, and relive famous tales in distinctive group encounters.

“I surrounded myself with people who were not shy about telling me what they thought I was doing right and wrong,” says Natcharian. “That’s what you need when you start a brand-new profession – other opinions.”

Having a distinctive vision also helps.

That’s how Paul Dunn of Madison discovered his new profession. “When my position as a senior project manager at ESPN was eliminated as part of a workforce reduction, I



Paul Dunn of Madison

immediately thought about the college environment,” he says. “That’s because one major demographic of the ESPN fan base is comprised of college students about to enter the workforce. So the moment I learned of my impending departure, I thought about my level of comfort with that demographic and realized it could translate to a new career.” All he had to do was find a college with an appropriate spot.

A tall order indeed – but in 2017, Dunn became the coordinator of the Integrative Career Development office at Mitchell College in New London. “I received great support from people in my network,

kept an open mind, pursued an industry in which I felt I could make a difference, and never gave up,” he asserts.

It may have been somewhat serendipitous for Dunn to have found an open position at Mitchell so quickly, but then again, that dean of all career-changers, Ben Franklin, had it absolutely right when he said that diligence is the mother of good luck.

Flexibility is also critical. In late summer, Natcharian of The Storyteller’s Cottage made the difficult decision to close her business and move its operations online, due to a drastic reduction in visits caused by COVID-19. The result was a new but related venture: The Storyteller’s Cottage Online Academy at storytellerscottage.podia.com. Its stated mission is “To bring literature to life, both by providing opportunities to bookworms to immerse themselves in their favorite fantasy realms, and by expanding the discipline of storytelling through master classes taught by expert writers, artists and storytellers.”

Asked about it, Natcharian said her clients’ reactions to the switch in business model “have so far all been lovely – lots of comments about how the [in-person] business will be missed. Currently, there about a hundred comments on our Facebook page.”

As for what comes next, she says, “I don’t have any specific contingency plans if the online version of The Storyteller’s Cottage doesn’t work out as planned, but my brain is a constantly-churning idea factory, so I’m sure I’ll think of something else to try! I guess the pandemic has taught me that life never follows a straight path, and that flexibility is key in dealing with the surprises fate may have in store.”

She says in addition to resilience and flexibility, “an ability to read the market in an unsentimental way is necessary to prevent pouring funds into a business model that will no longer be profitable. In other words, it’s important to know when to cut your losses and move on. It was fun while it lasted!”

In addition to journalism, Joel Samberg consults on employee communications, edits books, writes plays, and has one or two other word-related careers. His website can be found at JoeltheWriter.com.

RESOURCES:

10 steps to a successful career change.
The Balance Careers.
thebalancecareers.com/successful-career-change-2058452

Career Change in Connecticut.
The Internet Chamber of Commerce.
icc.org/career-change/connecticut.htm

Connecticut Back to Work Initiative.
business.ct.gov/jobs-and-resources
career.uconn.edu/blog/2020/07/06/free-remote-job-training-with-ct-back-to-work-initiative/

Find Something New.
findsomethingnew.org

Getting, changing, or losing a job. Fidelity.
myguidance.fidelity.com/ftgw/pna/public/lifeevents/content/changingjobs/overview

Good news for Connecticut career changers. Career Counselling Connecticut.
careercounselingconnecticut.com/good-news-for-connecticut-career-changers

Gordon Career Center.
41 Wyllys Avenue, Middletown, CT.
(860) 685-2180
wesleyan.edu/careercenter

DESIGNED *for life*

CREATE YOUR ESCAPE

HYGIENIC CERAMIC TILE

CUSTOM NICHE

GRAB BAR

STONE MOSAIC HEATED FLOOR

TILE AMERICA

AMAZING SHOWROOMS | INSIGHTFUL ADVICE

A Connecticut family business for over 50 years

BROOKFIELD | FAIRFIELD | MANCHESTER | NEW HAVEN | NEW LONDON | STAMFORD | WEST HARTFORD



DELICIOUS

Healthy from the Inside Out

Try these immune-boosting bowls and bevs

By AMY S. WHITE / Photography by MARY QUINN

Wash your hands. Keep your distance. Don't touch your face. Wear a mask. Whether it's COVID-19, the flu, or just the common cold, recently we have all become more aware of the most important behaviors that can help us ward off illness. Building the body's natural defenses, or immunity, against viruses and bacteria is key to preventing sickness and maintaining good overall health.

However, when it comes to immunity, not all foods are created equal. Antioxidants make the best immune-builders, and our bodies absorb them better through foods rather than supplements. While no diet can cure or prevent any disease, read on to learn which vitamins and nutrients contain antioxidants. Then turn the page to find four recipes – two bowls and two beverages – that feature ingredients known for these immune-boosting properties.

