

DARIEEN NEIGHBORS

Bringing People Together...

FEBRUARY 2022



Geary Gallery:
The Art of Living
The Cohen
SoundWaters
Harbor Center
TV79: Our Town
TV Station

THE KREPPEIN FAMILY: STRENGTH IN NUMBERS



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Weed Beach

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With Dave and Kelly Kreppin and their kids on the cover, what's not to love about this issue ...if we do say so ourselves?! What an amazing clan this is. Six kids—every one of them playing at least a sport or two, balancing school, an extensive extended family ...plus two full time jobs *and*, with all on their plates, they still manage to open a vein for aspiring hockey players in town through Dave's volunteer leadership of the Darien Youth Hockey Association (DYHA). We're not the first to wonder how it all comes together for them ...and we're most certainly not the first to see the strength in numbers that fuels this family. We just hope you'll enjoy reading about them as much as we did meeting them ourselves.

We loved learning more about TV79, the subject of this month's *Our Town* feature. Who knew there was such a tremendous resource to help us stay on top of how the wheels are turning in our community and town government? Many more now, thanks to the really interesting information provided by station co-founder Jim Cameron. Netflix schmetflix!

And what's not to love about the incredible Cohen SoundWaters Harbor Center project designed to tap into the million-acre classroom that is Long Island Sound to support the college, career and personal growth of young people throughout our area while engraining in them a deep love for the environment. Thank you Bob Mazzone for contributing that



Pamela Dey Vossler
Content Coordinator
Darien Neighbors



Carl Trautmann
Publisher
Darien Neighbors

MARKETING & PARTNERSHIPS: Carl Trautmann, Publisher, 917-952-9534, ctrautmann@bestversionmedia.com

CONTENT & SUBMISSIONS: Pamela Dey Vossler, Content Coordinator, pdeyvossler@bestversionmedia.com

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER: Bambi Riegel | Riegel Picture Works, riegelpictureworks@gmail.com

DESIGNER: Terri Shelow



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great piece.

Thanks also to Nielsen's for giving us access to floral arranging with their *In the Garden* article. Loving that. ...and the business profile on Accent Picture Framing and Geary Gallery. We knew they were doing interesting things but we had no idea the extent to which they go to showcase and preserve the heirlooms, art and memories their customers bring to them.

We always love Bambi Riegel's gorgeous photos, and Carolyn Eddie's recipes. This month's Upside Down Orange and Polenta Cake is no exception. Same with the environmental wisdom that comes our way each month by way of Carolyn Bayne. She's got great info in this issue about just how much we can recycle at our very own town transfer station.

Most of all, we love our advertisers because without them, we don't exist so special Valentine's wishes to them and special Valentine's wishes to you!

Note: We had long planned to profile the Kreppins this month. It is a sad coincidence that the finalization of this issue coincided with the tragic loss of Teddy Balkind. We join Dave Kreppin in the condolences he extended to the Balkinds and the entire hockey community in his message to the DYHA family following the accident.

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The Art of Living: Accent Picture Framing & Geary Gallery

BY PAMELA DEY VOSSLER

Just as we color each day with our thoughts, relationships and activities—from the simple to the many layered, things we want to remember, occasions we want to honor. Lucky for us in Darien, there is Accent Picture Framing, a division of Geary Gallery ... though “framing” only scratches the surface in describing all they do to preserve memories and decorate our lives.

With more than 1,000 frames to choose from and 38 years in business, owners Tom and Anne Geary certainly bring a deep expertise to conventional framing.

From a background in construction and a knowledge of hand tools, Tom got his start in the business in Orlando, FL where he and Anne moved to open a chain of 10,000-square-foot craft stores, precursors to the Michael's stores that exist today.

“We opened eight of them in the four years that Anne and I lived there,” said Tom. “I was put in charge of the framing department in the eight stores. In 1984, Anne and I decided to move back to Connecticut to raise our family,” he continued. Accent Picture Framing was born.

From 4' x 8' photos and gigantic canvases to more traditionally-sized art, there is nothing they cannot frame, beautifully. Then there are the 3D projects and the shadow boxes they create to showcase everything from sports jerseys, christening gowns and weddings to collections and commemorative gifts.

“My flaw is I never say no to anyone,” said Tom, referring to a recent request to display eight golf balls, each signed by a different President. “Most businesses wouldn't touch something like this. Special orders don't upset us,” he continued.

In fact, the Gearys thrive on the complex, and the end result of every tricky project they tackle.

“Some framing projects are fairly simple and some are very challenging. The challenging projects are the ones that always interest me the most,” said Tom. “Regardless of the complexity of a framing project, whether it is a piece of art done by a child or a sports jersey, seeing the reaction on the customer's face when they first see it framed is very rewarding,” he added.

“We've based our business plan on good service. We've never focused on just making a 'quick buck,’” Tom continued. “We've always concentrated on doing whatever was necessary to give our customers a good experience, hopefully insuring that they would come back with repeat business. This philosophy seems to have worked over the last 38 years,” he said.

He and Anne thrive also on discovering and nurturing artists from Connecticut and beyond in their gallery.

“The Geary Gallery came about when we bought Windborne Gallery from Blaikie Hines in 1984. It was located across the street from the frame shop. In 1994, we bought the building (the frame shop was in) and moved the gallery so it would be in the same building as the frame shop,” explained Tom.

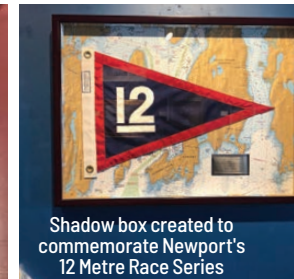
With 200 pieces of art on display, the Gearys have one of the largest galleries in Connecticut. They represent both Connecticut-based artists with national reputations and well-known artists from along the eastern seaboard with a lively schedule of art exhibits that rotate every month. Past exhibitions have included master pastelist Gene Sparkman, impressionist Ray Ellis, watercolorist A.N. Wyeth, pop artist Peter Max and marine artist John Stobart. Current Geary Gallery artists, including local artist



Tom Geary with a recently framed turn-of-the-century handpainted chart of Nantucket



Custom museum box crafted to display golf balls signed by eight presidents (Nixon - Obama)



Shadow box created to commemorate Newport's 12 Metre Race Series

Mary Morant, are featured at gearygallery.com.

The Gearys' willingness to trust their instincts about the artists they handle — operating outside the sometimes stifling environment of the art establishment — provides opportunities for Fairfield County art lovers to join in on the satisfaction the Gearys feel of discovering an artist themselves.

Another hidden treasure of this business is the oil painting restoration work they do ... yes, that family heirloom can be fixed! Started 25 years ago, Accent Restoration, also a division of Geary Gallery, rests on the exacting expertise of their conservator.

“With more than 25 years in private practice, our conservator has extensive experience in art restoration of oil paintings, frames and sculptures. Throughout his career, he has worked with leading museums and auction houses, and his restorations can be found at galleries, museums, historical societies and private residences throughout Fairfield County,” said Tom.

Life as art, art as life: For more on the many possibilities, stop by Geary Gallery at 576 Boston Post Road just down from Trader Joe's in Darien, visit gearygallery.com or call 203-655-6633.

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The Million Acre Classroom ...and the Center to House It

BY BOB MAZZONE, SOUNDWATERS



The Cohen SoundWaters Harbor Center on Stamford Harbor is scheduled to open in spring 2022. Visit HarborAmbitions.org to learn more.



What can we learn from a seahorse?

SoundWaters high school students were asking this question when they pulled up a seahorse in their trawl net on the SoundWaters research vessel. The students are on Long Island Sound weekly—even in winter, testing water quality and studying animal populations, two critical topics for the future of our planet. For more than 30 years, using Long Island Sound as a million acre classroom, SoundWaters has fostered a generation of students with a deep commitment to the environment. Today, with construction underway for the new Cohen SoundWaters Harbor Center on Stamford Harbor, the organization is laying the foundation for the next 30 years.

Access and Opportunity

Historically, access to Long Island Sound has been restricted, open mainly to residents of coastal communities. This barrier to entry is detrimental to the health of the Sound (“if I can’t enjoy it, why should I care about it?”), but also to educational opportunities for young people. According to SoundWaters President, Leigh Shemitz, access and opportunity are central to SoundWaters purpose: “We advance environmental justice and educational equity by creating broader access to Long Island Sound. Our community is stronger when we are connected to and learning from the Sound.” By transforming the community’s connection to the water, the Cohen SoundWaters Harbor Center will provide greater access and opportunities to help thousands of young people thrive.

The Harbor Center is designed to meet the needs of three anchor programs, each serving a unique population:

Young Mariners – Life Skills
SoundWaters Young Mariners uses the power of sailing to build life skills

and academic skills to propel students through their formative middle school years. Learning to sail fosters independence and accountability; in a sailboat, every decision a child makes has a consequence and they are responsible for the result. When they’re not on the water, students are growing academically through extra training in math and science. Currently, Young Mariners is only a five-week summer program. The Harbor Center will allow the program to operate year-round so that even more students will learn, sail and achieve.

Research Intensive – College Skills

If you are a high school student with an interest in marine science, where can you build the skills that will advance your college and even career aspirations? There are programs around the country, but with a million acres of Long Island Sound to explore, why travel? SoundWaters Research Intensive is a world class science experience right here at home. A fully-equipped lab in the Harbor Center, 12-month access to the SoundWaters research vessel and the chance to contribute to on-going research studies will give motivated students a college-level experience to prepare



High school students build college-level science skills on Long Island Sound in the SoundWaters Research Intensive program.



Harbor Corps provides young people with skills training to prepare them for entry level jobs in the maritime industry.

them for college and career.

Harbor Corps – Job Skills

Long Island Sound is a place of tremendous employment. In Connecticut alone, 75,000 people rely on the Sound for their livelihood, driving \$11 billion in economic output. Marinas, boat yards; fishing boats, tugboats, ferries and dredgers; the jobs are there, but the pathway to getting them is not clear. Young people who need career direction but have not been exposed to the waterfront may never even imagine a maritime career. SoundWaters created Harbor Corps as a workforce development program to be that pipeline to the maritime industry; the opportunity for young people to find stable, well-paying jobs. A professional-grade workshop in the new Harbor Center will offer Harbor Corps members technical skills training while instilling the critical work habits required for entry level jobs in the maritime industry.

Extraordinary Philanthropy

SoundWaters has launched the \$15 Million Harbor Ambitions Campaign to fund construction of the Harbor Center. Led by an anchor gift from the Steven and Alexandra Cohen Foundation, the community has responded enthusiastically and generously. To learn more about the Harbor Center, visit HarborAmbitions.org.



Young Mariners uses sailing to teach life skills and strengthen academic skills for middle school students.



What Darien is Reading

By Jill Maguire,
Reader Advisor, Darien Library

The Ballerinas by Rachel Kapelke-Dale

When Delphine Léger abandoned her prestigious spot at the Paris Opera Ballet, she took a secret with her that could upend the lives of her best friends. Thirteen years later, she returns to choreograph the ballet that will jumpstart her career, all while the secrets she buried come back with a vengeance.

Cloud Cuckoo Land by Anthony Doerr

The stories of three characters separated by centuries combine with one common thread: their shared adoration for an ancient Greek text. Follow the lives of a teen living in 15th-century Constantinople, an octogenarian theater director in present-day Idaho, and a teenager living on a space craft in the 22nd century.

Our Woman in Moscow by Beatriz Williams

In 1948, the sudden disappearance of London woman Iris Digby, her American diplomat husband, and their two children shakes the world. Four years later, her twin sister Ruth receives a postcard from Iris that forces her to journey to Moscow. Posing as the wife of a counterintelligence agent, Ruth plans to help extract the Digbys from behind the Iron Curtain.

This Month at Darien Library



Authors Ashley Whittaker, *The Well-Loved House*, and Christopher Spitzmuller, *A Year at Clove Brook Farm* Monday, 2/7 at 7 p.m.



Historic Bridges of the Merritt Parkway with Wes Haynes Tuesday, 2/8 at 7 p.m.



