

Twice as strong

New Canaan and Darien may take a different stance on the playing field, but when it comes to cutting the red tape, the towns are two peas in a pod.

The Hartford decree to combine all state probate courts into districts serving no less than 40,000 residents has caused some waves in New Canaan, which currently operates its own probate court right on Main Street for roughly 20,000 residents.

The state body overseeing the changes would combine New Canaan with Weston, Darien and Westport, sending 76,000 residents to one location — yet to be determined — for estate matters, name changes and private family matters such as commitments and appointments of guardians.

Harking back to the health district debate of several years ago, both New Canaan and Darien are willing to fight for local control and community convenience, and each of the possible groups listed in this week's lead story involve the two towns combining districts.

One question is whether they'll have to deal with the extra traffic caused by a third or fourth wheel.

Few in town are in favor of a change — envisioning long lines, seas of red tape, no more community chit chat and a lack of community feel.

A ride down South Avenue to Darien, with its hanging baskets and patches of brick sidewalks would be far more familiar than a haul to Westport, were that chosen for the hub of activity in a four-town probate district.

The clock is ticking, but residents of New Canaan still have time to pen a letter, place a call or attend a meeting about this issue.

Holiday deadlines

This week marks the end of summer hours at the *Advertiser*. The office will close at 3 p.m. today and tomorrow, August 27 and 28.

Regular office hours of 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Friday, will resume August 31.

The office will be closed Monday, September 7, for Labor Day. Federal, State and municipal offices are also closed for the holiday, as is the post office.

Deadlines for the issue of Thursday, September 10, will be 4:30 p.m. Friday, September 4, for letters to the editor, which must be limited to 350 words, and noon, Thursday, September 3 for press releases and social announcements.

Ordinarily, deadlines are noon Thursday (the week prior) for press releases and social announcements, 3 p.m. Monday for sports, 5 p.m. Monday for letters and 10 a.m. Wednesday for obituaries.

Meetings

Thursday, August 27

8:15 a.m. — South Western Region Metropolitan Planning Organization, Norwalk Transit District, 275 Wilson Avenue, Norwalk

Friday, August 28

9 a.m. — Coffee with the *Advertiser*, Fabulous Feasts, 31 Vitti Street

Tuesday, September 1

9 a.m. — Board of Selectmen, Town Hall Board Room

Thursday, September 3

8:30 a.m. — Health and Human Services Commission, Vine Cottage

3 p.m. — Representative Council of Cooperative Educational Services, 40 Lindeman Drive, Trumbull

8 p.m. — Parking Commission, Town Hall Board Room

Pre-September showers



Rain drops pool on summer leaves in New Canaan. (Janice Murray Photo)

Submit photos for this page to editor@ncadvertiser.com

People's forum

'Dog Days' brought community together

Editor, Advertiser:

Last week, when I heard about the Dog Days of Summer event, I marked my calendar to be sure to attend with Michelle, my sweet 14-year-old Pug. Unfortunately, the weather Thursday evening was very hot and muggy, so I couldn't bring Michelle, as she has difficulty breathing in this type of weather.

My husband and I decided to go anyway and tell Michelle all about it when we got home. As we walked into town, we saw the streets crowded with families, couples, groups of friends, and dogs everywhere. I had hoped to bring Michelle especially

because I heard that one of the salons was giving massages to arthritic dogs and I thought it might help her sore hips, but I really had no idea what else would be happening that would pertain to dogs.

As we walked through the town I was amazed at the creativity of the town merchants as they each found a way to tie their shop in with the doggie theme of the evening. There were homemade doggie treats, necklaces, accessories, toys, beds, groomers, animal adoptions, animal charities and more. And if the merchant didn't have a specific doggie item to sell, they welcomed our dogs

with big bowls of water, biscuits and treats.

This event was one of the most heartwarming events I've ever attended. By creating an evening for "man's best friend," it turned human strangers into friends as we all stopped to pet each other's dogs, exchange dog stories, health and training tips and proudly boast about how very special our dogs are.

What an absolutely lovely idea for bringing the community together and shoppers into town. We are truly blessed to live in such a wonderful community as New Canaan.

**Lori Lawnsby
(and Michelle)**

Many helped with VFW poppy drive

Editor, Advertiser:

Hats off to all who helped make our Buddy Poppy Drive this year a success.

Veterans who volunteered their time — Joseph Toppin, Paul Sedlak, Peter

Langenus, John and Tom Sirico, John Shufeld and Russel Kimes.

