

Community news

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Around Town

The Hour

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2006

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Prayers offered at AIDS Day service

STAMFORD — Fifteen members of the clergy will gather at 7 tonight at the First United Methodist Church to lead a World AIDS Day service of remembrance, awareness, hope and healing for people whose lives have been touched by AIDS.

The service, sponsored by AIDS Interfaith Stamford, brings together Protestant, Catholic, Jewish and Greek Orthodox clergy.

"In the 22nd year of the AIDS pandemic, we're coming together to raise up the plight of those infected, and join together to comfort them as well as their families, friends and caregivers," said the Rev. Dr. Douglas McArthur, pastor of First United Methodist Church and chairman of AIDS Interfaith in Stamford. "We will remember those lost and hear from those living with this disease. We will pray together and commit ourselves to doing all humanly possible to improve and save lives."

The service will feature music by the Stamford High School Madrigals, the Chamber Singers from Westhill High School, local choirs and cantors.

Five panels from the Project Names Quilt will be on display.

The clergy will offer prayers for healing and laying on of hands.

The service is open to the people of all faiths.

The Interact Club of Westhill High School will hold a reception.

Luminaries to light up holidays with hope

DARIEN — On Dec. 10, neighborhoods throughout Darien, New Canaan, Greenwich, Stamford, Norwalk, Wilton and Weston will light special luminary candles to celebrate the holiday season and provide support and hope to people living with an illness or giving the loss of a loved one in the Center for Hope's annual "Hope Lights Lives" project.

The annual fund-raiser supports bereavement and critical illness support programs offered through the Center for Hope and The Den for Grieving Kids.

"The 'Hope Lights Lives' luminary lighting is a special event that people in the community look forward to each

"While it's a beautiful sight to see how the luminaries light up a neighborhood, it also helps us remember those who may be in pain during the holiday season."

Deirdre Lewin
Center for Hope director

year," said Deirdre Lewin, director of the Center for Hope.

"While it's a beautiful sight to see how the luminaries light up a neighborhood, it also helps us remember those who may be in pain during the holiday season," she said

the lighting date nears.

Last year, more than 600 volunteers helped sell over 7,500 luminary kits.

A rain date is scheduled for Sunday, Dec. 17.

"Hope Lights Lives" luminary kits are \$25 and contain 12 tea light candles, 12 white paper bags and 12 plastic candle holders.

Kits are available for purchase at several area businesses and at the Center for Hope. For a list of participating vendors or to purchase a kit, call Gloria Veeder at (203) 869-4848.

"Hope Lights Lives" is sponsored by Hoffman Landscapes, Darien Bank & Trust, Patriot National Bank, Premier World Wide Express,

Michael Joseph's Catering, BMW of Darien, Commerce Bank, Webster Bank and Eastern Bag & Paper Company.

The Center for Hope provides comprehensive services for adults and children living with an illness or grieving a loss. All counseling, support and education services are facilitated by professionals.

The Center for Hope is a division Family Centers - a private, nonprofit organization offering education and human services to children, adults and families in Fairfield County. The agency is also licensed by the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health.

For more information, visit www.centerforhope.org.

Heart Ball will honor area first responders

NORWALK — The 41st annual Heart Ball, scheduled March 10 at Continental Manor, will pay tribute to the city's first responders — fire, police and EMS — from five towns that use Norwalk Hospital.

Since 1970, proceeds from the Evening Woman's Club of Norwalk Heart Ball have been donated to the Cardiac Section of the hospital with more than \$250,000 raised to date.

"We need to say thank you to those who provide the first treatment and transport us to the hospital for further care," said Karen Doyle Lyons, the chairman of the event.

First responders from Norwalk, Westport, New Canaan,

Wilton and Weston will be honored at the Heart Ball.

Through the generosity of individuals, businesses and corporations to the Heart Ball, the Cardiac Section has been able to upgrade the catheterization lab and fund new imaging equipment, purchase an additional electrocardiogram machine and underwrite the hospital's cardiology fellowship as well as fund cardiovascular equipment and rehabilitation equipment.

The Evening Woman's Club of Norwalk's mission is to "make a difference in the community."

For more information, call Lyons at (203) 846-9488.



Contributed photo

Several seals keep their eye on a photographer while resting in Long Island Sound.

Volunteers seek toys for holiday

NORWALK — Members of the Rowayton Volunteer Fire Department has invited the community to fill their fire boat with toys.

Citizens are asked to bring an unwrapped toy, appropriate for children age 4 to 23, to the firehouse between 1 and 3 p.m. Dec. 10.

Basketballs, footballs, sports jerseys, CD players, Barbies, Furbies and Pound Puppies are always popular, according to the volunteers, who added that gift certificates are always appreciated.

See **VOLUNTEERS, B12**

Aquarium to offer winter cruises on Sound to view seals and birds

NORWALK — If you like seeing the harbor seals at The Maritime Aquarium, you'll love seeing seals in the wild on one of the Aquarium's Winter Creature Cruises.

Cruise with Aquarium educators aboard the research vessel Oceanic on a two-and-a-half-hour adventure into Norwalk Harbor and Long Island Sound in hopes of spying some of the growing numbers of seals and birds that winter here.