Reclaiming Black Spaces with the Tenement Museum Wednesday, 2/16 at 7 p.m.



Beethoven's Shadow: Composers of the 19th Century with Gil Harel Wednesday, 2/16 at 7 p.m.

Register online at darienlibrary.org



Flower Arranging 101

BY BOB SABIA, WEDDINGS & EVENTS, NIELSEN'S

Is there anything quite so uplifting on a cold winter day as cut flowers beautifully arranged? To the uninitiated, however, the mere idea of positioning said blooms into some semblance of beauty can stop us in our tracks. But it doesn't have to be that way. Of course there is always the option of ordering an arrangement but with these simple guidelines and some chutzpa to trust your instincts, there's no reason why you can't give it a go yourself, and have quite a bit of fun while you're at it!

Step 1.

Select flowers and greenery based on where you plan to place your arrangement. A centerpiece will be different from what you create for a mantel or side table. Decide on a color scheme but shop with an open mind for a mix of blooms. You may find your color plan shifts once you see what's available. If you get stuck, ask the florist for help. Look for different shapes, sizes and textures—a mix of focal flowers with sturdy stems and more delicate blooms. (Focal flowers are typically the largest blooms in an arrangement or ones of an unusual texture or color.)

Note: Flowers should nearly always be overflowing the edges of the vessel you choose for your arrangement. Whether vertically or horizontally oriented, think of creating an arrangement that is one and half to two times the length or height of your vessel.

Step 2.

Cut and prepare the flowers. Cut the stems on an angle. This



improves their water intake. Trim leaves from the stems. The flowers will last longer if excess leaves are not draining their nutrients.

Step 3.

Choose and prepare a vessel. When selecting a container for your arrangement, anything goes as long as you can insert a watertight liner or plastic holder. Again, just keep in mind where you will be putting your arrangement. You will want a lower vessel for a centerpiece. If you want more control with your placement of flowers and greenery, use clear florist tape to create a grid over the top of your vessel. Two or three lines vertically then horizontally should do the trick though you may want more depending on the size of your vessel. Secure the crisscrossed tape with more tape around the diameter of the top of your vessel. You can hide any visible tape with the elements of your arrangement.

Note: If you are using a solid container, consider using loosely balled chicken wire to hold greens and flowers in place, with or without the florist tape.

Step 4.

Create a base with greenery.

Step 5.

After the greenery, place your focal flowers. You'll want to add these before other flowers. Their sturdier stems will give you a stronger arrangement.

Step 6.

Work in your more delicate flowers around the stronger stems then add any filler flowers. Aim for balance rather than straight symmetry, depending on your preferences which will quickly develop the more flowers you arrange.

For more help with your flower arranging, come see us at Nielsen's Florist & Garden Center at 1405 Post Road in Darien or visit us at niensensflorist.com. You may also participate in one of our monthly flower arranging workshops. Call us at 203-655-2541 for more details. Also, keep in mind that all cut flowers at Nielsen's are half price on Fridays!



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Whether you receive an arrangement or create one yourself, follow these tips to make it last.

1. Add water daily.
2. Keep in a cool place.
3. Remove dying flowers or greens each day.
4. If possible, change the water every two days.
5. An arrangement in an oasis needs to be kept very wet. Do not let the oasis dry out.



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From left: Brody, Quinn, Darcy, Graham, Remy, Hallie

THE KREPPEIN FAMILY: Strength In Numbers

BY PAMELA DEY VOSSLER | PHOTOS BY RIEGEL PICTURE WORKS

None of us accomplish anything in this life alone. Even independence, accountability, confidence and respect—for ourselves and others ...the things that bring us to stand on our own, to find our best life. They come to us by way of the people in our lives as they cheer us on, mentor us, coach us, teach us how to take a knock and get back up ...as they laugh with us, cry with us, help us. They are our team, the foundation for all we achieve, all that we are.

That couldn't be more true for the Kreppeins – Dave, Kelly and their six kids – Hallie (19), Graham (18), Quinn (15), Brody (11), Darcy (9) and Remy (7).

A hockey family if there ever was one, every Kreppein has played hockey practically since they could walk, with the exception of Kelly who was a diver through high school and college. Dave played growing up in Greenwich. He won an FCIAC title as a senior at Greenwich High School (GHS) then went on to play club hockey at Indiana University, a high-level alternative to the “varsity” version of the sport. He still plays pick-up games once or twice a week. Rising Stars was Hallie's intro to hockey, as it has been for all her siblings. She was part of the state championship girls' hockey team at Darien High School (DHS) in 2016, 2017 and 2018 and earned tournament MVP honors as a goalie her sophomore year. She was recruited to Portsmouth

Abbey to play hockey and repeated her junior year there, graduating in 2021. Graham, a senior at DHS, plays forward for the varsity team. Quinn, a sophomore at DHS, plays in goal for the JV team. Brody, a 6th grader at Middlesex Middle School, is a forward in the Darien Youth Hockey Association (DYHA). Darcy, a fourth grader at Holmes School, plays defense for the Ice Cats and Remy, a second grader at Holmes School, is a DYHA mite and plays in the house league.

Dave became a volunteer goalie coach at the request of an old hockey friend when he and Kelly arrived in Darien. The two kids who were born at the time were still babies. As his children entered the sport, Dave continued to coach, supporting his kids' passion and adding value where he saw that he could. He joined the DYHA Board, served the two terms the bylaws allow and was pulled from “retirement” in 2020 to lead DYHA just as COVID was hitting.

Kelly teaches fulltime at the YMCA's Holly Pond School. Dave is a lawyer working for Transatlantic Reinsurance Company. Every one of the Kreppein kids plays at least one other sport besides hockey. It's a lot.

“There's always someone coming and going,” said Kelly. Even church requires juggling. With sports schedules, the family often attends in shifts.

But the older kids help the younger kids, getting them into their hockey gear and driving them to practice, and the hockey community, by definition, is extraordinarily supportive of each other.

“Community is really the benchmark of Darien Youth Hockey,” said Dave.

