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VOL. 152 NO. 353

BRISTOLPRESS.COM

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2023

\$2.00

The Bristol Press

Serving the Communities of Central Connecticut



Highway traffic in Dallas

Holiday crowds at airports, on roads should be bigger than last year

DAVID KOENIG ASSOCIATED PRESS

More Americans are expected to fly or drive far from home over Christmas than did last year, putting a cap on a busy year for travel.

Auto club AAA forecast Monday that 115.2 million people will go 50 miles or more from home during the 10 days between Dec. 23 and New Year's Day. That's 2.2% more than AAA predicted during the comparable stretch last year.

"That desire to get away is stronger than we have seen in a very long time," said AAA spokeswoman

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Six nonprofits receive over \$13K

BRIAN M. JOHNSON @BRIANJOHNSONBP

BRISTOL — The Main Street Community Foundation awarded a record \$13,205 in grants from the Men & Boys Fund this November to support six nonprofit organizations working to improve the lives of local men and boys.

"This fund was established in 2016 to provide grants to organizations that address the needs of local men and boys in the communities of Bristol, Burlington, Plainville, Plymouth, Southington and Wolcott," said Samantha Rajotte, scholarship and program officer with the Main Street Community Foundation. "From promoting emotional growth in young boys to offering

dads a place to connect with their kids and learn about fatherhood, the Men & Boys' Fund is always looking for ways to support the social, emotional, and educational needs of men and boys in the local communities." Since its establishment, Rajotte said, more than \$63,000 in grants has been awarded from the Fund to local nonprofit organizations with "the same vision of improving the quality of men and boys' lives,

increasing their self-sufficiency, and assisting them in making positive changes in their communities." The following grants were awarded from the Fund this year:

Boys & Girls Club of Bristol — \$2,000 — Passport to Manhood, a program to engage boys ages 8-17 in discussions and activities that reinforce character, leadership and

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Samantha Rajotte, Main Street Community Foundation

Popular Spot Turns 35



Brian Johnson

Laurie Mitchell, an employee at Rodd's Restaurant for 27 years, brings Mayor Jeff Caggiano and visitors from the City of Bristol their breakfast.

Rodd's Restaurant celebrated by city

BRIAN M. JOHNSON @BRIANJOHNSONBP

BRISTOL — City leaders congratulated popular breakfast spot Rodd's Restaurant on 35 years of serving the Bristol community.

The restaurant at 854 Farmington Ave., as on most mornings, had packed seats as Mayor Jeff Caggiano

and Dawn Nielsen, marketing and public relations specialist, stopped by to present owner Gina Legnani-Pellrine with a congratulatory plaque Friday. Customers cheered and applauded from their seats as they posed for pictures.

Legnani-Pellrine attributes the success of Rodd's Restaurant over the years

to her employees.

"We have a great staff, most of which have been with us practically the whole time," she said. "Customers also like that we make everything fresh. We make our potato pancakes, banana bread and sauces in-house. We have a lot of regulars; some of whom came here with their

parents as children when we first opened. Now, they're coming here with their kids."

Legnani-Pellrine employs eight people. Servers like Laurie Mitchell, who has worked there for 27 years, have built long-standing friendships with regulars such as Howie Faxon, Caggiano's father in law.

She said many of them sit in the same place and order the same breakfast every day.

"Howie always orders oatmeal and burnt toast," Mitchell said.

Mitchell said the motto among staff at Rodd's Restaurant is "You're never alone at Rodd's." Customers and staff, she

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Tabitha Manafort

Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus will wave to children this Wednesday at Norton Park in Plainville.

Santa, Mrs. Claus waving to children at Norton Park

BRIAN M. JOHNSON @BRIANJOHNSONBP

PLAINVILLE — Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus will wave to children at Norton Park this Wednesday.

Plainville's annual "Wave to Santa" event will be held Wednesday

at 6 p.m. at Norton Park. Kids of all ages are invited to attend. Santa Claus & Mrs. Claus will circle the park two times accompanied by festively decorated police cars and fire trucks, with the elves handing out goodies.

Those who wish to attend

are asked to park between 5:15 and 5:45 p.m. Vehicle decorations are encouraged.

Tabitha Manafort, organizer of the annual Wave to Santa, said she and her sister, Quinn Wazorko Christopher, started the tradition when kids were

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Main Street grants awarded

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positive behavior

Bristol Family Resource Centers-\$3,000-Expansion of the WatchDOGS (Dads of Great Students) program to include South Side School and West Bristol School offering a series of 10 workshops to provide parenting education and increase fatherhood engagement

Bristol Public Schools — \$1,500 — Wolf's Den

after-school program at West Bristol School for young male students to promote social emotional growth, confidence and leadership

Community Counseling Centers of Central Connecticut — \$2,190 — Artful Self-Discovery program nurturing self-esteem, awareness and emotional bonds for boys through artistic exploration

Outside Perspectives

— \$3,000 — Youth Excellence Project (YEP) providing at-risk male youth with adult mentorship in outdoor spaces to promote health and build resiliency to the challenges in life

The New England Carousel Museum — \$1,515 — Spring Afternoon STEAM program for boys to provide introduction to engineering concepts and team building skills

