

# The Hartford News

September 3 – 9, 2020



## SPECIAL EDITION DOWNTOWN HARTFORD IS COMING BACK

Some of Downtown Hartford's normal hustle and bustle is returning following the worst of the COVID-19 shutdown. See inside for a look at Downtown's past six months and its future.

# A WORK IN PROGRESS

## Downtown Hartford's Road to Recovery

Almost everyone in the world has a memory of the moment when the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020 turned from rumor into reality.

That moment hit the Greater Hartford area on Tuesday, March 10, when the City of Hartford canceled the annual Saint Patrick's Day Parade, which had been scheduled for that Saturday, March 14.

We had been reading reports about the virus since late 2019. Curiosity gave way to increasing anxiety in January and February as lock-downs were instituted in China, Europe and other parts of the world.

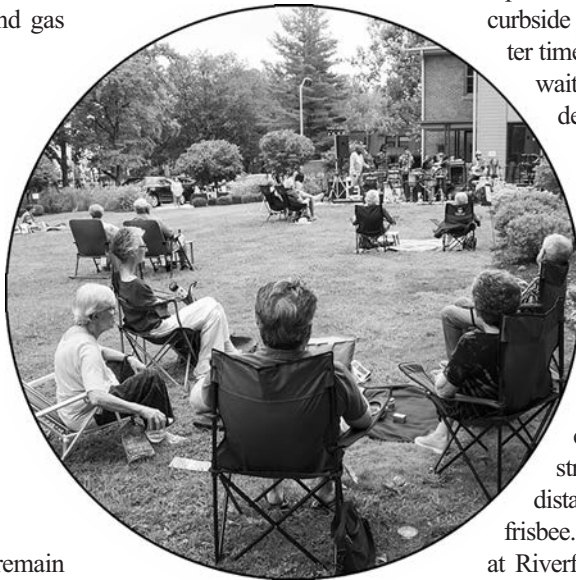
And now it was here.

And the cancellation of the Saint Patrick's Day Parade was just a hint of what was to come. Soon every other major public event – from the Puerto Rican Parade to the Greater Hartford Jazz Fest – was cancelled or went virtual as well. The Hartford Yard Goats canceled their season; churches closed.

In just a few days in mid-March, the world changed. It seemed as though all the simple pleasures in life were suddenly forbidden, from handshakes and hugs to eating at a

restaurant and going to the movies. In the initial phase of the COVID-19 pandemic shutdown under the direction of Governor Ned Lamont, only essential businesses like grocery stores and gas

*A socially distanced crowd attends an outdoor concert on the grounds of the Butler-McCook House on Thursday, August 13. Downtown Hartford's cultural institutions are all developing ways to recover from the COVID-19 shutdown (see page 4).*



stations were allowed to remain open. Restaurants were limited to take-out and delivery service. Office workers worked from home.

One by one, Hartford's cultural institutions closed their doors to the public and went online with virtual programs and events.

By the end of March, the lock-down had transformed Downtown

Hartford into an strange, eerie place. As the natural world began to blossom, the human world went into hibernation. The streets of

Downtown were almost empty of pedestrians, most shops and restaurants were dark. Hotels went dark, some lighting their windows in the shape of a heart as a thank you to healthcare workers. Cars whizzed along empty highways, even at rush hour. Parking spots were plentiful;

good news was not.

About two dozen downtown restaurants remained open even during the height of the pandemic in April. They delivered food, provided curbside pick-up and waited for better times. Others closed down and waited to see how the situation developed.

But as spring began to bloom and the weather started to warm up, people started to come to Downtown Hartford not for a play or a fancy dinner, but for the oldest form of entertainment: the great outdoors. People came to Bushnell Park to stroll, jog and play socially-distanced games of cricket and frisbee. Exercise classes were held at Riverfront Plaza and many new people were exposed to the beauty of walking, running and biking along the banks of the Connecticut River.

The first big step on the road to recovery came on May 20 when Phase I of the governor's four-phase recovery plan went into effect. Restaurants were allowed to have outdoor dining and many other

"non-essential" businesses were allowed to re-open. Strict rules had to be followed to prevent the further spread of the virus, but it was a step in the right direction. Two weeks later, hair salons and barber shops got the green light to re-open.

On June 17, following the state's progress in limiting the spread of the virus, Phase II began. Restaurants were allowed to have indoor dining if they followed strict social distancing regulations. Capacity was limited to 50% of normal, as it was at gyms, fitness centers and most other businesses and institutions that were allowed to re-open. Outdoor events were allowed with limited capacity.

Despite the easing of restrictions, many businesses and institutions remained closed, feeling that the risks still outweighed the benefits.

But others have gone ahead, although with limited services. The Downtown Branch of Hartford Public Library re-opened on Monday, July 13. But only the ground floor was open for patrons to use computers and other

Continued on page 12

## DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

# Reconnecting with Hartford's Neighborhoods, North and South

When Hartford's street system was being laid down in the late 19th century, almost all roads led – quite literally – to Downtown. At that time, Downtown Hartford was the undisputed retail, cultural and commercial center of the city and the region.

In the mid-20th century, however, Downtown began to grow increasingly isolated from the rest of the city. Residential areas Downtown were cleared out for urban renewal projects like Constitution Plaza.

As the 20th century progressed, more and more Downtown workers moved to the suburbs. Getting in and out of Downtown – and finding a place to park – became the primary concerns. I-84 cut Downtown off from the surrounding neighborhoods to the north and west and I-91 cut it off from the Connecticut River. This isolation was increased by the addition of many surface parking lots built on the outskirts of Downtown.

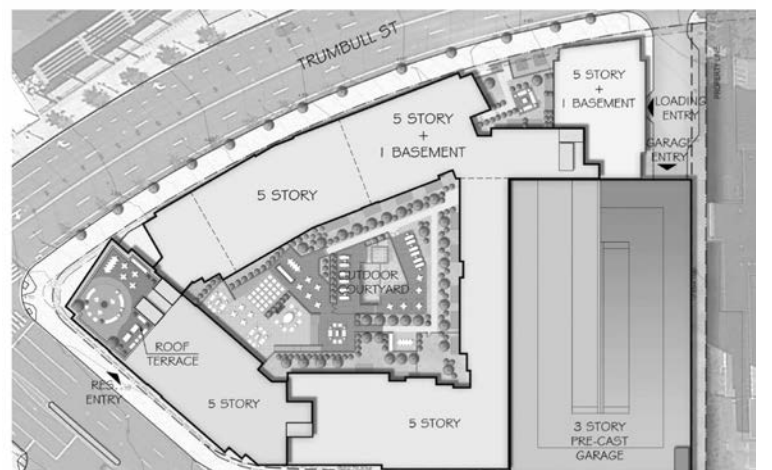
By the late 20th century, it was becoming increasingly clear that this isolation was not good for either Downtown or the rest of the city. A first step forward was Riverfront Recapture, founded in 1981 to reconnect Hartford to the Connecticut River. After years of work, Riverfront Plaza opened in Downtown Hartford in 1999, reconnecting Downtown with the river and East Hartford as well.

Around the same time, state and city leaders began pushing for more residential space in Downtown Hartford. Under the leadership of the Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA), this initiative has seen many successes in the past few years. Several residential complexes have been built Downtown and more are on the way. As a result, Downtown has become more like a neighborhood and less like an office park in the past decade.

Now construction will soon start on two projects that will help



The mixed-use complex above will soon be rising at the long abandoned corner of Park and Main Streets, just south of Downtown Hartford. North of Downtown the DoNo (DOWntown NOrth) project includes a wide variety of housing and commercial space around Dunkin Donuts Stadium. The first phase will be at Parcel C (right), just south of the stadium.



reconnect Downtown with the neighborhoods to the north and south.

In the north, the DoNo (DOWntown NOrth) project is moving forward. The overall project is estimated to cost approximately \$215 million and at this time is envisioned to consist of 794 residential units and 59,600 square feet

of retail and commercial space built on several properties surrounding Dunkin Donuts Stadium. The project is expected to take six years.

The first phase of the overall construction project will concentrate on what developers have labeled "Parcel C," a triangular-shaped property located along Trumbull

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### THE HARTFORD NEWS

Publishers .....Jon Harden  
.....Lynne Lumsden  
Managing Editor .....Andy Hart  
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Spanish Editor .....Wilfredo Ayala  
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.....David Samuels  
.....Donna Swarr  
.....Tom Swarr  
.....Maricarmen Cajahuaringa

Published by Southside Media  
563 Franklin Ave., Hartford, CT 06114  
(860) 296-6128 FAX 866-875-3785 • E-Mail:  
hartfordnews@aol.com

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# Snapshots from Six Months We'll Never Forget



Cars line up on Jefferson Street for Hartford Hospital's COVID-19 Drive-Through Testing Site in mid-March. At that time, Hartford Hospital and Saint Francis Hospital were the only testing sites in Hartford. By June, there were 10 permanent testing sites in Hartford in addition to temporary "pop-up" sites all over the city. Initial tests required a doctor's order; currently virtually anyone who wants to be tested can do so for free.



