

## State reaps billions from gamblers' losses

### Lottery, casino slot machines, online gaming boost revenue

By Luca Powell  
STAFF WRITER

It was a sunny Saturday in 1986 — 40 years ago — when the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation cut the ribbon on its first bingo hall. The hall would soon welcome busloads of eager players for its first night of shouting out numbers and declaring winners. On the prize list

were cars, boats and trips to Acapulco, according to a news article from that year. The game's organizer promised the "highest prizes in New England."

It was a hopeful moment. One tribe member said he believed the bingo hall could help transform the reservation into a "major tourist attraction."

That bingo hall would eventually evolve into Fox-

woods Resort Casino, which last Saturday celebrated its anniversary of bingo draws in a throwback to that opening day.

It's safe to say that gambling in Connecticut has changed over the intervening four decades. Once a niche hope for the state's Native American population, the industry has boomed into a success story that routes hundreds of

millions of dollars to the state of Connecticut every year — heavily from the pocketbooks of Connecticut residents.

Connecticut has made around \$22 billion on the gambling industry since the lottery was started in 1972, according to records from the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection. That sum in-



Portland Press Herald/Getty Images  
**People play high-stakes bingo at Foxwoods Casino in March 2002.**



Courtesy of the Merritt Parkway Conservancy  
**The Clinton Avenue Bridge over the Merritt Parkway in Westport after its restoration.**

## Merritt Parkway has 69 bridges — no two alike

### Restorations highlight decades of high design

By Brianna Gurciullo  
STAFF WRITER

When sitting in traffic on the Merritt Parkway, it can be difficult for drivers to appreciate the architecture around them.

But along the more than 85-year-old roadway through Fairfield County are 69 bridges that, unlike the traffic conditions, aren't monotonous.

"No two bridges are alike — each one is an indepen-

dent and unique work of art," said Arianne Kolb, executive director of the Merritt Parkway Conservancy, a nonprofit that for 25 years has advocated for the preservation of the nationally designated scenic byway and historic district.

The bridges are part of an exhibition called "The Merritt: Masterwork of Design and Planning," which the

New Canaan Library is hosting through Sept. 30 in honor of the U.S. Semi-quincentennial.

"The response has been overwhelming," Kolb said about the exhibit. "Overwhelming, A: how little people know about the history of the Merritt, and B: they don't know about the complexity of work that goes

**Bridges continues on A4**

## Data shows politics shapes racial identity



Philip Bump  
COMMENTARY

The majority of Americans are white, as are the majority of Connecticut residents. And "to be white in America is not to have to think about it," as Robert W. Terry wrote more than 40 years ago. The central privilege of being white in the United States is that race is a

secondary concern.

But an increasing number of Americans aren't white — or at least aren't only white — which has led to an enormous amount of consternation among some of the country's residents. Mostly, it seems, among those white Americans,

**Bump continues on A6**

## West Nile virus found in Conn. mosquitoes

By Richard Chumney  
STAFF WRITER

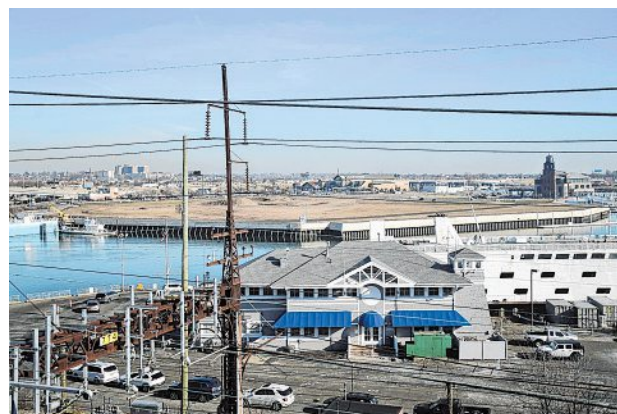
Connecticut officials are urging the public to wear bug spray and to cover their bare skin when outside after mosquitoes captured in Milford recently tested positive for the potentially deadly West Nile virus.

The mosquitoes were tapped on June 29, marking the first identification of the virus in the state this year, according to an announcement Tuesday by the state Mosquito Management Program.

"This serves as an important reminder for people to protect themselves from mosquito bites," Philip Armstrong, the

**West Nile continues on A4**

## Bridgeport & Port Jefferson Ferry to launch summer concert series



Hearst Connecticut Media file photo  
**The Bridgeport & Port Jefferson Steamboat Company plans to launch a concert series at the Bridgeport dock and terminal this summer.**

By Brianna Gurciullo  
STAFF WRITER

Live music hosted by the Bridgeport & Port Jefferson Steamboat Company is coming ashore.

The company, which operates ferry rides across Long Island Sound throughout the year, plans to launch a concert series at the Bridgeport dock and terminal this summer. It will also offer, as it has before, evening cruises with on-board performances by area bands in July and August.

While tickets for the cruises cost \$22 per person, the shows at the terminal will be free.

"I would hope people would take advantage of the freebie," said Fred Hall, the ferry company's general manager. "We'll see how it goes. Hopefully it'll be a success."

The dockside concerts will take place on Saturdays from July 11 through Aug. 29. Hall said musicians will perform from about noon to 3 p.m. on the back deck of the terminal building, which has a

snack bar.

Here is the lineup so far: July 11 — Mary-Elaine Jenkins and friend

July 18 — Reed Foehl and Putnam Murdock

July 25 — Jefferson Hamer and friend

Aug. 1 — Liz Hanley and Eamon O'Leary

Aug. 8 — Johnny Irion

Aug. 15 — TBA

Aug. 22 — Katie Martucci and Josh Dunn

Aug. 29 — TBA  
Bridgeport's Planning and Zoning Commission approved the company's plans to host live enter-

tainment at the terminal in March.

Parking isn't available on site, but garages, street parking and the Bridgeport train station are in the area.

Meanwhile, the returning live music cruises will set sail from Bridgeport and Port Jefferson, N.Y. every Thursday from July 9 through Aug. 20.

Most of the nights, a Connecticut-based band will play on the boat that departs from Bridgeport at 6:15 p.m., while a Long

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High: 85. Low: 70. **Page A12**

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