We have all heard that taking vitamin C can help stave off a cold. That's because this essential vitamin, which is also an antioxidant, encourages the production of white blood cells that aid in fighting infections. Our bodies don't produce or store vitamin C, so it's important to try to include some in your daily diet. Most people think of citrus fruits when they think of vitamin C, but it is plentiful in many other foods as well, such as red bell peppers, pineapple, broccoli, and leafy greens like spinach or kale.

Vitamin E is another antioxidant that is vital to helping immunity. In addition to being a key player in the formation of red blood cells, this powerful nutrient helps the body fight infection by protecting

cells from damage. Nuts, dates, seeds, and green leafy vegetables are some foods that are rich in vitamin E.

Known for giving yellow and orange vegetables their bright color, beta carotene is another antioxidant that has been shown to help bolster the immune system. Foods high in beta carotene include carrots, red and orange peppers, broccoli, and leafy greens.

Flavonoids are plant chemicals that serve as antioxidants and therefore can help your body function more efficiently and protect it against toxins. Flavonoids are found in berries, tree fruits like bananas and apples, nuts, and tea.


Other foods that have been shown to have a variety of immunity-building capabilities are: brown rice, ginger, garlic, onions, spices like turmeric and cinnamon, and yogurt.

You will notice the recipes here specifically use the immune-boosting ingredients mentioned above. The "sweet" rice bowl makes a great breakfast or a snack, while the "savory" rice bowl is meant as a snack, lunch, or dinner. Connecticut mixologist Mary Quinn created a smoothie that you can try as a meal replacement or snack, as well as a delicious fall mocktail that tastes so good you won't miss the alcohol.

So, continue to wash your hands, keep your distance, avoid touching your face, and wear your mask. But while you're at it, incorporate these immune-boosting bowls and bevs into your meal rotation, and stay safe and healthy out there. 🍷

Amy S. White is a Connecticut teacher, writer, and line cook.

POTENT MIX: This "Sweet Rice Bowl" combines brown rice, dates, chopped walnuts, orange pieces, chopped spinach, turmeric, and honey.



Known for giving yellow and orange vegetables their bright color, beta carotene is another antioxidant that has been shown to help bolster the immune system.

Foods high in beta carotene include carrots, red and orange peppers, broccoli, and leafy greens.

HEALTHY CHOICES: Foods like garlic, walnuts, and a variety of fruits and vegetables have proven immunity-building capabilities.

"SWEET" RICE BOWL

Ingredients:

1/2 cup prepared brown rice
2-3 dates, chopped
1/4 cup chopped walnuts
1/2 orange, peeled and cut into pieces
1/4 cup chopped spinach or other leafy greens
Turmeric, to taste
Honey, to taste

Stir together or layer rice, dates, walnuts, orange, and spinach in a bowl. Sprinkle with turmeric and drizzle with honey.

"SAVORY" RICE BOWL

Ingredients:

1/2 cup prepared brown rice
1 Tbsp. vegetable oil
1 Tbsp. fresh ginger, peeled and grated
1 clove garlic, peeled and chopped
1 green onion, chopped
1/2 cup chopped broccoli
1/2 red pepper, chopped
1 carrot, peeled and julienned
1/2 cup pineapple chunks
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
1/4 cup slivered almonds

Heat vegetable oil in a large frying pan. Add grated ginger, garlic, green onion, broccoli, red pepper, carrot, and pineapple. Cook over medium-high heat, stirring often, until fragrant and hot, 5-6 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Remove from heat and stir in prepared rice and almonds.

KICK-START SMOOTHIE

(Recipe courtesy of Mary Quinn, mixologist)

Ingredients:

1 5-oz. container Greek-style key lime yogurt
1/2 cup pineapple chunks
1/2 cup almond milk
1/4 cup green tea
1/2 cup spinach or other leafy green
Cinnamon, to taste

Place all ingredients except cinnamon in a blender and blend until well incorporated. Garnish with a light sprinkle of cinnamon.





CRANAPPLE SHRUB (A MOCKTAIL)

(Recipe courtesy of Mary Quinn, Mixologist)

Note: Shrub must be prepared two days in advance

Ingredients:

1 cup cranberries

1 cup apple cider vinegar

1/2 cup turbinado sugar

2-3 apples, shredded (use the shredding side of a cheese grater)

