

Hoffman DECADES

Autumn/Winter 2009



LIFE LESSONS

Capital Prep students study their way to a brighter future

INSIDE

Innovations in Motion—
Exciting new offerings for 2010.

Page 24



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8

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CONTENTS

2 WELCOME

A letter from the Hoffmans.

4 DETAILS

Gizmos & gadgets.

6 SNAPSHOTS

Hoffman and the community.

8 DINING

Recipes for Success

Four restaurateurs cook up unique new dining concepts.

By Sarah Wesley-Lemire

12 COVER STORY

Life Lessons

Capital Preparatory Magnet School is giving Hartford education a good name. More importantly, it's offering Hartford students a real shot at a bright future. *By Joyce Rossignol*

16 FEATURE

Above and Beyond

Brain cancer survivor Ben Goldman makes the world a better place. *By Sarah Wesley-Lemire*

20 FEATURE

A Brave New World

Whether it's clothes, furniture or sports equipment, shopping resale is the new cool. *By Sarah Wesley-Lemire*

24 WHEELS

Innovation in Motion

Ford's alternative energy vehicles, Lexus hybrid, Honda Insight and A5 Audi convertible just part of the exciting offerings for 2010. *Plus*, a peek at fuel-saving and performance-enhancing TDI technology. *By Keith Griffin*

27 Open for Business

Hoffman Auto Group unveils its new Toyota/Scion dealership and marks the successful completion of *Project HX: The Hoffman Ten* renovation and expansion project. *By Keith Griffin*

28 ENTERTAINMENT

All About Kate

Old Saybrook's former town offices are reborn as the Katharine Hepburn Cultural Arts Center. *By Nancy Thompson*

31 FAMILY FUN

Let's Go to LEGO!

LEGO launches a nationwide KidsFest fair at Hartford's CT Convention Center from Nov. 20 to 22. Got kids? You won't want to miss it!

By Carola DiPoi

32 HAPPENINGS

Events throughout Hartford County.



16



27

On the cover: Dr. Steve Perry founded Capital Preparatory School in downtown Hartford to open new doors for students from challenging backgrounds. He's succeeding beyond anyone's wildest dreams. *Photo by Lisa Brisson*

WELCOME TO OUR Winter edition of *Decades*.

This issue, we bring you a fascinating story about a Hartford County man who, despite growing up in a local housing project and running into plenty of trouble in school, has become a nationally renowned education expert. Dr. Steve Perry is the founder of Capital Preparatory Magnet School in downtown Hartford – a school that offers its students hope and a clear path out of poverty and despair. The school’s students are mostly minorities, and many come from difficult backgrounds. But thanks to the rigorous discipline and high expectations of Perry and his staff, 100 percent of the school’s graduates have gone on to college.

Equally inspiring is the story of young Ben Goldman of Wethersfield, who at the age of eight was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor. Far from bringing him down, the experience galvanized him into action. For the past few years, Goldman, now 13, has been tirelessly working to make a difference in the lives of others by organizing fundraisers and encouraging other youngsters to volunteer in the community. At every moment, his big heart, joy for living, and unquenchable enthusiasm shine through.

Looking for a bargain in these tough economic times? Sarah Wesley-Lemire takes you on a tour of local consignment shops – the new “in” place to go shopping. Whether it’s clothes, sports gear or furniture you seek, you’ll find quality merchandise at low prices, and will likely come home with bags filled with treasures – without breaking your budget.

If it’s a new car you’re shopping for, you won’t want to miss Keith Griffin’s round-up of the exciting new 2010 models. Ford’s alternative energy vehicles, the Lexus hybrid, the Honda Insight and the A5 Audi convertible are just a few of the cutting-edge offerings now available.

In the mood for some entertainment? The new Katharine Hepburn Cultural Center in Old Saybrook has brought a fresh perspective to the former town hall, a building that was originally a theater. The arts center offers its patrons a wide range of traveling shows, along with a plethora of memorabilia centering around the town’s most famous resident – the woman locals knew simply as “Kate.” Our company was a proud sponsor of the official opening gala, held Oct. 17.

If some fun and excitement for the kids is what you’re after, look no further than the first ever LEGO KidsFest, coming up at the Connecticut Convention Center November 20-22. This interactive toy extravaganza will include life-sized and miniature LEGO models; build, race and play booths; live stage demonstrations; interactive presentations, and much more. Don’t miss it!

We know you’ll enjoy this issue. Thank you as always for your loyalty and support.



PHOTO BY LANNY NAGLER

Jeffrey S. Hoffman
Co-Chairman

I. Bradley Hoffman
Co-Chairman

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LAST-MINUTE LUCK

A banner advertising the Mandell JCC’s annual raffle outside the Bloomfield Avenue, West Hartford center caught the eye of Suzanne Barkyoumb of East Granby on her way to work. She and her husband Tim still can’t believe their incredible luck. She bought the last ticket sold, on the final day of the fundraising raffle, and won the grand prize – a \$15,000 gift certificate donated by Hoffman.

The couple, both U.S. military veterans, bid farewell to their ancient, on-its-last-mile 1989 Lincoln recently. They drove out of Hoffman Ford in East Hartford with a shiny new blue Ford F150 pick-up truck, thanks to a last minute decision to buy a \$50 raffle ticket.

The Mandell JCC’s raffle raised \$30,000 to support scholarships for camps, early childhood education and senior citizen programs.

“I pass the Mandell JCC every day on my way to work in Hartford and kept putting off the decision to buy a ticket. On the day before the drawing, I called to see if there were any left,” recalls Mrs. Barkyoumb. She hurried over to the JCC at lunchtime and bought the last and luckiest ticket.

Shown from left are: **Jeffrey Hoffman** and **I. Bradley Hoffman**, co-chairmen of the Hoffman Auto Group, **Suzanne** and **Tim Barkyoumb**, and **Brian J. Newman** of West Hartford, president of Mandell Jewish Community Center.



HONDA'S NEW HOME NOW OPEN

The Hoffman Auto Group unveiled its new Honda facility with a grand opening event on June 18, with more than 300 guests in attendance. The event, emceed by WFSB’s **Scot Haney** and **Mark Dixon**, also celebrated Channel 3 Kids Camp, which was selected as Hoffman’s Community Partner for the evening.

The new 29,698-square-foot Hoffman Honda on Route 44 in Avon offers a three-lane, climate-controlled drive-through service reception area, so customers can get out of their cars inside the building, avoiding any inclement weather. The service department has increased its service bays from nine to 20. The building has a 9,000-square-foot showroom with room to display up to 10 vehicles, and a parts boutique. A new waiting lounge offers complimentary computer access, Wi-Fi Internet access, a quiet room for business use, a coffee bar and LCD flat screen television, as well as a children’s play room.

Shown from left are: **Denise Hornbecker**; **Scot Haney**; **Jeffrey Hoffman**, co-chairman of Hoffman Auto Group; **Mark Dixon**; **I. Bradley Hoffman**, co-chairman of Hoffman Auto Group; and **Matthew Hoffman**, vice-president of Hoffman Auto Group.



EMPLOYEE RECEIVES SUV IN HONOR OF 40 YEARS WITH HOFFMAN

Working on a busy Monday at the East Hartford Ford dealership, **Chris Michelson** was asked to go over to the Hoffman Audi dealership next door.

To her surprise, she was met by her fellow employees as well as **Jeffrey Hoffman** and **I. Bradley Hoffman**, co-chairmen of the Hoffman Auto Group of East Hartford, Avon and New London. Michelson was presented with a cake and her choice of any brand new Ford Edge or Escape, Toyota Highlander, Honda Pilot, Saab 9-7X, or the Audi Q5 in recognition of her 40th year of dedicated service with the company.

Michelson currently serves as the Hoffman Ford/Isuzu/Audi/Porsche office manager in East Hartford. She began her career at Hoffman as a clerk, and is the longest employed woman to work at Hoffman Auto Group. Michelson has remained with the same franchise – Ford – throughout her entire 40-year career, and has served as office manager at Hoffman Audi and Porsche since their inception.



FOR THE CHILDREN

The 11th annual Burton C. Hoffman Golf Classic was held on June 8 at the Tumblebrook Country Club in Bloomfield to benefit the Connecticut Children's Medical Center. In 11 years, Hoffman Auto has raised more than \$900,000 for the hospital.

Volunteers, from left, included: **Jess Pines**, tournament director **Anne Bjorkland**, **Jimmy Velasquez**, **Meri Grenier**, **Sam Pines**, **Craig Tracey**, **Chrissy Pakutka**, **Anne Marie Shackway**, **Steve Shields**, **Kathleen Halpner**, **Lori Principe**, **Lara Hoffman** and **Marlene Zychowski**.

A SPECIAL OCCASION

On Sat. May 9, more than 30 Hoffman Auto Group employees from the East Hartford, Avon and New London locations donated their time to volunteer with the Special Olympics track and field events at Weaver High in Hartford. Hoffman Auto was also a sponsor of the event. Shown are employees with family members who also volunteered.



TOYOTA GRAND REOPENING

1) Attending the official opening of Hoffman Auto Group's Toyota/Scion dealership in September were, from left: **Kevin Fletcher** of Toyota USA; **I. Bradley Hoffman**, co-chairman of Hoffman Auto Group; **Matthew Hoffman**, vice-president of Hoffman Auto Group; **Jeffrey Hoffman**, co-chairman of Hoffman Auto Group; and **Kevin Cour** of Toyota USA. 2) More than 400 guests attended the festivities in the brand new Hoffman Toyota showroom. 3) **Gloria McAdam**, CEO of Foodshare, accepted a donation to Foodshare from Hoffman Auto Group in the amount of \$10,000. From left: **Jeffrey Hoffman** and **I. Bradley Hoffman**; McAdam; emcee **Logan Byrnes** of Fox 61 (at the podium); and **Matthew Hoffman**, vice-president of Hoffman Auto. 4) Also enjoying the festivities were **Janet Robinson**, local sales manager for Fox 61; **Marlene Zychowski**, marketing director for Hoffman Auto Group; **Kathy Hoffman**; and **Logan Byrnes**.



CORRECTION AND INVITATION

The black and white photo of I. Hoffman in the last issue of *DECADES* had an incorrect caption. The vehicle shown was not a 1930 Model T Ford as stated. It was brought to our attention by avid antique auto buff Joseph Hitchery of Niantic that the car in the photo was not a Ford at all, but a 1929 Nash Six Series, which was probably a trade-in on the Hoffman lot.