Also, a special thanks to First Selectman Jeb Walker, Dunkin' Donuts and Walter Stewart's Market.

Many thanks again.

**John D. Calitri
Commander
New Canaan Post 653
Veterans of Foreign Wars**

Local role model remembered

Editor, Advertiser:

I would like to share my remembrance of the late Dr. Ida Davidoff, a longtime New Canaan resident at 73 Marshall Ridge Road.

Ida was a wife, mother, warm and gracious friend to many, family therapist, writer, researcher, public speaker and founder of Woman's Place, an organization that provided a library, courses and programs for women. Woman's Place's course on divorce was particularly helpful to New Canaan area women

who were contemplating or going through a divorce.

In May 1994, on my recommendation, she received the Veteran Feminists of America medal of honor for her founding of Woman's Place.

I invited Betty Friedan to Ida's 80th birthday party; Betty came, interviewed Ida for her book, "The Fountain of Age," and included her in that book, which was about living a vital life while aging.

Ida died on May 11, 2001, shortly before her 98th birthday; she had stopped

counseling clients only weeks before her death.

There is not a day goes by that I don't think of Ida and miss her.

She was a dear friend (I lived in Stamford from June of 1973 until the end of 1981), mentor, and role model to me.

Now that I am 81 myself and continue to be active as a feminist, writer, and public speaker, her model of what a woman should and can be is always before me.

Sonia Pressman Fuentes

MAIN & ELM

The Rev. Michael Jude Fay, formerly of St. Aloysius Parish from 1987-91, died Saturday at a federal prison in Butner, N.C. He was 58.

Being held for stealing more than \$1 million from Darien's oldest Catholic parish, Fr. Fay had served 10 months of a 37-month sentence for theft, when his fight with prostate cancer ended.

While he most recently worked in Darien, he will be remembered by those in New Canaan as well, said Msgr. William J. Scheyd of St. Aloysius.

"When he was a priest here in New Canaan he was very much loved in the community and did a lot of work," he said. "He is remembered fondly by many parishioners for his goodness."

The *Advertiser's* article about how a Marilyn Monroe bra sold for \$5,200, and how her subsequent undergarment items were put on display in neighboring Westport, has spurred one New Canaan resident's memory of the iconic 20th century figure.

According to Mark Yankee, a local employee, the blonde bombshell made some extra pocket cash years ago as his baby-sitter. Yankee and Monroe were not too busy to shoot some photos to document the days.

Further, Yankee's mother Eileen Heckert, a renowned actress, was also in the company of Monroe, starring alongside her in the 1956 film "Bus Stop."

New Canaan's music legend Paul Simon heads to the Big Apple to join other A-list musicians for the 25th Anniversary Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Benefit Concerts, a two-night event offering more than 60 years of rock and roll classics.

Along with Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band, Simon & Garfunkel, Crosby, Stills, Nash & Friends and Stevie Wonder, Simon will take to the Madison Square Garden arena October 29.

Musicians Eric Clapton, Aretha Franklin, Metallica and U2 will round out the benefit on October 30.

NEW CANAAN ADVERTISER

"Grow or Go"

ncadvertiser.com

First Published
July 25, 1908

John E. Hersam,
Editor and Publisher
1908-1949

V. Donald Hersam Sr.,
Publisher
1949-1966

HERSAM ACORN

Martin V. Hersam,
Chief Operating
Officer

Thomas B. Nash,
Group Publisher

V. Donald Hersam, Jr.,
Publisher

dhersam@ncadvertiser.com

Laura Kenyon,
Editor

lkenyon@ncadvertiser.com

Andrew Kersey,
Assistant Editor

akersey@ncadvertiser.com

Dave Stewart,
Sports Editor

sports@ncadvertiser.com

Carrie Schmelkin,
Reporter

cschmelkin@ncadvertiser.com

Circulation
and subscriptions

circ@ncadvertiser.com

Our town in pictures

The *Advertiser* is seeking photos of those quiet moments, little known hideaways or exciting natural encounters throughout New Canaan, for publication on the editorial page.

Submissions may be emailed as high resolution jpegs to editor@ncadvertiser.com, along with contact information and a suggested caption.

Coffee with the ADVERTISER

Readers are invited to come chat with the editorial staff of the *New Canaan Advertiser* over a cup of java at the next gathering, 9 a.m. tomorrow, Friday, August 28, at Fabulous Feasts, 31 Vitti Street.

Coffees take place every second and fourth Friday of the month.