1 cinnamon stick

Peel from 2 oranges

1 can or bottle of ginger beer

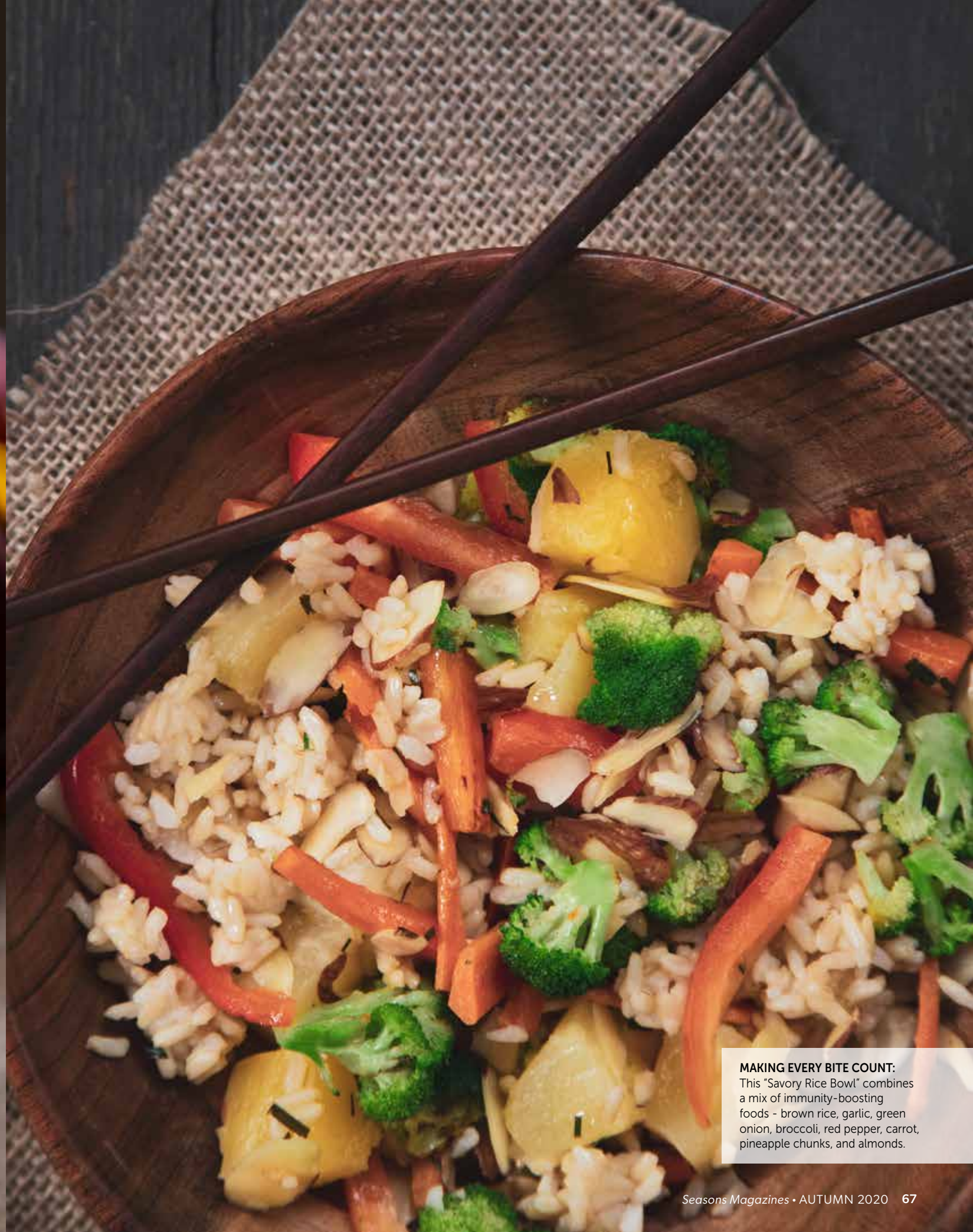
Additional cinnamon stick and/or apple slices for garnish

To make the shrub:

Puree together the cranberries, apple cider vinegar, and turbinado sugar. Add the shredded apples, cinnamon stick, and orange peels. Pour into an airtight container such as a canning jar. Allow to sit for two days in a cool, dry place.

To make the mocktail:

Fill a glass with ice. Mix 1 part shrub with 1 part ginger beer. Garnish with apple slices and a cinnamon stick if desired.



MAKING EVERY BITE COUNT:

This "Savory Rice Bowl" combines a mix of immunity-boosting foods - brown rice, garlic, green onion, broccoli, red pepper, carrot, pineapple chunks, and almonds.



New England residents are having a blast on Connecticut's golf courses, enjoying the chance to get some fresh air, exercise, and a little competitive play.

Taking a Swing at it

Pandemic spurs golfers new and old to flock to Connecticut's golf greens and fairways

By **JOHN TORSIELLO** / Photography By **MARK WILLIAM PAUL**

Thanks to golf, 2020 in Connecticut has not been quite as isolating as we had feared it would be when the COVID-19 pandemic hit with full force in late winter.

In fact, most golf courses report that play is up considerably this year, and pros are seeing new golfers by the dozens taking up the game. All of this is a good sign for a sport that endured an unwelcome flattening and dipping of the curve in popularity in recent years, for a variety of reasons. Now, people seem more than pleased to get out and spend four or five hours in the company of friends, when before they would bemoan how long it took to play 18 holes.