Mr. Hitchery knew that the Model T Ford was only produced from 1908 to 1927. He also noted that Ford never produced a car that had

wooden spoke wheels like the one shown in the photo.

Thank you to Mr. Hitchery for your keen interest and for bringing this to our attention!

If anyone else has a picture of an old automobile purchased from Hoffman, please let us know. We would be delighted to run the picture, along with a caption, in the next issue of *Decades* magazine. Please contact Hoffman Auto Group marketing director Marlene Zychowski at mzychowski@hoffmanauto.com or call 860.290.6385.



Recipes for Success

Four restaurateurs cook up unique new dining concepts.

BY MARA DRESNER — PHOTOS BY LISA BRISSON

When an accounting student at the University of Hartford needed a little extra cash, he got a job parking cars for a restaurant in West Hartford.

One day, the bartender didn't show up. In classic "A Star Is Born" fashion, the owner asked if the student had bartending experience. He didn't, but that didn't matter to the desperate owner.

Soon, the student was bartending and managing the valet services, then managing the restaurant. Two years after he took that part-time job, Dan Keller owned part of the restaurant.

"And that's how I started in the business. The owner really took me under his wing. My parents were totally against it," he says with a chuckle. "That was 23 years ago. I never expected to get into the restaurant business."

The course of careers, like love, seldom runs smooth, and after a few years, Keller felt "burned out," and left the state for about a year.

He came back to work at La Trattoria

in Canton, before opening Black Orchid on the Berlin Turnpike in Newington. "It was an upscale American restaurant. It was the first restaurant I did myself. I learned I really loved the restaurant business and wanted to make my life's career out of it," he says.

From there, it was on to a 12-year stint as director of operations for the Hot Tomato's Restaurant Group, where responsibilities included opening new restaurants.

Then, three years ago, after the death of the owner of Hot Tomato's, Keller decided it was time to venture back out on his own.

The result was DISH Bar & Grill in downtown Hartford. Keller and his partner Bill Carbone knew that a restaurant is not just about the food. There's the look, the feel, the intangibles that make customers comfortable and wanting to come back.

"We had to look at the location, most

of all, and who our clientele was going to be. During the day, it would be business people coming out of the office buildings for lunch. It was not housewives with kids or families for lunch. At nighttime, we're catering to theatergoers, concertgoers, traveling business people staying at hotels," he explains. "The restaurant is about really great food, really great service, in a great atmosphere, in a relaxed way."

The partners had decided to locate DISH in the old Sage Allen department store — a building with a very industrial feel and "a lot of cement walls." The next challenge was to come up with the right décor. "We have chains hanging from ceiling. There are 20,000 dishes stacked up. There's a big circle theme because of DISH," Keller says. "We have big wine walls made of steel. If you're if not careful, it can be cold, so the textures, the fabrics, the colors are very soft. It's very cutting edge in a soft way. It's difficult to mix those two. We really wanted to design a restaurant that didn't seem to belong in Hartford, [one] that seemed like it



The new Dish 'n Dat opening in Canton at The Shoppes at Farmington Valley will be headed by co-owners Bill Carbone and Daniel Keller and managed by Jennifer Holcomb.

belonged in Boston or New York.”

The restaurant was very well received. “In the two years that it’s been open, DISH has built a very loyal following,” Keller says.

Recognizing that a lot of their customers worked downtown but lived in the suburbs, Keller and Carbone decided to go after that market as well. The location? A retail space – formerly occupied by Simmer – at the Shoppes at Farmington Valley in Canton.

“This is a place that I’d looked at five years ago for Hot Tomato’s. Then, the numbers didn’t make sense. Now, we were able to work out a very good deal for what I wanted to do,” says Keller. “This is a neighborhood I know. It’s across the street from La Trattoria. I live out that way. I feel there’s a strong need for a good quality, casual restaurant.”

The new restaurant, DISH ‘n Dat, opened in September. But this is no clone of Hartford’s DISH.

“My business partner Billy and I both grew up in New Jersey, eating at diners. In New Jersey, the concept of diners is upscale. That’s where our theme came from,” says Keller. “I think the perception of diners in Connecticut is different than the perception of diners in New Jersey or New York. There, it’s considered a great place to go for a good casual dinner, a good quality dinner. We’re taking the whole idea of a diner and bringing it upscale.

Everything is made to order. Everything is made in house. Everything is of DISH quality, with a lower price point.”

DISH ‘n Dat offers breakfast on weekends and an all-day breakfast section on the menu. “We’ll serve our very famous mac and cheese from DISH Bar & Grill. There will be a lot of comfort food, fried chicken, bacon wrapped meatloaf, chicken pot pie, great sandwiches, soups. You can go in 7 o’clock at night and have steak, and your wife can have the eggs she wants. There’s nothing like that in this area at all.”

Keller and Carbone once again worked with the Archimage Group of Hartford to help create the look.

“The décor when you walk in feels like a real classy diner. There’s a lot of stainless steel, Formica tabletops, stainless chairs, bar stools. We have dishes on the walls like we do in Hartford. There are wine walls lit up. We do a wall of spoons, curved walls inside the front hall with 3,500 spoons. There’s a big mural in the dining room of floating dishes. We’re doing cool design elements.”

Keller believes the DISH ‘n Dat concept is new for Connecticut. He says that if it is successful in Canton, he plans to duplicate the concept in other towns, naming West Hartford, Glastonbury and South Windsor.

With his years of experience as a restaurateur, Keller wryly notes a few lessons he has learned. “Whatever I thought the

budget was going to be, I need to raise it by 50 percent. Whenever I thought the restaurant would open, I need to add another month or two. DISH was over-budget and behind schedule. [We started with] four cement walls. There was nothing in the space when Bill and I took over.” By contrast, “DISH ‘n Dat was already a restaurant that we’re rehabbing, so we’re a lot closer on time and a lot closer to budget,” says Keller, who originally planned to open in August and gradually revised that to the middle or end of September.

“This is the seventh restaurant I’ve opened, and not one ever opened on time.” But he’s learned not to rush the process. “When I first started, people would say, ‘Don’t go to a restaurant the first few weeks. Let them work out kinks.’ They’d give you a second chance. Now, if they come to a restaurant and have a bad experience, your chance of getting those people back is slim to none. People are a lot more selective nowadays in the way they spend their dollars.”

No matter what’s on the menu, he has one goal: to make the customer happy.

“My biggest compliment as a restaurant owner is when someone makes reservations on the way out the door or when I receive a letter in the mail or an e-mail, telling me from the from time they walked in the door until the time they left, it was above their expectations,” he says. “Our company philosophy is to surpass your expectations.”

DISH Bar & Grill is located at 900 Main Street, Hartford, (860) 249-3474. www.dishbarandgrill.com. DISH ‘n Dat is located at The Shoppes at Farmington Valley, Canton, (860) 693-4927.

Going by their Gut

Ryan and Kelleanne Jones, owners of the brand-new Mill at 2T in Tariffville, both have the restaurant business in their blood.

Ryan started cooking as a high schooler in Avon, working his way up through the kitchen hierarchy. “I found out I was pretty good at it. Few people know what they want to do when they’re in high school. I knew I wanted to be a cook.”



Above: One of the dishes offered in the ever-changing seasonal menu is the strawberry grouper, which is plated with red bok choy and carrot risotto.

Left: Ryan and Kelleanne Jones, owners of The Mill at 2T.

After attending the Culinary Institute of America (CIA), he headed to Boca Raton, Florida, coming back to Connecticut after a year and a half, and taking a chef's position at the Silo in Farmington.

He then ran Lucas & Company, a restaurant and catering facility.

Kelleanne began working in restaurants when she was just 15.

"I had always wanted to go to culinary school. Ironically, my parents talked me out of it. I worked nights and weekends in restaurants, learning every facet of it. Instead of going to Johnson & Wales, I went to Central to be a teacher. When I graduated, I didn't even try to be a teacher. I ended up working at a few restaurants, in every position."

She met a lot of people and started organizing events, ultimately becoming the manager for Tapas in Hartford. "I was manager from the beginning, picking out the patterns for the glassware and the designs; it was like home," she says.

But the calls from people asking her to help with events continued, prompting her to leave Tapas and open her own catering business. "That really happened magically overnight. One big party turned into another one and another one, and then, I needed business cards."

She found a small cafeteria kitchen in Hartford across from Saint Francis Hospital, worked out a deal that included providing food for the building, and began hiring staff.

One of those staffers was Ryan.

"He had experience in catering – real, high-end, good catering. I had kind of faked it for a while. He could take it to the next level," she says.

The business was called Pintore Catering. Pintore means artist in Portuguese. She chose the name because she once heard a waiter use the word and it resonated with her. The logo was an artist's palette with a fork, knife and spoon through it.

With the business' success came something else – love. "Ryan and I fell for each other after working together for a while," she says. They eventually got married and started a family.

A year and a half ago, the couple sold the business to one of the chefs, took the summer off and thought about what she calls the "million dollar question" – what to do next.

The pair did something that many might consider rash. They packed up their four children and moved to Las Vegas. Ryan worked for Steve Wynn's Encore Property, with 52 chefs working for him. Kelleanne also worked full time.

"It was tough on the family," says Ryan. "I was working 120 hours a week at the hotel. She was working 60, 70 hours a week at her job. We realized we needed to leave Vegas."

They did something that many would consider just as impulsive as the original move. "We were out there for five months

and we packed up and moved back. We realized we didn't want to work apart. Working for others wasn't healthy for us," says Kelleanne.

Back in Connecticut, the pieces quickly fell into place. On July 31, they opened The Mill at 2T in Tariffville – located, as its name implies, in an old mill building.

"We found the space and fell in love with it. I knew we could do a lot with it. I can do the majority of the cooking; Kelli can do the majority of the front end," says Ryan.

When it came to the design, the couple took the same approach as they do with their lives: do what feels right. Rather than use a restaurant design firm, they went with their gut and did everything on their own – with no preconceived idea of what the restaurant would look like when it was finished.

Today, when customers enter the old historic mill, their first impression is of the openness and richness of the space. "There are 25-foot walls. It's all exposed brick and beams. There's dark wood, black trim, Spanish estate chandeliers, some woodwork from a Newport mansion," says Ryan. "It's elegant and there's a very upscale feel, but in the same breath, it's still casual and comfortable. We can accommodate everything from jeans and shorts to anniversaries. Nothing is lost in the mix."

The pair love to entertain on the personal level, and wanted to replicate for guests the feeling of being invited to dinner at their

home. "We have a 700-square-foot kitchen at the house. Every time we have people over, that's the place to be," says Ryan. "When you walk into this space, we wanted it to be comfortable and unpretentious."

Treating customers like guests in their home is part of the plan.

"We want to really take care of people," adds Kelleanne. "We appreciate them coming in. We want to get to know them and have them be part of our group. We want to please everyone and go through every measure to make it happen," she says.

The dining room is open to the kitchen, with a counter separating the two. Patrons sitting on the six bar stools at the counter have a clear view of whatever is going on in the kitchen.

"They really see how the food is prepared," he says. "And we'll do tastings. If we're making a scallop dish, we might throw in an extra scallop" for a customer to sample.

The open kitchen concept, he says, "is pretty much unseen in this area. In major cities, it's come in a little bit, but it doesn't happen [much] around here. ... We want everybody to have faith in the food coming out. You really never know what's going on behind kitchen doors."

Although the restaurant has only been open for a couple of months, prime weekend times are usually booked by Wednesday. The Mill at 2T is only open Wednesday through Saturday from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m., to leave the couple time to focus on their family; Tuesday is an office day for them.

Though their path is unconventional, it's clear that Kelleanne and Ryan are doing what they love.

"We have a lot of friends who are so not satisfied in their life. We feel the complete opposite. We believe in living each day as happily as you can. We packed up and moved to Las Vegas and five months later, we moved back. A lot of people would be scared to move once, never mind twice, in such a short time," says Kelleanne.

"What was really important to us was the balance. When we were catering, we were missing out on a lot of time with the kids. Now, we're doing what we love. We're entertaining people," she added. "We get up every morning with the kids and bring them to school. Right now, we're living the dream. We have the best of both worlds. What's better than that?" **H**

The Mill at 2T is located at 2 Tunxis Road, Tariffville, (860) 658-7890. www.themillat2t.com.

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Life Lessons

Capital Preparatory Magnet School is giving Hartford education a good name. More importantly, it's offering Hartford students a real shot at a bright future. By Joyce Rossignol | Photos by Lisa Brisson

U.S. *News & World Report* named Capital Preparatory Magnet School one of the best high schools in America.

In its Black in America 2 series, CNN told the world about the amazing achievements of Hartford's Capital Prep, featuring the school's founder and principal, Dr. Steve Perry.

Perry – who grew up in a housing project and was once tossed out of preschool for disruptive behavior – has also appeared on Fox's *Hannity & Colmes*, and on MSNBC and CNN as a national authority on education.

Bill Cosby has praised Perry, and visited the school to learn more about the 39-year-old principal and his students. Famed Sudanese-born activist and former NBA star Manute Bol has also stopped by.

What is so special about Capital Prep?

Many things, actually. First, it really is a prep school. The students are here to prepare for college. The courses are challenging. The discipline is tough love. The classes are small.

The four-year-old school has approximately 280 students in grades 6 through 12. Each year, more than 2,000 parents from the city of Hartford and 22 surrounding suburbs submit applications in hopes of snagging one of just 40 available seats school-wide.

Those who are chosen are welcomed into a family of like-minded friends with the same ambitious goals, and, as the principal says in his welcoming message: "a keen understanding of social justice. It is not enough for our children to get an education. We expect them to use it to improve the lives of others."

Dr. Perry says Capital Prep began with a parent's question: "Why is it that only

rich kids get in to a good school?"

This school was his answer, "proving that any child from any race or economic setting can be provided access to a world-class education. Our approach is simple. We focus on discipline and structure, with a deep and abiding love that refuses to allow any child to give us anything less than their very best."

The students look good, too, arriving at their school in the old G. Fox building in downtown Hartford wearing preppy blazers. The boys wear ties.

Perry likes the look of school uniforms. However, he cautions: "People who want to replicate what we do [need to] understand that Superman's strength doesn't come with his cape. You don't put kids in a uniform and that somehow answers the call for excellence. Superman's strength comes from something within him."

Today, despite the fact that nearly 85 percent of the students are Black or Hispanic, and 62 percent are considered "disadvantaged" by poverty, every single student who graduates from Capital Preparatory Magnet School goes on to a four-year college. Among them: Bay Path, Bentley, Bingham, Boston College, Boston University, Brigham Young. To Hofstra and Howard and George Washington, and Rensselaer Polytechnic. And right here at home, to UConn, to Trinity, to the University of Hartford and St. Joe's. Capital Prep students have gone on to 50 different colleges so far.

Part of the school's secret for success is its insistence that students be disciplined – not only in the classroom, but also in the way they present themselves to the world. Any student who sports an untucked shirt or leaves his or her blazer in the locker hears about it, in no uncertain terms, from Perry and his staff.

Because the school is located in the same building as Capital Community College, upper-level students are able to enroll in CCC courses. As a result, they not only have the opportunity to earn college credits but with each success, gain confidence that they are, in fact, college material.

As Perry and the faculty at Capital Prep open wider doors for their students, the parents are expected to come through those doors as well. On CNN, the principal was asked: "Do you mean to tell me you are asking under-educated people who have gone to raggedy schools to look beyond themselves and see their child into a future they have never experienced?"

His answer: "Absolutely. Parents must be the ultimate visionaries." He means inner city parents, too.

Parental involvement is a requirement for acceptance at Capital Prep, but not enough parents show up for their children's activities. Only two dozen parents are likely to turn up at PTO meetings – and empty bleachers at school games is the norm rather the exception, leaving Perry and his staff to cheer the students on.

On CNN, he said: "Support of parents that we should have is rarely seen in an urban school. We can't let the parents off the hook, but a good school can overcome the limitations of a less than effective family."

Still, he says, lack of parental interest and involvement hurts the children, and that makes him mad.

In his book *Man Up! Nobody Is Coming To Save Us*, he demands that mothers take control of their sons; that fathers take

Dr. Steve Perry, founder and principal of Capital Preparatory Magnet School in Hartford, poses with students (from left) Sarah Alexander, 17, Kiara Medina, 16 and Felix Afranie, 18.



COVER STORY

responsibility for their families. “The greatest challenge to the Black community is the Black man. If he’s not in the house, I hope some pain shoots through his body, because that’s what is happening to the children every time he’s gone. They are jarred into gangs. The pain that comes from leaving your children to fend for themselves kills the community from the inside.”

He is mad at the teachers’ union too,

When it comes to preparing disadvantaged children for college and a decent life – a path out of poverty – there is no time to lose, Perry says.

and says so in print, on television and in his latest book, *Raggedy Schools*. “You can’t say you are an institution designed for the children in cities such as Hartford, when you can post three generations of failure.”

He believes schools should be open year-round, and that the school day should run longer than it typically does in public schools. Connecticut has one of the largest achievement gaps in the nation. Many

children of color read at three to four grade levels below white children, due to a variety of factors that include poverty and, frequently, verbal or physical abuse at home and on the streets. So when it comes to preparing disadvantaged children for college and a decent life – a path out of poverty – there is no time to lose, he says. Short school days and long summer vacations are not an option.

Perry says his own childhood is a typical story “for the 70 percent of African-American children brought up by a single parent – not the least of whom is Barack Obama.” Perry was born on his mother’s 16th birthday and grew up in the projects in Middletown, becoming the third generation of his family to live in poverty.

He doesn’t take all the credit for rising above that: “It would be foolhardy for

me to say I did it by myself, but by the same token, everybody has to seize the opportunities they are given.” He caught a break at the University of Pennsylvania, “where they saw in me the potential to be something more than I was, and provided me with a full academic scholarship.”

And now he is determined to provide a chance for students at Capital Prep. He says when they first get there, they are still the same kids as everyone else in their neighborhoods. Before long, however, “the children understand that to whom much is given, much is expected.”

Unlike other public schools, Capital Preparatory Magnet School operates six days a week.

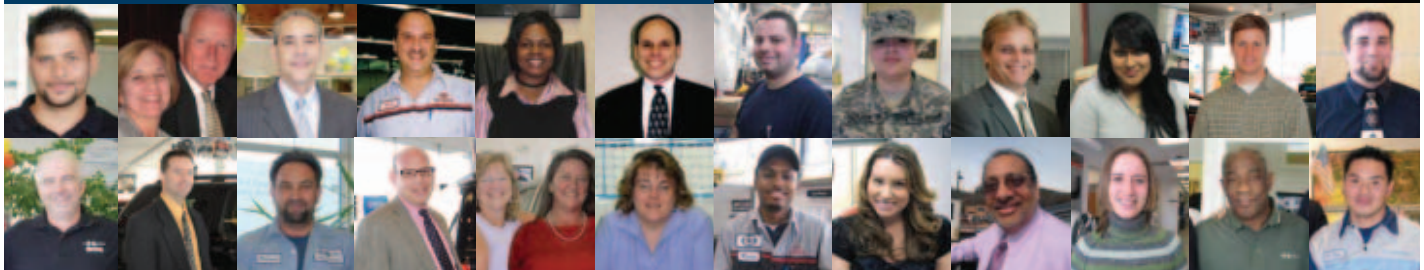
For three top seniors who are about to go on to college, Capital Prep has been a straight shot to their dreams since the day they were enrolled. Articulate, confident and ambitious, they have excelled in this challenging experience.

Felix Afranie, who lives in East Hartford now, came to America from Ghana when he was in the fifth grade. He brought with him his dream of becoming a chemical engineer and he has not wavered from his goal. He is now Head Boy (stu-



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dent leader) at Capital Prep and he expects to go on to WPI or Rensselaer.

Sarah Alexander, who is Head Girl, chose Capital "because I knew I needed to go to college to get where I want to be in my life. I would look at kids who went to my district high school, and they are not going to get anywhere," she says. "This year, I started tutoring kids here, and I love teaching. It's been like my 'wow.' Without Capital Prep, college would not have been possible for me."

Kiara Medina, a prefect now, came home one day from Hartford's Belizzi Middle School to find her mother had enrolled her at Capital Prep. "I had never heard of the school or the program. I was reluctant to come here. I didn't have any interest. Now, I want to go into Criminal Justice. I went down to the University of New Haven for a tour. I want to go there. Capital Prep opened my eyes. Now I know what I'm going to have to do. I take college classes here. I am prepared."

In the middle of August, the school is open and bustling. Why aren't these kids at the beach? That makes Sarah laugh: "I got out of school on June 24 and come July 6, I was back in school. I go, 'What

happened to my summer vacation?'"

She adds, "In my first semester here, I rebelled. I totally wanted to go to the beach with everybody else. Then I got to thinking, 'Sure, I'm here in the summer – but what else would I be doing? Everybody else my age was out on the streets just chilling or they are getting into stuff they shouldn't be getting into. At Capital Prep, not only am I in here learning, which is fun – talking to people, meeting with people, we share so much, we have so much in common – I'm actually having more fun staying out of trouble than being out there getting into trouble. And I have been taking college classes. That's a whole chunk of money I won't have to pay for when I get to college. I'd rather be in here saving my mom and myself money than being out there just doing nothing."

Felix enjoys the family feeling. "Everybody here knows everybody's name. If somebody does something wrong, we correct each other. If you mess up, people have your back. Outside of school, we are all together every single time. We'll have this family forever."

Sarah says the faculty is family, too. "We call some of our teachers auntie. We have a

momma in school; we have a dad. We have here, in a positive way, what people could go out on the street and find through gangs. I'm not going to join a gang [just] because I need somebody to hang out with. You have 300 people to hang out with here."

Felix says some students do drop out because they feel the school is too hard, "which I don't understand. All the teachers have the time for you to come in for help. I've been here at school in the morning this summer, working with math, or Sarah is tutoring somebody with math. We're all here for each other."

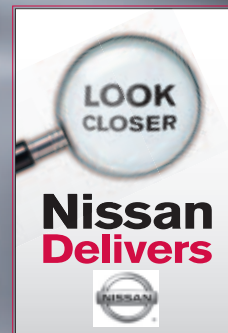
They joke about their school's national recognition: "We've got fame?" But they were pleased and impressed that Bill Cosby came to visit them. "It was really nice," says Kiara. "Parents were like, 'Can we come, too?' Here's this [famous] person taking time out of his life to talk to us."

"And Manute Bol," Felix interjects. "I was very proud when I saw him because I am African and he is trying very hard to heal the struggles there."

Sarah adds: "That's what we want to do, too. We focus on righting the wrongs in society. We focus on making everything just." *H*



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Above & Beyond

It was an unusual growth spurt that prompted Ben Goldman's mom, Mary, to take him to their pediatrician for a physical. It appeared from the results that her eight-year-old son was facing the early onset of puberty. Mary was not alarmed. She assumed that there was probably a minor issue with his pituitary gland.

The doctor, however, suspected that something more serious was amiss and sent Ben for an MRI. Unfortunately, the concern was warranted. An hour after the MRI was completed, the pediatrician called and said, "Mary, sit down." At just eight years old, Ben was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor near his hypothalamus.

To meet Ben now, you'd never suspect that the confident 13-year-old Wethersfield resident, with his compelling charisma and new braces, spent more than a year of his life at the Connecticut Children's Medical Center doing battle with brain cancer. In fact, it's hard to imagine *anything* slowing Ben Goldman down *at all*. By all appearances, Ben is an unstoppable force of positive energy and ambition with an impressively long list of accomplishments and accolades rivaling that of most adults. Sitting with him, you get the sense that the young man before you is well on his way to going places and won't be making any pit stops until he gets there.

His mom says that he was always extremely driven, even before the cancer became a part of their lives. But what makes Ben unique is how he has been able to turn a life-altering experience into a mission to help other people and leave his mark on the world.

Ben's desire to do something more began while he was still undergoing chemotherapy at CCMC. He recalls spending 11 hours every Friday at Clinic 2J on the

second floor of the hospital, hooked up to the machine that slowly delivered the poison to his system. While undergoing treatment, Ben, who loves playing piano, would often ask to have a keyboard in his room and he would play and sing to keep himself occupied during the long hours.

Brain cancer survivor Ben Goldman makes the world a better place.

By Sarah Wesley-Lemire
Photos by Lisa Brisson

Meanwhile, Nate Hagstrom, Ben's doctor and the head of Hematology and Oncology at CCMC, would occasionally bring in his guitar to play for patients during rounds. They began playing and singing together whenever Ben was there for treatment, and the two struck up a friendship.

Ben recalls one long Friday when there were no available beds to lie on while receiving the chemo, and thus he had to

spend all 11 hours of his treatment sitting in a chair. That experience prompted him to do something so that no one else would have to endure the same thing. He recalls, "I knew how it felt to sit in a chair with a hard back for 11 hours and I would never, ever want to do it again. So I didn't want anyone else to have to do it."

His mom suggested that Ben and Dr. Hagstrom record a CD of songs in order to raise money for the hospital. On a Saturday morning – after Ben spent the previous day receiving chemo – a friend who worked at radio station KISS 95.7 FM welcomed Ben and Hagstrom for a recording session. From that, a CD called *Notes From the Heart* was made.

The CDs were sold locally by friends and businesses. Ben hoped that the effort would raise enough to buy a recliner for Clinic 2J, but when all was said and done, they ended up raising far more than they expected; thousands of dollars were generated for the hospital.

Encouraged and invigorated by the success of the CD, Ben found that he derived a deep feeling of satisfaction from having accomplished something that went above and beyond, and he didn't want it to end there. So when he learned that his church was planning an event, Ben offered to speak as a cancer survivor in the hope that it might encourage and comfort other people who were going through similar experiences. That engagement led to many more, as he was frequently asked to speak at other events and share his story all over Connecticut.

It was after one of those speeches that he met Burchard Marshall. The elderly Black gentleman told Ben that he had spent his youth playing baseball for such teams as the London Colored Elks and





Ben enjoys serving as a football game announcer for Public Access Television.

the Norwich Yellow Jackets, but because of segregation laws and prejudice, he was never able to realize his dreams of playing in the big leagues. Burchard said that his lifelong ambition had been to play with the Boston Red Sox, but was never allowed the opportunity.

His story touched Ben, who in turn called Red Sox President/Chief Executive Officer Larry Lucchino and told him about Marshall. He recalls, "I felt so ashamed of the way [Burchard] was treated by the community back then. I wanted him to realize that society has changed. I wanted to do all that I could so that he could be treated fairly and simply end his life satisfied."

Lucchino agreed with Ben and ultimately had Marshall come to a game at Fenway by limousine, where he was honored with a ceremony and brought the ball out to the mound for the first pitch. The crowd at Fenway gave Marshall a standing ovation. Marshall credits Ben for giving him the best day of his life.

But Ben didn't stop there. He continued giving speeches – sometimes up to 30 a year – and also began volunteering his time to various charities in order to help others cope with cancer. After spending three summers as a resident at The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp (the nonprofit camp founded by Paul Newman in 1988

to serve children and families coping with cancer and other illnesses), he is now a volunteer there as part of its music program. And he is utterly adamant about doing more – giving back to the community, and doing anything he can to help other people. He's especially passionate about finding ways to help kids struggling with serious pediatric illnesses. "No kid should have to face what I've seen kids face. I need to make a difference," he says.

And as if that isn't enough, he also volunteers at church, plays piano for kindergarten classes, speaks at the Rotary Club, and visits the CCMC to talk to patients and offer them encouragement. Ben does all of this when he isn't busy with schoolwork or participating in school plays. He was even the student body vice president at his school last year.

When asked why he tirelessly spends so much time trying to make a difference, he simply replies, "I know that there are people less fortunate than me. I made out so awesomely with what I have. To look at me, you'd never know that I had brain cancer. Never."

And he's correct. You *would* never know by looking at him that he is a cancer survivor or that he lives knowing that there's a 70 percent chance that the cancer will return and require treatment again. It's a staggering fact that he casually

dismisses. "You think that's pretty tough odds, right? They're not. I *know* I'm one of the 30 [percent]. It's simply the attitude I have and that'll never change. There were times, I'll admit, that I was like, 'Why me, why me?' You deal with it. You live up to it and you make the best of it. Because you don't let cancer get the best of you."

He credits his faith – along with his parents, Mary and Rob, his younger brother Nick and an amazingly large circle of friends, family, and members of the community – for having been his support over the last few years. UConn Huskies Coach Jim Calhoun is among those supporters and Ben cites him as one of the people he admires most in the world (other than his parents and his Grandpa Larry).

Ben says that he could call Calhoun at two in the morning and no matter what the reason for the call, Calhoun would be there to help. "That's just the kind of man he is." And clearly, Calhoun embodies what Ben would someday like to be. Like the admired coach, Ben sees himself being involved in sports when he's older. He's already scored an internship at CBS and would love to be a sportscaster like Jim Nantz. With a grin from ear to ear, Ben proudly shows that he has Nantz on his cell phone as a personal contact, and it's obvious that he's already visualizing his potential future on national television.

His boundless energy and optimism are evident in everything he says and does, and he admits that he worries that there aren't enough hours in the day to accomplish all that he wants to do. He tried for one summer to just chill out and be like any other kid, but found that he was "bored out of my skull." And thus he returned to what he knows, which is filling his days with pursuits and his dreams of making a difference.

Ben's latest endeavor, "Kids for Philanthropy," is a partnership between him and the president of the Saint Francis Foundation, Paul Pendergast. Together, they are creating a new movement to recruit kids to go out into the community and make a difference in someone else's life. Ben says that it doesn't matter how big or small the initiative, it's the initiative – in and of itself – that is paramount, whether it is taking the \$20 your aunt gives you for graduation and donating it to a good cause, or even just cleaning your room because it helps a parent. It's the act of doing something for someone else that matters the most.

He would love to see the project go nationwide and into schools everywhere.

He wants kids to know that there's more to life than video games and iPods. "I think that giving back is one of the greatest things people can do. Nowadays, a lot of kids have everything and are so in their own world with everything they do. I think that there's a lot more to life than that."

Mary Goldman says that she and her husband are very proud of their son, whom she describes as a "go-getter." She says that if he wants something, he'll find a way to get it. "He is non-stop, and not in a crazy way. He's up at 5:30 a.m. He loves to see his itinerary filled. He'll lay out his clothes for a golf tournament that he's playing in next week. He's compassionate, obviously stubborn and thickheaded, but in many good ways. If someone needs help at church, he's right there. He just loves people."

