

August 3, 2020



# THE VILLAGER



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Thank you to Loretta Sills for contributing the cover photo capturing a display in front of her North Trail unit. The Villager welcomes submissions for cover consideration. Photos must be emailed as high-resolution jpeg images to [cking@oronoquevillage.com](mailto:cking@oronoquevillage.com).

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# A MESSAGE FROM THE OVCA PRESIDENT



*This column was distributed via an eblast on Friday, July 24.*

**JULY 21, 2020**

**By Bob Grosso**

**COVID-19 Update:** We have been in this together for over four months, adjusting our daily routines and making sacrifices in order to stay safe and well for our beloved families and those around us. Over the past several weeks, our country has experienced many upticks in the virus and many states have been rolling back their reopening plans including the postponement of Phase 3 of the Reopen Connecticut Plan.

**Reopening of our Facilities Update:** At the June 16, OVCA Board meeting, the board voted on motions to open the following facilities contingent that Connecticut's Reopen

Plan for Phase 3 removes the 65+ "Stay Home, Stay Safe" recommendation. On Monday, July 6, Governor Lamont announced that Phase 3 has been placed on hold. This directly impacted the reopening of the South Clubhouse pools, racquet sports facilities and the bocce court.

During the recent July 21 OVCA Board meeting, the following motions were presented, discussed and voted upon:

**Motions Passed:**

1. The closure of the Association's pool facilities shall continue until the "65 Stay Home" guideline listed by the State of CT is lifted. Absent the action occurring, the closure will again be reviewed at the Aug. 18 OVCA Board meeting. **Vote: 12 yes; 1 no; 1 abstention.**

2. The closure of the Association's Racquet Sports Facilities shall continue until the "65 Stay Home" guideline issued by the State of CT is lifted. Absent that action occurring, the closure will again be reviewed at the Aug. 18 OVCA Board meeting. **Vote: 12 yes; 2 no.**

3. The closure of the Association's bocce facility shall continue until the "65 Stay Home" guideline issued by the State of Connecticut is lifted. Absent that action occurring, the closure will again be reviewed at the Aug. 18 OVCA Board meeting. **Vote: 12 yes; 2 no.**

4. The closure of the Association's clubhouses shall continue until a date to be determined. The closure of the clubhouses will again be reviewed at the Aug. 18 OVCA Board meeting. **Vote: 13 yes; 1 abstention.**

**Why is There no Unit Owner Rebate Related To the Closure of the Facilities?**

Fixed cost of the buildings <u>\$671,500:</u>	
Mortgage/Reno loans:	\$430,000
Insurance:	\$121,000
Property tax:	\$94,500
Utilities:	\$26,000
Variable cost savings <u>\$57,606:</u>	
Payroll reductions:	\$43,304
(clubhouse and pools)	
Pool chemicals/start-up items:	\$14,302

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Please direct all questions regarding *The Villager* to Editor Carol King. Resident submissions of 500 words or less are welcome and will be considered for publication. Articles will be published as space allows. Submissions pertaining to OVCA-, OVTD- and resident-related matters are given priority. Villager articles are edited to conform to the standards of the Associated Press Stylebook.

*The Villager* is published by the Communications Committee of The Oronoque Village Condominium Association. Disclaimer: All advertisers are paid submissions and *The Villager* makes no representation of their credibility. Neither OVCA nor OVTD discriminate in the use of facilities by resident groups.

Mortgage/Reno loans rate adjustment finalized resulted in a ~\$35,000 interest expense reduction. **The cost-savings were already incorporated into the construction of the 2020/2021 annual budget which was approved by the OVCA Board in June.**

**Insurance:** Our staff has worked with our insurance carriers, implemented recommendations and site inspections and raised resident awareness and participation. The results gave us a savings reflected in the 2020/201 Budget. Below is a high-level insurance summary:

Insurance Summary	Loss Ratio: 2018 when we were dropped	Loss Ratio: Today
Property	68%	22%
General Liability	205%	65%
Package (Property / GL)	104%	28%

**2019/2020 Annual Audit** has commenced. OV's audit is led by Glenn J. Nanavaty of Nanavaty, Nanavaty & Davenport, LLP, Certified Public Accountants.

**2020/201 Budget:** A combination of Oronoque Village's fiscal year (ending June 30, 2020) unaudited under variance and final insurance savings is approximately \$50,000. These funds will be applied toward the establishment of a COVID-19 Reserve Account for future reopening expenses.

**Cable:** Our current contract with Altice Optimum ends in July 2021. This 5-year contract included a year-over-year 4% increase. We have entered into a contingency consultant agreement to find the best rate/company for our community. The agreement states that for every dollar in savings, we will save seventy-five cents and the consultant will receive twenty-five cents, on the back end. The annual realized savings will be paid at the end of each fiscal year.

## NOTICE OF DISTRICT 7 ELECTION

District 7 announced that its election will be held on Thursday, Sept. 24. Residents are asked to please check their black boxes in late August when full details will be communicated via the delivery of flyers.

**Program Maintenance:** Mark and Fred are currently evaluating new Program Maintenance materials with associated costs to enhance the exteriors of the buildings.

**Oronoque Country Club (OCC):** COVID-19 has also directly negatively impacted large and small businesses throughout the country including Oronoque Country Club, our neighbor/partner. The cancellation of many planned catered events and Monday golf tournaments has taken a financial toll. Our Executive Director, OCC Liaison Mim Schreck and I have been in close communication with OCC's general manager, Tommy Miller. This included a conference call with the country club's corporate headquarters discussing various scenarios to "right" the ship. However, as I am sure you can imagine, there is no easy solution. Rest assured we are working hard to assist in the development of a plan that is a win-win for Oronoque Village's partnership with Oronoque Country Club.