My, how attitudes change about life's opportunities when a crisis rears its ugly head!

Governor Ned Lamont on March 24 ordered all non-essential businesses, including golf courses, to close

when the pandemic hit, in an effort to limit the spread of coronavirus. But only 36 hours later, after lobbying by the Connecticut State Golf Association and individual courses, Lamont and the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) allowed courses to continue operation, as long as they adhered to strict guidelines meant to eliminate any kind of contact and encourage social distancing.

At Hop Meadow Country Club in Simsbury, the course has been packed since it opened. "Play has been busy and active all year long," reports Joe Cordani, Jr., director of golf. "We are up approximately 40 percent in rounds this season. The COVID-19 pandemic has in this way been a blessing and golf has been a terrific way to get outdoors and spend time with your family and friends. It has been like a perfect oasis to be able to have members play here during the pandemic."

Jason Loomis, head golf professional at Great River

Golf Club in Milford, says "play has been through the roof!" He also reported rounds to be up 40 percent this year over last. "So many people are just happy to have something to do," he says.

Harwinton's Fairview Farm Golf Course opened early this year, as other Connecticut courses did, but had to close for a while when the pandemic hit. Since the course reopened in late March, it has been flooded with golfers. "Play has been significantly more than usual," says head golf professional Bob Sparks. "I have been here 20 years and it's the most amount of play I have ever seen. Tee times have been sunup to sundown."

Loomis says his club, in compliance with state and CDC guidelines, adopted rules and regulations out of the norm. "These changed almost weekly, between the state and CDC. We started out not allowing carts, then we moved to single rider, now you can ride together if you wear a mask. We also started out not being able to touch the flagstick and we used foam inserts to prevent the ball from going in the hole. Now we are back to normal flags and cups. We have always been very liberal about cleaning our carts; we just add a disinfectant to the cleaning procedure."

Clubs in late summer were still not allowed to have water stations on the course or ball washers. They could also not

have tournaments or events larger than 100 people.

Cordani says guest play at Hop Meadow, a private club, was restricted until June. Then, it became Monday through Thursday only. "After July 4th, we got back to normal guest policy. Our bag room was closed until mid-May and carts are restricted to one rider per cart, unless it's a spouse or child."

"We opened up for play on March 8, the earliest it has ever opened, and were excited for a great season," says Jeffrey Beyer, head golf professional at South Windsor's Topstone Golf Course. "Once the COVID-19 pandemic began, we all felt that we would have to close the golf course for the foreseeable future, with no idea on when we would open again. When it was announced that Connecticut golf courses could remain open with specific guidelines, we quickly began preparing for the restrictions."

Topstone's clubhouse was closed and management installed self-swipe credit card readers at the outside entrance to the golf shop; set up a cleaning schedule of all high-touch areas around the staging area and clubhouse; and made sure its entire golf cart fleet was cleaned before going out again when turned around for new customers. The golf carts were also cleaned again at the end of the day. Says Beyer, "In addition, we took in all ball washers, water coolers, scorecards, and pencils from the golf course. Players were also restricted



Golfers abide by the masking and other safety rules at Fairview Farm Golf Course in Harwinton. Photo by **Mark William Paul**

“I’m happy to say that our new normal really isn’t that bad after all. Play in general has been significantly busier as people seem to have more free time, and golf is in a good place moving forward.” –Head golf professional Jan Wivestad

to riding one player per golf cart.”

Over time, according to Beyer, restrictions began to loosen. “Now, the clubhouses and the golf shop are open, scorecards and pencils are being given out, and players can ride two to a golf cart. We still clean and disinfect all high-touch areas plus keep up the strict golf cart cleaning schedule. We keep using the self-swipe credit card readers because they are safer and speed up the check-in time.”

Beyer has seen “a lot of new golfers this year” most initially from out of state because courses beyond Connecticut were closed. But, to local course owners’ and managers’ delight, many out-of-staters keep coming back on a weekly basis. There have also been many more Connecticut residents coming to play Topstone for the first time who have become “regulars.” Most golfers express gratitude to Beyer that the course remained open and say that they feel safe while playing.

Watertown’s Crestbrook Park Golf Course allowed play beginning in late March but started the year with the pro shop building closed, and taking only online and phone payments. “We were fortunate to open the building and get back to normal check-ins,” says head golf professional Jan Wivestad. “Masks to enter our building and social distancing seem to be the most significant change from normal operations. We can now touch flags but we started with no touching flags, no rakes around bunkers, and only one person per cart,



Players enjoy a golf lesson at Blue Fox Run in Avon. Photo by Mark William Paul

which made it hard on business with no tournaments. We are catching up with things. We had an event here that was safe and went off without a hitch. I’m happy to say that our new normal really isn’t that bad after all. Play in general has been significantly busier as people seem to have more free time, and golf is in a good place moving forward.”

