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Medical Audit Looks to Save for Taxpayers

In an effort to save the town money, Mayor Leng recently ordered an audit of the Town's medical expenses, one of the Town's biggest budget items. The audit will be completed by The Segal Company of Farmington, who have previously assisted the Town in implementing cost-saving changes in many of the currently existing union agreements.



of \$1.5 million, but Mayor Leng believes more savings can be realized in the future.

The ultimate goal of the audit is to determine where Hamden can save on costs while still

The last time the Town's medical expenses were audited was in 2009, when the medical expenses account was found to be in a deficit of about \$9 million. Last year, the account saw a surplus

providing employees with appropriate benefits. The last time a claims audit was conducted, the Town found a savings of about \$200,000.

Hamden High School Students Raise Over \$40,000 for Teacher

When Hamden High School students heard the news that their math teacher, Kathryn Caliendo's husband was battling Stage 4 stomach/intestinal cancer, compassion took over. The students created a Go Fund

Me page on January 29th, and raised more than \$20,000 in just two days. Currently, the page has raised over \$42,000 with over 400 donors.

The students recognize the emotional and financial

stress that balancing full time teacher career and caring for a loved one can bring, so they wanted to be able to "give her a break", as they say on the Go Fund Me page. Anyone wishing to make a donation should click [HERE](#) !

A Letter from Mayor Curt Balzano Leng



Greetings Fellow Hamdenites –

Please allow me to welcome you to the February issue of the Town of Hamden Monthly Newsletter, and for those of you just joining in for the first time, please note that the January issue is also available on the Town's website (www.hamden.com). Although only the second issue of the Town Newsletter, we have already taken steps to incorporate suggestions for content and structure from our readers. In this issue, you will find additional information directly from our Police Department as well as a special focus on recent and upcoming events and activities around Hamden.

Taking a moment to reflect on the Month of February, it would be fair to say that the Town of Hamden made it through one of winter's toughest months with flying colors. While the amount of storms we experienced in February were minimal in comparison to recent years, Hamden and the rest of the State did experience a few heavy snowstorms, brutally frigid temperatures, and hazardous road conditions. Maintaining a functioning, effective, and responsive local government during adverse conditions is no small task, and I am immensely proud of the manner in which my staff and Hamden's Police, Fire, and Public Works Departments have handled their duties these Winter months. Throughout February's toughest storms, Hamden was able to maintain a constant flow of updates to the community regarding the status of emergency protective measures, the loss and restoration of electricity, and the status of roadway conditions and cleanup measures.

I would like to extend a special thanks to Fire Chief, David Berardesca, Police Chief, Thomas Wydra, and Public Works Director, Craig Cesare, for their excellent work ensuring Hamden's residents received and continue to receive top quality services! As the threat of inclement weather diminishes, residents should expect to see Public Works crews repairing and replacing damaged roadways as the Spring Season approaches

Although the winter season is coming to a close and spring is on the rise, Hamden is focused on the most important season of the year: Budget Season. As I prepare to deliver the 2016 Budget Address on March 16th, I wish to assure Hamden residents that I (along with Hamden's financial staff and department heads) am working diligently to develop an operating budget that is both fiscally responsible and reflective of the true need for services and programs throughout Town. This year, Hamden will budget efficiently and effectively, taking a close examination of the current services offered by the Town and identifying areas which can be improved at little or no cost to the Hamden taxpayer. Hamden's services will remain top quality as we assess the Town's financial capacity and seek to implement changes designed to carry Hamden through the 21st century.

I greatly look forward to delivering my budget proposal to the residents of Hamden and to our Legislative Council, and am confident that they will be pleased with the direction that I, and my team, wish to lead Hamden towards as we move into the future together.

- Mayor Curt Balzano Leng

Constituent Services Center Receives Re-Branding

Mayor Curt Balzano Leng is pleased to announce the implementation of the new Constituent Service Center in the entrance to the Government Center building. The Center will function as a much needed welcoming point to our building, and will assist with the continuing development and implementation of Hamden's constituent services. This new location will allow a refocused approach to the process of locating and utilizing the proper town departments for all residents' or visitors' needs. Whether being directed to the proper floor and office, or conducting outreach to residents by telephone or email, the Constituent Services Center will function as a conduit for residents to bring their individual questions, comments or concerns to the attention of their Town government.



