

Norwalk

Just a thought . . .

There is no time like the old time, when you and I were young.

■ Oliver Wendell Holmes

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2006

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NEWS BRIEFS

Wilton Arts Council seeks photos for show

WILTON — The Wilton Arts Council's seventh annual photography show, Focus '06, will be accepting photograph entries on Sunday, Feb. 26, from 1 to 4 p.m. and on Thursday, March 2, from 4 to 6 at the Wilton Library. All professional, amateur, high school students and college level photographers will be eligible to participate. New this year is the Len Freas Memorial Junior Photography Division for elementary and junior high ages up to and including eighth-graders.

All photographs must be framed, wired and ready to hang. Entries are limited to two per photographer and may be black and white, color or digital. There are no size limitations. The photos will be hung throughout the Wilton Library.

Contact: by mail - Focus '06, Wilton Arts Council, P.O. Box 7161, Wilton, CT 06897; by phone - Call Pam at 762-8771 and leave your name, address and phone and you will be sent a brochure.

For more information, visit www.wiltonarts.org.

By-laws change

NORWALK — The Frank C. Godfrey Post 12 is announcing a proposed by-laws change at the Feb. 21 membership meeting.

Contact the post for any questions or for more information at (203) 866-8249.

Courage to Speak

Family Night

NORWALK — Tuesday, March 7 (snow date March 14), is the second annual Courage To Speak "Empowering Youth to be Drug Free" Family Night at West Rocks Middle School, 8 West Rocks Road, 5:30 p.m.

Guests will hear from Norwalk's seventh-graders about their drug prevention work with the Courage To Speak middle school curriculum. Emcee for the evening will be Deputy Minority Leader Lawrence Cafero. Featured speakers are Mayor Richard A. Moccia, Norwalk Deputy Chief of Police Mark Palmer and School Superintendent Dr. Salvatore Corda. Special guests include Dr. Thomas Kirk, commissioner of Addiction Services and Mental Health of CT, and June Stansbury, special agent in charge of the New England Division of the DEA.

For more information, visit www.couragetospeak.org or call (203) 247-3975.

Norden plan increases affordable units

By ROBERT KOCH
Hour Staff Writer

NORWALK — Following a city recommendation, Spinnaker Cos. has boosted the percentage of affordable housing units within its proposed 316-unit development for the eastern half of the Norden property.

"We are doing the 15 percent recommended by the Industrial Zones Committee," said Spin-

naker principal Clayton H. Fowler, leaving City Hall Thursday night after further review of the proposed development by Zoning commissioners. "We would fit (studio apartments) in the mid-rise buildings."

Norden Place LLC — a joint venture of Spinnaker Real Estate Partners LLC, Greenfield Partners and Summit

Development — needs Zoning commission approval to build housing between NordenPark and the Norwalk-Westport border. The site now is zoned for Restricted Industrial Use and not multi-family housing.

The development calls for the units to be built in "villages" on the eastern half of the 78.6-acre Norden site, which lies between Norden

Place, the Westport border, Interstate 95 and the Metro-North railroad tracks. Traffic would enter from Norden Place. Allowing emergency vehicles to enter via Hiawatha Lane in Westport is under consideration.

The Industrial Zones Committee last month approved a draft report recommending allowing multi-family housing

on the Norden site and requiring that 15 percent of the resulting units be priced affordably. That's roughly four-dozen units, assuming that 316 units are built.

Fowler said changing floor plans — not adding square footage — allowed Spinnaker to boost the portion of affordable units from 12 percent to 15 per-

See NORDEN, A4

Shays slams media, Democrats at press conference

By PATRICK R. LINSEY
Hour Staff Writer

REGION — Rep. Christopher Shays, R-4, denounced what he termed "incredible allegations" reported by local media outlets, and accused Democrats of spreading "a campaign of misinformation" at a media breakfast Thursday at the Norwalk Inn on East Avenue.

The Connecticut congressman also spoke about his recent fact-finding trip to Iraq, and a member of his staff described the new Medicare Part D drug program.

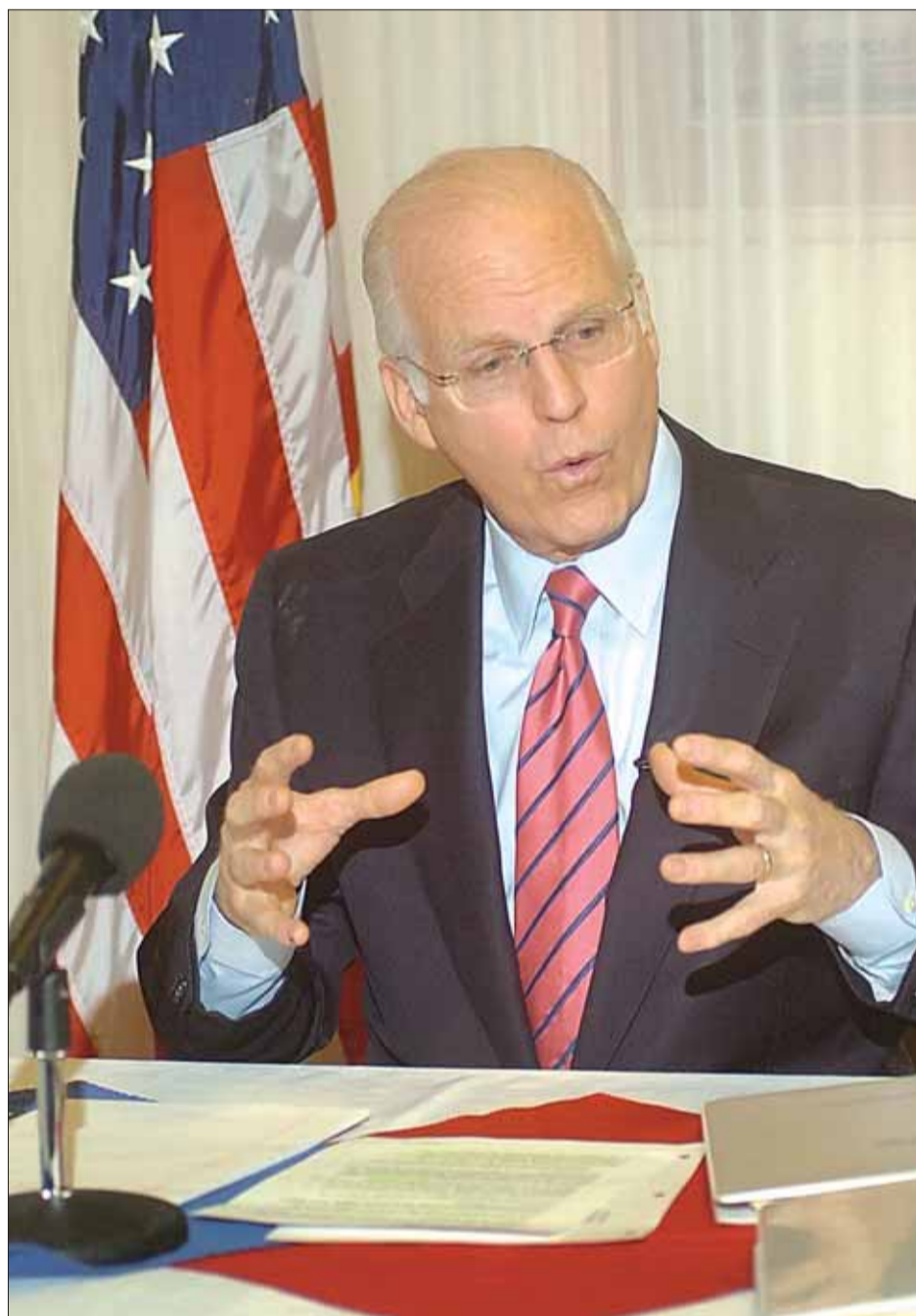
"They allowed this incredible allegation to be viewed as true."

Congressman
Christopher Shays, R4

Disputing reports and opinion pieces in area media outlets, Shays criticized the *Connecticut Post*, which stated in a Feb. 1 editorial that he supported "\$12.7 billion in cuts for college students in need of loans."

"They allowed this incredible allegation to be viewed as true," Shays said.

While rates were raised on Parent PLUS loans, the interest rates were fixed at 7.9 percent. The rates were previously variable, now at 6.1 per-



Hour photo / ERIK TRAUTMANN

Congressman Chris Shays talks to reporters regarding his visit to Iraq as well as other issues during a press conference at Norwalk Inn Thursday morning.

cent with a 9 percent cap.

Much of the savings also comes from the repeal of lender subsidies, Shays said. Lenders did little to discredit mischaracterizations from Democrats, he said, because they were angry after the subsidy was cut.

Shays noted he has a personal interest in student loans. "My daughter is a student," he said, "and she is maxed out on her loans."

He also criticized reports that 100,000 people will lose their health coverage by 2015, due to the bill.

See SHAYS, A5

St. George proposal revisited

Commissioners review residents' concerns

By ROBERT KOCH
Hour Staff Writer

NORWALK — Zoning commissioners reviewed Thursday night concerns voiced by residents last month about a proposed 21,000-square-foot expansion to St. George Greek Orthodox Church at 238 West Rocks Road.

At the public hearing at City Hall Jan. 19, neighbors asked for less lighting, parking changes and landscaping to shield the addition from their back windows.

On Thursday night, Zoning commissioners concluded that the church has responded to residents' concerns.

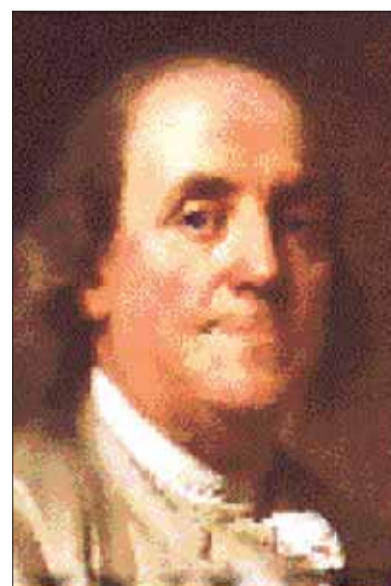
"They're attempting to make some real arrangements to become good neighbors," said commission Chairwoman Dorothy Mobilia, noting the church's offer to build a fence, add trees and shrubbery, and remove 26 parking spaces from the West Rocks Road side of the property. "They seem to be making a serious effort."

Michael E. Wrinn, assistant planning and zoning director for the city, relayed to Zoning Commission Chairwoman

department data outlining calls to 238 West Rocks Road. In 2003, police recorded five incidents. In 2004, they recorded eight incidents. In 2005, there were 16 incidents, including

See ST. GEORGE, A5

'Ben Franklin' to appear for tour of Westport Saturday



By JEANNE HOFF
Hour Staff Writer

WESTPORT — Merwin Goldsmith, who plays arraignment judge Ian Feist in the hit television sitcom "Law & Order" will be in full 18th-century regalia Saturday as he does a Ben Franklin reenactment during the Westport Historical Society's first Destination Westport tour.

"It's a narrated tour starting at the site of the tavern where George Washington spent the night and then it continues from there and follows the original Kings Highway, and we end up at the milestone in Fairfield," said Barbara Ray-

mond, volunteer archivist for the Westport Historical Society. "The milestone has the engraving on it that shows the mileage to New Haven."

Historians say the milestone, at 480 Post Road, Fairfield, was engraved by Franklin when he served as postmaster.

Those boarding the tour bus will meet at the Westport Historical Society, 25 Avery Place, at 2 p.m.

Tickets are \$10 per individual and \$25 per family.

Susan Gold of the historical society said that there are only 10 tickets left for purchase.

"This is the first tour and

we've had a wonderful response to the tours that we've scheduled. We feel it's a great way to acquaint people to the community," Gold said. "The bus tour is another way of understanding one of the greatest Americans. Ben Franklin is a brilliant politician, scientist, writer and developer. He's a total renaissance man."

Goldsmith will ride the 47-passenger bus with event participants along with town historian Allen Raymond, who is also co-president of the historical society, and members of the historical society event committee.

"We'll be talking about Ben Franklin and his accomplishments as a postmaster and how he was abruptly dismissed from that position" said Goldsmith, who also performs throughout the region in a one-man show titled "Franklin of Philadelphia."

"He's a fascinating character. A giant in American history and lately there has been a greater appreciation of his importance in the Revolutionary war," said Goldsmith. "Franklin got the French to come on our side. It was brilliant diplomacy."

The American Revolution

See BEN, A5

Heart Healthy Cooking February 14

Learn delicious, heart healthy alternatives to your favorite recipes in this hands-on cooking class. Class topics include recipe substitutions and DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) meal planning. At the end of the class, you will be invited to eat and enjoy the many dishes prepared in class.

When:
Tues, February 14,
11:30 am - 1 pm

Where:
Brace Auditorium Kitchen
Tully Health Center
32 Strawberry Hill Court

Speaker:
Lynda Mezansky, RD

Fee:
\$35

For information about this free lecture, please call toll-free:
1-877-233-WELL (9355)

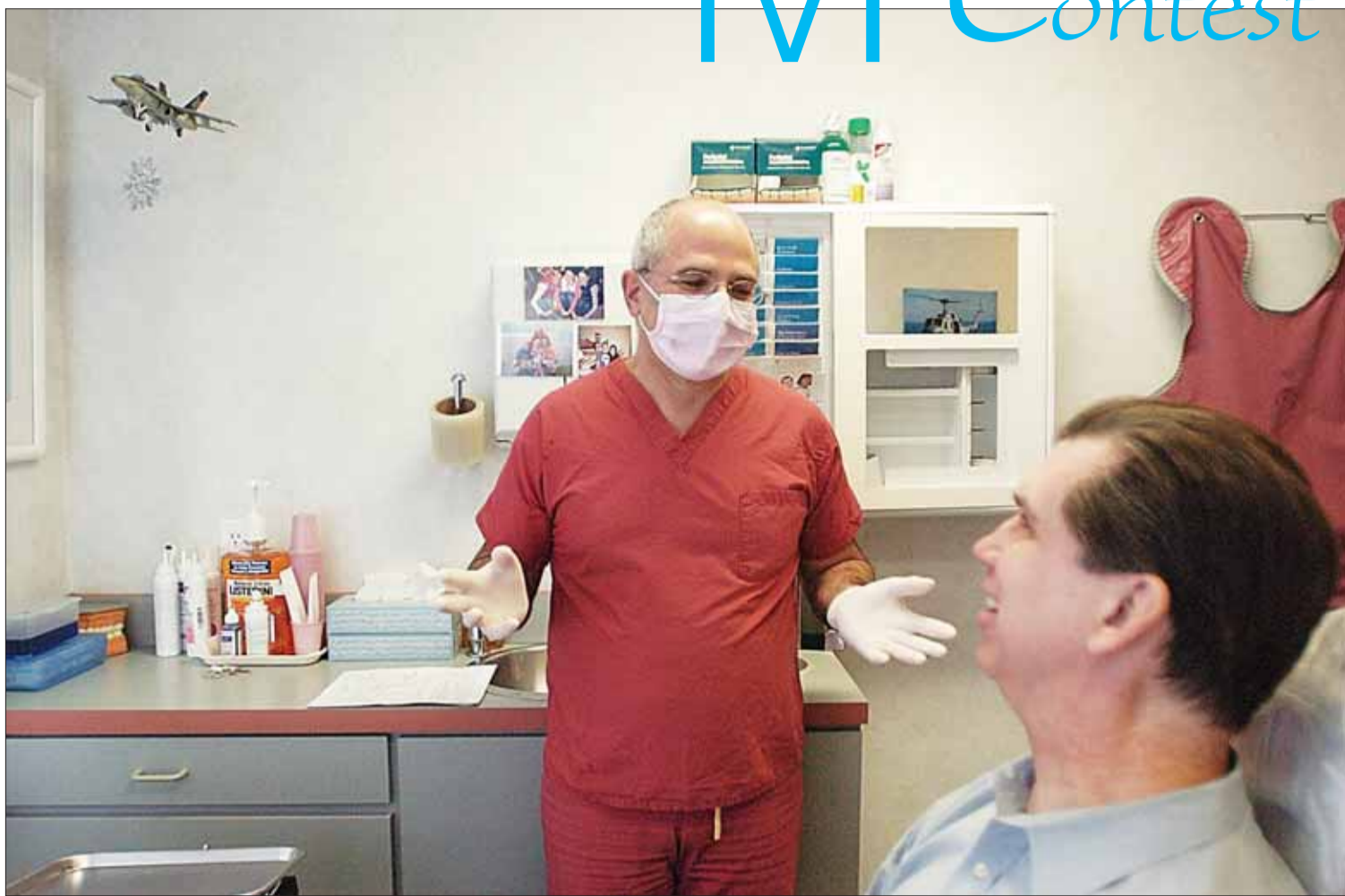
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At the dentist ...

Makeover Contest



Hour photo/ HANS HALLGREN

A brighter smile

Michael Hodish, DMD, of Advanced Dental Group, PC, in Norwalk, talks with Michael Krysiuk about his goals for dental care. Hour Makeover winners April Washington and Krysiuk both received a dental check-up and assessment, cleaning and professional tooth whitening as part of their makeover process. They also received a special spa treatment at Dermage, fitness training at Stand Firm Fitness, and a skin care consultation by Arbonne International. Upcoming is a new look and style at Fusions salon, manicure and pedicure at Born of Earth and a brand new outfit from Brooks Brothers.

'Franklin' to lead tour

From A3

was the catalyst for political separation of the 13 Colonies in North America from the British empire and the formation of the United States.

Franklin was one of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence and, in turn, one of the nation's founding fathers.

"Destination Westport helps people to really understand what makes Westport so unique. This is almost like a living history of Westport," said Katherine Otey, associate director, of the Westport Historical Society. "We're going to showcase something that's one of the jewels of our town and you have to come to Westport to do it."

For more information on Destination Westport and upcoming tours contact Otey at the Westport Historical Society by calling (203) 222-1424.

Franklin Facts

- To avoid having to keep putting his glasses on, Franklin cut two pairs of spectacles in half and put each half in a single frame, thus creating what we today call bifocals.
- Franklin developed a flexible urinary catheter to ease his brother John's pain from kidney stones.
- Over his lifetime, Franklin crossed the Atlantic Ocean eight times.
- To figure out postal routes, Franklin invented a simple odometer and attached it to his carriage to measure and keep track of the distances.

Source: The Franklin Institute Online.

St. George responds to residents' concern

From A3

false alarms, Wrinn said. "If you got a false alarm, that is not a disturbance," Commissioner Jacqueline Lightfield said.

On residents' concerns about lighting, Lightfield said a problem exists today. She said she is not swayed that the proposed addition would worsen it.

Several commissioners asked that the church take steps to shield neighbors from construction Dumpsters if the project is approved.

Congregants of the church, whose membership exceeds 400, want the community center to teach the Greek language, preserve Greek traditions and provide young people with activities such as basket-

ball and volleyball. They say the community center will give them space for sports, language instruction and continuing their traditions.

Residents have expressed concerns about traffic and congestion resulting the church's annual fair, which typically takes place in June.

"Do other churches have fairs? You can't really single

this church out for that," Mobilia said.

Dozens of St. George members packed the Common Council chambers of City Hall Jan. 19 to speak in favor of the proposed expansion. By the end of the roughly two-hour public hearing, about two-dozen people had spoken in favor of the expansion; up to a half-dozen others spoke against it.

Shays critical of media, addresses Medicaid

From A3

Rather, the government will save \$3.2 billion over five years from cost sharing options with Medicaid, Shays said. If the states choose to take part, premiums could be collected, but not to exceed 5 percent of a family's income, he said.

The budget bill was necessary to slow the growth in entitlement spending, said Shays. Over five years, the growth will be slowed from 33 to 30 percent. The bill is projected to save nearly \$40 billion over the five-year period.

Shays' likely Democratic opponent said that to suggest people will not be hurt by the budget cuts is ludicrous.

"It's amazing that Chris (Shays) can say with a straight face that the budget bill will

not negatively impact college students and their parents," said former Westport First Selectwoman Diane Farrell. "Seventy percent, or \$15 billion, of the \$21 billion in gross savings from cuts to student financial aid programs will come by raising interests rates."

Medicaid recipients will

also be hurt, she maintained.

"The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office is saying that millions of low-income people will have to pay more for health care," said Farrell. "And some of them would

forego care or drop out of Medicaid because of the higher co-payments and premiums."

Staff writer Patrick R. Linsey may be reached via e-mail at plinsey@thehour.com.

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