Blue Fox Run Golf Course in Avon also saw a lot of out of state play, mainly from Massachusetts, early on. For several months, course restrictions included no rakes near bunkers, ball lifts in holes, asking golfers to stay six feet apart, and one rider per cart. “Now, rakes are okay, scorecards are okay, and you can now pull the pins on the greens,” says Barry Wilson, general manager, “as well as allowing two people in a cart with masks.”

Wilson says if courses were not allowed to open, they would have suffered economic damage that some might not be able to recover from, as is the case with other businesses. “We would still have had to pay our superintendent and grounds crew, as well as pay for chemicals to maintain course conditions.” All that with no income.

Wilson has also seen a number of new players, “lots



Golf is a sport that can be played safely in a time of COVID.

When crisis strikes, pets like Benji feel it too.

Your gift to pets in need will be matched for a limited time.

Give today



Accepting gifts of cash, shares of stock and from donor-advised funds

Newington • Waterford • Westport • CThumane.org

70 Seasons Magazines • AUTUMN 2020

Seasons Magazines • AUTUMN 2020 71



A golfing party makes the most of a beautiful day on the course at Blue Fox Run in Avon. Photo by Mark William Paul.

of first-timers, plenty of college kids. I think golf is the safest sport to play. Most people are 200 yards away when on the courses. Hopefully we can keep the new golfers.”

Peter Joyce, general manager and COO at Wampanoag County Club in West Hartford, says opening the course allowed membership a “mental escape” from the day-to-day challenges that COVID-19 presents. “Play has increased significantly. With no school or after-school recreation, along with college being dismissed earlier than expected, golf became one of the only options for families. Wampanoag became a haven for families to enjoy their club in a safe environment.”

As with other courses, Sparks says he and management at Fairview Farm Golf Course didn’t know what they would be faced with when they originally had to close. “We had an early start (in early March) and it looked like it was going to be a great year. COVID-19 hit, and we didn’t know what was going to happen.”

He believes golf has proven to provide some normalcy and an outlet for many during these “crazy” times. “Customers were very thankful, understanding, and appreciative to be able to play golf. Of course, parties and outings have suffered. But we have had some outings with no food and tee time starts that have been successful.”

Sparks says the guidelines that were put in place initially were very challenging, with payments having to be taken over the phone. “We purchased a gazebo to take payments outside and alleviate the phone calls because we just couldn’t keep up. Single golf carts were challenging since we just don’t have enough carts and it was much more traffic and wear on the golf course.”

Fairview Farm is known as a learning ground for youngsters. Sparks was pleased that camps and lessons have kept him and others busy. “Many sports are not able to be played, but golf is the only sport outdoors where you don’t share any type of equipment. My U.S. Kids Junior Tour has had record numbers and is not slowing down during the fall.”

Former PGA Tour pro Bobby Gage, head golf professional at Winsted’s Green Woods Country Club, was disappointed that his club’s junior camps were cancelled this season but he plans to get them going again next year. “New golfers have been prevalent, and the game seems to be growing in that respect.”

One aspect of golf courses that has suffered has been food and beverage operations. The chow and drinks have been mostly takeout, which cuts into proceeds from liquor and food sales because, as we know, golfers usually enjoy hanging out at the “19th hole” after a round and talking over the

A
fully-human
RADIO SHOW + PODCAST

AUDACIOUS

with
CHION WOLF

tune in
WED 11P / SAT 10A
stream
wnpr.org

Connecticut
public
Media for the curious.

PBS
npr



Families are finding golf to be a perfect way to get out of the house.

day with a cold one nearby.

Great River Golf Club shut its impressive indoors bar and dining area at the start of the season but later offered pre-made sandwiches and bottled beverages outdoors. Says Loomis, “Once the state allowed us to do outside dining, we were very fortunate because we have a large patio.”

Hop Meadow Country Club, says Cordani, is adhering to all DECD guidelines as it pertains to food and beverage. “We started the year doing takeout only, which was well received by our members.”

Beyer says Topstone Restaurant has kept busy by offering food delivery to golfers on the course and began a “robust” to-go Family Meal Deal. “As restaurant restrictions eased, we set up outside dining on our patio and in other outside areas that we have never used before. Both have become so popular that we will continue to use them in the future.”

Joyce and his staff had to “think outside of the traditional country club box” to give options to members. “We are offering to-go, both à la carte and family-style options, and themed to-go nights as well. When we were able to open our large patio, it became a sell-out nightly. Providing a safe environment for membership and staff was paramount,” he adds. “The hours of training and guidance to ensure mem-

bers and staff felt comfortable has paid off. We have been very fortunate that the weather has been so dry this summer, which allowed us to enjoy many nights outside.”

Opening a new business in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic has, of course, been a challenge. Such was the case for Ron Beck, PGA director of golf coaching at Northeast Performance Institute in Portland. “Mostly, it was just getting our building built. Programming changed to only include individual coaching and very small groups.”

Beck has noticed the golf market is “booming” with new players and “lapsed” players getting back into the game. “It’s no wonder. People are craving entertainment and outdoor activities with social distancing. What could be better than golf?”

Beck opened his business July 20 and has been busy. Clientele has run the gamut, he says, from advanced competitive players to rank beginners who show up with their newly purchased box sets.

Says Beck, “In the long run, golf will be viewed as one of the few industries that is better off because of COVID-19. We just have to keep all these new and returning players interested and engaged.” 📺

Is Seasons Media part of your 2021 marketing plan?

Seasons Media, locally owned and operated, offers a growing collection of high-end, glossy magazines that are direct-mailed to influential households across Connecticut. Our unique, multi-media approach to reaching these households includes a variety of opportunities including two television shows, *Seasons Magazines Up Close* and *CT VOICE Out Loud*.

PRINT ADVERTISING
TWO TELEVISION SHOWS
SPONSORED CONTENT
DIGITAL ADVERTISING
SOCIAL MEDIA VIDEO
PODCAST SPONSORSHIP
PERFORATED INSERTS and MORE!

SEASONS
MAGAZINES

CONNECTICUT
VOICE

Contact Jim Tully

jim@seasonsmagazines.com

Phone: 860-413-2022 | Cell: 860-729-2938

www.seasonsmagazines.com | www.ctvoice.com



THE GOLD STANDARD IN MAGAZINE PUBLISHING



Seasons Magazines congratulates all our VOICE & SEASONS contributors for recently winning Excellence in Journalism awards from the Connecticut Society of Professional Journalists

Business Coverage Third Place Making it right Carol Latter	Feature Photo Second Place Wisdom in the window Stan Godlewski	Humorous Column First Place Funny bones Matthew Dicks and Sean Wang	Religion Second Place Embracing tradition: Interfaith families Cara McDonough	Feature Story First Place Writing his next act Frank Rizzo
Diversity Coverage Third Place Coming to America – Part II Sarah Wesley Lemire	Headlines Second Place Upstaged by love; Funny bones; Major (and minor) ambitions Carol Latter	Humorous Column Second Place The worst of times Matthew Dicks and Sean Wang	Sports Feature Second Place Game on: Special Olympics celebrates 50th Teresa Pelham	General Column Second Place Heart families Kevin Lembo
Education First Place Making it right Carol Latter	Health Third Place Healing horses Alix Boyle	In-Depth Second Place Horsing around John Torsiello	Diversity Coverage First Place Coming out Jane Latus	Sports Feature First Place A question of fairness Dawn Ennis
Feature Photo First Place Chef Denise Appel Winter Caplanson		Photo Essay First Place Final destination Stan Godlewski	Diversity Coverage Second Place Raising the curtain Jane Latus	

Visit seasonsmagazines.com and ctvoice.com



Beautifully appointed Nantucket style Colonial in Hoffmann Farms of Canton!!

There is a full in-law apartment in this stunning "vacation at home" oasis with sparkling 5 yr old saltwater gunite pool w/spa, an extensive patio w/fire pit, mature plantings, & a putting green! Enjoy an open floor plan w/sunken living rm, library w/built-ins & inspiring tumbled marble sunrm. A lower lev rec area has a custom band stage, drybar, room for party games is so fun & creative!! One of a kind home is wired for generator, 3 hvac systems, detailed millwork. See all that Canton has to offer with historic downtown Collinsville, a lively arts & music scene, the Farmington River w/world class fly fishing & kayaking. \$1,125,000.



COLDWELL BANKER
REALTY

Katie French
Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage
700 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury, CT 06070
860-977-3802

Named to The Thousand Report top agents in the nation







ANTHOLOGY
SENIOR LIVING

EXPLORE
The New Standard in Senior Living.

MONTH-TO-MONTH RENTAL OPTIONS. CALL TODAY!
ANTHOLOGY OF SIMSBURY / 142 Cooper Ave Simsbury, CT / 860-317-0032
ANTHOLOGY OF FARMINGTON / 1 Bridgewater Rd Farmington, CT / 860-404-6355
AnthologySeniorLiving.com

VTM Connecticut HAS A VOICE!



CT VOICE has partnered with the LGBTQ community to provide a voice for all. Every voice is unique, interesting, meaningful and important, and this publication has a duty and privilege to present those voices.

Each issue will bring you engaging, thought-provoking, and fun stories.

Follow us on Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest and LinkedIn. We'd love to hear your thoughts and story ideas.

