

THE WATERBURY EXCHANGER

Exchange Club of Waterbury
P.O. Box 9244
Waterbury, CT 06724-9244

Website:

www.waterburyexchangeclub.org

Email:

waterburyexchange203@gmail.com

Exchange Club Officers 2023-2024

Justin Golden, President
 Ivelisse Cruz, Vice President
 Don Marold, Treasurer
 Kathy Craig, Club Secretary
 Megan Charette, Imm. Past President

Board of Directors 2023-2024

Ginny O'Rourke Cookson
 Brenda Corbo
 Mark Graveline
 Kelly Cronin
 Mary Ann Marold
 Maureen Torrence

Exchange Club Foundation Officers:

Mary Ann Marold, President
 Don Marold, Treasurer
 Kathy Craig, Secretary
 Ginny O'Rourke Cookson,
 Imm. Past President

Foundation Board Members:

Megan Charette
 Brenda Corbo
 Ivelisse Cruz
 Justin Golden
 Mark Graveline
 Marci McAllister
 Barbara Sticco
 Maureen Torrence

Motto: Unity for Service

CT District Officers:

George Gray, President
 Paul Greatsinger, Pres. Elect
 Peter Clarke, Treasurer
 Kathy Craig, Secretary
 Jason Fields, Div. IV Director



Inside:

Page 2	Message from the Incoming President
Pages 2-3	Message from Immediate Past President
Page 3	Budget Update News from the Treasurer
Pages 3-4	News from YOY Chair & Foundation
Pages 4-5	News from the CT District
Page 5	A Message from Your National President
Pages 6-8	Member Highlights
Page 8	Birthdays & Anniversaries
Page 9-12	Event Photos

MEETING NOTICE:

Next club meeting scheduled for **Monday, August 14th** as cancelled!

Kelly is beginning construction at the farm and would not be conducive to our meeting space. She apologizes for the late notice; however, does want to have the club out to the farm soon and she will re-schedule asap. So, stay tuned.

Mission Statement: Exchange, America's Service Club, is a group of men and women working together to make our communities better places to live through programs of service in Americanism, Community Service, Youth Activities and its national project, the Prevention of Child Abuse



A Message from your 2023-24 President, Justin Golden

The CT District Exchange Club hosted its annual district meeting last month at the Heritage Hotel in Southbury. *George Gray*, our District President kicked off the education portion of the meeting that featured a variety of speakers covering many related topics about our national organization, district events, and club happenings.

The featured speaker was our new National President, *Leif Welhaven* from Billings, Montana. He led a spirited discussion entitled "Creating a Culture of Growth and Retention." Leif told us

of his work in the greater Billings area about founding and growing multiple clubs in that area through outreach, finding and inspiring new members to form and expand their clubs with creative approaches to creating awareness of the Exchange Club and our support & participation in the communities we reside and work in. Additionally, how do you retain your current membership to stay active and involved? This led to an inspirational talk with many unique and creative ideas we can use here in our club going forward.

Additionally, several weeks later he was a guest speaker at my first Executive Board meeting as he joined us again; this time remotely but with a similar effect concerning the recruitment of new members and retention of current ones.

Consider these: Business networking, Exchange started out sharing business ideas and collaborating to make our communities better places to live.

Meeting prospective new members' needs and expectations such as business networking, developing leadership skills, having a visible community presence e.g. local politicians wanting to get involved, fostering a sense of giving back to the community, friendship and socializing, gratification in helping others.

Leif is a great speaker, communicator and has taken an interest in our club. We look forward to working with him during this year.

Thank you for allowing me to lead your club for the next two years and I also look forward to getting to know you all better and working with you. Feel free to bring any new ideas you may have to any of our board members or I at any time. We are in this great club – together as a team!

Yours in Exchange,
Justin



A Message from Immediate Past President, Megan Charette:

Growing up as the youngest in my family, I had nothing to do with children until my mom would force me to substitute teach during college breaks at the elementary school where she served as Principal. Standing in the middle of a room surrounded by 30 screaming first graders was eye-opening and taught me one thing for absolute sure – I did NOT want to be a teacher!

