

ON A ROLL

UCONN'S TOURNNEY RUN FEATURES A NUMBER OF DOMINANT SECOND-HALF PERFORMANCES, PAGE 10A



THE BREAKING POINT

AFTER DEALING CAPABLY WITH STRESS DURING THE SEASON, UCONN WOMEN SUCCUMBED TO OHIO STATE PRESSURE, PAGE 10A

Town's recycling costs rise

Due to dramatic changes to the recycling market, Prospect's proposed budget calls for a \$213,355 increase in recycling disposal and a \$14,200 increase in pickup. PAGE 3A



Coffee shop franchise opens

Aroma Joe's, known for its handcrafted tea, coffee and smoothies created in a culture designed to positively impact lives, opens a location in Waterbury today. PAGE 1B

Mix of uses OK'd for city plaza

Waterbury's Zoning Commission approved an application to establish an overlay zone at Colonial Plaza on Thomaston Avenue to spur economic development. PAGE 4A

Coping with a calamity

Residents in one of the Mississippi towns hit hardest by tornadoes found solace in their church communities Sunday, after 25 people were killed Friday. PAGE 7A

COMMUNITY NEWS, PAGE 3B



TODAY AT REP-AM.COM

» #HTPB Hit the paws button to vote for your favorite pet of the week featured in Sunday's Accent section.

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High **52** Increasing cloudiness, with rain developing by afternoon. Page **8B**
Low **33**

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Dear Annie **8B** Lottery **2A** Your Day **2A**

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'Baby Bonds' in the works

State eyes program aimed at children born into poverty

BY STEVE BIGHAM
REPUBLICAN-AMERICAN

WATERBURY — Pending the approval of necessary funding, as of July 1 any child born into poverty in Connecticut will be awarded \$3,200 to be invested by the state and can then be claimed once the child turns 18.

State officials say the Baby Bonds program is a first-of-its-kind initiative and the latest attempt to combat wealth inequality and spur economic growth.

In 2021, Connecticut became the first state in the nation to pass an initiative that invests directly in children born into poverty.

The \$50 million to fund the program, however, still needs to be approved by the State Bond Commission, and there is no guarantee that will happen.

State Treasurer Erick Russell said the program will set aside funds for each baby born in Connecticut whose birth was covered by HUSKY, the state's public health insurance plan for lower-income families.

Russell and state Rep. Gerardo Reyes, D-75th, were at the South End Recreation Center on East Liberty Street Thursday to speak with residents about CT Baby Bonds,

See **PROGRAM**, Page **6A**



STEVE BIGHAM REPUBLICAN-AMERICAN

A large gathering of residents from Waterbury's South End turned out to hear about a new program designed to assist children born into poverty.

DOT COMMISSIONER ROAD TESTED

Torrington native took a scenic route to state's top job

BY BRUNO MATARAZZO JR.
REPUBLICAN-AMERICAN

TORRINGTON — Garrett Eucalitto has found you can go home again, and the ride north from New Haven involves more than 40 miles of state roads he now oversees

The Torrington native is the newly appointed state Department of Transportation commissioner, getting acclimated to his new role since his appointment in January. He previously served for three years as deputy secretary of the state's roads, bridges and rails.

Eucalitto sat down last week with the Republican-American for his first interview since he took on the department's top job.

Eucalitto was born and raised in Torrington and graduated from Torrington High School in 1999. He went on to Holy Cross College in Worcester where he studied political science, graduating in 2003. He spent six months substitute teaching in Litchfield before going to graduate school at Boston University, graduating in 2006 with a master's degree in international relations.

An interest in transportation since childhood revved up in Washington, D.C., where Eucalitto worked on infrastructure and appropriations with the National Gov-



BRUNO MATARAZZO JR. REPUBLICAN-AMERICAN

State Transportation Commissioner Garrett Eucalitto stands on East Main Street (Route 202) in Torrington, his hometown. Eucalitto was confirmed by the legislature in January, and he spoke to the Republican-American about many of the projects coming down the pike for the state.

» The state's new commissioner of the Department of Transportation offers his views on a number of projects in the region, including the I-84 interchange known as the "Mixmaster," progress on the train station in Waterbury, and a Metro-North extension to Torrington, Page **6A**.

ernors Association, part of his circuitous route to DOT headquarters in Newington.

"I initially wanted to do foreign service," Eucalitto said. However, as a gay man, he was formerly "in the closet. It wasn't really as accepted in those communities."

"I pivoted to work on Capitol Hill where I can be myself," Eucalitto said.

His salary as the DOT's commissioner is \$220,000 a year. The position is appointed by the governor, so the job is tied to each governor's term.

Eucalitto started working

as a deputy commissioner a couple of months before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

With so many DOT staff working in the office, he and his boss at the time, former commissioner Joseph Giulietti, worked in the office as well.

"We went into the office basically every day because our crews kept working. Our agency is 3,500 people ..., during the peak COVID during March, April of 2020, half of

See **EUCALITTO**, Page **6A**

Survey: Internet-less residents say cost is barrier

BY PAUL HUGHES
REPUBLICAN-AMERICAN

A statewide survey found Connecticut households without broadband internet service ranked affordability and reliability as the biggest reasons why their homes are not connected.

The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities commissioned the survey of nearly 169 towns and cities to support municipal efforts in securing federal funds to increase broadband access and reliability across the state.

The state government is anticipating receiving nearly \$300 million in federal funding for supporting broadband

A 2021 state law set a goal of achieving universal broadband access at minimum download speeds of 1,000 megabits per second and upload speeds of 100 megabits per second. The Federal Communications Commission's "served" standard is 100 megabits per second download and 20 megabits per second upload.

infrastructure projects and broadband affordability programs for households and businesses to close gaps in broadband availability.

Some areas, including the rural towns of Litchfield County's Northwest Corner, have almost no service.

Despite that, the conclusion the Connecticut Confer-

ence of Municipalities drew based on the survey results is that the primary barrier to universal adoption of high-speed broadband is not availability, but rather affordability and reliability.

"The state of connectivity in Connecticut is better than we originally thought," said Joe DeLong, president and

» The Economic Development Committee in Salisbury conducted a session to discuss the potential for improved fiber optics in town, Page **4A**.

CEO of the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities.

Overall, only 2.4% of all survey respondents reported they do not have internet at their home, and only a small segment of them reported availability as the main obstacle.

DeLong said the results also suggest a disconnect between what consumers have versus what they actually need.

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