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SHELTON *Life*

COMMUNITY & BUSINESS NEWS

WINTER 2025
VOLUME 31, ISSUE 1



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SHELTON COMMUNITY & BUSINESS NEWS

Greetings From the Mayor

Welcome from the Editor



Hello Shelton Residents,
Brrr! It's been a chilly start to 2025 here in Shelton, and I can't help but wonder if we'll ever see snow like we used to.

Remember those days when we'd build igloos and tunnels through snowbanks so high they needed roadside stakes? Those were the days!

But don't let the lack of snow fool you - our city is still bustling with warmth and activity. One of my favorite ways to beat the cold is by embarking on a culinary adventure through Shelton's diverse restaurant scene. From cozy cafes to upscale eateries, we've got it all. Who needs snow when you've got comfort food, right? For those who enjoy braving the elements, Shelton's numerous hiking trails offer the perfect opportunity to get your blood pumping and lungs full of crisp winter air.

As Chairman of the Economic Development Commission and a local business owner, I'm constantly amazed

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Dear Residents and Business Owners of Shelton,

Our community stands on a rich historical foundation, one that we continue to build upon with every project and initiative that enhances our city's charm and livability.

In this issue, we take a look back at the past of our beloved city, reflecting on the journey that has

shaped the vibrant community we know today. We also bring you an exciting update on the Canal Lock Park. This project will not only aim to preserve our natural and historical sites but also provide enhanced recreational opportunities for everyone in Shelton.

I'm also pleased to introduce you to some of the newest additions to our local business landscape—Relish Market & Deli and Mavi Café. These establishments are more than just places to shop and dine; they are a testament to the entrepreneurial spirit that thrives in our community. I encourage each of you to visit and support these local businesses, as well as all our town's enterprises.

I want to express my deepest gratitude for your continued support and active participation in our community affairs. Your engagement is vital to our success and inspires us to work harder to meet your expectations.

Thank you for your continued support and involvement in our community's growth and success.

Warm regards,

Mark A. Lauretti
Mayor, City of Shelton



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In Memory

Fred Musante, Sr., (1922-2009)

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DID YOU KNOW?

SIDEWALKS AND SNOW

It's the responsibility of the homeowner or occupant whose land abuts any paved sidewalk within the city to keep the sidewalk clear from snow, ice or sleet. Snow should be removed within (12) hours after it has fallen.

LEAVES/GRASS IN STREET

Not to blow leaves or grass clippings into the road as they become a hazard to bicyclists, motorcyclists, pedestrians, especially when leaves and grass become wet. Cars may also veer to avoid large piles.

STREET LIGHTS

When a city street light goes out, report the outage to United Illuminating (UI) by calling UI at 800-7-CALL-UI (800.722.5584). They also have on their website uinet.com a Street Light Repair Form if you prefer to report online.

WATER RUNOFF

Homeowners or occupants cannot run drain pipes toward the street causing potential freezing or other hazardous conditions for vehicles, pedestrians, or adjacent homeowners.

SANITARY SEWER – WIPES AND GREASE

Wipes and grease are the main reasons for sewer backups within the city, whether in private lines or city lines.

Most wipes/items that are listed as "flushable" are not. All wipes should be disposed in the trash to help keep sewer lines clear. This includes baby wipes, cleaning wipes, feminine hygiene products, diapers, paper towels, tissues, and trash of any kind.

Pouring grease down the drain causes problems with private plumbing as well as city sewer lines, pumping stations and the treatment plant. Mixing soap and hot water does NOT keep it from hardening in drain pipes. Instead use empty coffee cans or other methods to collect grease for proper disposal in trash. ♦

A Shelton Landmark – Gone!

On a crisp Saturday, November 16, 2024, tragedy struck as a fire ravaged the Highland Golf Course Clubhouse located at 261 Wooster Street in Shelton, Connecticut. Miraculously, there was no loss of life, a testament to the rapid response and heroism of Shelton's dedicated "volunteer" fire department and assistance from neighboring fire crews.

Despite this, only the chimney remains standing—a solemn marker of the tremendous loss felt by the community.

Founded at the dawn of the 20th century, in a year when the United States was composed of 45 states and President William McKinley led the



nation, the Highland Golf Club became a cornerstone of local tradition. Its original membership of 56 passionate golfers laid the foundation for a club that would endure over a century. By 1902, the club expanded its course across Perry Hill Road, setting the stage for its storied future.

The clubhouse, which was destroyed in the recent fire, was originally constructed on land purchased in

1929, after Frank H. Gates, a revered figure in the club's history, redesigned the course. Gates' vision was not merely functional but also a picturesque setting that framed the natural beauty of one of Shelton's highest points. His layout provided an enjoyable and challenging game for golfers of all levels.

Over the years, Highland Golf Club did not just survive; it thrived, adapting and evolving with the times while maintaining its charm and challenging play. It celebrated its 124th year in operation in 2024, just as it was planning significant improvements. This included tree removal, the addition of new tee boxes, and an expansion of the Pro Shop facilities—investments that signified a commitment to its future.

Highland Golf Club was more than just a place to play golf; it was a venerable institution where friendships were forged and the community came together. The name "Highland" itself, derived from its elevated location, symbolized both a physical and a metaphorical high point in Shelton.

In the wake of this disaster, the resilience of Highland Golf Club will undoubtedly be tested. However, the spirit of its members and the community's resolve suggest that this is not the end but rather a chapter in its rich history.

The editors of Shelton Life, in recognizing the significance of Highland Golf Club to the community, believe that reflecting on its past is crucial as we look forward to its rebirth. As this historic club rises from the ashes, it will continue to offer a sanctuary for golf enthusiasts and a gathering place for friends, standing as a testament to the enduring spirit of Shelton.

**Excerpts reprinted from the Tercentenary Pictorial and history of the LNV ♦*

LOCAL BUSINESSES

Relish Market & Deli

Bringing Quality and Convenience to Downtown Shelton



Kristin Marchetti

community to downtown Shelton with her newest venture, Relish Market.

For more than two decades, she has worked in restaurants and behind bars from Newport to Key West, eventually landing on the west coast of Puerto Rico where she ran a food trailer. It wasn't long before her daily soup offerings quickly became a local fixture. Whether it's fine dining or serving drinks to spring breakers, Marchetti has done it all.

Through these experiences she cultivated a skill that borders on a superpower. "I've developed the ability to read people and know what they are looking for before they can even say it," she explains, a skill that has already come in handy. Since opening in early November, Marchetti has been prioritizing customer feedback when stocking the shelves, taking into account seasonality, to provide Relish's customers with exactly what they need.

Marchetti discovered the storefront at the end of the Derby-Shelton bridge while still living in Puerto Rico. On a trip home to visit family, she realized the location perfectly fit a long-held vision of hers. "I wanted to create a store with items that I enjoy shopping for. A selection that is approachable, but also artisanal. Something that is unique." The vision certainly has come true, Marchetti does not compromise on the quality of her locally sourced produce, nor on that of any other items on sale at Relish. At the same time the store avoids any air of high-brow exclusivity that might dismay some from trying unfamiliar foods, or from exploring new varieties of the familiar. Two daily soups, one vegan, one restriction free, reflect this welcoming mission.

Of course, Marchetti knows the value of a beloved

Kristin Marchetti knows food, crediting her Italian heritage for introducing her to the power of a good meal. "Food was at the center of every occasion," she recalls of her upbringing in and around her grandmother's kitchen, "it brings people together." Now, Marchetti is bringing this sense of

corner store, especially in an area like downtown Shelton, with its growing number of condos and apartments. Large grocery stores may be nearby, but who hasn't had the need to skip traffic altogether and just run down to grab some cheese, a carton of milk, and



quality roll without compromising flavor and quality, or paying an arm-and-a-leg? Relish has everything for a quick bite but is always ready to wake that urge to try something new. It is hard to browse the shelves and menus of Relish and not feel that. From specialty olive oils from Italy, small-batch artisanal salsa, and farm-made soda, to German made potato chips, and French breakfast biscuits: the food-lover will find something – right next to a familiar treat perhaps once encountered on an international trip, or all the way back in grandma's kitchen.

One might compare Relish's balancing act to the preparation of a good meal, something that may look simple if done correctly, but is a real art of its own. "The ratio of the ingredients is just as important as the ingredients themselves," Marchetti explains about the composition of the deli sandwiches freshly prepared to order. An apt philosophy when it comes to sandwiches, but as so many insights about food, it can be applied to life itself – and certainly to this new addition to Shelton's downtown.