She recalls being floored when she first received the news about Ben. "You have five minutes where you just totally fall apart and then I snapped out of it. The last thing you ever expect is that your kid has a brain tumor. But you do what you have to do."

Mary acknowledges the outpouring of support they've received along the way from people far and wide, and how it has

changed their lives for the better. "We had a great support system. We met so many fabulous people who will be in our life forever throughout this whole thing. That's how you look at it. We did things, saw people and went places that we never would have otherwise."

She also knows that a recurrence of the cancer is always possible. But like

a hard time, I'll be there to cook [or do whatever they need]. And not wait to be asked, but just go to someone and offer."

For Ben, it just boils down to the good feeling he gets when he does something to help somebody else. He offers his thoughts on it all with a wisdom that goes far beyond his 13 years. "To quote an anonymous poet, 'You can't live life

When asked why he tirelessly spends so much time trying to make a difference, Ben simply replies, "I know that there are people less fortunate than me. I made out so awesomely with what I have. To look at me, you'd never know that I had brain cancer. Never."

her son, she's confident that he will face any future challenges head on and that ultimately, he will be okay.

Their experiences have made them more aware of the needs of other people. As a whole, the family tries to be supportive of others in need and help where they can. "We don't have checks to write or money to give, but if a family's having

with two catcher's mitts on. You have to have one hand free to give the ball back.' Through my illness, a lot has been given to us as a family, through different people, the community or friends we know. And now it's time for me to give the ball back."

And because of this, Ben Goldman makes the world a better place for the rest of us. *H*

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A Brave New World

Shopping resale is the new cool.

BY SARAH WESLEY-LEMIRE



It used to be that consignment shoppers darted clandestinely into shops, wearing dark glasses and furtively looking around to make sure that no one they knew would see them. Those days are long over. With the economy on a roller coaster ride and conservation making a serious comeback, consumers are rethinking how they spend their money and where they spend it.

It's no secret that that consignment shopping is essentially purchasing something second hand. But the stigma once attached to buying "used" has lifted, and shoppers have become savvy to the fact that buying consignment means saving huge bucks. And these days, that can't be a bad thing.

Whether you are looking for apparel, handbags, shoes, books, sporting goods or even furniture, there's a little something for everyone if you just know where to look. You can outfit your family, your home or your athlete, and at the end of the day, you just might find a few treasures for yourself.

Uptown Consignment

For the sophisticated shopper who loves Louis Vuitton, Coach and everything else with a designer label, drive directly (do not stop and do not pass go) to Uptown Consignment in either of its two locations, Wethersfield or South Windsor.

The high-end consignment store is the brainchild of Barbara Capenera. While vacationing in Florida during the late 1980s,

Capenera shopped at a consignment store and scored big when she purchased a Calvin Klein jumpsuit for just \$8. Being able to purchase designer clothing for such a reasonable price was exciting to her, and upon returning to Connecticut from her vacation, she and her husband Ralph decided to open their own consignment store. The two hashed out a business plan and in 1991, they opened Uptown Consignment in Rocky Hill. It has thrived ever since.

From its humble beginnings with just one employee and about 2,000 square feet of space, the footage has since doubled and now, more than 25 employees staff their two locations, with a third opening soon in Southington.

What makes the store so successful is not only the exceptionally reasonable pricing on big ticket names such as Versace and Gucci but also because it only sells items that are in nearly perfect condition. "Everyone knows that we have high standards," Capenera explains, "and it's a smart way to shop. The items being

purchased look just like retail." But for much less, and that's the whole idea.

Uptown's diverse offerings include designer apparel for men, women, teens and children. There are shoes, current books, upscale giftware, jewelry and a huge selection of formal wear including wedding dresses. The customers tend to be diverse as well. Capenera sees families, career women, and even those who can more than likely afford full retail prices, but choose to shop smarter and get more for less.

Children's Orchard

Everyone knows that spending a bunch of money on kids' clothes is like throwing your money into a stream and watching as it all floats away. Children's clothes are becoming increasingly expensive and with the way children stain, soil, or outgrow them, it only makes sense to reconsider where you shop for these items and how much you spend. It's not just the thrifty bargain hunters who shop consignment for their kids – it's the shrewd consumer who knows that brand name kids' clothes can be found for a whole lot less than retail, if you just know where to look.

Children's Orchard in Manchester is a good place to start. The national franchise is known for its quality clothing without the inflated price tag. Owner Joanne Miller has been running the Manchester store for more than 14 years and says that the store's apparel is primarily geared toward children



This page, clockwise starting at far left: Children's Orchard in Manchester is known for its quality clothing without the inflated price tag; Plato's Closet, with its three Connecticut locations, is geared to both teen boys and girls and 20-somethings and overflows with gently-used, high-end clothes marked 60% to 70% off of retail prices; The Perfect Piece offers just about everything you could possibly need to outfit your home.

aged one to six years. But clothing isn't all you can expect to find when you walk through the doors. Children's Orchard also carries toys, furniture, books, formal wear, and even a large selection of Halloween costumes during the fall months.

Miller says that often, moms come into her store to sell their children's clothing and end up staying to shop the fantastic deals. They ultimately become return customers along with other value-conscious customers who love a bargain. "Why pay \$60 for a pair of jeans when you can pay \$12? It just makes sense," she says.

The store only sells in-style, brand name clothes that have to be in near perfect condition with no visible stains or fading. Miller says that her litmus test for taking items is always, "Would I buy this?" Thus, only the best stuff makes the cut, which ultimately means a wide selection of top quality clothing and better value for the customers.

Plato's Closet

Teens and young adults are aware that keeping up with current fashion trends can often mean forking over a steep \$20 to \$30 for just one t-shirt. And a pair of designer jeans? Forget about it. To look your best, you might as well just hand over your wallet. But wait, maybe you don't need to part with all of your cash just yet. Not if you are shopping at Plato's Closet. Plato's is probably one of

the best-kept secrets of fashionable and budget-conscious young adults.

Looking for Abercrombie & Fitch, Hollister, American Eagle, Citizens of Humanity, or other high-end apparel? Look no further. Plato's, with its three Connecticut locations (Wethersfield, South Windsor and Enfield) is literally overflowing with gently-used, high-end clothes marked 60% to 70% off of retail prices.

The store and its inventory are specifically geared for both teen boys and girls and 20-somethings. Cool music plays in the background and you aren't likely to run into Mom and Pop perusing the merchandise. With the prices of name brand merchandise skyrocketing, business has picked up considerably for the popular resale store in the last couple of years. District Manager Amy Motes says that it's the great prices for top-of-the-line merchandise that keeps young customers returning. In addition, all items taken for resale must be in pristine condition and must have been sold in retail stores within the last 12 to 18 months, so nothing on the rack is going to look like it was fashionable back in early 2001. Plato's Closet also carries handbags, shoes, pajamas and a large selection of apparel and shoes for young men.

Play It Again Sports

The sports enthusiast could go broke buying skis, golf clubs, skates, softball cleats, and anything else needed for most sports.

Uptown Consignment

781 Cromwell Avenue, Rocky Hill; (860) 257-1661
 Stop & Shop Plaza; 1735 Ellington Road, South Windsor; (860) 644-9090
www.uptownconsignment.com

Children's Orchard

The Plaza at Burr Corners; 1131-P Tolland Turnpike, Manchester; (860) 643-0525
www.childrensorchar.com

Plato's Closet

1055 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield; (860) 529-0870
 Evergreen Run Shopping Center; 90 Buckland Road, South Windsor; (860) 648-2125
 54 Hazard Avenue, Enfield; (860) 741-0439
www.platoscloset.com

Play It Again Sports

15 South Main Street, West Hartford; (860) 523-4692
 839 Queen Street, Southington; (860) 621-0045
 Candlewood Lake Plaza; 14 Candlewood Lake Road, Brookfield; (203) 775-0577
www.playitagainsports.com

The Perfect Piece

Stop & Shop Plaza; 1735 Ellington Road, South Windsor; (860) 644-7869
perfectpiecefurniture@gmail.com

It just doesn't come cheap. But before spending a bunch of money on any of those items, it's worth your time to stop into Play It Again Sports – with locations in West Hartford, Brookfield, and Southington to see if they have what you're looking for, prior to paying full price. If they do, you could possibly save yourself half off of regular retail prices. The franchise carries nearly all sports-related items, including

equipment, gear and apparel for all age groups from tots to adults.

In addition to offering used items, the stores all have an extensive inventory of new gear as well. So either way, you'll probably leave with what you came in for, whether it be used or new, and you'll spend less.

Manager Bob Lynch of the West Hartford location feels that the store caters

The stigma once attached to buying "used" has lifted, and shoppers have become savvy to the fact that buying consignment means saving huge bucks.

especially to families and kids. He often sees parents bring in used or outgrown equipment and trade it in for stuff that fits, or whatever gear is necessary for the sports their kids are currently playing. He notes that the stores have an especially large selection of skis and snowboards, and focus on fitting them correctly. "We pride ourselves on exceptional customer service," says Lynch. How can you go wrong with good value and great customer service? The answer is easy; you can't.

The Perfect Piece

If quality furniture and home decoratives at a decent price are what you seek, skip the tag sales and high-priced furniture stores and head over to The Perfect Piece furniture consignment store located in South Windsor – conveniently located just a couple doors down from Uptown Consignment.

The store has been around for nearly 16

years, but new owner Geoffrey King has only owned the business since July when, after two decades in the printing trade, he decided he needed a change. King considers his inventory to be an eclectic collection of furniture ranging from traditional names such as Pennsylvania House, Ethan Allen, Drexel Heritage and other name brand pieces, to more non-traditional but eye-catching items such as a nifty entertainment cabinet that appears to have been imported from ancient India, but in reality

has cut-outs in the back to accommodate the electrical cords of modern electronics.

King sees a changing economy as part of the reason he does a brisk business, but notes that many people are also downsizing, which accounts for some of the consigned pieces the store receives. A wide variety of customers shop at The Perfect Piece, but they all have one thing in common. They are all people who are seeking good quality without having to spend a fortune. As he puts it, "Used furniture doesn't have to look like used furniture." And it doesn't. All the store's furniture has to be in ready to go into someone's home as is, with no visible defects.