Constituent Services Specialist, Ashley Alcott

The new appearance of the Constituent Services Center is an important part of our rebrand, shifting focus from the residents entering our building with confusion and bewilderment, to giving residents a clear and concise location to help find their way through Government Center or be directed to other Town facilities. Another change yet to come is the development of a more efficient means of locating, documenting, tracking and subsequently resolving a range of Town issues brought by both residents and town departments. This new process will give residents a means of witnessing the extent of work being performed throughout Hamden, and allow proficient management of resources by the Mayor and his team.

The rebranding continues with the addition of the Town's new Constituent Services Specialist Ashley Alcott, who is the smiling face at the station as you enter Government Center. She is adept at working with residents to coordinate immediate and appropriate responses to all types of constituent concerns, from road and sidewalk issues to questions regarding Town events, meetings, and procedures. Working closely with the Mayor's office, and all Town departments, her goal in the Constituent Services Center is a satisfied resident with every contact. Ashley will work closely with David Garretson, the Mayor's Director of Legislative and Constituent Services, who provides an additional level of direct communication to the Mayor for all resident's concerns. Along with the Mayor's office team, and all of the Town departments, the Constituent Services Center will be a driving force behind Mayor Leng's administration and he is hopeful that residents will do their share by becoming part of the team that makes our Town a better place to live.

The overall goal of these changes is to realize improved efficiency of operations, increased effectiveness with regard to constituent concern resolution, maximized transparency through information flow, strengthened relationship building, heightened use of technology, as well as intensified outreach to residents of the Town of Hamden.

Hamden Announces 10th Annual Earth Day Celebration

Hamden's 2016 Earth Day Celebration will be held on Saturday, April 16th from 10am - 3pm at the Hamden Middle School, located at 2623 Dixwell Avenue. This year's family-oriented, free celebration will feature an excellent array of exhibitors promoting earth friendly services, products and organizations, food, music, and free activities including face painting, bird feeder crafting, a scavenger hunt (complete it and win a prize), a coloring contest, and additional hand-crafts, activities, and other fun and games.

In addition, don't miss a pre-event bird walk at 8:00am (for details call Florence McBride at 203-288-6777), C.J. May's Magic Show at 11:00am, the Orchid Awards at 12:00pm Noon, and the Audubon Birds of Prey demonstration at 1:00pm.



Take2Recycling at Hamden's 2013 Earth Day Event

Other activities throughout the entire day will include Circle K Farm's petting zoo, a hands-on reptiles exhibit by Hamden High School, and opportunities to "Touch a Truck" with a Hamden fire truck, police car, and more! Additional activities and events will be announced in the coming weeks.

Attendees are encouraged to bring cell phones, thumb drives, hard drives (crushing on site), ink cartridges, eyeglasses and batteries for recycling. Feel free to bring your expired, unused, and/or unwanted medication for free, confidential and safe disposal. Additionally, bring your (gently) used children's books. Donations will be distributed by AARP Experience Corps to area children who have little access to books.

Additional exhibitors and event sponsors will be highlighted in the coming weeks, keep an eye out for additional press related to the 2016 Earth Day Celebration! Local vendors who may wish to sponsor this year's Earth Day Event may reach out to the contact below, a full description of the benefits of becoming a sponsor will be provided to you!

For further information, please contact Information & Research Officer, Patrick J. Donnelly at (203) 287-7009 or by email at pdonnelly@hamden.com.

Read Across America Day Comes to Hamden



Mayor Leng reads “Horton Hears a Who”

Wednesday, March 2nd marks beloved children’s author Dr. Seuss’ birthday and the Town of Hamden is partnering with United Way of Greater New Haven to celebrate by bringing the National Education Association’s 17th annual Read Across America Day to Church Street School. United Way will be organizing a day of reading where an adult volunteer will be reading a Dr. Seuss book to each class. Volunteer readers will include Mayor Leng, United Way volunteers, Town of Hamden employees, and Quinnipiac University students.

This event will encourage students to get excited about reading as a leisure activity. Church Street School will join more than 45 million readers across the country. The NEA reports that 26% of children who were read to three or four times in a week by a family member recognized all letters in the alphabet, as opposed to 14% of children who were read to less frequently.