“If we can't get a ride to hockey, we send a text through WhatsApp and someone will say ‘Oh I'll come get him,’” added Kelly.

And then there are friends and neighbors. “We get a lot of help from (them). That's the great thing about Darien. It is small but everybody helps each other,” said Kelly, grateful particularly for her neighbors on Rose Lane where she and Dave have lived since moving to town in 2004.

Factor in COVID, remote work and school—eight people quarantined in a house that is not 10,000 square feet, a puppy and chickens added during the height of the pandemic and it's easy to see how the governing mantra in the Kreppein household is “Embrace the chaos.” Even before COVID.

“Our life is chaotic. If you get bogged down or you're wound up so tightly, you would never do anything. And so it's important to embrace the chaos, being able to deal with it,” said Dave.

“Embrace the chaos ...the good and the bad,” agreed Kelly enthusiastically. “We say that to each other (all the time) ...the chaos of having six kids, seven hockey players, getting them to where they need to be, the sports equipment, all being home during COVID, road tripping/vacationing, family gatherings. Why not get a puppy!? Why not hatch chickens during COVID

when we are all on top of each other? How can it get anymore chaotic!?” said Kelly, laughing, well aware of the gifts in the life she and Dave have built.

When just living together is a bonding experience, closeness is a given.

“That's the great thing about having a big family, there's always someone to talk to,” said Kelly.

“Having an older sister or an older brother that has gone through (what you're experiencing) or that you look up to and they can give you some good advice is important,” added Dave.

They should know. Kelly, who also grew up in Greenwich, has three older sisters and a younger brother. Dave is one of seven boys, all of whom played at least two sports.

“It was like a locker room,” said Dave laughing at the memory of his home and the bathroom with three sinks that he and his brothers shared growing up. “We didn't have a small house, but with seven boys, you always had a roommate until you were a junior in high school and then you had your own room.”

It's how the Kreppein kids are growing up too. And they wouldn't have it any other way. In fact, when Hallie left for boarding school at Portsmouth Abbey, where she was recruited to play hockey, and a bedroom opened up, Darcy moved into it. She lasted just two months before returning to the room she shared with her brothers.

“It was too quiet for her,” said Kelly.

But when the kids squabble, which of course they do, Kelly and Dave step in to referee, teaching them first and foremost to respect each other. “We won't let them treat each other badly and



Kelly and Dave Kreppein and a typical view of the back of their car

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The Menu

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Beet Deviled Eggs

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Chorizo & Potato Egg Bakes

Caramelized Onions, Manchego Cheese

Heart-Shaped Tea Sandwiches

Smoked Salmon & Dill
Classic Chicken Salad
Cucumber & Cream Cheese

Cheese & Charcuterie Board

Heart Crostini & Local Honey

Strawberry & Arugula Salad

Candied Pecans, Lemon Vinaigrette

Vegetable Crudite

Spinach & Herb Dip

Mini Desserts

French Macarons
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Little Lemon Tarts
Strawberry Cupcakes

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when they do, we stop it," said Kelly.

Respect is non-negotiable in the Kreppein family.

"Talking back and being fresh, those kinds of things don't work when you're trying to raise six kids," said Dave.

"Kids chirp what they see and hear at home," he added, noting how this lead-by-example extends to sports.

With numbers too comes independence, an insistence on do-it-yourself-or-it-may-not-get-done.

"I was a goalie growing up. I put pressure on myself to succeed. Coming from seven boys, I had to take it upon myself to work on my craft and get better, not with my parents pushing me, because with seven kids going in a million different directions, if you didn't do it yourself, it wasn't going to get done, usually," explained David.

While more involved with their kids' sports than Dave's parents were able to be, Kelly and Dave are proud of the independence their kids have learned. Though they do not allow their kids to quit mid-season or mid-commitment, they give their children plenty of room to decide for themselves once they have honored their obligation. It's not always easy.

Despite Hallie's many achievements in hockey, she decided not to try to walk on the team at University of Vermont where she is a freshman. Instead, she opted to try out for club lacrosse and made the team.

"It was a little heart-breaking," said Kelly. "But it's her choice and it's the best choice for her. She does not regret it."

"She could have played division three ice hockey or lacrosse. Her final two choices (for college) came down to St. Lawrence University playing girls D3 lacrosse or UVM. And, you know, she made that decision on her own and she's having the time of her life. We're very proud of how independent she has become," said

Dave.

Brody too, though initially pulled by the siren song of lacrosse in Darien, chose baseball last year.

"Brody was a good lacrosse player but he said 'I want to play travel baseball' and now he is and he's loving it. We try to encourage our kids to play something to be passionate about but also enjoy themselves and have fun," said Dave.

And work hard.

"We want our kids to work hard and follow-through," said Dave.

"It's important that (our kids) see that we work hard to provide for ourselves and to provide for them to do everything that we can do to make life the best that it can be," said Kelly who developed tremendous discipline in her years diving at GHS and then Bucknell, where she went to college. "I think the kids see that we work really hard to try to keep to our commitments and make things work."

But you don't grow up in a family this size, oriented as it is toward sports, without a healthy competitive spirit, as Remy clearly proves.

After years of watching his older siblings play sports, he was like a "racehorse chomping at the bit," according to Dave. In his first soccer game as a kindergartener, he scored 15 goals. "He was finally able to get on the field himself and he kind of went overboard," recalled Dave laughing.

And then there is all that comes from extended family: All of Kelly's sisters still live in Greenwich, as does her mom. They gather most Sunday nights for family dinners with as many of the 19 cousins on Kelly's side as can make it. In summers, they converge on Greenwich Country Club, where they have been members for generations.



From left: Remy, Chief, Darcy, Brody, Quinn, Graham, Hallie

Dave's family, including the 17 cousins on his side, while dispersed throughout the U.S., still gathers at least annually for a North Carolina beach vacation and often on holidays. They're all close.

It was through their siblings that Dave and Kelly met. Though just two years apart at GHS, it wasn't until Dave was in law school at Santa Clara University and Kelly was a senior at Bucknell that their paths crossed and sparks flew, when Kelly's older sister attended Dave's older brother's wedding and Kelly met them out at a post-reception party. Married in 2000 and coming up short in a Greenwich house hunt several years later, they bought the house on Rose Lane from Kelly's great uncle. Built in

1904, the house has never not been in the family.