In April, workers from the City of Hartford Public Works Department placed masks on over a dozen of the city's most prominent statues (including at the Corning Fountain in Bushnell Park, above). The purpose of the effort was to remind and encourage people to wear masks while out in public – and to add a touch of humor to a grim month. Masks are still required in places where social distancing is not possible.



The first phase of Governor Ned Lamont four-phase recovery plan went into effect on May 20. Among other things, restaurants were allowed to have outdoor dining again. To assist downtown restaurants with limited or no outdoor seating, Pratt Street was closed to traffic at lunchtime and chairs and tables were set up. Chip McCabe of the Hartford Business Improvement District is shown laying down a sign to encourage social distancing.



In June, the COVID-19 pandemic was knocked out of the headlines by the wave of massive protests across the nation sparked by the death of George Floyd on May 25th at the hands of Minneapolis police. Downtown Hartford saw many marches and rallies with thousands of people supporting the Black Lives Matter movement, including this one on June 19. Protests in Hartford tapered off but continued in July and August.



With virtually everything closed during the pandemic, Hartford's magnificent park system gained a new popularity. Downtown Hartford's Bushnell Park played host to everything from cricket matches to ballet practice. Shown above are dancers Brian Syms, Jr., Alex Zarlengo and Caroline Payne. In April, Payne had a led a neighborhood sing-along from the second floor of her West End home.



Riverfront Recapture and the Hartford Marathon Foundation held their first 5K Scramble Run of the year on August 15 from Riverfront Plaza to Riverside Park and back again. In past years, hundreds of runners had jammed together for similar events but, for obvious reasons, crowds were smaller and less dense this year. Still, it was great to be out again and running with friends, as the gesture of the woman at center seems to be showing.

# Downtown Hartford's Cultural Gems Face COVID-19

## Different Institutions Craft Different Solutions

### Hartford Public Library

**500 Main St., [hplct.org](http://hplct.org):** The Downtown Branch of Hartford Public Library re-opened to the public in July. Only the first floor is open for public use of computers, fax machines and other services. Contact-less pick-up of books, DVDs and other materials that have been pre-requested is still being done on Arch Street. All branch libraries remain closed, but the library is still doing a wide variety of online programming

### Wadsworth Atheneum

**600 Main St., [thewadsworth.org](http://thewadsworth.org):** The Wadsworth will re-open to the public this Labor Day weekend (open Saturday, September 5th; Sunday, September 6th; Monday, September 7th). Capacity controls, enhanced cleaning, and timed

entry (in line with the governor's Reopen Connecticut guidelines) will help ensure a safe environment. Admission will be free through November 15, but online reservations are needed in advance to secure your entrance time and allow for contact tracing (go to: [thewadsworth.org/visit/](http://thewadsworth.org/visit/)). Following the holiday weekend, the galleries will be open to the public on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays noon-5pm. Preregistration is encouraged for all visits and we will do our best to accommodate walk-ups based on availability.

### Connecticut Science Center

**250 Columbus Blvd., [ctsciencecenter.org](http://ctsciencecenter.org):** The Connecticut Science Center has re-opened to the public. Please see story on page 11.



Martha Kayser (left) and Aekyung Kim (right) were part of a string quartet from the Hartford Symphony Orchestra which played the Pratt Street Picnic on Friday, August 28. Other members of the quartet were Lisa Rautenburg and Jeff Krieger. Like many other local cultural institutions that had to cancel its main events, Hartford Symphony Orchestra has remained active with online activities and small performances, such as the one above. (Hart photo)

### Old State House

**800 Main St., [cga.ct.gov/osh](http://cga.ct.gov/osh):** Due to COVID-19 concerns, the interior of Connecticut's Old State House is closed until further notice, although the grounds are still open to the public. The Old State House Farmers Market will be operating 10 am to 2 pm on Tuesdays and Fridays through October 30. In addition, three outdoor concerts will be held on the Old State House lawn from 12-1 pm this month: Friday, September 11, The Kenn Morr Band; Friday, September 18, Nelson Bello Latin Jazz Trio; and Friday, September 25, Illuminous. All concerts are free. Please wear your mask and follow social distancing regulations.

### Butler-McCook House & Garden

**396 Main St. Isham-Terry House**  
**211 High St. [ctlandmarks.org/events](http://ctlandmarks.org/events).** The Butler-McCook House & Garden and Isham Terry House in Hartford are both open for tours by advance reservation. \$10 for Adults and \$5 for Children. Masks and social distancing required. Call (860) 247-8996 x 11 to book. The Antiquarian and Landmarks Society, which manages both sites, is currently working on a fall schedule of online and in-person events. Please check the website [ctlandmarks.org/events](http://ctlandmarks.org/events) for details as they become available.



## HARTFORD BLOOMS

### Presents Hartford Blooms Heritage Tours 2020

Friday, Saturday & Sunday ~ September 11, 12 & 13

Free Parking at the Land Rover Hartford Showroom ~ Boxed Lunches Available to Order  
Cost: \$20 per person/per tour\*

Please indicate dates and sessions of attending by checking one or more of the boxes below. Tour options will include by bus, following in your own automobile or a virtual tour. All tours will start and end at Land Rover Hartford, 77 Weston Street, Hartford.

#### Tour 1

Cedar Hill Cemetery; "Mount Trashmore";  
Historic House Garden; Coltsville "Window Tour";  
Keney Park Experimental Garden

- Fri, Sept. 11, 10am - 1pm  
 Sat, Sept. 12, 10am - 1pm  
 Sun, Sept. 13, 10am - 1pm

#### Tour 2

Keney Park Experimental Garden; Elizabeth Park  
Antique Rose Garden; Historic House Garden;  
KNOX Lands & Greenhouse; "Hidden Garden"

- Fri, Sept. 11, 2pm-5pm  
 Sat, Sept. 12, 2pm-5pm  
 Sun, Sept. 13, 2pm-5pm

#### Lunch

\*Cost of lunch is in addition to cost of tour. Please pay of the day of the tour. The lunch break and lecture will run from 1-2 pm and is open to participants in both the 1st and 2nd tours.

- Yes! I will be ordering \_\_ (quantity) boxed lunches.**  
**(Lunch cost is additional; menu provided the day of the tour)**
- No, thank you. I will skip the lunch but may attend the lecture.**

#### Tickets

Your \$20 admission includes a full-color tour booklet, which serves as your ticket. To pay by check, make check payable and mail to: **Hartford Blooms/KofC, 140 Farmington Avenue, Hartford, CT 06105** (along with this form). To pay by credit card, please go to our website: [www.HartfordBlooms.gdn](http://www.HartfordBlooms.gdn). If you have any questions, call 860-422-7937.

Please reserve me \_\_ (quantity) tickets @\$20 each for a total of \$\_\_

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsored by the Richard Garmany Fund, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, and Land Rover Hartford

### Riverfront Recapture



Riverfront Recapture rowing class on the Connecticut River

**riverfront.org:** All Riverfront Recapture parks and trails are now open. Some trails had to be closed briefly while staff removed fallen trees and branches following Tropical Storm Isaias in early August. Another round of rowing classes (single-person boats only) is now accepting registration, go to [riverfront.org/rowing](http://riverfront.org/rowing) to sign up.

### Hartford Symphony Orchestra

Due to COVID-19 restrictions and concerns, Hartford Symphony Orchestra (HSO) has decided to cancel the first three Masterworks concerts of the 20-21 season: *Bernstein & Copland* (October 2-4, 2020), *Mendelssohn's Italian* (November 6-8, 2020), and *Tchaikovsky &*

# Read All About It

*As school begins in the time of Coronavirus, UConn Barnes & Noble Downtown stays the course*

BY ANNE GOSHDIGIAN

Just a few days before the start of classes at the University of Connecticut's Hartford campus, store manager Laurie Bompert looked around at the well-stocked but eerily quiet bookstore. Traditionally, this is "rush" time at college bookstores across the country. There'd be a steady line of customers at the cash registers waiting to pay for textbooks, school supplies, UConn logo merchandise, and assorted sundries. Most of the 30 staff members would be kept busy from the store opening at 8 a.m. until closing time 12 hours later, 7 days a week. But the pandemic has been a game-changer. The rush staff now consists of four employees, plus three more working at the Starbucks outlet a few steps below the selling floor. In spite of that, Laurie—a Hartford native—was her usual upbeat self as she ticked off the changes that have occurred in the

Black culture—especially children's books by Black authors, something we never stocked before—and books about Trump and politics. We're not selling a lot of frivolous stuff right now." She mentioned her personal preferences: "As a book person, I can't do escapism during this time. I also watch a lot of documentaries." There's been a lot of conversation in recent years about the future of the printed word. How does someone on the inside view that? According to Laurie, "I think books will be here until the end of time because they've been here since the beginning of time. I have never been someone who thought E-books, audio books, and the Kindle or Nook would take over." As for student texts, "Almost every book we carry has an E-book option, but it's the physical books that fly off the shelves; very few request E-books." As a bookstore that's been host to



Laurie Bompert (left), Manager of the UCONN Barnes & Noble in Downtown Hartford at a book signing last November. (File photo)

day-to-day operation of the business. "There are fewer physical customers. About 80% of our sales are done online; it's all shipment in and out." She mentioned that the store hours have been reduced—9 a.m.-3 p.m. Monday-Friday. With remote learning still in place since the spring semester, Laurie said "UConn's classes are about only 18% in-person, and those are mostly labs." And the new normal also includes several precautions that have to be taken by both staff and customers. Masks must be worn, hand sanitizer is available at both entrances, the floors are marked for social distancing, and ID's are not touched. "We also disinfect everything a half-hour before closing."

