

Have You Heard ...? We're No. 1

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What's up from all around town — notable news notes as of mid-June 2017:

The new building has been opened for the Swap Shop at Darien Recycling Center (the Dump) on Ledge Road and the old tent has been taken down.

Some pictures:

"Thank you Energy and Recycling Center Committee for making it happen!" First Selectman Jayme Stevenson tweeted.

Holmes School students enjoyed their annual field days on the Holmes School playground. Each class is divided into color teams that compete in events including scooter ball, relay races, capture the flag and wiffle

ball.

The Darien High School boys lacrosse team has not only four straight state titles under its belt, with Saturday's 16-3 win over Cheshire, but a solid national reputation.

[Two](#) tweets [from](#) sportswriter [Dave Ruden](#):

Ruden was referring to [this ranking](#), from the USA Today High School Sports website:

Darien student Connor McNamara, son of Christa and John McNamara has won first place in the Connecticut State Daughters of the American Revolution Fifth Grade Essay Contest. He received his award last weekend.

Connor, a student at Royle School, was honored as Darien's Good Wife's River Chapter DAR Essay winner at a chapter reception in February of 2017.

His essay was automatically entered into the State level contest. With over 45 DAR Chapters in Connecticut, Connor's essay faced stiff competition.

Connor's essay, titled "Celebrating a Century: America's National Parks," describes the unparalleled beauty of Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. His essay will now be entered into the NE Regional Society Daughters of the American Revolution Essay Contest.

It may have been a misty, overcast spring evening, but for one night, 300 guests were transported to Cuba with décor, food, drinks, and music for Opus for Person-to-Person's unforgettable "Havana Nights" themed fundraiser at the Tokeneke Club.

The sold-out event on April 22, raised more than \$130,000 that will go directly to Person-to-Person's

programs benefitting children: Baby Basics which provides baby layettes to help new mothers in need at Stamford and Norwalk hospitals; Camp scholarships that provide children the opportunity to expand their horizons while parents work in the summer months; scholarships to deserving young students attending college; and, of course, the Holiday Toy Store which ensures that all children can experience the joys of the holiday season.

A vintage car parked in front of the Tokeneke Club set the tone of the event as guests arrived. Breathtaking palms, and flower arrangements styled by Hessney & Co. made it feel like an authentic night in the tropics. Guests embraced the theme fully with colorful dresses and fedoras at every turn.

The cocktail hour featured authentic Cuban music by the Quimbombo Trio, and many guests enjoyed hand-rolled cigars by Connecticut Cigar Company sponsored by William Raveis. CK Swett led the heated live auction while guests dined on a Cuban-themed surf and turf dinner. "I loved seeing the expressions of our guests as they arrived and took in the authentic Cuban scene our committee created, said OPUS Board Liason Lisa Bishai.

"More than anything though, it was gratifying to know that the tireless work of the dedicated, talented women of OPUS would improve the lives of the children in our community. It was an enjoyable night for guests, but the children we helped is what this event is all about."

A moving speech from Person-to-Person beneficiary Carmen Nieves brought people to tears and preceded a very successful paddle raise for P2P's programs.

Finally, guests danced the night away to The Sultans band, back for the second year in a row. At night's end, guests lingered, not yet ready to leave their tropical escape, but as they left, they were delighted by the gorgeous, colorfully-packaged takeaway treats generously provided by Kirby and Company.

The Y has a new mobile app available for download in the App Store and Google Play. According to the Y's

newsletter:

News for Darien

<http://darienite.com> app includes upgrade features including:

- Connect to wearable devices i.e. Fitbit
- Record and share workouts
- Create fitness goals
- Easily connect to a personal trainer
- View class schedules

Download our new mobile app by June 15 for a chance to win 10% off one of our programs! There will be 5 lucky winners.

Choose from:

- Massage - 1 Session
- Stand Up Paddle Class*
- InBody Assessment
- Pilates Reformer Private Session
- Personal Training 10 Pack
- Group Swim Lessons

Search for the Darien Y in the [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#) and select the app created by Netpulse.

We'll be moving away from our current app in June. So be sure to download the new app today!

[Tree Conservancy of Darien](#), with help from Richard Jones Landscaping, recently planted the rest of the 30 trees donated last December by Planters Choice Nursery.

Darienite

TCD installed a Snowbell at the Town Hall, an Eastern Redbud, a Paperbark Maple and a Sugar Maple at the DCA, and four Sugar Maple trees on Ledge Road (pictured). Since the nonprofit's inception in 2010, TCD <http://darienite.com> in town.

On behalf of Darien Rowayton Bank, President Robert Kettenmann presented a check to Betsy McNeil of NGTE for sponsorship of their "Play in May" men's and women's doubles tennis tournament for May 6 at country clubs in Darien, followed by a gala at Country Club of Darien.

Evening festivities with a Kentucky Derby theme included a dinner, open bar, live auction and casino style games. Proceeds benefit Norwalk Grassroots Tennis & Education.

NGTE provides free, year-round programming to children who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. The organization has grown in 21 the past years from serving 15 youth to touching the lives of nearly 500 children last year through tennis and education.

In addition to its tennis program for Norwalk Youth, NGTE provides them with support to meet their academic, physical, and social-emotional needs so they can graduate high school prepared for college or a career.

At [YWCA Darien/Norwalk](#) 's 2017 Women of Distinction luncheon at Woodway Country Club in May, YW Executive Director Judy Phillips kicked off the luncheon before handing the program over to Erica Zaky a former News 12 and NY Emmy award-winning journalist, to emcee the event.

Distinguished guests included State Rep. Terrie Wood and First Selectman Jayme Stevenson. Previous honorees Maryann Lehmann, Ceci Maher, Novelette Peterkin, Sueanne Schorr, Alicia Sillars and Charlotte Suhler were present to celebrate the newest Women of Distinction.

The Women of Distinction awards recognize and celebrate the achievements of local women in both Darien and Norwalk and acknowledges their outstanding contributions.

"Our 2017 Honorees are six amazing women who go above and beyond in their service to the local and global community," said Judy Phillips, "While the work they do varies greatly what they all have in common is a commitment to the empowerment of others which, is a core tenant of the mission of the YWCA."

Darienite
News for Darien

Initiated by David Hawes, a Halstead Agent, a number of community leaders in Darien and Hawes' co-workers came together to donate 100 American Flags to the town.

<http://darienite.com> May weekend, the flags now adorn existing light posts throughout the town and will remain through the Fourth of July weekend.

Joining Hawes in donating and volunteering time on this project are a large number of fellow community leaders, including his wife and fellow Halstead Agent Holly Hawes, as well as Halstead Agent Nancy Dauk.

Other members of the group include John Hertz, Paul Hertz, Robert Wood, and Tim Wood of Hollow Tree Self Storage, and Rob and Dave Campbell of Ring's End Lumber.

“You can't do these things if you can't get help,” Hawes says. “I've had numerous people who have offered to volunteer and help because this isn't just a one-time deal. This is also putting the flags up and taking them down, when it's appropriate, and it's not just for this year.”

To learn more about the donation of flags to the town of Darien, contact David Hawes of Halstead at 203-856-4775 or dhawes@halstead.com.