The release valve from all this doing and going and driving and more doing? Those same numbers. While Kelly plays tennis and paddle and Dave has his hockey, they unwind by watching the kids play sports. In summers, Sprite Island Yacht Club off Calf Pasture Beach in Norwalk balances the go-all-the-time life they lead.

Whether from family or friends, from interests shared or paths in common, our respective "numbers" and the strength we get from them come from any combination of things, and they can add up powerfully to a life well and richly lived. Just ask the Kreppeins.

The Kreppein kids with just a sampling of their 36 first cousins



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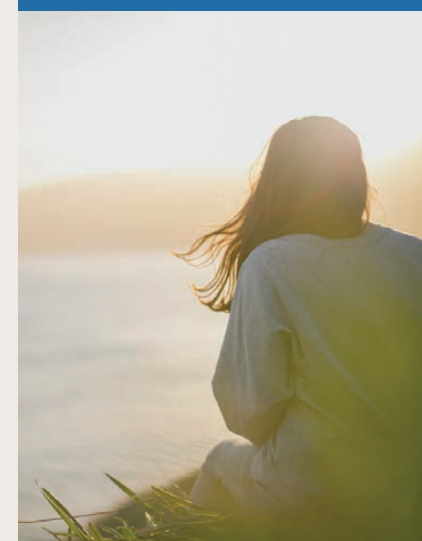
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Lots to Love at the Darien Recycling Center!

BY CAROLYN BAYNE, DARIEN RESIDENT & CHAIR, DARIEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABILITY



Ask Darien residents what they love about their town and you're likely to hear about the beautiful beaches, excellent schools and state-of-the-art library. Less likely to be mentioned—but beloved by many—is the Recycling Center.

Located at 126 Ledge Road, the *Darien Recycling and Refuse Center* gives residents opportunities to recycle a variety of materials, including those not accepted in, or appropriate for, the recycling bin.

Why is this important? Recycling saves natural resources and it also saves tax dollars. The Town of Darien pays nearly \$100 per ton of waste hauled to Wheelabrator Bridgeport where it is incinerated. Every ton diverted and repurposed saves taxpayers money.

That is why all residents, including those with a private hauler, are encouraged to obtain an annual permit for their vehicle. Fees are reasonable and vary: residents with private trash collection pay considerably less than those without it, and seniors are entitled to one

free permit per household.

Most paper, cardboard, plastic, metal and glass are accepted in mixed (single stream) recycling. However, many additional materials can be recycled, *but only at the Recycling Center*:

- ♻️ **APPLIANCES**, large and small, can be placed with other metal goods in the **METAL** drop-off.

- ♻️ There is a separate area for **REFRIGERATION EQUIPMENT**, which requires a \$15 Freon recovery fee.

- ♻️ Inside the transfer station building, to the right of where trash

is discarded, collections are set up for **BATTERIES, LIGHT BULBS, PAINT and SMOKE DETECTORS**.

- ♻️ With the explosion of online shopping, most residents are inundated by **CARDBOARD** boxes. Though corrugated cardboard is accepted in mixed recycling, it is always better to recycle it in the designated container at the Recycling Center. Cardboard collected separately is much cleaner and is more likely to be recycled into new cardboard and other paper products.

- ♻️ Lots of TVs, computers, phones and gaming consoles are retired after



Last year alone, almost 45 tons of unwanted clothing and other textiles were diverted from the waste stream through these USAgain bins.

the holidays. If these are still hanging around your house and not suitable for donation, then they, and other electronics, can be recycled in the **E-WASTE** drop-off.

- ♻️ **FOOD SCRAPS** can be recycled in the bins next to the transfer station building. Food comprises a whopping 22 percent of all solid waste, and if you're not already doing this, now is the time to start!

- ♻️ Plastics too large for the recycling bin, such as buckets, patio furniture and car seats, can be recycled in the **LARGE PLASTICS** collection area.

- ♻️ Since Darien's **MATTRESS** program was established in June 2015, more than 125 tons of mattresses and box springs have been kept out of the waste stream. Connecticut was the first state to pass comprehensive mattress stewardship legislation, relieving municipalities of the financial burden of disposing of discarded mattresses.

- ♻️ The Darien Advisory Committee on Sustainability prioritizes "reduce" and "reuse" even more than recycling. The **SWAP SHOP** is where residents can pass on usable items they no longer want, including household goods, books, sports equipment, toys, games and other hard-to-recycle items. Few places will accept a partially-used box of crayons or an open board game, but such items are quickly scooped up at the Swap Shop. Some goods are not accepted, so please note signage outside the building.

- ♻️ An estimated 96,000 tons of **TEXTILES** are disposed of each year in Connecticut. Besides clothing, this includes bedding, backpacks, curtains, towels, stuffed animals, shoes, belts and other

Continued on page 18

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Continued from page 17

accessories. Stationed outside the transfer station building and the Swap Shop are bins to collect textiles for reuse or recycling into rags or various types of insulation.

Last, but not least, there are recycling drop-offs for **CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION** materials, **LAWN AND GARDEN** debris, and **WASTE (MOTOR) OIL**.

Learn more by visiting our website at darientc.gov. *Darien Recycling Center* is also active on social media, so look for us on Facebook, Twitter and (soon!) Instagram. In a month that celebrates love, show your love for our town and our environment by taking advantage of all the recycling opportunities available to Darien residents!



Careful disposal of electronic products is important because many contain hazardous components which - if burned with other solid waste, can contribute to heavy metal contamination in the atmosphere.

Non-Program Products

These products do not have fees when purchased and are not accepted at drop-off sites:

- Paint thinners, mineral spirits, solvents
- Aerosol paints (spray cans)
- Auto and marine paints
- Arts and crafts paints
- Caulking compounds, epoxies, glues, adhesives
- Paint additives, colorants, tints, resins
- Wood preservatives (containing pesticides)
- Roof patch and repair
- Tar and bitumen-based products
- 2-component coatings
- Deck cleaners
- Traffic and road marking paints
- Industrial Maintenance (IM) coatings
- Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) (shop application) paints and finishes

Dinking, siphoning, and empty containers are not accepted at drop-off sites.