Occupying a much smaller space than other area Barnes & Noble stores in West Hartford, Glastonbury, and Manchester, nevertheless the Downtown location has an impressive and comprehensive selection of non-text ("general") books for sale, as well as art supplies, gift items, and greeting cards. "We were one of the first places open for business. Before that it was a ghost town down here", said Laurie. So what have people been buying and reading during the past six months? Escapist fare such as novels, poetry, and biographies? Surprisingly, she said that no, the most popular choices have been related to current affairs. "Anything related to Black Lives Matter and

frequent author events over the years, Laurie feels the loss of those gatherings this year. Several events slated for this past March—including one at the Bushnell featuring four noted authors—had to be cancelled due to the pandemic, as well as the very popular "Books on Pratt" showcase for local authors that was a success in its first two years—September 2018 and 2019—but won't be happening in 2020. The store stocks the works of many of them. "Events are on the back burner, but I'm trying to think of something that involves no fear, possibly outdoors", she said. In the meantime, UConn Barnes & Noble Downtown is—as always—ready to take special orders, and offers shipping (including overseas) and curbside pickup, all of the above available by calling 860-263-2260. Business hours are also for browsing the store's well-curated stock. Right now, many items are also on sale at 30% or more off the original price, including some clothing. Of interest to local shoppers, Laurie's hoping to begin stocking casual clothing such as hoodies, tees, and sweats that bear the names, logos, and colors of Hartford's oldest public high schools: HPHS, Weaver, and Bulkeley, bound to be popular with alumni. B&N may be a chain, but hometown girl Laurie Bompert has put the Hartford stamp all over the Downtown location.

# Downtown's Dining Scene Comes Back to Life



Like businesses across the state and the country, the COVID-19 shutdown was been a tough time for Downtown Hartford restaurants. But as restrictions eased and spring turned to summer, the outlook became brighter. Outdoor dining business was assisted by one of the driest summers in memory. Now, with the beginning of fall just a few weeks away, more restaurants are re-opening, including Black-Eyed Sally's, Max Downtown and the Arch Street Tavern. The Russell will soon be opening in its new spot on Allyn Street after many years of success at the corner of Pratt and Trumbull Streets.

Below is a list of current dining options downtown. Many restaurant also now utilize various food delivery services, such as Grub Hub and Uber Eats, please check the restaurant's website for a full list of options. While we have tried to make this list as accurate and up-to-date as possible, dining options continue to change. It's always a good idea to call ahead to determine your chosen eater's current situation. (All restaurants located in Downtown Hartford; all area codes 860 unless otherwise noted.)

Agave Grill	100 Allyn St	882-1557	Indoor/Outdoor/Take-out
Alladin Pizzeria	100 Allyn St	278-0202	Take-out & Delivery
Arch Street Tavern	86 Arch St	246-7610	Opening soon
Artichoke Basille	114 Asylum St.	969-6128	Closed until further notice
Bahn Mee	399 Capitol Ave 130 Ann Uccello St	880-2264	Take-out & delivery only; dine-in service later this fall
Bear's BBQ	25 Front St.	785-8772	Indoor/Outdoor/Take-out
Bin 228	228 Pearl St	244-9463	Closed until further notice
Black Eyed Sally's	350 Asylum St	278-7427	Opening Soon
Burger King	811 Main St	246-2442	Indoor//Take-out
Capital Grille	44 Front St	244-0075	Indoor/Outdoor/Take-out
City Steam Brewery	942 Main St	525-1600	Opening September 14
Dhaba Wala	49 Asylum St	232-1500	Indoor/Outdoor/Take-out
Donde Julio Rest.	83 Park St	724-3379	Take-out only
El Poeta	22 Pratt St	231-1268	Indoor/Take-out
El Pollo Guapo	26 Front St	246-2800	Indoor/Outdoor/Take-out
Feng Chophouse	93 Asylum St	549-3364	Scheduled to open in September
Fornarelli's Rest.	283 Asylum St	244-2016	Indoor/Outdoor/Take-out
Freshii	892 Main St	900-0231	Temporarily Closed
Max's Downtown	185 Asylum St	522-2530	Opening later this month
Peppercorn's Grill	357 Main St	547-1714	Indoor/Outdoor/Take-out
Pietro's Pizza	942 Main St	722-9514	Indoor/Outdoor/Take-out
Polish National Home	60 Charter Oak Ave	247-1784	Indoor/Outdoor/Take-out
Red Rock Tavern	369 Capitol Ave	246-4527	Indoor/Outdoor/Take-out
Republic at The Linden	10 Capitol Ave	310-3269	Private events & catering
Rushbowls Hartford	15 Front St	993-1747	Indoor/Outdoor/Take-out
Salute Restaurant	100 Trumbull St	899-1350	Indoor/Outdoor/Take-out
Sorella	901 Main St	244-9084	Indoor/Outdoor/Take-out
Spice Venue	81 Asylum St	244-0000	Indoor & Take-out
Stella's African Eatery	461 Capitol Ave	308-2175	Take-out
Story & Soil Coffee	387 Capitol Ave	540-3987	Indoor/Outdoor/Take-out
Sunberry	65 Pratt St	241-0811	Outdoor & Take-out
Ted's Montana Grill	35 Front Street	692-1167	Temporarily Closed
The Blind Pig	89 Arch St	744-4333	Indoor/Outdoor/Take-out
The Place 2 Be Downtown	5 Constitution Plaza		Opening in October
The Russell	187 Allyn St	727-4014	Opening Soon
The Tavern Downtown	201 Ann Uccello St	524-9990	Indoor/Outdoor/Take-out
Toasted	188 Asylum St	855-558-6278	Temporarily Closed
Trumbull Kitchen	150 Trumbull St	493-741	Indoor/Outdoor/Take-out
V's Trattoria	280 Trumbull St	904 5453	Indoor/Outdoor/Take-out



## A Brand New Community Has Developed in Coltsville... Stop By!

Samuel Colt is credited with introducing some of the key elements of modern industry to the Connecticut River Valley, the nation, and the world. He and his wife, Elizabeth Jarvis Colt, were the hammer and anvil that forged the modern factory system and changed society in the process. The genius of Samuel and the philanthropic activities of Elizabeth were key in creating the city we know today.

Today, with many cities such as Hartford bereft of the manufacturing



Full moon rising over the Colt Dome.

base that once fueled an economy that benefitted many, we see the rise of Coltsville as a new major player in the city that has spurred "A Steady Revival," according to the Hartford Courant.

A \$120 million redevelopment has brought the Colt factory back to life as a new hub of education, commerce, and residence, under the leadership of Larry Dooley of CG Management. Of course, it has taken a lot of financial support from the project's major investors: Chevron, United Bank, and CRDA.

Manufacturing is back; offices are back; an architectural firm has moved in; and schools occupy significant space. All 129 apartments are occupied, 48 additional units have come online and a National Park is in the process of being created.

With the development of the last major piece of the Colt Complex, the North Armory with its iconic blue onion dome, now complete, the old factory's transformation will be complete. Coltsville serves as a source of pride for not only the city of Hartford but the state of Connecticut as well.

The future will bring another 26 new apartment units and a gym facility in the u-shaped building on the north side of the Colt factory complex. Completion of this phase is scheduled for next year.

Retail space at Colt Gateway will soon be available to serve residents, neighbors and visitors.

Finally, the successful Hooker Brewery on the ground floor of the west side of the Colt Gateway complex will soon be expanding.

## A National Park in Progress

The area surrounding the former Colt Factory is in the process of becoming a National Park.



1. **Samuel Colt Memorial:** The memorial depicts two Samuel Colts - the young boy and the successful businessman.



2. **Colt's Patent Firearms Manufacturing Complex:** The machines and manufacturing techniques developed launched the second industrial revolution.



Photo circa 1870

3. **Armsmear:** The Colts had Armsmear constructed to mark their marriage. It is now a private residence for women.



4. **Colt Park:** Colt Park was originally part of the Colt's estate.



5. **Church of the Good Shepherd:** Elizabeth Colt built the Church in memory of her husband.



Aerial view of Coltsville, now in the process of becoming a National Park.



6. **Caldwell Hart Colt Memorial Parish House:** The Parish House was built in memory of the Colts' son, Caldwell.



