

State panel rules against probate attorney



A panel found Kristan Exner engaged in self-dealing and provided false information to a probate court while under oath.

Finds probable cause lawyer lied under oath on home sales, engaged in self-dealing

By Ella Napack STAFF WRITER

A judicial panel released findings this week saying state-contracted attorney Kristan Exner engaged in self-dealing and provided false information to a probate court while under oath.

Exner, who serves as a conservator for hundreds of people across the state, will face a hearing on the panel's findings. The hearing was scheduled for Aug. 6, but an attorney for Exner has requested it be pushed back.

CT Insider first reported in October that Exner sold two homes of residents she was appointed to represent to her own business partner, Joseph Garin. Both homes were resold by Garin within months at prices above what he purchased them for — in one case for more than two times what he purchased it for, property records show.

She also did not bring the home sales to the court for approval, according to probate records.

The Bridgeport Judicial Dis-

trict Grievance Panel wrote in its finding of probable cause that Exner “engaged in self-dealing, failed to follow the procedures of the probate courts to protect against exploitation of those the court seeks to protect and provided false information to the court while under oath.”

The panel's findings will now be heard by the Statewide Grievance Committee, which can decide to reprimand Exner if the committee agrees with the findings or dismiss the matter if it believes there is not clear and convincing evidence of an attorney rules violation. The statewide committee can also refer

Rules continues on A7

Conn. prisons to end in-cell shackling

By Josh LaBella STAFF WRITER

The state's prisons will no longer use in-cell shackling following a settlement between civil rights organizations and the Connecticut Department of Correction, officials say.

In a release, the American Civil Liberties Union Foundation of Connecticut said the settlement resolves a case challenging DOC's in-cell shackling of prisoners with mental illness.

“CDOC's in-cell shackling involved chaining a prisoner's legs and wrists, binding their hands to their feet with a tether chain, and then leaving them locked in their cell for hours or even days,” the release said.

Shackling continues on A4



Doug McCall of Nutmeg Treasure Hunters scans the sand with a metal detector at Hammonasset Beach State Park's Miegs Point in Madison on July 20.

Community raising money for family of fall victim

By Jessica Bravo STAFF WRITER

STAMFORD — The community is coming together to raise money for the family of the 4-year-old child that fell from a high-rise city apartment building earlier this week and died.

The GoFundMe had raised over \$2,500 through 58 denotations as of 12:30 p.m. on Thursday. The organizer of the fundraiser, who identified themselves as a neighbor and friend, said the young boy was visiting his grandmother's unit when he fell from a 10th-floor window on Sunday evening.

Fall continues on A7

From rings to artifacts

State's metal detectorists hit the beaches in search of treasure

By Austin Mirmina STAFF WRITER

MADISON — Just after 8 a.m. on a recent Monday, Doug McCall swept his metal detector across the sand at Hammonasset Beach State Park with a sand scoop slung over his shoulder.

He listened for a steady, high-pitched beep, the telltale sound every detectorist hopes to hear. When it came, the screen on his Garrett AT Pro flashed a number suggesting the buried object was most likely a coin.

“This could be a penny or something better,” McCall said, driving the scoop into the sand.

He probed the sandpile



Henry Cortes of Nutmeg Treasure Hunters looks in his sand scoop while scanning the beach with a metal detector at Hammonasset Beach State Park's Miegs Point in Madison on July 20.

next to the hole with the smaller, handheld pinpoint detector and quickly found the source of the noise: a bottle cap.

“This drives us crazy,” McCall said.

A few minutes later, another signal stopped him in his tracks. This time, it was a gold-colored wire-wrapped ring set with a round, purple gemstone — a perfect gift for his granddaughter.

Findings like these are what keep McCall coming back to a hobby where rusty bottle caps and metal tabs far outnumber rings and coins.

That's just the reality of beach hunting: metal tabs, bread ties, screws, tin foil and

Detectors continues on A4

Work zone speed cameras taking action around the state

By Brianna Gurciullo STAFF WRITER

Speed cameras will soon be active at the Interstate 91, I-691 and Route 15 interchange project in Meriden as well as at a roadway reconstruction project on I-84 in Newtown, according to the state Department of Transportation.

The state DOT launched a speed camera program for highway work zones on June 1, with systems initially deployed at three construction projects: on I-95 in East Lyme, on I-95 in

West Haven and on Route 2 in Colchester. After a five-week period of only issuing warnings, fines began on July 6.

Enforcement continues at the East Lyme project, but the work zones in Colchester and West Haven no longer have active cameras, DOT spokesperson Josh Morgan said.

The cameras at the highway projects in Meriden and Newtown are expected to be active by the end of the week, Morgan said. He was unable to provide the exact location of the cam-

era within the sprawling Meriden project, where DOT previously tested the technology.

DOT has also set up a camera near the Gold Star Memorial Bridge between New London and Groton, where work is underway to rehabilitate the north-bound span, but Morgan said the system is only collecting data at this time.

When activated, the camera systems are used to mail written warnings and fines to the owners of vehicles detected traveling 10 mph or more over the pos-

ed speed limits. Morgan said he didn't yet have verified data to share on the number of penalties issued so far.

For a first violation, an owner gets a written warning and no fine, unless the

Cameras continues on A6

A stationary speed camera unit operated by the Connecticut Department of Transportation at highway traffic sites.

Courtesy of the Connecticut Department of Transportation

