

Vol. 11 - Oct. 2020

Special Section of the

RepublicanAmerican

*Celebrating*

**DOWNTOWN**

*Main St.*

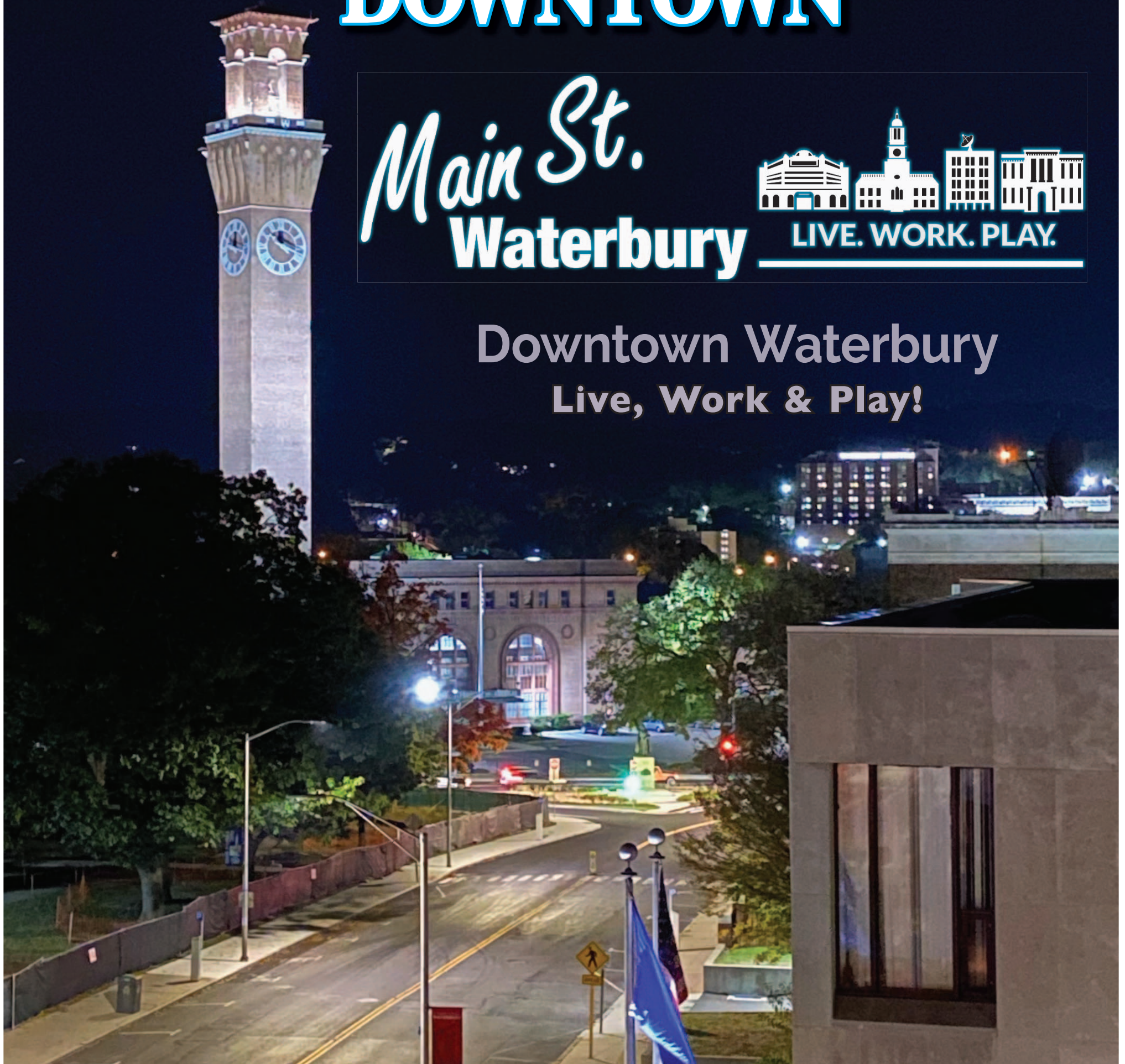
**Waterbury**



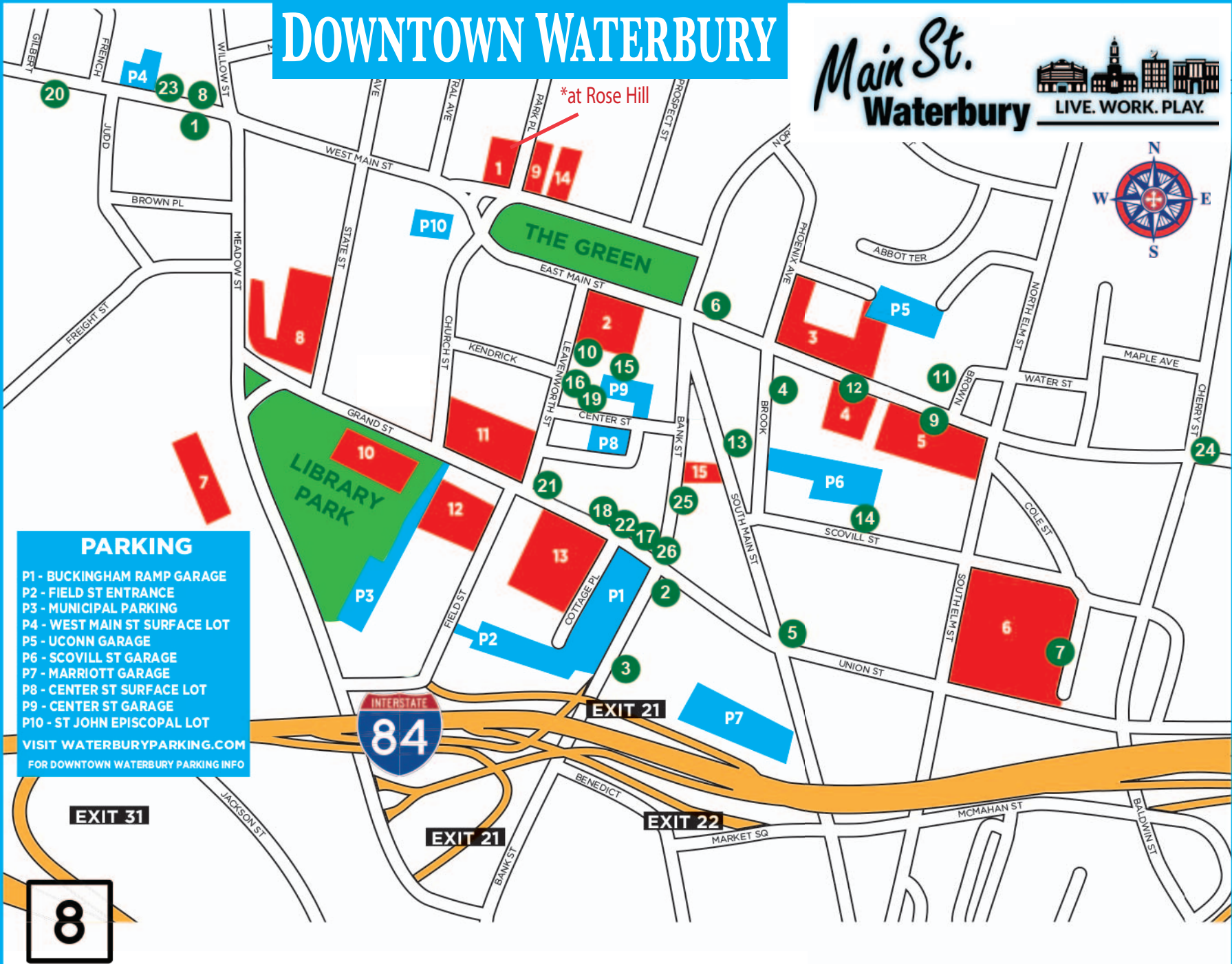
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On the Cover: Aerial view of Downtown Waterbury courtesy of Jason Vanasse  
Inside Photo: Waterbury Clock Tower by Derek L. Ward

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Vision Statement

"Downtown Waterbury, an easily accessible regional center and neighborhood in which to live, learn, work, and play."