**Reminder:** Wednesday, July 22, commenced the acceptance of resumes for the upcoming September election of the OVCA Executive Board: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. If you are interested in one of these positions, please mail your resume to Nanavaty, Nanavaty and Davenport LLP, 123 S Main Street, Ste. 140, Newtown, CT 06470. Resume acceptance ends on Tuesday, Aug. 11, at 5 p.m.

**Please be reminded that, according to our OVCA By-laws, campaigning of any nature may not commence until after the Aug.18 OVCA Board meeting.**



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# NOTICES

## ORONOQUE VILLAGE CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION, INC. NOTICE OF PROPOSED REVISION TO RULES

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Directors of the Oronoque Village Condominium Association, Inc. intends to amend the Rules of the Association by adopting a revision to the Association's Rules and Regulations.

### The proposed revision is as follows:

Displays for Candidates for Public Office or Ballot Questions: Signs for candidates for public or association office or for or against public or association ballot issues may be displayed provided:

- a. Signs must not exceed 2 feet by 3 feet in size.
- b. Signs may only be located in the windows of a unit or on a balcony or deck railing.
- c. Signs displayed on a balcony or deck railing may only be secured in such a manner that their removal does not damage the balcony or deck railing.
- d. Signs must not contain comments on candidates racial, religious or ethnic backgrounds nor violate any hate laws of the State of Connecticut or the United States.
- e. Signs may not be displayed sooner than Oct. 1 for a public election or until after the August OVCA Board meeting for a unit owner meeting at which candidates or ballot questions will be voted upon, nor may signs be lighted artificially after dark.
- f. Signs must be removed the day after the election or unit owners meeting at which votes are taken.
- g. Signs no larger than 1 foot by 2 feet may be placed on a stake no higher than 2 feet and put in the foundation planting area. No signs may be put on the common property. Such signs are subject to all of the above restrictions.

### In addition, the following is also part of this rule:

No "for sale", "for lease", "open house" or like advertising shall be placed on nor about the exterior of the unit or placed within the unit, nor shall they be displayed on any part of their common area or limited common area unless at the direction of the Oronoque Village Condominium Board of Directors, except Realtors and residents shall be permitted to display "open house" signs on Sunday only, exclusively between the hours of noon and 5 p.m. on the secondary roads and four corner location of Oronoque Village.

The penalty for violation of this rule is removal of the sign(s) or for an interior sign(s), a fine of \$25.00 per day.

Connecticut General Statute 47-261b(d) is the reference for this rule.

The Board will act on the proposed revision to the Rules and Regulations after considering comments from Unit Owners at its next meeting which will be held Aug. 18, 2020 at 7 p.m.

Unit Owners may comment on the proposed revision to the Rules and Regulations for consideration by the Board by sending comments to Executive Director Fred Rodriguez in care of Linda Arvers. Comments may be sent by email to larvers@oronoquevillage.com, dropped off as a letter in the NCB outside dropbox or sent by U.S. mail to Fred Rodriguez, c/o Linda Arvers, OV Business Office, 600 North Trail, Stratford, CT 06614.

Comments must be received no later than 5 p.m. on Aug. 14 to be considered by the Board prior to its vote during the Aug. 15 OVCA Board meeting.



## CANDIDATES SOUGHT FOR UPCOMING OVCA ELECTIONS

Resident unit owners, 55 years of age or older, who have lived in Oronoque Village for at least one year as of Aug. 11, 2020, may submit resumes for officer positions -- president, vice president, secretary and treasurer -- for the OVCA Board of Directors.

Resumes may be submitted by email to Glenn J. Nanavaty CPA at gnanavaty@nndcpa.com or by U.S. mail addressed to Nanavaty, Nanavaty & Davenport, 123 South Main St., Newtown, CT, 06470.

The deadline date for the submission of resumes is Aug. 11 at 5 p.m.



Candidates will be announced during the Aug. 18 OVCA Board meeting.

Procedures and instructions for voting in the elections will be sent to registered owners on or before Aug. 25.

A Candidates' Night is scheduled for Sept. 10.

The OVCA elections will be held on Sept. 15.

District elections are held within a 10-day time frame following the September OVCA election.



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# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## OV BOOK CLUB TO MEET SEPT. 2

The OV Book Club announced it will hold a virtual meeting on Sept. 2 via [www.GoToMeeting.com](http://www.GoToMeeting.com).

Details on how to access the meeting will be published at a later date.

Please see the flyer-ad on the inside back cover of this magazine for information about the book to be discussed and the time the meeting will take place.

## STRATFORD LIBRARY OFFERS 'TAKE OUT' SERVICE AND MORE

Although the Stratford Library reopened on July 27, it continues to offer online programs and services and the library will continue to offer contact-free service for patrons to borrow books and other items (by appointment only).

Though the building is open to the public, there is no seating available and "brisk browsing" is encouraged. Masks are mandatory.

Library browsing and borrowing activities are offered in the main lobby. At press time, adult and teen areas were scheduled to open on Aug. 3.

Library take-out services for patrons who are concerned about entering the space are still available. Visit <http://stratfordlibrary.org/library-take-out/> or call: 203-385-4164 between 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday, or visit <http://stratfordlibrary.org/about/#contact> for more information.

The library encourages people who are comfortable going to grocery stores and running other errands, however, to transition to coming into the lobby to pick up their materials.

Please see page 14 for information on virtual events to be presented by the Stratford Library this month.

## HELICOPTER MUSEUM OFFERING WEEKEND DOCENT-LED VISITS

Due to the extenuating conditions of 2020, Stratford's National Helicopter Museum (NHM), located at the train station, has been forced to limit its hours for this season.

Using scheduled visits, a docent can be available to Connecticut residents on Fridays or Saturdays, during the hours of 1-4 p.m., through mid-October.

