

'LOVE LINES' FORM INSIDE

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LEBANON: GIRLS SWIM TEAM

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Hurley building will need \$2-3 million to complete

By MICHELLE FIRESTONE
Chronicle Staff Writer

WILLIMANTIC — The non-profit group that hopes to renovate the Hurley building and build housing units there has hit a financial snag to the tune of \$3 or \$4 million.

Windham Town Manager Neal Beets announced the news during the Jan. 19 town council meeting.

The building is located at 699 Main St. and is owned by Northeastern Connecticut Community Development Corp. Inc.

NCCDC, a non-profit, purchased the property from Will Hurl LLC in June 2014 for \$115,000.

The property has been the home of a department store and gymnastics company at different times.

The property is being managed by DeMarco Management Corp. of Hartford, a property management company specializing in U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development related projects.

NCCDC plans to build 20 housing units for individuals of different income levels, including units designed for veterans, in the Hurley building.

NCCDC President and Savings Bank Institute and Trust CEO Rho Brouillard said NCCDC is in need of \$3 to \$4 million more to complete the project.

He noted that some old buildings "haven't been maintained for many, many years so they require a tremendous amount of rehabilitation work."

Brouillard said environmental remediation work needs to be done in the

building.

"It's just expensive to do," he said.

Beets noted one aspect of NCCDC's project, stabilizing the roof, has been finished, "which was a major, major problem."

As the roof was being fixed, a temporary shelter was used to protect people walking by from possible falling debris.

"The shelter the town constructed over the public sidewalk was removed," said Beets.

He said NCCDC reimbursed the town the \$10,000 it cost to construct the shelter.

Brouillard said NCCDC is applying through the state department of housing's "Competitive Housing Assistance (Town, Page 4)



Roxanne Pandolfi
Northeastern Connecticut Community Development Corp. hopes to renovate the former Hurley's Men's Store into 20 housing units.

Columbia native runs for president

By GREG SMITH
The Day

NEW LONDON — His name is not as well known as presidential candidates Donald Trump or Hillary Clinton, but David Morascini of New London says he has more to offer: common sense and a driving desire to end war worldwide.

Morascini, 60, has filed paperwork with the Federal Election Commission to become a presidential candidate and is making a push to get on the presidential ballot.

His message to voters: "World peace now. If not now, when?"

The Columbia native and former nightclub owner, who wears a handlebar mustache and has his salt-and-pepper hair pulled back into a pony tail, admits his campaign platform is something of a throwback to the 1960s era of peace and love.

He embraces the hippie comparisons and thinks baby boomers and millennials alike will share his views.

"My first day as president I will declare the U.S. a peaceful country," he said. "I think some people might think, 'This guy's crazy, but he's right.' I speak from my heart and soul. How long have people been begging for world peace?"

"If not now, when?" was a recurring theme during a recent interview in the cabin of his docked boat, a 40-foot Silverton, where he lives.

Morascini moved to New London while his wife was being treated for breast cancer. He ended up staying after she died.

Between puffs of his Maverick cigarette, Morascini talked about legalization of drugs and prostitution, his dreams of global disarmament and the pressing problem of climate change.

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Al Malpa
Firefighters drag a hose into a home at 440 Windham Road in South Windham Thursday to fight a chimney fire. Firefighter Ted Colwell said the fire extended to the gable end of the wall and charred the wall.

No injuries in chimney fire

By MICHELLE FIRESTONE
Chronicle Staff Writer

WILLIMANTIC — A fire on Windham Road in Willimantic Thursday afternoon did not cause any injuries and was quickly extinguished.

South Windham Fire Department Chief Patrick Farley said the call came in at 4:20 p.m. regarding a fire at a single-family home at 440 Windham Road.

"We were on scene for an hour," he said.

Willimantic Fire Department Chief Marc Scrivener could not be reached for comment this morning.

Windham Fire Marshal Michael Licata said the homeowner called about the fire after hearing a "crackling" in the wall.

"It's very fortunate that she was home at the time," said Licata.

According to the town assessor records, Gary Gray owns the home.

The home is a one-story ranch built in 1954.

The net assessment of the property and land is \$79,440.

Licata said the fire appears to have been caused by a defective chimney insert.

He said there was smoke in the house and there was damage to

the wall, as well as interior and exterior of the fireplace.

In addition to South Windham, North Windham, Windham Center and Willimantic fire departments responded to the fire.

The building official was called in to help determine if it was safe for the residents to return to the home.

Licata said the fireplace was not the only source of heat and the homeowners were able to return to their home.

"He did have a furnace," he said.

He cautioned people to make

(No injuries, Page 4)

Farm market may accept food stamps

By COREY SIPE
Chronicle Staff Writer

COVENTRY — Newly hired market master Erica Pagliuco is excited about the progress the town has made regarding the organization of the new Coventry Farmers Market at Hale Homestead for 2016.

She also said she hopes the market will be able to accept a variety of food stamps when it opens for the upcoming season.

Part of her excitement has to do with a \$35,000 state farm viability grant, which Eric Trott, Coventry's director of planning and development, indicated that the town won after receiving "verbal indication late last month ... the contracts are coming out soon."

Such funds will be used to purchase shirts and materials for the Friends of the Coventry Farmers Market at Hale Homestead, he explained.

The new farmers market replaces the successful Coventry Regional Farmers Market, which was run by the Bridges Healthy Cooking School for 12 years before its officials decided to call it quits.

To bridge the gap between the two markets, a number of vendors organized a Coventry Winter Farmers Market 2015-16 which runs every Sunday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Coventry High School Cafeteria, 78 Ripley Hill Road. It started Nov. 15 and runs through March 27 with no market on March 20 due to a school event.

However, the Town of Coventry will be operating the market this summer.

"Vendor applications will be going to the vendors at the end

of the month," Pagliuco said, adding there have been a number of vendors who have expressed interest who will be coming to the market for the first time along with those who have attended the market before.

She hopes the market will be able to accept WIC, the Women, Infant and Children Nutrition Service, SNAP, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and EBT, Electronics Benefit Transfers.

Pagliuco confirmed there will be guest vendor spots, as in previous years, as well as an effort to bring in more non-profit organizations that will provide information to customers rather than selling items.

She expects to have a programming calendar released by the end of February or the beginning of March.

The University of Connecticut Transportation Institute is helping the town analyze traffic, parking and pedestrian movement.

"We might be changing the entrance to the parking field ... probably we will be reversing the traffic flow to pull more traffic from the main road into the lot more efficiently," Pagliuco said, adding that filling the lot more efficiently could eliminate the issue of having vehicles park alongside the road.

While the farmers market has its own web page reached from the town's web site, Trott hopes it will have its own web site to help increase marketing efforts.

Pagliuco is inviting those who would like to sponsor the farmers market or participate as a vendor to contact her by e-mail at epagliuco@coventryct.org.

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Increase in birth defects leaves doctors puzzled

By MELISSA HEALY
Los Angeles Times

Physicians are seeing more instances of a birth defect in which infants are born with their intestines extruding from the stomach wall. The increase has been driven by a sharp rise in the defect among babies born to young African-American mothers, says a new report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Over the 18 years leading up to 2012, the CDC has documented a 263 percent increase in the birth defect among children born to young black mothers, said a report released Thursday by the agency.

Coleen Boyle, director of the CDC's National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities, said it was urgent that researchers find the cause of the defect and determine which women are at greater risk for having babies with the affliction.

In gastroschisis, the intestines, and sometime other visceral organs such as the liver and stomach, protrude through a hole next to a newborn's belly button.

Though the abnormality can be life-threatening, it can often be fixed soon after birth with surgery to

return the organs inside the abdomen and repair the abdominal wall. But because the affected organs are irritated by their exposure to amniotic fluid inside a mother's uterus, they can twist, swell, shorten and become infected.

As a result, babies born with the defect can have ongoing digestive and feeding problems. Some also have difficulty staying hydrated and absorbing nutrients from food, which can increase the risk for a range of medical problems, including stunted growth and malnutrition.

If the number of exposed internal organs is large, surgery must sometimes be done in stages. Recovery times can be long. Many babies born with the condition, which can be diagnosed during pregnancy by ultrasound, do not leave the hospital for six weeks or more, and their care in neonatal intensive units is costly.

Roughly 2,000 babies are born each year with gastroschisis.

The rise in the defect affected babies born to women across the spectrum of age and ethnicity. But most cases of gastroschisis occur in babies born

(Birth, Page 4)

Inside today's Chronicle

National

Major snow storm bears down on Washington, D.C.
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Sports

Husky hockey teams look to make their move. See notebook on Page 9.

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Around town

Overeaters Anonymous meets at 10 a.m. Saturday in the Johnson Room at Windham Community Memorial Hospital. See more calendar on Page 3.

