

Man freed after 20 years in prison

Torrington judge dismisses sex assault case

By Bruno Matarazzo Jr. STAFF WRITER

NEW MILFORD — A man who spent 20 years in jail after being convicted of sexual assault charges involving two young girls walked out a free man on Sept. 3 after a judge dismissed his case, agreeing that New Milford police waited too long to execute his arrest warrant despite information that could have helped them find him.

Last year, the Connecticut Appellate Court ordered a new trial for Roger Brown on the grounds that police unjustifiably delayed his arrest and his previous lawyers failed to properly pursue the issue. Last November, Brown's attorney, J. Patten Brown, filed a motion to dismiss the case at state Superior Court in Torrington, and on Sept. 3, Judge Brian Preleski agreed. The judge granted the motion to dismiss and vacated all his convictions after Brown served 20 years of a 23-year sentence that was handed down in 2008 following a jury trial. He was found

guilty of first-degree sexual assault, two counts of fourth-degree sexual assault and three counts of risk of injury to a child. Prosecutors urged the judge to reject the motion to dismiss, arguing that Brown had left Connecticut, lived in other states and was not readily available to local police. Brown maintained his innocence at his sentencing, telling Judge Michael Sheldon that "I'm innocent of these charges," according to published reports. "I'm very relieved," J. Patten Brown said Sept. 4 of the judge's decision. **Freed continues on A2**



Courtesy of J. Patten Brown
Roger Brown, left, shown with his attorney, J. Patten Brown, was freed from prison after 20 years after his conviction was overturned earlier this year.



Norbrook Farm Brewery honored
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ELECTION 2026
Tax breaks for data centers roil governor campaign

By Paul Hughes STAFF WRITER

Republican candidate Ryan Fazio is trying to use Gov. Ned Lamont's past support for recruiting data centers against the two-term Democrat in Connecticut's campaign for governor. Fazio is campaigning on repealing tax exemptions for qualifying data centers that Lamont got fast-tracked through the Democrat-controlled legislature in 2021 with overwhelming bipartisan support months before Fazio won a special election in the 36th Senate District. Lamont is not running away from having championed those long-term local property tax and state sales tax exemptions, but his stance has shifted from openly to selectively encouraging data center development in Connecticut. The governor now wants companies building and operating these supercomputing hubs to pay for electric grid upgrades or supply their own electricity. So does Fazio. Lamont is trying to blunt Fazio's campaign attacks by pointing out that only one company has qualified for the tax breaks and emphasizing his opposition to massive hyperscale data centers designed to support the extreme demands of cloud computing and AI. The campaign debate in Connecticut is taking place amid a wider national political argument over the development of data centers. Data centers have become a significant issue **Tax continues on A6**



Photos by H John Voorhees III/Hearst Connecticut Media
Brittany Conover, owner of Shaggy Coos Farm & Creamery, a female-led micro-dairy and creamery, is in her barn Aug. 19 in Easton.

‘There was real pain’

Connecticut steps in to support its dairy farmers as payments arrive

By Ken Dixon STAFF WRITER

EASTON — Shaggy Coos Farm & Creamery is one of the smallest dairies in Connecticut. But a statewide effort to help the 79 remaining milking operations at a time when production costs exceed sales revenue is making life a little easier for Brittany Conover and her husband on their 40 acres here on Center Road. The \$22.5 million that Gov. Ned Lamont freed up for dairy farmers in mid-May will give them an additional \$5.50 per 100 **Dairy continues on A6**



Dairy cows get comfy in piles of hay at Shaggy Coos Farm & Creamery, a female-led micro-dairy and creamery, in Easton last month.

‘Harwington’ sign contains a nearly 300-year-old typo

By Jordan Nathaniel Fenster STAFF WRITER

There is no “g” in Harwinton. That did not stop one from appearing on a new state highway sign in Litchfield. A directional sign installed on Route 254 points drivers toward “Harwington,” adding an extra consonant to the name of the neighboring town — and spelling it the way people in that part of Connecticut have sometimes pronounced it for generations. Litchfield First Selectman Denise Raap noticed the sign and posted a photograph of it on Facebook. “I guess they didn’t have anybody proofreading it that was



Courtesy of Denise Raap
A sign on Route 254 in Litchfield reads “Harwington.”

from the area because we know how to spell it,” Raap said. The sign was installed by a contractor as part of Connecticut Department of Transportation Project No. 0174-0463, which is replacing signs along secondary roads in western Connecticut, DOT spokesperson Eva Zymaris said. “The contractor has been notified to fix it,” Zymaris said. The \$2.1 million sign-replacement contract was awarded to Discount Fence of Connecticut, according to DOT contracting records. A message left with the contractor was not immediately returned. Raap said the state responded quickly after she brought the mis- **‘Harwington’ continues on A2**

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Floods damage shore towns

By Ken Dixon STAFF WRITER

Residents and businesses in the two dozen towns and cities along the Connecticut shoreline have sustained nearly half a billion dollars in flood damage since 1978, according to a new report on the effects of storms and resiliency efforts. Milford leads the list with \$76.4 million in insurance payouts from 1978 through 2025, followed by Fairfield at \$56.6 million, Norwalk at nearly \$46 million, Westport at \$44.3 million and Greenwich at \$38.6 million, according to the report released by the Western Connecticut Council of Governments. Waterford rounded out the claims totals with about \$1.5 million. **Floods continues on A2**

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