To schedule a visit, please phone the museum (203-375-8857), leave a message with your desired date, time and the number of visitors and a return call confirmation will be provided. In addition to a pictorial and model focus on helicopters, the NHM features a model of the first helicopter flight in Stratford in 1939, an actual Sikorsky S-76 cockpit and a

computer-based helicopter flight simulator.

The NHM members are in search of others interested in becoming docents. Its charter is to interest the young in aviation and to highlight Stratford and Connecticut's contributions to aviation.

## CURBSIDE PICKUP ON MONDAYS

Now that warmer weather has arrived, more Villagers are working outside in their yards.

Please remember that curbside pickup occurs every Monday. Residents may put bags out for pickup beginning Sunday at 5 p.m. but no later than 7 a.m. on Monday.

Those residents who prune trees or shrubs, or work in their garden by weeding, cutting back spent perennials or pulling up old annuals, are asked to place the debris in paper bags only. Plastic bags will not be accepted as the use of plastic bags raises the cost of disposal.

## MAINTENANCE & BUSINESS OFFICES REMAIN CLOSED TO RESIDENTS

During this COVID-19 pandemic, we are asking all Villagers to refrain from entering the Maintenance Building, Business Office or South Clubhouse to engage or contact staff.

We are following regulatory guidelines of social distancing and contact and expect that residents will also adhere to these CDC protocols, for your own protection and the protection of OV employees.

## SQUARE ONE THEATRE COMPANY ANNOUNCES REOPENING PLANS

The Square One Theatre Company had to cut short its acclaimed production of A.R. Gurney's "The Dining Room" last March. Due to the worldwide pandemic crisis, the theater presented only five performances before being shuttered. The set is still intact at the theater, which is located at Stratford Academy, with hopes it will be used in the fall.

The theater currently is planning to reopen its season on Nov. 5 when "The Dining Room" will play through Nov. 22.

Artistic Director Tom Holehan also announced that "Agnes of God", which was to close Square One's season last May, will instead run May 6-23, 2021. Subscribers who currently hold tickets for the 2020 performances are asked to hold onto them as they will be applied to the new show dates.

For further information, call the theater at 203-375-8778 or visit [www.squareonetheatre.com](http://www.squareonetheatre.com).





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## FEATURE: BLACK BEARS IN CONNECTICUT

**B**lack bears are impressive animals. Even a long-distance glimpse of one foraging in a woodland is an unforgettable experience for most outdoor enthusiasts.

In the past 10-20 years, annual sighting reports have increased dramatically, indicating a rapid increase in the bear population. With the number of bears increasing in the state, it is important for residents to learn the facts about black bears and how to coexist with them.

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environment Protection's (DEEP) response to a bear-sighting will depend on the specifics of each bear situation. The mere presence of a bear does not necessitate its removal. In most cases, if left alone, the bear will make its way to a more natural habitat.

Removing food attractants, such as bird feeders, reduces the chance that bears will go near homes. The DEEP seldom relocates bears. An exception may be made to remove a bear in an urban location when there is little likelihood that it can leave safely on its own and when the bear is in a position where it can be safely immobilized.

As bears become more regular residents of Connecticut towns, it is important that people learn to adapt to the presence of bears and take measures to avoid damage and problems. If people do not take precautions, problem behavior by bears can increase, possibly leading to bears being removed or destroyed.

**Description:** The black bear is a stocky animal with short, thick legs. It is the smallest North American bear. In Connecticut, adult males, or boars, normally weigh from 150 to 450 pounds, while females, or sows, weigh from 110 to 250 pounds. Yearlings weigh 45 to 100 pounds. Adults are 5 to 6 feet long.

The black bear's coat is typically glossy black or brownish black, except for the muzzle, which is tan. There is sometimes a small, white patch on the chest. In western North America some black bears are brown or cinnamon. Black bears have five toes with large claws on all feet. Bear tracks somewhat resemble human tracks, but the front feet are shorter than the rear. A bear's tail is short, from 3 to 5 inches long. The sexes are similar in appearance, although males are usually larger.

**Habitat and Diet:** Black bear habitat is forestland, usually with deciduous and coniferous trees, as well as streams, swamps and rock ledges. Bears prefer areas with thick understory vegetation and abundant food resources. Mature forests provide soft and hard mast (e.g., acorns) in late summer and fall. Wetlands are particularly important in spring when emerging plants are one of the few available foods.

Bears are omnivorous; they eat grasses, forbs, fruits, nuts and berries. They also will seek insects (particularly ants and bees), scavenge carrion and raid bird feeders and garbage cans. Bears occasionally will prey on small mammals, deer and livestock.

**Life History:** Breeding occurs during summer, usually in late June or early July. During this time, males travel extensively in search of females. The age when sows first produce cubs is related to the available food supply, but most begin to reproduce at age 3 or 4 and continue to have young every two years. Bears do not form long-lasting bonds, so the males may mate with more than one female during the breeding season. Fighting may occur between rival males as well as between males and unreceptive females.

Young are born in the den during January or February and are blind, toothless and covered with fine hair. Cubs weigh 6 to 12 ounces at birth. Litter sizes range from one to four cubs, with litters of two or three being most common.

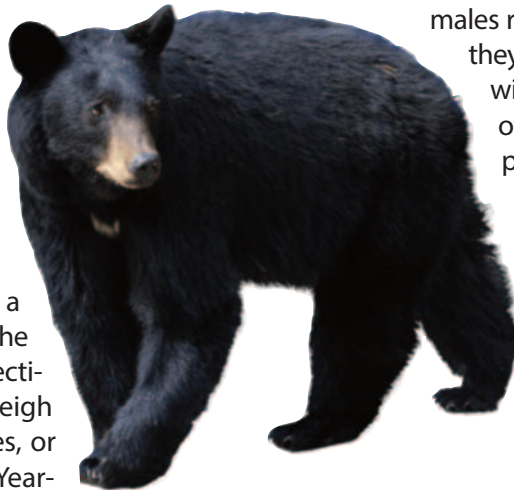
After giving birth, the sow usually continues her winter rest while the cubs are awake and nursing. Only females rear the young. Cubs are weaned when

they are about 7 months old and will remain with the female until the second summer of their lives. Then, the young bears, especially the males, may travel great distances in search of their own territories. Yearling females frequently settle near their mother's home range. Young bears are often forced into less preferred habitat.

