



Valley Panthers making waves in first season

SPORTS, 1B

The Bulletin

WEEKEND

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THANKSGIVING SHOPPING



While a few of the items weren't in stock, the total Thanksgiving shopping list cost was around \$50, \$10 more than what Aldi corporate is advertising for the cost. If you were to take away the price of the turkey, then the shopping list is under \$40. MATT GRAHN/NORWICH BULLETIN

Comparing prices at Aldi, Stop & Shop and ShopRite

Matt Grahn
Norwich Bulletin | USA TODAY NETWORK

Thanksgiving is about two weeks away. While many people may get an invitation to a Thanksgiving feast, and would only have to bring one or two items, others might be that host, or are opting to have Thanksgiving at home. Either way, the traditional full thanksgiving feast includes a turkey and all the fixings.

Even though it sounds like an expensive shopping

list, the grocery store chain Aldi announced that shoppers can buy a Thanksgiving dinner for 10 people for only \$40. It gave a list of 21 products, 26 items in total, that can be found at Aldi.

The Bulletin went to the Aldi in Lisbon, CT, the closest one to Norwich, on Nov. 10 to see how much it is, and how the prices compare to two of the grocery stores in Norwich. For our calculations, we used store brands wherever possible.

See **THANKSGIVING**, Page 2A

President of Norwich group honored for his impact

Beth McDermott
AI-assisted reporter
Norwich Bulletin | USA TODAY NETWORK

Kevin Brown, president and executive director of the Norwich Community Development Corporation, has been named Member of the Year by the Connecticut Economic Development Association.

The award, presented during the association's annual meeting and Best Practices Awards Ceremony on Oct. 30, recognizes a member who has exhibited leadership in the economic development profession or within the organization, according to a community announcement.

A team effort

"This prestigious, statewide award speaks volumes of Kevin's vision for Norwich and his leadership of a dedicated team that continues to revitalize Norwich," Paul Whitescarver, executive director of the Southeastern Connecticut Enterprise Region, said in the announcement.

"Kevin's work also defines and supports the larger mission of seCTer as we work across eastern Connecticut to create opportunities for entrepreneurs and the jobs they will create in turn."



Brown

Brown began his tenure at the Norwich Community Development Corporation four years ago during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, leading the Norwich Revitalization Program. The program has supported efforts to rehabilitate unused, vacant space to expand and attract new businesses, as well as fund building code corrections and exterior building repairs to retain existing businesses.

Brown and his staff have been responsible for American Rescue Plan Act-funded programs to build out large-scale projects that added significant employment opportunities to the Norwich economy.

Significant impact

So far, Brown has overseen seven major development projects of \$1 million or more that resulted in 370 jobs and more than 460,000 square feet of commercial space activation. These projects represent more than \$78 million in total investments, with a 21:1 ratio of private to public funding.

In the small-business sector, the Norwich Community Development Corporation's work has led to the establishment of 19 small businesses that created 116 jobs in more than 90,500 square feet of formerly dormant commercial space. This work represents

See **AWARD**, Page 2A

Providing holiday gifts to children in need in eastern CT

Beth McDermott
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Norwich Bulletin | USA TODAY NETWORK

Registration is open for the 2025 Tommy Toy Program, which provides holiday gifts to children in need in Eastern Connecticut.

The program serves families in New London and Windham counties who might otherwise receive few or no gifts during the holiday season, according to a community announcement.

Families must pre-register through an approved site and select a pick-up location. The program is for children ages 0-12 who reside in New London or Windham County.

Pick-up day is Dec. 10 at three locations: Gemma E. Moran, United Way Labor Food Center - 374 Broad St., New London; Reliance Health, Wellness Center (basement floor) - 2 Cliff St., Norwich and Killingly Commons, storefront between Famous Footwear Mattress Firm - 581 Hartford Pike, Dayville.

Where to sign up

A list of approved partner organizations where families can register is available at uwsect.org/tommytoy.

Volunteer opportunities are available for those interested in assisting with site set-up, decorating, toy distribution and clean-up. Volunteers must be 18 or older, or 12-17 with parent or guardian supervision. They should be able to lift 15 pounds, stand for long periods, interact with clients and use a computer.

Volunteer shifts are available from Dec. 8-11. More information and sign-up details are available at uwsect.org/volunteer.

The United Way works to help people in need and improve community conditions. More information about the organization is available at uwsect.org.

For more information about the Tommy Toy Program or to register, visit uwsect.org/tommytoy.

This story was created by reporter Beth McDermott, bmcdermott1@usatodayco.com, with the assistance of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Journalists were involved



A Tommy Toy Fund volunteer fills a bag with a small item. MATT GRAHN/NORWICH BULLETIN

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