7. **Armory Worker Houses:** Colt built 20 multi-family houses for worker housing.



8. **Potsdam Village:** The Village was fashioned after Potsdam Germany to recruit willow workers from Germany.

## TODAY'S Colt Gateway Colt Gateway Occupants

- 177 Residential apartments
- CG Management Company
- Connecticut Innovations
- CREC - Greater Hartford Academy of Arts
- Foley Carrier Services - Trucking Compliance Service
- Green Box - IS
- Hooker Brewery at Colt (some food available; the brewery will soon be expanded)
- Insurity - Insurance Software Company
- JCJ Architecture - Architectural Services
- Maier Design Group
- Office of Senator Christopher Murphy
- Tecton Architects
- Tom & Sam's Cafe
- Wellness Federal Credit Union

For apartment and commercial space inquiries, contact: **The Coltsville Leasing Office, 140 Huyshope Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106, 860-522-5000 ext 15, or leasing@coltgateway.com**

# Hartford Parks Gain New Popularity During COVID-19 Shutdown

The suddenness of the COVID-19 shutdown left many people at a loss. It seemed like the whole world had closed down. There were no plays, no concerts, no parades, no restaurants, no bars, no dance clubs, no festivals, no charity runs and even no church services.

What was one to do? Equally important, what was one to do with all the kids who were suddenly out of school?

Fortunately, Hartford's magnificent park system remained open, although the City decided to shut the park's parking lots to prevent large gatherings.

In Downtown Hartford, Bushnell Park and Riverfront Recapture's parks and trails came to the rescue.

With the coming of spring, people came to the parks to walk, jog and bike. They played cricket and



Seven and Nia McCauley play in Bushnell Park in March, shortly after the COVID-19 shutdown began.



While Riverfront Recapture had to cancel all of its major events this year, its trails and parks were often full of joggers, walkers, bikers and even this informal group of talented local break dancers who brought their own stage to Riverfront Plaza and practiced once or twice a week this summer.

tossed a football around. They enjoyed picnics.

Down at Charter Oak Landing, just south of Downtown Hartford, anglers lined the shore in May hoping to catch striped bass. Normally a satwater fish, striped bass leave their normal swimming grounds in Long Island Sound and beyond each spring to chase and feed off the large schools of alewives that swim up the river to spawn.

Initially, playscapes at city parks were closed, but they're all open

now. Unfortunately, the Bushnell Park Carousel has been closed until further notice and probably won't open again until next spring.

Although many businesses, and restaurants and a few institutions, such as the Wadsworth Atheneum, are opening up again, entertainment options in Hartford remain limited.

So our parks will continue to draw crowds as the leaves turn and add a dash of brilliant color to what has been quite a dreary year,



Youngsters cool off their feet in the Connecticut River at Riverside Park, just north of Downtown Hartford. For many, the COVID-19 shutdown was a time to rediscover the simple pleasures of life.

## Dance Festival Saturday

A coalition of several local dance groups will host the Columns Dance Festival this Saturday, September 5. From 2-6 pm there will be dance classes in a variety of styles, including contemporary, combo, and ballet. This will be followed at 7:30 pm with a performance featuring dancers from all over the region, including Ballet Hartford, The Royal Czyn Dance Company, Distinct Movement, IMMIX Dance Project and Sonia Plumb Dance Company. Tickets are required for both the classes and the performance. To purchase, go to: [columnsdance.com/events](http://columnsdance.com/events). All ticket holders will be required to provide email address and phone numbers per Hartford authorities for contact tracing. All ticket holders must wear a mask until they are ushered and seated in their own pod.

**WE CAN SEE YOUR PET AT NIGHT**  
**EMERGENCIES 24 / 7**  
**Sunday & Evening Well Care Appointments**



**PET E.R.**



**CONNECTICUT VETERINARY CENTER**

**860-233-8564**

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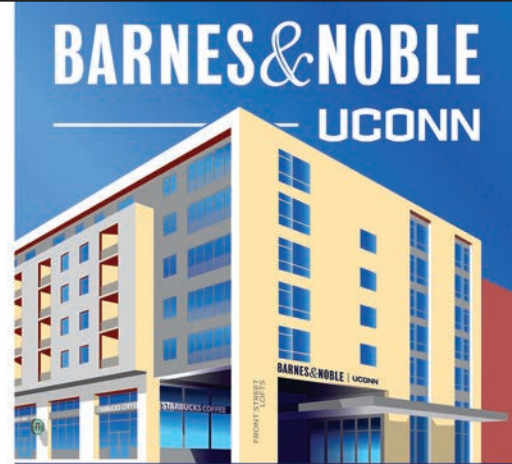
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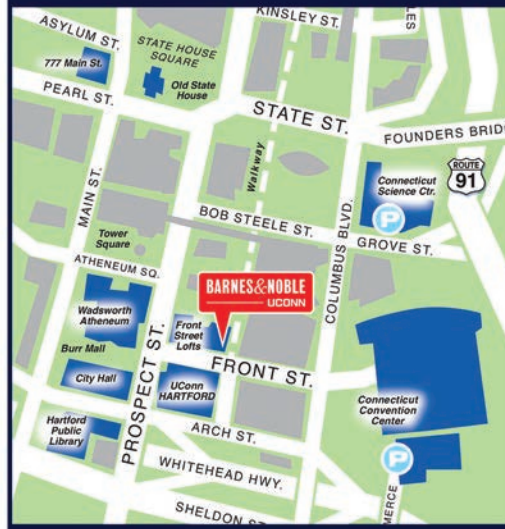
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## OPP Light Up The Darkness Run For Equity in Downtown Hartford Postponed to Saturday, September 12

Our Piece of the Pie (OPP) will host a free, non-competitive 5k run to raise funds for the Hartford Youth Service Corps on Saturday, September 12.

The event had originally been scheduled for this past Saturday, August 29, but was postponed due to forecasts of heavy rain.

The Light Up The Darkness run will begin at 8 p.m. sharp at the Pump House at Bushnell Park and end at Agave on Allyn Street for a socially distant celebration. The run will adhere to state/city guidelines surrounding public gatherings. Please remember to bring your own hand sanitizer and face

coverings!

The focus of this event is to raise awareness for the need of Equity in our communities and to raise awareness about the work of Our Piece of the Pie and the Youth Service Corps in Hartford. The event will be co-hosted by NODADBOD, a local organization focused on self-betterment.

The Youth Service Corps, powered by OPP, is an integral part of

a Hartford plan engaging youth in their futures, education, and employment through a year of paid service-learning projects. Corps members have completed over 250,000 hours of community service-learning projects, earning nearly \$3 million in wages.

For more information on Saturday's event, go to: [opp.org/lightupthedarkness/](http://opp.org/lightupthedarkness/)



***Our church reopens for Sunday Worship on September 13!***

Downtown Hartford at the corner of Main & Gold Streets

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### **New Flea Market Coming September 12!**

The new Capital Flea Market will open Saturday, September 12, at 1 Pequot Street, located off Market Street just north of Downtown Hartford.

The market will be open from 7am - 4pm on Saturdays and Sundays through November 29.

The new market will have a wide range of items, including food, clothes, shoes, jewelry, art, hair and skin care products and much more.

Admission is free; parking is available for \$5.

The Capital Flea Market will comply with all COVID-19 restrictions. You must wear a face mask and follow entrance and exit pathways. Please maintain an adequate distance from other shoppers when possible.



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## IQUILT NEWS

# Winterfest is a Go!

In the midst of a crazy year, progress continues on many fronts to improve Hartford. Many of the projects are small in nature, but together begin to make significant changes.

The biggest and brightest is Winterfest. As of today, Winterfest Hartford will open on Friday, November 27. Our \$250,000 fundraising goal still needs to be met, but we are hoping the community will come together once again and help us make this amazing event happen again this year. There will be many changes to comply with CDC and State guidelines during the coronavirus. More information to come, but if you want to help us reach that goal head to the [WinterfestHartford.com](http://WinterfestHartford.com) website to make a donation.

There are several projects the iQuilt Partnership is working on, including new lighting on Main Street between Gold and Wells Streets. In addition,

with the Bushnell Park Foundation and the City of Hartford, outside funding was secured to upgrade the lighting system and replace some windows and doors at the Bushnell Park Pump House.

Using a Federal grant we are working with the City to put a permanent bump out where the painted corner had been on Charter Oak and Main Streets, to slow down traffic as people turn the corner. There will also be some traffic calming added on the corner of Prospect

and Charter Oak. Final designs are being worked on and construction is expected next spring.

We were also thrilled this year to partner with #capave and the Frog Hollow NRZ to assist with their parklet between Lawrence and Babcock Streets. If you have not already, take a nice walk down and enjoy the outdoor seating and restaurants in this beautiful weather.