**Interesting Facts:** The black bear is an intelligent animal with keen senses of smell and hearing. It can detect the slightest aroma of food, which may lead the bear to campsites and near homes. Odor from carelessly stored food and garbage can lure bears long distances. Black bears travel and feed primarily at night, but can be active any time of the day. Climatic factors, such as drought, may result in a food shortage, causing bears to travel many miles in search of food.

Black bears are generally shy and secretive and usually fearful of humans. However, if they regularly find food near houses and areas of human activity, they can lose their fear of humans. Unlike grizzly bears, black bears are seldom aggressive toward humans.

Females with cubs tend to have restricted home ranges which average 5- to 7-square miles in Connecticut, while males move about widely in home ranges of 12- to 60-square miles. The size of a home range varies geographically and often depends on the quality of habitat. Most ranges are used by more than one bear, but specific areas are rarely used at



the same time. There can be some broad overlap between male and female ranges. In their home territories, bears may mark trees (called "bear trees") along their travel routes by clawing and biting the bark. Black bears are good tree climbers and strong swimmers. They also can run up to 35 miles per hour.

Black bears are not classified as true hibernators but their body temperature is lowered and heart rate slowed during winter denning. Denning enables bears to overcome unfavorable weather conditions and lack of food during winter. Denning bears do not eat, drink, urinate or defecate. However, they will usually wake up if disturbed during their winter dormancy. Bears commonly den under fallen trees or in brush piles, but varied sites are used, including rocky ledges. Most dens are lined with leaves, grass or rotted wood. In Connecticut, most bears den from late November through mid-March. Females tend to remain in the den for a longer period of time than males.

**Living with Bears:** Much of Connecticut's landscape is now forested and is suitable for black bears. The rapid increase in the bear population between the 1980s and early 2000s is expected to continue. As the bear population expands, interactions between humans and bears will increase. People should learn what to do if they see a bear and how to avoid unnecessary conflicts by keeping food away from bears.

***If You See a Bear***

- Observe it from a distance.
- Advertise your presence by shouting and waving your arms or walk slowly away while facing the bear.
  - Never attempt to feed or attract bears.
- Report bear sightings to the DEEP Wildlife Division (phone: 860-424-3011).

**Bears Near your Home:** In wilderness settings bears usually avoid people. But food attractants near homes can cause them to grow habituated to humans and disturbances, such as dogs and other noises. Bears are attracted by bird feeders, garbage, outdoor pet food, compost piles, fruit trees and berry-producing shrubs.

***To avoid attracting bears:***

- Remove bird feeders from late March through November. If a bear visits a bird feeder in winter, remove the feeder.
- Wait until the morning of collection before bringing out trash. Add a few capfuls of ammonia to trash bags and garbage cans to mask food odors.
- Keep trash bags in a container with a tight lid and store in a garage.
  - Do not leave pet food outside overnight.
  - Do not put meats or sweet-smelling fruit rinds in compost piles. Lime can be sprinkled on the compost pile to reduce the smell and discourage bears.
  - Thoroughly clean grills after use.
- Never intentionally feed bears. Bears that associate food with people may become aggressive and dangerous. This may lead to personal injury, property damage, and the need to destroy problem animals.
- Encourage your neighbors to take similar precautions.

Black bear attacks on humans are exceptionally rare. In most hiking areas, bears normally leave once they have sensed a human. However, at campsites and campgrounds, bears can be attracted by poorly stored food and garbage. If you see a bear when hiking or camping, make your presence known by making noise and waving your arms.

If you surprise a bear at close range, walk away slowly while facing the bear. Do not run. Try to stay calm as you make your retreat. Black bears will sometimes "bluff charge" to within a few feet of you when they feel threatened. If this happens, stand your ground and shout at the bear. Do not climb a tree because black bears are excellent tree climbers. Make sure your dog is on a leash and under control.

Sometimes bears are attracted to food that is prepared outside. Do not cook near your tent and do not store food inside your tent. Instead, keep your food in a vehicle or use a rope to suspend it 10 or more feet off the ground and at least 6 feet away from tree trunks. Even clothes that you have cooked in should be stored out of a bear's reach. OV

**Source:** <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP>



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## FUNERAL PLANNING

Soon after my most recent column (July 1 Villager), I received phone calls from two people asking whether burial instructions should be included in a Last Will and Testament.

The matters of the funeral services and instructions for burial are really topics that should be discussed by the family members during the lifetime of the parties (even though most people do not want to talk about it).

In former times, tradition, custom and religion were the guidelines for people to follow for interment. It was a matter of honor, respect and pride by some nationalities to have the most elaborate funerals that money could buy. The kind of coffin, bronze being the most significant, reflected the station of life the decedent had in the community. The number of professional criers attending the viewing and throwing themselves on the coffin also was considered. The more flower cars in the procession on the way to the cemetery, the more distinguished the decedent was in the eyes of the viewers.

However, tradition and customs have changed over the years; funerals and burials have become more practical in application. The costs of funerals have increased over time and more modest proceedings are now employed. Instead of holding viewings and elaborate funerals, there is a trend in which a simple memorial service is held at a reasonable time after a death, leaving only immediate family members to attend a private funeral.

In many instances, during their lifetimes, people have made advance arrangements with funeral directors for their final wishes (funeral, burial, cremation, etc.) and then inform the family what has been ordered. This avoids the burden of making decisions among the surviving family during a highly emotional time.

One should remember that the will is probated to become legally effective and the procedure is usually takes place at least 10 days after the death of the person. Funeral and burial instructions are, as a matter of practice, not included in a will.

It is advised that an individual prepare a personal information booklet to make it easy for others in the family to

find legal documents and to carry out their final wishes. The first portion should contain basic information, such as name, address, birth date, Social Security number, Medicare number, military serial number, if applicable, and a listing of all the children's names, addresses and phone numbers. The name and contact information for the priest, pastor or rabbi should be listed along with the funeral director.

If there were no prior arrangements made with that funeral director, then the instructions should be expressed

for the funeral service regarding burial and or cremation. If a burial plot had been purchased, it is important to include its location and where the deed is to be found.

To facilitate proceeding with the funeral director, the following should be listed, if applicable: location of the birth certificate, marriage certificate, divorce decree, veteran's discharge papers, citizenship/naturalization papers, length of residence in years in the state and the

U.S. Additionally, mother's and father's name and birthplaces may be required. Also include the name and location of a fraternal, lodge or church organization to be contacted. The information booklet should detail any insurance policy meant to pay the last expenses and the deed to the burial plot should be brought to the funeral director. Request the funeral director to notify Social Security.

Bob Smith was a chemical engineer who never married. He was employed by a prestigious company and resided in a rural area with his mother. When her health started to deteriorate, Bob quit his job to care full-time for his mother. Bob's brother, Tom, lived on Long Island with his wife and family of four children and agreed that mother would be taken care of by Bob.

For 10 years, Bob faithfully rendered the care for their mother. He had a garden to grow vegetables, had a few chickens for eggs, split wood for the fireplaces and made some home brew as a hobby. Tom would, from time to time, send money to Bob as a contribution toward living expenses. After mother passed away, Bob continued to reside in the rural residence but became more and more of a recluse. Tom still sent money for Bob's welfare.



After not hearing from Bob for about a week, Tom drove to the residence and found Bob dead in the kitchen, having suffered a massive heart attack.

After Bob's funeral and burial in the plot alongside his mother, Tom began to search of the house, which was no easy task. Bob was a hoarder who had been storing newspapers in stacks along all of the hallways and kept all of the recyclables in cardboard boxes scattered throughout the house. Tom did discover a small safe on the enclosed porch but could find no other documents or the combination to the safe. He hired a certified locksmith to open the safe. Upon the access to the inside, Tom found many passbooks to savings accounts, CDs and a composition book with listings of all kinds of stocks. There was no will, but there was an empty envelope with a printed return address of a firm in a nearby city.

Upon contacting the firm, Tom discovered they were a financial advisement operation. He informed them of Bob's death and reported that he was the surviving brother. The firm replied that nothing could be discussed until Tom hire legal representation.

Tom did retain an attorney to proceed with administration of the estate. Tom was appointed administrator and qualified after posting a bond. He searched again (after the house was emptied of all the trash and debris) without success in finding any will or any records. Upon contacting the firm in the next city, he was informed that Bob had a stock portfolio worth a little more than \$1,800,000. Bob, during

all the years of retirement, was active in stock trading and apparently quite successful.

With the passbooks and CDs, it was estimated that the estate was worth almost \$2 million.

Now, the bad news started to unfold: Bob had not filed any income tax returns after his retirement and had not paid real estate taxes for two years. Tom spent hundreds of hours dealing with accountants, stockbrokers, appraisers and attorneys to resolve the outstanding liabilities of the estate. It took six years and \$1,600,000 in filing fees, past-due taxes, penalties, accountant and attorney fees, brokerage commissions and costs to settle all liabilities to yield what Tom was to inherit after paying inheritance taxes.

In this case, even if Bob had a will, his brother still had to bear the burden caused by Bob's irresponsibility. The costs and time it took Tom to settle the estate was caused by his brother's neglect and misconduct during his lifetime.

OV

*OV resident Raymond B. Drake received a juris doctor degree from Rutgers School of Law in 1957. He was admitted to practice law before the Courts of New Jersey and the United States Supreme Court. He practiced in Hunterdon County, N.J., for 47 years specializing in municipal law, land use planning, real estate and estate planning and probate. Has was legal counsel to the Hunterdon County Board of Social Services for 33 years.*



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# BEYOND THE VILLAGE

## UPCOMING EVENTS OFFERED BY THE STRATFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

The following virtual events are being offered by the Stratford Library:

**Cooking with Seasonal Produce**, Thursday, Aug. 13, 11 a.m. - noon: Learn what you can make with seasonal produce. The class will be led by Siddhi Sheth, MS, RDN, CDN, a registered dietitian and in-store dietitian at the ShopRite of Shelton. Siddhi will discuss benefits of eating seasonal produce and tips for finding foods in season. Also, she will also perform a cooking demo using seasonal items.

If you would like to follow along with the cooking demo, please contact the library at 203-385-4162 or [www.stratfordlibrary.org](http://www.stratfordlibrary.org) to get a list of ingredients.

URL to join event: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89071892617>

**Books Over Coffee**, Wednesday, Aug. 26, noon - 1 p.m. There will be a discussion of "American Dirt," author Jeanine Cummins's controversial new novel about the ordeal

of a Mexican woman who had to leave behind her life and escape as an undocumented immigrant to the United States.

In "American Dirt" we meet Lydia Quixano Perez, who lives in the Mexican city of Acapulco where she runs a bookstore. She has a son, Luca, the love of her life, and a wonderful husband who is a journalist. One day a man enters Lydia's shop and finds four books he would like to buy. Javier is erudite, charming and, unbeknownst to Lydia, he is the boss of the newest drug cartel that has gruesomely taken over the city. When Lydia's husband's tell-all profile of Javier is published, none of their lives will ever be the same.

URL to join event: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83479777971>

For further information, call the library at 203-385-4162 or visit [www.stratfordlibrary.org](http://www.stratfordlibrary.org).



## RETURN OF A SUMMER TRADITION: THE STRATFORD SUMMER SUNSET CONCERT SERIES HAS RESUMED

The Stratford Department of Recreation announced that the 2020 Summer Sunset Concert Series is under way. The concerts will be performed at the Paradise Green Gazebo from 7-9 p.m. on Tuesdays, weather permitting.

"We are so pleased to move forward with this popular summertime tradition," said Stratford Mayor Laura R. Hoydick. "Although the series is abbreviated compared to prior years, it will be a welcome opportunity for folks to enjoy evenings of great music on the lovely Paradise Green. These events are more important to our community than ever before, and it will be fun to gather together again."

In light of the pandemic, attendees are required to practice social-distancing protocols currently in place: those within the same family may sit together while allowing a minimum of six feet between other families, and face masks are to be worn when entering local businesses.

Paradise Pizza is once again the sponsor of this Celebrate Stratford series.

For information about the Celebrate Stratford series of

events, please visit: [www.celebratestratford.com](http://www.celebratestratford.com).

A schedule of performances appears below.

Band	Date	Rain Date	Genre
Re-Entry Band	Tues., Aug. 11	Aug. 13	Light rock and blues
The Void	Tuesday, Aug. 18	Aug. 20	Rock, pop and R&B
The Cold Ones	Tuesday, Aug. 25	Aug. 27	Rock, pop
Chauncey Street Blues Band	Tuesday, Sept. 1	Sept. 3	Blues

Please remember to thank our advertisers and tell them that you saw their ad in The Villager!

## CLEANING WITH BLEACH: HARMFUL MISTAKES YOU MAY BE MAKING

**B**leach kills germs fast. But it can do more harm than good if you're not using it the right way. Here's what you need to know:

**Don't Use It All the Time** - Bleach is very strong. Reach for it to whiten laundry or clean up body fluids like blood, vomit or poop. It's also a good way to disinfect surfaces you touch a lot. That's things like doorknobs, countertops or light switches. Always cut it with water.

**Don't Mix With Ammonia** - This forms a toxic gas called chloramine. It can hurt the tissue in your eyes, throat, nose and lungs. It can also cause breathing problems.

**Don't Put Too Much in Your Laundry** - Don't pour it directly on your things. And don't use more than directed. That could damage them. Bleach is a good stain remover, but you can't use it on everything. It's not good for spandex, wool, silk or leather. Always check the label for directions on how to wash your clothes.

**Don't Clean Your Phone With Bleach** - Bleach can damage the screen's fingerprint-resistant coating. It might be OK to use an alcohol or disinfectant wipe. Check with the company that makes your phone to be sure. No matter what you clean with, don't get any moisture near the openings.

**Do Protect Yourself** - Bleach can burn your skin if it's really strong. The fumes might bother your eyes and lungs. Wearing goggles, a mask and gloves helps. You should also cover your feet and wear long sleeves and pants. Remember that bleach can stain your clothes, so don't wear anything you really like.

**Don't Mix With Acids** - Chlorine gas forms when you mix bleach with acids like vinegar or drain cleaner. It's dangerous to breathe in too much of it. It might make you cough or wheeze. Your eyes, nose and throat may burn.

**Don't Use It on Metal** - Bleach is corrosive. It can erode, or eat away, metal surfaces. Don't use it on copper, stainless steel, aluminum or other metals. And don't use bleach to get rid of rust, especially on fabric. It'll just make the stain permanent.

**Do Open Windows and Doors** - You should be extra careful with bleach if you have allergies or a health condition that makes it hard to breathe. That includes asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Opening windows or doors helps air out your home. Turn on a fan to give the fumes an extra push.

**Don't Use an Old Bottle** - You've got 24 hours to use bleach mixed with water. Pure bleach is good for 3-5 months. Keep the bottle away from heat and sunlight. Always toss it one year after it was made. Look for a string of letters and numbers on the label. For instance, you might see MR20106. That means it was made in 2020 on the 106th day of the year. Don't worry about the letters.

**Don't Pour It Down the Drain** - It might hurt your pipes or mix with other chemicals. Try baking soda instead. You can toss a handful down the drain and follow that with a rush of hot water. You can also pour 1 cup of vinegar down the drain. Let it sit in your pipes for 30 minutes, then run the hot water.

**Do Clean With Soap and Water First** - Bleach can't power through dust and dirt. That's partly because a thick layer of grime protects germs. Use soap and water to clean. Then coat the entire surface with your bleach mix so it's visibly wet. Let it air dry.

**Don't Use It on Food** - It's OK to use bleach mixed with water on eating utensils or surfaces like countertops. But don't wash your fruits and vegetables with it. Just scrub them under running water.



Source: WebMD.com

### HOW TO MAKE HOMEMADE, REUSABLE CLEANING WIPES

#### Materials:

- Plastic, glass or ziplock air-tight container
- Several clean cloths or rags cut in 8-inch by 8-inch squares
- 1½ cups water
- 1 cup rubbing alcohol, 70% or higher
- ½ cup white vinegar
- 1 Tbsp dish soap
- 8-10 drops essential oil (Recommended: cinnamon, Tea tree, oregano, peppermint, eucalyptus, clove or lemon)

#### Instructions:

Combine all wet ingredients in your container, stirring or

shaking well to combine. Place your rags in the container. Stir them around so that they all get damp. (It is imperative that you store the rags in an air-tight container so the alcohol doesn't dissipate.)

Use these wipes to clean nonporous hard surfaces such as countertops, doorknobs, faucets, light switches, remote controls and other highly touched surfaces. If you have sensitive skin, wear gloves when using. With alcohol-based cleaning wipes, you need to wet the surface that you are cleaning with the wipe and then allow it to air dry.