The Perfect Piece offers everything from dining room sets, couches and dressers to desks, cabinets, framed art, and just about everything else you could possibly need to outfit your home.

It doesn't matter *what* you are looking for these days. Whether it's apparel, handbags, shoes, sporting goods or furniture, what you *should* be looking for is a great deal. If you aren't, then get with the times. Consignment shopping is cool, and a great way to get more for less. And haven't you heard? Saving money never goes out of fashion! **H**

The 2010 Ford Fusion

"Fun and fuel economy have finally gotten married in a mid-size sedan."

Car and Driver, February 2009

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Porsche's first four-door sedan will initially be offered in three versions – the 400-horsepower two-wheel drive Panamera S and all-wheel drive Panamera 4S, and the 500-horsepower, twin-turbocharged all-wheel drive Panamera Turbo.

Ford's alternative energy vehicles, Lexus hybrid, Honda Insight and A5 Audi convertible are just part of the exciting offerings for 2010.

BY KEITH GRIFFIN

The new car industry is really shaking off its doldrums and coming out with some exciting new 2010 vehicles this fall. Alternative energy vehicles, hybrids, stylish sedans, and even convertibles are among the cars and trucks generating the most excitement.

Ford Alternative Energy Vehicles

Ford is in the midst of developing battery electric vehicles that will not use any fuel. The plan calls for the introduction in 2011 of a pure battery electric vehicle – using cutting-edge lithium-ion battery technology – as a passenger car in North America. According to Ford, after an overnight charge, it's ready for a range of more than 80 miles. Ford and its partner are targeting a range of up to 100 miles when the vehicle is introduced to the retail market.

Don't scoff at that range. It suits most of our driving needs, especially for commuters. A lot of us could drive back and forth to work a couple of times without ever having to plug in. Knowing the mindset of entrepreneurs, there will eventually be quick charging outlets at gas stations all across the country that can charge a car in 15 minutes or less to get you on your way. Currently, the BEV can be charged from either a standard 220-volt or 110-volt power outlet, with respective charge times of six or 12 hours.

Ford has introduced a new engine called EcoBoost that isn't alternative energy per se, but does a great deal to improve fuel efficiency without sacrificing power. EcoBoost technology combines

turbocharging and direct gasoline injection to improve fuel efficiency and lower CO₂ emissions. The first 3.5-liter EcoBoost V-6 engines debuted on 2010 Lincoln MKS, Lincoln MKT, Ford Taurus SHO and Ford Flex this summer. A test drive of the Ford Flex in the upper elevations of Colorado in June left me very impressed. A strong selling point of the EcoBoost engine is its ability to tow more than 5,500 lbs. using a V-6 engine.

Hybrids are nothing new, but the Fusion hybrid is a right-sized vehicle for people who want fuel economy and the ability to comfortably carry passengers. The Fusion Hybrid handily out-economizes both the Toyota Camry (33 mpg city/34 mpg hwy) and the Chevy Malibu (26mpg city/34 mpg hwy) with its rating of 41 mpg city and 36 mpg highway.

How's this for fuel economy? Drivers trained in mileage-maximizing techniques such as smooth acceleration and coasting to red lights were able to get an extraordinary 1,445.7 miles out of a single tank of gas during a fund-raising effort in Washington, D.C. They did it by averaging 81.5 miles per gallon in an off-the-showroom floor, non-modified 2010 Ford Fusion Hybrid, the

most fuel-efficient midsize car in North America – nearly doubling its U.S. certified mileage. By the way, you'll normally get about 700 miles from a tank of gas.

Other New Ford Vehicles

The Ford Taurus – the car that changed America's view of full-size sedans – is all-new for 2010. The new Taurus is aimed at drivers who move friends and family but place more of a premium on the driving experience and technologies aimed at making time on the road more meaningful and fun.

SEL and Limited series Taurus models are offered with a six-speed SelectShiftAutomatic featuring racing-inspired shift control paddles mounted on the steering wheel. SelectShift offers



The Lexus HS 250h, the world's first dedicated luxury hybrid, is also environmentally friendly. Sustainable ecological plastics are used in 30 percent of its interior trim and trunk.



Lexus HS 250h

the convenience of conventional automatic operation, or a manual shift mode that gives the driver complete control over gear selection. The SelectShift transmission enables “match-rev” downshifts and will hold manually selected gears, unlike some competitive transmissions that second-guess the driver.

Muscle goes modern for 2010 as the Ford Mustang – America's favorite muscle car for 45 years straight – hits the streets with a new exterior design; a new world-class interior featuring well-crafted materials and updated technology; and a V-8 with even more horsepower and an even throatier signature Mustang exhaust sound.

In true Mustang tradition, there is a “steed for every need.” At launch, customers can choose from a V-6 or V-8 with their choice of coupe, convertible or innovative glass roof, plus several new options and features delivering the opportunity for customers to personalize their cleaner, meaner-looking Mustangs.

The Insight, Honda's sole hybrid-only vehicle with introductory price of \$19,800, is the most affordable hybrid powertrain in the U.S. market.



There are a lot of reasons to like the Lexus HS 250h, the world's first dedicated luxury hybrid (and no, it's not a Prius dressed up to look like a Lexus). The first thing to like about HS 250h is that it achieves EPA-Estimated Rating of 35 MPG Combined Using 87-Octane Fuel. (That breaks down to 35 mpg city and 34 mpg highway, which is great fuel economy regardless of where you drive.)

What if safety is your main concern after fuel economy? The HS 250h comes with a standard supplemental restraint system, with a class-leading 10 airbags. There's no seating position in this hybrid that isn't protected by an airbag.

Another exciting aspect of the HS 250h is its use of recyclables. This Lexus, befitting such an environmentally friendly vehicle, uses sustainable ecological plastics in 30 percent of its interior trim and trunk.

Most importantly, this is a fun vehicle to drive and is attractive to the eye. You won't sacrifice luxury for fuel economy.

Honda Insight

Honda has introduced the 2010 Insight at a good time. It's Honda's sole hybrid-only vehicle. What's most praiseworthy is its introductory price of \$19,800 – the most affordable hybrid powertrain in the U.S. market.

Its best feature is its all-new Ecological Drive Assist System (Eco Assist). Pressing the ECON button can enhance the efficiency of multiple vehicle systems: throttle control, CVT operation, idle stop duration, air conditioning and cruise control operation (EX only). Eco Assist also provides driving style recommendations via a 3D background within the

WHY TDI TECHNOLOGY IS IMPORTANT

By now it's no secret that diesel engines are enjoying a resurgence in the U.S. market – and rightly so. With diesel prices practically mirroring regular gas prices, it makes sense to explore these automotive powerplants that can deliver up to 30 percent better fuel economy than their counterparts.

As you research diesel engines (such as those offered in the Audi A7 with a 3.0 liter V-6 and the Audi A3 with a 2.0 liter four-cylinder engine), you're going to come across the term “TDI.” At its most basic level, TDI stands for turbo direct injection (the D has nothing to do with diesel).

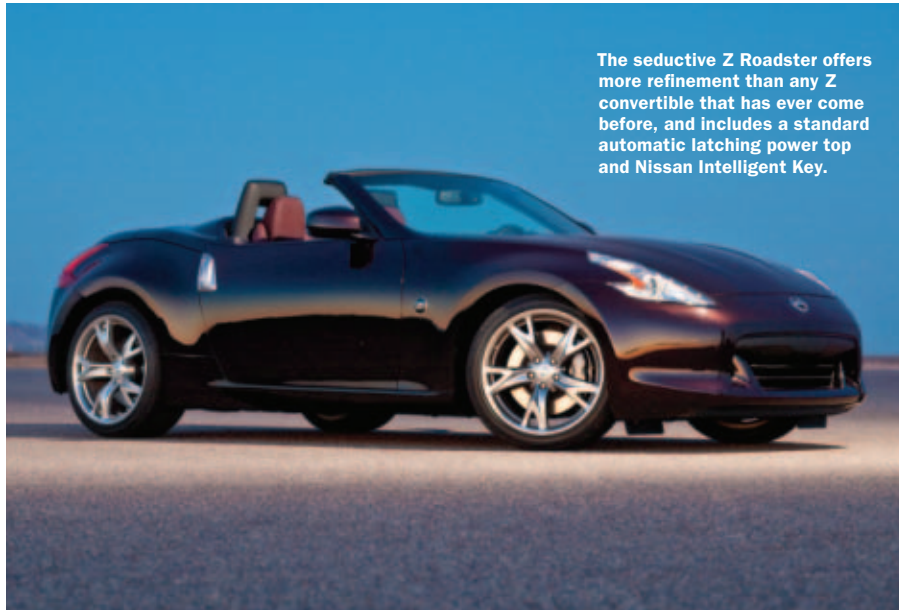
Audi introduced TDI – in the world's first diesel passenger car with direct injection and fully electronic engine management – in Europe in 1989. Since then, TDI has developed into a synonym for superior propulsive power and maximum efficiency.

What TDI does is make the diesel engine a performance choice, and not just a practical one. You need look no further than the fact that the R10 TDI has won the 12 hours of Sebring and 24 hours of Le Mans endurance races, demonstrating the superior endurance, reliability, performance, and clean technology of Audi's TDI engine. (One drop of diesel fuel has 12 percent more power than one drop of gasoline.)

TDI engines are best suited to American driving habits. They give us the “get up and go” we need under local city conditions, and then deliver fantastic V-6 fuel economy when we're on the highway. A TDI engine delivers fuel economy around town that most gas engines can only offer on the highway.

TDI engines have become more and more important for environmental reasons and national interests. A U.S. EPA analysis found that if one-third of Americans fueled their cars, pick-ups and SUVs with clean diesel instead of gasoline, our country could send back 1.5 million barrels of foreign oil per day. Plus, TDI clean diesel engines reduce carbon emissions by 20 percent over gasoline engines. Audi points out that if one-third of Americans switched from gasoline to clean diesel, it would be the equivalent of planting 2.2 billion trees.

TDI engines are a well-established technology that is beneficial in both lower and higher altitudes, as well as many climates, all without decreases in performance. Consider a TDI engine when shopping for your next car or SUV. It's going to deliver outstanding performance, both at the fuel pump and on the open road.



The seductive Z Roadster offers more refinement than any Z convertible that has ever come before, and includes a standard automatic latching power top and Nissan Intelligent Key.

speedometer that changes color to reflect how efficiently the driver is accelerating and braking.

Audi's Ever-improving Lineup

The Audi A5 Convertible can whet any appetite. The four-seater comes with a choice of three engines: a 3.0 TFSI, available with a supercharged, 333-horsepower 3.0-liter V-6 that is available on the sporty S5 trim; the traditional 3.2 FSI V6 that features a normally aspirated 265-hp 3.2-liter V-6; or the zippy 2.0 TFSI featuring Audi's turbocharged 211-hp inline-4 with a six-speed automatic in the all-wheel-drive Quattro model or a continuously variable transmission (CVT) in the front-wheel-drive FrontTrak model.

The A5 is simply a delightful car to drive. With its convertible top, it becomes a smile-inducing ride that is perfect for fall weather. Heated seats and a good knit cap will keep you comfortable on sunny days, even when the temperatures dip into the 30s.

The new Audi Q5 combines the dynamism of a sports sedan with highly variable interior and versatile options for leisure-time and family use. Strong and efficient engines, quattro permanent all-wheel drive and agile running gear have been brought together to create a superior technology package for both on- and off-road driving. The sportiest SUV in its class is dynamic, multifunctional and comfortable.

The Audi Q7 now comes with an outstanding six-cylinder diesel engine that provides lots of horsepower and torque. With its 3.0 liter V6 clean diesel engine, the Audi Q7 TDI generates 225

horsepower, and a substantial 406 lb-ft of torque at a low 1,750 rpm. This represents a 25 percent increase in torque over the 4.2 FSI engine. It offers 20 mpg EPA combined fuel economy, a 25 percent increase in fuel efficiency over the 3.6 FSI engine.

The ultra low emission system installed on the Audi Q7 TDI ensures that the engine conforms to the limits included in the ULEV II / Bin 5 standards. This level exceeds even the most stringent standards in all 50 U.S. states. The TDI features an optimized combustion process along with engine emissions, while a cleaning system reduces nitrogen oxide exhaust emissions by up to 90 percent.

Porsche Panamera

People scoffed when Porsche first introduced a sport utility vehicle. Now, some of the same crowd is wondering about the German automaker rolling out its first four-door sedan. Well, this is a company known for excellent product decisions. Has any Porsche ever been a complete dud? How many automakers can say that?

The Panamera is Porsche's fourth model line, joining the 911, Boxster/Cayman and Cayenne model series. According to Porsche, it is the first premium car with an automatically shifting double-clutch transmission to feature an engine start/stop system that saves fuel and reduces emissions by turning the engine off when it is not needed, such as when sitting at a stop light, for example.

It will initially be offered in three versions – the 400-horsepower two-wheel drive Panamera S and all-wheel drive Panamera 4S, and the 500-horsepower, twin-turbocharged all-wheel drive

Panamera Turbo. All U.S. Panamera models feature a seven-speed Porsche double-clutch gearbox, ultra-fast gearshifts without the slightest interruption of engine power, a high level of comfort for four, and outstanding fuel efficiency when compared to a conventional automatic transmission. The Panamera S, for example, consumes equal to 26.2 mpg, according to Porsche.

Nissan Adds Excitement

Two all-new Nissan sports cars, the Nissan GT-R and Nissan 370Z, have been named to "Edmunds' *Inside Line* 2009 Readers' Most Wanted Awards" list. The GT-R and 370Z were the only double winners, taking two categories each in the poll of readers' favorites in 15 vehicle categories designated by vehicle type and price range.

For 2010, the horsepower rating of the GT-R's 3.8-liter twin-turbo V6 engine has increased to 485 hp (from 480 hp) and the car's high-performance, 6-speed, dual-clutch transmission receives new Transmission Control Module (TCM) programming designed to optimize clutch engagement for improved drivability, and improve vehicle acceleration with the Vehicle Dynamic Control (VDC) activated. In addition, the braking system has been updated with more rigid brake lines for improved durability, and the brake calipers now carry both the Brembo and Nissan logos. Finally, the GT-R's state-of-the-art suspension has been retuned with redesigned Bilstein shocks, with a new valve body design and revised spring and damper rates.

In the first full redesign of the iconic Nissan Z since its re-introduction as a 2003 model, nearly every piece and component has been rethought or redesigned – a shorter wheelbase, greater use of lightweight body materials, a new engine with more horsepower and improved fuel economy, a new 7-speed automatic transmission with paddle shifters, a world's first synchronized downshift rev matching system for the manual transmission, a high quality driver-centric interior and new available technology features.

The seductively styled Z Roadster offers everything the hardtop Z Coupe does – and more. It has more refinement than any Z convertible that has ever come before, and includes a standard automatic latching power top and Nissan Intelligent Key. Also offered are an array of technology and convenience features, including the first-ever Z Roadster-available heating and cooling ventilated net seats, Bluetooth Hands-free Phone System, satellite radio and advanced Nissan Navigation System. **H**



Open for Business

Hoffman Auto's expansive new Toyota/Scion dealership joins Hoffman Honda and Hoffman Nissan in the company's auto park.

BY KEITH GRIFFIN

NEW AND used car buyers at Hoffman Toyota/Scion are being greeted by a brand-new sales, service and parts facility that is going to enhance their dealings at the West Simsbury dealership, whether they're purchasing a vehicle or getting it serviced. The theme of this new building can best be described as connectivity.

"The driving force behind the new facility was to provide a better experience for our customers in both sales and service. We completely did a retrofit," said Anne Marie Shackway, construction coordinator for Hoffman. The new facility is 40 percent larger than the one it replaces. The old structure was demolished to make way for the new building, which now houses sales, service, parts and administration.

The facility is part of the Hoffman family's continued focus on improvement. The previous building was more than 20 years old and the company's leadership felt it was time for a change to a more modern facility, better suited to customers' needs. "During the construction, we had it pre-planned for all of our networking needs," said Shackway.

The new facility was opened on Sept. 17 with a celebration that included a ribbon cutting. Past, current and future Toyota customers joined together with the Hoffman family and employees, as well as Toyota executives, to fête the new building. WTIC-TV morning news

co-host Logan Byrnes served as emcee for the festivities. "It was a grand celebration," said Shackway, who shepherded the new facility's construction.

Customers will be able to connect with Toyota's constantly evolving 2010 lineup, including such exciting vehicles as the third generation 2010 Toyota Prius. The new car showroom is an expansive 8,300 square feet.

All sales associates in the new car showroom have their own workstations in the facility. There are 14 spots now, but that number is likely to grow as demand continues to increase for Toyotas, Shackway said.

The customer experiences connectivity in the service area with a climate controlled, three-bay service drive-up area for dropping off vehicles. No longer is it necessary to queue up a pedestal to talk with a service writer (or walk inside during a rainy day). Now the customer and service writer connect right inside the drop-off bay.

The service department and customers also connect with quicker turnaround times. The new Hoffman Toyota has 20 service bays available to maintain customers' vehicles. If you decide to wait for your Toyota to be fixed, you don't lose connectivity with the outside world. The new service facility offers Wi-Fi for your laptop so you can keep working (or stay connected to your social networks – "Hey, I'm twittering from Hoffman Toyota.") If you don't feel like lugging your laptop

into the dealership, never fear – Hoffman Auto has made computer workstations available for its customers, so they can work or check e-mail.

Connectivity also comes through in the waiting lounges. Customers can connect with a hot cup of coffee while perusing the latest periodicals in a quiet lounge. Another lounge is provided for folks who might want to connect with "Judge Judy" while waiting for their cars. It's a thoughtful dealership that separates the two areas so customers can get exactly what they want.

The new Hoffman facility also connects with the environment. "All of our lighting throughout the entire facility is energy efficient," said Shackway. Further energy efficiencies come from automatic lighting that senses when a room is empty and shuts itself down.

The opening of the Toyota dealership also marked the conclusion of a major expansion renovation campaign by the company. *Project HX: The Hoffman Ten* included major facility renovations, new construction, and new franchises for the Hoffman Auto Group, taking the business to a whole new level and giving customers an unmatched experience.

With the opening of the new Toyota facility, Hoffman Auto Group now has a total of 10 franchises, along with 10 facilities offering clients 212,000 square feet of excellence. *H*



All About Kate

Old Saybrook's former town offices are reborn as the Katharine Hepburn Cultural Arts Center.

BY NANCY THOMPSON

For decades, residents of the shoreline town of Old Saybrook were nonchalant about the legendary actress in their midst. They might see Katharine Hepburn at a shop on Main Street or in the local movie theater, but they didn't run over to ask for her autograph or try to snap a photo. They loved her and protected her privacy.

Since her death in 2003, many of those residents have worked tirelessly to honor her by creating the Katharine Hepburn Cultural Arts Center (KHCAC) in the former town hall.

Ground was broken for the \$4.7 million project in the spring of 2007, days before what would have been her 100th birthday, and a full schedule of concerts, lectures, plays, simulcasts and other events will be presented there this fall.

The center not only is a tribute to an Academy Award-winning actress once known as "box office poison," but also is a fitting evolution for a building that was a theater long before it became the seat of town government.

"The building was originally built as a theater and the KHCAC is an example of our town's effort to bring back its 'antiquities' for a vibrant and enhanced quality of life," said Michael A. Pace, Old Saybrook's first selectman.

"First and foremost, it's a beautiful building," said Elaine Staplins, the town historian and a member of the center's board of trustees. "We're so fortunate. It's a wonderful asset for the town, not only as a tourist attraction, but also as a museum that emphasizes Katharine Hepburn's life as a resident of the town."

"The space got used for a gazillion things," said Chuck Still, the arts center's executive director. "They showed some of

Highlights of Katharine Hepburn's life

1907

Born May 12 in Hartford

1912

Her family starts spending summers in the borough of Fenwick in Old Saybrook

1928

Graduates from Bryn Mawr College with a degree in history and philosophy

1933

Wins her first "Best Actress" Academy Award for *Morning Glory*

1938

Family home in Old Saybrook is destroyed by a hurricane

1967

Wins her second "Best Actress" Academy Award for *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*

1968

Wins her third "Best Actress" Academy Award for *The Lion in Winter*

1981

Wins a record-setting fourth "Best Actress" Academy Award for *On Golden Pond*

1990

Receives Kennedy Center Honor

2003

Dies June 29 in Old Saybrook

the first movies there in 1914; they played basketball there; in the 1950s it was used for third- and fourth-grade classrooms; and it also functioned as a theater.”

In the 1960s, as the town grew, municipal offices took up more and more of the 12,753-square-foot building. As the office space expanded, the stage was removed, a false ceiling was installed, and the theater’s seating area was converted to a conference room, he said.

Eventually, the building was too small to house the town offices, which moved to a former school a few yards to the west. The old theater/town hall was empty and ready for a new life.

At first, the idea was to fix it up and lease it in the summer to a repertory company, and the rest of the year for weddings and other events, Still said. However, when Hepburn died, “a grander vision was born. It became a bigger deal.”

Hepburn’s family agreed to let the town name the restored theater after her, a board of trustees was formed and charged with running the theater, and a capital campaign was begun to raise \$1.7 million to finish the renovations. Town bonding and state grants covered most of



the rest of the cost of the project.

Still, who had been the executive director of the Riverside Theater in Vero Beach, Florida, managing director of the Merrimack Repertory Theater in Lowell, Massachusetts and head of the Berkshire Theater Festival in Stockbridge,

Massachusetts, was hired as executive director in April, 2008.

Visitors to the arts center enter a vestibule that provides access to the box office and to a small museum dedicated to Hepburn as a citizen of Old Saybrook and of Connecticut. The museum was not

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completed in time for the center's grand opening in September, but it will be open whenever the box office is, Still said. Memorabilia such as mugs will be available at a small counter, and a portable bar will be set up near the front of the vestibule, which offers a stunning view of the town's Main Street.

Even with the glass addition, the brick façade of the historic building is visible.

"One of the million nice things the architect did was leave the exterior of the building [intact]," Still said.

Guests use an elevator or stairway to go to the second floor, where they find a completely renovated 250-seat theater with spacious new seats, gold walls, a blue ceiling almost identical to the original, and a stage with a huge retractable screen that will be used for events such as simul-

casts of performances by the National Theatre of London, the Metropolitan Opera and the 92nd Street Y.

Ann Nyberg, a shoreline resident and news anchor at WTNH Channel 8, is on the center's board of trustees and is one of its most enthusiastic supporters.

"It's a little gem of a place with a movie star's name," she said. "It's small, it's intimate, it's folksy and fun."

Nyberg, who writes a blog for the center's website, said the site recently passed the 100,000-hit mark, with visitors from as near as small islands off the Connecticut coast and from as far away as Europe.

She acknowledges that starting a new theater in a deep recession is difficult, but adds, "but we're getting it done." Officials there are working with their counterparts at the Ivoryton Playhouse in Essex and the Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam to help each other. "There's safety in numbers," she says.

Nyberg says events will appeal to all ages, with presentations for children as well as for adults.

"It's kind of like a magic box," she says. "You never know what will be there next." *H*

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Let's go to LEGO



LEGO KidsFest offers entertainment for kids of all ages.

BY CAROLA DIPOI

Looking for something fun and amazing to do with your kids in November? LEGO Systems Inc. and LIFE Marketing & Events (LM&E) are teaming up to launch the first-ever family-oriented extravaganza of its kind in the country – a three-day LEGO KidsFest in downtown Hartford from Friday, Nov. 20 to Sunday, Nov. 22.

This “wildly energetic” and educational event will provide parents and their families with interactive, creative, hands-on activities to thrill and entertain them throughout the weekend.

LEGO KidsFest will include life-sized and miniature LEGO models; build, race and play booths; live stage demonstrations; interactive presentations, and much more.

Though LEGO is traditionally a child’s toy, the expo will include activities that appeal to adults as well. NELUG, the New England LEGO Users Group, was formed in 1999 to invite adults to share in their LEGO hobby, and as a result, has gained a large following of adult LEGO fans. NELUG will be exhibiting several of its models at the expo.

LEGO will also be giving away a trip for one family to go to LEGOLAND California for five days and four nights. The theme park has more than 50 rides, interactive shows, and other attractions. The giveaway includes a package for four people, including airfare and hotel stay. The drawing will take

place at the expo on Sunday, Nov. 22.

Vince Rubino, manager of event marketing for LEGO Systems Inc., said the show offers wholesome fun for the whole family, and is expected to attract “kids of all ages, young and old. We’ll have a fair number of large exhibits and amazing displays. We’ll also have play areas where kids can be challenged – and where they can express their creativity and imagination with LEGO bricks.”

Named “Toy of the Century,” by *Fortune* magazine, LEGO blocks are a brand recognized and sold in 130 countries, and played with by more than 300 million children around the world. The company, founded in 1932 in Denmark, has grown from a one-man concern to become the world’s fifth-largest toy manufacturer.

The word “lego” comes from the Danish phrase, leg godt, which means “play well.” LEGO adheres to a philosophy that “good play” helps children to learn and develop useful skills while having fun. LEGO KidsFest is sure to provide just that.

Rubino said LEGO KidsFest is being managed and run by LIFE Marketing & Events (LM&E), a division of West Hartford-based LIFE Publications, publisher of *Hartford Magazine*, 12 LIFE newspapers and numerous specialty publications. LEGO Systems Inc. is the title sponsor.

“We’re excited to work with LM&E. They have a proven track record of putting on quality events – namely, Sun WineFest [at Mohegan Sun], so we know the expertise that they bring to events,” Rubino said.

Hoffman customers can SAVE \$4 off the door price of each ticket by purchasing them in advance at LEGOkidsfest.com and using the discount code “DECADES” or by calling 860.953.0444 ext. 146.

He added that the Hartford LEGO KidsFest may be the first in a series of similar events rolled out across the U.S.

“It’s a first-time venture. We’re pretty excited about the opportunities to partner with LM&E and take this program out across the country,” Rubino said.

LEGO KidsFest will be held at the Connecticut Convention Center, 100 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford. **H**

For more information, visit www.LEGOkidsfest.com.



PHOTO BY STEVE LASCHEVER



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE TRANS SIBERIAN ORCHESTRA

Events Calendar

Greater Hartford hosts a big variety of special events throughout the year — from street festivals and art shows to major concerts and sporting events. Here is a sample of events that may be of interest to you.

- **Nov. 4-5 – “Beethoven Lives Upstairs.”** A performance about what happens to a young boy when a “madman” moves into the apartment upstairs in Vienna. *Herbert D. Welte Hall, Central Connecticut State University, 1615 Stanley St., New Britain; 860.832.2278.*
- **Nov. 6 – “Ricky Scaggs and Kentucky.”** Enjoy an evening with the 14-time Grammy Award winner as he serenades the crowd as bluegrass music’s ambassador. *The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, 166 Capitol Ave., Hartford; 860.987.5900; www.bushnell.org.*
- **Nov. 6-8 – Connecticut International Auto Show.** The leading showcase of the newest and the best model imports in domestic vehicles. Learn about the latest technologies in fuel efficiency and compare prices and features in automobiles. Tickets are \$10, \$5 for children ages 6-12. *Connecticut Convention Center, Hartford, 100 Columbus Blvd., Hartford; 800.251.1563; www.paragonexpo.com.*
- **Nov. 12-15 – “Brahms Requiem.”** The Hartford Symphony orchestra will perform a work labored over for a dozen years by the composer, set to the words of prophets and the gospels. Guest conductor will be Constantine Kitsopoulos. *The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, 166 Capitol Ave., Hartford; 860.987.5900; www.bushnell.org.*
- **Nov. 12-Dec. 20 – “Shakespeare’s R & J.”** A lively, hot-blooded adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet*, adapted by Joe Calarco. *Theater Works, 233 Pearl St., Hartford; 860.727.4027; www.theaterworkshartford.com.*
- **Nov. 13-15 – “Dixie’s Tupperware Party.”** Join funny, fast-talking Dixie Longate as she educates her guests on the alternative uses for her plastic products. Includes funny tales, free giveaways, and audience participation. *The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, 166 Capitol Ave., Hartford; 860.987.5900; www.bushnell.org.*
- **Nov. 13-15 – Sugarloaf Crafts Festival.** Over 300 fine artists and craft designers will be featured selling their unique creations. Musical performances and craft demonstrations also included. Tickets are \$8 for adults and are good for all three days. *Connecticut Expo Center, 265 Reverend Moody Overpass, Hartford; 800.210.9900; www.sugarloaforcrafts.com.*
- **Nov. 14 – Trans Siberian Orchestra.** Listen to the music of this multi-genre rock orchestra, which includes symphonic metal, progressive rock, heavy metal and classical music. *XL Center, 1 Civic Center Plaza, Hartford; 860.727.8010; www.xlcenter.com.*
- **Nov. 17-22 – Steppenwolf’s “August: Osage County.”** Winner of the 2008 Pulitzer Prize for Drama and the Tony Award for Best Play, “August” tells the story of a large extended family brought together by the disappearance of the patriarch. Written by Tracy Letts and directed by Anna D. Shapiro. Tickets are \$15-\$65. *The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, 166 Capitol Ave., Hartford; 860.987.5900; www.bushnell.org.*
- **Nov. 22 – “Sunday Serenades: Music in the Age of Rembrandt.”** Come in and listen to music from across the centuries. *Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, 600 Main St., Hartford; 860.278.2670; www.wadsworthatheneum.org.*
- **Dec. 3 – First Thursday Program: “A Victorian Christmas on Main Street.”** Join carolers for music and dining at the historic house for the holiday season. *Butler-McCook House and Garden, 396 Main St., Hartford; 860.522.1806.*
- **Dec. 3-30 – “A Christmas Carol.”** Come see Connecticut’s favorite holiday show as ghosts drift over the crowd in this classic story. *Hartford Stage, 50 Church St., Hartford; 860.525.5601; www.hartfordstage.org*
- **Dec. 11-12 – “Holiday Pops.”** The Hartford Symphony will perform with lively carolers, and spirited choruses. *The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, 166 Capitol Ave., Hartford; 860.987.5900; www.bushnell.org.*
- **Dec. 15-20 – “Christmas with the Rat Pack - Live at The Sands.”** Come join the group to beat your winter blues with this holiday rendition. *The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, 166 Capitol Ave., Hartford; 860.987.5900; www.bushnell.org.*



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