

West Haven Voice

July 25, 2019

Vol. 24, Issue 29, 20 Pages

West Haven's only independent news source
By and For West Haven

Voice Profile

A weekly in-depth interview

"Some members of the Democratic Town Committee asked me if I'd consider running for state representative. I thought about it and made the leap."

Michael DiMassa
--See page 9



Council OKs 'Haven' despite no answers

By Josh LaBella
Voice Reporter

The City Council hosted a litany of items on the agenda Monday night. This included approving a Department of Economic and Community Development grant for the Haven project, an amended a referral of street abandonment for the project, and MARB enforced mill rate increase.

Representatives of the Haven project were in attendance to see the approval of the grant and the abandonment of the roads. Some council members, who have been waiting for the developers to attend the meeting, took the opportunity to ask them about timelines for the project.

Third District Councilman Aaron Charney and Second District Councilman Nicholas Ruickoldt were especially inquisitive to the developers. Charney, whose district the Haven is in, asked developer Matt Armstrong when the project would be finished to no avail.

Armstrong said he could not answer hypotheticals but that they are working diligently on the process. When Charney questioned what

businesses the developer was bringing into the mall Armstrong said he had to withhold the information due to confidentiality agreements.

Ruickoldt took umbrage with the fact that the road abandonment was the last action the council takes before they are no longer a part of the process. While he said he supported the project, he said he had a lot more questions for the developer before he would feel comfortable approving the abandonment.

The council eventually approved, without Ruickoldt, the road abandonment of Water Street and, in part, Center Street and Richards Place. The stipulations for the measure were that the developer acquired a demolition permit from the city, issues a schedule for the demolition and built a perimeter fence around the property, all within six to eight months. They also put a six-month sunset clause on the referral.

Corporation Counsel Lee Tiernan said the \$5 million grant was for "demolition, street improvements and site improvements." When

See Council, page 9

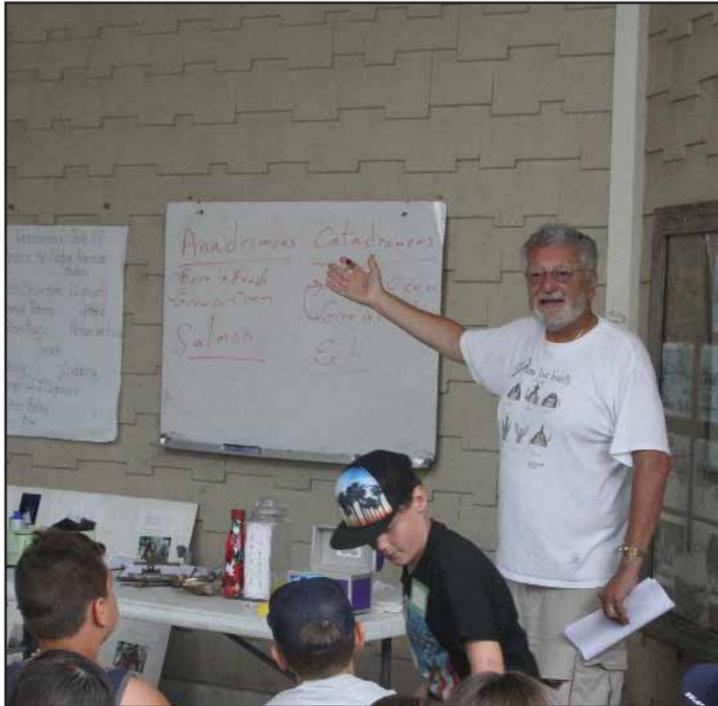


Photo by Russ McCreven

Familiar face

The West Haven Eco-Camp has been one of the most popular summer programs offered in the city -- and its gone on for three decades. One of the faces that was there at the beginning is that of Gerry Frumento, former WHHS science teacher, who still takes part in the program he helped found with the late Mike Paone. The camp was in its third session. See page 15.



Photo by Russ McCreven

Keepin' cool!

Voice Photographer Russ McCreven spied these two ladies keeping cool by the shore near Dawson Avenue, Monday. The region and most of the country was sweltering under the third heatwave of the season. Temperatures topped the 100-degree mark inland. It wasn't quite that bad here, with temps topping out at 96 over the weekend. Coupled with high humidity, many people either did what these folks did, or stayed indoors away from the heat.

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Public Meetings

Weather

Friday July 26 Mostly sunny
High 84F



Sunrise: 5:41 am
Sunset: 8:14 pm
Wind: SE 5-10
High Tide: 6:49 am; 7:08 pm

Saturday July 27 Another Beautiful day!
High 83F



Sunrise: 5:42 am
Sunset: 8:13 pm
Wind: S 10-15
High Tide: 7:45 am; 8:01 pm

Sunday July 28 Sunny with some clouds.
High 84F



Sunrise: 5:43 am
Sunset: 8:12 pm
Wind: SSW 5-10
High Tide: 8:39 am; 8:54 pm

Monday July 29 Mix of sun and clouds
High 86F



Sunrise: 5:44 am
Sunset: 8:11 pm
Wind: NW 5-10
High Tide: 9:32 am; 9:46 pm



Kids' Forecast

Jack Santino, age 3, a student at the West Haven Child Development Center, Inc. predicts nice weather to enjoy some watermelon.

Things to Do

To have your event featured here email it to: info@westhavenvoice.com

West Haven High School Class of 1969 will hold its 50th reunion on Friday, Sept. 27, at Seasons located at 990 Foxon Road, East Haven, from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m.

There will be music provided by a DJ, a plentiful cocktail and hors d'oeuvre hour, buffet dinner along with open bar. Cost is \$75 per person. Checks should be made payable to Charlene Morgal and mailed to 18 Shumway

St., West Haven, 06516, before Aug.15.

More information can be found on our Facebook page: WHHS Class of 1969- 50th reunion, or by emailing chazbo40@aol.com /203 494 7379 or sandee110@aol.com /203 494 7730.

The West Haven Italian-American Civic Association will hold a Summer Day Doo Wop Dance at 85 Chase Lane on Saturday, July 27, at 7 p.m. Music by Charles the DJ till 12. Free beer, wine or soda. Tickets: \$20 per person. Call Lou at (203) 934-3339 or (203) 464-1976 or Ben at (203) 933-4423.

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July 30 -- Planning and Zoning public hearing on Village District Regulation, 7 p.m. Harriett North Meeting Room, City Hall.

July 31 - 6:30 P.M. -- Council Chambers - Special Council Meeting for Deliberations/Actions.

Aug. 1 - 6:30 P.M. -- Council Chambers - Special Council Meeting for Deliberations/Actions

LEGAL NOTICE

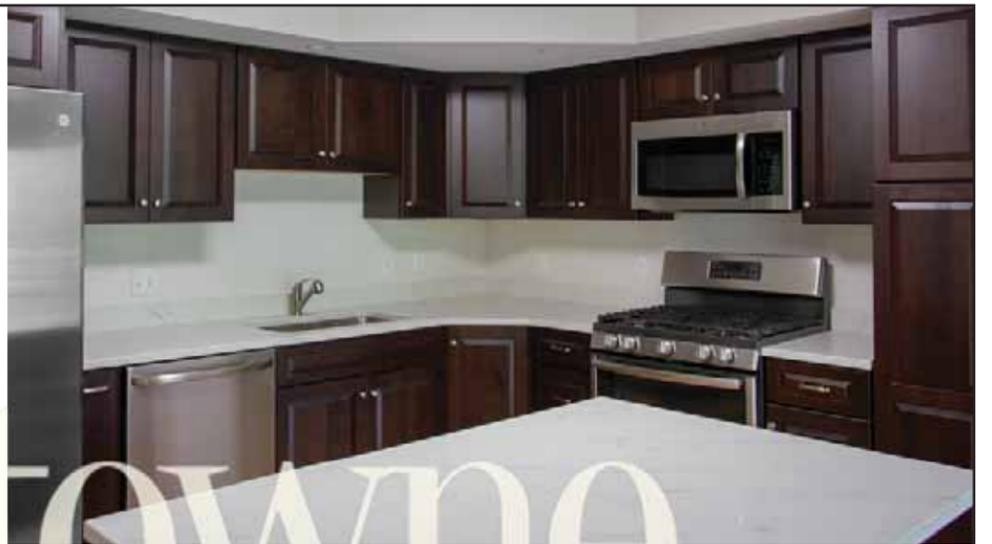
A general meeting of the Oak Grove Cemetery Association will be held on July 29, 2019 at 6:00 pm at Oak Grove Cemetery at the main office.

On this date:

2007 -- India gets its first female president. Pratibha Patil, a politician stayed in office as the head of state of the South Asian country for 5 years.

1984 -- Svetlana Savitskaya becomes the First Woman to Walk in Space. The Soviet cosmonaut was part of the Soyuz T-12 mission, which docked at the Salyut 7 Space station.

1976 -- The famous Face on Mars photo is taken. Viking 1, the first space probe to successfully land on Mars took the famous photo.



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O'Brien wants to pick it up from '17

By Josh LaBella
Voice Reporter

Former two-term mayor and current mayoral candidate Ed O'Brien said he decided to run for the top spot in the city so he could continue where he left off.

"I think we had a lot of good development going on," said O'Brien. "We were actually raising revenue instead of raising taxes. I just want to finish what I started. I've had a lot of developers calling me and asking me to run again and a lot of residents, who didn't vote last time, were asking me to run."

O'Brien said complacency was the reason he lost the previous election. He said many voters did not turn out and his own team thought he was a shoe in.

O'Brien acknowledged the top issue in West Haven is finance. He said he agrees with the other mayoral candidates who said the only way out of the trouble the city is in is development.

"We need economic development," said O'Brien. "We need to increase the grand list."

O'Brien said he would prioritize the train station area as well as Center district for development. He also said he wants to ensure work on

the Haven project and Beach Street development continue.

The former mayor said current Mayor Nancy Rossi won using a misinformation campaign. According to O'Brien, the city's finances were getting better under his leadership.

"We had to work with the MFAC, which morphed into the MARB, and they recognized we were moving in the right direction," said O'Brien. "We paid off 18 percent of our debt. I did not double the deficit. It's a cumulative deficit.

It's the same as it was when I started.

O'Brien said he knows he would work well with the Municipal Accountability Review Board. He said he sees them as another set of eyes and pointed to his work with the Municipal Finance Advisory Commission as proof it would be a good relationship.

O'Brien took issue with the tax increases the city has seen during Rossi's term. He said they were due to Rossi's unwillingness to make cuts and

big changes.

"The MARB wanted her to make cuts," said O'Brien. "They wanted her to make substantial changes. They wanted us to do that also. We changed our healthcare; we saved a million dollars. We changed our energy and saved

\$600,000. She was cutting concerts that were mostly paid for by fundraising."

The candidate said he plans to make cuts while concentrating on raising tax revenue via commercial development.

O'Brien said he is not entering the race.
See O'Brien, page 16



EDWARD O'BRIEN



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Dear Felicia

As I write this week's mis-sive honey bunch, it seems the sweltering heat we've had hearabouts is jest about over for a little while, anyway. This ole gal decided to hunker down in her domicile for a couple days, whilst the heat outside got worse. There was nary a breath of air around here, even when the tide came in, witch is normally the time it gets breezy.

Tennyrate, the heat in the burg was of a different sort. The GOP had its caucus last week, and there are some who're gonna be happy and some who're not. Y'see, despite tryin' to present a unified front, the 60-member Town Committee voted 22-20 - witch means that 18 people didn't show - to nominate Michelle Gregorio as the endorsed candidate.

Why are some people gonna be happy and t'others not? Well, the vote perty much cinches it. It was a very split ballot, and Steven Mullins,

who is perty much a face of the party, was on the short end. Steve has already let it be known he will primary for the nod.

That's where the not-so-happy people will reside. Y'see, whilst most of the time a primary is considered a good thing, the GOP - or some o' them - think it's not setch a good thing. Yew remember I mentioned that a few weeks ago, and got a missive from an interested Republican saying, no, that wasn't the case.

The GOP don't wanna hafta spend its rather limited "war chest" on a primary. So much for that. Mullins thinks he deserves the nomination, and Gregorio does too. Whilst Cobina understands the dollars and cents of the matter, the exposure the two candidates will get will be a good thing.

The GOP is gonna hafta work to get outta this rut it's been in in the last 30 years, and this might be the way to at least come part way.

Now what has to happen is two things: the candidates hafta separate themselves from each other, and offer a viable alternative to the Demmie machine that has run the city into the ground the last little while. With the ratio of Democrats to Republicans runnin' about 6:1, that's gonna be a tall order, no matter effen there's a primary or not. Still to be determined at this writing is the Demmie nominee, expected to be Nancy Rossi in a run-away - her people control the Democratic Town Committee. But, that don't mean things are over. Petition drives are already being prepped as we speak with both Deb Collins, the candidate backed by the "out" factions of the party, and Ed O'Brien, the former mayor and one who's being backed by more than a few, though across faction lines, trying to get on the ballot.

As we've said before a three-way race will be a crap shoot when it comes to who'll win. Normally about 6000-8000 voters come out for primaries, and the numbers - and margins of victory - are small. With a three-way race, more voters are gonna hafta be attracted to come out in September, or the numbers and margins will be really small and really upsetting to the losers.

We remember the 1981 primary that only had Don Wrinn and George Dunleavy. That was as factionalized as

this go-round. It could put a rupture in the party that might do the impossible - elect a Republican. It's too early to make those predictions, but we know one thing, it's gonna be a dirty, dirty race.

~~~

*Cobina got this note this past week, and thought yew'd be interested. It seems it's gonna create a bit of confusion effen what it sez is true. It comes from a pal, and we thought yew'd be interested. The boys and girls in the Actors Colony certainly might:*

*"Friday, I was having dinner at a friend's home in Md th e talk got around to tax bills. Th is family owns income property in West Haven and insisted that th ey didn't pay a «Sewer Use Fee» . They pulled up their West Haven taxbill on their laptop, and, sure enough, there was no indication of a Sewer Use Fee on the on-line version of their tax bill. When they pulled up their mailed hard copy from the Tax Collector out of their files, the Sewer Use fee was properly there.*

*"For the heck of it, they looked up my (address deleted) tax bill on their laptop and the same missing reference to a 'Sewer Use Fee' was present there, too. I would think that it should be on both the online and mailed versions of the bill."*

*Yes, one would think so, wouldn't one? I wonder if the people in the Actors Colony are aware of the SNAFU. I bet they aren't. Effen that's the case, they better do a look-see to figger out*

*how to git the word out to people.*

*I can jest see it now, people not having their registrations or home sales not go through for lack of payment thata they didn't even know about.*

*Of course, like tax bills, not getting one is no defense as far as the city - and state - are concerned. It's the responsibility of the taxpayer to get his bill, not t'other way around. Funny how that works, huh?*

~~~

Sammy Bluejay reports that the City Council is gonna have two public sessions next week, July 31 and Aug. 1 at 6:30 in the Council Chambers or Harriett North Room, depending on attendance. The hearings are gonna be about the Charter Revision Commishes report. To say that the report has sent a cold shiver up some politicos' spines is to understate it.

There are some on the commish who are fully expecting that the political establishment will try to deep six the biggest reforms of the report. Changing the status quo is always a tetchy thing, especially when politics is playing like it is around here. People like the rules, they're comfortable.

The fact that the city needs some change, and more than cosmetic, hasn't really dawned on some in the establishment. Changing the city council and some of the boards, and putting up responsible and qualified people in offices should be the coin of the realm, but it hasn't been around here.

There is a belief that the report will be picked apart and much of what the commish did lopped off before it goes to the voters. We hope not. Whilst there might be things that are difficult or down-right scary, the commishes work should be allowed to stand on its own and let the voters decide. We hope the council doesn't decide to cherry-pick some parts of it, and then discard other parts. We especially like the reworking of the City Council. Bigger districts and more minority representation is a good thing. It's been a problem ever since the current charter was put together. There are other things too, but that's the one that Cobina really likes.

~~~

*With the Haven getting the go-ahead from the DOT with its traffic plan, we have voiced our concerns regarding the traffic that's gonna come into town once the shopping center is built. We understand that a new lane will be added, but with the Kimberly Avenue Bridge - properly called the Fummiatti Bridge - as aged as it is, will we have traffic jams from the highway to the center? One would think so.*

*Mitt luff und kizzez,*

*Cobina*

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# Gregorio gets GOP nod in close vote

By Josh LaBella  
Voice Reporter

The Republican Town Committee nominated Michele Gregorio as its mayoral candidate in their caucus last Tuesday – as well as candidates for many under-ticket positions. Steven Mullins, the other announced candidate, said he plans on getting the signatures required to force a primary. Many in attendance said they were optimistic this election could see big gains for the Republicans in West Haven – due to division amongst the

## Rossi a shoe-in for nod

By Josh LaBella  
Voice Reporter

Tuesday night, after press time, the Democratic Town Committee was expected to nominate candidates for November's election at its caucus. Rossi, who won her first term in 2017, is expected to get the necessary majority on the DTC, a committee on which her supporters hold a comfortable majority.

That does not mean there won't be a primary. Her two Democratic opponents, former mayor Ed O'Brien and City Clerk Debbie Collins, have both said they are ready to get the 743 signatures required in order to primary for the seat. Collins was expected to have her name put into nomination Tuesday night, while O'Brien did not, according to the candidate this week (See page 3).

Candidates being considered so far are: Nancy Rossi, mayor; Patty Horvath, city clerk; Michael Last, treasurer; and Dorothy Chambrelli for tax collector. Party Chairman Michael Last has also asked DTC members to support Anne Heffernan, Cebi Waterfield and Andrea Talamelli for Board of Education seats as well as Ronald Quagliani and Gary Donovan for Council-at-large seats.

Unsure at this point is how many candidates on the under-ticket will be cross-endorsed, and how many new candidates will seek those positions. At least a few council candidates and top-of-the-ticket offices were expected to be challenged.

Collins has the support of at least one faction in the three-way split of the party, that being the Morrissey faction. O'Brien, who was supported by that segment, is running with the backing of rank-and-file supporters.

Democrats. Under-ticket nominations included: Lorraine Jensen, tax collector; Roman Khondker, treasurer; and Sergio Hruszko for city clerk.

For City Council, the GOP nominated: Eric Pesapne, District 1; Thomas Dellacamera, District 2; Victoria Clifford, District 3; Chris Belous, District 6; Silvana Apicella, District 8; Tom Mansfield, District 9; and Barry Lee Cohen for District 10. The party also nominated incumbent Richard DePalma and Colleen O'Connor for Council-at-Large seats. Barry Lee Cohen, vice-chairman of the RTC, said the GOP will find candidates for Districts 4, 5 and 7 by November.

Candidates for the Board of

Education are incumbent Pat Libero, current chairwoman of the RTC, incumbent Robert Guthrie and Angela Driver.

Out of 42 votes cast for the mayoral nomination, the split was 22-20 in favor of Gregorio. She said she was very excited, not for herself, but for the citizens of West Haven.

"We know we can reduce taxes," said Gregorio. "We know we can have economic development. We know we can have safe streets. We know that we can clean up this city and eliminate blight. We all know we can enjoy our city again."

Gregorio said she is looking forward to running a great campaign and gave her congratulations to those nominated.

"Let's do this this year," Gregorio said. "This is our year."

GOP Board of Education member Rosa Richardson called for unity within the party and discussed the importance of presenting a united front. She said she was disappointed in how close the mayoral votes were only because it meant there was some division in the RTC.

"I would love nothing more than to see us be one," said Richardson, "because we can't beat the enemy when they have three factions and can still kick our ass. We have to be one and we have to be united."

Cohen spoke out against the party having a mayoral primary. He said the attention Democrats have received is mainly as a result of party infighting

and that the GOP should stay away from it.

"There's so much for us to pick on and, basically, show their pettiness," said Cohen. "If there's going to be a primary, yes, one person will win the battle. But, we are going to have a much tougher battle winning the war."

After the caucus, Mullins said he got more votes than he expected. He said he had a feeling the votes were not going to go in his direction but is ready to get the signatures for a primary.

"One hundred fifty-eight Republican signatures are required to start a primary city-wide," said Mullins. "We're not going to have any problem getting that. I'm going to do what I have to do."

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PRESENTS

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## New 'fee' on bags is tax

So, now they've gone after our plastic bags. The General Assembly has imposed a 10-cent tax on the bags that supermarkets and dry goods stores give customers. Ostensibly it is an environmental move. "We must protect the environment," say its supporters. The fact that the bags - many of them anyway - say they are recyclable, which should be the magic words, seems not to be of any consequence.

Like many taxes imposed on taxpayers, the "reason" for the tax is not really the reason for the tax. If the plastic bags are a) reusable; and b) recyclable we have to question the reasons given by the powers that be in the General Assembly. That is why we used the word "ostensibly" in the paragraph above.

You see, the game was given away when it was determined that the legislators in Hartford are hoping for the same windfall they get from bottles and cans. The estimate we saw for the new tax is somewhere around \$22 million in revenues. And, of course, the lawmakers would bristle at our calling it a tax. They would prefer "fee," we're buying the bags. We prefer calling it what it is, a new way to nickel and dime us into a new revenue stream.

The Connecticut General Assembly presides over a state that is fast imploding on its economic self with a declining population and ballooning budget and unfunded liabilities. Rather than take a hard, long look at revenues and expenses - you don't buy votes by cutting spending - the Assembly will look a more and more taxes - fees - in order to gain more funding. This money will be funneled into the General Fund and used to pay for more programs, more bureaucrats and more votes. That is why we are against the tolls on state highways. The gas tax was implemented to pay for state roads and bridges, but over the years was siphoned off into other places. The same will happen with tolls. Profligate spending won't be curbed, it will be enabled. Just like an enabler gives an alcoholic a drink, new fees and taxes give legislators more ways to spend.

We hope many taxpayers work around the new tax. Supermarkets are planning not to use the plastic bags. That's one way. We hope shoppers will use their own bags. Though there is a part of us that would look to thwart the eco-fascists in our society that promoted this bill. They will be happy with the bill and its results. They are ideologues.

Ultimately, we hope that the \$22 million will never be realized by the assembly. It can happen. Until the General Assembly realizes it has tapped out the taxpayers, more and more commodities are up for grabs.

Just once, we'd like to see some fiscal restraint; but given the track record of the Connecticut General Assembly, its Democratic majority and RINO minority, we won't hold our collective breath.

## A fair hearing

The West Haven City Council has scheduled special meetings, July 31 and Aug. 1, next Wednesday and Thursday, for special meeting regarding the Charter Revision Commission's recent report. This newspaper, meanwhile, is running an on-going series on the details of that report.

The public should pay special attention to both. The Commission has recommended some far-reaching reforms that are designed to streamline and improve city government. We hope the recommendations are given a fair and honest hearing and review.



## Biden part of one percent

By Rich Lowry  
Syndicated Columnist  
The American middle class just got a lot richer.

Joe Biden, who invariably and tiresomely refers to himself as "Middle-Class Joe," made \$15 million the first two years after the end of the Obama administration.

According to one estimate, it takes an annual income of \$420,000 to be in the top 1% of earners.

Biden made 26 times that in 2017. He used to be remarkable among top politicians for not being very wealthy, but even in the old days of straitened circumstances, he and his wife were making about \$400,000 a year, enough to make the top 1% in Delaware.

This doesn't discredit any particular Democratic policy proposal, but it shows that in inveighing against the 1%, many top Democrats are attacking a group they are happy to be part of.

The Bidens bought a \$2.7 million vacation house on the beach, a luxury far out of the reach of the vast majority of Americans.

If Biden has felt any guilt, he has yet to show it.

We shouldn't begrudge Biden, or anyone else, getting what the market is willing to pay him, and spending it on

things he enjoys. But what's true of Biden is as true of other denizens of the 1%, a category that includes people across all sorts of industries and professions.

What distinguishes the buck-raking of a politician like Biden is that he is simply cashing in on his fame, rather than adding any true value the way an entrepreneur does, or providing important services like a doctor or an accountant.

Writing books (often with the help of a ghostwriter) and showing up and giving speeches is perhaps the easiest money in America, and it is uniquely the path to wealth of politicians.

This road is so paved with gold that even Sandinista-friendly avowed socialists can make a bounty, as Bernie Sanders has without apology, indeed with a prickly defensiveness. "I didn't know that it was a crime to write a good book, which turned out to be a bestseller," he huffed at a community meeting.

It's also not a crime to use tax loopholes to keep from paying more than necessary to the IRS, as Biden can attest. The Wall Street Journal reports that the former vice president, a longtime critic of tax loopholes exploited by the rich, himself used a loophole that

Democrats have long tried to eliminate to save about half a million on his tax bill.

Biden is by no means the lead scourge of the wealthy in the Democratic field.

He's been outflanked on this issue by Sanders and Elizabeth Warren, who herself made nearly a million dollars last year.

At a recent fundraiser, he said that rich people shouldn't be demonized. Of course, Biden was talking to a room of fellow rich people.

On CNN the other night, he was back as usual to calling himself Middle-Class Joe. It's probably too much to ask him to give up that shopworn self-image.

Still, he and many of his colleagues would be truer to how they live their own lives if they began to more fully embrace and promote the idea of their fellow Americans getting rich.

*Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review. (c) 2019 by King Features Synd., Inc.*

Read Rich Lowry  
each week  
in the Voice



Dear Eleanore Turkington:  
I am writing regarding my sidewalk. I have been trying to get sidewalks for at least 11 years. The closest I've come was the city taking down the tree that's lifting the sidewalk and the street. The stump is still here and the sidewalk.

I feel bad for the high school kids because they have to walk in the street. The kid down the street is in a wheelchair and his dad must walk him in the street. Eleanore, can you help me. No one else has.

MG, Linden Street

DearMG:

Well, readers, it has been

a battle. But Councilwoman Tracy Morrissey came to bat for this frustrated resident. Councilwoman's comments sent to Gripe Vine included, "I have spoken with Ernie Chiarelli, the sidewalk inspector who has inspected the sidewalk and spoke with the homeowner. He explained to her the new procedures he put in place and how to report damaged sidewalks. The sidewalk is slated for repair over the next few weeks."

Following this information, Gripe Vine notified Councilwoman Morrissey to see if a target date would be set.



ELEANORE TURKINGTON

Here's the confirming information I received from Councilwoman Morrissey, "As

promised, the sidewalk was dug up and will be poured by the end of the week (July 9).

Gripe Vine Readers:

I received two photos from MG, the individual who complained of the sidewalks poor condition and received the two photos in my column today. As you can see, I have labeled them, BEFORE and

AFTER.

Thanks to Councilwoman Tracy Morrissey and her diligent efforts a new sidewalk was installed and safety was restored on Linden Street.

You can send your gripes, comments and issues to gripevine4wh@aol.com or mail them to Gripe Vine c/o West Haven Voice, 666 Savin Ave.



This sidewalk on Linden Street, was recently installed and these two photos are self-explanatory.

# GRIPE VINE

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If you need more writing space, complete your gripe on a separate piece of paper and submit with this form. Your identity will be kept confidential with Eleanore Turkington, Gripe Vine Columnist. You can also email your gripe to gripevine4wh@aol.com

## BACKPAIN?

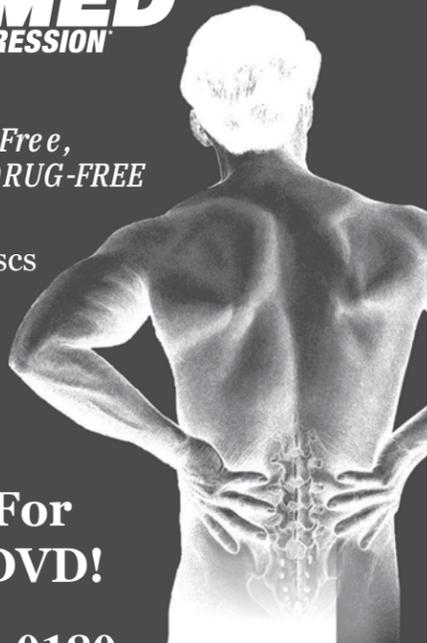
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## Historian's corner

By Dan Shine

### Tom Thumb

This week's column is taken from *The West Haven Booster*, dated November 1933, and written in the style of that era:

Today we beg to recall to your recollection a big, little man, who in his boyhood spent considerable time in West Haven, at the home of a relative, still standing on a terraced hillside off Campbell Avenue (in the area of present-day Marshall's Garage).

Sixty years or more ago, this house was often pointed out as having had the distinction of harboring Charles Sherwood Stratton, otherwise known as Tom Thumb.

Stratton was born in Bridgeport in 1838.

Connecticut's famous showman, P.T. Barnum, early discovered the little chap's possibilities and exploited them.

At this time, he weighed but 16 lbs. and measured but 2 feet in height. His brain was normal and he was intelligent and teachable. Combined with

agility and something of the trickiness of a monkey was a wit enough to make those attributes count in making him into the most widely known and the best beloved freak in the whole world of showdom.

Of course Barnum, who knew the power of advertising exercised that power to the limit.

He took his protégé on tour through Europe. While in London, he was commanded to appear before Queen Victoria who was much pleased with his performance and dubbed him The General, a title that thereafter stuck to him.

Barnum was wont to tell that when the time came for them to withdraw from the audience chamber, the little General, as was customary, began to back from the room. This was too slow a progress, so Tom Thumb turned about and ran a few yards, then turned again and again began to retreat backward. Again he lost patience and again turned and

ran.

Thus alternating he at last amid the laughter of the on-lookers reached the end of the room.

His miniature coach drawn by tiny ponies in glittering trappings his suites of toy-like furniture, his elegant costumes which he wore with strutting importance (funny as only his diminutive size could make it) were drawing cards wherever he appeared.

In 1882 he married Lavinia Warren, one of the two sisters both dwarfs whom Barnum also introduced to the public. The writer recalls having seen the Tom Thumbs in the late 1870s when they, independent of the Big Show, toured the East.

The General had by this time grown a trifle taller and somewhat heavier, and bore the stamp of maturity. Mrs. Tom Thumb was an intriguing, human doll.

The Little General died in 1882, aged 44 years.



P.T. Barnum, who came from Bridgeport, is shown with one of his most famous "attractions," Charles Sherwood Stratton, also known as Tom Thumb. Stratton had relatives in West Ha-

# Making the case for credentials

*Ed Note: The following is the latest in a series explanatory columns on recommendations made by the Charter Revision Commission.*

By Ed Granfield  
Commission Chairman

The mere suggestion of "Raising the Bar" in West Haven by establishing baseline credentials for all city department heads within the City Charter is a touchy subject. Our critics will suggest that we are attacking our current department leaders, which would be a false assumption. This component of our proposal, if passed in 2019, would not go into effect until 2021. And if it goes into effect in 2021, it does not mean there will be a wholesale firing of unqualified department heads.

It means the next time there is an opening for a new department head, that individual would have to meet the standards set forth within the City Charter! Breathe everyone, this is about the future of the city.

West Haven, along with many other cities and towns, struggles with the politics of "The friends and family program." I think we can all agree it is one thing to push a local political button to help someone land an entry-level position so long as they are qualified and capable. But it is quite another matter when it comes to the management of a city with 1200 employees and a \$163 million budget.

The Charter Revision Commission believes that West

Haven taxpayers deserve the very best from their city government. Now if you believe we already do, you are welcome to your opinion. That said, is it too much to ask that all city department heads be required to meet typical industry standards in advanced education, training and experience? Is it too much to ask that these standards are documented within our City Charter to insure those standards are always met?

Department leaders can/may be responsible for dozens, maybe hundreds of employees and \$\$ millions of taxpayer dollars. "Raising the Bar" on this issue is a no-brainer. The CRC proposal includes credentials for all department heads because a highly trained and qualified management team is vital to the success of any community and political influence should not be part of the equation. We cannot eliminate it, but we can make every effort to reduce it! Credentials for all city department leaders is a necessity in order to meet the needs and demands of 21st century governing.

Sticking with the topic of credentials, the CRC has also proposed moving the City Clerk, Tax Collector, and the City Treasurer from elected to appointed positions. In today's complex world, each of these offices requires a great deal of expertise in their respective fields, and it is illegal to require credentials for elected officials! For example, a Town & City Clerk, in order to meet

state certification requirements, must complete five classes, plus two years on-the-job training, and pass a state exam, just to become certified.

A certified Tax Collector is typically college educated, with three years of municipal tax experience and must also pass a state exam. A City Treasurer is also typically college educated in the field of finance or accounting, must be bondable, and is legally responsible for the receipt, accounting and investment of city funds. A City Treasurer is also responsible for municipal trust funds and signing off on bonds, notes, and other finan-

cial obligations.

Our research of communities of similar size in Connecticut through the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) supports our conclusion of the 15 Cities and Towns like West Haven, 80% of treasurers, 90% of tax collectors, and almost 50% of city clerks are appointed (a growing trend). But since it is illegal to require credentials for elected officials, anyone can run for, get elected, and occupy one of these important positions, anyone. The risk should be obvious.

The democratic election process, created by the Founding

Fathers of this nation was, by design, meant to insure that our local, state and federal legislative bodies would always be of, by, and for the people. These three offices are not legislative, they are managerial by design, and critical in scope. The research supports this move and the CCM verifies the logic by comparing similar communities to West Haven.

The CRC unanimously endorses this proposed change along with the addition of credentials to the City Charter, not only to "raise the bar" but our standards of excellence in West Haven.



Photo by Michael P. Walsh

## New sidewalks for Center

From left, Mayor Nancy R. Rossi, Public Works Commissioner Tom McCarthy and Rossi's executive assistant, Lou Esposito, look on as a crew from the city's sidewalk contractor, Elm City Materials Inc. of Spring Street, finishes the first pour of concrete for replacing a stretch of sidewalk in front of the Savin Rock Conference Center at 6 Rock St. on Friday. The work, which will include a new crosswalk of stamped concrete that resembles red brick pavers, is being financed with a state Local Capital Improvement Program grant and supervised by city sidewalk inspector Ernie Chiarelli.

# Public service attracted DiMassa

By Josh LaBella  
Voice Reporter

Well into his second term, State Rep. (D-115) Michael DiMassa said he "got the bug" for public service because he liked to help people and work with others towards a common goal.

The 28-year-old said he started out interning for Mayor

John Picard and continued to take opportunities when they arose.

"At one point, some members of the Democratic Town Committee asked me if I'd consider running for state representative," said DiMassa. "I thought about it and made the leap."

DiMassa said he has no long term plans for politics. His

goal, he said, is to stay in for a small amount of time, try and make a difference in people's lives where he can and then pass the torch for the next person.

When he ran in 2016, the state representative ran against incumbent and current executive assistant to the mayor, Louis Esposito. He said having worked on Esposito's cam-

paigns in the past made it a tough experience.

"Neither Lou nor I made it personal," said DiMassa. "It was just one of those things where people in the district told me it was time for a fresh perspective."

DiMassa said he wanted to look at jobs, economic development and school funding going into his first term. He

said in his district there are a lot of one-parent households and people who work two or three part-time jobs instead of one full-time job.

"Those are the issues you run into here," said DiMassa. "How do we propel the local economy?"

Representative DiMassa said leveraging state resources to

See DiMassa, page 18



MICHAEL DIMASSA

## Council: OKs grant

Continued from page 1

it came to approving that item, the developers fielded more questions. At one point, a council member asked the developer what skin they had in the game to finish the project.

Armstrong replied to the question by saying the developers had acquired 56 parcels of land and invested \$25 to \$30 million into the project so far.

"If I don't answer your questions it is not that I am trying to be evasive," said Armstrong. "It is that I don't have the answers yet."

Charney pointed to blight issues and property value declining in his district. He said while the project was city wide, "Some people are taking more of a hit than others."

Another issue the council tackled was the approval of a .42 increase in the mill rate. The MARB increased the mill rate when adjusting the city budget last month after not allowing the Rossi administration to use one-time revenue from the sale of city property to fill gaps.

Unlike previous years, the MARB made a stipulation that, in order to get restructuring funds, the city council would have to vote to approve the change.

Sixth District Councilman Peter Massaro said he was tired of how the MARB treats the city and its officials.

"It's like extortion," said Massaro. "Putting a gun to your head."

Chairman Ronald Quagliani said he wished the relationship between the MARB and city officials was more collaborative and pointed out that in Tier 4 communities [West Haven is Tier 3] the council and mayor have a voting role in the process.

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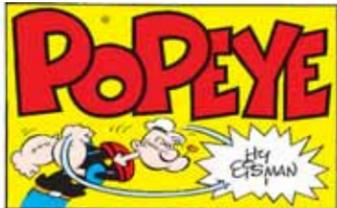
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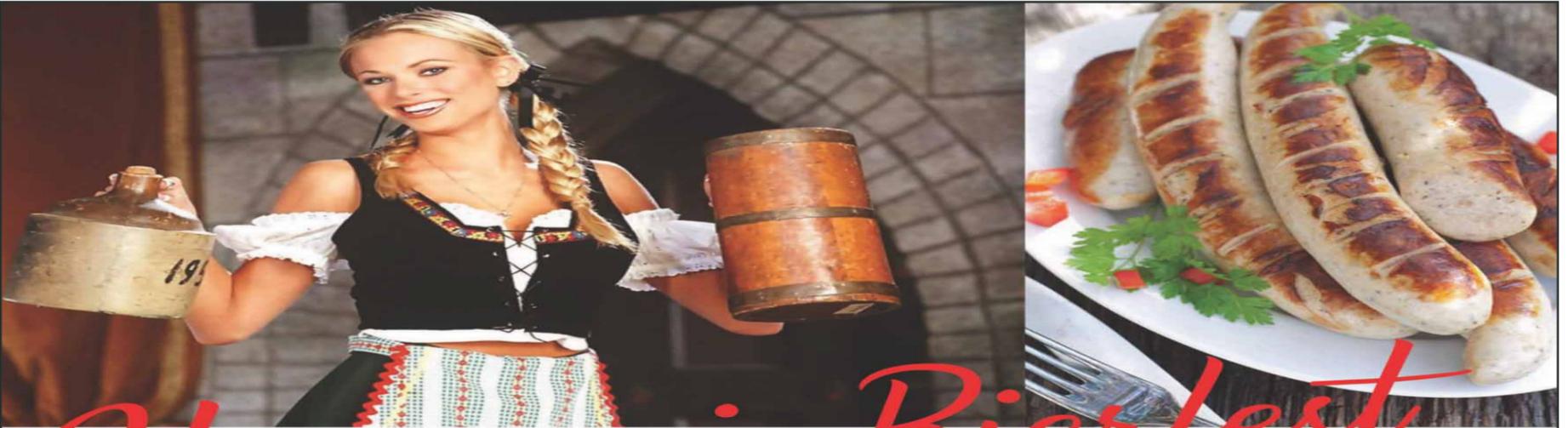


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## My two cents

By Bill Riccio, Jr.

While much of the working public looks to the next few weeks as vacation time – August being the month when many if not most take vacation – the coming of the end of July traditionally spells the end of the summer for this writer, as things begin to move toward the beginning of the new academic year, and the beginning of fall sports.

When I was a working official – all of two years ago in football – summer was here, but it had many other connections with the beginning of football. Whether on a collegiate or high school level, July meant clinics, rules tests, rules reading. Notes from commissioners and interpreters and discussions on how this rule or that rule will be implemented made up the bulk of the last two weeks in July and the rest of August.

Of course, games began in the last week of August or first week in September, depending on Thanksgiving and/or the dates of the NCAA playoffs. College teams would begin in the last week of August sometimes so they could put in a bye week in the middle of the season.

High school teams began practice the third week of August and had to have 10 days in before they could scrimmage. That's all changed now with the mandatory bye week in October (either the first or second week) as determined by medical staff. So, there are fewer scrimmages and less time to prepare.

For professional fans, training camp begins in the third week of July, and the 14-days of practice ends with exhibition games. It's too bad about those exhibition games. They are getting fewer and fewer. Last week, it was revealed the NFL wants to go to an 18-game schedule, further biting into exhibition season.

It's hard to believe but it was 50 years ago next month that the first Giants-Jets game was played in Yale Bowl. It was a hot, steamy day in the Bowl, as the Jets, who would take the 1969 Super Bowl, topped the Giants.

I thought about that game because of a trip I took near Long Wharf. The game was part of a series begun a year or two earlier in Yale Bowl to benefit the Albie Booth Boys Club. The game eventually raised the funds for the club, and it was built on Sargent Drive, and is still there. Unfortunately, Boys and Girls Clubs around here are like hen's teeth. The club closed a few years after it was open.

That's too bad. Booth, known as Little Boy Blue, passed away in 1960. His heroics for Yale, particularly his senior year, are legendary. He beat Army with a field goal on a drop kick, and was a scat back that bedeviled opponents.

The professional game saw the lucrative nature of the exhibition games and by the end of the 1970s, the benefit game in a place like New Haven was a memory. Now season ticket holders have to buy their tickets – including exhibition games – as part of the package.

While I'm not on the field anymore since taking  
**See My Two Cents, page 14**

# Steve Harris tapped to succeed Morrell



STEVE HARRIS

By Mike Madera  
Voice Columnist

The list of head coaches for the West Haven hockey program is few. Steve Harris can now consider himself one of a handful in the storied program's history.

With the expected approval from the Board of Education this Monday evening, Harris will join a list which includes Hal Smullen, Edward L. Bennett, Art Crouse, Art Delucia, Gordie Smith and most recently, Joe Morrell, who stepped down after 21 years at the helm.

"It is absolutely amazing," Harris said. "I have been part of the West Haven Youth Hockey program where I started and to see all those guys and what they have done is amazing. I am right back where I started. It is an absolute honor to be the head coach at West Haven. I have very big shoes to fill with Joe Morrell. He was amazing with

**See Harris, page 13**



Submitted Photo

## Shore Haven champions

The Duffy's Tavern Red Sox completed a banner year, going 14-1 in the regular season and then went undefeated in postseason play. They upended the Pirates to take home league championship. They are shown with their trophies following the Championship Game.

# Harris: *Takes over Devils program*

Continued from page 12

the kids and he was one of my coaches along with Mike Violano when I was at Notre Dame. He knew how to get the most out of his players."

Superintendent of Schools Neil C. Cavallaro was enthusiastic about the choice.

"Steve is really committed to hockey. He has worked extremely hard to get to this point. He has a strong passion for hockey and he has worked many years to develop his coaching skills," he said. "I watched him turn Hamden Hall around. He is going to take the time and work hard to make the program better. We feel like we got the right guy. He coached my son (Connor) and I watched him in action. He is committed. He is good to the kids. He has prepared himself for this point. He has coached two or three teams in a season. His goal was to become a better hockey coach."

Harris has an impressive youth hockey and prep school coaching resume, most notably coaching at Hamden Hall for eight years, with seven of those years as head coach. Harris made an immediate impact on the program of the Hornets as he was winless in his first year at the helm, but followed with a semifinal appearance one year later.

His experience was a big factor in making the choice.

"Steve brings a great deal of experience coaching at all levels to our program," West Haven Athletic Director Jon Capone said. "He has a tremendous amount of respect for the history of our program. My job is to assist him in the transition, and I'm excited to begin working with him."

Harris has also been impressive at the youth hockey levels where he took the Yale U14/U15 Tier 3 squad to the New England quarterfinal game last season and took the CT Oilers to the EJEPL finals and Atlantic Youth Hockey League quarterfinals.

"He is the consummate professional," Yale Youth Hockey President Charlie Andriole said. "He is a very diligent teacher of the game of hockey. He always handles himself with the calmest of demeanor. That is not to say he doesn't expect good things from his players. He does it in a very calm way, which I find rare. He will be a great fit for West Haven. He is a great teacher with expansive knowledge. He coached all three of my kids so I know his methodologies and his philosophies."

Said Harris, "Coaching the different age groups has really helped. You get to see how the kids develop, and then to watch them go from youth

hockey to high school, you see the older kids help mold the younger kids. It is a big part of the way everyone transforms. You get to see the mindset of the specific age groups."

Harris expanded his coaching last year, serving as the advance scout and skills instructor at Notre Dame — West Haven under then first year coach Larry Vieira.

Vieira joined in endorsing the choice of Harris for the West Haven post.

"In my opinion, he is one of the most outstanding young coaches in the area," Vieira said of Harris. "He has a presence about him. The kids respond when he walks in the room. His hockey knowledge is off the charts. He has a little bit of an edge to him. He has that "it" factor. That is an ex-

cellent hire. We will miss him here."

Harris is no stranger to high school hockey in the area as he starred at cross-town Notre Dame from 1996-1999, where he was known for his sharp shot and nose to come up with the big goals.

Harris needed just three years to join the 100-point club for the Green Knights and took home a state championship as a sophomore.

"I grew up in West Haven and was a West Haven kid," Harris said. "I went to Notre Dame for four years, then college, but came right back to volunteer in the West Haven Youth Hockey. I was never that far removed from West Haven."

The new West Haven coach went on to play prep school at

the Gunnery, before attending Johnson and Wales University.

With the Westies having qualified for the postseason 20 of the past 21 years, Harris has one goal in mind and that is to bring a state title back to West Haven for the first time since 1994.

"My message is an easy one and that is let's win a state championship," Harris said. "I really think with seeing them play last year and what they did, and with the returning players and group coming in, if we follow the system and work hard, it is an attainable goal. We first want to get to the SCC tournament and win that, but the ultimate goal for everyone is to win a state championship. We need to bring a banner back to the Bennett Rink.

He said his methods of coaching is one of earned respect.

"I am not a yeller or screamer. I like to give the kids the benefit of the doubt. I like to give them opportunities, but if I tell them once, I don't want to see it done again. Respect is earned, not given. That has worked out for me."

Harris will name his assistants shortly, with long-time assistant coach Jim Lafo expected to be retained.

"I am not going to change tradition here," Harris said. "There is plenty of tradition at West Haven. I am looking to keep the alumni involved. I'm excited to be here."

Harris, who has an 18-month old daughter with his wife Michelle, works for the City of Milford.



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# My two cents

# New play clock rule to be seen in 2019

Continued from page 12

over as the assigning commissioner of the Vincent J. Reilly – New Haven Football Officials Association – these weeks are the beginning of the season even now.

The national conference call for rules was conducted this week, the state high school officials clinic is in three weeks, and I still have exams and meetings to conduct. New officials are being trained, veteran officials are reading the rulebook and making plans for the new season.

The point is that while the summer is only half over, for many, these weeks are like an ante-room to the tasks that will take us into the fall and not end until the turkey is on the table in November.

The assigning tasks will be a bit easier this year as state high schools have gone onto the same assigning platform as officials.

Last year, the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference had one platform to publish its high school schedules in all sports.

The different sports had to take the games and import them into the assigning platform in order to schedule games. There was always the possibility a game was forgotten or missed either by the school or the assigner.

This past year the CIAC went over to Arbiter.com, a platform that has been around for two decades. The schools put the games right into the system, and the assigners see in real time the changes made. Last year, with the weather, myself and many other assigners had to spend hours making changes and alerting officials.

This year it will be much easier.

Schools are inputting games and still making changes. Assignments will begin in a couple of weeks. Then the mind-set really changes.

The weather might say summer, but football season means autumn.

The arrival of commercials on radio and TV for “Back to School” sales means the kids, too, are beginning to shift their attention.

We wait for summer all year, especially after Christmas, and it is made shorter by the things we find ourselves doing as the weeks inexorably move forward.

In an effort to establish a more consistent time period between downs in high school football, the play clock will start at 40 seconds instead of 25 seconds in many cases beginning with the 2019 season.

This change was one of seven rules revisions recommended by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Football Rules Committee at its January 13-15 meeting in Indianapolis, which were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

The play clock will continue to start at 25 seconds (a) prior to a try following a score, (b) to start a period or overtime series, (c) following administration of an inadvertent whistle, (d) following a charged time-out, (e) following an official’s time-out, with a few exceptions, and (f) following the stoppage of the play clock by the referee for any other reason. In all other cases, 40 seconds will be placed on the play clock and start when the ball is declared dead by a game official.

Previously, the ball was marked ready-for-play when, after it had been placed for a down, the referee gave the ready-for-play signal and the 25-second count began. Beginning next season, in addition to the above situations when the 25-second count is used,

the ball will also be ready for play when, starting immediately after the ball has been ruled dead by a game official after a down, the ball has been placed on the ground by the game official and the game official has stepped away to position.

“The entire committee needs to be commended for its thorough discussion regarding the move to a 40-second play clock, except in specific situations that will still have a 25-second play clock to show play is ready to begin,” said Todd Tharp, assistant director of the Iowa High School Athletic Association and chair of the NFHS Football Rules Committee. “This is one of the most substantial game administration rules changes to be approved in the past 10 years, and without detailed experimentation from several state associations over the past three years, along with cooperation of the NFHS Football Game Officials Manual Committee, all the elements needed to approve this proposal would not have been in place.

Another significant change approved by the committee was the addition of a note to Rule 1-3-7 to permit state associations to create instant-replay procedures for state postseason contests only. This revision would allow game or replay officials to use a replay monitor during state postseason contests to review decisions by the on-field game officials. Use of a replay monitor would be on a state-by-state adoption basis, and the methodology for reviewing calls would be determined by the applicable state association.

“The ultimate goal of each game official and each

officiating crew is to get the call correct,” Tharp said. “Each state association, by individual adoption, can now use replay or video monitoring during its respective postseason contests to review decisions by the on-field game officials. Each state association, if it adopts this rules revision, will also create the parameters and scope of the replay.”

With regard to uniforms, the NFHS Football Rules Committee clarified the size requirements for numbers on jerseys through the 2023 season and added a new requirement effective with the 2024 season. Clarifications to Rule 1-5-1c (in bold) that are in effect through the 2023 state that the numbers, inclusive of any border, shall be centered horizontally at least 8 inches and 10 inches high on front and back, respectively. In addition, the entire body of the number (the continuous horizontal bars and vertical strokes) exclusive of any border(s) shall be approximately 1½-inches wide. Finally, through the 2023 season, the body of the number (the continuous horizontal bars and vertical strokes) shall be either: (a) a continuous color(s) contrasting with the jersey color; or (b) the same color(s) as the jersey with a minimum of one border that is at least ¼-inch in width of a single solid contrasting color.

Effective with the 2024 season, the entire body of the number (the continuous horizontal bars and vertical strokes) of the number shall be a single solid color that clearly contrasts with the body color of the jersey.

“The purpose of numbers on jerseys is to provide clear iden

See Rules, page 15

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# Eco-Camp still going strong!



Photos by Russ McCreven

## Eco-Camp continues success

The West Haven Eco-Camp has been an educational and fun way to spend part of the summer for youngsters over a span of almost three decades. Founded by the late Mike Paone and Gerry Frumento, the camp has educated and entertained thousands. Children learn the ecosystem that is part of the shore area with walks along the beach, while getting hands-on instruction about various plants and animals. This year is no exception as the camp is currently in its third weeklong session. Clockwise from left above: Senior counselors meet to discuss the Food Fest and other activities. Right above and below -- Camp Director Pat Fallon holds court before the day begins.



## Rules: *Clock* is a big change

Continued from page 14

ification of players," said Bob Colgate, NFHS director of sports and sports medicine and staff liaison to the NFHS Football Rules Committee. "In order to enhance the ability to easily identify players, the committee has clarified the size requirements for jersey numbers through the 2023 season and added a new requirement for the 2024 season."

Two changes were approved by the committee in an effort to reduce the risk of injury in high school football. First, tripping the runner is now prohibited. Beginning next season, it will be a foul to intentionally use the lower leg or foot to obstruct a runner below the knees. Previously, a runner was not included in the definition of tripping. Second, in Rule 9-4-3k, the "horse-collar" foul was expanded to in-

clude the name-plate area, which is directly below the back collar. Colgate said grabbing the name-plate area of the runner's jersey, directly below the back collar, and pulling the runner to the ground is now an illegal personal contact foul.

A change in the definition of a legal scrimmage formation was approved. A legal scrimmage formation now requires at least five offensive players on their line of scrimmage (instead of seven) with no more than four backs. The committee noted that this change will make it easier to identify legal and illegal offensive formations.

The final change approved by the NFHS Football Rules Committee for the 2019 season was a reduction in the penalty for illegally kicking or batting the ball from 15 yards to 10 yards.



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# O'Brien: *To primary*

Continued from page 3  
 ing his name into the Democratic caucus which occurred Tuesday night after press time. He called the Democratic Town Committee "a political group that is very supportive of Nancy." He added he thinks the DTC is very supportive of Rossi regardless of whether her decision is good or bad.

"I think I'm going to [focus] on the Democrats of West Haven," said O'Brien. "I'm just going to primary afterwards."

O'Brien said he has been getting a good response from democrat voters in the city and believes he will do well in the primary.

# Concert series begins at Old Grove

By Michael P. Walsh  
*Special to the Voice*

The West Haven Summer Concert Series kicks off tonight in Old Grove Park with Top 40 music performed by Timmy Maia Experience. The free concerts are scheduled from 7-9 p.m.

The Thursday night series will follow Aug. 1 with dance rock anthems by The Signature Band and rhythm and blues and classic rock

hits by The Nu Groove on Aug. 8, both on the Green. The lineup will continue with R&B, funk and reggae favorites by Le'Mixx Band on Aug. 15 in Old Grove Park.

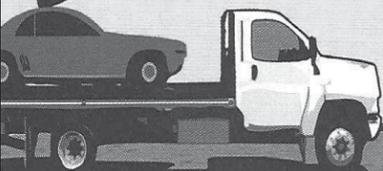
Concerts postponed by rain will move to the same time and venue the following Monday.

For rescheduling information, visit the Department of Parks and Recreation website, [www.whparkrec.com](http://www.whparkrec.com), or call (203) 937-3677 after 4 p.m. the day of the concert.

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## Legal Notice

### West Haven City Council

#### Notice of Public Hearing for Charter Revision

In accordance with Rule #11 of the Rules Governing the actions of the City Council, Chairman Quagliani has called a Public Hearing of the West Haven City Council to be held at 6:30 pm on Monday, July 29, 2019, in the Harriet North Courtroom of City Hall, 355 Main Street (2nd Floor).

#### Agenda

- 1.) Pledge of Allegiance
- 2.) Roll Call
- 3.) Clerk to read call of Special Meeting
- 4.) Public input on the proposed recommended changes to the West Haven City Charter as transmitted by the Charter Revision .Commission.
- 5.) Chairman's Comments
- 6.) Adjournment

---

Stacy Riccio

Clerk of the Council

## P&Z workshop on regs slated for Tuesday in City Hall's North Room

By Michael P. Walsh  
*Special to the Voice*

The Planning and Zoning Commission is holding an interactive public workshop for the proposed village district regulation for the center of West Haven.

The workshop is set for 7 p.m. Tuesday in the Harriet C. North Community Room on the second floor of City Hall, 355 Main St.

The workshop is a follow-up to the June 18 public information session that introduced the concept of the village district regulation for downtown West Haven.

Based on the positive reaction at the June meeting, the commission is inviting members of the public to share their input on a draft regulation of the proposed village district.

P&Z Chairwoman Kathleen Hendricks said the commission aims to attract a wide range of participants for the workshop, including area businesses and property owners, neighborhood residents and community leaders.

Hendricks said the commission is considering the regulation initially for the area roughly bounded by the railroad tracks, Washington Avenue, Atwater Street and Savin Avenue.

Elements of the zoning concept include establishing design standards and an architectural review process for visible changes to buildings in the area; guiding new development in the central business district; protecting and improving the residential and business character of the area; and performing an architectural review by a professional architect of proposed projects as part of the current zoning approval process.

The village district concept for the West Haven Center was first envisioned as one of multiple recommendations for improving the downtown area in the city's Plan of Conservation and Development, which was adopted by the commission in June 2017.

For information on the plan, residents can log in and see the POCD at <https://www.cityofwesthaven.com/DocumentCenter/View/827/Plan-of-Conservation-and-Development-Final-PDF>.

For more information, call the Department of Planning and Development at (203) 937-3580.

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## Around Town

### Doo Wop Dance

The West Haven Italian-American Civic Association will hold a Summer Day Doo Wop Dance at 85 Chase Lane on Saturday, July 27, at 7 p.m. Music by Charles the DJ till 12. Free beer, wine or soda. Cash Bar for mixed drinks. BYO snacks, coffee at 11. Tickets: \$20 per person. Call Lou at (203) 934-3339 or (203) 464-1976 or Ben at (203) 933-4423.

### 1st Church VBS

Join the First Congregational Church of West Haven for a week of fun and

learning with its annual Vacation Bible School (VBS). This year features a journey to Athens on Aug. 5-9.

Kids will learn all about the Apostle Paul and God's immeasurable love. Visit our website for more information and registration: <http://fccwesthaven.org/vbs/>.

### WHHS '69

West Haven High School Class of 1969 will hold its 50th reunion on Friday, Sept. 27, at Seasons located at 990 Foxon Road, East Haven, from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m. There will be music provided by a DJ, a plentiful cocktail and hors

d'oeuvre hour, buffet dinner along with open bar. The cost is \$75 per person. Checks should be made payable to Charlene Morgal and mailed to 18 Shumway St., West Haven, 06516, before August 15. More information can be found on our Facebook page: WHHS Class of 1969- 50th reunion, or by emailing [chazbo40@aol.com](mailto:chazbo40@aol.com) /203 494 7379 or [sandee110@aol.com](mailto:sandee110@aol.com) /203 494 7730.

### Bierfest

The annual Bierfest at the Harugari German-American Club, 66 Highland St., is scheduled for Sunday, July 28

at the club. The gate opens at 1 p.m. The Austrian Boys will play traditional German music for your listening and dancing pleasure from 2-6.

There will also Special Entertainment by the Harugari Schuhplattlers. Admission is \$5 for adults, no charge for children 18 and under. Veterans get in for free with your veteran card. Under the pavilion, rain or shine. For more information go to [harugari.org](http://harugari.org).

### WHHS '64

WHHS Class of 1964 will be holding its 55th year class reunion on Saturday, Oct. 5 at App's Restaurant, Captain Thomas Boulevard.

# DiMassa: *Working as a team is part of job*

Continued from page 9

make improvements to municipalities is the best way to create jobs and stabilize the tax rate.

DiMassa said passing legislation like the \$15 an hour minimum wage and paid family medical leave help lift the burden off some of his constituents. He also said he was excited for early absentee vot-

ing, which will be on a state referendum ballot next year, because it will allow more people to participate in the political process.

According to DiMassa, he has to maintain a good relationship with whatever administration is running city hall.

He said in a city like West Haven, where things are quickly

politicized, people frequently ask him his take on local elections.

"I try not to get involved in politics because I have to work with the mayor," said DiMassa. "If the mayor says, 'this is a priority,' then that's the priority I'm working off of. I also don't feel it's my job to make my political views known in issues that concern public be-

cause I feel the voters of West Haven should make their own decision."

DiMassa said he will regularly help city officials by making calls to places like the Department of Transportation or the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to try and speed up a city project or get something done.

"We have a lot of DOT-related projects in West Haven because we have a lot of state roads that run through West Haven," said DiMassa. "When it comes to potholes or restriping the roads, we have to work with the DOT."

He said because the DOT schedules road maintenance

years in advance and they are so inundated with requests it can be a challenge to get it done.

DiMassa said it is not uncommon, in any project or task, to have to call a department commissioner two or three times in order to get something looked at or completed.

Given that there are only three state representatives and two senators who represent West Haven, DiMassa said it takes more effort and teamwork on the part of their delegation to get something for the city.

"We have to work twice as hard to make our case for things," said DiMassa.

Photo courtesy of WHCDC



### Keeping cool!

Levi DeMayo, age 1, a student at the West Haven Child Development Center, Inc., keeps cool with outdoor water play. The most recent heat wave had temperatures in the high 90s in our area, while topping triple digits inland. He seems pretty content to play just outside the wading pool.

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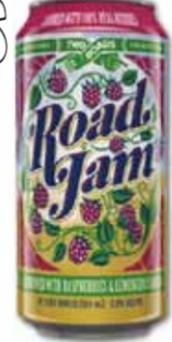
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