

# Bridgeport boost for vendors

The Recollective, in former Connecticut Post printing plant, opens marketplace in October

By Brian Lockhart and Andrew DaRosa  
STAFF WRITERS

BRIDGEPORT — In the spring, Mongers Market, an antique and vintage shoppers' destination on Railroad Avenue, permanently closed after seven years in the city.

For Bridgeport native John Paul O'Grodnick, who operated

the MOJO Thrifts booth within Mongers, losing the market was a "very sad" moment because it had become more than a place to buy and sell all sorts of interesting items.

"It drew a lot of the community together," he said.

However, Bridgeport will not be without that kind of multi-vendor marketplace for long. O'Grodnick is helping to open a

successor business only minutes from the former Mongers Market location.

The Recollective is projected to open in mid-October at 588 State St., according to O'Grodnick, its operations coordinator. He said the site, just on the edge of downtown and former home to the Hearst-owned Connecticut Post printing plant, will feature two floors of sellers.

O'Grodnick is a local artist and art consultant for the city. After hearing about Mongers' initial closing plans at the beginning of May, he contacted New York City-based developer Kiumarz Geula, who was in the process of purchasing 588 State St. O'Grodnick thought the old manufacturing building would be a great replacement space.

"I pretty much hit the ground

running. I started planning in my head of how this could work and how many vendors we can help with being displaced, and keeping the small businesses in the city of Bridgeport to the best of our ability," O'Grodnick said.

Bridgeport property records show the sale by Hearst Media Services Connecticut LLC to Geula's 588 State Street Realty

***Recollective continues on A4***



Above, Annie Curioli, 3, of Norwalk, holds a rose so her dad Paul can smell it during Connecticut's annual 9/11 Memorial Ceremony at Sherwood Island State Park in Westport on Thursday. The ceremony honors and celebrates the lives of those killed in the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

Photos by Christian Abraham/Hearst Connecticut Media

## Report finds 40% of CT households struggle to afford basics

By Alex Putterman  
STAFF WRITER

The number of Connecticut households struggling to afford essentials has risen, amid sharp inflation and a shortage of affordable housing, new data shows.

According to the United Way of Connecticut's annual ALICE report, about 40% of Connecticut families — or 580,520 total — faced financial instability in 2023. The percentage of households facing hardship increased slightly since last year's report, and the total has risen 17% since 2019.

"We're presenting this information not because there's a crisis coming, but because there's a crisis here," said Daniel Fitzmaurice, director of advocacy for the United Way of Connecticut.

By the United Way's accounting, households are considered to face financial hardship not only if they

***ALICE continues on A7***

## Sources: State preps bid for minority stake in WNBA's Sun

The Lamont administration, eager to find a way to keep the Connecticut Sun basketball team in the state, is preparing a bid to buy a minority stake in the team, sources familiar with the negotiations said.



Dan Haar  
COMMENTARY

That's not the state's preferred deal for Connecticut. An outright purchase of the team by a group led by Wall Street billionaire and part-time Westport resident Marc Lasry remains on the table.

But a minority sale could avert a

***Haar continues on A4***

# 'No timeline for grief'

Connecticut marks 24th anniversary of Sept. 11 attacks, remembering 161 local victims

By Austin Mirmina  
STAFF WRITER

WESTPORT — Mary Fetchet said she didn't want anyone to feel the depth of grief and despair she felt when her 24-year-old son, Bradley Fetchet, was killed in the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

So, in one of their darkest moments, she and her husband opened their New Canaan home to others, hosting weekly support meetings where victims' families could mourn together and get critical updates on recovery efforts at Ground Zero.

The same spirit of connection and camaraderie, first fostered in Fetchet's home, is



Nicolas Pelletier, of Greenwich, places a rose in honor of his father Mike during Connecticut's 9/11 Memorial Ceremony at Sherwood Island State Park in Westport on Thursday.

still going strong more than two decades later.

On Thursday, Connecticut hosted its annual memorial ceremony at Sherwood Island State Park, where Fetchet and other families shared how the bonds they formed in the aftermath of 9/11 has helped them honor their loved ones and process their grief.

Bradley Fetchet had just started work as an equities trader in the World Trade Center's South Tower when a hijacked airplane struck the building that morning. He was an "accomplished athlete, a wonderful son and a mentor" to his two younger brothers, his mother recalled.

At the time, Mary Fetchet

***9/11 continues on A4***

## Hyper-realistic mannequin boosts Yale developmental disability study

By Cris Villalonga-Vivoni  
STAFF WRITER

Walking through the health simulation center at the Yale School of Nursing feels like taking a tour of the cleanest, quietest hospital pediatric unit and maternity ward ever to exist. That is, until the professors start using the mannequins lying in the hospital beds.

Professors transform the life-size, rubbery, mostly expressionless mannequins — modeled after adults or children — by adding fake blood and fluids to simulate injuries. Students then receive a short list of symp-

oms and must determine the diagnosis and treatment.

Mannequin models were regularly upgraded throughout the years, becoming more advanced and inclusive in sizes, ages and races. However, that's where most of the diversity in models has historically ended.

Until Gwen, a hyper-realistic mannequin created from a 3-D scan of a 7-year-old girl with Down syndrome and a new member to Yale's collection. Not only is Gwen an educational tool, but she is also the heart of a new master's level concentration focused on caring for people with intellectual and devel-

opmental disabilities across their life.

"We don't just want to weave it in," said Christine Rodriguez, Yale's associate dean of nursing impact and a driving force in bringing Gwen to the school. "No, we want it to be separate and a standalone in itself, because it's so important."

Intellectual and developmental disabilities, or IDD, are a broad term covering a wide range of conditions, including genetic, neurodevelopmental, metabolic, endocrine and neurologic disorders, as well as developmental delays, Rodriguez

***Yale continues on A7***



Jim Shannon/Hearst Connecticut Media

Linda Ghampton, director of the Simulation Unit at the Yale University School of Nursing, with AI Hal, a new hyper-realistic mannequin at the Yale West Campus in Orange on April 21. Yale is launching an initiative focusing on improving how medical students are taught to care for patients with disabilities.