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For Our Town From Our Town

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Volume 32 No 8 February 20, 2026



Northford Resident Named

Elementary Assistant Principal of the Year

CHESHIRE (CT) -- The Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) is pleased to announce that Lea DiStefano, assistant principal of Eli Whitney Elementary School in Stratford, has been selected as the 2026 Elementary School Assistant Principal of the Year. DiStefano was nominated by district colleague Lisa Saunders, who is assistant principal at nearby Nichols Elementary School.

Known for leading with empathy, purpose, and collaboration, DiStefano places relationships, student voice, and instructional excellence at the center of everything she does. Colleagues describe her as a leader who looks beyond numbers to truly understand children and their experiences. "Her warmth and care drive everything she does," shared one staff member. "You can feel the love she has for every child and every family."

DiStefano's leadership has transformed school culture through initiatives that amplify student voice, including Student Council and Student Advisory, where students design and lead schoolwide projects that address real needs. One third grader called her "the best assistant principal in the world," while another student said, "Just being near her, you feel better." Even students who visit her office for behavioral issues often leave smiling, with one noting that "she helps us learn from every experience."

As an instructional leader, DiStefano is widely respected for her collaborative, strengths-based approach. Eli Whitney Principal Robert Veteri credits her with "fostering a culture of professional curiosity, trust, and continuous improvement." DiStefano launched Instructional Rounds and Lesson Study cycles that allow teachers to learn from one another and refine practice together. Her influence now extends beyond her school, as these models are being replicated across the district. One faculty member noted, "I am still learning and growing from her despite having been a teacher for 30 years."

Families consistently describe DiStefano as a trusted bridge between home and school. "When I think of Lea, I'm reminded of how she sees my children as just as important as I do," shared one parent. Another added, "She creates a sense of belonging—my child has graduated but still feels a deep connection to this school." Through initiatives such as a schoolwide equity team, a care closet stocked with essential items, and inclusive events like Multicultural Night, DiStefano has helped build a community where families feel welcomed, valued, and proud to contribute. Says Veteri, "Lea has transformed how we work alongside families. She views family engagement as a true partnership and intentionally weaves families into the fabric of our school."

A champion for student growth, DiStefano translated the district's Portrait of a Graduate framework into age-appropriate, classroom-ready lessons that help students develop key competencies while ensuring teachers feel confident and supported in its implementation.

Reflecting on her leadership, DiStefano shared, "Relationships and trust-building are the foundation of everything I do. We figure things out together, push one another to grow, and keep students at the center of every decision." As one staff member summed it up, "If there could be a Lea DiStefano in every elementary school, the world would be a different place." Her recognition as Assistant Principal of the Year celebrates a legacy of care, excellence, and community that continues to shape her school and district.

Town Loses a Familiar Legend

The Williams family of Northford would like to announce that Miss Carousel Lady passed away on January 10th. Miss Carousel was a black and white llama that was cared for by Wanda Williams. Miss Carousel was at least 27 years old and was a beloved member of the neighborhood. When Wanda would take Miss Carousel for a walk, parents would stop their cars so the children could get a good look, workmen often stopped to visit, neighbors greeted her warmly, and the neighborhood dogs looked forward to her passing their house and were eager to become her friend.

Carousel was featured in the Totoket Times on two occasions. Her first appearance was a 'pet photo' also featuring her dog friend Chole Koerber. She was also featured along with the NBHS baseball team as she was adopted by the team as their unofficial mascot as they competed (and won) the Shoreline Championships in 2024 and 2025.

Her first public sighting was in the Memorial Day Parade walking with others pets to promote the summer reading program at Edward Smith Library. Her long life may be attributed to the many blessings she received at the Blessing of the Animals at St. Andrews Church and appearing at numerous Christmas nativity scenes. She was predeceased by Waltzing Matilda.

We would like to thank the community for welcoming Miss Carousel and bringing new friends to Wanda's life. Special thanks to family and friends that supported Wanda in the care and love of Miss Carousel and to Dr. Shannon at Country Companions Veterinary.



Reconstruction on Twin Lakes Road

NORTH BRANFORD, CONNECTICUT - the Town of North Branford is developing a project for the reconstruction of approximately 7,000 feet of roadway on Twin Lakes Road from Foxon Road (S.R. 80) to Queach Road. Preliminary design has been completed and the project is slated for construction under the Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP) administered by the Connecticut Department of Transportation.

It is the Town's and the State's policy to keep people informed and involved when such projects are undertaken. It is important that the community share its concerns to assist in the project's development. The Town will conduct an informational meeting at Town Hall, 909 Foxon Road on Thursday, February 26, 2026 at 6:30 PM in the Town Council Chambers. Deaf and hearing impaired persons wishing to attend this meeting and requiring an interpreter may make arrangements by contacting Christopher M. Holden P.E., Town Engineer at 203-484-6009 at least five working days prior to the meeting.

The dollar amount for the construction of the project as programmed for the project is \$3,556,000 (Three Million, Five Hundred Fifty Six Thousand Dollars).

The Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program will provide 100% of the construction cost.

Anyone interested in obtaining further information or providing input may do so by contacting Christopher Holden P.E., Town Engineer at cholden@northbranfordct.gov or by phone at 203-484-6009.

TOTOKET TIMES

Deadline		Publication Date	
February	27	March	6
March	13	March	20
March	27	April	3
April	10	April	17
April	24	June	1
June	8	June	15
June	24	July	1





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Thank You for Your Generosity

As we enter a new year, the Food Pantry of North Branford would like to thank the community for their extreme generosity in assisting to provide food to those who are experiencing food insecurity. The Pantry's goal is to provide free supplemental food to both North Branford and Northford residents. The FPNB is a nonprofit organization that allows our guests to shop on a weekly basis free of charge. We do not receive town or government funding, so we are dependent upon

the donations and assistance from community members.

We do receive donations from charitable organizations and occasional grants. This thank you, however, is intended for the individuals, small businesses, school food drives, and other in town fund raising activities. During what many may feel to be a stressful time, the community's generosity is a welcome reminder of the positive. The Food Pantry is staffed entirely by dedicated volunteers.

The Pantry successfully moved to its new location at 260 Forest Road in March of 2025, achieving one of our biggest goals of securing a handicapped-accessible location. Although the FPNB is not a town agency, we would be remiss in not thanking the mayor, the town council, and the Public Works Department for all their support and assistance in facilitating this move.

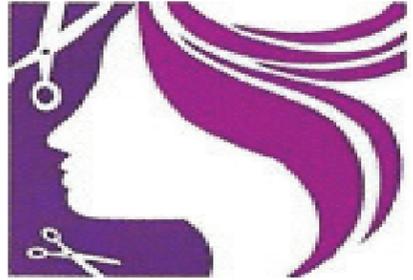
The Pantry shopping hours are Wednesdays from 4 to 7 pm, and Fridays from 10 am to 1 pm. Guests should bring a CT i.d. when initially registering, and their own reusable bags or boxes on a weekly basis. Our phone number is 203-208-2581.

We truly appreciate all of you who have supported us in some way. We



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State Representative Vincent Candelora

Connecticut's War on Its Own Police Must End



Connecticut has a police recruitment crisis. Departments across the state struggle to fill vacancies while experienced officers consider early retirement. Municipal leaders and state police commanders constantly ask: Why can't we attract and retain good officers?

We got our answer recently when the state Inspector General announced an investigation into two Connecticut State Troopers for their actions during a November traffic stop. Their offense? Successfully stopping a driver who fled from police at speeds exceeding 100 mph through a construction zone.

Let's review the facts. A trooper observed a driver speeding erratically with a license plate registered to a different vehicle and suspected the driver was intoxicated. When he attempted a traffic stop, the driver fled, initiating a high-speed pursuit through Montville and Norwich. Troopers first deployed stop sticks, which deflated a tire, yet the driver continued to flee. The trooper then radioed his supervisor requesting authorization to perform a PIT maneuver—a technique where the patrol vehicle hits the fleeing car's rear bumper to force it into a controlled spin. His supervisor granted that authorization. The maneuver successfully stopped the vehicle. Connecticut's Police Officer Standards and Training Council issued a directive in 2019 explicitly permitting PIT maneuvers to stop fleeing vehicles—a technique the trooper used with supervisor approval. The driver and passenger were taken into custody and charged with motor vehicle and narcotics offenses.