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**Carl Rosa**  
CEO, Main Street Waterbury

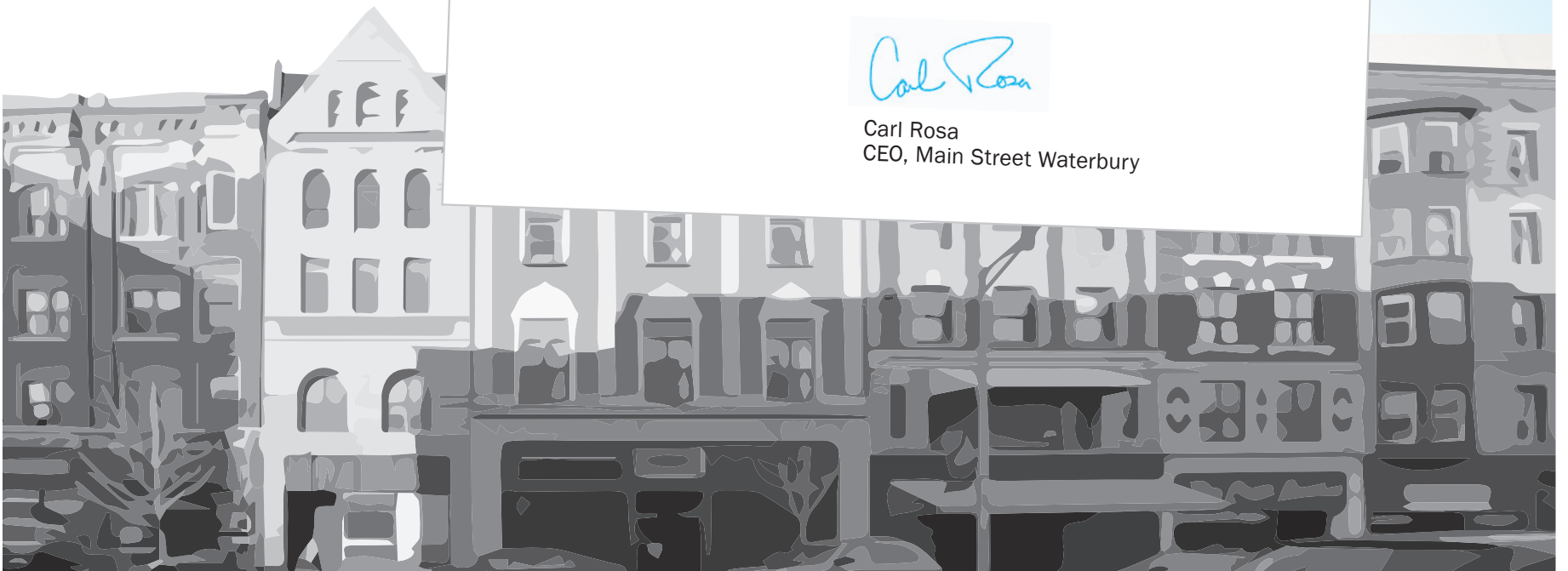


Thursday, October 15, 2020

On behalf of Main Street Waterbury, we are pleased to present the eleventh issue of Celebrating Downtown. Now in our 17th year, we continue to focus on projects and programs to make downtown Waterbury clean, safe, and friendly. We are a 501c3 not for profit organization and to date, our very loyal and dedicated volunteers have logged in close to 30,000 hours lending their talents for the betterment of our beautiful downtown district. We are proud to have achieved for our 16th consecutive year, a National Accreditation designation from Main Street America. This honor is bestowed upon Main Street programs from across the country who consistently demonstrate high standards in administration of the four-point approach of design, promotion, organization, and economic vitality to downtown revitalization. This designation means even more as we navigate in a COVID pandemic world. Norms and the traditional way have been turned upside down. Yet, we adapt and transition, as we look to help downtown businesses survive, thrive, and prosper. In fact, the services, partnerships, and support that Main Street Waterbury provide and encourage are needed now more than ever before in our lifetime. Of course, we can only operate with the consistent and strong support of our Board of Directors, volunteers, partners, generous donors, and downtown stakeholders. In particular, we'd like to thank the City of Waterbury, The Waterbury Development Corporation, the Waterbury Regional Chamber of Commerce, Post University, the University of Connecticut Waterbury Campus, the Connecticut Main Street Center, the Connecticut Community Foundation, The Republican-American Newspaper, and so many more organizations and businesses who continue to believe in us and our efforts for downtown Waterbury. We are still in a period of investment and progress for downtown as planned projects come to fruition and continue to excite. Hard work by so many does not go unnoticed and as you'll see in this issue, the articles will inform you, update you, and hopefully continue to inspire you to help us with our mission and vision as we strive to make downtown Waterbury "an easily accessible regional center and neighborhood in which to live, learn, work, and play."

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carl Rosa". The signature is fluid and stylized, with a large "C" and a long, sweeping underline.

Carl Rosa  
CEO, Main Street Waterbury





# When Downtowns Stood Still, Main Street Organizations Stepped Up



**Christine Schilke**

*Connecticut Main Street Center  
Marketing & Development Director*

Let's face it, 2020 has been a year like no other. No one could have predicted the way it would unfold, the shuttering of businesses and schools as a pandemic, invisible and insidious, raced across the globe. Balancing the need to be prudent with the need to be productive was a tightrope we all walked as we collectively shifted to working, learning and socializing from home. All of us were impacted both personally and professionally, and from our statewide perspective as the state's leading downtown resource, the impact on our Main Streets was devastating, albeit necessary to protect our citizens and businesses in the long-term.

Still, the lingering effects of social distancing can't be understated. Our downtowns, the heartbeat of our communities, stood still and silent as non-essential businesses were forced to close. Those that remained opened fared little better as customers stayed home to keep themselves and others safe by venturing out as little as possible.

Despite the worry and fear we all experienced, Covid-19 has also provided some positives. At the Connecticut Main Street Center (CMSC), we saw people across the

state and nation rush to help each other. From the federal, state and local government to our Main Street member communities, to families and individuals, everyone wanted to help small businesses in any way they could.

At CMSC, this meant supporting our Main Street members by making sure they had the information and resources they needed to help their town centers survive. Initially, this meant virtually convening our members to share with each other their concerns, questions and best practices for assisting local businesses. Many local merchants relied on their Main Street organization to help them navigate Covid-specific financial aid applications, find Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), know and understand social distancing requirements, and move their businesses online.

Several members also spearheaded "eat local" campaigns to bolster local establishments. For instance, Main Street Waterbury's Downtown Happy Hour virtual campaign encouraged people to order from local restaurants, gather virtually on their porches, and post the revelry to Instagram. Main Street organizations like Waterbury's also provided vital lifelines to their local merchants by helping them come up with creative

solutions to meet the community's needs and drum up business. CMSC member CityCenter Danbury shared how a Main Street dress shop quickly pivoted from selling prom and wedding dresses to making masks for neighboring businesses, while Simsbury Main Street Partnership said they were having particularly good success in advising local restaurants to sell family meal kits and worked with local grocers and markets to sell individually portioned meals from local restaurants. In Manchester, the Special Services District guided shopkeepers on what they'd need to do to make patrons feel safe once they reopened, from hand-sanitizer to PPE to reduced capacity. Many CMSC members also actively collaborated with municipal governments on temporary zoning changes to accommodate the new business models necessitated by Covid. Things like changing ordinances to allow for outdoor dining or reallocating funding to purchase PPE were advocated for and facilitated by our Main Street members.

While CMSC provided constant updates during the height of the crisis to our members on what state and federal resources were available to support them, as we look forward, our focus turns to ensuring our downtowns and Main Streets return as healthy and robust as ever. To that end, CMSC's Main Street

Forums for the 21st Century educational series will focus this year on the theme of Recovery & Resiliency. Under this umbrella, we created a Small Business Resource Library which includes a series of videos for small business owners to navigate Covid safely and profitably, from setting up e-commerce to utilizing social media. We've also lined up a series of webinars featuring national and local experts to advise municipal and downtowns leaders on how they can creatively reactivate their downtowns, and even take advantage of opportunities for positive and lasting change created by Covid.

Even though Covid-19 has presented challenges unlike any other we've faced, it's also shown how vital our downtown ecosystems are, and how much they're strengthened by active, engaged downtown organizations like Main Street Waterbury. While we've hated to see our Main Streets hurting, we've been inspired and energized to see the passion and dedication of our members and the resiliency of our downtowns. It's why we continue to love what we do, helping our members create great downtowns, Main Street by Main Street. And it's why we know that although the road in front of us may be a tough one, if we stick together, our downtowns will come back, better than ever!



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# Celebrating the Future of The Mattatuck Museum



**Stephanie Harris**

*Director of Operations & Marketing*  
[stephanie@mattmuseum.org](mailto:stephanie@mattmuseum.org)

The Mattatuck Museum brings its year-and-a-half-long construction and renovation project to a close this fall. Since June 2019, the community has watched as the construction process unfolded from the groundbreaking to the erection of new steel framing, and now the installation of the large glass windows and zinc siding. Changes to the building, both inside and out, have generated a space to match the vision of the Mattatuck; producing a gathering place that nurtures creativity and learning through transformative experiences.

The \$8 million capital project, committed to re-envisioning the Museum, was announced in November of 2018. The Museum engaged the architectural firm of Ann Beha Architects (ABA) to develop a plan to reimagine the Museum while continuing to be a welcoming, inclusive, stimulating, and enriching community anchor. “Watching the Museum take shape through this process has been remarkable and inspiring,” says Museum Director Bob Burns. “Hearing from community members and donors who’ve watched the progress and can’t wait to see the final result has spurred us on and helped push us to the finish line.” The construction team led by Downes Construction Co. broke ground in the Spring of 2019 and the Museum plans to open its doors to the public in the Spring of 2021. The project

has continued to gain momentum through the inevitable changes COVID-19 has created for all workplaces.

“The expansion of The MATT is a much-needed and well-timed move. The construction project is impressive and speaks to the dedication of the Museum to draw visitors to downtown Waterbury to benefit the City and the surrounding area. Kudos to Bob Burns for making it happen!” remarks Donald Taglialatella, a longtime supporter of the Museum and donor to the collection.

Over the next seven weeks, Waterburians can expect to see the Museum’s construction site even busier than usual as the crew finalizes ABA’s plans. With construction now in its final stages, the Museum has announced a fundraising effort to help them cross the finish line. The Campaign for the Last Million was created to invigorate the last of the fundraising needed to complete the Museum’s expansion and renovation.

“I am honored to play a role in the success of The MATT’s transformation into a museum for today and for generations to come,” says campaign donor Valerie Friedman. “Donors at any level can take ownership in the success of this project, an impressive cultural asset for the City of Waterbury. Please join me; let’s show our support and finish the task.”

The Campaign for the Last Million allows the public to track the Museum’s progress and



*View of entrance to roof terrace.*

get behind-the-scenes glimpses at the renovated and new spaces. The public engages with an interactive site that provides opportunities to unlock exclusive content at [mattmuseum.org/unlock](http://mattmuseum.org/unlock). On the campaign’s website, a depiction of the Museum’s exterior greets the viewer, boasting an outdoor roof terrace overlooking Waterbury’s historic green and artwork through the windows. Further down the page, guests can see the floor plans from the Basement to the Third Floor, and even take a Virtual Tour of the rendered space including two new educational studio spaces, allowing for a 25% increase in school tours, family programs, and adult studio classes; a café and community spaces; additional exhibition space; and a more welcoming exterior that invites the community and visitors into the Museum. “These renovations will allow the Museum to serve more students, improve exhibitions, and better care for the collection,” notes Charles Monagan, President of the

Board of Directors. “I invite you to learn more about the project and see how your support can contribute to the future of the Museum.”

Within the maps, rooms are divided into square feet through an interactive grid. For every \$25 donation made, the Museum will unlock one square foot of the building on the map. As soon as all of the square feet in each room are unlocked, exclusive videos, images, and other special content from the Museum staff will be revealed. Watch the blue squares turn yellow as more of the building is unlocked and the Museum gets closer to their fundraising goal.

“Despite many challenges over the last 18 months, we look forward to welcoming the greater Waterbury community to the new Mattatuck Museum in spring 2021,” says Bob Burns. “We have been saying all along that every donation makes a difference, and The Campaign for the Last Million provides an opportunity for everyone in our





View of construction progress of upper Museum floor.

community, from the \$25 donor to the \$25,000 donor, to help us unlock the future of the Mattatuck Museum.”

As construction moves forward, the Museum continues to reside at their Rose Hill location, at 63 Prospect Street. The latest exhibition, Moises Suriel: Waterbury Greats, opened on Thursday, September 17 to the excitement of the community, and will remain on view through November 1. Waterbury Greats is a collection envisioned by Dr. James H. Gatling to honor Black Waterburians who have made significant contributions to the Black community. Dr. Gatling’s vision is brought to life through forty-eight portraits drawn by Waterbury-based artist Moises Suriel.

The Museum is open by appointment only, Monday-Friday from 9:00am-4:00pm (and 12:00-5:00pm the first weekend of the month). Admission tickets can be purchased online at [www.mattmuseum.org/visit](http://www.mattmuseum.org/visit). The website also outlines the Museum’s updated guidelines for

visitors during the COVID-19 Pandemic, including what to expect on your visit, cleaning and safety protocols, and frequently asked questions.

The Museum plans to continue to host programs in-person at Rose Hill and virtually through December 11th, when they will close their doors to the public as they begin the transition to the re-envisioned building at 144 West Main Street. The move and reinstallation will take three months. At the end of February 2021, the Museum will begin a soft reopening featuring the work of two artists and the newly reinstalled collection gallery and an expanded installation of Presidential Signatures.

The Museum has been overwhelmed by the community’s continued support and enthusiastic response to the project. The Board and Staff hope that new friends and long-time donors will assist in the final phase of the campaign, to make the new vision for the Museum a reality for downtown Waterbury.

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# Chamber Pivots to Provide Critical Services Virtually



CT Gov. Ned Lamont addresses regional business owners on a Zoom call with Chamber members.



**Julie Pesce**  
*Membership Services and  
 Communications Director  
 Waterbury Regional Chamber*

One of the Waterbury Chamber's signature attributes – and a core tenet of its mission – is providing powerful networking opportunities for members of the business community. When COVID-19 made meeting face-to-face nearly impossible earlier this year, the Chamber, like so many businesses and organizations, was forced to switch gears and get creative to continue delivering its services.

“What businesses have needed most – and continue to need as we all move forward in this new normal – is information, resources, and connections,” said Lynn Ward, the Chamber's President and

CEO. “All of our efforts at the Chamber continue to focus on how we can deliver these critical services to our business community.”

Obtaining and sharing the most up-to-date information on state and federal directives, financial assistance programs for businesses, and best

practices to protect employees and customers was a main focus for the Chamber from the beginning of the pandemic. With

regulations changing daily, Chamber members received email blasts and personal phone calls, ensuring they had access to the latest information. Dedicated pages on the Chamber's website, [www.](http://www.waterburychamber.com)

[waterburychamber.com](http://waterburychamber.com), continue to be updated with COVID-19 and Business Reopening information. More challenging than keeping businesses informed was shifting gears to provide programming and events in an online format. Utilizing video conferencing services, the

Chamber has created opportunities for members to listen directly to, and ask questions of, elected officials, including Waterbury Mayor Neil O'Leary, Governor Ned Lamont, Senator Chris Murphy, and Senator Richard Blumenthal, among others.

“The opportunity to connect with key decision-makers has been extremely valuable for our members,” said Chamber Public Policy and Economic Development Director David

Krechevsky. “The ability for business owners and professionals to ask questions about the issues directly affecting their businesses and employees has been helpful for those who participated.” On October 7th, the Chamber hosted a debate for candidates in the 5th Congressional District, which was streamed live for participants to view. Incumbent Congresswoman Jahana Hayes (D) and challenger David X. Sullivan (R) discussed their views on key topics, including education, health care, regulation, social justice, taxes, and trade.

Wanting to recognize the dedicated healthcare workers who have been on front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chamber also shifted the format of its annual Health Care Council Awards event, recognizing outstanding members of the industry virtually. Keynote speaker Dr. Peter Hotez, an internationally recognized expert on viruses and vaccines, joined the discussion to provide some insight on infectious disease and the likely timeline for a COVID-19 vaccine.

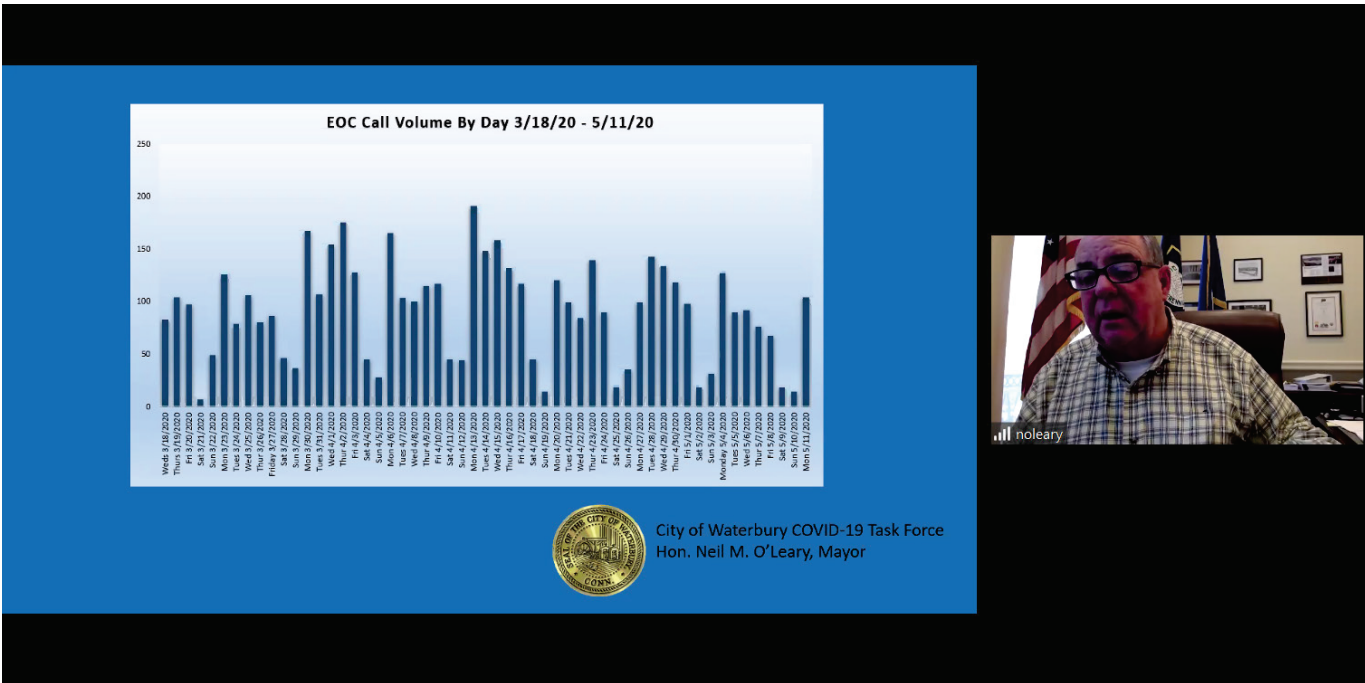
In addition to these online events, Chamber members have taken advantage of online seminars on a wide variety of topics, ranging from human resources issues and sexual harassment prevention training to discussions on funding programs, marketing, public relations and more.

All past virtual events are recorded and available to view on the Chamber's website at [www.waterburychamber.com/](http://www.waterburychamber.com/)

*When times of crisis pull apart and isolate us, a sense of membership, community and belonging serve as powerful tools to bring us together.*



covid19 for those interested in watching and gaining insight from these videos. Looking ahead, the Chamber will continue to provide virtual opportunities for learning, training, interaction and networking, including a virtual job fair later in the fall. The Waterbury Regional Chamber has welcomed new members throughout the past year and looks forward to serving even more businesses with its content, resources, and support. When times of crisis pull apart and isolate us, a sense of membership, community and belonging serve as powerful tools to bring us together. Business professionals are encouraged to explore the upcoming events and resources the organization offers online to see where they might be able to benefit.




Waterbury Mayor Neil O'Leary reviews city data related to the COVID-19 pandemic during the Chamber's virtual event that allowed members to participate in Q & A with the Mayor.

The Waterbury Regional Chamber is the largest business-membership organization in our region, serving 14 communities in the area and showcases a strong


membership of about 1,000 businesses with which our members can connect and do business. If you're interested in growing your business or in what the Waterbury Regional

Chamber can do for you, visit us online at [www.waterburychamber.com](http://www.waterburychamber.com) or call us at (203) 757-0701. Office hours are currently by appointment only.

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## A Message from the Waterbury Chief of Police



**Fernando Spagnolo**  
*Chief of Police*

**“To protect with vigilance and serve with impartiality, while engaging in a strong partnership with the community”**

is the mission of the Waterbury Police Department, and the latter has never held more truth than with the trials and challenges we have faced this year. I would like to first acknowledge the excellent police work that our officers continue to carry out daily. The Waterbury Police Department, first dealing with the novel coronavirus in March, has immersed itself in an even deeper and stronger engagement with the community and city partners during this pandemic. In addition to answering basic calls for service, some officers have taken on a change in their roles with purpose and fortitude, helping the community recover by dealing with food shortages, assisting senior citizens with help getting medications, delivering meals, and assisting in various roles we have to take on to get the job done. In addition to officers working outside with the public, I thought we had to be creative in our communications with one another, holding internal and external meetings became conference calls throughout this pandemic. The

community came to the aid of each other in the midst of the PPE (personal protective equipment) shortages which made protecting each other and the members of the police department difficult. Throughout it all, the citizens of Waterbury have shown great resolve, stepping up to help each other and us with donations of equipment to keep each other safe. Presently, we have resumed some in-person meetings following the social distancing guidelines recommended by the CDC, with the option to teleconference. We have also partially re-opened the lobby of the police department and resumed fingerprinting. Overall, under the direction of Mayor O’Leary and Governor Ned Lamont, Waterbury and Connecticut has fared much than other cities and states. We are carefully optimistic as we continue to press forward.

In May, we dealt with the killing of George Floyd, sparking nationwide protests -bringing to light some needed changes in police procedures throughout the country. It has been our duty to examine our policies and procedures in dealing with citizens. Although Waterbury Police Department is always at the forefront of our training and police procedures, it has invited us to look at taking on different reforms -such as reinforcing de-escalation and enhancing decision making in high risk environments. Subsequently, we have instituted some changes, enhanced officer training, and shared changes we’ve already done

prior with some community partners. The review training session for officers has now been increased annually, and the length of the review training sessions increased from 3 to 5 days. The following training has been added to the already required basic training: Below 100 Officer Safety Training and Awareness; Police and the Public; Problem Oriented Policing. The latter provides a component that includes a community panel, a question and answer period, and includes feedback from police officers, community members and leaders; and Cultural Awareness and Diversity and Crowd Control/Civil Disorder. This in-depth experience cements the fact that communication inside and outside our agency is critical to continuous operations. I, along with the members of the Waterbury Police Department, take the commitment of the health and safety of its citizens and the community seriously.

To help our officers and civilians cope with these stressful issues, I met with everyone in a series of internal small group discussions regarding local and national current events. I have always been in favor of an open door policy with the public and invited the community involved in the protest to come in and speak with me in an effort to open lines of communication and in doing so I have created some working relationships. In addition, Mayor O’Leary created what would be a four-part series of Town Hall events to help people communicate and better understand the events going on in the nation, with myself

being the host of the second town hall. This four-hour block included some implementations of new policies and procedures, and included an opportunity for feedback from residents, such as the suggestion of creating a civilian review board. These subject-based town hall forums were a much needed effort to ensure strong two-way communication between city residents and the police and were a way to help better understand the residents of the community.

I have led my department with a philosophy of community oriented policing, to include interaction with all members of the community, with a focus on the impoverished black and brown communities. With the Community Relations Division and PAL, we continue to strengthen our desire to help and enhance our communities by inviting residents to take part in a series of community group meetings and discussions on crime prevention, addressing quality of life issues and providing a vast array of services, outreach and support to those who need assistance.

In an effort to maintain transparency and open further lines of communication, I have recently released discipline handed out in complaints against officers to the public. With the development and passing of the Police Accountability Bill, the Waterbury Police Department has and continues to maintain our legacy of impartiality, integrity and strong partnership within our community and create an effort to reach common ground amongst our citizens and achieve goals to help create a community of peace and understanding.





# A reflection on what lies beneath the look of our Downtown Waterbury – The People, The Businesses.



**Anabela Maia**

*Chairperson MSW Design Committee*



As a marketer at heart with a passion to help businesses grow, it was no wonder I

gravitated to Main Street Waterbury in its early years and back again in 2012 to volunteer for the Design Committee. One of the things that attracted me to Main Street Waterbury was the opportunity to network with local leaders, make new connections, be a part of the community and more importantly contribute to the advancement of downtown. While I grew up in Naugatuck and frequented downtown at every opportunity. I knew that the people of the city of Waterbury carried the same memories for their downtown, as I do for mine. A city that is full of history and at its core, is the center - the heart of Waterbury filled with emotions and memories of what still remains a beautiful place we call downtown Waterbury. Did you know that JFK spoke from the balcony of the Elton Hotel across from the Green? There is so much more and if you haven't yet explored the area, you can with a walking audio tour that in conjunction with Mattatuck Museum and Main Street Waterbury is now available online. Use your mobile phone with a QR reader to scan this barcode and start listening for free on soundcloud. You can also visit [www.soundcloud.com/mattatuckmuseum](http://www.soundcloud.com/mattatuckmuseum)

Now, let's talk Design committee and what this group of volunteers do for downtown. By definition the word "Design" means "to decide upon the look and functioning of a building, (garment, or other object), by making a detailed drawing of it."

While we aren't drawing up building schematics, we are developing programs that facilitate the look of our downtown with standards of store fronts, awnings, façade grant funding, removal of old metered parking stations, placement of bicycle racks, enforcing clean areas in front of businesses and working with local groups to plant flowers in pots. Many of these initiatives are often with the support of city officials, city departments and agencies to ensure that our downtown is clean. By no means is our work ever complete,



*Diane Gorman, owner of Signature's Restaurant recording her Heart of Waterbury video*



*Planter located on Bank St. decorated by the Waterbury Garden Club*

that would be like cleaning up our 6-year old's toys and saying we're done. That hardly ever happens.

That was the "Look" – Now, we know the Look is outward facing. What's under the "Look" is greater. The look can be buttoned up and tidy but what lies beneath is greater, the Heart. Physiologically speaking, it relates to the function of the larger community and sub-communities of downtown. In the Heart of Downtown Waterbury are the small mom and shop businesses. 2020 is a year of reflection, of priorities and of new growth. As businesses began to shutter closed in late March 2020, we wanted to be able to help them and allow them to tell their story. The story, the people and how together we develop an interwoven community that relies on each other for support, encouragement and growth.

We invite you to hear more about the following businesses as they share their story on who they are, what they do, how COVID-19 has impacted their business and what they are doing to stay strong and more importantly what you can do to support local downtown businesses at a time when looking beyond the outside and inside of hearts is how we design what our downtown looks like.

Heart of Waterbury – a Video series featuring the people and businesses of downtown Waterbury.



## HEAR FROM:

Matt Bryne of MinuteMan Press located at 170 Grand St.

Diane Gorman of Signature's Restaurant & Bar located at 29 Leavenworth St.

Vic Buselli of Mar-Vic Cleaners & Tailors located at 186 Grand St.

Michael Dixon of One Touch Repair located at 99 Bank St.

Bob Burns of Mattatuck Museum located at Rose Hill

Jesse Pacyne of Thirsty Goat Bar located at 23 Scovill St.

Mike Finan of Prestige Superstore Auto located at 1200 Wolcott Rd. Waterbury

David Aldorondo, Christina Arroyo, and Lily Burgos of Post University located at 140 Bank Street

Efrain Torres of Brown Building Living located at 20 East Main St.

Plus more coming soon. Visit our Youtube page or [www.mainstreetwaterbury.com](http://www.mainstreetwaterbury.com) for new videos.

The business landscape has changed, and will continue to do so. Our mission is to create a clean, safe and friendly downtown. It has its challenges. It has hurdles. It has vision. Those who wish to join us can do so in person every third Tuesday of the month at 4:30pm on the 4th floor of the Waterbury Regional Chamber located at 83 Bank St. or virtually online while we are under covid safety protocols until further notice. Reach out to [amaia@mainstreetwaterbury.com](mailto:amaia@mainstreetwaterbury.com) for more details. If you would like to support but do not have the time to volunteer, please consider making a financial contribution on our website at [www.mainstreetwaterbury.com](http://www.mainstreetwaterbury.com) or a check can be mailed or dropped off at 83 Bank St. 4th Fl, Waterbury CT.



# Post University Recognized by the CT Main Street Center



**Joan Huwiler**

*Director of University Communications*

Post University was recognized by the Connecticut Main Street Center, for its transformation of the historic former Howland-Hughes Department Store and its role in helping to revive downtown Waterbury. The University received a 2020 Connecticut Main Street Award of Excellence. The university, recognized for its stewardship, was one of eight companies honored.

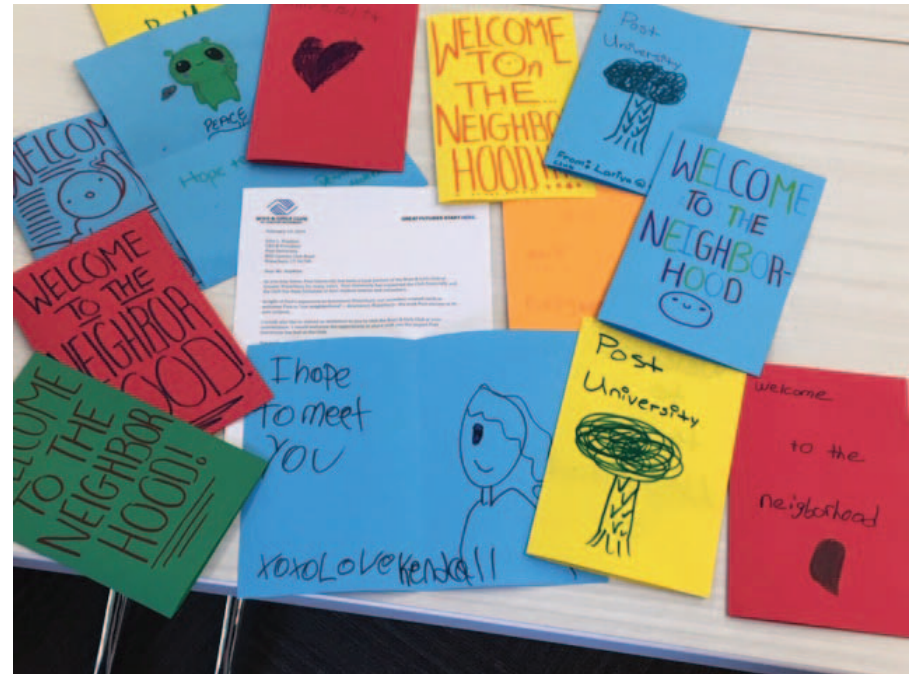
“We are committed to downtown Waterbury and care deeply about this area and its legacy...it’s our home,” said John L. Hopkins, CEO & President of Post University. “We are honored with this recognition and look forward to strengthening our history with the downtown community for years to come.” Under Hopkins’ leadership, the updated Howland-Hughes building has transformed into a state-of-the-art technological hub for the associates who serve the university’s growing population of distance learning students through its online programs. The University occupies three floors of the building. The nearly 500 associates who work in the building all enjoy and support downtown Waterbury’s array of local businesses and offerings.

Beyond supporting local eateries and businesses, the University has opened its doors and welcomed community partners to use the renovated space. Waterbury School System, YMCA, Workforce Development, the Waterbury Chamber, and many more civic and private institutions have used the building for

meetings, events and receptions. The University hosted a Veteran’s Day program as well as holiday festivities on Bank Street.

Last year, Post customized the building’s lobby to reflect former Yuletide glory synonymous with the old Howland-Hughes department store. For the first time in nearly 30 years, Santa Claus was back on Bank Street for local children to meet. The lobby was

transformed into a winter wonderland while one of the building’s windows featured original marionettes from the department store’s mid-20th Century holiday décor. The event brought hundreds of visitors to downtown during the holidays. “Post University didn’t just re-open the doors and windows to the building, they opened avenues to connection and community stewardship,” said Carl Rosa, Main Street Waterbury CEO. “Not only did we see a beautiful and historic building get the care it deserved, its new function is for such a great reason: supporting members of our community who want an education.”





# OLLI at UConn: Where Learning Never Retires - Lifelong Learning Online



**BY FIONA de MERELL**  
*Director, Osher Lifelong Learning  
 Institute (OLLI) at the  
 University of Connecticut*

During this strange time where social isolation is a very real concern, older adults across Connecticut can rest assured that there are still learning and social opportunities available for them – in the comfort and safety of their own homes. UConn Waterbury's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) has pivoted to fully-online fall and spring semesters during the 2020-21 academic year. OLLI membership is open to anyone aged 50 or above, and its fall 2020 semester features over 30 course offerings in various areas of study including painting, cooking, literature, writing, music, and film appreciation.

All classes are held via the video-conferencing app, Zoom. OLLI provides open orientation sessions for students and instructors to learn online learning basics and ask questions in a low-stress environment. In addition to online classes, OLLI offers a weekly Wednesday evening social

hour where students can connect, chat, and de-stress. Further, many of OLLI's social interest clubs, such as Book Club, continue to meet virtually. The much-loved OLLI Garden at Fulton Park, funded in part by the Connecticut Community Foundation, has flourished, even with social distancing among the crops!

Some OLLI students expressed concern about shifting to a fully-online learning modality, wondering if their social connections or ability to learn effectively would suffer compared to the in-person program. But after the pilot online summer session, those concerns were quickly calmed. One student shared, "Zoom seems to be the only answer to learning since we cannot attend classes in person. I am grateful these Zoom classes were set up for us." Another noted, "As I don't want to be exposed to Covid-19 by being inside a building, I'm glad that Zoom exists. It must have been really boring in 1348 and 1918!"

OLLI Director, Fiona de Merell, said, "In a world where things are



OLLI Ukulele class

so uncertain, wondering whether we'll be able to fulfill the OLLI mission of lifelong learning and social engagement is not one of those uncertainties. We're thrilled to see familiar faces on our Zoom screens, and to welcome new students who might not have been able to join us before now. And in finding creative ways to maintain our relationships with downtown partners, we're all learning together and supporting each other."

OLLI President, Mila Limson, said, "We now live in a world where a sense of community is more important than ever. OLLI is our community. It is a community where we create

lasting bonds and find intellectual and social engagement." She continues, "While our fall semester feels different, the essence of our community remains the same. We will continue to search for opportunities, we will keep learning, we will explore new ways to stay connected, and we will continue to laugh together. If we remain flexible, focused and involved, this pandemic experience, ultimately, will strengthen the OLLI community and lifelong learning."

**For more information about OLLI, or to register for classes, call 475-222-6232 or go to [www.oli.uconn.edu](http://www.oli.uconn.edu)**



OLLI Ukulele class



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| • Waterbury Hospital, (203) 573-6041  | • 131 Main St., Thomaston, (860) 283-4700                 |
| • Women's Health & Shoulder/Hand Center, 134 Grandview Ave., (203) 575-2593 | • 650 Wolcott Rd., Wolcott, (203) 879-6700                |
|   | • 365 Main St., Watertown, (475) 207-9244                 |



# The Greater Waterbury YMCA



**Allison Reklaitis**  
*Director of Development*

The Greater Waterbury YMCA has seen a year unlike any other, and while 2020 is not quite over, the feats of the Y and its impact on the local community continue to make it an organization that remains a pillar of strength and a beacon of hope for Waterbury. In the beginning of March 2020, the Y secured a new phase in the expansion of their child care programs by purchasing from the City of Waterbury the Rose Hill property located at 63 Prospect. Preceding this purchase the Y had raised a significant amount of funds to renovate and rehabilitate the three buildings located on the property, and operating through a lease to purchase agreement opened and expanded Preschool and School Age programming on the site in late 2019. The purchase in March solidified the Y's commitment to the community. However, not two weeks after the purchase of Rose Hill the world was turned upside down. The Y saw its preschool programs close, and shortly thereafter the doors to the West Main Street facility closed as well.

Faced with difficult decisions regarding staffing, programming, and facility maintenance, the Y got to work. Called upon by City and State officials, the organization was immediately asked to provide emergency child care services to the children of hospital workers and first responders in the area. Knowing that these families were critical to aiding the community and armed with the institutional knowledge of providing high quality child care on a daily basis, they upgraded their current preschool and school age

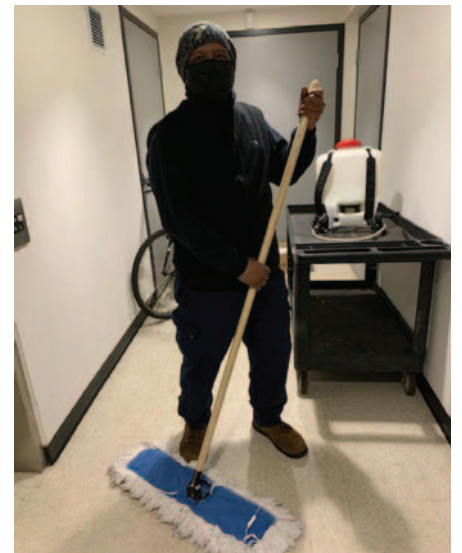
protocols to fit in line with new health and safety procedures. Staff wore masks, continued to make cleanliness a priority, limited group sizes to ensure proper cohorting, and adapted new drop off and pick up procedures to ensure social distancing. This is where the purchase of the Rose Hill property became crucial, as the Y was able to use two of the three buildings to provide this critical childcare. The Emergency Child Care initiative ran for 14 weeks, serving nearly 50 children per week. Beyond child care, the Y continued to serve its members by creating virtual content to engage individuals and families who were homebound during the quarantine period. Our Health and Wellness team created

dozens of fitness classes for people to participate in at home as well as videos demonstrating healthy cooking and nutrition tips. Additionally, kids were engaged in craft and storytelling activities.

When the Y's doors opened back up in June, members were treated to the YMCA they know and love, albeit with a few changes. Cardio machines were spaced farther apart for use, group fitness classes were held in the gym, and of course everyone was asked to wear masks when traveling throughout the building. Still this did not deter the faithful from returning. Camps Mataucha and Oakasha also opened at the end of June to give local kids the opportunity to be outdoors and experience a summer full of fun and

camaraderie.

Like most local non-profits and small businesses, The Greater Waterbury YMCA has faced an uphill battle since March 2020. Budget constraints and membership traffic limits the number of hours the facility is open. Reduced in person programming also hinders the ability to produce additional revenue. However, the Y is extremely thankful to a multitude of individual donors, corporations, foundations, as well as City and State government for helping to keep staff employed, programs running, and the community well served. As 2020 draws to a close, the Y will continue to do what it does best...help the people of Waterbury lead happier and healthier lives.





# Downtown Waterbury Update



**Joseph McGrath**  
Director of Economic  
Development

Mayor O'Leary and the Office of Economic Development continue to work with private and public investors to meet the objectives of "The City of Waterbury's Downtown Strategic Plan." Strong leadership, careful planning, and input from residents, businesses, students, and elected officials enabled us to make positive strides in bringing jobs to the city's central business district while improving current property values.

Mayor O'Leary's strategic plan to renovate the green and beautify downtown Waterbury

continues to elicit positive feedback from downtown pedestrians, businesses, students, churches, non-profits, and visitors. UConn, Post University, the Mattatuck Museum, the Palace Theater, Waterbury Arts Magnet School, Seven Angel Theatre, along with various seasonal events contribute to a substantial arts, culture and education scene enjoyed and appreciated by many who live or visit the City of Waterbury.

The Freight Street renovations funded by a federal Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant has been completed and includes bike paths, bio swales, new lighting and street scape improvements designed to complement future mixed use development. Phases 2 and 3 are well underway which will include improvements to Meadow and Jackson Street. As you drive through downtown you can't help but notice the City of Waterbury's continuing investment in critical infrastructure improvements.

The East Main Street streetscape project continues to move ahead. Ongoing work includes replacement of a 100

year old water main, the creation of an aesthetically pleasing corridor which will include new pavement, printed cross walks, new benches, new lighting, and new bus shelters. These improvements will ensure that the services provided will be reliable for years to come. The construction to the newly designed parking lot at the Metro North Train station is complete. The entire lot was repaved, new lighting and granite curb cuts were installed, and new landscaping was completed. The Board of Alderman approved the design of the new Prospect Street surface parking lot; construction is scheduled to start shortly. Library Park is under extensive

renovation that will provide the city additional capacity to enhance our already rich arts and culture scene.

The Mayor and the Office of Economic Development will continue to work with private and public investors who are convinced that Waterbury is a prime location for future opportunities. Our city is centrally located between Boston and New York and offers historic building stock, improved rail and bus lines, downtown student housing, and an affordable cost of living.

Mayor O'Leary will be sure to keep you informed of updates through the newspaper, social media, and his monthly radio show.

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## Time Restored/restarted to/on Bank Street



**BY Zachary Keith**  
Project Manager, of Waterbury  
Development Corporation

On October 23, 2019, the clock that was only right, twice a day was removed stirring concern about its fate. Worry not the clock was brought to Old School Antiques in Peacedale Rhode Island where Peter Nunes fully restored the case and movement back to its original glory when Bank Street was home to numerous Jewelry stores and fine clothing stores. The clock was returned to its location April 16, 2020(my birthday, what a great gift).

The story of this old clock begins a century ago with Morris A Green. Morris Green was born in Poland in 1867 and immigrated to Waterbury in 1883. He founded M. A. Green Jewelers in 1898 and started by repairing and selling jewelry out of a horse and carriage until he saved enough to open his first storefront, which was located at 167 South Main Street. From 1902-1904 his store was located at 213 Bank Street and in 1905-1906 he was operating out of 224 Bank Street. From 1907-1921 his store was at 200 Bank Street in the Buckingham Building, as the building's first tenant. From

1922-1936 his store was located at 71-73 Grand Street in Waterbury. Morris Green ordered the clock from Seth Thomas on August 17, 1921 and the clock was shipped to Waterbury on November 4, 1921. Morris retired from active work in 1923 and remained the owner of the store until his passing in 1943.

In 1932, the family purchased Lux, Bond, and Lux Jewelers and renamed the store Lux Bond, and Green. In November of 1936, the store and clock were moved to its current location at 117 Bank Street. The store remained in Waterbury until 1993 when it relocated to

Hartford, CT as Lux, Bond, and Green. It was at this point that in 1993 the Lux, Bond, and Green Jewelry store donated the clock to the City of Waterbury. Robert Green, chairman of Lux Bond and Green, wrote a letter to Mayor Bergin on December 21, 1992 offering the clock to the City of Waterbury. The Board of Aldermen accepted the clock as a gift at its January 14, 1993 meeting and the City became the owner of the clock, subject to certain conditions.

The clock is a 17-foot tall two dial Seth Thomas clock. Bill Goldstein, Ideal jewelers, and Hank Paine, Howland Hughes





Photos by Zachary Keith, Project Manager, of Waterbury Development Corporation

helped the city wind the clock. City employees now wind the clock once every eight days. The clock always had the wording “M. A. Green” on the top”. Peter Nunes fully dismantled the clock and removed the old layers of paint and rust. He then restored the clock exterior and interior fully.

The restoration of the historic M.A. Green clock was a vital step to the revival of the rest of the downtown historic district. The Brown building has been renovated converting the upper two floors for student housing. The Howland Hughes building has been renovated and now houses 450 Post University employees.

The Waterbury Green was recently renovated with Wi-Fi, seating, lighting, and sidewalks. East Main Street is currently undergoing a water main replacement and will then undergo a complete streets renovation with paving sidewalks lights etc. All of this downtown restoration projects work together to create a better city and by restoring the clock that will continue the work. The clock now sits on a raised footing and once again, the face lights up Bank Street at night. There may not be the same sort of retail downtown as when Seth Thomas unloaded the clock in 1921, but one thing is certain this clock will be here for the next hundred years.



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# IT'S WORTH THE WAIT

## THE PALACE AND #BROADWAYWILLBEBACK



**BY Sheree Marcucci**  
Marketing & Public Relations  
Officer Palace Theater

Have you felt it? Have you felt the something missing in our community since March when the COVID -19 virus became a full blown Pandemic and forced a shutdown of life as we knew it?

The Pandemic made sweeping changes in many things we took for granted and none more so than the live entertainment industry, specifically theaters and other performance venues. No longer could you shrug off the stresses of everyday life by going out and enjoying a show and losing yourself in the magic

that only a live performance experience offers. Our crown jewel of downtown Waterbury, the Palace Theater over the last fifteen years since re-opening, offered so much magic – national tours of Broadway shows, headline musical artists and comedy acts and more, that brought close to 2,000,000 people to our city center. That's what's missing. The marquee, which not too long ago heralded all the exciting shows coming to Waterbury, now offers messages of hope and gratitude instead. We're missing the sounds of traffic and people hurriedly rushing into the theater on show nights. There's a hushed quiet that now blankets the landscape, yet we remain optimistic that re-opening is on

the horizon. And although we would love to do so immediately, the safety and health of our customers is a top priority.

While we patiently await the gradual return to normal, our focus now as we abide by state regulations, (which as of press time is limited to 25 people who can enter the building), is considering new and unique ways to engage our loyal customers.

Some of the activities planned following current safety protocols of masks, social distancing and the 25 person limit, include our ever popular monthly guided tours of the Palace which will resume in October, small Fundraising

events and other curated programs and gatherings.

As capacity restrictions slowly get lifted and we are allowed to incrementally increase the number of patrons, we will continue to investigate other ways of utilizing our beloved Palace, such as for Jazz, Trivia, and other types of presentations until we can return to offering the full productions presented from the majestic Palace stage.

When we do reopen fully, at our 2,600 person capacity, for stage productions, you can be assured we will be in compliance with all required state, local and industry health regulations to ensure the safety of all patrons, performers and staff. That new normal will





likely include mask wearing, staggering entry times, more adaptive customer service policies, and ongoing sanitizing and cleaning protocols while the building is fully occupied.

Optimistically as we look forward to our 100 year anniversary in 2022, our goal

and hope is to be back to the old normal and operating at 100% capacity by then, bringing the community the excitement, energy and yes hope, of those live theatrical experiences you've been missing. It's Worth the Wait. #Broadwaywillbeback

## A High School Student's Perspective



BY Viola Flowers

On Thursday March 12th, I sat in my AP Language and Composition class bright and early at 7:20 in the morning, ready to start another day at the Waterbury Arts Magnet School. My teacher was reviewing our homework assignment from the previous night, and we all were smiling and laughing as she was reviewing the material, thinking it was just another Thursday morning at WAMS. Why wouldn't it be? I spent the rest of my day putting together the final details of a school-wide basketball tournament I had organized as a fundraiser for my junior class- collecting permission slips, selling tickets, and promoting the event to every student that would lend a listening ear. The school was bustling with energy- the major production of *The Wiz* was about to finally take the Palace stage the next night, after months of preparation and rehearsals from our students and teachers. Everyone was walking with their friends, talking about the upcoming events, laughing as carefree as ever. It was a normal high school day.

The next time I was in WAMS, it was Tuesday September 8th. I saw maybe just a third of the same students, between the senior class that had just graduated and the high percentage of students attending the Virtual Academy from their homes. I could barely hear people talking, let alone laughing. If people were smiling, I couldn't see it behind their masks. The entire high school dynamic has changed. Education is not the same anymore. Teachers that have had decades of experience are teaching as if it were their first year, trying to navigate teaching to both a classroom and a computer. Learning as a whole is different, with most of the material being taught independently. Class time is spent troubleshooting Internet issues and trying to connect a



virtual classroom with a real one, instead of reviewing lessons and last night's homework.

Academics aside, the arts have been severely impacted as well. Dance classes are taken within a six foot box on the floor with a mask on. All performances, for any department, are indefinitely on hold. It truly is a challenge to be in an arts school where the arts can barely be practiced. We were once overflowing with creative projects, bursting at the seams with ideas for outlets of our artistic expressions. Now, our ideas are constricted to a screen. If it can't go online, it can't go on.

The high school atmosphere feels extinct. Meeting up with friends in the halls, walking to class together side by side, pushing through the crowds, trying to beat the sound of the bell- all the little, youthful things that contributed to the high school experience- are all gone. It's the simple interactions like these that I took for granted my entire high school career, failing to fully appreciate the value of the education I was receiving and the relationships I built with my peers and teachers.

I hope that more advancements are made in terms of our reopening, for my time at WAMS should not have to end like this. With teams of lifelong professional educators, I hope the district can continue to develop better schooling plans that have both students' safety and quality of learning at heart. But until then, I'll have to continue to go to school with my mask on and say hi to my classmates from my computer.



# 150 Years of the Silas Bronson Library



**Raechel Guest**  
Director of the  
Silas Bronson Library

Yes, we are open! But we have made a few changes. Our goal is to continue to provide you with the library services you rely on, in new ways that keep everyone safe through the pandemic. One new feature everyone loves: in accordance with state guidelines, we are waiving late fees for any items returned during the pandemic. However, please note that if an item isn't returned, it will be marked as lost, and the replacement fee will still be charged. Generally speaking, the library is open by appointment to limit the number of people in the building at the same time. You must wear a mask that completely covers your nose and mouth when you are inside the library. Touchless hand sanitizer dispensers are located at the entrance and at the computer center. Disinfecting wipes are available for use between patrons at the computers. Our Wi-Fi reaches all the way to Grand Street, so you can sit comfortably in your car to use it at any time.

## Library Card Online Signup

If you need to get a library card, you can now apply online at [bronsonlibrary.org/digital](http://bronsonlibrary.org/digital).

After filling out the form, you will receive an email with your temporary password, at which point you can start using your card for all of our online services, including ebooks. After you apply online, we will call you to schedule an appointment for you to pick up your physical card. Anyone who lives in Waterbury, no matter how young, is eligible for a Silas Bronson Library card. Children must have permission from their legal guardian to receive a card.

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Like many other libraries throughout Connecticut, we have implemented an appointment-based system for borrowing library materials, very much like restaurant take out service. Here's how it works: You can place your "order" online by logging into your account at [silas.biblio.org](http://silas.biblio.org) or by using the Acorn Catalog app on your smartphone. Search for the items you want to borrow, then select "Request Item." You'll be prompted to verify your contact information – please make sure it's correct. After you place your request, our staff will gather your items together and call you to schedule a time for pickup. We'll have everything ready when you arrive at your appointment time, making pickup go quickly and smoothly. If you don't want to use the

online catalog, give us a call at 203-574-8225 and our librarians will help you over the phone. Make sure you have your library card with you when you call. Don't know what you want? Give us a call! Our librarians can make expert recommendations based on what types of books you like to read. If you're looking for material for adults, call 203-574-8225. If you're looking for material for children and teens, call 203-574-8213. If you prefer to use the Bunker Hill Branch Library, call 203-574-8240.

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If you need to use the copier, you are welcome to drop by anytime. Copies fifteen cents per page.

### Chrome Books and Hotspots

New this fall – you can borrow a chrome book computer and a Wi-Fi hotspot from the library! Chrome books and hotspots will be available to borrow for one week at a time starting in October. They have been made possible thanks to the Connecticut State Library and the federal CARES Act. Starting this winter, we will have a set of chrome books available just for seniors, thanks

to a grant from the Connecticut Community Foundation.

### Online Resources

We have a variety of resources for you to use online or on your smartphone, free with your library card. For the kids, we have the World Book, which includes more than just an encyclopedia – there are educational games, books, and more.

If you want to brush up on your job skills, the Lynda Learning database includes thousands of tutorials for computer-based work, as well as tutorials on photography, drawing, and music.

Mango is an easy way to learn a new language. A free app can be downloaded to your phone and offers short lessons you can practice any time.

We also offer resource centers

for repair and maintenance of cars and small engines, giving you access to repair manuals for everything from lawnmowers to cars from 1974.

Looking for a news article? Our online resources let you search for articles from the Republican American newspaper from 2004 to the present, as well as articles in national magazines.

### Free Programs

Although we are not holding any in-person programs for the time being, we are offering free online programs via Zoom. We have several book clubs that meet monthly, chess club which meets every other week, a genealogy tips program, and a variety of special educational programs. Advance registration is required for the programs – you can sign up by visiting our website, [bronsonlibrary.org](http://bronsonlibrary.org),

where the full program roster is available.

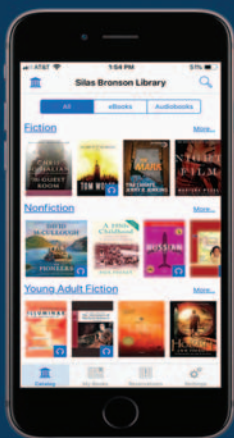
### 150 Years of the Silas Bronson Library

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the Silas Bronson Library, and it is certainly an unusual year. We had planned to hold a number of celebrations this year, but everything has been put on hold thanks to the pandemic. This is not the first time that the library has seen a change in its operations – we've changed quite a lot over the past century and a half.

If you'd like to learn more about the history of the library, please visit our website at [bronsonlibrary.org/libraryhistory](http://bronsonlibrary.org/libraryhistory), where we have posted a series of articles and images about the library over the years.



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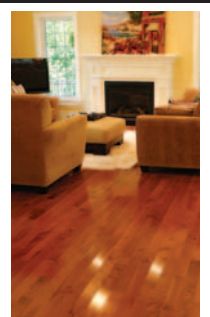
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# Brass City Brew and Que Tour Book



**Carl Rosa**  
CEO, Main Street Waterbury

It's 2020 and a pandemic is upon us. In an effort to curb the spread of COVID-19 and keep people safe, the State of Connecticut rightfully and prudently put a limit on the allowable outdoor event crowd sizes. This has essentially put the kibosh on multiple large-scale festivals and fairs, many of which occur in the fall and are run by non-profit organizations that rely heavily on the funds generated by these events. In fact, this is a scenario being played out across the U.S as numerous Governors have enacted

similar Executive orders. Main Street Waterbury's Brass City Brew and Que is among these festivals. September 12th would have been the 15th annual Brew Fest, certainly a cause for great celebration. But alas, like so many others, we've had to postpone and reschedule to the Spring of 2021. What a celebration that will be when we can all come out and play once again. I encourage you to stay tuned for event details as they develop. That being said, critical funds for our Main Street Waterbury organization are needed Now! Like many other non-profits, we've had to pivot, be creative, and seek a way forward. So, what does one do when you can't bring numerous brewers to Waterbury who feature over 270 craft beer varieties for

hundreds of loyal fest goers to sample? You bring our loyal patrons to the brewers!

Introducing the Brass City Brew and Que Tour Book! That's right! For the price of an "at the gate Brew Fest VIP Ticket", you can purchase a book loaded with vouchers and

discounts from your favorite Connecticut craft beer breweries. We're providing an adventure and experience where you can take a tour around CT visiting brewers, sampling their product and having a great time at your own leisure and schedule throughout the year. Of course all safety and social distancing protocols will be in affect according to Executive order mandates until such time as they are no longer necessary. Brewers are finding great creative ways to be in compliance and still provide a fun experience for their patrons.

We've teamed up with CTBeer.com who's vast network of Connecticut's finest craft breweries is impressive and exciting! Many of these breweries and brewers have been so supportive to the Brass City Brew and Que over the years. They too have been struggling during this pandemic. Our way to say thanks is to bring our Brew Fest audiences to them.

The reaction from the Brewers has been tremendous. They love the approach, they love the opportunity and they want to be involved. We can't ask for more than that!

The Tour Book will be released this fall and available for sale through our MSW website, and Brass City Brew and Que website. Details for purchasing will also be available through all of our social media platforms

including facebook and Instagram. If you haven't already, I encourage you to "like" our Brass City Brew and Que facebook page where you'll get all the updates about the Tour Book, The Brew Fest, and of course the recent addition of the barbeque competition.

You can also visit CTBeer.com for specific details.

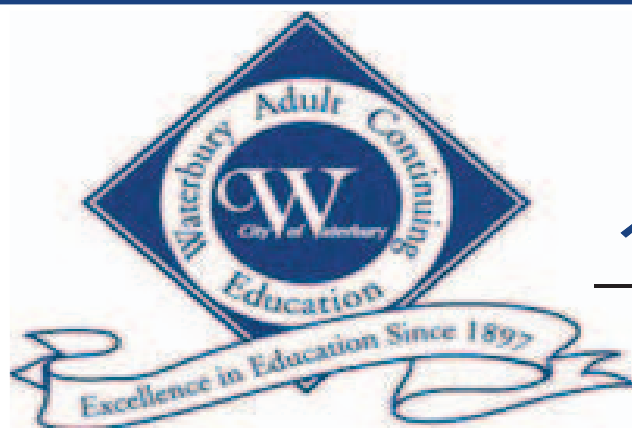
Just think about what a great gift this Tour Book will make. You and I both know friends, relatives and neighbors who enjoy good craft beer and appreciate creativity along with funky and inspiring indoor/outdoor spaces. They also enjoy a variety of both complex and simple flavor profiles to keep things fun and interesting. Get them the Brass City Brew and Que Tour Book and don't wait. Believe me, they'll appreciate it.

We're counting on you to help us spread the word. Don't forget to visit

brasscitybrewandque.com, CTBeer.com, mainstreetwaterbury.com and also like us on the Brass City Brew and Que facebook page. If you need additional details you can email my office at [croso@mainstreetwaterbury.com](mailto:croso@mainstreetwaterbury.com) or [brasscitybrewandque@gmail.com](mailto:brasscitybrewandque@gmail.com). A special thanks goes to Nutmeg Fine Wines & Spirits for their many years of support in hosting the Brew Fest and recruiting brewer participants. A daunting task worthy of a good craft beer! Cheers!!







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