

RepublicanAmerican



FINALS BOUND

The undefeated Woodland boys basketball team beats Cromwell to reach its first CIAC final in program history.

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SUPER SOPHS

The Patriots are banking on several players making a year two leap.

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SWEET TREATS

Great Mountain Forest is offering a forest-to-table maple sugaring event in Norfolk.

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STATUS QUO

The Naugatuck school system is planning for status quo with a \$75.4M budget proposal.

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PLEA DEAL

Former Kent School IT worker who accessed students' private photos to avoid jail time in plea deal.

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CT EATS

Fancy tea and a history of cheese are coming to the state. Read about it on our weekly foodie page.

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State recovers \$43 million in Medicaid fraud payments

By Paul Hughes
STAFF WRITER

HARTFORD — At least \$43.4 million in fraudulent Medicaid payments were made in Connecticut between fiscal years 2021 and 2025, the state Division of Criminal Justice recently reported to a legislative committee.

The Division of Criminal

Justice informed the Appropriations Committee in a follow-up report to its budget presentation for the upcoming 2027 fiscal year that the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit opened 260 cases between the 2021 and 2025 fiscal years, made 41 arrests and secured 37 convictions.

The largest amount for Medicaid recoveries reported dur-

ing that five-year period was \$16.2 million in the 2023 fiscal year, and the 65 cases opened that year also represented a five-year high. The dozen convictions recorded in the 2024 fiscal year represented the most during that five-year period. The 2021 and 2025 fiscal years tied for most annual arrests, with 10 for each year.

Medicaid is a joint state-fed-

eral program that helps pay for free or low-cost health care for seniors, low-income households, people with disabilities and pregnant women. More than 68.8 million people were enrolled in Medicaid nationally in late 2025, according to the latest available federal figures, and another 7.2 million were enrolled in the Children's

Fraud continues on A10

'Man our ship and bring her to life!'



Associated Press

U.S. Marine Col. Harvey C. Barnum Jr. wearing his Medal of Honor, which he earned in 1965 as a young lieutenant in Vietnam in December 1965.

U.S. Navy ship named for Cheshire Medal of Honor recipient to be commissioned

By Jesse Leavenworth

STAFF WRITER

The U.S. Navy announced Thursday that a new warship named for Cheshire native and Medal of Honor recipient Col. Harvey C. Barnum Jr. will be commissioned in April.

The USS Harvey C. Barnum Jr., an Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer, is to be commissioned on April 11 in Norfolk, Va. Barnum, 85, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran of the Vietnam War who now lives in Virginia, said Thursday that he will be there.

"It's a phenomenal honor," he said. "It doesn't get any better than that."

Barnum graduated in 1958 from Cheshire High School, where he was class president in

Ship continues on A5



Neil Boorjian/U.S. Navy

The USS Harvey C. Barnum Jr., a guided missile destroyer named for a Medal of Honor recipient from Cheshire, is set to be commissioned in Norfolk, Va., on April 11.

Connecticut could tax sweetened beverages to pay for school meals

By Jordan Nathaniel Fenster

STAFF WRITER

A proposal to create a tax on sweetened beverages that would then be turned around to fund free meals at public schools across Connecticut drew plenty of testimony at the state Capitol in Hartford Monday, most opposed to the concept.

While many spoke out

against the proposal, most did not necessarily oppose the goal of the measure.

"This is one of those topics where I think we can all agree that the goal, the end goal, is very laudable," state Rep. Joe Polletta, R-Watertown, said of the push for free student meals. "I think there's the need across the state of Connecticut for meals, especially in those vulnerable communities."

Tax continues on A10

State lawmakers eye grants to aid municipalities, schools

By Natasha Sokoloff

STAFF WRITER

HARTFORD — Connecticut House Democrats announced a plan Monday that aims to ease the property tax burden on towns and cities struggling to fund their local school systems.

Boosting dollars for schools has emerged as a priority this legislative session, and under-

lying the various proposals introduced so far is the acknowledgment that without an additional state investment in education funding, municipalities will be forced to raise property taxes or reduce support for local school districts.

During a news conference at the Legislative Office Building, House Democratic leaders introduced a plan to address

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Weather: Partly cloudy.
High: 38 Low: 26
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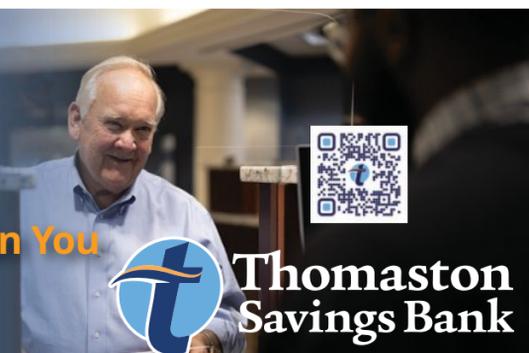
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