I decided I didn't want kids. I was going to be a successful businesswoman, travel the world and make tons of money (ha!). Three short years later I met my husband, 2 years later I was married, and 4 years after that I welcomed one of the two main joys of my life – my daughter Savannah.

It always makes me smile to look back at how naïve I was and what an amazing impact my children have made on my life. While I always liked the fact that the main mission of Exchange was the prevention of child abuse, that mission didn't hit home with me then the way it does now that I have 2 children of my own.

The work we do is without question one of the most important, vital services to our community that we can provide. I am so proud of our club and all that we have accomplished and continue to accomplish each year. So many of our members have stepped up in the most amazing ways, and we have such a wealth of knowledge within our membership that enables us to be the best at what we do.

To serve as the President of the Waterbury Exchange Club for the past 2 years has been an honor. I appreciate the trust, support, and fellowship that I received throughout those two years and look forward to staying involved and assisting Justin as he steps into his Presidential term.

(continued)

It would be remiss of me not to single out my Board of Directors with a special thank you, as all of you were so instrumental in keeping the club on task and active throughout a tough few years as we struggled through the Covid pandemic. We came out of the pandemic just as strong – if not stronger! – than we went in and that is a true testament to our member's dedication.

Don Marold, Kathy Craig, and Ginny O'Rourke – your guidance was exceptional. I could not have done this without you. Our incoming President, *Justin Golden*, is incredibly motivated and enthusiastic about all things Exchange. I can't wait to see what the next two years will bring and look forward to continuing to expand our club and embrace new ideas.

Thank you, members, of Exchange, for putting your trust in me and allowing me to grow as a leader and community ambassador. It has been a wild ride, and I loved every minute!

Best Regards,
Megan

A Message from Don Marold, Club Treasurer



The club's executive committee has crafted the budgets for the 2023-24 fiscal year and on August 2nd, the board of directors voted to accept them as presented.

Regarding the Operating Budget, there are a couple of things to note. President Justin has set a goal of increasing our membership to 50 active members by the end of the club year. For budgeting purposes, we used 45 members as our benchmark. Even though the CT District has increased their dues we have held our dues amount at \$75/\$300 for the coming year. One of the big contributors to avoiding a dues increase was the success of the Duck Race proceeds. Our thanks to NeNean and Karen for their hard work. We ended last fiscal year with a profit of \$169.25. Thank you to our members for their prompt payment of dues.

Over in the Project Budget, we are anticipating a net profit from the Bethlehem fair of \$7,500.00. Prayers for good weather are welcome and may start now. We have also included funding this year for sponsoring a P.A.L. baseball team. It was a great success last year and look forward to another championship year next year. We have also budgeted for more 75th Anniversary activities ending December 31st. We had a loss of \$1,387.75 for the last fiscal year which was anticipated because of our anniversary projects.

A detailed breakdown of the budgets will be sent to the membership soon. If you have any questions and/or suggestions please reach out to Club Treasurer Don Marold (dmarold51@gmail.com).

News from Youth of the Year Chair & Foundation President, Mary Ann Marold:



It's been an exciting time for the Youth of the Year this year as both young ladies were featured in the Waterbury Republican Newspaper. Congratulations to both!

(continued)

Valedictorian: Aniyah Parker-Rickett

Nickname: Niyah
 Age: 18
 Hometown: Waterbury
 Parents: Damina Parker-Ricketts and Michael Ricketts

Plans after graduation, including intended major/college: I plan on going to college for pre med with a major in allied health sciences and a minor in journalism.
 Dream career: OB/GYN or nurse practitioner

What should we expect from your generation? A crowd full of young voices and ideas

Describe yourself in one word: Resilient

Who is your greatest influence or mentor? My English and drama teacher, Mrs. LaBonte

What is your advice for rising seniors? Discover where your balance lies on a scale and you will have control over your path. It's all about balance.

What's the best advice you ever received? Always listen to yourself. It brings a different perspective every time.
 Biggest fear: Insects



CONTRIBUTOR
 Aniyah Parker-Ricketts is the Wilby High School valedictorian.

