

Hartford Courant



VOLUME CXC | MONDAY, MAY 18, 2026 | COURANT.COM

Most of Connecticut coast privately owned

Expect to pay in towns with beaches

By Stephen Underwood
HARTFORD COURANT

As Connecticut residents and tourists stake out their favorite beach spots this summer, many will head to a state park. For those who want a more private getaway on the shoreline, it may be harder to find. Connecticut has a rich coastal history with approximately 100 miles of continuous shoreline, yet around 80% the state's coast is privately owned and only 14% is considered sandy beaches,

according to the state's Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. Of the state's existing coastal public access sites, 16% are privately owned, making public beaches crowded as residents look for a place to cool off.

Connecticut has four state beaches including Hammonasset Beach State Park in Madison, which features over two miles of beach, a boardwalk and nature center. Other state beaches include Rocky Neck State Park in East Lyme, Sherwood Island State Park in Westport and Silver Sands State Park in Milford.

Access to state beaches and

parks is free for residents with vehicles registered in Connecticut. Out-of-state drivers have to pay a parking fee that starts at \$7. Most of these beaches also open early in the morning and stay open until sunset, according to DEEP.

Several towns also have beaches for recreation, including popular spots like Compo Beach in Westport, Jennings Beach and Penfield Beach in Fairfield, Gulf Beach in Milford, McCook Point Park in East Lyme and a number of beaches in West Haven. Many towns allow non-residents to purchase day

See **BEACH** on Page A2



Crowds gather at Hammonasset Beach State Park to stay cool in the summer heat, June 23, 2025. **AARON FLAUM/HARTFORD COURANT**



Students Raiyan Khan, left, and Shayaam Qaiser.

Packing up dorms to help others

Connecticut College student volunteers recently bagged clothes as students sorted through donated items collected from fellow students packing up their dorm rooms during the annual Give 'N Go program. Students collected clothing, bedding, small appliances and other reusable items to donate to United Way and local nonprofit organizations through May 18. **AARON FLAUM/HARTFORD COURANT**



Connecticut College student volunteers sort through donated clothes collected from fellow students.



Connecticut College student volunteer Dani Rutherford looks at a baggy pair of pants.

Anorexia sidelined top high school runner

Competing again, she's focused on taking her life back

By Lori Riley
HARTFORD COURANT

It was winter, cold and dreary and it got dark early, and every day Harper Shirley would get on her treadmill and run 10 miles. Shirley, who is now a junior at Manchester High, wasn't training for anything. She wasn't running on the cross country or track teams anymore, even after finishing fifth at the State Open cross country championships in a stunning debut as a freshman.

She was trying to lose weight. She would tell her parents she ate when she didn't. Or she would make up a number when they asked about her weight.

"It was so obsessive," Shirley said. "I was so miserable. I wasn't nice to anyone around me. I felt so alone."

On Jan. 1, 2025, Shirley, who had lost 40 pounds, finally broke down and told her parents, who took action. She spent two weeks in the hospital and then over three months as an inpatient and also in outpatient programs to treat her eating disorder, which was diagnosed as anorexia.

Anorexia among female athletes, especially distance runners, is not uncommon. According to a 2023 article by clinical psychologist Kendra Becker, the director of translational research at the eating disorders clinical and research program at Mass General Hospital, anorexia and bulimia affect approximately 1.6% of U.S. adults and about 2% of U.S. adolescents. However, "among female athletes, those numbers increase dramatically — as high as 42% — depending on age, type of sport, and competitive level. Furthermore, up to 70% of female athletes may engage

See **RUNNER** on Page A2

CCSU to create marketing campaign around controversial plans

Faculty seeks safeguards, raises concern about 'surveillance technologies'

By Sean Krofssik
HARTFORD COURANT

Central Connecticut State University has hired a video production company to support a marketing campaign that focuses on the New Britain school's exploration of an R2 Polytechnic designation.

"Central has engaged Miceli Productions to support the development of an internal marketing and communications campaign centered on the university's exploration of an R2 Polytechnic designation," according to an email sent to CCSU staff and obtained by the Courant. "The goal of this effort

is to strengthen understanding of what R2 Polytechnic means and to build excitement and enthusiasm across the Central community."

A statement from CCSU president Dr. Zulma R. Toro confirmed the news.

See **CAMPAIGN** on Page A2

Drone hits edge of nuclear plant

No fallout detected, but attack adds to unease for US, Iran

By Jon Gambrell and Samy Magdy
ASSOCIATED PRESS

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — A drone strike sparked a fire on the edge of the United Arab Emirates' sole nuclear power plant on Sunday in what authorities said was an "unprovoked terrorist attack."

No one was blamed, but it highlighted the risk of renewed war between the United States and Iran signaled they were ready to fight again.

There were no reported injuries or radiological release. The UAE, which has hosted air defenses and personnel from Israel, recently accused Iran of launching drone and missile attacks.

Tensions have risen over the Strait of Hormuz, a vital energy waterway gripped by Iran, which

See **DRONE** on Page A5

SUBSCRIPTION

Visit myaccount.courant.com or call 860-241-6200 to sign up for a subscription. To place a classified ad, call 860-525-2525. 24/7 coverage at courant.com

WEATHER FORECAST

Warm sunshine, few clouds. **HIGH OF 83, B12**

INDEX

Advice B8 Connecticut A3 Puzzles B9
Classified A11 Markets B12 Sports B1
Comics/TV B10-11 Obituaries A10 Weather B12

\$4.00 Copyright 2025
The Hartford Courant Co.