Source: TheFrugaler.com

## 8 LOW-KEY HIKES IN CONNECTICUT WITH AMAZING PAYOFFS

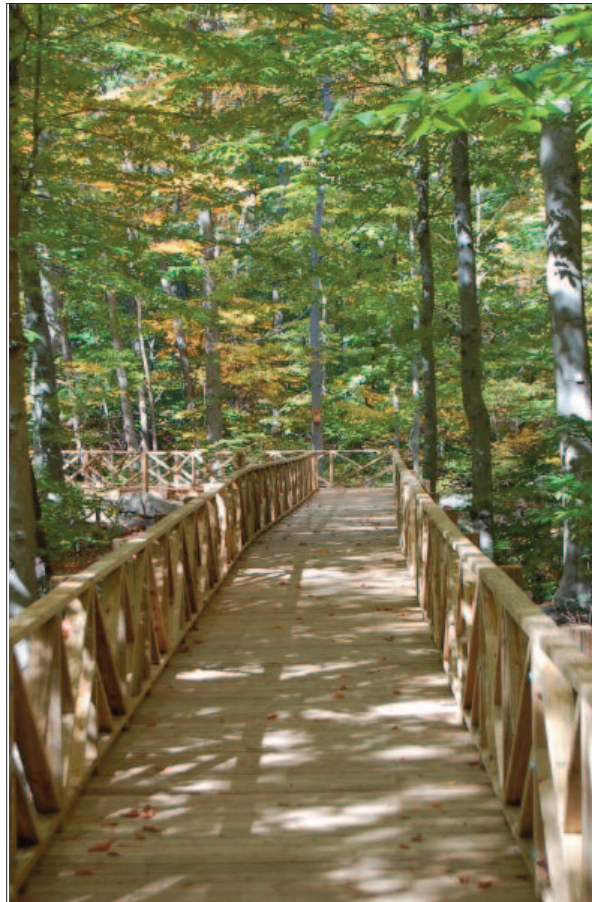
Undoubtedly, Connecticut is chock full of amazing hikes. But some of them can be long and difficult, especially if you aren't an avid hiker. Who says you have to conquer mountains to enjoy big rewards? If you aren't in the mood to tackle an 8-mile trek up the side of a mountain, here are some simple hikes that still have incredible payoffs.

### 1. Gillette Castle Railroad Trail, East Haddam -

Gillette Castle is wondrously beautiful with its stone architecture and medieval feel. But venture a bit away from the main attraction and you'll find a quaint trail that winds through the property on the former bed of Gillette's miniature railroad. The scenic path crosses a footbridge and leads to an abandoned train tunnel that you can explore. Gillette Castle State Park is located at 67 River Road.

### 2. Wheels In The Woods Trail, Stamford

- This universally accessible boardwalk trail can be found at the Stamford Nature Center. The trail runs along a brook through the forest and is quite relaxing. Perfect for any abilities, you'll love this enchanting boardwalk stroll. Visit the animal farm, otter pond, galleries, farmhouse and nature center while you're here. Enjoy the Stamford Museum and Nature Center at 39 Scofieldtown Road.



*Wheels In The Woods Trail at the Stamford Nature Center, 39 Scofieldtown Road.*

### 3. Giant Steps Trail, New Haven

- Found at East Rock Park, this set of giant steps is a hike worth taking. Carved into the side of the ledge, it will take you about 20 minutes to climb to the top. Rewarding views of the city and Long Island Sound await you at the top after climbing this natural staircase. Find the 427-acre park at 41 Cold Spring St.

### 4. Ice House Ruins Trail, Litchfield

- White Memorial Conservation Center is renowned for its stunning boardwalk trail. Choose a slightly different path for a walk

through some significant ruins. The Ice House Ruins Trail is part of the yellow-blazed lake trail and takes you on a 1-mile journey through the past. View the remains of a once-bustling commercial ice house operation on this scenic path. Find White Memorial Conservation Center at 80 Whitehall Road.

### 5. Red Trail, Kent Falls State Park

- This simple hike is under one mile and leads to a jaw-dropping scene. One of the state's most stunning waterfalls waits at the end of this easy trail. Bring a picnic and spend some time at this gorgeous natural wonder. Kent Falls State Park is located at 462 Kent Cornwall Road.

### 6. Michael Donnelly Preserve Trail, South Windsor

- Glide across the marsh on this beautiful boardwalk trail. The 2.5-mile wetland walk will afford you many chances to enjoy the surrounding habitat. Enjoy the scenic journey at 1165 Sullivan Ave.

### 7. Roaring Brook Nature Center, Canton

- Soak in the natural surroundings on a few different trails at Roaring Brook Nature Center. Meander through the woods for a bit of reflection as you take in the scenic paths. Afterward visit the outdoor gardens, beaver wetland exhibit and nature center. Visit Roaring Brook Nature Center at 70 Gracey Road.

### 8. Boardwalk Trail, Milford

- This short and simple hike at the Connecticut Audubon Society Coastal Center at Milford Point takes you across the marsh and lands you on a stunning beach. Enjoy the sounds of coastal birds and tidal waters as you journey through this shoreline oasis. Visit the Connecticut Audubon Society Coastal Center at Milford Point at 1 Milford Point Road.



Source: <https://www.onlyinyourstate.com/connecticut/>



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## TRADITIONAL FINNISH CARDAMOM BREAD

Submitted by Dr. Constance Green

Folks, don't save this bread for Christmas! Serve with hot or iced tea on any summer afternoon under the summer sky—and it will keep you just as good company on a wintery day as well.

I like cutting this bread into ½-inch slices. Serving with butter and my favorite chia jam (published in the June 1 Villager) makes a delightful teatime addition. Also, you can add some seasonal fruits like nectarines, fresh blueberries or strawberries to that chia jam. Yum!