Pet peeve: Staring
 What's your biggest concern for the country or the world? That the population between negative and positive people won't even out, override one another. We need to do better.

BY THE NUMBERS

220 graduates
65% attending college
19% employment
11% trades
5% military

Valedictorian: Mahasin Gudaf

Age: 18
 Hometown: Waterbury
 Parents: Adama Quartey (mother) and Siddig Gudaf (father)

Plans after graduation, intended major/college: University of Connecticut, majoring in allied health sciences

Dream career: Physician
 What should we expect from your generation? More technological advancements and increased global connectivity. People also will continue to fight for justice.

Describe yourself in one word: Dynamic

Greatest influence/mentor: My sister, Salma Gudaf. Her talent and determination inspires me to work toward my dreams and be a better person every day.

Advice for rising seniors: Seize the moment. Take advantage of all the opportunities you have and make sure to take care of yourself. Go out and have fun as much as you can so that you make good memories.

Best advice I ever received? Failing to plan is planning to fail. We are only ever living in the present, so it's necessary that we cherish it with wisdom from the past and motivation for the future.

Biggest fear: Not taking every opportunity life has in store
 Something I got away with, without telling my parents: I went to Massachusetts to



CONTRIBUTOR
 Mahasin Gudaf is Waterbury Arts Magnet School's valedictorian.

look at colleges and walk around the city with my boss's friend. I told them I went to Hartford.

Pet peeve: People chewing loudly; people jumping to conclusions or making assumptions; people making fun of strangers for no reason

Biggest concern: I worry that people's lack of empathy for others and the Earth will lead to violence and destruction. The excessive hatred people contain is alarming and may be at the expense of innocent individuals and the environment.

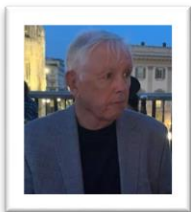
BY THE NUMBERS

96 of the 108 graduates are entering a two- or four-year college, university or trade school
--

Update on the Annual Wine Tasting Event – It has been postponed until April 2024 – Thank you to all that have stepped up to the plate to help volunteer; however, this is another “full club” participation required. If you don’t know where your time and talents can help, we’ll assign you a task. We need everyone’s cooperation to make this as successful as in the past. Stay tuned for meeting dates to be scheduled soon.

Thank you all in advance, *Don & Mary Ann Marold*, Event Chairs

Words from the CT District President, George Gray



Dear Fellow Exchangites:

We had a “low turnout” for the CT District Convention in June but you would think the room was standing room only with the level of enthusiasm during both the afternoon session as well as the evening dinner. This year’s guest speaker for the afternoon was our own, President Elect, *Leif Welhaven*. He wasted no time in asking the audience, “What does Exchange represent to you? Why are you in the club? Where do you want to see your club in the future?”

Leif comes from Billings, MT, and has numerous clubs in that area alone. As he was listing off the **Breakfast Club** (*because people can't meet for lunch or dinner*), the **Luncheon Club** (*because people can't meet for breakfast or dinner*), the **Dinner Club** (*because people can't meet for breakfast or lunch*), there were others mentioned too but the one that touched my heart was the **Special Needs Club** (*because they just want to be included*) that got my attention even more. There are no excuses with Leif when it comes to club building! If there isn't one there for the cause you need, build one! (This paragraph was included by Kathy Craig, a convention attendee).

A piece of business taken away from the convention was that the CT District dues were approved for a \$6.00 per year increase. Unfortunately, because not many members attend district events, the cost of everything has increased, this increase which is the first in many years was necessary to help offset the increases being passed on to the district.

During the night Leif asked again “**What does Exchange Represent - it's simple- Kids, Veterans, Communities, and programs to prevent child abuse, And we do it from our heart**” Use that slogan when thinking about whom you can invite to join your club.

(continued)

Along with the evening's activities of speeches and installations, two members *Don Marold*, of the Waterbury Exchange Club and *Claudia Vaudreuil*, of the Naugatuck Club both received the *Mike DeNegris Award*, "in support of Exchange Values." Congratulations to both of you – so well deserved! (photos of the convention are featured at the end of the newsletter)

I will be traveling from club meeting to club meeting whenever invited and always willing to help out wherever I can. A schedule of the CT District meetings will be published soon and I hope officers and members will begin to attend these as in the past. Being a local club member, you are also a member of the CT District and your voice is important!