Recycling paint prevents harmful substances from entering the environment. Look for this drop-off inside the transfer station building.

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- WE CAN'T ACCEPT
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 - Auto and Marine Paints
 - 2-Part Paints
 - Road Marking Paint
 - Industrial Paint
 - Tints and Resins
 - Thinner and Solvent
 - Caulk and Spackle
 - Wood Treatment/Preservatives
 - Deck Cleaner
 - Tar/Asphalt Products

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Darien...thank you for your ongoing support...whether through take out, dining at our place or just the kind wishes we receive daily, my team and I are so appreciative to have the opportunity to provide you all with sustenance..both with food and hospitality. It has been amazing to watch this town come back to *LIFE*. We know that regardless of what 2021 brings we will be here in an amazing community doing this together.

David Nelson, Owner, Ten Twenty Post

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Upside Down Orange and Polenta Cake

BY CAROLYN BAYNE, DARIEN RESIDENT & CHAIR, DARIEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABILITY



I feel I did not always appreciate seasons, somehow assuming that produce, like tomatoes, plums and oranges, were always available. Then last year, after months of gorgeous, juicy Cara Caras, Blood and Navel oranges, suddenly every orange I sliced was dry and inedible. So, rejoice, we are back in peak orange season and I have the perfect cake for you.

My Orange and Polenta Cake is loosely based on the classic Victoria Sponge recipe, but part of the flour is replaced with a mixture of ground almonds and polenta. Why polenta? To be honest, I am not quite sure. I just had a need to make a polenta cake and was pretty happy with how it turned out, more substantial than a regular sponge, with a very pleasing, slightly gritty texture. I also added some home-made marmalade to the mix, well less marmalade and more orange rinds in syrup, which boosted the 'orangeness' of the cake. Regular marmalade will work just as well.

Poaching the orange slices in syrup requires a bit of time, but can be done ahead.

Delicious served slightly warm with creme fraiche.

INGREDIENTS

For the orange topping

- Two oranges, thinly sliced – blood oranges would look spectacular

- 1 cup water
- 1 cup sugar

For the Orange and Polenta Cake

- 2 and 1/4 sticks of butter, at room temp
- 1 and 1/4 cups sugar
- 4 eggs
- 1 cup of all-purpose flour
- 2/3 cup polenta
- 1 cup ground almonds
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 large tablespoon marmalade
- 2 tablespoons Ricotta



For the Orange Syrup

- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/3 cup freshly squeezed orange juice

INSTRUCTIONS

- Preheat oven to 350F
- Line a 9-inch springform pan with parchment paper.
- To make the orange topping
 - In a large frying pan or skillet, dissolve the sugar in the water.
 - Add the orange slices and gently poach in the liquid for around an hour and a quarter or until the rind is soft and almost transparent.
 - Arrange the slices in overlapping circles at the base of the springform pan.

To make the cake

- Cream the butter and sugar together until light and fluffy.
- Add the eggs, one at a time and mix thoroughly.
- Add all the dry ingredients to a separate bowl and mix together, then fold into the creamed mixture.
- Add the marmalade and the ricotta. Add a little milk or liquid from the poached oranges if the mixture seems too dry.
- Transfer the mixture to the pan, spread evenly over the orange slices.
- Cook for about 45 minutes, or until a skewer inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean.

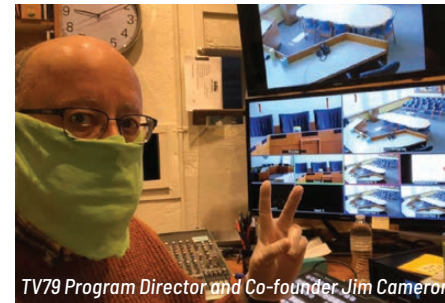
To make the syrup

- Dissolve the sugar in the orange juice in a small pan over a medium heat.
- Pour syrup over the warm cake, and leave to cool.
- Run a knife around the edge of the cake, then loosen the sides of the springform pan. Invert the cooled cake onto a serving plate and admire!

Find more of my recipes at carolynsabsolutelyfabulousevents.com. If you make this or any of my other recipes in *Darien Neighbors*, please share photos! ...and remember to tag me on Instagram @carolynsfabfoods.

Our Town, Our Town TV Station: The TV79 Story

BY PAMELA DEY VOSSLER WITH TV79



How do you know what's happening in Darien ...how the budget is being written, what land developments are planned and how things are going in our schools?

You could give up your weekday evenings to attend all of the board and commission meetings where these decisions are being made. Or you could tune in Darien TV79, our town's government and community TV station.

Founded by David Dever and Jim Cameron, two broadcasting mavens active in Darien for decades, Darien TV79 covers all of the meetings and community events that make Darien such a citizen-engaged community.

"Most of our coverage is live but it's all archived on our Vimeo platform for on-demand viewing," says Program Director Jim Cameron. "You can watch us on Optimum cable channel 79 as well as our live prime-time feed to YouTube, Facebook and Twitter." All of the meeting coverage is archived and searchable using the station's new website DarienTV79.com.

Staffed by a team of six local videographers, TV79 covers as many as 15 meetings each week including the Board of Selectmen, Planning & Zoning Commission and all of the work of the Representative Town Meeting and its committees.

When COVID hit, shutting down in-person meetings, the operation of the town didn't miss a beat, moving to virtual platforms such as Go To Meeting and Zoom. All of those deliberations were also carried on TV79.

The station's broadcast equipment has been bought over the years using grants from the Area Nine Cable Council using funds from local cable subscribers. And the videographer staff are paid using funding from the Town.

"We operate on a very lean budget," says Cameron. "I'm very thrifty with taxpayer funds."

In 2020 TV79 received a generous grant from The Darien Foundation to purchase new HD cameras, switchers and a CASTUS computer server. That meant the station could soar from re-airing only six shows each week to dozens daily.