The Town of Hamden and the Board of Education are excited to be participating in the event this year, and are hoping to see the program grow in future years. For more information on Read Across America Day, please visit www.nea.org/readacross and www.readacrossamerica.org

Let's Move Wellness Fair

Dedicated to the health and wellbeing of Hamden residents, the Youth Services Bureau along with Hamden's Partnership for Young Children, Hamden Public Schools, and the Mayor's Office held the third annual Let's Move Health and Wellness Fair on Saturday, February 27th at Dunbar Hill School. The event was a great success and was attended by over 275 Hamden community members. There were fun physical activities, learning and community building, interactive demonstrations, and healthy treats.

DJ Rachel provided family friendly music while attendees enjoyed interactive yoga, archery, martial arts, Zumba and other fitness classes, information about nutrition, and more! A Fitbit fitness tracker was even raffled off. Over twenty local businesses had great health information, giveaways, and activities that emphasized wellness. We hope you enjoyed Let's Move, Hamden this year, and hope to see you again next year!



Attendees enjoy healthy snacks



Zumba is fun for the whole family!

Any questions or comments regarding the event should be directed to:

Susan Rubino
Hamden Youth Services Bureau
203-777-2610 ext. 1120

Prescription Drug Discount Card Offered to Hamden Residents

contact us'. A disclaimer at the bottom of the form states 'Not available for Tennessee residents.' The page also features the CCM logo and text: 'Connecticut Conference of Municipalities' and 'This program has been developed by your Local Government Executives and the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities to help lower the prescription drug cost for...'."/>

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Anyone regardless of age or income can participate. No eligibility requirements.

Enter Your Full Name Enter Your Email

CT

Town of Hamden

Get Your Card Don't see your state, municipality or county here? [contact us](#)

Not available for Tennessee residents.

This program has been developed by your Local Government Executives and the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities to help lower the prescription drug cost for

Home Page of www.CTRxDiscountCard.com

The prescription drug discount program offered by the Town of Hamden, in accordance with the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) has saved Hamden residents over \$95,000 on 2,069 prescriptions since the Town joined the program in 2003.

Since CCM began offering the “CCM Prescription Drug Discount Card” in September 2012, 125 towns and cities throughout Connecticut have signed up for the program. During that time, residents in the participating communities have filled over 146,000 prescriptions and saved almost **\$8,000,000** with an average prescription savings of 52%. The program is free to any CCM-member municipality, providing savings on any prescriptions not covered by insurance. There are no costs to either the participating municipalities or their residents.

The Prescription Drug Discount Card can also be used by residents who have insurance, if their current insurance doesn't cover a medication, or if their pet needs human-based medication, according to Shari Fiveash, CCM Director of Member Services. In addition to prescription medications, there are other services available such as vision and hearing, discounted exams, frames, lenses, and hearing aid devices.

Residents can get the prescription cards at no cost at the Hamden Government Center located at 2750 Dixwell Avenue, or online at www.CTRxDiscountCard.com, and selecting Hamden from the drop-down menu.

AARP and Hamden Team Up for Tax Aide



Seniors receive tax aide from AARP counselors
at Miller Memorial Senior Center

Town Officials wish to remind residents that FREE tax counseling is available for the elderly. The program is available at both the Miller Senior Center and Keefe Community Center, and provides Federal and Connecticut income tax preparation assistance for low and middle income taxpayers, with special attention to those 60 and older. The program will run through the duration of tax season, ending on April 15th.

The program is offered at the Miller Senior Center, located at 2901 Dixwell Ave, Hamden, CT 06518, on Tuesdays and Fridays at 8:30am, 9:15am, 10:00am, 10:45am and 11:30am (by appointment only). Appointments can be made by calling Hamden Elderly Services at 203-287-2547 during business hours.

Additionally, the program is offered at the Keefe Community Center, located at 11 Pine St, Hamden, CT 06514, every Thursday from 3:00 – 8:00pm, with no appointments necessary. Again, this program is absolutely free to those who wish to participate!

Hamden Police Department Monthly Update



Hamden Police Academy 2015 Graduates

The Hamden Police Department would like to welcome and encourage residents to participate in the Citizen's Police Academy running Thursdays from March 24th through June 16th from 6:30-9PM. We want Hamden's 60,000+ residents--from our many neighborhoods, at every stage in life, from all backgrounds--to understand what we do all day: how we work to keep you safe; the reality vs. what you see on TV; what you can do to help us. We hope to learn from you as well during this 13-week course--your feedback, questions, and concerns help us to better do our jobs.

In a relaxed and friendly atmosphere at our training classroom at the Hamden P.D., you'll learn about us, and we will learn about you.

- Walk a mile in our shoes: Who we are, what we do, and why we do it—we'll answer your questions about current controversial issues: patrol procedures, ethics and integrity, motor vehicle stops, cultural awareness and hate bias, and use of force
- TV vs. Reality (it must be like a CSI episode, right?): Crime scene investigation, computer and internet crimes, police technology, and criminal justice procedures (not like a John Grisham novel!?)
- In my backyard?: Major crimes and fraud investigations, drugs and gangs
- What you can do to help us: Crime prevention, Blockwatch, Firearms safety
- Everyone's favorite—K-9s!: Meet these furry members of the HPD, learn about their training, and enjoy a demonstration of their skills

Applications must be submitted to the Hamden Police Department by 4:00pm on March 18, 2016.

Applicants may submit via mail, faxing (203) 230-4068, emailing Sergeant Brent Zuscin at bzuscin@hamdenpd.com, or dropping the application off at the police department,

[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD THE APPLICATION](#)

Department Spotlight: Community Services

The Community Services Department, located in the town's Keefe Community Center, is always hard at work enhancing the quality of life for many Hamden residents. Services available through the Community Services Department include the Town's food bank, holiday food drives, fuel assistance, holiday toy drives, and much, much more.

The department's 2015 Holiday Toy Drive was a great success, and was able to provide toys for over 550 Hamden children for the holiday season. We would like to thank our contributors including the Hamden Fire Station 2, and first time contributors Massage on Whitney, Old Navy, and Physician's One Urgent Care.