Relish Market & Deli is at 464 Howe Ave and has hours of Monday, Wednesday through Saturday 8:00 AM until 8:00 PM and Sunday from 10:00 AM until 6:00 PM. Phone: (203) 513-2494. ♦

Mavi Café A Dream Come True



Owners Ana & Rene Figueroa



A full decade before Ana and Rene Figueroa took over Mavi Café, the small place in Huntington was already their dream location. "If I owned a place like this, imagine what I could do with it," Rene quotes his wife, recalling the moment in 2012 when she first brought up the idea of ownership. Back then she was still working long hours as a surgical technician, and the idea of owning a business was a distant dream. But ten years down the road a friend of the Shelton family mentioned that Auntie's Café up in Huntington was up for sale and Rene immediately remembered his wife's vision all that time ago.

Having recently retired as a correctional officer, he shared the news with his wife and within weeks, the dream became a reality. "The whole family always loved to bake and entertain," Rene shares and they expanded the menu with new breakfast options, baked goods, and beverages. No less than eighteen flavors of muffins are offered at Mavi Café – that is the regular sized ones, rather than the additional varieties of mini-muffins – and "they are BIG and fresh!" as a happy customer shares on social media. They are also deliciously tasty, with the classic Blueberry Muffin being the number one seller. This kind of variety brings constant changes to the menu, with seasonal adjustments to the recipes for both baked goods, as well as the cold beverages, teas, and coffees.

"Sometimes our customers still ask for the Hawaii Muffin, but they are out of season," Ana admits when explaining how they determine when it is time to switch an item from the menu. Luckily there will be enough alternative options available. The baker herself is partial to the Pumpkin Pecan Muffin, though even that might be replaced once winter comes knocking at the door.

Continuing from the previous owners, Mavi Café's other big sellers are its many breakfast sandwiches, though here too the Figueras expanded the selection, adding items such as Portuguese Natas (custard tarts) to the menu. "People start coming in at 6:30 am and it doesn't stop until 10," says Rene, "We warn them that you might have to wait ten, fifteen minutes, but they're willing to do that!" That's little wonder, given the growing reputation, with many regulars coming in for their breakfast daily.

Beginning this summer, Mavi Café is now also offering catering services and working with local schools, businesses, and corporate offices. Their dream keeps the Figueras busy, even though, Rene says, "it doesn't seem like work to us!"

Mavi Café is located at 522 Shelton Avenue in Shelton and is open Monday through Saturday 5 AM – 3 PM, and Sundays 7 AM – 1 PM. Get a breakfast sandwich and make sure to take home a baked treat! ♦

LOCAL BUSINESSES

MOSS

A Hub of Inspiration for Plant Enthusiasts



Even on a gray winter morning, you feel an immediate boost to your mood when stepping into the fragrant and lush interior of the storefront of Moss on Howe Avenue. The bright and sunny greeting of the sisters and co-owners Kelly Mercieri and Melanie Rooney could lift anyone's spirit on its own; but they would be the first to credit the feeling to biophilia – the innate joy humans experience when surrounded by nature and life. Mercieri explains the term as a part of their design philosophy, “whether people walk by the ocean, or hike a trail, their mood will improve when surrounded by living things.” After already owning a floral business in Massachusetts for twenty years, she has rich experience in bringing that same sense to businesses, restaurants, and practices.

In September of 2024 the sisters opened the downtown location as a spot for customers to visit, gather ideas for inspiration, and consult with the two owners. Melanie, who had a previous career in marketing, moved to Shelton six years ago and her sister followed more recently to be closer to family and grandchildren. It did not take long for the two to agree

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Melanie Rooney (L) Kelly Mercieri (R)

The Stories Behind Shelton's Clean Sweep Patches

For fifteen years, Shelton has been awarding embroidered patches to people who roll up their sleeves and pick up litter from their neighborhood under the Clean Sweep Program. These patches are a big hit with Scouts as well as many adults.

Because the design changes every year, they have become collectibles. Receiving a patch is easy. Just pick up litter from any public place during Clean Sweep, which is the entire week of Earth Day (April 22), then report your clean-up and request a patch via the website DontTrashShelton.org.

Many of the patches had local inspiration. Here are some of the backstories:



The Split Rock Turkey (2015): This beloved hen spent most of her day in the center of one of Shelton's busiest intersections, holding up traffic as drivers took extra measures to avoid striking her. She persisted for a few months before wandering off during mating season.



The Shelton Bear (2016): This young male bear was marked with a fresh cut on its rump and was therefore easy to identify as it traveled back and forth from the Stratford border to downtown Shelton searching for food. The young bear went boldly from house to house searching for bird feeders and garbage and was Shelton's first (but not last!) experience with a bear that was more than just quietly passing through. Many startled residents called 911, and a Facebook page was even set up for "the Shelton Bear." Eventually the bear wandered into downtown one afternoon where it was captured by state DEEP staff and transported to Newtown. As the state's bear



population continues to rise, bear sightings in Shelton have become much more common.

Official City Flower (2017): In 2016, city leaders designated Orange Coneflower (*Rudbeckia fulgida* 'Goldsturm') as Shelton's official city flower. The move was championed by the Olde Ripton Garden Club, who encouraged residents to plant this native cultivar because of its attraction to pollinators and birds.



The Hope Lake Dam and Gatehouse (2018): This iconic scene has become symbolic of the Shelton Lakes Greenway, a park that encompasses three reservoirs, eleven miles of trails, and a dog park.

Red Eft (2019): This tiny but vivid orange newt is the terrestrial phase of the Eastern Spotted Newt, an amphibian found at Shelton Lakes on rainy day walks. It also has a more drab aquatic phase that may be seen swimming in small pools along the trails.



The Boehm Pond Beaver (2021): This stamp commemorates the beaver family that made Boehm Pond their home before the unauthorized destruction of their dam. The beaver were a highlight for hikers, and the enlarged pond attracted wildlife such as otters and wood ducks.



Red Trillium of Birchbank Mountain (2023): The forest floor at Birchbank Mountain is briefly blanketed with spring wildflowers such as Dutchman's Breeches, Red Trillium, Bloodroot, and Blue Cohosh. This showy display of

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Girl Scout cleaning up the Far Mill River spring ephemerals is unsurpassed in the region. It's made possible by the unusual growing conditions at the base of the riverbluff.

A few other patches were inspired by personal experiences of the designer, including the Red Fox patch (2022) after a family of fox took over the back

yard. The Green Frog patch (2020) depicted a pet frog upon its release after it was raised from a tadpole over the winter.

The Clean Sweep patches are a reminder of local efforts to keep our neighborhoods clean, including our parks, waterways, roadsides, and school grounds. Each patch represents a small, yet significant, contribution to improving the environment and fostering community pride. By celebrating local wildlife and landmarks, they also deepen the connection between residents and their city.

One of my favorite pictures is from 2015 and it's been on our website that long. Here's the link: <http://donttrashshelton.org/2015%20Recognitions.html> It's the first picture. Those kids might all be adults by now. Click the photo a couple times to enlarge before downloading.

For more information about Shelton Clean Sweep, visit DontTrashShelton.org. ♦

Moss, continued from pg. 6

that they should, "merge and come together for this," as they describe the beginning of this venture. "We were surprised by the many plant enthusiasts," they add when asked about the community, seeing that many customers come in to brighten their home with plants and asking for expert advice.

The importance of being surrounded by nature for people's mental health is something recognized too by businesses and care providers. One of their more recent clients is a medspa that overhauled its interior design concepts to benefit its clients with the relaxing and calming influence of being surrounded by plants which do much more to a person's well-being than detoxify the air of stuffy interiors. Restaurants, medical doctors, and corporate offices have also picked up on these benefits and consult with Moss to bring a bit of green into the workspace as well as their public facing facilities.

Naturally, Moss also offers floral arrangements, center pieces, and other decorative pieces for weddings and events. Their flower gifts or carefully catered tiny succulent planters will bring a smile on anyone's face presented with them. The aesthetic at Moss is emphasizing the unique qualities of each one of their pieces with many of their pots and containers sourced from antique markets. From weathered terracotta, and driftwood containers, to teapots, and wine glasses, the sisters elevate the everyday item with their art.

Christmas Tree decorations are in their portfolio as



well, and here too, they emphasize the organic aspect of their business. "Don't expect baubles and diamonds," Mercieri warns as she explains their philosophy. The sisters source their plants and supplies primarily from local farms, making their rounds of greenhouses and sellers in the region at least once a week. The seasonality of plant life in New England might be considered a challenge, but the two florists clearly take it as an opportunity. Throughout the year they dry flowers throughout their shop. Preserved in this way, even in the dreary winter, they will bring color and texture to the most wonderful bouquets and arrangements.

To see more of their work visit their homepage mossgardendesign.com, follow their Instagram at [moss.garden.design](https://www.instagram.com/moss.garden.design), find them on Facebook at [facebook.com/mossgardendesigns](https://www.facebook.com/mossgardendesigns), or step into their shop at Moss Garden Design at 515 Howe Avenue in Shelton during their business hours (Tuesday – Friday: 10 AM – 6 PM, Saturday: 10 AM – 3 PM). ♦

HVA –Your River Partner

By Lynn Werner, HVA executive director, and Jane Bakker, HVA special projects manager



About HVA

Our mission: We are the voice of the Housatonic River, its tributaries and watershed lands in Connecticut, Massachusetts and New York. We work and act to protect, restore and advocate for its natural beauty and climate resilience through collaboration, education and engagement.

What do we do?

With a professional team of conservationists, interns, and volunteers, and a strong network of community and conservation partners, we restore and protect vital watershed lands and waters. Together we have a long track record—83 years and counting! —of successfully conserving and defending this river valley.

With HVA members, community leaders, government agencies and conservation partners:

- 30,000 acres of land within the Housatonic River Valley were protected including 1,500 acres to permanently protect the Appalachian Trail between Cornwall, Sharon and Kent, and the rest conserved in dozens of communities across the watershed through easements and state/federal conservation designations.
- More than 200 miles of rivers and streams are improved or better protected through community efforts to designate river greenways, restore riparian buffers, remove dams, replace flow-pinching and flood causing culverts, find and stop pollution, and improve management through watershed plans and state/federal designations. The city of Shelton has

consistently led riverfront conservation, recreation and revitalization in the region, and is a leader for other communities along the Housatonic and Naugatuck Rivers.

- Thousands of people and school children across the region know more about river



health, and how to steward our lands and waters. Shelton and Derby were among the first River Valley towns to launch the RiverSmart Campaign, helping residents take

actions on their own property to safeguard clean water and river health.

- At the same time, HVA's River Stewards of Tomorrow Fund was established in honor of



Philip Crane Jones, a river guide lost too soon. The River Stewards Fund provides funds to help hire and train aspiring environmental

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COMMUNITY NEWS

leaders every summer. These young men and women are smart, passionate, and inspire hope for the future.

What's changing?

As our climate shifts, our actions in the next decade will profoundly affect the long-term environmental health of this place we cherish. Today we are working in two vital ways to establish a healthy and climate-ready watershed by 2040:

Follow the Forest: Conserving a 50,000-acre woodland and wildlife climate corridor from southwestern Connecticut through New York and the Berkshires to Canada, for wildlife habitat, clean water, and carbon and temperature moderation.



Clean, Cold and Connected:

Restoring and protecting 500 miles of rivers and streams along with the groundwater that recharges these waterways and our local drinking water.

Education and Partnership: Engaging people and partners from our watershed's diverse communities in environmental solutions.

We also fight for common sense policies that help our environment; encourage and mentor young environmental leaders; and help families paddle, hike, explore and protect the woods, waters and wildlife in this beautiful place we call home.

Results since 2020

- Today, with 50 **Follow the Forest** partners working across the watershed and south into the Hudson Valley and north into Vermont,



we're prioritizing and securing core forest and linkage parcels for conservation. Together we have conserved or secured an additional 10,000 woodland and linkage acres, more than 20 percent of our 50,000-acre goal.

- The HVA Litchfield Hills Greenprint Partners Pledge Fund, which helps our conservation partners accomplish significant, strategic land protection and advance **Follow the Forest**, has raised \$1.25M from private donors and leveraged over \$12M to protect 3,000 plus acres.
- More Naugatuck and Housatonic Valley



towns can access new conservation funds via our successful expansion of the Highlands Conservation Act; eight communities are moving ahead with nine

more gearing up, all helping to protect our local part of the **Follow the Forest** climate corridor.

- With 75 **Clean, Cold and Connected** partners, more than 800 stream culverts are



assessed and prioritized today across the Berkshires, northwest Connecticut, and the lower Naugatuck Valley; Fish need to swim upstream to spawn; we're making that possible and restoring dwindling diadromous fish populations in streams across the region

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HVA, continued from pg. 10

with our partners. A network of HVA **Clean, Cold and Connected** partners such as the Pootatuck Watershed Association, Trout Unlimited, Nature Conservancy, Farmington



River Watershed Association, Connecticut River Conservancy, Save the Sound, and town leaders in the greater Danbury lower Valley regions are uniting to restore rivers.

- Watershed-restoration plans are complete for the Still River (seven-town greater Danbury area); the bi-state Ten Mile River (eight towns in NY and northwest CT); and Pootatuck River (Newtown, CT); and underway in the Green River and Southwest Branch basins (Berkshires).
- Diadromous fish and other river critters in the Naugatuck River Valley are getting a helping hand from Long Island Sound back to



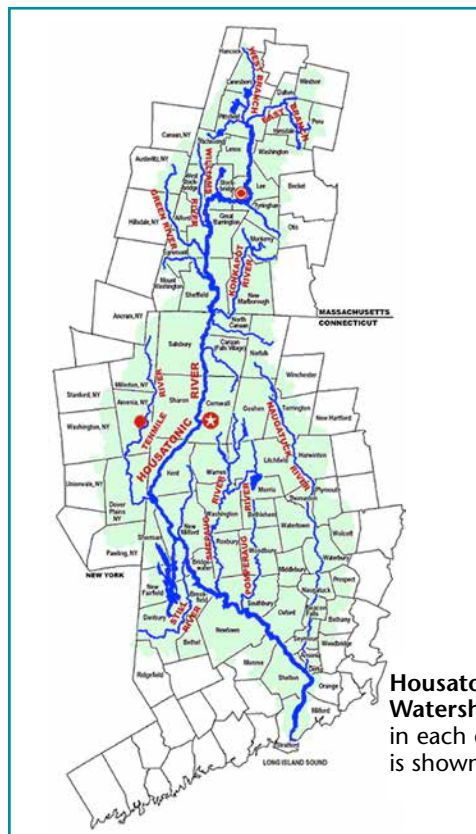
cool freshwater habitats in Prospect, Beacon Falls, Bethany, Thomaston and Watertown where work is on-going to replace stream-pinching culverts and other barriers; HVA is looking at new opportunities in Shelton, Derby, Ansonia and Stratford, as well.

- The Pootatuck River and tributaries like the Deep River are “closer to cleaner” with the Pootatuck Watershed Action Plan almost done with the help of partners like the Pootatuck Watershed Association, Trout

Unlimited, Newtown neighbors and town leaders.

- River health is improving in Bethel, New Milford and Newtown thanks to HVA's Still River Connections high school students busy planting rain gardens and buffers.

A future of clean, cool rivers and drinking water, thriving woodlands and wildlife, and livable communities for our children and grandchildren—together we can make this happen. It's possible, with the help of caring friends and partners across the tri-state Housatonic Watershed. **Learn more at www.hvatoday.org ♦**



Housatonic River Watershed: HVA offices in each of the three states is shown by a red circle.

The editors of *Shelton Life* extend our heartfelt condolences on the passing of Jane Bakker, Special Projects Manager at the Housatonic Valley Association, in January 2025.

For years, Jane contributed insightful and well-researched articles to our city's newsletter on behalf of the Housatonic Valley Association. Her dedication, professionalism, and gracious style left a lasting impact on our publication and our community.

We are deeply grateful for her contributions and will miss her presence in our pages. Our thoughts are with her family, friends, and colleagues during this difficult time.

Revitalizing Connections: The Completion of the Derby-Shelton Bridge Enhancements

On November 12, 2024, the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments celebrated the completion of a significant enhancement project on the historic Derby-Shelton Bridge. This project not only revitalizes a key link between the neighboring communities of Derby and Shelton but also preserves its historic character while fostering regional growth.

Initiated in April 2021, the Derby-Shelton Bridge Pedestrian and Bicyclist Enhancements Project was implemented at a total cost of \$12 million, with \$8.3 million funded by federal sources and \$3.7 million by the state. The renovation aimed to transform the over-century-old bridge into a more accessible and appealing public space. Enhanced features include improved lighting, widened sidewalks, a new cycle track, and an additional travel lane.

The bridge's redesign was skillfully handled by AECOM, under contract with the Valley Council of Governments, with construction executed by Mohawk Northeast, Inc. These enhancements are designed not only to meet current safety and accessibility standards but also to encourage more pedestrian and bicycle traffic across the bridge.

Jack Walsh, Co-Chair of the Naugatuck River Greenway Steering Committee, provided attendees with insights into the bridge's colorful history. Dating back to 1831, the original bridge was built and then rebuilt due to natural disasters and community needs until the current structure was erected in 1918 by the CT State Highway Department. The bridge's transformation over the years underscores its importance in local development and transportation history.

Walsh concluded by highlighting the crucial role played by the Derby-Shelton Rotary Club in financing an initial study that developed the concepts for refurbishing and enhancing the historic bridge. This preliminary study facilitated the acquisition of funds from the CT Office of Policy and Management, which were used to design the bridge's comprehensive rehabilitation. The new design included the addition of bike paths, walking paths, and updated lighting and railings. Subsequently, with support from the



local delegation and the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments, federal and state grants were successfully obtained to finance these improvements.

The milestone event was marked by the presence of notable figures including Governor Ned Lamont, CT Department of Transportation Commissioner Garrett Eucalitto, and Mayors Mark Lauretti of Shelton and Joseph DiMartino of Derby. The event also recognized the contributions of State Senators, Representatives, and former Mayor Tony Staffieri of Derby, highlighting a collaborative effort across multiple government levels.

This project not only improves the daily commute of many residents but also enhances the recreational potential of the area. By facilitating easier access to both towns, it supports local businesses and encourages a healthier, more active lifestyle among residents.

The successful completion of the Derby-Shelton Bridge project exemplifies effective community-focused infrastructure development. It also sets a precedent for future projects that aim to balance historical preservation with modern needs. As the bridge begins a new chapter, it continues to stand as a testament to the enduring spirit of community and progress in the Naugatuck Valley region. ♦

The Valley Transit District: VTD2GO

The Valley Transit District has provided public transit in the valley for over 40 years. A new ridesharing opportunity is now being offered to Ansonia, Derby and Shelton called VTD2GO.

Residents of the valley towns of Ansonia, Derby, and Shelton can now enjoy a new, convenient way to travel within their communities. VTD2GO, launched by Valley Transit District (VTD), offers an innovative ridesharing service that combines the affordability of public transit with the convenience of a private ride.

How VTD2GO Works: VTD2GO is designed to be easy, affordable, and reliable. Here's a step-by-step guide on how the service operates:

1. Booking a Ride:

- Users can book a ride using the VTD2GO app by entering their pickup and drop-off locations.
- If traveling with additional passengers, users can indicate so during the booking.
- Upon booking, the app provides an estimated arrival time for the vehicle. This time is updated in real-time as the vehicle approaches.

2. Boarding and Payment:

- Prompt boarding is encouraged once the driver arrives.
- Payment can be made through the app with a registered card, or directly to the driver if preferred.

3. During the Ride:

- The ridesharing service may include other passengers who are traveling in the same direction.
- Additional stops may be made to pick up or drop off other riders.
- Passengers can track their ride and share their trip status in real-time using the app.

Sharing Your Trip: VTD2GO utilizes a sophisticated algorithm to match riders headed in the same direction, ensuring that each ride is both efficient and timely. This smart matching system provides

the luxury of a private ride while maintaining the eco-friendliness and community orientation of public transit.

Affordability: One of the most appealing aspects of VTD2GO is its cost-effectiveness. Each ride is priced at only \$2.00, making it a budget-friendly option for daily commuters and casual travelers alike.

Reliability: With over 40 years of experience in providing public transit, VTD ensures that VTD2GO maintains high standards of reliability. Riders can track their ride in real-time, providing peace of mind and ensuring they are kept informed every step of the way.

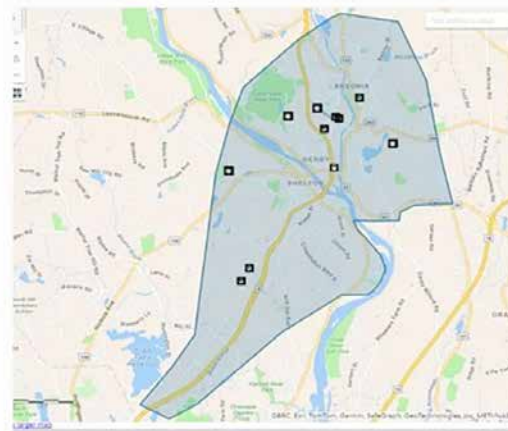
Conclusion: VTD2GO represents a significant step forward in local transportation for Ansonia, Derby, and Shelton. By bridging the gap between private and public transit options, VTD2GO offers a modern solution that supports the mobility needs of its community members. Whether you're commuting to work, running errands, or meeting friends, VTD2GO provides a practical, efficient, and economical way to navigate around town.

Service Area Map in Ansonia, Derby, and Shelton

You can travel anywhere inside the service zone.

Reliable Service from the Valley Transit District

This service is operated by Valley Transit District (VTD). The VTD has provided safe and reliable public transit in the Valley for over 40 years.



Contact Us

- www.valleytransit.org/vtd2go-micro-transit
- Howarewedoing@valleytransit.org
- 41 Main Street, Derby, CT

COMMUNITY NEWS

As shown in the map on the previous page, Shelton is well represented with the VTD2GO travel zone extending 5 miles along Rt 110 (Howe Avenue and River Road) from Indian Well State Park to the intersection of Route 110 and Constitution Boulevard. The area further extends along Bridgeport Avenue, nearly to the Trumbull Town Line.

For more information or to download the app, residents are encouraged to visit the Valley Transit District's website or search for VTD2GO in the app store. Welcome to a new era of local travel! Learn more at valleytransit.org/vtd2go-micro-transit. ♦

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VTD2GO is a new on-demand transportation service to get around Ansonia, Derby, and Shelton, CT



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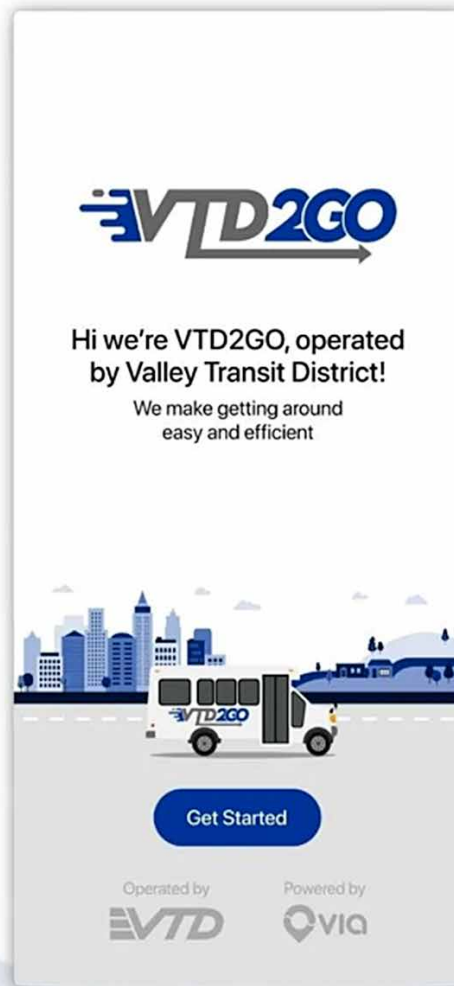
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Benchmark Senior Living Celebrates 10-year Anniversary



Attending plays at Center Stage when grandkids are in the productions!

Moving from home to an Assisted Living community can be challenging, but the experienced team at Benchmark Senior Living at Split Rock does their best to make residents and their families feel at home. Residents are assigned an 'angel' staff member to show them the ropes and introduce them to new friends.

The Split Rock Team connects with each resident to find out their talents, passions, and interests and guides them towards programs and trips of interest. This year, Director of Resident Lifestyle and lifelong Shelton resident, Theresa Waldron created a program called, "Better Together." Each resident or their family members are invited to create a new program based on their knowledge, hobby, or favorite destination. One resident's son presented a lovely program about Backyard Birds. Other residents are creating show & tell presentations entitled, "Stories of Our Stuff!" another resident is leading a bible study, "The Women Surrounding the Birth of Jesus." A retired EMT designed a bus tour, Hidden Huntington Gems. For those who avoid the spotlight, Benchmark at Split Rock offers opportunities to quietly volunteer in charita-

ble clubs and committees.

Many residents are delighted to discover the rich lifestyle Shelton has to offer when they move to Shelton to be closer to family. Whether it's heading to the Huntington Green for a Music under the Stars Concert, Apple Picking at Beardsley Cider Mill, borrowing a book from Plumb Memorial Library, attending Shakespeare in the Park, or dining at Spotted Horse, residents enjoy staying local!

At Benchmark Senior Living's 10-year anniversary party, Shelton resident, Marion Drobish said, "It's heavenly for people who need help. I'm in love with the staff. My husband & I are thankful for the new chapter of life we've started here." And Marion knows about chapters. Not

continued next page



Air Force recruiter, Liz Toth, came to speak to resident Veterans and invite them to visit the base in Granby.

COMMUNITY NEWS

only is Marion a retired teacher and a member of our Book Club, but her brother-in-law, Gary Scarpa recently presented excerpts from his book, "What Are the Chances?" to the Split Rock community!

Benchmark Senior Living at Split Rock offers a Mind and Memory Care Neighborhood as well as a Traditional, independent neighborhood. Please reach out to Mary DeGennaro for more information 203.929.1111. mdegennaro@benchmarkquality.com. ♦



Boxing banter and ballet, a class to improve balance and socialization.



The late Father Nello always had a line for confessions.



Dining Service Director, Ashley Garnett, makes resident recipes for her monthly chef demos!



You'd be surprised who the pool sharks are!



Having a competitive game with friends in the library!



“The EDC Chairman Steps Out to Visit”

By Bing J. Carbone

A Lifetime of Service: A Conversation with Bob Lally

Bing Remembers Bob:

There are plenty of things I’ve forgotten over the years, but some moments stick with you forever. One of those moments happened around 1993, just a year after I had moved to Shelton.

Now, let me preface this by saying I am not a handy guy—I can’t hammer a nail straight to save my life—but I was working on a home project when I realized I was missing a very specific screw that I needed to finish the job.

There was no Amazon back then, and I’m pretty sure Home Depot hadn’t yet set up shop in Derby. But what we did have was a little place across from the Brownson Country Club golf course called Huntington Hardware.

I walked in, feeling a little sheepish, because really—who walks into a hardware store asking to buy one single screw? I imagined the conversation ending with me being laughed out of the store. But instead, a gentleman approached me with a warm smile and asked how he could help.

Trying to save face, I held up the screw and casually asked, “Would you happen to have a box of these?” (There was no way I was admitting I needed just one.)

He took a look at it, furrowed his brow, and said, “Let me check.”

A few minutes later, he came back and shook his head. It was a specialty screw—not something he had in stock or even could order. But instead of sending me on my way, he said, “Wait here.” Then he disappeared into the back of the store.



Robert “Bob” Lally

Fifteen minutes later, he returned—holding my screw, “All set,” he said. “I modified this one on a small machine I have in the back so it’ll work for you.” I was floored. Who does that?! I told him I’d pay for an entire box. He just smiled and said, “Thirty-five cents.”

That moment defined customer service for me. It’s a story I’ve told countless times, even to my own sales employees at Modern Plastics. And as it turns out, the man who went above and beyond for me that day wasn’t just any employee—he was the owner of Huntington Hardware, Bob Lally.

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COMMUNITY NEWS



Front Row: Marlene and Morgan
Back Row: Bob, Kathy and Greg

The Man Behind the Store

I had the pleasure of sitting down with Bob to talk about his life, his business, and his experiences in Shelton.

Bob has been a Shelton resident for nearly 60 years, which by my math means he arrived around 1965. Like many of the prominent people I've interviewed, he has his roots in Bridgeport, Connecticut.

He also served in the U.S. Navy, traveling the world, and in his characteristic humility, he responds to people thanking him for his service by saying, "Thank you for letting me serve you."

Bob married his wife, Marlene, in 1961 while working for a Westport-based company, where he climbed the ranks to become Vice President over a 17-year career.

He and Marlene raised two children, Greg and Kathy, and later, Bob took on a new challenge—working for the company that invented baggage x-ray screening systems for airports.

But all that traveling for work took a toll. He was missing out on time with his wife and kids. That's when Marlene told him about a hardware store for sale in Huntington, and by the early 1980s, Bob made a life-changing decision: he left the corporate world to become a small business owner.

The Life of a Small Business Owner

Running a hardware store is no small task, and for decades, Huntington Hardware was open seven days a week. When I asked how he managed to balance work, family, and maybe sneak in a few hours of sleep, he simply replied, "I had to."

His family joined him in the business, including Marlene, who played a crucial role behind the scenes. He fondly recalls their dynamic: "She never interfered with my decisions, but she always helped me make them."

While Huntington Hardware thrived for many years, eventually, the rise of big-box retailers like Walmart and Home Depot made it difficult to compete. Bob was smart—he knew the perception was that these stores had better prices, even when they didn't. What set him apart was his relentless focus on customer service and high-quality products. He told me about a time he compared the drills he sold to the ones at the big stores—his would last, theirs wouldn't.

In the end, price perception won, and closing Huntington Hardware was, as he put it, "horrible and the worst time of my life."

Although Huntington Hardware closed, Huntington Rental stayed in business for an additional 10 years run by his daughter, Kathy.

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SHELTON COMMUNITY & BUSINESS NEWS

COMMUNITY NEWS



Bob and Kathy at Huntington Rental

Beyond the Hardware Store

Bob didn't just run a business—he also had a career in politics. His friend Marty Coughlin encouraged him to get involved, and he joined the Democratic Party, serving on the Board of Apportionment and Taxation and later as a two-term Alderman and as Chairman of the Long Range Planning Committee. He even ran for Mayor of Shelton at one point!

The project he's most proud of? Being involved with the construction of the new Shelton Intermediate School, a \$40 million project.

After that, he stepped away from public service and focused on giving back volunteering with the St. Vincent de Paul Society's food pantry. As with everything in his life, Bob saw community service as a duty, not a career move.

Bob added one of his proudest moments was in 2017. A hurricane devastated Houston, Texas. Bob took the initiative to coordinate a group of volunteers and remembers the response from the Shelton community was incredible. A large group of people turned out collecting everything from pet food to blankets and personal items. Both St. Joseph's school and Echo Hose Fire house were used to store items

as they were collected. The end result was filling up two 18-wheeler trucks. One of the things Bob stated he learned from this was that sometimes people want to help, and all you have to do is ask and they will respond.

Advice for the Next Generation

When I asked Bob what advice he had for young people, he immediately talked about taking risks—an essential trait for anyone aiming for success.

He became emotional when recalling the 40+ young

continued next page



COMMUNITY NEWS

people who worked at his store over the years, many of whom went into various careers such as doctors, CEOs, first responders, and business owners. Knowing he played a small role in their journeys, meant the world to him.

It was time for me to ask my seven questions as I do with all of the folks I have interviewed, so here they are;

Seven Fun Questions with Bob

1. What superpower would you like to have?

I never desired power—super or otherwise!

2. If stranded on an island, what two items would you bring?

My sanity and some matches!

3. If you could travel anywhere, where would you go?

Hilton Head or Italy (I've been five times and love Northern Italy and Sicily).

4. If you never had to work, what would you do?

WORK!

5. What was your greatest fear as a business owner?

Watching the big-box stores take over.

6. Any regrets?

When you come from nothing and succeed, what's left to regret?

7. White clam pizza or sausage and mushroom?

Sausage and mushroom!



1-on-One Nominations

The editors of Shelton Life are asking for nominations of Shelton residents who may like to be considered to be interviewed by Chairman Bing Carbone for his 1-on-One story. There are many unsung heroes, and we are certain they may live right here in Shelton. Please reach out to Aleta Miner at a.miner@sheltonedc.com.



Bob and EDC Chairman Bing Carbone

Final Thoughts

When I asked Bob how he'd like to be remembered he simply said: "The way I am."

I paused after he answered that and I thought, yes, I will remember Bob Lally "the way he is" and that single \$.35 screw!

Note: Bob graduated from Quinnipiac College in 1961 (now known as Quinnipiac University) and was a founding member of Alpha Phi Omega National Senior Fraternity. Bob is proud to be called a "Golden Bobcat" since he graduated over 50 years ago. Today, Bob is the proud grandfather of Morgan, Joey and Samantha and can be found working as a Deputy Registrar for the City of Shelton.

Cheers to you Bob! You have certainly left your mark on Shelton. ♦

Sunnyside Elementary School Achieves Blue Ribbon Status

The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors exceptional public and non-public elementary, middle, and high schools that demonstrate high academic performance or effectively address achievement gaps among diverse student populations. The program aims to highlight the finest educational institutions in the United States and disseminate exemplary practices from these schools nationwide.

Each year, the U.S. Department of Education collaborates with state education departments to identify and nominate exemplary schools for this prestigious award, based on student performance metrics and efforts to bridge achievement gaps. Through a comprehensive evaluation process, the



U.S. Department of Education recognizes outstanding schools annually, celebrating their accomplishments. This esteemed award acknowledges the dedication of students, educators, families, and communities in fostering safe and nurturing environments where students can excel.

plishment to propel our school forward. We are excited to showcase the excellence present within the Shelton Public Schools to the nation!" said Sunnyside Principal, Ms. Darla Ellis Lussier.

A celebration occurred at the school in late November where Superintendent Kenneth Saranich along with Board of Education Chairwomen, Mrs. Amy Romano, presented Sunnyside's student-body with the Blue Ribbon Award flag and plaque.

Saranich said, "Sunnyside School is a shining example of the great work happening throughout the Shelton school district, and this achievement should be a proud moment for the whole community."

Mayor Mark Lauretti was in attendance and com-



mended the Sunnyside Elementary School for nurturing an atmosphere that advances education through intense instruction and high expectations.

At the assembly Lussier shared that Sunnyside was also recently named as a 2023-2024 Connecticut School of Distinction. The school has been honored with this award for seven consecutive years, acknowledging both high performance and significant growth as assessed by the Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessment.

Ms. Jana Spiegel, TESOL teacher commented that

continued on next page

SCHOOL NEWS



Sunnyside is composed of individuals from a variety of cultural, ethnic, and economic backgrounds, and proudly upholds the enduring motto, "Sunnyside Strong, Our strength lies in our diversity." Our community serves as a genuine melting pot of cultures, fostering unity and support. We actively promote family engagement and students at Sunnyside partake in monthly cultural learning activities to deepen their understanding of the unique characteristics and customs of various cultures.

School Interventionist, Mrs. Heidi Ferrigno, states "Our school community is immensely proud of the academic achievements and social advancements our Tigers have made. The students are taught how to develop a growth mindset and persevere even when content is challenging to them."

The staff at Sunnyside is dedicated to delivering targeted tier 1 instruction for all students. In alignment with our curricular programs and district scheduling, we have established two instructional blocks that facilitate further differentiated instruction. The specialists work



closely with the teachers to analyze data and identify adult actions that will be used to advance the students academically," commented Mrs. Melissa Manning, Math Specialist at Sunnyside.

The Office of Teaching and Learning has provided our school with meaningful, relevant, and practical professional development. Our Superintendent's implementation of instructional rounds within the district, along with his "green light culture" approach, has propelled Sunnyside to attain high levels of student growth. "I am so proud of the staff and students for all they have achieved," Lussier said.

Mayor Lauretti, who shared with the packed gymnasium that he is an alumnus of Sunnyside, stated that "no matter the weather, the sun is always shining on Sunnyside Elementary School!" The Mayor expressed that this award is an acknowledgement of the good efforts, dedication and commitment of the school's staff, students, families and community partners to fostering lifelong learners. ♦



Flourishing Friendships Intergenerational Relationships Benefit All

Friendships come in all shapes, sizes and ages. This was observed when second graders at Long Hill School came together with residents of Wesley Heights, a senior living community, located across the street from Long Hill School. The idea began with Hailey Monroe, Resident Service Coordinator at Wesley Heights. Hailey, Andrea D'Aiuto, principal at Long Hill, Sarah Arcieri, school social worker and Laura Mulligan, reading consultant at the school collaborated and ideas were brought to life to form this intergenerational relationship. Research shows intergenerational relationships lead to improved social skills for students and older adults can experience health and social-emotional benefits. Mrs. Arcieri and Ms. Mulligan prepared the students for the visit by reading the book, *Verdi*, by Janell Cannon. The book describes a snake that does not want to age, but realizes just because your outer appearance changes you can still be young at heart. The students listened to the story

and shared their thoughts on aging. A week later the second graders had their first meeting with their new friends. Fourteen residents came from Wesley Heights and were introduced to the second graders in the cafeteria at Long Hill School. Some discussion questions were given to the groups to get the conversation started, but they weren't needed for very long. Former teacher and Wesley Heights resident, Connie Koskelowski, commented about the experience. "It was delightful. I used to teach 30 students at a time, so getting this one-on-one time was special." Lively conversations, smiling and laughing came easily for these unlikely matches of old and young. Wesley Heights resident, Barbara Jensen, summed this up best, "It was absolutely fantastic! It made me happy to laugh together." Both the second graders and Wesley Heights residents look forward to their next interaction. Strong relationships with age spans of fifty or more years will be blooming on Long Hill Avenue. ♦



Salon Kai – A Low-Tox, Sustainable Innovator in the World of Hair and Beauty

A crew of contractors is hard at work on this cold December morning, removing concrete and debris from some of the former industrial lots outside Shelton's Conti building.

Inside the building, the team of Salon Kai is also working hard on removing chemicals and detoxifying the world of haircare and beauty services. At the heart of one of their most popular services is the hair-detox, a one-hour-spa service that includes scalp exfoliation, detox, massage, and blow drying which leads to reduction in common issues such as dandruff and an overall improvement of hair-health. "The skin is our biggest organ, and everything we put on it will be absorbed," says Kaila Shaw Addis, founder and owner of the salon.

Just as there is an increasing awareness of the environmental problems brought about by heavy industrial pollution, there is also an increasing demand for low-tox alternatives when it comes to beauty services. Salon Kai was at the forefront of this trend, when Kaila first imagined this eco-conscious space on the former factory and storage floor. Having started out on her own in 2018, by 2022 the salon had grown to a team of four. Since then Salon Kai moved to a larger space across the hall, built out and designed by the owner and her husband, and grown its team to seven.

Two team members are already bridal specialists, but one of business' goals for 2025 is to hire an additional two stylists providing their services to brides and bridal parties. These are natural multipliers for the acquisition of new clients, but in the decade since Kaila has first made the conscious effort to cut synthetic chemicals and harmful toxins from her personal life, she has seen a trend of people seeking out organic options. Having a sense of harmony between her work and her convictions is important to the homeschool mom, and spreading a sense of healthy living through her salon is aspirational. "Many of our new clients are just coming to us after searching online for alternatives," she explains. Finding suppliers is not always easy, but the beauty industry as a whole has been waking up to the demand.

Over the years the salon has also grown beyond beauty-services alone and added a small collection of



Kaila Shaw Addis, founder and owner

organic and sustainably sourced clothing and jewelry to their floor. Outfits made from organic cotton and Alpaca wool, as well as artisanal non-toxic candles are for sale, and another instance where Kaila sees growth potential for her business.

There are very few procedures they cannot offer at the salon. Even for the popular hair smoothing Brazilian blowout and keratin treatment there are organic alternatives. Conventional salons rely here on formaldehyde, though the FDA already proposed a ban on the treatment in 2023. It is a substance you won't find at Salon Kai. It does not matter the hair type, the team here can offer a wholistic solution.

Wholistic too is the reiki infused crown works treatment, which goes beyond detox and includes a makeover for hair, body, and soul. Combining the detox with a cleanse and the intentional goal setting, the procedure truly is a way to reinvent and rejuvenate yourself.

Salon Kai is located behind door #8 at 415 Howe Ave, in downtown Shelton. For more information, or to book an appointment, visit www.salonkaict.com. You can also follow them on [Instagram @salonkai_ct](https://www.instagram.com/salonkai_ct). ♦

Edward Nelson Shelton (1812-1884) The Man Who Shaped a City



Edward Nelson Shelton

In the tapestry of American industrialists whose vision and determination forged entire communities, Edward Nelson Shelton stands as a pivotal figure. His life and legacy are deeply interwoven with the development of Shelton, Connecticut, a city that not only bears his name but also reflects his enduring influence on its growth and character.

Edward Nelson Shelton, pictured above, was born in Huntington in 1812. In 1836, he located to the Birmingham section of Derby and worked with his brother-in-law in producing tacks. He became involved in many enterprises in town including the Birmingham National Bank, the Derby Savings Bank and the Shelton Company which made boxes. He was credited as being the leader of the group that pushed for a state charter to dam the Housatonic River and raised the capital to make it a reality.

When the Ousatonic Dam was officially opened on October 10, 1870, cheap water power created a thriving manufacturing industry on the other side of the Housatonic River. This area of town came to be known as Shelton. As president of the Ousatonic Water Company, that was the springboard for the endeavor that was to put his name on the borough of Shelton and then on all of the former Huntington when it became a city in 1919.

In 1853, recognizing the potential of the area's natural resources and strategic location along the Housatonic River, Shelton partnered with the Howe Machine Company to relocate their sewing machine factory to what was then a primarily agrarian community. This decision was the catalyst for Shelton's transformation into a burgeoning industrial hub. The establishment of the Howe factory not only provided jobs but also attracted a wave of skilled laborers and their families, setting the stage for rapid population growth and economic expansion.

Shelton's vision went beyond simply transplanting an existing business. He was instrumental in planning the layout of the town that would surround the factory, ensuring that it included adequate housing, infrastructure, and amenities to support a growing workforce. This holistic approach to urban planning was progressive for its time, reflecting Shelton's understanding of the needs of a thriving industrial community.

Moreover, Shelton's influence extended into social and economic spheres. He was a proponent of creating a supportive environment for workers, which was evident in his efforts to establish educational institutions, recreational facilities, and other community structures. These initiatives were crucial in fostering a sense of community and belonging among the inhabitants, many of whom were immigrants new to the United States.

The economic ripple effect of Shelton's enterprises was substantial. The arrival of the Howe Machine Company spurred the development of ancillary businesses, including suppliers and service providers. Over time, the area saw the rise of other industries, such as rubber and brass manufacturing, further diversifying its economic base and reducing dependency on a single industry.

Shelton's commitment to community development was also visible in his personal contributions to local governance and civic affairs. He served in various capacities, from town committees to state-level roles, advocating for policies and initiatives that supported local growth and sustainability. His leadership helped shape the legislative and economic landscape in ways that facilitated long-term prosperity.

However, the growth and industrialization led by figures like Shelton were not without challenges. The 19th century was a period of significant social and labor unrest, and the rapid changes brought about by industrialization often led to difficult working conditions and economic disparities. While Shelton was considered a benevolent employer for his time, the era itself was marked by struggles between labor and industry, reflecting broader national trends.

Despite these challenges, the legacy of Edward

continued on next page

Shelton's Canal Lock Restoring a Piece of History



As Edward Nelson Shelton had the vision and was the driving force behind the Ousatonic Dam, hydropower has a historical and ongoing role in Shelton, Connecticut's energy landscape. The city utilized water power extensively during its industrial

allowing water to enter each lock chamber one at a time. Boats would be moved forward through the gates separating each section to reach the canal level.

This canal system was integral to the region's industrial activity during the era, as it enabled transportation of goods to and from factories along the waterway. While the canal itself is no longer in commercial use, preservation efforts are ongoing. The City of Shelton and local organizations are planning an environmental restoration project, which includes the lock's historical preservation and improving public access to the area, cleaning up a canal, making it a scenic and educational part of the downtown landscape.

The City of Shelton received a grant from the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection in the amount of \$130,000 toward the canal lock preservation efforts, and an engineer will be proceeding with this project early in 2025. ♦

development, particularly along the Housatonic River, where dams powered early mills and manufacturing facilities.

The Shelton Canal Lock in Shelton, Connecticut, is a historic feature of the canal system constructed in the 19th century. Dating back to 1867, the locks were built to facilitate navigation between the upper and lower river and the canal system. They employed a system of three sequential locks to raise canal boats approximately 10 feet by



Edward Shelton, continued from pg. 25

Nelson Shelton in the city that now bears his name is positive. Today, Shelton, Connecticut, is a testament to his impact, maintaining a balance between its industrial roots and its development as a modern residential community. The city's growth has been guided by a blend of honoring its historical heritage and adapting to the needs of contemporary residents.

Edward Nelson Shelton's life and work offer a compelling narrative about the role of individual

vision and initiative in shaping the destinies of American cities. His approach to industrial development, community planning, and civic engagement provides valuable insights into the complexities of urban growth during a critical period in U.S. history. Shelton, Connecticut, as it stands today, is not just a place on the map but a living legacy of its namesake's enduring influence on its foundation and growth. ♦

Shelton Libraries Want Your Opinion! Your Input is Important

Now that both libraries in Shelton are cleaned, renovated and updated, the staff, Library Board and Friends of the Shelton Libraries would like to know what library patrons want and need.

A committee was recently formed of active library users comprised of staff, Friends of the Library, Library Board members, students and a Shelton school media specialist. The purpose of the committee was to brainstorm ideas and construct a survey outlining optimal service to library patrons – from library usage to the programs offered, services provided, and improvements that can be made. services we provide, and how we can improve.

The survey the committee constructed takes only three minutes to fill out and can be found at either library at the Circulation Desks, on the library's website at www.sheltonlibrarysystem.org or by attending a program at either library. The survey began January 1st and will run to March 31st, 2025.



Leanne Paglusio

Once the committee compiles all the data, they will put together a "Strategic Plan for the Shelton Libraries: 2024-2029". This information will be vital to see what is working, what the public would like to see changed, and if it is something that can be provided. It will also let the staff know what needs to be advertised more to ensure everyone is aware of all the services offered.

Please take the time to fill out the survey. If you

need additional information or have any questions, please call (203) 924-1580 ext. 5105. This is the perfect time for the library to assess how they are doing. Every respondent who drops the survey at either library will leave with a small treat as a thank you for your input and time.

Also, the Huntington Branch has recently hired former library assistant, Leanne Paglusio, as the Children's Librarian. Ms. Paglusio assumed the position on December 1st and has already begun to plan a roster of children's programs, bringing her years of library experience to her new role. Please stop in and welcome her as she begins this new journey!

The library's website, sheltonlibrary.org, not only provides access to the survey information, but is also a gateway into online databases, both informational, educational, and entertaining. In addition to a calendar of all the programs at both libraries, with a valid Shelton library card library patrons can download books, audiobooks, movies, music, magazines, comic books and information from consumer news to medical information.

There is a busy program schedule as well at both libraries. From Tai Chi classes to winter reading clubs, cooking and craft demonstrations to a bi-weekly film series, history and informational lectures, story times for little ones and more, there is always something interesting going on.

As a reminder, with the assistance of the Friends of the Library, there is the continuous Book Nook book sale happening in the Reading Room at the Plumb Library. They not only sell all the best sellers, but have a selection of puzzles that you might want to explore. Their Virtual Booksale is available through the library's website as well. They are always looking for volunteers to help them in their important work for the libraries. Please email them at: friendsofthesheltonlibraries@gmail.com. ♦



Public Library At Home – Mrs. Beardsley Welcomes Families

Back in the 1950s there was a public library located on Leavenworth Road in the living room of the 200-year old home of Mr. and Mrs. Stephen G. Beardsley. The books could be found inconspicuously among antique furnishings. From 3:00 to 8:30 pm every Friday, the living room became a public library where 20 to 30 neighbors would come by to browse, borrow books or return them.

At that time, Mrs. Constance A. Beardsley was a library assistant at the Plumb Memorial Library and had operated a branch from her home since 1949 when she consented to the arrangement on a “temporary” basis. Mrs. Beardsley explained that Mrs. Annie Brooks started a library in her home in 1911. When she passed away in 1949, they asked her to take it over. She agreed to “do it for a while.”

Three bookcases whose contents a visitor may mistake for the family collection, contain from 300 to 400 volumes. Mrs. Beardsley rotated books between her home and the library to give users a changing

collection from which to choose.

Among her more regular visitors are her three grandchildren Lois, Linda and Daniel, children of Mr. and Mrs. David S. Beardsley who lived nearby at 59 School Street. Her three other grandchildren lived in Alabama at the time.

The youngsters would call frequently for story hours – an unofficial but grandmotherly treat. Mrs. Beardsley noted a broadening of Daniel’s reading tastes – for a long time he wanted blue books but now takes any color.

The branch library had a potential clientele of around 200 families in White Hills. Mrs. Beardsley stated circulation of her home collection did drop as Shelton schools had built up substantial libraries.

Mrs. Beardsley had an appropriate hobby – reading. It was wonderful to think this was shared with some many.

*Reprinted from: Evening Sentinel
front page – February 3, 1968. ♦*

Shelton Resident Creates Historic Frame

A new page in Thoroughbred racing history was written last year when the 156-year-old Belmont Stakes was contested at iconic Saratoga Race Course for the first time.

To commemorate the historic moment media members covering the June 8 final jewel in the Triple Crown gathered for a group picture that has become a permanent fixture in the Saratoga pressbox – with the help of a Shelton firm.

Shelton resident Bob Ehalt, a senior correspondent for BloodHorse publications, worked with Matt Roe of FRAME Creations to create framing for the photo taken by photographer Skip Dickstein that will join other historic images and mementoes adorning the pressbox walls.

“It was an honor to create such a one-of-a-kind piece that will commemorate a famous race from now through eternity,” said Roe, senior framing specialist for FRAME Creations. “To be a part of preserving that historic moment for the media members was a great thrill.”

The framing was courtesy of the New York Racing Association.

FRAME Creations is located at 10 Huntington Street in Shelton. ♦



Shelton Makes Improvements to Public Facilities

The City of Shelton has become eligible under the Community Development Block Grant Entitlement Program which is authorized under Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. To be eligible for this program, a municipality must have a population of over 40,000 residents.

Annual grants are provided through this program to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment and by expanding economic opportunities principally for low-and-moderate income persons.

The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development determines the amount of each entitlement grantee's annual funding allocation by a statutory dual formula which uses several objective measures of community needs, including the extent of poverty, population, housing overcrowding, age of housing and population growth lag in relationship to other metropolitan areas. This year's grant allocation to Shelton was \$191,032.

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program supports community development activities to build stronger and more resilient communities. To support community development, activities are identified through an ongoing process. Activities may address needs such as infrastructure, economic development projects, public facilities installation, community centers, housing rehabilitation, public services, clearance/acquisition, microenterprise assistance, code enforcement, homeowner assistance, etc.

Under this entitlement program, the City of Shelton intends to make improvements to the Shelton Senior Center, Helen DeVaux Senior Apartments and the Plumb Memorial Library.

Shelton Senior Center – The Senior Center has been allocated \$20,000 and will be purchasing a new refrigerator and stove, a commercial grade convection oven, and a commercial grade dishwasher. These new appliances will help the center serve over 200 senior citizens on a daily basis.

Helen DeVaux Senior Apartments – Helen DeVaux Senior Apartments located on Howe Avenue has received a number of building improvements over the past few years. This latest grant will enable the Shelton Housing Authority to install new railings

and fences to improve safety and security for the area residents.

Plumb Memorial Library – The Plumb Memorial Library in downtown has received \$20,000 to install a set of handicap accessible exterior doors at the back of the building where the elevator has been installed. These activities should be completed by early Spring 2025 and will enhance the many improvements made to this public facility over the past few years.

Paul Grimmer, President of the Shelton Economic Development Corporation said, "The program, as it is administered by the US HUD is an annual program, which will enable the City of Shelton to make similar improvements and investments to public facilities throughout the city for years to come." ♦



SHELTON SENIOR CENTER HOSTS THANKSGIVING DINNER

A very blessed Thanksgiving luncheon was enjoyed by 68 grateful seniors. Eight turkeys and all the fixings were cooked and presented to them by the Senior Center's amazing staff and volunteers who helped Senior Center Director, Doreen Laucella, make this happen for so many. Everyone was so very grateful sitting around one endless table of love and appreciation.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Community Calendar

PARKS & RECREATION

Community Center Hours:

Monday-Friday 6:30 am - 9:30 pm

Saturday 7:30 am - 3:30 pm

Pool Hours:

Monday-Friday 6:00 am - 8:45 pm

Sunday 8:00 am - 3:30 pm

Saturday 7:30 am - 3:30 pm

Information is posted on the city website: www.cityofshelton.org.

Information/Cancellation Hotline
203-331-4120 • 41 Church Street

SHELTON SENIOR CENTER

The Center provides a wide range of social, educational, health, financial, and recreational programs for residents 55 years of age and older. The Center sponsors parties, BBQ's, special events, day/overnight trips and casino trips.

Transportation to the Center is provided for Shelton residents (FREE MWF) including free shopping bus to local stores for members on Wednesdays. For more information regarding any of these programs, please call the Center at (203) 924-9324.

SHELTON YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES

The Youth Service Bureau was established in 1988 by the City of Shelton for the purpose of developing, planning and coordinating services for the youth of the city and their families. In 2023, the name was changed to Shelton Youth and Family Services and works cooperatively with schools, police, youth, parents and other community resources to encourage our youth to strive for their full potential. Shelton Youth and Family Services provides programs for both youth and parents on issues of importance in today's society. It also provides information and referrals for parents and youth in need. For more information, please call Shelton Youth and Family Services at 203-924-7614 or by email at syfs@cityofshelton.org

SHELTON LIBRARY SYSTEM

Plumb Memorial Library

65 Wooster St. 203-924-9461

Huntington Branch Library

In the Community Center,
41 Church St. 203-926-0111

CONTACT INFORMATION

Shelton City Hall (203) 924-1555

Shelton Board of Education

(203) 924-1023

Shelton Community Center

(203) 925-8422

Shelton Highways and Bridges

(203) 924-9277

Shelton Animal Control

(203) 924-2501

Shelton Libraries:

Plumb Library (203) 924-1580

Branch Library (203) 926-0111

Shelton Police Dept. (203) 924-1544

Shelton Probate Court

(203) 924-8462

Shelton Registrar of Voters

(203) 924-2533

1ST WARD ALDERMEN

Anthony Simonetti (203) 926-0922

Porter C. McKinnon

portermckinnon32@gmail.com

2ND WARD ALDERMEN

Eric McPherson (203) 924-5862

Ben Perry bperryward2@gmail.com

3rd WARD ALDERMEN

John Anglace (203) 929-1515

Cris Balamaci (203) 922-1639

4th WARD ALDERMEN

Lorenzo Durante (203) 623-3060

Bernie Simons (203) 925-8499

STATE LEGISLATORS

State Senator Kevin Kelly

(860) 240-8826

State Representative Ben McGorty

(800) 842-1423

State Representative Jason Perillo

(800) 842-1423

CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATION

Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro

(New Haven office) (203) 562-3718

Congressman Jim Himes

(Bridgeport office) (866) 453-0028

U.S. SENATORS

Senator Richard Blumenthal

(Bridgeport office) (203) 330-0598

Senator Chris Murphy

(Hartford office) (860) 549-8463

Welcome, continued from page 1

by the buzz around Shelton. The feedback I hear time and again is how our city provides the perfect environment for businesses to thrive. Business owners, company CEO's, Non-Profit organizations all want to expand or relocate to the City of Shelton.

There is a common theme, and it is an appreciation of what Shelton offers to help their companies succeed: the ability to find people to work at their companies and a city that is "predictable and consistent". In this very issue of Shelton Life, we highlight some wonderful new businesses planting roots here in Shelton. It's no wonder Shelton has become the envy of Connecticut!

As we trudge through these frosty months, let's take a moment to appreciate what makes Shelton special. Whether you're attending local events, supporting our businesses, or simply admiring our winter wonderland (minus the wonder of snow), there's always something to warm the heart.

Spring is just around the corner but until then, stay warm, stay positive, and remember - in Shelton, our community spirit is always in full bloom, no matter the season!

Cheers,



Bing Carbone Editor, Shelton Life

Chairman, Economic Development Commission ♦

SHELTON COMMUNITY & BUSINESS NEWS

Economic Development Commission
City of Shelton
54 Hill Street
Shelton, Connecticut 06484

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The recently completed Derby/Shelton Bridge enhancements.