For more information on CT District Events, go to <https://ctdistrictexchange.org/>

Yours in Exchange, *George*

Words from National Exchange President, *Leif Welhaven*

Hello CT – Leif, your National President here! Wanted to send you a quick message Welcome to the new fiscal year and I am excited to be your new National President. I live in Billings, MT and I have met several of you at your district convention. I look forward to serving with you and alongside you this year. A couple of things I might say would be important to mention is that our focus this year will be GROWTH and RETENTION. I know it's exciting to do all the other projects and to have our convention and things like that but really our goal is to grow and carry on the legacy of Exchange. As I mentioned in Phoenix, the need is great and the workers are few and so what you are left with is a gap so we are looking for people willing to stand in the gap with us shoulder to shoulder and dream to dream to make a difference in our communities.



One thing I might leave you with is one of the beauties of Exchange, which I think is important to share with people is that everyone has time to give but it all looks different for everybody. If someone says they only want to join if they can put 110% into it. I say, everyone's 110% looks different and so what I mean by that is if you can put in 2 hours a day or 2 hours a week, 2 hours a month, 2 hours a quarter, 2 hours a year, it really doesn't matter because it's all making an impact in our communities in helping kids, communities, veterans, and prevention of child abuse. The real beauty of Exchange is now you can leverage those hours to whatever that looks like for you and you can affect several social service organizations that service our mission.

A few years ago I did a Facebook post where I had tagged all the agencies that we donated monies, time, talents, and energies here in my small hometown of Billings of 125,000 people and over 150 organizations so if I was typically going to volunteer I might have to pick from one cause or one passion or with one organization to give to. But with Exchange, I can give in this case to over 150 organizations and that really means impact in making a difference.

Thank you and I will bring you another message for your next newsletter just know that from the #406 and Billings, we support everything you do and I look forward to meeting you all at the Salute in October.

Leif, Your National President

(Note: this article was transcribed from an audio voice message sent to Kathy)

Exchange Club of Waterbury Member Highlights

On June 20, 2023, Board Member *Ginny O'Rourke Cookson* opened her beautiful home on Hitchcock Lake in Wolcott, CT for our end-of-the-year picnic and installation of officers for 2023-24. It was a great night of fellowship as we also installed two new members; *Jim Geary & Sheyar (Sam) Hussain*. (please see the photos at the end of the newsletter).

End-of-the-year awards were also given out to members; *NeNean Cofrancesco* for her outstanding service and dedication to the club for the past two years as club secretary. NeNean is stepping down from this leadership position to enjoy more time traveling with family and friends. Thank you seems so small for the amount of affection you brought to your position. Job Well Done!!!

Kathy Craig was also surprised to receive the Exchange Club Member of the Year award for "your contributions to and support of the ideals of Exchange." Yes, I may be producing this newsletter and listing this information along with other awardee information but I would be remiss if I didn't say "Thank You once again. We have a great club with many individuals that have children in their hearts and that's what keeps us going strong!" There is one more award waiting to be given out but guess you'll have to wait for that information..... 😊

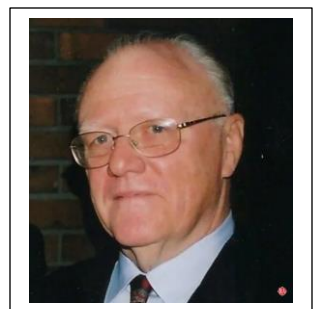
Recently we received a check in the amount of **\$637.50** as "our portion" of the proceeds from the Naugatuck Chamber *Duck Day* tickets that were initiated and managed by club members *NeNean Cofrancesco* and *Karen Engratt*. Now that's the kind of fundraiser we need!!! Great job ladies.

In our last newsletter, we highlighted a few items to update the club on:

PAL - our Exchange Club Baseball Team - went undefeated all season and won City Champs!!! (see photos) On July 6th our club honored the team and Coach Giampetruzzi with a plaque and trophies along with a pizza party for their sportsmanship and teamwork. We are building a great relationship with PAL, Officer Mike Macary, LT. Chris Amatruda all under the support of Chief Spagnola. We are excited to let you know that it was decided to sponsor a baseball team again in 2024. When the schedule is announced, we hope you can make some of the games. Thanks to those that came out on the bleachers as well as the pizza party. The parents were just as appreciative of our support as the kids were. Great Job Exchange! (On a side note: in the last newsletter there was a photo from the 1st little league Exchange team and a teaser to see if anyone knew who the Exchange member featured was. . . Sam Leisring! Thanks Sam for being at the games to cheer on the team too)

Teddy Bears - we had some leftovers from a donation made to the club and they were donated to the Waterbury Office of DCF for their *Olive Branch Gift Shoppe* managed by *Jackie Ford*, their Community Outreach Coordinator.

Doc Shanahan - it saddens us to say we've lost another long-time member of Exchange due to health complications. Doc passed away on July 9, 2023, at Waterbury Hospital. He had been in Middlebury Convalescent home for the past 10 months and complications set in. He leaves behind his wife Peg of 65 years, his four daughters, eleven grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. He was a truly dedicated member and gentleman that we will miss greatly. Please keep his family in your prayers at this sad time. Thank you to those members that went to his services. His family smiled when they talked about his "Exchange Life" and how much this club meant to him for over 60+ years. For those of us that knew him, he will be missed!



New Items to Follow Up On

At the end of the year picnic samples of a shirt we've selected for our Exchange Club "Fried Dough Booth" representation were presented.



These shirts have been ordered in **crew or v-neck style** (please specify if ordering) at \$8.50 each for those that requested one; however we will have a few extra on hand in large (short sleeve and long sleeve). If you have not ordered and would like one, we will let you know when they come in. For those that have ordered, Don will be adding that cost to your next dues statement. We are hoping to have them by September 1st to distribute for the fair. Watch for an email regarding pick up.

Bethlehem Fair Sign-Ups – some also signed up at the picnic and I am working diligently to put those schedules together. This is a crazy time of the year and lots of details to follow up on. This year we also don't have my van to transport items from various locations both to and from the fairgrounds. I have asked the Board to allow us to rent a small box truck for the weekend but will need to work out the details to get this done. I will keep everyone informed. If you haven't signed up, there's still time and space for you!

Club Calendars – this was a new project for this year to keep everyone up to date with items already planned, please refer to August and September for reference of luncheon meetings & special events. (Back to School Rally & Bethlehem Fair) Everyone should have received their copy both electronically (if you get an email) and a hard copy. It's not perfect and not complete but it's a start! We used to get these from National years ago but they have since stopped producing them. I compiled whatever information I could with meetings scheduled, birthdays, etc. I will keep you informed of other events that you can add to your copy if you so choose. There will be evening meetings, CT district meeting events, and other local Exchange Club events and hopefully, if a member has an event we can support, you can notify me to circulate to our membership too. Again, this was produced with our membership in mind, how you choose to use it is entirely up to you!

Waterbury Parade (Memorial Day 2024) – stay tuned – we'd like to build a float for next year – have people ride the float such as our Dr. Shea honorees (Youth, ACE, Police & Fire, BOGD), Etc. We will be compiling a parade committee after the 1st of the year. If anyone has a connection with a towing company or someone with a flatbed that could be used as a float – please let Justin know.



Important Club Date to Remember

Monday, August 14th – 5:30 PM – Kelly's Kids – Prospect, CT

Club social event – come see the farm and enjoy pizza with other members

Please RSVP to Kathy by 8/10 to ensure food supply. (kcraig055@gmail.com or 203-558-1467

BYOB & Desserts please.

Wednesday, August 16th - Back to School Rally with Waterbury Youth Services

Fulton Park – 12 noon – 2 pm – Exchange will be presenting school supplies

Stop by if you can.....

Friday – Sunday, September 8-10th – Bethlehem Fair

Plans to begin shortly – hope you plan on volunteering over the weekend

More club event dates will be announced thru the Foundation for our 75th Anniversary

We apologize we are in a new calendar year starting July 1st but we did not want to leave out the June birthdays or anniversaries since there was no June newsletter.

June Anniversaries:

- Ray Albini – 6/2014 – 9 years
- Erik Anthony – 2017 – 6 years
- NeNean Cofrancesco – 2017 – 6 years
- Sara Carabetta – 2017 – 6 years
- Justin Golden – 2017 – 6 years
- James Higgins – 2017 – 6 years
- Penny McCasland – 2017 – 6 years
- Caitlyn Sheedy – 2017 – 6 years



June Birthdays:

Brenda Corbo – June 5th

July Anniversaries:

none

July Birthdays:

- Penny McCasland – 20th
- Karen Engratt – 29th
- Lee Schlesinger – 30th

August Anniversaries:

- Mary Ann Marold – 2021 – 2 years
- Jeff Oliveria – 1998 – 25 years

August Birthdays:

- Mary Ann Marold & Spenser Parish – 14th
- Jeff Oliveria – 27th

September Anniversaries:

- Ivelisse Cruz – 2021 – 2 years
- Olivia Dudley – 2022 – 1 year
- Karen Engratt – 2021 – 2 years
- Ginny O’Rourke Cookson – 1994 – 29 years

September Birthdays:

- Ray Albini – 10th
- Don Marold – 21st

This listing is covering the months we missed and the next two as we probably won’t be publishing another edition until after the fair. Please submit anything you have for us to publicize for you.



WAYS TO SUPPORT FELLOW EXCHANGITES . . .

Note: If any club member has an event or wants to publicize a business or social item, please send the information to Kathy Craig as soon as possible. This is another way members can help each other.

Please see the end of the newsletter for a collage of photos from our recent events: Tribute at City Hall for Fallen Heroes, Memorial Day Parade, PAL Baseball, Teddy Bear presentation, and the CT District Convention

Note from Newsletter Editor: Kathy Craig

I am in the process of updating our club roster with National Exchange and would appreciate receiving any information needed for your current phone number, address, work information, email address and phone too.

I will be working with Justin on a quarterly basis for your next editions of the Waterbury Exchanger. If you have any information you need to submit, please send it to kcraig055@gmail.com. Thank you and I hope you read about the great ways you are supporting your community!!

Waterbury, CT Fallen Heroes Tribute –May 2023



Members in attendance:
 seated l to r: Don Marold, Ginny O'Rourke Cookson,
 Mary Ann Marold, and Ivelisse Cruz
 standing l to r: Michelle Grull, Debi Schatzle Baker,
 Megan Charette, and Ann Marino

Memorial Day Parade – Waterbury – May 28, 2023



Members present: Kathy Craig, Debi Schatzle Baker, Ivelisse Cruz (and our family members too)



CT District Convention – June 10, 2023



District President George Gray with opening remarks



“Wtby Delegates” at the convention
L to R front row: Debi Schatzle Baker; Marsha Leisring; National President, Leif Welhaven; Sam Leisring; Mary Ann Marold; Megan Charette; Kathy Craig; CT District President, George Gray
L to R back row: Don Marold; and Justin Goldent



Don & Mary Ann Marold with daughter Emily & her fiancé Christopher Sautter
Congratulations Don Well Deserved!!!



Summer End of the Year Picnic @ Ginny's Home - June 20, 2023



2023-24 Board & Officer Installation by Claudia



*Congrats NeNean, Secretary
Job Well Done!*



Exchangite of the Year 2023



*Megan giving an emotional
farewell speech stepping
down as President. Great Job*



*2023-24 President Justin
addresses the crowd!*



*Thank you to Sam & Amy of
Saverio's Pizza & Catering for
great service once again!*

Thursday, July 10, 2023

Presentation to the Waterbury PAL/Exchange Baseball Team & our Teddy Bear Presentation to Waterbury Department of Children & Families



Thank you to all those members that came out to support the Pal/Exchange Baseball team this year and watch for the schedule for 2024 – we will be sponsoring a team again!

Note from editor: If you have anything you want published in the next newsletter, don't wait! Next edition will be "after the fair"