In addition to the Town government meetings, the station also carries interview programs produced by the Darien Library, Darien Men's Association, SEPAC and SoundWaters. "We also operate a program exchange with the New Canaan and Greenwich town TV stations to share programs of regional interest," says Cameron.

TV79 also covered all of the Town's bicentennial events and has contributed those videos to the "time capsule" to reside at the Darien Library, which will be opened in 50 years.

To keep Darienites informed about what's on the air, TV79 produces a weekly e-mail program guide subscribed to by 1,100 residents on an opt-in basis. "I put a lot of work into that guide," says Cameron. "It not only lists the shows we're airing but includes embedded links to the meetings' agenda and the archived Vimeo videos. That way you can scan the guide, find a meeting of interest and with one click be watching it on your phone or tablet."

A 30+ year resident of Darien, Cameron calls on a 40-year career in broadcasting and communications in running TV79. He's a member of the RTM, serves on the Board of Ethics and believes passionately in open, transparent government.

"Darien is not a town run by a handful of powerful politicians," he says. "This is a town where citizen engagement is essential to decision-making. So TV79 is an easy way to follow how the town is being run so your voice can be heard."

He recounts a Board of Selectmen meeting early in the station's operation as an example.

"I was sitting in our control room 'shooting' a meeting when someone popped his head into our booth and asked 'Is this where you run TV79?' 'Yeah, I said. This is where the magic happens.'

"The gentleman said he was watching the live Board meeting from home and was so angry at what he saw and heard, he raced down to Town Hall to say his piece. Feedback like that makes all the work worthwhile."

"If you want a say in how your town is run, you've got to stay involved," says Cameron. "It's your responsibility as a citizen and we hope that TV79 makes it all a bit easier."

How to Find



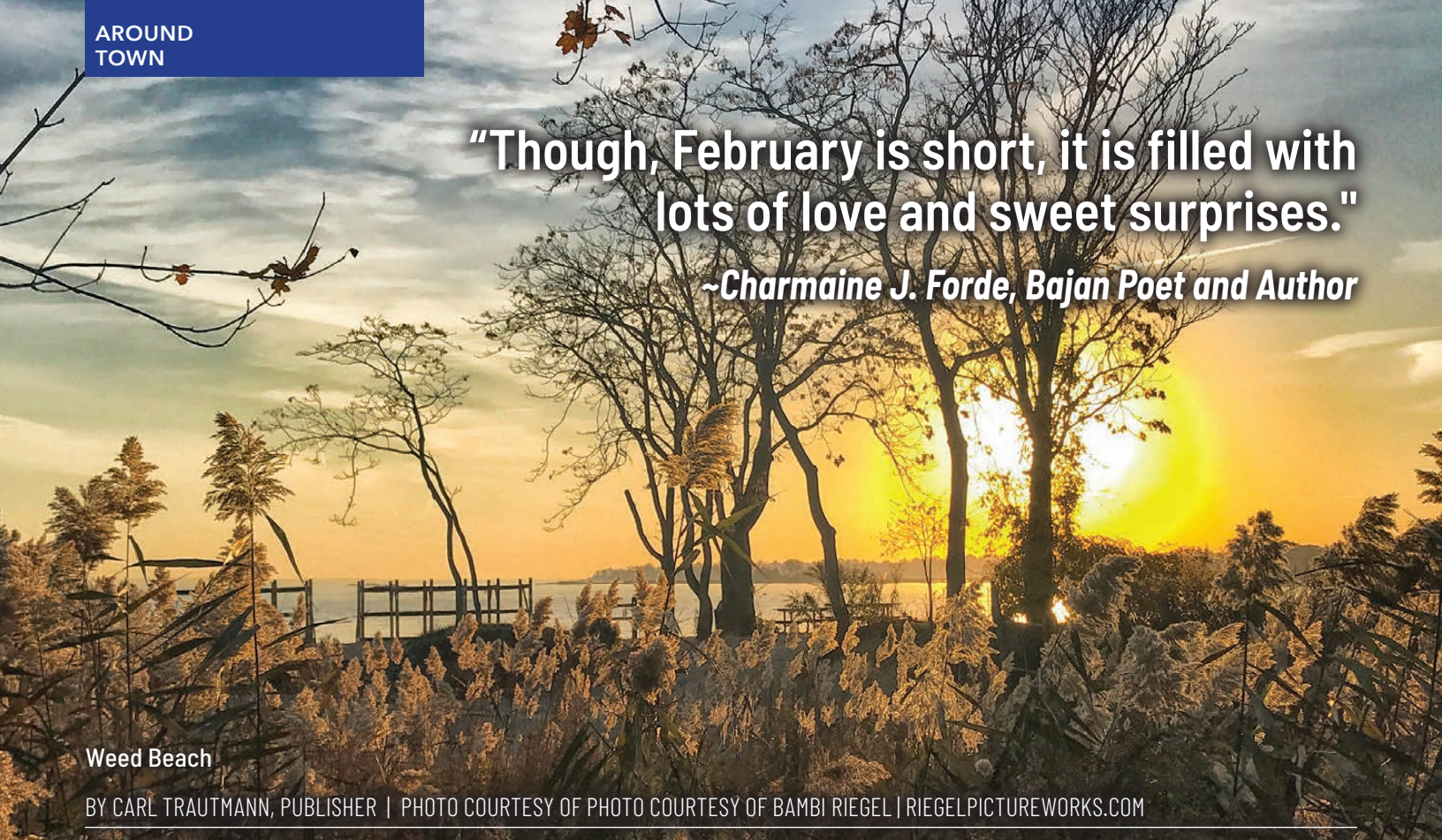
- TV79 website: DarienTV79.com
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"Though, February is short, it is filled with lots of love and sweet surprises."

~Charmaine J. Forde, Bajan Poet and Author

Weed Beach

BY CARL TRAUTMANN, PUBLISHER | PHOTO COURTESY OF PHOTO COURTESY OF BAMBI RIEGEL | RIEGELPICTUREWORKS.COM



As we all know, February is the shortest month of the year, but this short month is filled with great holidays, fun facts and a rich history.

February comes from the Latin word februa, which means "to cleanse." The month was named after the Roman Februalia, which was a month-long festival of purification and atonement that took place this time of year.

February 1st marks the start of the Lunar (or Chinese) New Year. This year is the year of the Tiger. On February 16th of this year, at 11:59pm, February's full moon will reach peak illumination. It's also known as the "Snow Moon" likely because, on average, February is the snowiest month of the year in the USA (according to the National Weather Service).



Groundhog Day (a movie favorite) falls on February 2nd, as it does every year. We are all familiar with Punxsutawney Phil and his shadow. Interestingly, what is now uniquely celebrated as Groundhog Day in the USA, has its origins as a Celtic festival celebrating the midpoint between the winter solstice and spring equinox.

Washington, Lincoln, King, Anthony are the great Americans with celebrated birthdays this month. And of course, there is the newest and most unique of American "holidays," Super Bowl Sunday. Try a catered Super Bowl Party from our friends at **Palmer's Market**.

But there is one February holiday above all that looms largest. Valentine's Day, celebrated every February 14th. St. Valentine is the Patron Saint of affianced couples, bee keepers, engaged couples, happy marriages, love, lovers and young people. A beautiful bouquet from **Nielsen's Florists** is a perfect way to say "I love you." Or, a romantic dinner at **Ten Twenty Post**. Who wouldn't love a beautiful gift from the **Darien Sport Shop**?

So many choices in our beautiful town to help you celebrate this month of February.

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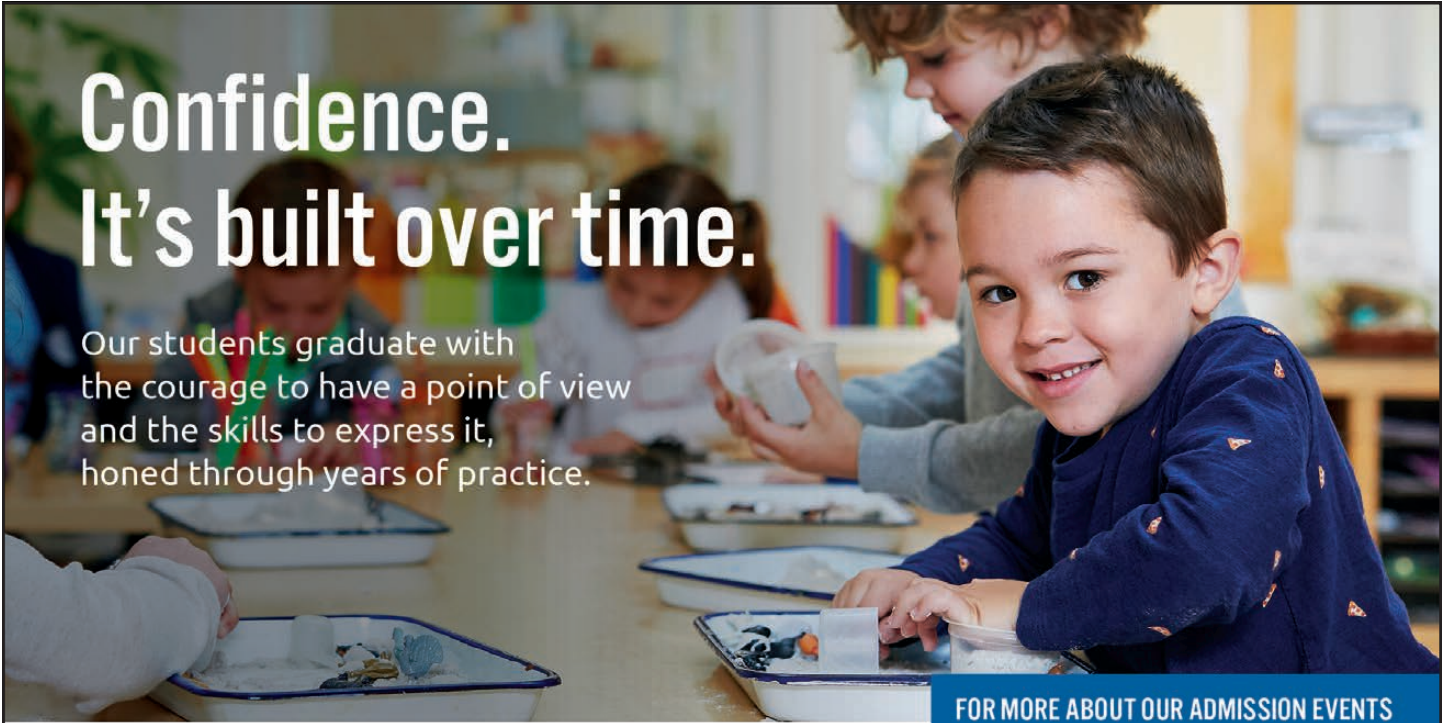
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DEPARTMENT/OFFICE	CONTACT NAME	Phone	Email
Assessor	Anthony Homicki, CCMA II	203-656-7310	ahomicki@darienct.gov
Building Official	Peter Solheim	203-656-7347	psolheim@darienct.gov
Finance	Jennifer Charneski	203-656-7334	jcharneski@darienct.gov
Fire Marshal	Robert Buch	203-656-7345	bbuch@darienct.gov
Harbor Master	Tom Bell	203-253-9519 (C)	darienharbor@darienct.gov
Planning & Zoning	Jeremy Ginsberg	203-656-7351	jginsberg@darienct.gov
Police Department	Don Anderson	203-662-5310	danderson@darienct.gov
Selectman's Office	Jayne J. Stevenson	203-656-7338	jstevenson@darienct.gov
Darien Senior Center	Elizabeth Paris	203-656-7490	eparis@darienct.gov
Director of Human Services	Ali Ramsteck, LCSW	203-656-7328	aramsteck@darienct.gov
Superintendent of Schools	Alan Addley	203-656-7412	aaddley@darienps.org
Tax Collector	Kathy Larkins	203-656-7314	klarkins@darienct.gov
	Town Hall 2 Renshaw Rd.	203-656-7300	