

Darienite

News for Darien

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Have You Heard ...?

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The low-down on what's up around town:

Animal Embassy director Chris Evers recently visited students in Miss Rochler's third grade class at Holmes Elementary School.

The Darien Police Commission has decided to look in-house for a police chief to replace Duane Lovello, who's retiring in mid-February.

"We're excited to report that we recently installed nine trees at the [Darien Community Association \(DCA\)](#) that included five Redbuds, three Dogwoods, and one White-Flowering Redbud," the Tree Conservancy of

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Darien [announced on Facebook](#).

"Many thanks to [Planters Choice](#) Nursery for their generous donation of trees and to [Richard Jones Landscaping](#) for the help installing."

From Darien Library:

If you live in Darien, you can bring up to five old light bulbs to Darien Library and exchange them for energy-efficient LED bulbs.

Go down to the Help Desk on the "Lower Level" (which is what Darien Library calls the basement) with an ID or mailed envelope showing your Darien address.

A post from Darien Police Department [on Facebook](#): Out of 169 CT towns, Darien ranked 12th for actively registered dogs and had the highest 10-year increase in all of Connecticut! Well done and thank you!

[Person-to-Person](#) has been given two gifts from the Praxair Global Giving Program, totaling \$10,000. Praxair employees who volunteer time, talent or provide financial support to eligible non-profit organizations are encouraged to submit a grant request for consideration, and through the efforts of one employee volunteering at P2P, the grants were approved.

One grant will be applied to the area of greatest need; the other is being directed to the P2P Scholarship Program for the current academic year. "At P2P we help people in need of emergency assistance and we also provide opportunities for long-term stability and future success," says P2P Executive Director Ceci Maher. "Through the P2P Scholarship Program, students from low-income households can realize the dream of a college education."

In the "[Cops & Kids Adventures](#)" program, Darien police have fun with a select group of middle school kids in town as a way of keeping up good relations with the town's youth. Here's a video of some recent fun, and you can find more on [the police Facebook timeline](#):

"Tell your friends to join the Darien YMCA any time during 2017 and they will receive a complimentary Inbody 570 body composition assessment and personal training session to help define their fitness goals."

— *from the Darien YMCA Newsletter*

"The Darien Community Association (DCA) is working to create a strategic plan with a clear direction and focus for our work over the course of the next two to three years," the DCA said in a recent newsletter. "An important step in the planning process is to hear from the community – our members, donors, program participants, clients, community partners, and others – to tell us what you feel is working and what could be done better.

"We would appreciate your taking the time to complete a short 5-10 minute survey [using the link provided here](#). For those wishing to expand on your survey responses and tell us even more, you will have the opportunity at the end of the survey to sign up for a one-hour focus group.

"Thank you for sharing your thoughts with us and for helping us plan for the DCA's future."

- 7:00 p.m. — Board of Selectmen: Budget — LIVE

Tuesday

- 2 p.m. — Public Works Bldg Comm— LIVE — [AGENDA](#)
- 7 p.m. — Board of Education Budget Hearing — LIVE — [AGENDA](#)
- 7 p.m. — Board of Selectmen: Budget — TAPED
- 8 p.m. — Planning & Zoning Commission — TAPED — [AGENDA](#)

Wednesday

- 7 p.m. — Bd of Selectmen - Budget — LIVE
- 7 p.m. — Environmental Protection Commission — TAPED — [AGENDA](#)

The Anchor Youth Group at the United Church of Rowayton announced its meeting dates for the winter and spring of 2017.

Meetings are attended by area students in grades 6–8 who gather on Wednesdays from 6:30 p.m.–8 p.m. for on-sight games, activities and hot topic discussions in the church's Fellowship Hall at 210 Rowayton Ave.

“Students from all communities are welcome,” said Val Harden, chair of the church's education activities. “Church membership is not required. Just show up and join in the fun.”

Evening events include karaoke, NERF football, sundae night, ping-pong, foosball, pizza night, air hockey and outreach service projects. Recently, the group had a fun-filled evening of trampolining at Sky Zone in Norwalk. A day trip to Six Flags or Lake Compounce is planned for the spring.

Wednesday meeting dates for Winter-Spring 2017 are Feb. 8 & 22, March 8 & 22, April 5 & 19, May 3 & 17.

For questions, phone, text or email Ray Meurer, 203.856.4155, raymeurer9@gmail.com.

Here's a summary, in facts and figures, [of the announcements](#) on record [high ridership on Metro-North](#) and the New Haven line:

- Metro-North Railroad is seeing record ridership numbers with 86.5 million customers in 2016, the highest ridership in the railroad's history, surpassing the previous record of 86.3 million, set last year.

- Metro-North ridership more than doubled since the railroad was founded in 1983.
- The New Haven Line, Metro-North's busiest, had 40.5 million annual rides, up 20,800, or 0.1 percent over 2015.
- The New Haven Line remains the busiest commuter rail line in America.
- The so-called "inner portion" of the New Haven Line — between Stamford and Grand Central Terminal — had ridership growth of 1.8 percent; commuter trips were up 2.4 percent and discretionary travel was up 0.8 percent.
- The "outer portion" — between Stamford and New Haven — decreased by 0.2 percent, with a 0.6 percent decline in commuter trips and a 0.2 percent growth for non-commuters.
- The New Canaan Branch had a decline of 0.6 percent in total ridership in 2016.

A statement from Gov. Dannel Malloy:

"Our future economic growth depends on the vibrancy and vitality of an efficient transportation system that attracts workers and businesses and moves goods and services as efficiently as possible. For too long, our state did not make the needed investments to keep up with our transportation needs, and now we are making the long overdue steps to make our bold vision of a modernized transportation system into a reality. The New Haven Line is a critical component of Connecticut's economic engine, and its growing use signals the need to provide our state's residents with a best-in-class transportation system."

Jim Cameron was quoted by the Hartford Courant [in its story](#) about the ridership increase:

"Ridership is up even with lower gasoline prices because traffic is intolerable and driving to New York is unthinkable," said Jim Cameron, founder of the Commuter Action Group. "And the trains are doing a better job than they did before."