

Records shed light on hospital's woes

From forgiven debt to diverted funding, Prospect's bills piled up

By Liese Klein
STAFF WRITER

Of all the fixes needed at Waterbury Hospital, it's the plywood that seemed to bother the nurses the most.

"There's a wall that fell off the back wall of the hospital — because it's on the back of the hospital, they didn't replace it yet," veteran registered nurse Marilyn Anthony said. Nurses and

other staff have to walk by the makeshift repair every day, she added. "It's just plywood."

Speaking at a Nov. 11 event celebrating Waterbury Hospital's pending purchase by UConn Health, Anthony and another nurse also expressed frustration at decades-out-of-date computer systems and broken elevators. All of the issues represent years of deferred maintenance by the hospital's current owner,

bankrupt Prospect Medical Holdings.

Local managers blamed the maintenance issues and staff shortages at Prospect's Connecticut hospitals on the company's California executives, who signaled a major cash crunch starting around 2019, said state Sen. Dr. Saud Anwar. That cash crunch was brought on in part by the Prospect's soaring debt

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CEO Dr. Andrew Agwunobi speaks at an event announcing UConn Health's bid to buy Waterbury Hospital on Nov. 11.

Liese Klein/
Hearst Connecticut Media



Ken Dixon/Hearst Connecticut Media

Scaffolding would have obscured the historic state Capitol building from visitors expected to flock there in July for the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

\$50M rehab of Capitol delayed

Project to start in September after 250th celebrations

By Ken Dixon
STAFF WRITER

HARTFORD — The two-year \$50 million exterior cleaning and restoration of the historic state Capitol building will take a back seat to next year's 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

The advisory State Capitol Preservation and Restoration Commission voted recently to delay the project until Sept. 1, 2026. That means the historic 1878 Gothic structure in Hartford will not be sheathed in scaffolding at a time when it will be a major backdrop for a variety of commemorative activities, particularly July 4, 2026, when the nation will celebrate semiquincentennial events.

Denise Merrill, chairwoman of the America 250 Connecticut Commission, said Thursday the 14-acre State Capitol campus and the adjacent Bushnell Park are scheduled to host groups from towns and cities throughout the state on July 4. She praised state Sen. Cathy Osten, chairwoman of the restoration commission, for steering the group in support of delaying the work, which will include re-pointing granite and marble blocks and refurbishing 522 windows.

Merrill, a former majority

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Photos by Tyler Sizemore/Hearst Connecticut Media

Snow falls on the 13th anniversary of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting at the Sandy Hook Permanent Memorial in Newtown on Sunday.

Faith leaders reflect on Sandy Hook anniversary

13 years after school shooting, clergy renew call for reconciliation

By Michael Gagne
STAFF WRITER

NEWTOWN — Thirteen years later, the town's faith leaders' reason for gathering remains the same — remembering the lives of 20 first-graders and six educators lost in the massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School on Dec. 14, 2012, while also calling for reconciliation and togetherness.

Newtown's faith leaders urged for that reconciliation during an annual service held Sunday at Newtown Congregational Church.

"On this day 13 years ago, a lot of empathy and compassion was displayed in our town. How can you learn



A white rose is placed on the 13th anniversary of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting at the Sandy Hook Permanent Memorial in Newtown.

MORE INSIDE: On Sandy Hook's 13th anniversary, new shootings revive painful questions about gun violence. **A3**

something from that day that would put us in the same mindset so that we can still be in solidarity, unity and empathetic with each other?" asked Steve Bamberg, of Congregation Adath Israel.

Bamberg said 13 years earlier, the Newtown community shared an experience "which made us vulnerable, empathetic and unified. Now we seem to have lost the ability to recognize each other as human beings in our own community, in our own state, in our country."

He said the community has "a lot of work to do" to reconcile and heal.

"Everyone can be where they are and come from where they are. It is a journey

Sandy Hook continues on A7

Stamford-based Lovesac shifts to U.S. manufacturing

Stamford-based Lovesac will reshore U.S. manufacturing to reduce tariffs and supply-chain risks — from port delays to piracy — while exiting China.

Mike Blake/
Reuters



Tariffs, shipping risks spur decision to pivot

By Alexander Soule
STAFF WRITER

Citing a double whammy of tariffs and the ongoing specter of supply disruptions — including the possibility of high-seas piracy — one of Connecticut's fastest-growing retailers is doubling down on plans to shift manufacturing to the United States.

Based in Stamford, Lovesac

designs "Sactional" couches and chairs that owners can configure to match room layouts, or customize otherwise including with wireless speaker systems for "home theater" acoustics in living rooms and dens.

To date, Lovesac has relied on outsourced manufacturers to ship its Sactional components, in China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Taiwan and Viet-

nam. The company's "Sac beanbag" chair are made in North Carolina and Texas. Lovesac had previously disclosed plans to invest in domestic manufacturing "to support supply chain redundancy for certain of our products" as worded in its most recent annual report.

Tariffs have played into those decisions, both as a known extra expense and an unknown source of uncertainty over how

Lovesac continues on A7