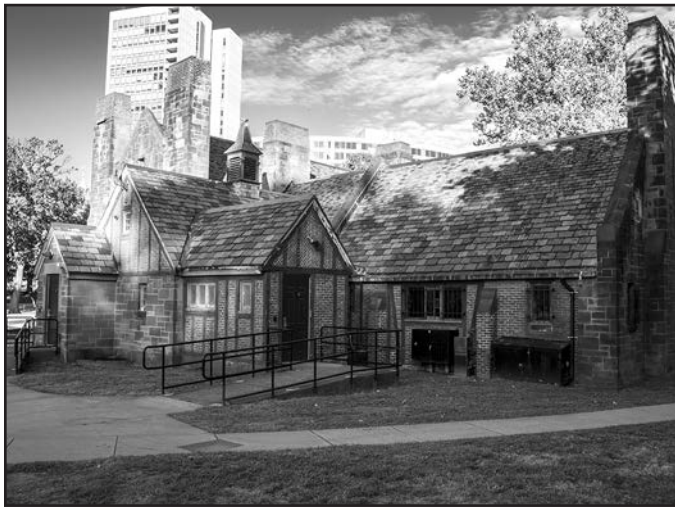
We continue to strive for Bushnell Garden's development. This new park at the corner of Gold, Lewis, and Jewell Streets has a large fundraising goal, a challenge this year. As a result, we plan to start developing it in pieces. If you're interested in ways to help move this project forward, we would love to hear from you. This project will help us connect Bushnell Park to Main Street and provide the completion of the "GreenWalk," a one mile walk from the state capital to the

Connecticut river.

Finally, we continue to work towards our 15-year future with Hartford400. Check out [hartford400.org](http://hartford400.org) to learn more about what we've heard so far, what is underway, and add your visions for the future. We are especially interested in recruiting young adults to have conversations with their peers about their aspirations, as the future is their present to claim.



(Above) Winterfest ice skating in December 2020; (below) the iQuilt Partnerships has helped secure funding for repairs to the Bushnell Park Pump House.



## Downtown Cultural Institutions

Continued from page 4

*Grieg* (December 4-6, 2020). The October 30, 2020 POPS! performance of *The Empire Strikes Back in Concert* has also been cancelled. HSO is working to develop compelling alternative forms of fall programming, with details to be announced after Labor Day. This fall, HSO is planning to feature several exciting subscriber and donor-exclusive events, including both virtual experiences and intimate, in-person performances.

### Hartford Stage

**50 Church St., [hartfordstage.org](http://hartfordstage.org):** Due to the pandemic, Hartford Stage has decided to cancel all onstage performances for the 2020/2021 season. This includes the previously postponed productions of *Ah Wilderness!* and *The Complete History of Comedy (Abridged)*, this year's production of *A Christmas Carol—A Ghost Story of Christmas*, and our 2020/2021 MainStage season. Ticket-holders who wish to donate the value of their ticket to Hartford Stage will gain exclusive access to various online programs. Go to [hartfordstage.org/covid-19-update/](http://hartfordstage.org/covid-19-update/) to find out more.

### TheaterWorks

**233 Pearl St., [twhartford.org](http://twhartford.org):** Due to the pandemic, TheaterWorks will not be presenting live shows for the remainder of its season. Instead, the theater will present an expanded line-up of online programming. Rather than its regular five show (in-person) season, TheaterWorks will be offering one new theatrical experience a month – that's twelve (12)

plays, developmental readings and musicals. Various package deals for individuals and households are available. Find out more at: [twhartford.org/membership\\_details/](http://twhartford.org/membership_details/)

### The Bushnell

**166 Capitol Ave., [bushnell.org](http://bushnell.org):** The Bushnell has no events scheduled through the end of this year at this time. The next scheduled show is *The Band's Visit* from January 20-24, 2021.

### XL Center

**1 Civic Center Plaza, [xlcenter.com](http://xlcenter.com):** No concerts are scheduled at the XL Center in the near-future. Sporting events are still planned with COVID-19 restrictions and guidelines in place. The American Hockey League is planning to start its 2020-21 season in early December and it is expected the Hartford Wolf Pack will begin playing games at the XL at that time.

### Outdoor Talk at the Atheneum Sept. 9

The Wadsworth Atheneum will continue its series of outdoor art talk with "The Facades of the Wadsworth Atheneum" on Wednesday, September 9 at 12:00 noon. A tour of the museum grounds highlights the history of the Wadsworth and sites significant to the development of the museum and its most renowned patrons. The tour will start from the Atheneum's Main Street entrance. Availability is limited and advance registration is required. To register, go to [www.thewadsworth.org](http://www.thewadsworth.org)



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## CT Science Center Open and Ready to Fascinate Young and Old!

The Connecticut Science Center is open for business and is excited to welcome the community. The Science Center staff have been working diligently to ensure that the enjoyable experience visitors have come to expect continues to be healthy, safe, clean and exciting. Although things may look a little different, there are plenty of engaging experiences for science lovers of all ages.

Before re-opening, the Science Center assembled a health advisory board to ensure that every experience is safe and fun. As a result, the Connecticut Science Center instituted "Safety at Play" protocols to keep visitors and staff safe. As a result, you'll notice that sanitizer and wipes are provided for visitors to disinfect contact points, including interactive exhibits, before and/or after use. Science Center staff are also actively sanitizing and cleaning contact points throughout the facility, including exhibits, between uses. Each visitor and staff member is required to wear a face mask while at the Science Center and must pass through a touchless temperature scan upon entering. Timed entry tickets must be reserved online in advance of a guest's visit to manage the building capacity for safe distancing. Don't worry, there are plenty of friendly staff members to welcome you and guide you through the process and plenty of room in the galleries for safe distancing.

This fall, the Connecticut Science Center is excited to announce a lineup of virtual and in person experiences the whole family can enjoy. Whether at home or in person at the Science Center, there are ways for the community to interact and explore science. The blockbuster exhibition Maya: Hidden Worlds Revealed has been extended through the end of the year. Visitors can explore the fascinating world of the ancient Maya through authentic artifacts and immersive environments. Just one way the community can come enjoy this amazing exhibition is during Community Day on September 19. This fall, Community Day at the Science Center will feature CT Mini MakeFest and Family Harvesting Day. Visitors can harvest the seeds from Michaela's Garden with the Petit Family Foundation, participate in Maker and Harvest-themed activities and demonstrations throughout the galleries and so much more. By illuminating makers' talents, they hope to celebrate Connecticut innovation and craftsmanship, and inspire local families to create and build with their own hands. Virtual programs will accompany these events and more as families continue to balance a remote learning environment. From the comfort of their own home, visitors can participate in virtual workshops, LIVE Science Demonstrations on Facebook Live, adult only evening events, Science At Play features on their blog Down to A Science, and so much more.

The Science Center is also excited for the upcoming launch of their STEM in a Box program, an extension of their popular Camp in a Box program this past summer. Each box



contains the materials for three weeks of engaging, hands-on activities kids can follow along with at home. Plus, families receive a 60-minute virtual session with a Public Programs Educator per week to walk the kids through the activities. There will be three different boxes families can choose from, or they

can bundle and participate in all three. Themes will include: Spooky Makers, Fall Food Fun, and Winter Wonders.


To learn more about any of the above programs, or to reserve a timed ticket for your next visit to the Science Center, visit [CTScienceCenter.org](http://CTScienceCenter.org).

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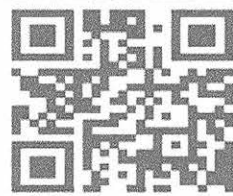
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## Downtown's Road Back

Continued from page 2

resources. Borrowing of materials is still done by curbside pick-up.

Riverfront Recapture has re-started its rowing classes, but only for single-person boats. And on Saturday, August 15, it teamed up with the Greater Hartford Marathon to hold a socially distanced 5K run along the river. Hartford Athletic began playing soccer games again at Dillon Stadium in July. Attendance was limited to 25% of normal capacity. The Wadsworth Atheneum is re-opening this weekend.

Pratt Street has been closed to traffic for most of the week this summer for the Pratt Street Patio, presented by the Hartford Business Improvement District (HBID), which includes live music on Friday nights. HBID is planning to continue live music on Fridays through September and possibly into October. HBID is also planning to bring back its week-long outdoor horror movie series on Constitution Plaza some time in October.

Phase III of the governor's recovery plan was slated to start in mid-July, but was put on hold following a renewed surge of the virus in many other states, although not Connecticut. As a result, private gatherings are still limited to 25 people inside and 100 people outside, bars will remain closed (indoors and outdoors) and indoor dining at restaurants and gyms will remain at 50 percent capacity. Large entertainment venues such as Dillon Stadium will remain at 25 percent capacity. Lamont did not immediately offer a new date for the introduction of phase 3, which was originally slated for July 20. At this time, no firm date has been set for the implementation of Phase III as the governor monitors both Connecticut's progress against the virus and the experience of other states.

While much of Downtown Hartford is also in a "wait and see" phase, some businesses are moving forward. The Wadsworth Atheneum is opening to the public this weekend. Many of Downtown's most famous restaurants, including the Arch Street Tavern, Black-Eyed Sally's and Max Downtown, are planning to re-open this month.

The uncertainty that has marked the COVID-19 pandemic from its beginning remains. But progress is being made and the innovations and skills developed during this difficult time are certain to pay valuable dividend in the future.

## Hartford BID Responds to COVID-19 Crisis

The Hartford Business Improvement District (BID) responded quickly to the Covid crisis, adjusting all of their projects and programs to suit the rapidly changing environment.

### Website adjustments:

Hartford.com was completely re-tooled to focus on providing the most up to date list of Hartford restaurants that were open and doing take-out or delivery, a constantly updated list and calendar of livestream events, and has continued to update the site as Hartford moves along with the state through reopening phases.

### Physical Distancing PSA:

The Hartford BID created physical distancing sidewalk signage and placed the signs in high-traffic areas throughout their district. Hartford Has It heart flags were placed on Pratt Street to show solidarity and support for essential workers.

### Social Service Outreach:

Understanding that the services provided for people experiencing homelessness, or in need of other social service assistance, were going to be heavily impacted by the pandemic, the Hartford BID worked with the Coordinated Access Network to create an updated social service outreach document that could be disseminated in person or via email with an updated list of places for people to get mental health assistance, find out the answers to questions about shelter or housing, rehab or detox, food pantry hours, and listed daily meal locations.

The Hartford BID rented four hand sanitizing stations and secured them in the district's busiest bus shelters so individuals utilizing public transit had an additional safety measure at their disposal.

### Pratt Street:

The Hartford BID worked with the City of Hartford to adjust and expand the hours of the Pratt Street Patio to provide public seating and expanded outdoor dining for the businesses on Pratt.

The BID also took the opportunity to fast-track physical space improvements like the 5x5 HTFD mural project, and the installation of a new piano key mural on Trumbull Street.

Hartford.com continues to heavily promote safe entertainment activities and dining options, both in their district, and throughout the city through social media and their weekly email.

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Hands On Hartford Labor Day Free Lunch

Hands On Hartford will hold its annual Labor Day Community Lunch on Monday, September 7, from 11:30 am -1:30 pm, at the organization's headquarters at 55 Bartholomew Avenue in Hartford's Parkville neighborhood. Lunches may be taken "to go" or eaten outside, where limited seating is available. The menu includes BBQ chicken, pasta salad, roasted corn, baked beans and ice cream. There will also be free books for the kids and gift bags with toiletries. The lunch is free to those in need. For more information, call Hands On Hartford at 860-728-3201.

### Need a High School Diploma?

Newington Public Schools operates an Evening High School Diploma Program. Students enrolled in the program can earn the credits necessary to acquire their high school diploma. In-person registration will be held Wednesday, September 9, and Thursday, September 10, from 5-7:30 pm in Room 124 of Newington High School, 605 Willard Avenue, Newington. Interested students should call the Newington Adult Education Office at 860-667-5850 to make an appointment. You must be 17 years or older. Please bring a copy of your high school transcript and photo ID when registering.

### Outdoor Summer Pops Concert on Sept. 9

Cuatro Puntas will present Golden Scroll Soloists and Peruvian guitarist and vocalist Pedro Cirilo Coral in a free concert from 12 - 1:30 pm on Wednesday, September 9, in the Hoffman Courtyard at Hartford Stage, 50 Church Street, Hartford. Golden Scroll Soloists have been wowing audiences with a variety of styles for 15 years. Similar in style to the Vitamin String Quartet of YouTube fame, the Golden Scroll Soloists meld pop, classical, and jazz into an upbeat string quartet experience.

### MARG Meets September 10

The Maple Avenue Revitalization Group (MARG) will hold its monthly meeting at 6 pm on Thursday, September 10, in the lower level of Saint Augustine Church, 10 Campfield Avenue, Hartford. Representatives from Freeman Associates will discuss their plans for the Lower Franklin Avenue Streetscape Project. There will also be a discussion of public safety. For more information, call Hyacinth Yennie at 860-296-5543;

### City Council Virtual Public Comment and Meeting September 14

On Monday, September 13, the Hartford Court of Common Council will hold a virtual public comment and City Council meeting via the WebEx platform. These meetings will be broadcasted and recorded by Hartford Public Access Television (hpatv.org, HPA TV Facebook Page, or channel 96 for Comcast/Xfinity customers). The public comment session will start at 6 pm and the meeting at 7 pm. To sign up to speak, please reach out to David Grant (860) 757-9738, david.grant@hartford.gov. The deadline to register is 5:20 pm, Monday, September 13th. Once signed up, participants will be given a conference number and are asked to call in by 5:40pm to receive further instructions.

### "Love Hartford" South End Clean-up Sept. 19

The Love Hartford Anti-Litter Campaign will host a clean-up of Wethersfield Avenue from 10 am - 12 noon on Saturday, September 19. This event is a collaboration with the Hartford Chamber of Commerce and HYPE (Hartford Young Professionals and Entrepreneurs). Coffee from Chamber Member Story and Soil will be provided. Pizza will be provided at the end of the clean up. To register, go to: [metrohartfordalliancectassoc.wliinc34.com/events/Love-Hartford-Southend-Edition-3912/register](https://metrohartfordalliancectassoc.wliinc34.com/events/Love-Hartford-Southend-Edition-3912/register)

### Zion Hill Cemetery Beautification Project Sept. 12 & 20

On September 12th and September 20th, the Friends of Zion Hill Cemetery (FOZHC) are seeking volunteers to help with the first phase of its gateway improvement project at Zion and Ward Streets (in the Frog Hollow neighborhood, just north of Trinity College). The group will be creating beds beneath the flowering trees and planting bushes, bulbs and perennials. This project is being funded by the City of Hartford's Love Your Block program and Sustainable CT and our 60-day fundraising campaign. The City of Hartford Department of Public Works will be providing mulch and Love Your Block will be providing tools for the event and free T-shirts for volunteers. The event will begin at 9:30 and last until 12:30 both days. Volunteers may come and go as you please. If you would like to volunteer, email to [carey@homebyhand.org](mailto:carey@homebyhand.org) with your name, phone number and T-shirt size.

## Downtown Developments, North and South

Continued from page 2

Street just south of the ballpark.

This planned five-story complex will include 200 residential units, 10,800 square feet of retail space and a 259-space parking garage as well as courtyards and rooftop terraces.

The development of the area around the baseball stadium was used to sell paying for its construction to city residents. Problems with the construction of the stadium, including the City of Hartford's dismissal of the project's initial developer, have delayed the start of construction on the developments surrounding the ballpark. Hopefully there will be shovels in the ground soon.

To the south of Downtown, at the intersection of Park and Main Streets, construction on a more modest but equally important project is expected to begin in just a few weeks.

Tentatively named "Park & Main," this development will include 126 residential units and 23,460 square feet of retail space. Twenty percent of the apartments (which will include studios, one- and two- bedroom units) are reserved for affordable housing.

Spinnaker Real Estate Partners



Political and business leaders break ground for the new development at the corner of Park and Main Streets on August 18. (File photo)

and 7 Summits Realty are the lead developers on the project.

The intersection of Park and Main is one of the key spots in the city, located at the juncture of the Downtown, Frog Hollow and South Green neighborhoods. The area has been vacant for several years, despite several plans to develop it.

But ground was broken for the project two weeks ago and Clay Fowler, Chairman and CEO of Spinnaker Real Estate Partners said construction had actually already begun. He explained that Park & Main will be constructed in a modular fashion with units being built off-site and then brought to the actual

construction area. Construction of those units is already underway, Fowler said at the ground-breaking.

"The Park and Main development is a critical piece of connecting our South End community with Downtown," said State Representative Julio Concepcion, a resident of Downtown Hartford. "This development also adds to a great deal of investment in the Park Street area, including a new library, affordable housing, infrastructure improvements, and Parkville Market. I want to thank all of those involved in making this a reality, particularly the residents who fought hard for this project for so many years."

## Hartford...Once Upon a Time



In keeping with our Downtown Hartford theme this week, we present this photo from the mid-19th century. The view is looking south down Main Street; Christ Church Cathedral is at right. It is very clear from this photo that church steeples rather than office buildings dominated the Hartford skyline up until the early 20th century. (Photo courtesy of the Hartford History Center at Hartford Public Library)

### OP-ED

## The Way Forward with WiFi for Hartford

DAVID BAUMAN

CEO, Backstage Networks ([www.bsnlive.com](http://www.bsnlive.com))

It is no surprise that the residents of Hartford, and all over Connecticut have made significant changes in 2020. The reality of the situation is that we can no longer be idle and postpone development – now is the time to enact plans to improve the quality of life for all Connecticut citizens.