Participants will observe science in action and have a great experience at the same time.

The seals can often be observed at low tide, when they "haul out" to rest on exposed

rocks. Aquarium educators will also point out winter waterfowl, discuss the formation of Long Island Sound, and talk about the changes that occur in the Sound over the winter.

Weather and animal sighting data collected during each cruise is added to the Aquarium's Harbor Seal Census Study and Biodiversity Census databases.

Cruises continue on select weekends through early April.

In December: at 2 p.m. Dec. 2; 8 a.m. Dec. 10; at 1 p.m. Dec. 16; at 1 p.m. Dec. 30 and at 1 p.m. Dec. 31.

In January: at noon Jan. 13; at 1 p.m. Jan. 14; at 11:30 a.m.

Jan. 27 and at 12:30 p.m. Jan. 28.

In February: at 10 a.m., Feb. 10 and 11 a.m. Feb. 11; 10 a.m. Feb. 24 and at 11 a.m. Feb. 25.

In March: at 9 a.m., March 10 and at 9:30 a.m. March 11 and at 9 a.m. March 24 and at 10 a.m., March 25.

In April: at 9 a.m. April 4 and at 9 a.m. April 8.

Bring binoculars, and dress warmly. The cost is \$20 (\$17.50 for members). Boat capacity is limited, so reservations are strongly recommended. Walk-up tickets will be sold, space permitting. All passengers must be over 42 inches tall.

For more information, call The Maritime Aquarium at (203) 852-0700 ext. 2206.

'Wine' & Howl wine tasting will raise funds to help find homes for animals

WESTON — The third annual "Wine" & Howl Wine Tasting fund-raiser from 4 to 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 2, will bring together wine, food and a silent auction to give participants a great feeling as they help homeless animals at PAWS find a second chance at a new life.

The event will be held at the Norfield Congregational Church, 64 Norfield Road.

The wines offered will suit any budget and would make gifts for this holiday season or even just to keep for yourself.

Knipschildt Chocolatier will be a supporter of the event with Fritz Knipschildt is donating his hand-made, award-winning chocolates for sampling at the event.

The event will include featured wines from Merritt Wines of Norwalk; a silent auction; handcrafted artisan chocolate by award-winning chocolatier Fritz Knipschildt; hors d'oeuvres and door prizes.

Tickets are \$30 per person if purchased in advance. Tickets may also be purchased at the door the day of the event for \$40 each.

Last year's event raised more than \$10,000 and Pet Animal Welfare Society officials are hoping to raise at least \$12,500 this year.

In addition to raising funds through ticket sales and the silent auction, 10 percent of the purchase price of all wines ordered at the event will be donated to PAWS.

Michael Sautkulis of Merritt Wines personally selects every product in the store and has selected a collection of wines suited to every taste and pocketbook for this event.

This event is supported by PAWS patron Georgie White, as well as by local businesses All Pets Crematory & Remembrances, and Best Friends Pet Resort.

Information for purchasing

tickets and directions to the wine tasting can be found on the PAWS Web site at www.pawsct.org or by calling PAWS at (203) 750-9572 x 142.

All proceeds benefit the PAWS Animal Shelter and will assist the group in its efforts to help homeless animals in our community.

PAWS, serving the lower Fairfield County area, is a nonprofit, no-kill shelter that rescues dogs and cats from the streets, pounds and situations where they can no longer stay. The group spays, neuters, loves, medically cares for and adopts out these most deserving animals to good, permanent homes.

Since 1962 PAWS has rescued over 14,000 animals and has spayed/neutered thousands more. If you would like to obtain more information about PAWS visit the Web site at www.pawsct.org or call (203) 750-9572.

Candlelight Concert set

WESTPORT — The 66th Annual Candlelight Concert will be presented at Staples High School on Friday, Dec. 7 and Saturday, Dec. 8 in the Staples High School Auditorium.

On Dec. 7 there will be one performance at 7 p.m. and two performances on Dec. 8 at 7 and 9:30 p.m.

The Staples Choir and Chorale, Symphonic and Sophomore Orchestras and the Symphonic and Sophomore Bands will perform. The concert includes a sing-along of "Hallelujah Chorus."

General seating tickets are available. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope with the order form and an alternate time if your first choice is not available. Requests should be mailed to Staples High School 70 North Ave. ATTN: Dianne Clark.



Contributed photo

Ann Jayson holds one of her shell art creations, which will be for sale at the annual Holiday Exhibit at the Rowayton Arts Center.

Arts center show to allow visitors to shop for holidays

NORWALK — The annual Holiday Show is on exhibit at the Rowayton Arts Center, 145 Rowayton Ave.

Numerous local artisans are offering for sale their "one of a kind" arts and crafts. The show provides an opportunity to visit the arts center and purchase handmade gifts for the holidays.

Featured are original Christmas cards, small paint-

ings, wreaths and Christmas tree ornaments, handcrafted bird feeders, jewelry, pottery and so forth that will be available for purchase.

Visitors also may inquire about membership and winter/spring art classes.

For information call 866-2744

The gallery hours are noon to 5 p.m. Tuesday to Saturday and 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday.