

Wi-Fi coming to some Conn. trains

Not Metro-North's New Haven Line

By **Brianna Gurciullo**
STAFF WRITER

In the East Lot outside Union Station in New Haven, what appears to be a trailer or small shipping container sits in one corner on top of several parking spaces.

Inside is a model of a new passenger coach expected to enter service in 2027. Two fact

sheets lay out its features and amenities, including power outlets, laptop tables ... and Wi-Fi.

The state ordered 60 of the new train cars from manufacturer Alstom in 2023. After their delivery in late 2026, the coaches are expected to run on CTrail's Hartford Line and the Danbury and Waterbury branches of Metro-North

Railroad's New Haven Line, replacing cars that are decades old. Details of how exactly the Wi-Fi would work were not immediately available.

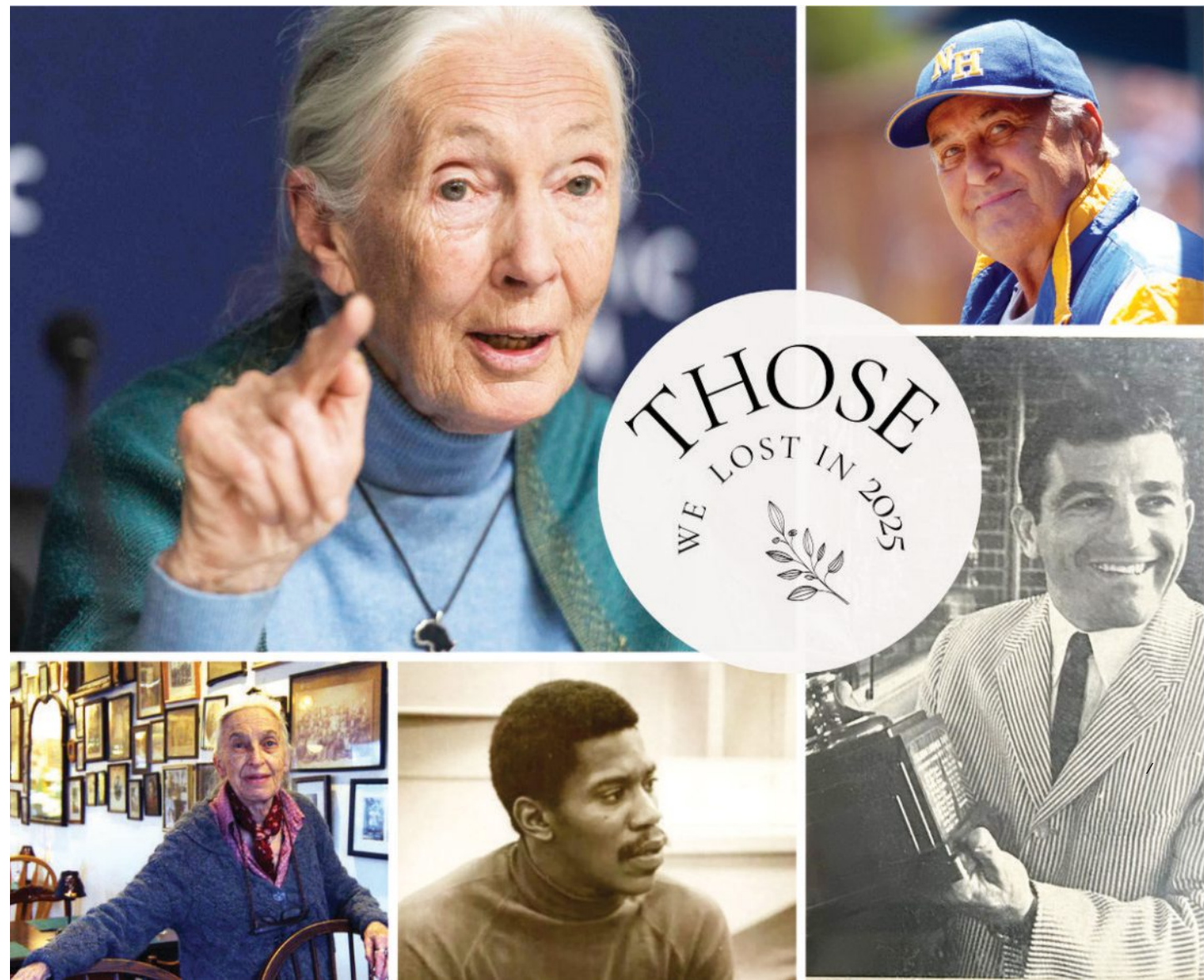
But the new coaches won't be coming to the main New Haven Line or its New Canaan branch, which use Kawasaki M8 cars. The fleet began to enter service in 2011 and now totals 471 cars.

Trains continues on A6



Arnold Gold/Hearst Connecticut Media

The new Metro-North cars will feature Wi-Fi service and power outlets, but they will not run on the main New Haven Line.



Remembering residents who left their mark on Connecticut

By **Cassandra Day and Tyler Fedor**
STAFF WRITERS

We're remembering notable individuals who died this year with ties to Connecticut, including actors and educators, coaches and officials, the artist best known for album covers for Jethro Tull and the Yardbirds and a paranormal investigator who worked with the Annabelle doll.

Below are stories about some of the people Connecticut lost this year.

Burt Leventhal, 89

A New Haven native, Burt Leventhal played basketball at Hillhouse High School before going on to serve in the U.S. Army from 1958-1960,

Deaths continues on A4



Arnold Gold/Hearst Connecticut Media

Flowers are arranged at center ice at Veterans Memorial Rink in West Hartford on Feb. 3, 2025, for a silent vigil in memory of the lives lost in the crash of Flight 5342 in Washington, D.C.

Nail tech at Norwalk salon arrested for 'racial comments,' police say

By **Josh LaBella, Peter Yankowski**
STAFF WRITERS

NORWALK — Police have charged a technician at a Norwalk nail salon after a woman claimed he made "disparaging racial comments" toward her, officials say.

Hai Bin Zu, 26, was charged with breach of peace and released on a written promise to appear in court, the Norwalk Police Department said in a news release Wednesday.

Police said officers were called Tuesday morning to Bling Bling Nail Salon on Main Street for a report of a male individual causing a disturbance inside.

There was no active disturbance when they arrived, police said, but the man who was the subject of the call told officers a female family friend who was at the business earlier had been subjected to racial insults. They said detectives then took over the investigation based on it being a possible hate incident.

Police said the parties involved, as well as a witness, told investigators the initial dispute arose out of services rendered at the nail salon. They said the woman reported that, during an argument with Bin Zu, a male nail technician, he had made disparaging racial comments toward her. The woman then struck the technician on the side of his head with her hand, police said, adding no injuries were reported.

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State lawmakers spent \$7.6M in the last 5 years sending mail to voters

By **Bill Cummings**
STAFF WRITER

State lawmakers spent \$7.6 million over the last five years sending voters newsletters and piles of other mail, a CT Insider review of legislative spending found.

The majority Democrats in the House and Senate spent about \$5.1 million in taxpayer money on mailings between the 2021 and 2025 fiscal years while the Republican minority spent about \$2.5 million, the review found. Democrats hold a 101-49 majority in the House and a 25-11 majority in the Senate.

In all, the spending re-

sulted in tens of thousands of pieces of first class and bulk mail hitting the mailboxes of registered voters during the period reviewed. All that activity is regulated by pages of rules, which include volume limits for most lawmakers and a prohibition against sending mail after July 16 during an even-numbered election year, a time when lawmakers may be running for another term.

The mailings typically contain information about issues the lawmaker wants to promote and provide photos of the legislator interacting with constituents or giving a speech. A recent



Ned Gerard/Hearst Connecticut Media

The Connecticut state Capitol in Hartford. Connecticut state lawmakers spent \$7.6 million over the last five years sending newsletters and mail to voters, a review shows.

newsletter sent by state Rep. Jan Hochadel, D-Meriden,

told voters the state budget contained no new

taxes, and that lawmakers had improved child-care affordability, cut energy costs, cracked down on street takeovers and protected reproductive freedom.

Still, the amount of mail sent to voters varied greatly among lawmakers on both sides, according to the review. For example, Senate Majority Leader Bob Duff, D-Norwalk, spent \$133,991 over the years reviewed, the most of any lawmaker, while former Senate Minority Leader Kevin Kelly of Stratford spent \$63,409. Kelly resigned in January 2025 to become a state Superior Court judge.

Jonathan Wharton, a political science professor at Southern Connecticut State University, said the legislative mailing privilege has a long history.

"It's part of our of tradition," he said. "I'm a former congressional aide and the notion was to keep constituents informed. It can be very useful for constituents. I think it's an essential process of the legislative branch."

But Wharton conceded free postage also represents a built-in advantage for incumbent politicians.

"It does get the name recognition out there, and that

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