No one was killed. No one was injured. A dangerous pursuit ended without tragedy.

Two months later State Police leadership referred this case to the Inspector General, who then opened an investigation classifying the authorized maneuver as "deadly force"—a technical classification that ignores what actually happened and the greater danger posed by allowing a reckless driver to flee at dangerous speeds. I believe classifying PIT maneuvers as "deadly force" categorically is an overreach of the Inspector General's authority.

But that referral didn't happen in a vacuum. It happened in a political climate created by Governor Lamont and legislative Democrats who rammed through the 2020 police accountability law over law enforcement objections. That law created the Inspector General's office and fostered an environment where police leaders feel compelled to refer cases up the chain rather than risk political blowback. The chilling effect is the point.

An internal State Police review would have been appropriate and sufficient. Instead, two troopers are now suspended. Their careers hang in the balance. The mental toll of an Inspector General investigation now weighs on troopers who successfully ended a dangerous pursuit without anyone getting hurt.

The consequences extend far beyond these two troopers. Every municipal police chief struggling to fill patrol shifts should point to this case. Every state police commander watching experienced troopers retire early knows exactly why. Who would choose a career where stopping a fleeing, reckless driver through an authorized technique—with supervisor approval, after less aggressive methods failed—can still destroy your life?

Connecticut residents deserve better than a system that treats its officers as suspects for doing difficult work. The recruitment crisis will only deepen until Hartford learns a simple lesson: you cannot expect men and women to **run toward danger if the state plans to punish them when they get there.**

Rep. Vincent Candelora
House Republican Leader
86th District

North Branford, Durham, East Haven, Guilford

Let's Be "Frank"

As you know brother, for some time, this has been my favorite time of the year. Spring baseball (North Branford High School and Yankees) combined with Easter preparations (spiritually and socially) and a little work (very little) in the yard always took me out of that winter funk.

As you also know, it wasn't always my favorite. First, we start with Palm Sunday. At 13 years old I wasn't interested in the long Mass with the full Passion of Christ. There was also a long procession with our elderly parishioners (many of them immigrants) singing chants in Italian or Latin (I could never tell the difference).

After a Mass that seemed like an eternity, we had to delay our usual Sunday at aunt Tess's, to go first to the cemetery and then daddies sisters, to disperse Palm amongst those unable to get their own. Prayers to a bunch of stones at the cemetery and then wet kisses from toothless aunts was not my idea of an uplifting celebration.

As the week progressed, it was the torture of dealing with the crowd of people at Pacelli's (my after school job) as they stood in long lines to purchase their holiday needs. Mom had gotten me a job working there when I was thirteen. Pacelli's was an Italian import store, unique in the Easter needs. Fresh basket cheese, ricotta, ham, salami, prosciutto and eggs for the ham pies. They also had all the specialty items that were needed to finish a successful Easter feast.

My reward for getting half day Holy Thursday and all of Good Friday off from school was to work two and a half full days as a runner at the store. Stocking the shelves, carrying out orders to cars, fixing up the olives buckets and dealing with 100 pound bags of rice, wheat and beans were only a few of my endless holiday chores.

If that wasn't enough, I got out of a full day of work just in time to satisfy what mom insisted were my church obligations. A long service on Holy Thursday followed by walking to five other churches in the neighborhood (that was before the arch diocese saw fit to close or combine most of those churches) to light a candle and say a prayer. By the time we got home it was close to midnight and I had to be back to the store at 8am on Friday. I'm sure there were some type of child labor laws we were breaking but no one seemed to care.

No meat on Good Friday ruined one of my few pleasures as I couldn't even sample a piece of ham or salami now and then. Following a full day it was back to church for the stations of the cross and the procession with Gesu morte (the dead Jesus). It was an Italian custom to carry a replica of the dead Jesus around the church, in dedication to what he did to save us.

Finally home with no tv as it was a time for reflection and penance. My penance was getting ready for a store full of people buying their last minute items for a large Easter dinner celebration. Figs, olives, hard cheese, cherries in brandy, panetone's and much more were loaded into the cars. The day ended with another two hour service of lights and High Mass to celebrate the risen Christ.

I agonized for weeks about the coming of the holiday that was suppose to be a grand celebration. As I got older I came to love that holiday more than any others. Yes my least favorite time of year soon became my favorite. The time for reflection, the tradition filled ceremonies and the beautiful music that I later became a part of always seemed to make me happy. To this day I am still a part of the watered down versions of those services.

I long for the family filled conversations at Pacelli's, the long extended church services, the delicious foods we could only afford to eat once a year and a table full of relatives. Just give me one more toothless kiss from the aunts followed by the gift of a Kennedy half dollar.

It's funny some of the things we hated in our youth, we love in our older years and long for their return.

Hope you're doing ok brother. Your palm cross will be delivered to the cemetery as usual.

Say hi to the rest of the family who will be at your dinner table on Palm Sunday instead of mine. Tell them they too will be the recipient of their seasonal Palm Crosses.

I love them and miss them and I'll see you soon.

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The publisher assumes no responsibility for typographical errors. In the event of an error, the publisher will issue a credit adjustment on only the incorrect portion of the advertisement, as well as a retraction in the next issue.

Letters to the editor...

This paper encourages all readers to voice their opinions and comments.

The Totoket Times is not responsible for erroneous information or statements in letters to the editor. Letters should be as brief as possible.

All letters must be signed. A telephone number should be included and no personal attacks.

This paper reserves the right to edit all letters.

All letters should be addressed to :

The Editor

P.O. Box 313, Northford, CT 06472



Help my Friend Stephen McGovern

Hello to all those caring people out there in the world who would consider becoming a (live liver donor). The purpose is for helping people like my longtime friend (Stephen McGovern), this is so he can work his way back to good health and go on living a productive life. We thank you for this opportunity to express a very personal and very important matter for a true family man and great friend to everyone! My name is Danny Maggiore, a longtime good friend to a great man, (Stephen McGovern) only (56) years old The (GOVERNOR), a nick name we all call him, due to the fact he helps everyone with his big heart to help organize their lives, whether its life rolls, parties/reunions or just getting people together to secure donations to help others. (With Stephen no one is left behind). He is the true definition of that good man who actually does take his shirt off his back to help you. (STEPHEN NEEDS OUR HELP NOW)!!! He needs a (live liver donor) for a liver transplant, the donor must be (18-65 yrs. old in good health and must have an (O- blood type)). To those considering this will of course have to be evaluated for compatibility. This alongside surgery or any procedure will be at (NO) cost to the donor. It will be paid for by the Transplant Center. After consulting his medical team it was agreed upon that Stephen would need to have a liver transplant, due to an Autoimmune disease called (PSC) (Primary Sclerosing Cholangitis.) that has severely complicated Stephens health, it keeps him from enjoying his family and all the normal things in our daily lives, most of us take for granted. In addition, Stephens's wife also a great friend to many had to undergo her own liver transplant 11 yrs ago. But by the grace of God she received the help she needed and is back to good health. Stephen was right by her side doing all he can like he does for everyone. The chances of 2 people in the same house hold needing a liver transplant under different diagnosis is extremely rare. They have both been through a great deal of challenges with their health. The fact is they are both great people and simply do not deserve what they've gone through. Now its Stephens turn to get the help he needs. They have hung in there, kept their faith intact, and I am so proud of them for that. My heart goes out to both of them. Stephen SR. supports his wife of many years and 2 wonderful children, Stephen JR. and Jordan. In fact Stephen JR. will be getting married soon. (so please help my buddy live). Help Stephen with his journey back to good health with your live liver donation, so he can go on in good health, enjoy life/family/seeing his children get married and bring to fruition some grandchildren. This is a dream we all have in our lives as parents. So once again I ask for that special person to come forward and become Stephens's live liver donor. That great angelic donor that helps Stephen with the repair of his liver with their donation for his liver transplant, so again he can live on as that productive person he has always been. They will receive great karma in return, first healing very quickly from their liver donation in approximately (3 months) as it immediately grows back to full size and just simply feeling great about oneself due to the fact they are helping a very worthy and kind person return back to good health, this is such a great feeling in and of itself. WOW! it's amazing; the liver is the only organ in our body that grows back. The liver being the filter for the human body, makes it much harder needy/important when debilitated to live on in good health and bring to fruition all the good things GOD intended us to do. AMEN! On that. GOD bless you all and again please spread the word in all conversations you partake in. This helps us in finding that compatible person for Stephens liver transplant that is so urgently needed. Please tell them, (that a good man needs our help!) We appreciate your consideration in becoming a (live liver donor) for (Stephen McGovern), we also appreciate those who want to help but are unable to participate. And please, we ask for you all to keep Stephen and his family in your thoughts and prayers, as they will keep you in theirs. IF you or anyone you know has an interest in becoming a (live liver donor) for my good friend (Stephen McGovern) and would like to learn more about this matter, please contact the (YALE LIVER DONOR REFERRAL LINE) @ (1-866-925-3897) OR CALL STEPHEN DIRECTLY @ (203-500-1218). Thank you all for your time and consideration; again we appreciate the opportunity to express this very important and very personal matter. We can only imagine how extremely important and time sensitive this matter is. (Peace to you all!) Happy holidays.

NARFE Monthly Meeting

The National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association monthly meeting will be held Monday, March 2, 1:pm, at the North Haven Congregational Church, 28 Church St. All active and retired federal workers are invited to attend. The guest speaker will be Registered Dietitian Marisa McCoy who will present the Mind Diet for Brain Health. NARFE is dedicated to protecting and preserving the earned benefits of federal workers and retirees. Info: <http://www.Narfe.org>

Recycling News

Scrap Metal Pickup will be the week of April 6th.
The Electronic Waste Drop-Off will be on April 18th where we will be taking most electronics, mattresses and propane tanks, all for free.
Bulky Waste pick up will be the week of April 20th.

Regional Water Authority Rain Barrel Sale

For a limited time and while supplies last, you can purchase a 50-gallon Ivy Rain Barrel at a discounted price from RWA. The price is \$80 each, discounted from \$162.99.



Rain barrels are a great way for homeowners to use water wisely and manage water costs. They also help reduce stormwater pollution by keeping water out of storm drains that can carry contaminants from the street into water sources.

The deadline to place your order is Tuesday, March 31st Or when products run out.

<https://www.rainwatersolutions.com/products/rwater>

Pickup is Saturday April 11th – 9am to 12pm
at RWA, 90 Sargent Dr. New Haven

North Branford's Plastic Bag Recycling Program

ACCEPTED: grocery bags, newspaper sleeves, produce bags, bread bags, dry cleaning bags, ice bags, wood pellet bags, salt bags, zipper bags, plastic wraps from water bottle cases, diapers, bathroom tissue, and paper towels, as well as bubble wrap and shipping pillows. Plastic bags with recycling symbols Number 2 or Number 4 are accepted.

NOT ACCEPTED: Food, Plastic Water Bottles, pet food bags, plastic bags with recycling symbols **Number 5 or Number 7** (i.e., salad and grape bags), snack bags (potato chips, popcorn, and candy), frozen food bags, and any bags with food residue.



The North Branford's Solid/Hazardous Waste and Recycling Committee is looking for new members.

We are an advisory committee to the Town Manager. Our goal is to develop and implement environmentally sound solutions and best practices for solid waste disposal and recycling management on behalf of our town. We are always looking for people with fresh ideas to join us. Please call the Town Manager if you are interested.

For more information about recycling in North Branford you can check out North Branford's Recycling Committee's website: townofnorthbranfordct.com/government/boards-commissions/hazardous-wasterecycling-committee.aspx or our Facebook page: North Branford CT Hazardous Waste & Recycling Committee

Thank You for Your Participation



NORTH BRANFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS



THE MISSION OF THE NORTH BRANFORD SCHOOL SYSTEM, A PROUD, CARING COMMUNITY, IS TO PREPARE ALL STUDENTS TO BE CAPABLE, CONFIDENT LIFE-LONG LEARNERS WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS IN A DIVERSE AND CHANGING WORLD BY PROVIDING A COMPREHENSIVE, CHALLENGING PROGRAM IN COLLABORATION WITH FAMILY AND COMMUNITY.

JEROME HARRISON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ELIZABETH PARKER - PRINCIPAL



This past fall was a busy and meaningful time at Jerome Harrison Elementary School, filled with opportunities for students to learn, lead, and connect with one another and the broader community. From leadership development and service projects to family engagement and school wide celebrations, JHS continues to foster a culture of care, curiosity, and collaboration.

Earlier this fall, members of the JHS Student Council, along with their staff facilitators attended the Little Leaders Conference at the auditorium. The event was led by the Dream Team High School students, who created engaging, age-appropriate activities centered on leadership, self-advocacy, empathy, and teamwork. Our elementary students were excited to learn from their high school peers and left inspired by what it means to be a leader at any age.

Community partnerships were also on full display this fall when Mayor Rose Angeloni, and members of the Board of Education, Marjorie Bonadies, Kim Dawson, Judy Bannon, and Beth Siena joined JHS preschool students and staff to create snack packs for our NB Food Pantry. This hands-on activity gave even our youngest learners a meaningful way to practice empathy and understand how small acts of kindness can make a big difference.

On November 11, JHS honored Veterans Day with a meaningful school wide celebration. The day began with a special breakfast for visiting veterans, warmly hosted by Student Council members. Following breakfast, the school gathered for an assembly featuring a procession led by the Landcraft Fife and Drum Corps, a second-grade student's solo performance of the National Anthem, and student songs and reflections expressing gratitude and respect for those who have served.



Family engagement remains a priority at JHS. This school year, the school has already hosted two family nights, one focused on "The Power of Play" and another on executive functioning. These events provided families with practical strategies and insight into how children learn and grow. Another family night is planned for February, with a focus on STEM learning, continuing to strengthen the home-school connection.

This past month also included the school's fourth BEE Assembly of the year, centered on the theme of empathy and caring for others. Following the assembly, students participated in classroom lessons and activities that reinforced these ideas, helping them connect schoolwide expectations to everyday actions. Art and creativity also played a special role this fall. Art teacher Chris Lutjen led students and their families in creating a "Gratitude" mural, which will be proudly displayed in the school. This collaborative project provided a meaningful opportunity for reflection and celebration of thankfulness within the JHS community. Together, these moments reflect the heart of Jerome Harrison Elementary School - a place where learning is purposeful, relationships matter, and students are encouraged to grow as thinkers, leaders, and caring members of their community. As we look ahead, the JHS community is excited for all that 2026 will bring.



TOTOKET VALLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL JOSEPH AMODIO - PRINCIPAL

The first half of the school year has been an exciting and meaningful one at Totoket Valley Elementary School, marked by a wide range of student-led and student-centered learning experiences and leadership opportunities.

Through our Student Senate, students have taken on authentic leadership roles. This fall, third-grade representatives participated in the Little Leaders Conference hosted by the North Branford School District, collaborating with peers from Guilford, Jerome Harrison Elementary School, and the North Branford High School Dream Team. Similarly, our fourth- and fifth-grade student leaders attended the Connecticut Association of Schools Elementary Leadership Conference at Housatonic Community College. Both of these experiences challenged students to think critically, collaborate with peers from across the district and state, and reflect on what it means to be a leader within their school and community.

This year also brought new leadership opportunities aligned with student interests and passions. The introduction of our Green Team has created a space for students interested in sustainability to support our partnership with the North Branford Recycling Committee and strengthen schoolwide recycling efforts. Through this work, students are learning how small, intentional actions can have a meaningful impact on their school and community.

Another new initiative is our Student Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Advisory Group. This group collaborates to design and deliver lessons and activities for younger peers focused on authentic challenges students face during and beyond the school day. Topics include conflict resolution, mindfulness, skills for learning, and other key Habits of Mind. By serving as peer leaders, students are developing empathy, communication skills, and a strong sense of responsibility.

An additional partnership is our ongoing collaboration with the North Branford Land Trust. Through Nature Walks, students participate in hands-on, outdoor learning experiences intentionally aligned with grade-level science curriculum. Guided by Land Trust volunteers and school staff, these experiences bring science to life while fostering curiosity, collaboration, and environmental stewardship.



In addition to academic growth, Totoket Valley Elementary continues to prioritize student health and wellness. This month, students are participating in the Kids Heart Challenge, reinforcing the importance of physical health, perseverance, and community involvement. Through this initiative, students learn about heart health, goal-setting, and caring for themselves and others—habits that support lifelong wellness.

We are also proud to highlight the return of our Arts Action Team, a group of students with strong artistic interests and abilities. This team reflects on and supports our art program, contributes to our Magic Mailbox initiative, and identifies artists for our monthly Artist Spotlight. Through this work, students develop leadership skills, creative thinking, and a meaningful voice in shaping the artistic culture of our school.

Further celebrating the arts, three Totoket Valley Elementary students have been selected to attend the Connecticut Music Education Association's day-long music festival at the University of Bridgeport. This honor recognizes their musical talent, dedication, and commitment, while providing a rich opportunity to learn, collaborate, and perform alongside students from across the state.

The first ever TVES Robotics Club started this year. Meeting weekly, participants explore design, engineering, and coding through hands-on problem-solving. In its inaugural year, students have not only learned the fundamentals of robotics but have also attended local robotics competitions at Quinnipiac University.

Additional highlights include our fourth graders' participation in the Scripps National Spelling Bee, promoting word study, perseverance, and academic confidence; our third graders' partnership with the FRC preschool program, fostering leadership and cross-age connections; and our fifth graders' collaboration with the Connecticut River Association through the Salmon in the Classroom program, offering hands-on, inquiry-based learning focused on science and environmental stewardship.

Together, these experiences reflect our ongoing commitment to creating meaningful, engaging opportunities that place students at the center of their learning.



NORTH BRANFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT TEACHERS OF THE YEAR



MEGAN BARNES
JEROME HARRISON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



AMANDA ROBINSON
TOTOKET VALLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



SHANNON SLOCUM
NORTH BRANFORD INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL & DISTRICT TEACHER OF THE YEAR



NICOLAS DELIZIO
NORTH BRANFORD HIGH SCHOOL



NORTH BRANFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS



THE DISTRICT INSTRUCTIONAL VISION DESCRIBES THE RESEARCH-BASED AND HIGH LEVERAGE INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES THAT WE COLLECTIVELY APPLY TO CULTIVATE THE HABITS AND COMPETENCIES WE ARE DRIVEN TO DEVELOP IN ALL LEARNERS DURING THEIR TIME IN THE NORTH BRANFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS. THE INSTRUCTIONAL VISION SUPPORTS THE DISTRICT MISSION AND HELPS ACHIEVE THE VISION OF THE GRADUATE.



HAWKS



NORTH BRANFORD INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL KAROLYN DAHLSTROM ED.D. - PRINCIPAL

The past few months have been an especially busy and exciting time at NBIS, filled with opportunities for our students to learn, express themselves, and engage beyond the classroom. Even amid full schedules and academic demands, our students have risen to the occasion by showcasing their creativity, leadership, and commitment to our school and greater community.

Earlier in the fall, Kendrick Moore, a motivational speaker on the importance of character, shared his words of wisdom with our students and the expectation of being your best self. NBIS students also partnered with the NBHS Wounded Warrior Club to raise money for Breast Cancer Awareness, as well as hosting our annual Community Round Up, where we gathered 1,000 more canned goods than last year! Our 8th grade students also participated in the annual trip to Washington, D.C. Many students love this trip and the chance to see history come alive.

On November 10th, NBIS had the honor of welcoming 11 veterans, representing every branch of the military, into our school to celebrate Veterans Day. Students had the privilege of listening to powerful stories, asking thoughtful questions, and experiencing history firsthand.

On December 5th, Ann Braden, author of *The Benefits of Being an Octopus*, visited and spoke with all of our 7th grade classes. Our students recently finished reading her novel, making the experience especially meaningful. She discussed the inspiration behind her first novel, how she crafted the storyline, and the ways in which her character's growth reflected real students today.

This year, 16 of our NBIS students are traveling to JHS each month as "Reader Leaders." These students read a book to each kindergarten class and then engage the younger students in a related craft activity. This meaningful partnership fosters a love of reading, builds leadership skills, and strengthens connections across our schools. Each May, we proudly celebrate reading together with our JHS friends.

Building on last year's success, our Counseling Department continues to survey 8th grade students to explore their career interests. Using this information, community members are invited each month to share insights about their professions through our Career Lunches. We were excited to kick off this year's series with a visit from the North Branford Police Department. Our students also shined on stage in a wonderful production of *The Little Mermaid*, directed by Sharon Monnes and Jaci Giammattei. The performance was another smashing success and a testament to the talent, dedication, and hard work of our students and theater staff at NBIS.

The NBIS Principal's Council also attended the CAS Middle Level Leadership conference for the second year in a row. The students are eager and excited to share their new learning and continue to build their leadership through working with staff and administration to offer students new opportunities at NBIS. The NBIS Writing Club hosted our first ever NBIS Open Mic Night on January 22nd in the NBHS Cafe. It was an honor to see our students share their talents and performances!

From meaningful assemblies and service opportunities, to artistic performances and partnerships across grade levels and organizations, NBIS continues to be a place where students grow not only as learners, but as thoughtful, engaged citizens.



NORTH BRANFORD HIGH SCHOOL MEGAN LEE - INTERIM PRINCIPAL



At North Branford High School, academic excellence is anchored by our SOAR expectations—a comprehensive framework that defines our 'Vision of the Graduate' and shapes our school culture. Our students aspire to be: Socially Responsible Contributors, Open-Minded Engaged Citizens, Achievement Focused Students, and Resilient Lifelong Leaders. These core competencies ensure that every NBHS student develops the character and skills necessary for post-secondary success. Our comprehensive high school offers core content classes and elective credits across nine departments— all essential requirements to earn 24 credits for a high school diploma. With this framework, we are dedicated to fostering the "whole student" and are proud of the rigorous and varied programs we offer. Featured below are just a few highlights of the meaningful learning happening every day in our building.

English: Academic rigor remains high in the English department with over 40% of the senior class enrolled in University of Connecticut Early College Experience courses this spring; and our juniors are deep in personalized SAT goal-setting to prepare for the upcoming spring exams. The department also had some fun events such as a murder mystery party, virtual field trips, and collaborative projects with the Culinary and Art departments.

Mathematics: Algebra 2 students applied polynomial functions to design "thrill-ride" roller coasters, while Statistics students utilized everything from candy to the school parking lot to master data sampling and confidence intervals.

Social Studies: History is being brought to life through immersive trips to the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and creative projects like the "Heritage Recipe Book" in our newly debuted AP Modern World History course for freshmen. 11th grade students in Contemporary Issues and AP U.S. Government & Politics have been engaged in rigorous analysis of various political ideologies that shape our modern world.

Science: AP Biology and Environmental Science students recently conducted water quality analyses at Chatfield Hollow, while Project Lead the Way: Biomedical Science students are developing clinical competencies, including vital sign assessment and anatomical dissection. Looking ahead, we are hopeful to debut a new Coastal Marine Science of Long Island Sound elective course for next school year.

Visual Arts: Students of all ability levels begin in Art Foundations and work to develop their artistic skills. In this course, they create vision boards and artistic symbols that focus on measurable personal and/or academic goals. Students in our advanced visual arts classes are mastering everything from 35mm film development in our brand-new darkroom to intricate textile embroidery on botanical cyanotypes.

Music: The music hallways are buzzing as the band and chorus prepare for the district-wide Spectrum Concerts this winter. NBHS students hope to inspire and invite new talent to our growing program as the 8th graders begin their course registration process this spring.

Physical Education and Health: We continue to offer a robust physical education and health curriculum in alignment to state standards. Our adaptive physical education class offers time for students with disabilities to engage in physical activity with their peers; students are active in our weight room during and after school, promoting a culture of health and wellness across our building.

Technology & Careers: Students in Tech and Careers have designed robots, built and repaired vehicles, produced news packages in the video studio, and even created green insulation materials. Our Culinary Arts students continue to sharpen their skills in the kitchen, while the Theatre Arts program just performed our fall play "The Play That Goes Wrong" on the NB auditorium stage.

The World Language Department is currently bridging the gap between North Branford and the world. Through the Open Canopy program, an initiative sponsored by the Harvard Graduate School of Education, Spanish IV Honors students are engaging in a global dialogue with students from across the United States and in locations as diverse as India and Spain to explore global perspectives and make thinking visible. Furthermore, the department continues to honor high-level proficiency through the State of Connecticut Seal of Biliteracy. By passing the rigorous Avant STAMP 4S assessment, eligible seniors can graduate with official recognition of their fluency in multiple languages

Social/Emotional Learning: Our mental health team and school counselors are dedicated to supporting all students. Students have access to our guidance suite throughout the day, should they need a quiet place to do work or to check in with a counselor. Our continued collaboration with the Root Center and BH Care allows us to connect students and their families to essential mental health services and resources beyond NBHS.





NORTH BRANFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS



"EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES ARE NOT JUST HOBBIES. THEY ARE OPPORTUNITIES TO DISCOVER NEW PASSIONS, BUILD RESILIENCE, AND SHAPE THE FUTURE." - UNKNOWN



NORTH BRANFORD TRANSITION CENTER LEA PIERSON - TRANSITION COORDINATOR

Students at the Transition Center continue to make meaningful progress across job sites, classrooms, and the community as they build the skills needed for independence and employment.

Throughout the first half of the school year, students have strengthened core employment skills such as following schedules, meeting job site expectations, demonstrating impressive social skills while working with the public, working as part of a team, and managing their time effectively. Increased independence, confidence, and responsibility have been evident as students take greater ownership of their work and daily routines.



In addition to vocational development, instruction has focused on practical areas including banking and budgeting, tending to financial obligations, hygiene, balanced diets, organizing personal materials, and using calendars to plan daily and weekly responsibilities. Students are also learning to manage personal healthcare tasks, such as understanding prescriptions, requesting refills appropriately, and tracking medication schedules—skills that are critical for adult independence.

Community safety and engagement remain an integral part of the program. Students actively practice daily problem solving scenarios, safe decision-making while traveling in the community and participating in public spaces. They have also deepened their sense of civic responsibility through meaningful volunteer work. This includes assisting at the Branford Community Dining Room, giving back through volunteer efforts at Jerome Harrison and Totoket Valley Elementary School, and creating specialty gifts for Veterans and residents at local nursing homes.



Creativity and entrepreneurship continue to thrive at the Transition Center as well. Students have been actively involved in producing and selling a variety of items, including seasonal holiday wreaths, small scale printing products, and homemade dog treats. Through these projects, students practice teamwork, task completion, quality control, and basic business concepts.

Every Friday, our students head out on community outings where learning meets fun! These outings give them real-world opportunities to interact with others, build confidence, and enjoy themselves while learning important life skills.

Overall, the progress made by students at the Transition Center reflects their hard work, determination, and growing independence.



NBHS EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES LORI CONNELLY - ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

In addition to our academic programming, NBHS is proud of its clubs, activities, and athletic programming. Student access to extracurriculars remains a priority to engage and support our learners in all facets of their life.

We offer over 30 clubs at NBHS ranging from Animal Allies and Chess Club, to National Honor Society and Yearbook. Clubs sponsor activities throughout the year and many create lessons for our school-based advisory program to deepen student social and emotional learning.



NBHS is proud to offer a variety of athletic teams for students to join across three different seasons. This year, we have seen competitive teams and individual successes.

Our fall season features eight programs directly at NBHS, including separate Boys and Girls Cross Country teams. In addition to these internal programs, the district partners with Sacred Heart, East Haven, and New Haven for a collaborative Girls Swimming and Diving team. This past fall 166 athletes participated, with four programs successfully fielding Junior Varsity squads.

Fall highlights: Our Football team made the playoffs for the first time under Pequot League and NHFOA "Coach of the Year" Anthony Salvati; Field Hockey and Volleyball both had competitive seasons and made it to both the Shoreline and State tournaments.

During the winter season, NBHS hosts six direct programs, including Boys and Girls Indoor Track. The district also leverages several essential relationships to provide specialized opportunities, including collaborative teams for Wrestling with East Haven and Gymnastics with Hand, and co-op teams for Girls Ice Hockey with Guilford, East Haven, and Coginchaug, and Boys Swimming and Diving with North Haven, Guilford, and East Haven. These programs collectively served 124 student-athletes.

Winter Highlights (so far): Indoor Track has individual qualifications for the shoreline (28 athletes) and state tournaments (nine athletes). We are in the midst of competitive seasons for Girls and Boys Basketball with many opportunities for students to access co-op partnerships.

The spring season remains our most active period, typically averaging nearly 200 participants. NBHS offers nine direct spring programs, including Boys and Girls Outdoor Track, alongside a collaborative Boys Tennis team with East Haven. With five teams offering Junior Varsity levels, the spring season provides a critical foundation for player development and engagement.



NORTH BRANFORD HIGH SCHOOL PERIOD II HONORS

HIGH HONORS

12TH GRADE

Beecher, Zachary
Berardesca, Ashley
Bliven, Alyssa
Blyschak, Gabriel
Brockett, Jack
Brustman, Leah
Budd, Michael
Carbone, Santino
Carusone, Justin
Connelly, Tyler
Crane, Abigail
DePino, Payton
Esposito, Alexa
Falcigno, Nico
Falconi, Jair
Ferraro, Gregory
Gonzalez, Christian
Haeckel, Jason
Heffernan, Tyler
Ianniello, Gianna
Jara, Wilyan
Kilstrom, Liam
Klouman, Matthew
Knowlton, Jack
Lacroix, Cameron
Longo, Brandon
Marino, Alyssa
Morehead, Logan
Navarrete, Cassidy
O'Brien, Charles
O'Rourke, Ashlyn
Pienkosz, Olivia
Poston, Jacob
Preiss, Emma
Raymond, Caleb
Richards, Russell
Rivera, Destiny
Ryszczyk, Ava
Sargent, Brock
Savo, Myrissa
Sigel, Anthony
Sorrell, Sophia
Sudusky, Kyle
Tang, Meghan
Torres, Sury
Urbina, Mateo
Valente, Jonna
Venturini, Leo
Vitarisi, Lauren
Warren, Isabella
Westefeld, John

HIGH HONOR

11TH GRADE

Ahmed, Afran
Balliu, Jayden
Biehler, Aiden
Caffalette, Talan
Carbone, Armani
Chasanoff, Ella
Dolzani, Steven
Dowson, Marina
Duggan, Finn
Esposito, Ava
Ferraro, Myles
Filicia, Cheryl
Forgione, Matthew
Guerrero, Gabriel
Harper, Mallory
Harper, Mia
Ianniello, William
Johnson, Samantha
Kilstrom, Mason
Kleckner, Kayla
Kundrath, Brianna
LeBeau, Autumn
Macauley, Kate
Magazzi, Marcus
Marashi, Edmira
Martone, Alia
McCullough, Joseph
Miller, Craig
Nargi, Joseph
Pancak, Skye
Paolini, Natalia
Patel, VEDI
Pereira, Alexander
Plano, Matteo
Podzikowski, Siena
Porcu, Juliana
Rish, Aesop
Rivera, Luis
Rosado, Haylee
Sigal, Alexandra
Sigal, Michael
Troche, Gian
Troche, Iris
Velasco, Matthew
Wojciechowski,
Emma
Wright, Carly
Zulawski, Katheryn

HIGH HONORS

10TH GRADE

Acampora, Justin

Allan, Taylor
Anderson, Matteo
Behrens, Greta
Biolzi, Sadie
Budd, Ellie
Camarco, Logan
Castro, Lance
Cereni, Mariela
Chittenden, Shelby
Connelly, Kylie
Cook, Quinn
Cronan, Alexander
DeMetro, John
Dudek, Cooper
Hortillo, Ethan
Jaracy, Jake
Kirmali, Layla
LeClaire, Isabella
Lorenti, Olivia
Lucibella, Dessa
Luangsay, Natalie
McDermott-Miliano,
Gabriella
Merry, Jacob
Murphy, Ryan
Patel, Risha
Pavic, Marin
Pelczar, Carson
Reyes, Emilia
Smith, Broden
Traill, Ian
Vander Wyk, Noah
Vitale, Liliana

HIGH HONORS

9TH GRADE

Adhikari, Ashmi
Alves, Mya
Balg, Will
Bernardo, Bella
Brigance, Evangeline
Brochu, Landen
Caffalette, Avery
Corso, Gianna
DeLucia, Tessa
Demiroz, Ekin
Fusco-Cuneo, Lucy
Giannotti, Brinleigh
Gwiazda, Macey
Hansen, Emma
Iamunno, Santino
Karim, Fatima
Levix, Caroline
MacDougall, Kendall

Malkin, Riley
Manning, Avery
Mazzucco, Gianna
Paulino, Kimberly
Podzikowski, Sophia
Poston, Tyler
Potocsky, Addison
Salvati, Gianni
Salz, Arianna
Sandagata, Luciano
Savo, Lucas
Spanier, Elisia

HONORS

12TH GRADE

Aiken, Bree
Baxter, Caleb
Brindisi, Marcus
Brittall, Avery
Budeit, Aijalyn
Cantore, Taylor
Cioffi-Smith, Chase
DiStefano, Madison
Estes, Conor
Estrada, Nylis
Iamunno, Benicio
Intravia, Luca
Kluk, Bryson
Krista, Christopher
Landino, Luca
Leonard, Gwen
Leone, Gavin
Martone, Nicco
Nastri, Jamie
Papa, Samantha
Piercey, Christopher
Sarenas, Benjamin
Snedeker, Alexa
Traill, Gavin

HONORS

11TH GRADE

Budeit, Alana
Burns, Landen
Cameron, Peyton
Cruz, Christopher
Esposito, Mason

Frost, Adrienne
Fusco-Cuneo, Aden
Gildersleeve, Dustin
Gonzalez-Delgado,
Leilani
Iitli, Semih
Keil, Brianna
Lahun, Baidu
Landau, Brian
Martone, Santino
Meizies, Tyler
Meneo, Makayla
Montero, Justin
O'Connor, Elisa
Pearson, Luciano
Perrelli, Mya
Peterson, Leif
Piroli, Elianna
Plano, Luca
Ramage, Mae
Salvati, Nicolas
Seward, Madelynn
Small, William
Spinelli, Valentina
Stakaj, Daniella
Stimpson, Juliana
Urbano, Mario
Weld, Aubrey

HONORS

10TH GRADE

Abanoz, Eda
Adinolfi, Ava
Altland, Gabe
Beisaw, Mia
Cappella, Jason
Collins, Andrew
Dagliere, Gracie
Dahlheimer, Logan
Daley, Erin
DeFrancesco, Ava
DiStefano, Mason
Durkin, Alexa
Ferrucci, Ava
Fuina, Grace
Gambardella, Lilah

Kingsbury, Riley
Lake, Evan
Landino, Marco
LaRock, Monnique
Maider, Isabella
Mann, Emily
Martinez, Andrew
Minnocci, Cole
Parisi, Francesca
Patel, Dhanvi
Redman, Colby
Virginelli, Sophia
Walston, Joshua
Wyatt, Adilyn

HONORS

9TH GRADE

Baker, Emma
Brustman, Owen
Camejo, Hannah
Cotten, Zoe
Cucinotta, Jackson
Dagliere, Ellie
Diaz, Max
DiBenedetto, Gianni
Freeman, Sophia
Gikes, Blake
Grimes, David
Heon, Nora
Jaracy, Jack
Kavanaugh, James
Loomis, Ana
Lucibello, Tessa
Marino, Gia
McLain, Jerimaiah
Morales, Alaysia
Muravnick, Ashlyn
Rolston, Brielle
Santiago, Giana
Scasino, Marie
Speringo, Gabriella
Stavrides, Nicholas
Toto, Lia
Tynes, Jason
Yanza-Rivera,
Jaquelyn

THEY MAKE US PROUD

Gunner Manske made High Honors at Xavier High School in Middletown.
Bella Martone was named to the Dean's List at Clark University in Worcester, MA.

Makenna Stone was named to the Dean's List at Worcester Polytechnical Institute in Worcester, MA.
Katelyn Bailey was named to the Dean's List at Western New England University in Springfield, MA.

Andrew Fiondella and Joey Carofano were named to the Dean's List at Plymouth State University in Plymouth, NH.

Nicholas Beecher, Jillian Sweeney and Cailey Waldrum were named to the Dean's List at Salve Regina University in Newport, RI.

Tea Ferrucci, Griffin Geist, Carolyn Heffernan, Alexa Teodoro, Adriana Esposito and Georgia Fowler were named to the Dean's List at the University of Rhode Island in Kingston.

Kiley Mullins was named to the Dean's List at the University of Scranton Fall in PA.

North Branford

Scholarship Association

The North Branford Scholarship Association announces that applications for scholarship awards are available at the town libraries and the North Branford High School Guidance Office beginning March 1st. Graduating high school seniors living in North Branford regardless of what school they graduate from are eligible. Applications must be in by March 30th, 2026. Our fund drive is also being run at this time. If anyone would like to make a donation or help us raise monies for the students please call Lars at 203 483-1311.

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SATURDAY 11AM—7PM

SUNDAY 11AM—4PM



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NORTH BRANFORD INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL PERIOD II HONORS

Grade 8 HH

Allen, Cameron Sean
 Altland, Noelle
 Ames, Eden Maci
 Bayreuther, Harrison
 Bernardo, Talia Rose
 Bonaldo, Brooke Marie
 Brown, Aubrey
 Brown, Randall Philip
 Calvo, Allison Rose
 Ciancola, Tyler Anthony
 Claude, Mason Noah
 Connelly, Emma Rose
 Constantinople, Isabella
 Coplin, Rya Nicole
 Cretella, Sofia
 Doughty, Eli Joseph
 Furtak, Lilliana
 Hollenbeck, Heidi Bell
 Kleckner, Zoey Nicole
 Leete, Norah Shea
 Martinelli, Nathaniel
 Martinez, Emma Rose
 Maybury, Myla Blake
 Morrell, Reagan Sophie
 Murphy, Madeline
 Paul, Emma Elizabeth
 Pelczar, Anna
 Reding, Alexander
 Richardson, Breanna
 Saccu, Mason Joseph
 Saja, Austin Martin
 Salvati, Isabella Anne
 Sciuto, Abbey Lynn
 Velasco, Samantha
 Venturini, Nino
 Wheaton, Mara

Grade 7 HH

Anderson, Rocco Sean
 Bayusik, Hailey Grace
 Beauchemin, Jackson
 Bernier, Ava
 Bevilacqua, Mariachiara
 Biron, Gabriella Lucia
 Brindisi, Livia Joy
 Bronit, Mila Cataleya
 Brown, Adriana Marie
 Buontempo, Mila Elle
 Byrd, Jeremiah Robert
 Cahill, Cooper Flynn
 Camp, Geneviese Rose
 Casteel, Jaire
 Cifaldi, Madison Taylor
 Cousino, Julianna
 DeMartino, Logan
 Estrada, Valentina
 Falcigno, Luciana

Farotti, Jackson
 Forsyth, McKayla
 Fryer, Avery Carol
 Fusco-Cuneo, Gavin
 Garcia, Rose Anna
 Girardi, Taylor Sutton
 Gularte, Emma Victoria
 Horn, Aubrey Claire
 Jimenez, Skylah Idalis
 Mazzucco, Jason
 Melillo, Anderson
 Peterson, Tristan
 Piekarski, Hayden Lee
 Rapuano, Topanga
 Romano, Ella Marie
 Sciuto, Brooke Helen
 Sermabekian, Victoria
 Sherwood, Logan
 Shove, Carter Michael
 Skinner, LilyAnn
 Smith, Mason Allan
 Sorrentino, Nicholas
 Stadolnik, Pete
 Stavrides, Eva
 Weld, Emmy Bree
 Wenzel, Isabella
 Wilson, Payton
 Wood, Fiona
 Yanza-Rivera,

Grade 6 HH

Allen, Reagan Mae
 Barrett, Keegan Jace
 Broderick, Adeline
 Camejo, Calia
 Cerrone, Aviela
 Conte, Paul Jeffery
 Conway, Avery Bell
 DeFrancesco, Farah
 DiLungo, Ariana
 Dowson, Callie Emma
 Fernandez, Lilliana
 Forsyth, Hailey Jean
 Furtak, Caden Perry
 Gambardella, Grace
 Hewitt, Ada May
 Jennings, Thomas
 Kundrath, Nathan
 Lovelace, Eden Rae
 Manner, Addison Mia
 Manning, Olive Grace
 Maybury, Addie Lynn
 Mignosa, Paige
 Miller, Aubrey Rose
 Moalli, Giovanni
 Moroniti, Vincenzo
 Morrell, Natalie Grace

Nicolelli, Nathaniel
 O'Grady, Dylan
 Page, Hailey May
 Paradis, Carmen
 Piche, Stella Viola
 Reyes, Alexander i
 Ripani, Ella Rose
 Rivera, Estrella
 Rolston, Rylan
 Salvati, Luciano
 Salz, Violet Anne
 Schreiner, Noah
 Sorrell, Benjamin
 Toman, Connor
 Vizueta, Anjali
 Vongher, Cole Sosuke
 Wright, Penelope Iris

Grade 8 Honors

Aneiro, Hayden
 Biehler, Thomas
 Budd, Lillian Mary
 Casteel, Jerimiah
 Cleary, Molly May
 Cook, Owen Paul
 Demertzoglou,
 Epameinondas
 Elliston, Aden John
 Ercolani, Aubrey
 Esposito, Lily Amelia
 Gauvin, Presley Jude
 Gularte, Madison
 Hurley, Aishlyn
 Lucibello, Amalia
 Mickiewicz, Emma
 Nargi, Olivia Marie
 Nocereto, Brooke
 O'Grady, Molly Aliza
 Pizarro, Liangeliz
 Ritter, Joseph Russell
 Savo, Andrew
 Tobias, Julia Isabelle
 Toti, Giuliana Lidia
 Wyatt, Coltyn Jason

Grade 7 Honors

Arabolos, Isabella
 Barraco, Lillian Grace
 Busetta, Gianna Marie
 Cabrera Puent
 Camp, Madison Rose
 Crane, Jackson
 Cushen, Ace Phillip
 D'Aria, Carmelina
 Dotson, Natalie
 Flynn, Christian Sean
 Fortier, Daniel
 Gallagher, Jared

Guerra, Charlotte Rita
 Haddad, Greyson
 Jennette, Luke Mason
 Karbowski, Kaci Rose
 Knowlton, Matthew
 Kokorus, Alexander
 Mastriano, Mila Paige
 Nunez, Liam Alexis
 Ranz, Anastasia Mae
 Reding, Jacqueline
 Reynolds, Cassidy
 Russo, Vada Lillian
 Salz, Hailey Marie
 Sampson, Giavanna
 Sommo, Louis
 Taylor, Jeremiah
 Tracz, Bennett Reide
 Tracz, Parker
 Verzi, Mitchell Vitale
 Michael Brandon
 Yarnall, Travis Kellan

Grade 6 Honors

Apicella, Alexa

Buffaloe, AmberRose
 Calvo, Taylor Emma
 Canell, Grace
 Chamberlain, Asher
 Colafati, Xavier
 Colangelo, Dominic
 Como, Elizabeth Rose
 D'Aria, Liliana
 Davis, Savannah Jane
 Downes, Andrew Alan
 Ferrucci, Gabriel
 Forgione, Gabriel
 Giannopoulos, Angelo
 Giovanni, Penelope
 Golebiewski, Lukas
 Gregorio Diaz, Jenxiel
 Hall, Catherine Rose
 Kavanaugh, Ryan
 Kelly, Charlie Ryanne
 Knoob, Bryce
 Konesky, Alexander
 MacKenzie, Everett
 Malone, Emily

Miller, Hailey
 Ozoria, Chloe Grace
 Palladino, Ava Grace
 Rapuano, Bella Rose
 Raza, Ahmed
 Rodriguez, Noah
 Rondon, Leannie
 Scali, Daniel Joseph
 Somers, Grace Ann
 Sommo, Cambree
 Swanson, Rowan
 Turcio, Amora Rose
 Urbina, Maximiliano
 Vongher, Walter



**“HATS FOR HOPE”
 IN NORTH BRANFORD**

This fall, North Branford Public School District (NBPS) completed their annual “Hats For Hope” campaign to support the Tommy Fund Foundation. The Tommy Fund Foundation provides support and care to the families with children undergoing chemotherapy at Smilow Cancer Hospital in New Haven.

Now in its 5th year, North Branford Public School began their annual Hats for Hope Fundraiser after the Tommy Fund helped one of their own. NBHS Junior Nicolas Salvati (16) battled Burkitt Lymphoma over five years ago during the pandemic. The Tommy Fund Foundation assisted and supported his family through this difficult time. Wanting to pay the organization’s generosity forward to other children in need, Salvati teamed up with North Branford School administrators, including Dr. Carter Welch, to help bring the Hats for Hope campaign to the North Branford school district.

Now, every September, Salvati and Dr. Welch coordinate the district wide event to raise awareness for childhood cancer by asking students and staff to bring a dollar or more. In exchange, participants wear their favorite hat to school for the day. This year’s event raised over \$1,700, making it the most successful Hats for Hope campaign in the district to date.

“Year round outside of the extreme efforts surrounding Hats for Hope, the North Branford community has shown support to many patients, survivors and loved ones the Tommy Fund has lost. We thank the Salvati family and all those in the area for stepping up for our families at every stage of impact,” shares Rebecca M Santoli, Executive Director, Tommy Fund.

Thank you to the students, staff, and parents in North Branford for making this year’s Hats for Hope campaign a success, and a special “Hats Off” to Dr. Carter Welch and Nicolas Salvati for their organization and coordination efforts.

NORTH BRANFORD BARBERSHOP

HAIR CUTS
MEN \$16.00
SENIORS & KIDS UNDER 10 \$14.00

Tues 8:30 - 5:00 Wed. 8:30 - 5:00
Thur. 8:30 - 5:00 Fri 8:20 - 5:00
Sat. 8:30 - 2:00
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REC & READ

Join our Parks and Rec staff for a monthly story time and activity geared towards children ages 0-4 years. This 45 minute program will include a short story read out loud and an activity to match. *Each child will get to take home a copy of the book!*

February 18, 2026 - 10:15 - 11:00am - \$5
STW Art Room - Ages 4 and under

Please register by 2/16/26

SNOW TUBING



Spend a Thursday night snow tubing with friends at Powder Ridge! Dress for fun in the snow with snow pants, jacket, gloves and hat.

Transportation, tubes, and helmets are provided. Grades 6-8

February 26, 2026 - \$45res/\$50nr

Register by: 2/20

Departs from STW: 4:15 pm

Returns appx: 8:30 pm

Chaperoned by Parks & Recreation staff

Waivers for snow tubing are required and must be filled out and signed by a parent or guardian in order to participate. The waiver can be found under the program information.



Mary's Culinary Classes

Join Mary Amter in this unique, hands on culinary experience that will engage children in preparing delicious creations. They will explore, create, and learn basic cooking techniques!

Grades 3-5 at STW Community Center

WEDNESDAY APRIL 15, 2026

MILLIONAIRE GNOCCHI AND EASTER DESSERT CUPS

1:00 - 3:00pm

\$40 res/ \$45 non-res per class



NORTH BRANFORD PARKS AND RECREATION & SENIOR CENTER AFTER SCHOOL R.E.C Crew

Recreation • Education • Creativity

REGISTRATION IS BY THE MONTH (Space is limited) Students are walked over from TVES or take the bus from Jerome Harrison School.

Grades K-5

JEROME HARRISON (JHS)

TOTOKET VALLEY (TVES)

5 DAYS A WEEK - \$300/month

5 DAYS A WEEK - \$300/month

3:25pm-5:30pm

M/W/F - \$180/month

1:40pm-5:30pm - Early Dismissal

T/TH - \$120/month

2:45pm-5:30pm

12:55pm-5:30pm - Early Dismissal

Our program provides a safe environment where kids can..

- Receive homework support
- Engage in recreational activities
- Enhance social/emotional development
- Most importantly HAVE FUN!

— SENIOR CENTER —

ST. PATRICK'S DAY LUNCHEON

Thursday, March 12th

\$10 dine in \$12 takeout
Lunch served at 12:00pm

Registration opens on 2/2 and closes on 3/6

Ol' Fashion Corned Beef, Cabbage Potatoes & Carrots, Irish Soda Bread, and Dessert!

Take out meals are limited- please speak to the staff if you are in need of a meal to go

MOHEGAN SUN BUS TRIP

Monday, February 23 - 8:00am - 4:00pm
\$20 res / \$25 nr

If you are meeting at the STW Community Center, we will be leaving at 8:00 a.m. Departs Mohegan at 2:30pm. Please register by 2/17

CHAIR YOGA

February 17 - April 7 - 10:30 - 11:30am
\$45 res / \$50 nr

Instructor: Sharon Bailey

Chair yoga is a gentle form of yoga that is done while sitting and using a chair for support. Chair yoga helps build strength, improve coordination, and promotes relaxation, reduces stress. Please register by 2/6

LUNCH BUNCH

John & Maria's Pizzeria-Restaurant in East Haven
February 25, 2026
12:00 - 2:00pm

Lunch Bunch is back! Join us for lunch (pay on your own) at John & Maria's Pizzeria-Restaurant in East Haven! Kindly register by 2/18

DINER DASH

Crazy Toast House, Target and Ferraro's
March 11, 2026

Departs STW at 11:00am Returns 2:00pm

Come for a meal on your own at the Crazy Toast House then we will head over to Target and Ferraro's. Please register by 3/9.

SENIOR CENTER SILVER SNEAKERS MOBILITY & BALANCE FUSION *NEW*

A gentle, mobility-focused class designed to keep you moving with confidence. This class blends seated and standing flexibility work with balance drills that help improve posture, joint mobility, and fall-prevention skills.

Instructor: Christina Murphy

Mondays Feb 23 - March 16

10:30 - 11:15am - STW Yoga Room

Free for Silver Sneakers Members

\$10 for the session for non-members

North Haven Sons & Daughters of Italy Lodge #2805

Even Italians are Irish on St. Patrick's Day.
Celebrate our Corned Beef & Cabbage Dinner

Saturday, March 21, 2026

North Haven Congregational Church 28 Church Street,

Corned Beef, Cabbage, Potatoes, & Carrots.
Coffee & Desserts.

Special Entertainment
Irish Step Dancers

Dinner Starts at 6:00 PM'

Just \$25.00 per person. Sign up as a new member and your dinner is free!

Call Frank at 203-410-4254



Sons & Daughters of Italy Prepare Meals for RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE

On January 21st, members of the Community Outreach committee of the North Haven Sons and Daughters of Italy prepared dinner at the Ronald McDonald House of CT in New Haven. This is part of the RMH Meals

From the Heart program. The committee prepared a hearty chicken and vegetable soup, served with rice or orzo pasta. Dinner rolls and dessert were also provided. For more information about the Ronald McDonald House, please visit <https://www.rmhc-ctma.org>. To learn more about the North Haven Sons and Daughters of Italy, please visit <https://northhaven-lodge2805.club>.

Photo caption: Lodge members preparing dinner at Ronald McDonald House CT are (l-r) Georgianna Hull, Charlene Logan, Denise Krause, Donna Casciello, Diane Barone and Regina Najarian.

Boston's Quincy Market and North End Bus Trip Saturday, April 11, 2026

\$85.00

call SueAnn at 203-710-4186

NORTH BRANFORD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT

COSTUME JEWELRY DRIVE

VINTAGE~GOLD~SILVER~
DIAMONDS~COSTUME

All Donated Items are Greatly Appreciated!



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our Facebook Page

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TO DONATE
SEND US A MESSAGE



ALL THE KING'S HORSES EQUINE RESCUE

501c3 non-profit Connecticut Horse Rescue

Please join us for a magical afternoon to help rescue horses find their ...



Sunday, March 15, 2026

11:30a-2:30p

Connecticut Carousel Museum

95 Riverside Ave, Bristol CT

\$60 Adult/\$30 Child Ticket price includes:

- ★ A Delicious Brunch (Served at 12:30)
- ★ Silent Auction & Raffles
- ★ Admission to explore the Carousel Museum
- ★ Learn about the Rescue ~ Our Horses and Our Mission

For More Information & to Purchase Tickets
See our Facebook Page or use link below



CLASSIFIED AD RATES

Personal, For Sale, Help Wanted, Tag Sale, and all non-business classified
1 issue \$9.00 2 issues \$12.00 3 issues \$15.00
20 words or less, not including phone #. \$.05 per word, per run,
after 20 words

Lost and Found FREE

Business Classified Ads & Real Estate
3 issues \$35.00, 6 issues \$60.00, 12 issues \$100.00
\$.10 per word, per run, after 20 words

Payment MUST accompany all ads. The advertiser must notify this newspaper of any errors.

Send ad along with your check to:

Totoket Times P.O. Box 313 Northford, CT 06472

For more information call 203-410-4254

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TJC Electrical Services - No Job too small or big. Service upgrade & Generator Specials. Call Tom Cassella at 203-619-2823. Licensed & Insured.

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John DiMaggio Plumbing - Residential/Commercial repairs/remodeling. Big or small. Water Heater Specials! Licensed & Insured. Call 203 - 627 - 6826. References available.

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Home Improvements - Ceiling & wall repairs. Water damage repairs. Drywall - Doors - Trim - Windows - Winter Rates. Free Estimates. Insured. Call Bill at 203-901-2136.

Deck & Porch Work - Decks - Porches - Railings - Stairs - Columns - Concrete Piers - New or repairs. Wood or composite decking. Winter rates. Insured. Call Bill at 203-901-2136..

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WINTER SAVINGS - Best prices and availability are now. Get a freshly painted room or two. Sole proprietor so NO worries about a house full of strangers. Small jobs our specialty. Celebrating 40 years. BBB A+ rated. **Trimworks Painting Lic. #0619599.** Call 203-484-9181.

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Large Oak Hutch. Glass front. \$100.
Old Magazines 1950 UP-1960.
National Geo's. 1935 Free. Call 203-484-0761

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- Cookies/Snacks
- Music/Flowers
- 35 New Paintings

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279 Branford Rd., North Branford

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"Beautiful and peaceful space, staff was very kind and sympathetic... Their kindness will not be forgotten."

Scan below to visit our website!!

BRANFORD COMPASSION CLUB AND THE GREATER NEW HAVEN CAT PROJECT

INVITE YOU TO JOIN US FOR OUR "PURR-ONI DINNER"

Wednesday, March 25, 2026

Christ & The Epiphany Church
39 Park Place, East Haven

Doors open at 5:30pm
Dinner served at 6:30pm

CATERED BY WHAT'S COOKIN'

MENU : PASTA MARINARA, PASTA PRIMAVERA, MEATBALLS, SALAD, BREAD, SODA, COFFEE & DESSERT

TICKETS \$30/PERSON (TABLE ARRANGEMENTS FOR GROUPS OF 4+)

VISIT GNHCP.ORG/DINNER TO PURCHASE THROUGH MARCH 22, 2026

(ADVANCED TICKET PURCHASE REQUIRED)

RAFFLE BASKETS & DOOR PRIZES!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT: CHRISKAT32@AOL.COM