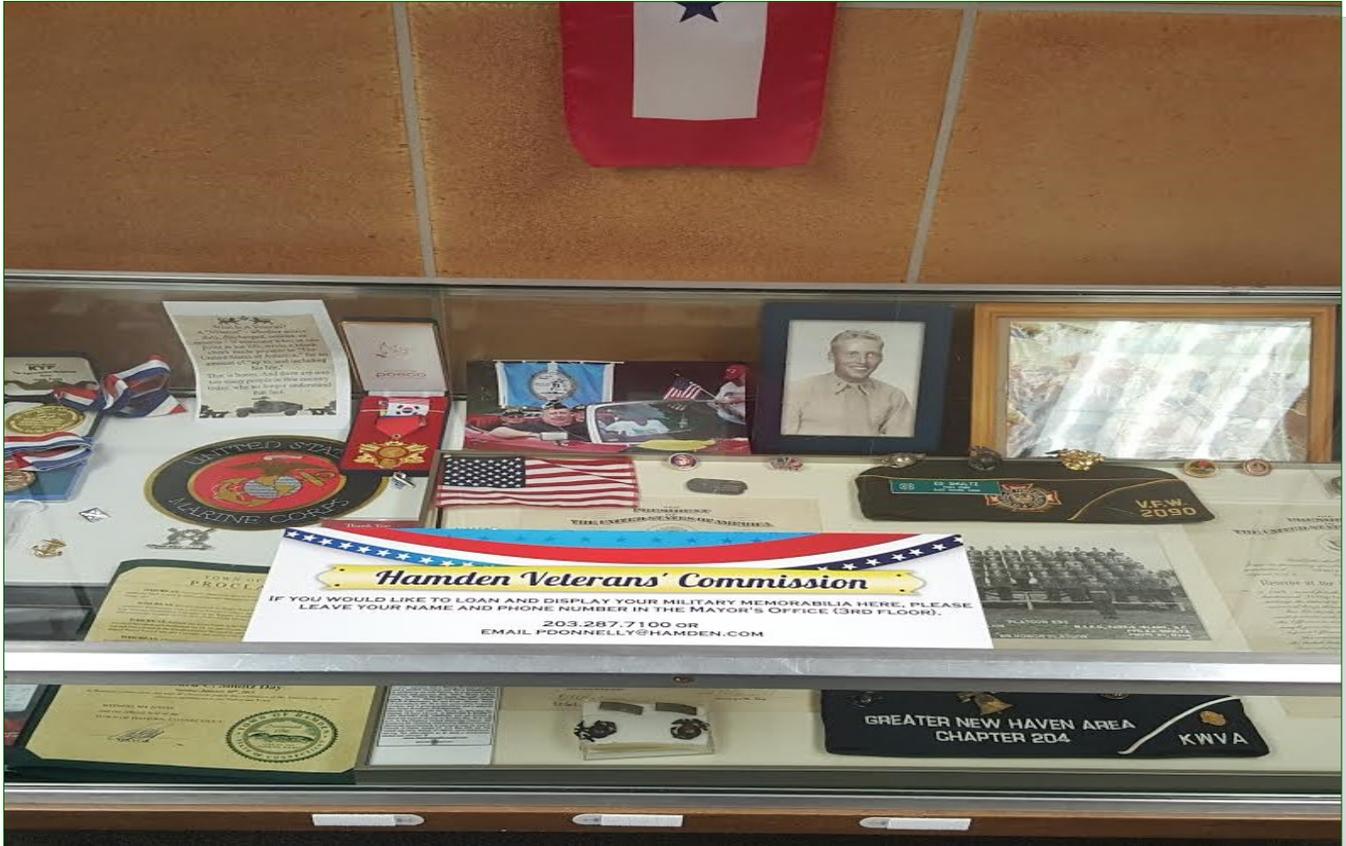
Inside the Hamden Food Bank

In addition to a great holiday toy drive, the Community Services Department has already provided 2592 meals in January 2016 alone. Meals provided by our food bank increased by 2,034 from 2014 to 2015, and are expecting to increase this year as well. The department also provides a diaper bank, and have taken 45 appointments in January.

In addition to the great emergency assistance services that the Community Services Department provides, there are also many seasonal and year round services provided. The Community Services Department works with the Quinnipiac School of Business to offer free tax assistance for residents with an annual income of less than \$54,000. They are accepting walk-ins every Thursday from 3-8pm through April 14th. They also provide scholarships to lower income families to send their children to Hamden summer camp programs, and provide emergency rental assistance programs when funding is available to families that meet the guidelines.

The Town is proud to be able to provide so many wonderful services year round to residents in need. We sincerely thank all of the caring staff in our Community Services Department for their continued efforts.

Board Spotlight: Veteran's Commission



Veteran's Commission Display: Currently honoring veteran Ed Schultz

The Hamden Veterans' Commission is proud to announce that it has acquired a large rectangular glass top display table courtesy of the Hamden Library. It can be locked to secure items that you may want to loan and share with the public from your years of military service. The table is located at the Government Center in the lobby in front of the Wall of Honor. Items will be rotated every few months.

If you are interested in displaying your memorabilia or have any questions, please leave a message by calling the Mayor's Office at 203-287-7100 and a member of the Commission will get back to you.

Information Guide

February 2016

Helpful Resources

Hamden Youth Services:

- [2015-2016 Youth Services Program Guide](#)
- [Youth Center](#)

Hamden Elderly Services:

- [February 2016 Newsletter](#)
- [March Miller Café Menu](#)
- [March Miller Café CHOICE Menu](#)

Hamden Arts & Recreation:

- [Winter Entertainment Series](#)
- [Arts and Rec Program Registration](#)

(A few dates left for each!)

Upcoming Events

[“Read Across America” Day, March 2nd](#)

[Pumpernickel Puppets presents “Peter and the Rabbit”, March 5th.](#)

["Echoes of Sinatra: A Celebration of a Man and his Music", March 13th](#)

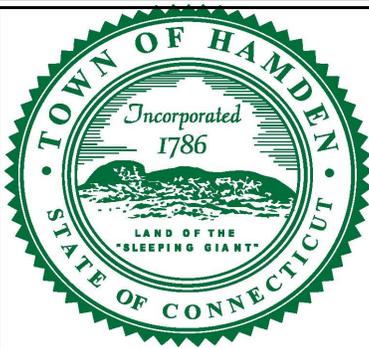
Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting Ceremony @ Lucky Ewe Irish Goods, March 17th

[Earth Day, April 16th](#)

[Hamden Regional Chamber of Commerce Business Expo, April 20th](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- [Mayor Leng to participate in “Read Across America Day” on March 2nd](#)
- Mayor Leng to present “Recommended Budget” on March 16th
- [Hamden Arts & Recreation announces updated Bus Trip agenda](#)
- [Hamden Arts & Recreation announces early registration for Summer Camps](#)
- [Hamden High School DECA Asks Residents to Participate in Pledge to Pledge](#)



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PATRICK J. DONNELLY



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