FOR ADVERTISING
INFORMATION CONTACT
jim@seasonsmagazines.com



www.CTVOICE.com



FINAL THOUGHTS

Written by **Matthew Dicks**

Illustrated by **Sean Wang**



When Tricks Were Treats!

Halloween night, and thankfully, I am prepared. A week ago, I went to the grocery store and bought two dozen eggs. This was necessary because on Halloween, the Almacs grocery store in my hometown of Blackstone, Massachusetts does not sell eggs to kids. For good reason.

I've also painted my eggs black. I'm not sure how much this is going to help. I like to think that the eggs will be camouflaged as they fly through the night sky at their targets, but many of my targets are houses, which can't exactly dodge the attack. But with some luck, I may find some small, human targets as well on this night.

It's going to be the best night of the year.

"That's how you spent your Halloween night when you were a kid?" Clara asks.

Charlie punches me in the arm. "What's wrong with you?"

Clara, age 10, and Charlie, age 7, are eating grilled cheese sandwiches as quickly as possible so we can begin trick or treating. I thought they might like to hear the story of their father's childhood antics as they devour their dinner.

Apparently not.

I shouldn't be surprised. Something disturbing has taken place on this planet since I was a child. I had initially chalked it up to my move from a small farm town in eastern Massachusetts to the center of a more

conservative, more sophisticated Connecticut, more than two decades ago, but I don't think the change is geographic. I think the cultural landscape has shifted, and somehow a newfound sense of decency, order, and rigor has not only infected parents but their children, too.

"But what if we all had eggs?" I ask my kids, hoping to light a spark. "You have a dozen. I have a dozen. We go to the cemetery on Halloween and battle it out!"

They look at me like I'm crazy.

"Your mom brought you to the cemetery on Halloween?" Clara asks.

"Of course not," I say. "No one brought us anywhere. I was on my own on Halloween night. We dressed up in terrible costumes and were off!"

"How old were you?" Charlie asks.

"I don't know," I say. "Fourth grade? Maybe fifth grade?"

"I'm in fourth grade!" Clara hisses.

"Exactly!"

It turns out that I need no Halloween mask on this night. My children are looking at me like I'm a monster.

I try to explain to them that eggs and toilet paper and general mayhem sound outrageous by today's standards, but I promise that it was a far more innocent time to be a child. You strapped a plastic Spiderman mask to your head or rubbed some coal on your cheeks, declared yourself a hobo, and went 'a walking. You collected candy along the way, devouring it in fistfuls as quickly as possible, looking for the right target for your eggs and toilet paper.

For me, it was always the house near the bottom of the hill, where an old lady would hand out Chex mix in Ziploc bags.

"Trick or treat!" demands a treat, and repurposed cereal did not qualify as a treat, so every year, she got a trick.

Toilet paper in her pine tree.

"Stop talking and finish taping us!" Clara demands. I'm wrapping my children in the requisite reflective tape in the unlikely event either one of them would ever be permitted (or ever want) to leave our sight for half a second and venture into the road where a driver might not spot them.

Doubtful considering the path chosen for this evening is primarily small side streets and tidy cul-de-sacs.

"What if someone toilet papered you?" Charlie asks.

"Actually, they did," I tell him. When I was 19 years old, I exited my apartment on the morning after

"That poor guy will be digging out his car for hours," I thought as I walked to the end of the row. Then I realized: Wait. That was my car.

Halloween in order to go to work. I went to the parking lot and walked past a car so covered in toilet paper that was completely invisible.

"That poor guy will be digging out his car for hours," I thought as I walked to the end of the row. Then I realized: Wait. That was my car.

"See?" Clara asks, "How did you feel?"

"Actually, kind of great," I say. Two girls, Jen and Sherry, spent hours toilet papering my car, then they stuck a small block of wood under the windshield wipers with their names written on it, as a calling card.

"You call that great?" Charlie asks.

It was great. Two of my friends spent their time and money on an unforgettable prank. Even though I was the victim, I was kind of happy. They could've pranked anyone. They chose me.

Almost 30 years later, I still look back on that morning with such fondness.

My kids look at me like I've lost my marbles.

And off we go, to trick or treat.

I spend the night refereeing whose turn it is to ring the doorbell. Reminding my kids to say please and thank you. Saying hello to neighbors who offer Clara special treats to avoid her peanut allergy.

"Pat and Ken always give us the best treats," Clara says. "You'd really want to egg their house?"

No, not Pat and Ken's house. Nobody's house, really. Other than my high school science teacher's home, there was never much joy in egging inanimate objects.

But if I had a chance, I think I'd like to egg my kids. Break a well lobbed egg atop each of their heads, hoping that the combination of egg, yolk, and shock might rouse some inner ruffian lurking within, desperate to emerge and offer the world a little bit of mayhem.

Sadly, I don't think that will be the case. For reasons I will never understand, these kids are rule followers. Upright citizens. Respectful, responsible little souls.

This is fine most of the time, but tonight is Halloween. A night for tricks and treats.

Instead, I'm saddled with flashlights, reflector tape, and disgustingly well-mannered children.

Kids these days are the worst. 📺

Matthew Dicks is an elementary school teacher, bestselling novelist, and 50-time Moth Story SLAM champion. He was once brought home by police on a Halloween night after getting caught by his high school science teacher while egging his house. Bad night. Good story.

Sean Wang, an MIT architecture graduate, is author of the sci-fi graphic novel series, Runners. Learn more at seanwang.com.

THE TEAM YOU KNOW... THE TEAM YOU TRUST!



DARREN KRAMER ANN NYBERG JOE FUREY JOHN PIERSON

WEEKNIGHTS 10PM ON **myTV9**
& **11PM** ON **NEWS 8**
wtmh.com



SEASONS OF NEW HAVEN™
P.O. BOX 92
WEST SIMSBURY, CT 06092

PRESORTED STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 21
FREEPORT, OH
43973

Business

- Master of Business Administration, MBA
Accelerated, Accounting, Finance, Healthcare Administration, International Business, Management, Marketing

Blue Economy and Scientific Innovation

- Applied Physics, MS • Applied Statistics, Certificate
- Biology, MS • Chemistry, MS, Professional Science Masters
- Computer Science, MS, *Cybersecurity, Software Development*
- Environmental Education, MS
- Physics, Nanotechnology, Post-Masters Certificate

Education

- Bilingual Multicultural Education/TESOL, MS
- Education, MA, 6th Year
- Educational Leadership, EdD, 6th Year
General, Intermediate Administrator
- Library and Information Science, MLIS
- Master of Arts in Teaching, MAT
Bilingual/Elementary Education, Early Childhood, Elementary Education Grades 7-12 Concentrations: Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, English, Mathematics, Physics
- Reading, MS, 6th Year
- Reading and Language Arts Consultant, Post-Masters Certificate
- Remedial Reading and Language Arts Specialist, Graduate Certificate
- School Library Media, Certificate
Cross Endorsement, Initial Teacher Certification
- Special Education, MS, 6th Year *Assistive Technology, Autism Spectrum Disorders and other Developmental Disabilities, Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, Learning Disabilities*

Movement Sciences

- Athletic Training, MAT (Summer 2021)
- Exercise Science, MS, *Human Performance, Sport Psychology*

Health and Wellness

- Clinical Mental Health Counseling, MS, Post-Masters Certificate
- Communication Disorders, MS • Exercise Science, MS
- Marriage and Family Therapy, MFT
- Master In Athletic Training, MAT
- Nursing, MSN, Post-Masters Certificate
Clinical Nurse Leader, Family Nurse Practitioner, Nurse Educator
- Nursing Education, EdD • Nurse Educator, NSN
- Psychology, MA • Public Health, MPH
- School Counseling, MS, 6th Year, Post-Masters Certificate
- School Health Education, MS • School Psychology, MS, 6th Year
- Social Work, MSW, *Clinical Practice, Community Practice: Community Organization, Policy, and Leadership*
- Social Work, DWS
- Social Work & Women & Gender Studies, MSW/MA

Liberal Arts

- Creative Writing, MFA • English, MA MS
- History, MA, Grad Certificate • Political Science, MS
- Romance Languages, MS *French, Italian, Spanish*
- Sociology, MS • Women's & Gender Studies, MA, Certificate

Recreation and Sport Management

- Recreation and Leisure Studies, MA
Recreation Administration, Recreation Therapy
- Sport and Entertainment Management, MS

Continuing Professional Education Programs

These self-paced, affordable on-line courses and certificates, developed by industry professionals and tailored to the needs of professional learners, will help enhance your skill set and opportunities.

- Agile Project Management • Career Building • Communication
- Computer Applications • Data Analytics • Drone Academy
- Emerging Technologies • Communication
- Emotional Intelligence for Managers
- Non-Profit Management Certificate
- Women in Business • Leaders and Work-Life Balance
- Finding Purpose in Your Career • Personal Branding
- PMP Certification Preparation
- Spanish and Latino Cultures for Health Professionals

Your Graduate Degree Will Set You Apart in a Competitive World



Wondering if there's room for graduate school in your busy life? Southern's School of Graduate and Professional Studies provides you with an array of market-driven programs delivered in flexible formats that will fit your schedule and help to advance your career.

With more than 100 unique graduate degrees, you get the resources, facilities, and research opportunities you would expect in a much larger university. Plus, you'll receive the flexibility, affordability, and return on investment you require from one of the top graduate programs in the country.

Visit SouthernCT.edu/grad



Southern Connecticut
State University
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE
AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES