

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Vol. 1 Issue 2

April 2021

Monthly Newsletter



WELCOME...

It's exciting to see signs of life getting back to "normal"! Governor Lamont's announcement that most of the state's Covid-19 restrictions will be lifted on May 19th, for every business sector, is exactly the good news we have been waiting for! Torrington's businesses are ready and open for business!

share the business's social media posts, or leave a glowing review.

We are looking forward to seeing our businesses thriving and our streets alive again! Please enjoy everything that Torrington has to offer; stay safe and remember to have fun!

Sincerely,

Rista Malanca

Director of Economic Development

As you start to venture out, be sure to continue support our local businesses! I would encourage you to visit as many businesses as you can, but this isn't the only way you can support your favorite businesses. Be sure to talk about your positive experiences with friends, family and on social media; simply

6 WAYS TO SUPPORT SMALL BUSINESSES

WRITE A POSITIVE REVIEW	\$0.00
TELL YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY	\$0.00
FOLLOW THEM ON SOCIAL MEDIA	\$0.00
ENGAGE WITH THEIR POSTS	\$0.00
GIVE THEM A SHOUT OUT	\$0.00
SIGN UP FOR THEIR EMAILS	\$0.00

TOTAL \$0.00

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Find us!





Corkboard.com is a 100% e-commerce business headquartered in Torrington, shipping hand crafted products direct to consumers across the nation. Corkboard.com is America's premier designer and manufacturer of high-end, hand crafted corkboards, bulletin boards, chalkboards, dry-erase calendars, and frameless pin boards. Corkboard.com has a broad client base ranging from private consumers renovating their kitchen, to interior designers, corporate offices, healthcare offices, real estate developers, schools, and even the film industry.

Founder of Corkboard.com, Eric Haggard, is originally from Seattle, WA and attended the University of Washington in its first class of graphic design majors. He moved to NYC after college and opened a graphic design studio in SOHO, where he began a company called Pulp Paper Products which distributed custom manufactured paper products to high-end gift stores across the U.S. In 2003, Eric and his wife, Kimberly Rock, relocated to Falls Village and moved his factory from Long Island City, NY to the former IGA building on Migeon Avenue in Torrington. Eric and Kimberly have long been fascinated with old mill towns, industrial spaces, and the creative economy, and found that Torrington was a great fit for them. Eric adds that one of the reasons he was drawn to Torrington was the supply of a skilled labor force. Following the economic crash of 2008, and the introduction of new and innovative technology, Eric saw the need to adjust his business model. He notes how the iPhone and other smartphones reduced the demand of paper scrapbooks, photo albums, and photo development. He dismantled Pulp Paper Products and acquired the domain Corkboard.com, exercising his skill with framing equipment, and producing high-quality chalkboard and corkboard products. With a new business comes a need for a new space, and so Eric began renting a factory

space on Norwood Avenue for the past few years.

As a talented and experienced designer, Eric is dedicated to helping customers design custom boards to fit their vision and spaces. Therefore, Corkboard.com largely offers personalized service with custom sized boards configured to the needs and vision of a variety of customers. Corkboard.com customers often customize boards for their kitchens in unusual spaces like the side of a refrigerator with a dry erase calendar and a chalkboard for grocery lists, etc. Interior designers outfit their clients' homes and have created entire walls of the frameless fabric pin boards for their own inspiration boards. A mom might be buying a chalkboard personalized with her kids' names on it combined with a bulletin board to feature photos. All boards are built by hand by a team of carpenter builders in Torrington, who take great pride in creating a high quality, handmade products.

Eric and Kimberly recently purchased 6,000 square foot building at 66 East Albert Street, and began renovating it with the intention of creating a "modern workspace". The manufacturing space has been carefully constructed to be energy efficient, complete with LED lighting, insulated ceiling, etc., and provide a more productive space for the construction of the product. In addition to the manufacturing space and workshop, Eric designed a modern and stylish office space which is more conducive to creativity and inspiration — including a gourmet kitchen, hip offices, completely renovated bathrooms, and a design resource room. The floors are polished concrete, new 8 foot by 10 foot windows were installed



renovated bathrooms, and a design resource room. The floors are polished concrete, new 8 foot by 10 foot windows were installed and the exterior will undergo a renovation as the weather warms up. While it has been challenging to run Cork-board.com by day and to renovate the space at night and weekends, along with the added supply chain challenges that came with Covid -19; notably, increased shipping and advertising costs and delays on raw materials, Eric and Kimberly are very grateful that the business is doing well. His hope is that, with increased space, he can hire more workers and continue to grow the business.

Eric and Kimberly's commitment to Torrington is reflected by the role the business plays in the community. Their goals are to have a positive impact on the community, by renovating the building and making the exterior more attractive as well as the interior. They are very interested in the concept of "adaptive reuse" of industrial space to serve new purposes, and once the dust settles, hope to invest in another building and bring it back to life to help other creative oriented businesses thrive in Torrington.



YOU BELONG @ THE DONUT STATION



The Donut Station began serving the community of Torrington 25 years ago, evolving out of Bess Eaton Donuts which was started by the Ponte family in 1965. Current owner, Bonnie Ponte, has been running the establishment for thirteen years with the mission to "give customers and employees a place to feel wanted, accepted and welcome. We strive to serve our community by making a difference in the lives of those around us."

In 2008, Bonnie began to notice an unfortunate shift in the quick-service food industry. As other establishments regressed in quality, Bonnie sought to help rectify the lacking conditions in the quick-service industry through high-quality food items and exceptional service. The Donut Station is designed to be a community place where customers and employees are genuinely cared for. Yet, Bonnie notes how the development and growth of its employees are equally as important. One of The Donut Station's critical goals is to provide its employees the tools they need to succeed. Bonnie says she feels an obligation to help teach and mentor her younger employees as to prepare them for the world ahead.

Through the challenges of Covid-19, Bonnie acknowledges how fortunate The Donut Station was to have such a supportive and understanding customer base. Although indoor seating was closed due to government regulations, The Donut Station's drive-thru allowed them to remain open for both customers and employees.

Committed to bringing the community together and advocating for her fellow local business owners, Bonnie has organized a Shark Week "Shark Hunt" wherein surrounding businesses host sharks as part of a scavenger hunt. Visitors can travel to participating local businesses, learn a fun fact about sharks, and return to The Donut Station to be entered for a pool of prizes. The community-wide excursion is meant to be a fun way to connect with customers as well as bring recognition and support to surrounding businesses. The Donut Station will be expanding to Wethersfield this August and intends to uphold its values, fostering kindness and achieving goodness in a new community.



"Doing it all" : Supporting Growth in Torrington Businesses



Torrington native, Jack Reynolds, is the owner of Minuteman Press in Torrington which services the Northwest corner of Connecticut. After earning a degree in graphic design from UCONN, Jack began his career as a designer for a printing company in Waterbury, and was then recruited as a marketing professional for Cigna in Hartford. But, through the hustle and bustle of working in a city setting, Jack searched for a stronger connection to community. He was tired of the time-consuming commute and longed for quality family time. So, he decided that it was time for a change in his career path. With his degree in graphic design and substantial career experience in marketing, he sought out the printing industry. Jack actually worked in the graphics department for a local newspaper out of college, and figured that

acquiring a printing business close to home was a good plan. Here, he could combine his affinity for design with his marketing and management skills acquired from years of working with a large corporation. Jack mentions that his choice to explore opportunities in his home town was the best decision for him and his family, and is "fortunate to have made valuable connections with the businesses here. I enjoy being part of the world". Previously tucked away from the public eye, Jack brought Minuteman press to Main Street five years ago. He knew this move was essential to gaining greater awareness and increasing sales. Once satisfied with business growth, Minuteman Press made the move to Migeon Avenue, as Jack recognized the need for a more customer friendly, spacious work area.

Since 2013, Jack and his team have been committed to the Torrington community, intent on helping small to medium businesses function and grow through printed and marketing products. Jack's primary mission as the proprietor of Minuteman Press in Torrington is to provide customers with the security of knowing that his franchise has the knowledge, capability, and products to help business grow. "We want to simply help

them get better at what they do", he says. With the ability to print anything from brands, logos, messages, etc. on anything and create custom products, they are able to do just that.

With school aged children, Jack noticed the void of positive community youth news, and sought out his next business venture. Jack partnered with Tim Gaffy, who had developed a website dedicated to youth sports news, to create a print magazine. The *Litchfield County Monthly* is a professionally designed publication that showcases local student athletes and the good things they are doing. Complete with cards and advertisements, the magazine not only supports local youth but also the Torrington business community.

The restrictions and regulations of Covid-19 definitely brought some challenges to Minuteman, as a significant percentage of projects are financed for local events. With closings and cancellations, Minuteman saw lost revenue from typical sales generated from products advertising such events like posters, tickets, and merchandise. While the pandemic certainly interrupted their business pattern and slowed growth trajectory, Jack and his team remain optimistic and stay looking forward.



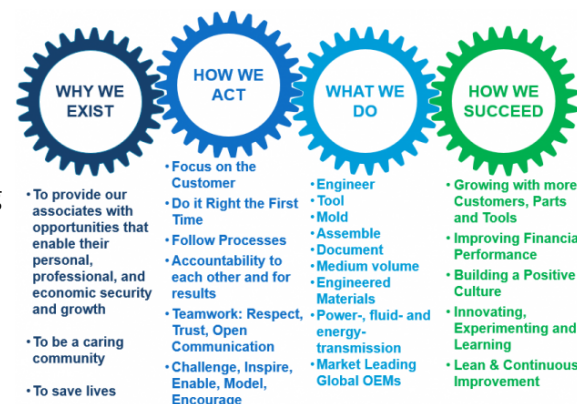


For 70 years, [Seitz LLC](#) has been a leading injection molding and custom contract manufacturing partner to the world's most innovative and quality-conscious brands. Seitz specializes in plastic injection molding and with impressive design engineering and manufacturing processes, Seitz produces high-quality, custom-made products. Their sole-sourced parts, mechanical components and complete electrical assemblies can be found throughout in hospitals and care centers, high-use restaurant and food and beverage systems, driving critical automation and money handling machines, in many home and consumer goods, and the automotive industry.

Seitz is dedicated to the community, their employees, and their customers, always prioritizing teamwork and respect, and enabling career growth. Seitz supports nearly 130 jobs ranging from executive program leads, to customer service, quality inspection, engineering and design, soldering and assembly operations, and everything in between. