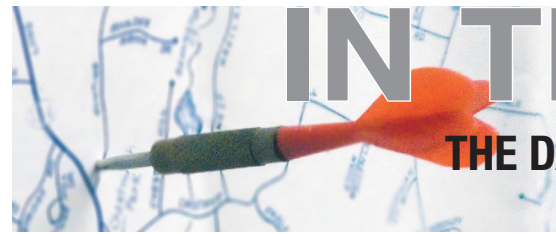


SPORTS

Tiger wins the Memorial with late charge



IN THE SWING

THE DART: Friendships endure at Brennan

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MONDAY, JUNE 8, 2009

SERVING THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1829

Trial over fire service lawsuit ends

By Jeff Morganteen
STAFF WRITER

City, volunteers await decision from judge

Details of the lawsuit

The suit alleges the city breached its management agreement with the Turn of River Volunteer Fire Department and violated the city Charter by withholding taxpayer money and diverting it to Stamford Fire & Rescue.

STAMFORD — The hearings are over. The wait begins.

The trial portion of the lawsuit between the city and one of its volunteer fire departments, Turn of River, concluded last week. Both sides await a decision from Judge Kevin Tierney that will come within 120 days.

The Turn of River Fire Department covers 15 square miles where rural North Stamford meets the more developed southern half of the

city. In 2007, the department sued the city to block a consolidation plan that would have staffed its firehouses with city firefighters from Stamford Fire & Rescue, the career department that covers downtown Stamford.

"It's a relief that the two-year judicial process has come to a conclusion, and we look forward to a decision," Aaron Lee, president of Turn

of River, said after the trial ended Friday.

The suit alleges the city breached its management agreement with the department and violated the city Charter by withholding taxpayer money and diverting it to Stamford Fire & Rescue.

Turn of River is suing for the reinstatement of its \$330,000 budget, which was cut to \$40,000 this year

after the volunteers voted down a mediated agreement with the city last summer.

It is one of several lawsuits in Stamford's convoluted fire service, in which six independent departments share duties. One is a career department, and the rest — Glenbrook, Belltown, Turn of River, Long Ridge and Springdale — are run by volunteers and rely on

money from the city. City firefighters operate out of Springdale and Glenbrook.

Mark Kovack, attorney for Turn of River, said the lawsuit is a "hoax" and that the city is "not responsible for the lawsuit." Please see FIRE on A4

FOR A GOOD CAUSE



Ruth Cardiello of Wilton inscribes a dedication Sunday on the tribute wall in Columbus Park to her Aunt Pat, who died of cancer. Cardiello participated in Stamford Hospital's annual Hope in Motion Walk, Run & Ride event, benefiting the Bennett Cancer Center, with a team from the hospital.

Keeping hope alive

Fundraising walk, run and ride benefits cancer center

By Devon Lash
STAFF WRITER

STAMFORD — Some of the tribute wall's messages were simple — a first name scrawled in ink.

Some were deeply personal — "Ducka, I wish I could have known you better," someone penned in neat script.

Others were messages of hope. "I love you, Dee. I made it," said one of the hundreds of purple footprints posted Sunday on the Hope in Motion tribute wall in Columbus Park. The wall was a message board for the nearly 4,000 people who took part in the 14th annual fundraiser for Stamford Hospital's Bennett Cancer Center.

The park, crowded since the cyclists took off at 7 a.m., was filled with food stands, bright T-shirts and even more brightly dressed clowns.

More than 3,400 people were registered as of Friday — about 500 runners, nearly double last year's turnout, more than 120 riders and about 2,500 walkers.

Though donors can contribute until September, Hospital Foundation special events Chairwoman Fern Pessin said Sunday's total was \$580,000. That matches last year's event day total.

This year, though, there was \$60,000 less in corporate sponsorships because of the recession, Pessin said.

But it's not the dollar signs that make the day memorable, said Brian Grissler, chief executive officer of Stamford Hospital.

"It's an opportunity to thank all the people involved in the care of patients, the families, and those who have passed away after a battle with cancer," Grissler said.

Liz Manfredo, director of the Bennett Cancer, said each participant made a difference in a cancer patient's life.

"This recharges us through the year," Manfredo said.

The Stamford Hospital Foundation spent only a few hundred dollars to host the event because



More than 4,000 participants stride Sunday up Atlantic Street near the turnoff for Main Street in Stamford during the Hope in Motion Walk, Run & Ride event benefiting the Bennett Cancer Center. In the background is the Old Town Hall.

of in-kind donations from businesses.

Bob Polen, a marketing representative for the Costco wholesale store in Norwalk that provided drinks and snacks, said the event has a special place in his heart since his wife, Renee, died of breast cancer.

Nearly every participant and volunteer had a story about the effects of cancer on their lives. As the day went on, pieces of the stories were posted on the tribute wall.

On the wall, "their legacy lives on," said Sylvia Spitalnick of the Stamford Hospital Foundation.

— Staff Writer Devon Lash can be reached at devon.lash@scni.com or 964-2242.

Voices of support

By Devon Lash
STAFF WRITER

In his Sunday best, Clarence Glen of Bridgeport watched Sunday as more and more people poured into Columbus Park in Stamford. He didn't know what was going on, but he wanted to find out.

A volunteer invited him over with a wave of her hand, and he crossed the street.

It's a fundraiser for the cancer center, she told Glen, who pulled up his neatly tucked-in shirt. Please see VOICES on A4

School tip lines draw few calls

By Wynne Parry
STAFF WRITER

STAMFORD — High school tip lines that debuted in April have drawn calls but little, if any, significant information, administrators said.

The goal of tip lines set up at Stamford High, Westhill High and the Academy of Information Technology & Engineering was to allow students to come forward without the stigma of snitching.

It was promoted most at Stamford High, where two students were hospitalized after a fight in the back parking lot in January.

"After doing an initial investigation, it appears there were some students within the building that knew of this situation and didn't come forward with the information," Principal Rodney Bass said.

Initial calls included a complaint about garbage in front of the building and a prank about a dog on the roof, Bass said. Since then, the line received an odd call saying that a scavenger was hunted planned for the weekend of May 16, said Curtis Tinnin, the head of school security who monitors the tip line.

Administrators determined the call was a hoax and brushed it off, Tinnin said. But that Saturday evening, five bat-wielding assailants attempted to rob a group of Stamford High students on a scavenger hunt as they returned to their cars parked on Merriebrook Lane.

Since then, the line has been quiet, except for occasional automated messages with credit card offers, he said.

Stamford High students appear to know about the tip line, and the telephone number is posted on orange fliers around the school.

"I think it's a good idea, but not a lot of people are going to do it because of snitching," said Jonathan Rosenberg, a senior, taking a break from his work on the school newspaper. "I called it." Please see SCHOOL on A4

School safety hotlines

- Stamford High: 977-6655
- Westhill: 977-4345
- AITE: 977-4722

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Weather

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Classic cars fetch big bucks for charity

By Frank MacEachern
STAFF WRITER

GREENWICH — Joseph Ruszkowski, 27, opened the door of a 1962 Maserati 3500 GTi and took a peek inside.

"I like this one," he said with a smile before pointing to a nearby 1969 Porsche 911 Targa as his favorite car.

"If I was bidding, this is the one I would want," the Stamford resident said

Sunday afternoon at the 14th annual Concours d'Elegance at Roger Sherman Baldwin Park.

The two-day event was founded by Greenwich residents Bruce and Genia Wennerstrom. All proceeds benefited AmeriCares, a Stamford-based international relief organization.

In an auction Sunday filled with expensive and eye-catching automobiles

such as Ferraris, Jaguars and Rolls Royces, there was a touch of Hollywood glamor as Clark Gable's 1938 Packard convertible was on sale. It fetched \$282,000 from a private bidder over the telephone, said Maria Writesel, a spokeswoman for Bonham's, the auctioneers.

Sales were expected to total about \$4.5 million for the 89 automobiles, Writesel

Please see CARS on A4