As quarantine fatigue and the trauma associated with the last seven months crest, we must push forward together with a cohesive and well-informed strategy for re-opening. We must create a new normal that is safe and enables a more positive tomorrow. As we look at the back half of the year, headlined by the reopening of schools, there is a major lack of planning and initiative in developing a reopening strategy that provides diverse solutions to the groups who need them. Inconsistencies of schools being open versus those turning to online learning further complicates the matter. And while we understand that the solution is not simple, we do think there is much more that can be done to ensure citizens are provided with options that meet their needs and give access to community services like education, information, public, and business access. The lack of action on initiatives that enable online learning for families across the state is one of the realities underscoring these current issues. Many homes and households do not have the proper tools, Internet service, or general funds to tap into distanced learning. Going beyond providing opportunities for our youth to attend school remotely, we must also create similar experiences for our citizens to work remotely in safe and reliable environments.

From what we understand, there is some discussion around putting together a program to enable safe, distanced learning with reliable amenities. However, there seems to be no tangible action being taken to achieve this. There are rumors of potential RFPs being created and discussed, but no formal communication has come from legislators. And as an industry veteran, I frankly do not have confidence that legislators will be able to develop a program or RFP that contains the proper technical expertise in this area without consulting a subject matter expert like me.

This brings me to my main purpose for this article. I understand this situation is complex, with many stakeholders and no historical precedence from which to gain insights. This is also the very reason why I implore our lawmakers to consult with individuals like me and other industry experts to properly develop a plan that clearly addresses all of the technical elements required to do this properly. For exam-

ple, there are several core elements that must be addressed in the proposal/review process.

First, this is not just a service, but a right we must provide to our citizens. Access to reliable education and information is something we all have the right to, and it is our job to ensure that every individual has that same opportunity. Each day that passes where we do not have a plan communicated or in motion is another day we are failing our communities and our future generations. Second, now is not the time to be bogged down by large enterprises or complicated agreements. In the past, a similar agreement was made with a global IT company costing more than half a million dollars to implement, yet the project was so complicated that it never came to fruition, the money was lost, and the public suffered. In a post-COVID world, this is simply not an option. While I personally believe going with a small, nimble, and connected partner in the local community is the best course of action, I understand the need for the proper due diligence that an RFP process would provide. Yet at the very least, I would like to ensure that the RFP is conducted in a fair way that does not discredit or discount smaller local businesses for their size, but rather, provides an even playing field that analyzes the pros and cons that they bring to the table.

Lastly, this is a local problem and it should be addressed by a group of individuals who have the passion for and connections to this community. Our group has completed various projects of similar types in the region and globally and we've learned that executing on difficult timelines and in difficult environments is what we do best (in my opinion, better than anybody else). Yes, our company would be happy to win the business and provide this service for the community, but that is not the purpose of this article. In fact, I would offer our consulting services free of charge to ensure that the RFP that is developed is put together in a way that enables quick, safe, and reliable solutions for our community. Even if we do not win the business, knowing that we've had a hand in improving the lives of the citizens of this community is our primary goal. I urge our lawmakers or any others who are in a position where they can help speed this process to please do so. It is our hope that by mid-to-late fall that we will have safe, Wi-Fi-enabled homes and venues within our communities where people can access the information, education, and resources they need. To us, this is a basic right for everyone.

## Mrs. A. and Me

### A Downtown Hartford memory

COMMENTARY BY ANNE GOSHDIGIAN

In the summer of 1966 I turned 16, and like most teens, one of the first things I did was apply for a Social Security card, the ticket to getting a real job beyond the \$1 per hour babysitting I'd been doing. Heading into my junior year at HPHS, the idea of having some real spending money of my own for clothes, records, books, movies, fast food, etc. was the driving force. Without hesitation, I aimed for the top—the holy grail of part-time jobs for Hartford girls—applied to G.Fox & Company, the crème de la crème of the city's department stores, and was hired. My schedule would be 3-6 p.m. during the week, (3-9 on Thursdays when the store was open late) and 10-6 on Saturday. Back then the downtown stores were closed on Sundays and Mondays. The pay was \$1.25 an hour, plus a 20% store discount and free meals in the employees' cafeteria on Thursday night and Saturday afternoon. But first I had to attend two consecutive nights of training along with all the other new hires in a G.Fox classroom.

It was early November, around the time that evening temperatures dip into the 40s, and I wore my new wool Chesterfield coat, a dark gray herringbone with a black velvet collar that my mother had recently bought for me, to the first training class. I loved it, and appreciated that Mom had sprung for the \$50 price tag—a princely sum in those days. In the hall outside the classroom was a rack where we were told to hang our coats. For two hours we learned how to write up carbon copy sales slips, figure out how much sales tax to add by using a printed chart provided by the state, how to stamp a metal charge card with the embosser thingie, operate a manual cash register, and make change. On the way out I went to retrieve my brand new coat, took it off the hanger and put it on. It was too big, the lining had a large tear, and the wool revealed lint and “pilling” in a couple of places. Ergo, this was not my coat, but it was the only Chesterfield on the rack. I wore it home anyway, where my mother said someone must have taken mine by mistake, would surely notice their mistake, and return it at the next night's class. That didn't happen; I left the shopworn oversized coat on the rack. Now Mom was unhappy, and so was I. She was out 50 bucks and I was stuck without a really cool winter coat. What could be done? Having long ago recognized my writing ability, she told me to compose a letter to Mrs. Beatrice Fox Auerbach, owner of G.Fox and a retailing powerhouse with a worldwide reputation for her business savvy, innovation, and impeccable customer service. The top dog, the big boss, the queen. I sent the letter.

A few days later when I arrived for work, my supervisor told me I was to report to Mrs. Auerbach's office, right away. Uh-oh! Had the letter backfired? Was I going to lose my first job after less than two weeks? Her office was in a remote area on an upper floor and I needed directions in order to find it. With trepidation I spoke to a secretary who ushered me into the elegant inner sanctum, announcing my arrival to Mrs. A., who immediately put me at ease. With a genuine smile she stood and shook my hand as I took the chair she indicated across from her desk. Then she wanted to know all about me: Where I lived, went to school, what my favorite subjects were, hobbies, and what instrument I played. She asked about my brothers and parents, and spoke of all the fine Armenian people she knew, and wanted to know if I enjoyed working at G.Fox. She picked up my letter and complimented my writing. Then she extended an envelope with my name on it. Inside was a handwritten note to the manager of the Better Coats department stating that I was to choose any coat I wanted at no charge! As I thanked her and rose to leave, she took my hand and said “Anne, I think you'll do a fine job here. Thank you for your letter, and please don't hesitate to let me know if there's anything I can do for you.” For me?—just one of the hundreds of high school kids who worked there? I knew then I was in the presence of true class, keen intelligence, and a deep understanding of human nature. She was a Hartford treasure.



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# El Informativo Latino

## Oficial Ángel Valentin



Oficial Ángel Valentin, hoy es el fruto de tu esfuerzo único y formidable, ahora empieza su vida pensional, ahora empiezas una vida nueva donde solo el disfrute, será el adjetivo que acompañará el resto de tus días. Deseamos una feliz y merecida jubilación al oficial Angel Valentin. El oficial Valentin ha sido oficial del Departamento de Policía de Bloomfield durante 24 años. El oficial Valentin es muy conocido en la ciudad y siempre ha estado muy involucrado con nuestra comunidad. Se ha desempeñado en numerosas capacidades, que incluyen: oficial de patrulla, asignación de detective, detective regional de narcóticos, francotirador SWAT, oficial de entrenamiento de campo, oficial de recursos escolares, miembro de la guardia de honor, miembro de la Junta de Revisión Juvenil, oficial de servicios comunitarios, asesor de exploradores de la policía y enlace judicial / oficial de pruebas. Le deseamos todo lo mejor Oficial Valentin por tu jubilación y gran trabajo en la comunidad. De parte The Hartford newspapers y La Diferente Radio, la muchas gracias y felicidades. **ORGULLO PUERTORRIQUEÑO.** By Iris Rodriguez

## FELICIDADES



FELICIDADES, Sr. Ángel Valentin y Sra. Elizabeth Valentin Serrano que esta nueva vida que iniciaron juntos, se mantenga llena de amor, felicidad y comprensión. Que los sueños de ambos sean una realidad cada día. De parte de Hartford newspapers y La Diferente Radio le felicitamos. By Iris Rodriguez

## El Salario Mínimo de Connecticut Aumenta a \$12 por Hora

Los trabajadores de bajos salarios en Connecticut están obteniendo un aumento salarial esta semana, ya que se prevé que el salario mínimo por hora del estado aumente de \$11 a \$12 el martes.

El aumento salarial se produce más de un año después de que el gobernador Ned Lamont firmó un proyecto de ley que aumenta el salario mínimo por hora de Connecticut a \$ 15 durante un período de cuatro años y medio. La nueva ley elevó por primera vez el salario mínimo del estado de \$ 10.10 por hora a \$ 11 el 1 de octubre de 2019.

En total, el nuevo salario mínimo por hora aumentará a \$12 el 1 de septiembre; \$13 el 1 de agosto de 2021; \$14 el 1 de julio de 2022; y \$15 el 1 de junio de 2023. El salario mínimo federal por hora es de \$7.25 por hora.

Después de que la tarifa por hora alcance los \$ 15 en 2023, el salario mínimo cada 1 de enero a partir de entonces se ajustará por el cambio porcentual en el Índice federal de costos de empleo (ECI) para todos los sueldos y salarios de los trabajadores para el período de un año que termina el 30 de junio del año anterior.

Los opositores al cambio reciente de Connecticut han argumentado que el salario mínimo de \$15 será costoso para los pueblos y ciudades, que tendrán un costo estimado de \$ 24 millones debido al aumento, según el informe de un analista estatal. Los defensores de los salarios, sin embargo, dicen que el aumento es un beneficio muy necesario y muy atrasado para más de 330.000 trabajadores que ganaban el salario mínimo del estado, especialmente dado el alto costo de vida de Connecticut.

En los últimos años, varias empresas nacionales con presencia en Connecticut también han aumentado sus salarios mínimos, incluidas Target, Wells Fargo, Amazon y Bank of America.

Hartford HealthCare, Middlesex Health y TicketNetwork en 2019 anunciaron cada uno un salario mínimo de \$15 para sus empleados.

En otras partes de Nueva Inglaterra, el salario mínimo por hora es de \$12,75 en Massachusetts, \$12 en Maine, \$ 10,96 en Vermont, \$10,50 en Rhode Island y \$ 7,25 en New Hampshire.

By Iris Rodriguez

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## Hispanos Se Activan En Hartford, “El Poder No Se Da, Se Quita”

POR: MARICARMEN CAJAHUARINGA

Email: bocetomediamic@gmail.com

Los miembros del concejo de la municipalidad de Hartford, se reunieron el jueves con el lema, “Puertorriqueños, Hispanos y Latinex”, con una iniciativa en español que busca tocar temas de inclusión en la diversidad latina en la ciudad.

La reunión fue liderada por la concejal Maly Rosado, donde se tocó temas de educación civil como promover la limpieza en las calles, el censo, desempleo, inmigración, economía, y acceso de apoyo durante la pandemia del COVID-19.

La concejal por el partido “Familias Trabajadoras”, Wildaliz Bermúdez, fue la encargada de pre-

González dijo, “No quiero ofender a nadie, yo se que temenos latinos, dominicanos, peruanos, y colombianos, pero nosotros especialmente los puertorriqueños, somos americanos, no somos ciudadanos de segunda clase”. Seguidamente prosiguió refiriéndose directamente a la comunidad puertorriqueña, “Mientras estemos como el Coquí, “añangotao”, esperando que nos den todo en la mano, no vamos a tener lo que necesitamos”. Estas opiniones se dieron cuando González, instaba al público a tomar el poder en la ciudad, “El poder no se da, se quita!” dijo Gonzalez.

La reunión duró aproximada-



Boceto Media

sentar la preguntas que la comunidad había enviado con anticipación a los miembros del concejo. En el tema de pagos de renta durante el COVID-19, hubieron opiniones directas para los residentes y como han manejado su dinero de beneficios por desempleo.

“Hay ayuda de alimentos por medio de las escuelas públicas de Hartford. El American Job Center en la 3580 Main St. puede ayudar con su resume, es gratis”, dijo el concejal Nick Lebron.

Mientras tanto, el representante Vargas fue más tajante en su opinión, “Si usted recibió los \$600 semanales del desempleo por favor pague su renta para que no este atrasado. Ultimadamente, usted va a tener que pagar esos meses, así que ahorrese problemas”.

Según Lebron, la municipalidad aprobó un fondo económico de \$225 mil para promocionar temas de salud en el 2020. Pero las estadísticas siguen mostrando que Hartford, es una de las 3 ciudades de Connecticut, con una alta tasa de contagios de Coronavirus, algo que afecta grandemente a las comunidades desatendidas como la Latina y Morena.

Con una basta población inmigrante, Hartford, atravieza desafíos con sus residentes indocumentados. Aún así, los líderes se enfocaron en los beneficios que esa comunidad ha obtenido por medio de su lucha con el estado, como licencias de conducir, prestamos universitarios, becas, y el fondo de ayuda COVID-19 por medio de una tarjeta auspiciada por la organización 4-CT. Cabe recordar que hace un mes, los indocumentados protestaron a las afueras de la casa del gobernador Lamont, afirmando que hasta la fecha, los \$3 millones de dólares prometidos en junio, no han sido distribuidos.

La representante Minnie Gonzalez (D) también estuvo presente, y participó dando comentarios sobre inmigración y participación cívica con voz activista. En un momento,

mente 2 horas, y culminó con la presentación de la superintendente, Dra. Leslie Torres, quien mostró su plan de regreso a clases. Torres, dijo que los padres tienen el control de enviar a sus hijos a las escuelas o tener una educación virtual, aunque recaló que su distrito seguirá los protocolos de salud para clases presenciales.

Según Torres, el 83% de familias contestaron la encuesta de regreso a clases, pero faltan 3 mil estudiantes por responder. Sin embargo, Hartford ha hablado y el 54% de los padres han optado por el aprendizaje virtual.

Aunque la reunión fue de suma importancia para la comunidad hispana en Hartford, solo 10 personas llenaron el salón concejal. No se habló sobre los temas de corrupción policial, así como la conexión entre la municipalidad y los residentes, o temas de infraestructura. La concejal Rosado, dijo que ésta es una serie de reuniones que se llevarán a cabo, y más temas serán parte de los siguientes eventos en las próximas semanas.

El Martes, la representante González, informó en exclusiva para Boceto Media, que la municipalidad ha abierto una posición para la Junta de Educación, “Queremos latinos. Ahora mismo estamos buscando un candidato (a) para la Junta de Educación en la ciudad”.

Los latinos interesados tienen que cumplir los siguientes requisitos:

Ser ciudadano americano o naturalizado, vivir en Hartford, experiencia en actividades cívicas y educación. Los líderes municipales están dispuestos a entrenar a la persona seleccionada. Para participar en esta oportunidad de liderazgo, pueden contactar a sus concejal Hartford, o a la representante Minnie González, al 860-655-5907.

Para ver la cobertura en vivo y entrevistas de esta reunión visite la página de BOCETO MEDIA en Facebook.

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# Politically Speaking

*A Fresh Look at Issues Facing our Region & State*

**BY MIKE MCGARRY**

## President Trump's Numbers Beat the Virus!

We must congratulate the Republican candidate for president of the United States on his showing in the recent primary in Hartford. He outscored the COVID-19 virus! You know, that pesky virus that he said would be gone by Easter.

The figures (rounded off to simplify the math) are 8,000 votes for Joe Biden in the Democratic Primary and a whopping 120 for Donald Trump in the Republican Primary. But the sitting president did triumph in a certain way. His percentage of the total vote was...1.5 percent, easily passing positive COVID-19 tests (1.1 percent).

Adding insult to injury was the Republican State Chairman on the

television program "Face The State" being called on to resign following the party's latest scandal. Many feel that the real reason he was jumped on by the most recent G.O.P. candidate for governor, the leader of the House Republicans and outspoken women of the party was not the mess in the 2nd Congressional District, but the decline of the party under his leadership.

Most state chairmen fall on their swords when either party is crushed by the other at the polls. Losing everything – the senate race, all the congressional seats, both houses of the state legislature, the governor's chair and seeing many formerly rock-solid towns go

south after the election – should have been the clue.

This year looks even worse for the Connecticut G.O.P. with many suburban towns giving the sitting president only 70 percent of the Republican Primary vote! No wonder the G.O.P. leaders of both the state house and senate are jumping ship.

Many Democrats (some in leadership positions) do not glory in this downward trend of their traditional opponents. They are wise to prefer a balance because it gives the party and individual lawmakers more power. Remember when the Connecticut State Senate was divided between 18 Democrats and 18 Republicans? Every Democratic senator was a potential swing vote. Now, no matter what their seniority, street smarts, party loyalty is...they're just part of the crowd.

A good two party system keeps everyone on their toes and reduces the chances for so-called solutions the usually backfire – tolls for example. Watch out folks, a Democratic landslide in Connecticut with "Mr. 1.5 Percent" to pick on could mean "revenue enhancements," driving more taxpayers south (many of them Republicans). And thanks, Mr. G.O.P. Chairman for making the Republican Party the minority party.



## Cleaning Up Asylum Hill

Due to the COVID-10 pandemics, few neighborhood clean-ups were held in Hartford this spring. Now that restrictions have eased a bit, volunteers are again taking to the streets to tidy up their neighborhoods. On Sunday, August 30, the Asylum Hill Neighborhood Association (AHNA) held a "Love Your Block" Clean Up and Celebration. The event started and ended at Grace Lutheran Church at the corner of Niles and Woodland Street. This event is co-sponsored by the City of Hartford, "Love Your Block" project, Asylum Hill Neighborhood Association, Environmental Action Committee of Immanuel Congregational Church, Zen Solar, Knox Inc., Hands On Hartford, Blue Earth Compost and Grace Lutheran Church. (Bernie Michel photo)

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