### Ingredients

- 1 2/3 cups milk, heated to 110–115°F (no warmer)
- 2/3 cup coconut sugar
- 4 teaspoons ground cardamom, divided
- 2 (½ oz.) packages active dry yeast
- 3 eggs, slightly beaten, plus 1 egg yolk
- ½ cup organic white whole wheat flour
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 5 tablespoons pastured butter, cut into ½-inch cubes and brought to room temperature (do not melt)
- 1 tablespoon heavy cream + 2 tsp vanilla
- 1–2 tablespoons per loaf almond paste (marzipan)
- Sliced almonds, for garnishing



### Instructions

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle, combine the warmed milk, coconut sugar, 3 teaspoons of the ground cardamom and yeast. Stir together until foamy.
2. Add the 3 eggs and mix to combine. Next, add vanilla, flour and salt. Mix until a dough is formed.
3. Replace paddle with dough hook. On medium speed, knead dough for 2 minutes. While kneading, add butter 1 tablespoon at a time. After all the butter is incorporated, knead an additional 4–5 minutes. The dough will clear the bowl and be easy to handle.
4. Transfer dough to a greased bowl, cover, and let rise for 1 hour, or until doubled.
5. Divide dough in halves. Butter two 8x4-inch loaf pans, and arrange the divided dough in each pan. With a sharp knife or razor blade, cut a slit about 4 inches long on top of each loaf. Crumble the marzipan in each slit. Let loaves rise in pans for about 30 minutes. Meanwhile, preheat oven to 375°F.
6. Mix remaining 1 teaspoon cardamom, heavy cream and the egg yolk together. Brush over the loaves and place sliced almonds on the top.
7. Bake 25–30 minutes, or until golden. Cool 10 minutes before slicing. OV

## BROWNIE SWIRL CHEESECAKE

Submitted by Ken Block

### Ingredients:

- 1 8-oz. package brownie mix.
- 2 8-oz packages of softened cream cheese
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup milk chocolate pieces, melted

### Directions

Grease bottom of 9-inch springform pan. Prepare brownie mix as directed on package; pour batter evenly into springform pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes.

Combine cream cheese, sugar and vanilla with an electric mixer at medium speed, until well-blended.

Add eggs, one at a time, mixing well after each addition.

Pour mixture over brownie layer.

Spoon melted chocolate over cream cheese mixture; cut through batter with knife for marble effect.

Bake at 350 degrees for 35 minutes.

Loosen cake from rim of pan; cool before removing rim of pan, Chill.

Garnish with whipped cream and maraschino cherries, if desired. OV

10-12 servings

# WORK BY THE OV WRITER'S GROUP

## A WALK IN THE VILLAGE

© Robert D Macaluso, 2020

I didn't know her family name until I saw her photo and life story in the newspaper. Her warm smile was distinctive, easy to recognize, exactly what greeted me when I paused on my walks, "Good morning, Flo. Beautiful day... hydrangeas look great this year."

My comments mingled with those of other appreciative neighbors who stopped to admire, "What a colorful carpet of phlox! You take such good care of them, Flo." Her carefully tended perennials were reborn year after year to mingle with annual plantings of petunias and geraniums. The colorful blooms changed with the seasons and invited compliments and welcomed conversation.

I met her one cold autumn morning over a decade ago. I stopped to say "hello" and she interrupted, brushing a dusting of snow from the crimson sedums and yellow chrysanthemums in the flowerbed circling her lamppost. She fretted that it was going to be an early winter and I boasted that I'd soon be on my way to Florida. When I returned the following spring, a gray morning was brightened by a few lingering crocuses and hyacinths that were giving way to tulips and daffodils. Green sprouts poked through her other neat beds.

Everything was markedly different this year. I arrived home weeks later than usual; she was self-isolating. My "Good

morning, Flo" greeting became a wave of my hand to a masked, gray-haired woman who peered longingly from her window. I couldn't see her smile.

Bleeding hearts threatened to smother the budding perennials; weedy kudzu tangled and choked the clematis vines which were trying to climb the lamppost. Weeks later, overgrown untrimmed forsythia overhung the sidewalk and the neglected azaleas and rhododendrons needed pruning to foster next year's blossoms. Begonias, dahlias and calla lilies that had slept through the winter in large clay pots remained in a corner of the garage impatient to feel the warm spring sun, but that would not happen. In July, the fragrant roses that she would cut and share with neighbors dried on their stems. Summer's petals, shriveled foliage and withered stalks that needed to be removed to admit the next succession of blooms mingled with weeds in the normally pristine flower beds.

It's been many mornings since I saw her blue face mask and lonely eyes, but I recognized her smile gracing the newspaper photo above her life story. Flora Vitale had died from the dreaded virus after a short hospital stay. Her family, scattered around the country, announced "Services were private. In lieu of flowers family suggests memorial donations to your favorite charity."

**Author's Note:** *Flora Vitale is a fictitious character in a fictitious story and any resemblance to anyone living or dead is coincidental.*



The OV Book Club will resume its meetings on Wednesday, Sept. 2, at 2 p.m.  
via GoToMeeting.com.

(Instructions on how to attend the meeting will be announced at a later date.)

The book to be discussed on Sept. 2 is *Agent Running in the Field* by John Le Carre. *Agent Running in the Field* is a chilling portrait of our time, heartbreaking and darkly humorous, told to us with unflagging tension by the greatest chronicler of our age.

An excellent tale of an aging British intelligence agent tasked with facing down Moscow and her sleeper agents and a wife who disapproves of his role. The story takes readers across the expanse of modern Europe and deep into the vexing political landscape that is a staple of our current times.

Questions? Email Bahin Samimy at [bahinb@yahoo.com](mailto:bahinb@yahoo.com).



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- The speed limit is 20 miles per hour.
- Drivers must come to a complete halt at all stop signs.
- Pedestrians should walk facing traffic.
- When cars approach, walkers should form a single file.