



# TOWN OF DARIEN NEWSLETTER

September 1, 2023 - Issue 41

## MESSAGE FROM MONICA

Dear Residents,

As we transition from summer to fall, many of our students are diving into a new school year. Here's wishing them a productive and exciting journey ahead.

This weekend, we'll celebrate Labor Day on Monday, September 4<sup>th</sup>, honoring the achievements and dedication of American workers. I hope everyone enjoys the extended weekend and is able to spend quality time with loved ones.

While we celebrate, it's also crucial to touch upon a matter close to my heart: the safety and well-being of our community. Our Town departments, including Building, Fire, Health, Police, Public Works, and Zoning, are committed to our safety. However, we must remember that true safety is a joint effort. It is very concerning to note the recent car thefts from driveways during broad daylight, in the late afternoon while the owner is home. I urge each resident to be vigilant. Please, lock your car doors every time, no matter where it's parked, and make it a habit to take your keys or fob with you. We are all busy and it's easy to forget, but if you can associate removing your seatbelt with grabbing your keys or fob, that may help. Small actions can make a significant difference in community safety.

To a season of new beginnings, unity, and shared responsibility,

Warm regards,

Monica



## DATES & INFORMATION

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
9.5.23 7:00 PM

**PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION**  
9.5.23 7:30 PM

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMISSION**  
9.6.23 7:00 PM

**ADVISORY COMMISSION ON COASTAL WATERS**  
9.11.23 7:30 PM

**MONUMENTS & CEREMONIES COMMISSION**  
9.12.23 3:30 PM

**ADVISORY BOARD OF HEALTH**

### POLICE CRIME TIP

There has been increased media coverage across the country regarding theft at gas stations. The unique setting allows suspects to catch their victims by complete surprise when they are pumping gas or purchasing items inside the station. Most of the time, gas station customers leave their car doors unlocked and items like purses and wallets are often left in plain view. A thief is able to drive up next to the victim's car, open an unlocked door, and grab any valuables within reach. Then, the thief quickly drives off. This can happen unknowingly or in seconds even as the victim helplessly watches from the other side of the vehicle or nearby. In recent weeks here in Darien, vehicles have been stolen from gas stations while the owner leaves the car unattended, unlocked, and with the keys in it.

These thefts can be easily prevented if the

9.12.23 5:00 PM

### **OPERATIONS PLANNING COMMITTEE**

9.13.23 8:30 AM

### **BLIGHT REVIEW BOARD**

9.13.23 5:30 PM

### **ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABILITY**

9.13.23 12:00 PM

Virtual

The complete meeting schedule of all Boards and Commissions is available [here](#). Most meetings can be viewed on [DarienTV79.com](http://DarienTV79.com).

For additional events and programs happening within Darien, click [here](#) to view the Darien Community Calendar available through the Darien Chamber of Commerce.

appropriate precautions are taken. The Darien Police Department recommends the following tips to prevent residents from becoming victims of theft at area gas stations.

- Pick stations that are well-lit and have video surveillance cameras at the pump.
- Always remove your keys and lock the doors while you are pumping gas.
- Keep valuables out of plain view in your vehicle and lock the doors even if you are going inside for a moment.
- Pay attention to your surroundings.
- Don't let your cell phone distract you.



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**@TownOfDarienCT**  
**#TownOfDarienCT**

## **RESIDENT REMINDERS, NEWS, & TIPS**

### **Noise Abatement Survey**

The WestCOG New Canaan Branch Noise Abatement Survey will remain active until Friday, September 15<sup>th</sup>. This deadline has been extended from Thursday, August 31<sup>st</sup>. Please take a moment to complete the survey to provide your input. The more feedback received from the public, the better the results of the survey and hopefully, the more effective the solutions. The survey is available at <https://westcog.org/transportation/studies/noise-abatement-study/>.

