

'The idea was to bring the farmer's market indoors'

Downtown to bring food hall showcasing local vendors to historic Arcade Mall

By Brian Lockhart
STAFF WRITER

BRIDGEPORT — Over a decade ago, a downtown grocery store, Ripka's at the historic Arcade Mall, came and went, the owner blaming its closure on a lack of traffic. Lauren Coakley Vincent believes that section of the city, and the vacant former Ripka's

space on Main Street, is now ready to support a food hall featuring various sellers, inspired in part by the successful warm-weather neighborhood farmer's market nearby at McLevy Green. "We have a network of local vendors that do fresh produce and prepared food and artisanal products," said Vincent, who runs the Bridgeport

Downtown Special Services District. "The idea was to bring the farmer's market indoors, essentially." The district, which seeks to improve and promote downtown, recently received a \$5,000 grant from the Connecticut Main Street Center organization to help launch the food hall. Partners include Groundwork Bridgeport and the Bridgeport Arts and Cultural Council. "That (\$5,000) will be for a se-



Ned Gerard/Hearst Connecticut Media

The Arcade Mall in Bridgeport in a 2024 file photo. The Connecticut Main Street Center organization has awarded a \$5,000 grant to the Bridgeport Downtown Special Services District to help launch a food hall in the mall.

Fairfield can't scale its final Mountain

Fairfield Democrats set to pick new first selectman

Republicans push for special election

Team falls to Nevada in Little League World Series U.S. championship game



Gene J. Puskar/Associated Press

Nevada's Brooks Fechser (4) scores as Fairfield's Luca Pellegrini covers home on a wild pitch during the first inning of the Little League World Series championship game in South Williamsport, Pa., Saturday.

By Kevin Roberts
STAFF WRITER

There was no come-back this time for Fairfield National at the Little League Baseball World Series. Summerlin South of Las Vegas, Nev., rode the right arm and left-handed swing of Garrett Gallegos past the Connecticut and

Metro champions, 8-2, in the United States title game Saturday at Howard J. Lamade Stadium. Summerlin South will play Tung-Yuan of Chinese Taipei, a 1-0 winner over Santa Cruz, Aruba in the International title game, in the World Championship game on Sunday at 3 p.m. at Lamade Stadium. Fairfield National

ONLINE: For more coverage, go to ctinsider.com. runs in the first inning. Instead of one big blast, however, Cache Malan, Garrett Gallegos and Grayson Miranda put together three straight singles off Luca Pellegrini following a one-out walk to Brooks Fechser. By the time Pellegrini got out of the inning, he had thrown 34 pitches. Fairfield continues on A4

Republicans push for special election

By Shaniece Holmes-Brown
STAFF WRITER

FAIRFIELD — Democrats plan to choose Fairfield's new first selectman Monday while Republican officials push for a special election. Ten Democratic officials are scheduled to vote on the late First Selectman Bill Gerber's successor at 7:30 p.m. on Monday at the Fairfield Public School Administration building at 501 Kings Highway East. The vote will select the person to serve as first selectman for the remainder of Gerber's term, which ends in November 2027. Democratic Town Committee Chair Steven Sheinberg said the committee fully backs acting First Selectman Christine Vitale, a Democrat on the Board of Selectmen, filling the remainder of Gerber's term. "Since the tragic passing of Bill Gerber, Acting First Selectman Christine Vitale has led Fairfield with professionalism and stability," Sheinberg said in an email Tuesday. "She has managed the responsibilities of town government effectively and with a steady hand." The Democratic officials scheduled to vote Monday include the acting first selectman, the Democratic registrar of voters, the Democratic elected constables, the Plan and Zoning Commission Democratic alternates and the Zoning Board of Appeals Democratic alternates. Meanwhile, Republicans are seeking another path to fill the vacancy. State Sen. Tony Hwang announced Monday his plans to run for first selectman by petitioning for a special election. Hwang, a Republican, currently serves as state senator for the 28th District, which includes Fairfield. Pick continues on A16

School start times are among the earliest in the nation

By Natasha Sokoloff and Jessica Simms
STAFF WRITERS

When Greenwich changed its daily school schedules, the district seemed to be leading the charge for later school start

times statewide. Since then, about 30 Connecticut school districts have moved the start of school to a later time at one or more of their schools by at least 15 minutes over a five-year stretch, according to data compiled by CT

Insider. But now, at least two are reversing course, including Greenwich — a move at odds with calls to push back school start times across the state in recent years. As state lawmakers, parents and students have questioned

Connecticut's earlier-than-average school start time compared to other states and supported a universal later school start time, some of the district officials that have tried it say it's complicated, and doesn't come without some financial

burden. For two Connecticut communities, attempts to stray from their previous 7:15 a.m. and 7:30 a.m. high school start times have led to unintended consequences spanning from Start continues on A8

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