

Hartford Courant

VOLUME CLXXXIX

COURANT.COM

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2025

State to ante up portion of food aid

As federal benefits end Saturday, Connecticut to contribute \$3 million in emergency funds

By Christopher Keating
Hartford Courant

With federal food benefits scheduled to stop Saturday, Gov. Ned Lamont said Monday that the state is providing \$3 million on an emergency basis to partially fill the gap for some of the poorest people in the state.

About 10% of all Connecticut residents — more than 360,000 recipients — are expected to lose their food benefits Saturday as the federal government shutdown continues past 30 days.

To distribute the food, the state is providing the money to Foodshare, the regional food bank supplier that provides meals around the state year-round. The state legislature also recently tripled the amount of funding allocated to Foodshare after President Donald Trump's administration stopped deliveries of fresh food that were equivalent to about 1 million meals, officials said.

"The United States has an abundance of food," said U.S. Rep. Rosa DeLauro, a New Haven Democrat who serves as the ranking

member on the powerful House appropriations committee. "It is overly unconscionable. ... They are trying to blame Democrats, but they control the government. ... The money is there. I repeat. The money is there."

While the federal SNAP program has a contingency fund of nearly \$6 billion, the Trump administration announced that the contingency money would not be used as it is reserved for major emergencies like tornadoes, hurri-

Turn to Food, Page 5



Weekly volunteer Betty Curley of Naugatuck packs celery for distribution by Connecticut Foodshare's mobile pantries in September. **AARON FLAUM/HARTFORD COURANT**

School roof repair big Bristol ballot issue

By Don Stacom
Hartford Courant

Nearly 10 months after part of Bristol's Edgewood School roof collapsed, uncertainty about whether to repair the building has become an issue in one of the city's hardest political campaigns in years.

The finance board will decide Tuesday evening whether to authorize a major renovation, but the details are largely overshadowed by pre-Election Day rhetoric in the long-running divide between Mayor Jeff Caggiano and the Democratic leadership of the school board.

Local Democrats are slamming Caggiano as uncaring, Republicans are painting school board Chair Shelby Pons as incompetent, and each side is accusing the other of dishonesty.

"Shelby Pons has proven her ignorance about the burden she has placed on the taxpaying citizens of Bristol with her insatiable desire to spend taxpayer dollars," local GOP activist and former town chairman Art Mocabee posted on his Facebook page over the weekend. "Worse than that she expects the Board of Finance to entrust at least another \$6 million to a project she botched in the first place."

Democratic Town Chairman Michael Nicastro was equally rough, countering in a recent memo "Mayor Jeff Caggiano is out there trying to lie his way back into office. Under his watch roofs at Bristol Central, Bristol Eastern, and Edgewood Pre-K are literally falling apart. Make your voice heard. Kick Jeff Caggiano to the curb."

The Edgewood question is part of a bigger dispute over educa-

Turn to Roof, Page 2



Martina Jakober walks Luna with her mother, Cheryl Buckley, on Monday as they pass the new Chatfield Hollow Covered Bridge at Chatfield Hollow State Park in Killingworth.

A dog's day in the park

A great day for leashed dogs to get some fresh air and sun Monday is likely to repeat Tuesday, when it should even be a touch warmer. It appears rain remains on track for Thursday and maybe just a short spell of showers on Halloween.

AARON FLAUM/HARTFORD COURANT PHOTOS



A woman walking her dog passes the new Chatfield Hollow Covered Bridge.

Student aggression up in state schools

By Livi Stanford
Hartford Courant

In Connecticut classrooms, students are routinely insulting, threatening, cursing and physically assaulting teachers. The issue is the most pressing in education today, teachers and education advocates say.

The tense climate has caused teachers to ask to move to other schools to teach and some have been out on workers compensation due to injuries at school, according to the Connecticut Education Association.

The increased aggression from students is tied to numerous factors including the aftermath of COVID, the use of technology, and emotional dysregulation of students, according to mental health experts.

"I think what we are seeing and hearing across the state consistently is that the safety of the school environment, the working conditions and the student behavioral challenges have really leapfrogged in front of everybody to be the top concern," said Kate Dias, president of the Connecticut Education Association, the state's largest teacher union. "It is certainly a significant stressor in the environment that is impacting teachers' ability to do the instructional work. It is important to remember that these are not just physical confrontations. Sometimes these are students who will swear at their teacher and aggressively or verbally go after them, which ultimately stops instruction in the classroom."

The Connecticut State Department of Education states in its latest report on student discipline in schools for the 2023-24

Turn to Aggression, Page 2



A man walks Monday in Old Harbour, Jamaica, before Hurricane Melissa was expected to land. **MATIAS DELACROIX/AP**

Hurricane Melissa threatens Jamaica

Category 5 storm may be strongest on record to hit nation

By John Myers Jr. and Dánica Coto
Associated Press

KINGSTON, Jamaica — Hurricane Melissa intensified into a Category 5 storm Monday as it drew closer to Jamaica, where

forecasters expected it to unleash catastrophic flooding, landslides and widespread damage. At that level, it would be the strongest hurricane to hit the island since recordkeeping began in 1851.

Blamed for six deaths in the northern Caribbean as it headed toward the island, Melissa was on track to make landfall Tuesday in Jamaica before coming ashore in Cuba later in the day and then heading toward the Bahamas.

It was not expected to affect the United States.

Anticipating the hardship in store for his country, Jamaican Prime Minister Andrew Holness said: "I have been on my knees in prayer."

Hanna Mcleod, a 23-year-old hotel receptionist in Jamaica's capital, Kingston, said she boarded up the windows at her

Turn to Melissa, Page 5

Nephew shines light on 'Jaws' star Robert Shaw

Christopher Shaw Myers writes book to mark the 50th anniversary of the famous British actor/playwright/novelist's best-known film. **Connecticut, Page 3**

Opinion.....**News 6**
Obits**News 9-10**
Classified.....**News 11-12**
Puzzles**Living 9**

Comics**Living 10-11**
Stock markets**Living 12**

Hartford Courant
media group

\$4.00 Copyright 2025
The Hartford Courant Co.







NOV 1
UAB | NOON



NOV 8
DUKE | 3:30PM



NOV 15
AIR FORCE | NOON

FINAL 3 HOME GAMES!
GET YOUR TICKETS TODAY!

UCONN.TICKETS.COM