### **Beach Security Hours**

After Labor Day, Monday, September 4<sup>th</sup>, there will be no security guards at the entrance to Pear Tree Point Beach. The gate hours at Weed Beach will be changed to 10:00 AM through 6:00 PM 7 days a week. Security at Weed Beach will continue until October 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **Parks and Recreation Program Registration**

Fall & winter program registration for all Parks and Recreation offerings is currently open. Darien residents are given priority for registration and should visit the [Parks and Recreation page](#) to register. Residents will receive details in their email and should monitor the [website](#) and social media for updates.

### **Renters Rebate**

The Renters Rebate application deadline is September 7, 2023. Please call the Human Services Department at 203.656.7328 with questions, or to make an appointment. The Department is open Monday through Thursday from 8:00 AM to 5:15 PM.

### **Paddle Tennis**

The Paddle Tennis season begins Monday, October 9<sup>th</sup>, and runs through Saturday, March 30<sup>th</sup>. Requests for block time reservations must be returned to the Parks and Recreation Department by Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup>. If demand requires, a lottery drawing will be held on Tuesday, September 19<sup>th</sup> to determine court assignments. Block time reservation fees must be paid in full by Wednesday, October 4<sup>th</sup>. Application and court reservation details are available on the [Parks and Recreation page](#) of the Town of Darien website.

### **Tennis Courts**

The tennis court lines are scheduled to be painted on the new Cherry Lawn tennis courts the week after Labor.

### **Demolition of the Corbin Building**

In early to mid-September, residents will notice the demolition of the Corbin Building on Corbin Drive. It is anticipated that demolition will take approximately 8 days to complete. There will be fences along sidewalks for pedestrian safety and temporary road closures of Corbin Drive. Access to all of stores and businesses will be available throughout the demolition period.

## **COMMUNITY NEWS**

### **Darien Road Race**

The Darien Road Race, hosted by The Community Fund of Darien, will take place on Sunday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Residents should expect several road closures and delays on the 17<sup>th</sup>. Detailed information about the event, including registration information, is available on the [Community Fund of Darien](#) website.

### **September 11<sup>th</sup> Ceremony**

The Monuments and Ceremonies Commission of the Town of Darien invites all interested parties to participate in our annual September 11<sup>th</sup> Memorial Observation Ceremony on Monday, September 11<sup>th</sup>. The ceremony will take place at the Town's 9/11 Monument, located in the courtyard behind Middlesex Middle School on Hollow Tree Ridge Road. The ceremony will commence at 8:25 AM. Parking is limited to the rear parking lot due to school being in session. The ceremony is scheduled to last approximately 30-40 minutes.

### **Movie Night at Highland Farm**

The Darien Youth Commission and Darien Parks and Recreation Department invite families to enjoy a movie viewing under the stars at Highland Farm on Friday, October 6<sup>th</sup>. Event specifics, including the family movie title, will be available soon. Plan to pack a picnic dinner, grab some friends, a few chairs and blankets, and relax outdoors.

### **Rocktoberfest at Highland Farm**

On Saturday, October 7<sup>th</sup>, Darien Parks and Recreation is hosting Rocktoberfest – Darien's biggest music festival. The festival at Highland Farm will include music from headliner Hazzard County. Food trucks, games, and craft vendors will be on-site to add to the entertainment. Volunteer opportunities are available. Please email [Cassie Schull](#) for more information.

## **YOUTH COMMISSION**

### **Youth Commission's Summer Camp Wrap-Up**

For over 35 years, the Darien Youth Commission has successfully sponsored fun-filled summer camps for elementary-aged children and its popular Middle School Summer Activity (MSSAP) program. This summer, close to 400 children participated over a six-week period, with activities including arts & crafts, sports, entertainment, and field trips. While activities varied by camp, some of the program highlights included foam parties and bubble shows, visits to local amusement parks and educational centers, and time hanging out at the beach. The Youth Commission wants to thank all the wonderful counselors and camp directors who worked tirelessly to make summer camp happen in a safe, positive and enriching environment.

### **TOPS Registration**

The Teen Options Program (TOPS) is sponsored by the Darien Youth Commission. TOPS is committed to offering affordable, safe, fun, drug and alcohol-free activities for Darien students in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, including public, private, and home-schooled students. Online registration began on Monday, August 28<sup>th</sup>. Pre-registration to attend events is required. Please refer to the [Darien Youth Services](#) page for per-grade event details, including specific event locations and fees (fees are payable at the door).

The TOPS program is 99% reliant on parent involvement and support, so parent volunteerism is strongly encouraged. Sign-up links are available on the [Darien Youth Services](#) page.

## MATHER CENTER

### **Congratulations**

Elizabeth (Beth) Paris, Gerontologist, and Director of Darien Senior Programs at the Mather Center, was recently selected to join the Connecticut State Senior Center Advisory Group. Beth and her team do outstanding work with Darien seniors. It is exciting that her passion and expertise will be shared with others throughout the State.

### **National Senior Center Month**

September is National Senior Center Month. The theme for 2023 is “Discover Yours... Senior Center.” Senior Centers throughout the country work with community partners to provide access to health services, economic security, social engagement, creative outlets, as well as mobility and nutritional support – all in a social and fun environment. Our combined mission has remained the same – to be the local, trusted place in the community that connects people to programs and services, and provides opportunities to age well. In keeping with this year’s theme, the September schedule at Darien Senior Programs is chock full of diverse and exciting offerings, both new and tried–and–true. This month is a great time for Darien residents to [become a member](#) of Darien Senior Programs at the Mather Center.

## FLOODING

### **Grove Street & Tilley Pond Area Drainage Study Public Meeting**

The Public Meeting originally scheduled for July 25<sup>th</sup> has been rescheduled to Monday, September 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM. This informational meeting will address the recently completed drainage study of the Grove Street and Tilley Pond area, focusing on recent flooding between Tilley Pond and the Goodwives River. The results of the Grove Street and Tilley Pond drainage study will be explained in detail and will include all, or some, portion of the following roads: Lakeside Drive; West Avenue (near Tilley Pond); Leroy Avenue; Squab Lane; Grove Street; Day Street; Brook Street; Gideon Lane; Post Road (between Corbin Drive & Center Street); Corbin Drive; Center Street; and, Old Kings Highway South.

A portion of the meeting will be devoted to questions and answers specifically related to this drainage study. Other drainage studies in progress in Darien will not be discussed during this meeting. The drainage study document can be found on the left hand side of the [Public Works](#) page of the Town of Darien website, under Stormwater Information & Guidelines and then [Grove Street & Tilley Pond Area Drainage Evaluation Report](#).

The meeting will take place at the Town Hall auditorium, easily accessible from the front circle parking area. Additional parking is available in the lower front parking lot. TV79 will videotape the program for residents that are unable to attend.

## HUMAN SERVICES



DARIEN  
HUMAN  
SERVICES

### **Mental Health First Aid Training**

The Darien Human Services Department is offering another session of Mental Health First Aid Training on November 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. The training is free of charge to Darien residents or those who work with or interact regularly with, Darien residents. The training will be held at Post 53 from 8:30 AM – 1:00 PM on both days.

The interactive course is designed to give members of the public key skills to help someone who is developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. Like CPR training, which helps a non-medical professional assist an individual following a heart attack, the 8-hour certification in Mental Health First Aid helps an individual who does not have clinical training assist someone experiencing a mental health crisis. To register, email [aramsteck@darienct.gov](mailto:aramsteck@darienct.gov).

### **Connecticut Energy Assistance Program**

The Connecticut Energy Assistance Program helps eligible Darien households pay winter heating bills. The Human Services Department will begin accepting applications for the 2023/2024 program on Monday, September 18<sup>th</sup> for households who heat with oil, and on Monday, October 16<sup>th</sup> for households who heat with electricity, gas, or propane. Residents must meet the following income restrictions:

Maximum Household Income

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5
Annual Income	\$41,553	\$54,338	\$67,124	\$79,910	\$92,695

Proof of income is required, including:

- Social Security benefits
- Pensions or annuities
- Dividend and interest income
- Employment income
- Child support and/or alimony payments
- Unemployment, workman’s compensation, or disability payments

Darien Human Services office is open Monday through Thursday 8:00 AM to 5:15 PM. Please call 203-656-7328 to schedule an appointment.

## **HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

### **Vibrio Bacteria**

*Vibrio vulnificus* is a type of bacteria naturally occurring in brackish and salt water. The bacteria, tends to be found in higher concentrations from June through October when coastal waters are warm. *Vibrio vulnificus* can cause infections by wound exposure to water containing the bacteria. This past weekend, media reported about a “flesh eating bacteria” found in the Long Island Sound, the bacteria they were referring to is *vibrio vulnificus*. While the bacteria can cause serious illness if not treated properly, only 3 cases have been reported. Compared to the number of people swimming in the Long Island

Sound, this number of cases is very low. People with open wounds are urged to use caution and tightly cover open wounds, including newly tattooed or pierced skin when going in the water.

The vibrio virus can also be present in shellfish. Commercial fishermen are required to follow strict safety guidelines to prevent the bacteria from being transferred to people. Recreational harvesters need to follow these harvesting guidelines:

- Harvest only from open areas
- Make sure you have the appropriate permit.
- Always check the status of the shellfish area by calling the local shellfish hotline. Hotline numbers and recreational shellfishing maps for each town can be found at: <https://portal.ct.gov/DOAG/Aquaculture1/Aquaculture/Shellfish-Area-Contacts-and-Hotlines>.
- Try to plan your harvest for the beginning of the outgoing tide cycle, so that flats have been exposed to extreme temperatures for as little time as possible.
- Do not harvest shellfish that have been exposed to direct sunlight for more than two hours.
- Keep shellfish submerged using a floating bag, or similar device, until you leave the harvest area.
- Never use your boat's live well to store shellfish after harvest. This practice could result in the cross-contamination of shellfish, or the spread of pathogens.
- Keep shellfish shaded until placed on ice or into refrigeration.
- Place shellfish on ice, or under refrigeration at less than 45°F, immediately after harvest.
- Never leave shellfish in the car unless they are on ice in a cooler

### Blue Green Algae

The presence of Blue Green Algae persists in some of the water in Darien's Parks. Earlier this week, residents reported a gas-like odor in the area of Tilley Pond Park, found to be caused by the algae. The algae and the odor are not hazardous to health, yet it can be very toxic to animals, especially dogs. Please refer to the following safety alert from the CDC that includes more information about the algae, keeping your pets safe, and what steps to take should your pet come into contact with the algae bloom:

[https://www.cdc.gov/habs/pdf/algae\\_bloom\\_tall\\_card.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/habs/pdf/algae_bloom_tall_card.pdf)

With cooler weather and rains, the algae and associated odors, will dissipate. It is also important to note that this algae is not limited to our parks, but is common in freshwater lakes and ponds.

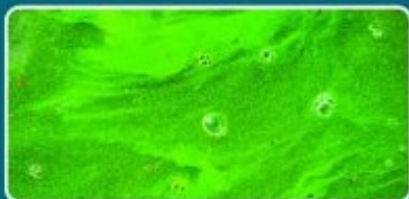
### Signs of a cyanobacterial bloom



Foam, scum, mats, or paint-like streaks on the water's surface



Different colors like green, blue, red, or brown



As the bloom dies off, it may smell like rotting plants.



Cyanobacteria bloom more often in summer and fall, but can bloom anytime.

# INTERESTING INFORMATION

## Spotted Lanternfly

*Lycorma delicatula*



CT Agricultural Experiment Station



PA Department of Agriculture

### Spotted Lanternfly

The spotted lanternfly is a new plant pest to the United States and has been detected in Fairfield, Litchfield, Hartford, New Haven, and New London Counties. The spotted lanternfly is native to China, India, and Vietnam. It is an invasive sap-feeding plant hopper. The insect attacks many hosts and has the potential to severely impact farm crops, particularly apples, grapes, hops, and several tree species. Residents are encouraged to kill the spotted lanternflies and their larva to prevent their spread. Adults are typically present in late summer and early fall and will lay egg masses on virtually any nearby hard surface.

[Sign up here to receive the newsletter](#)



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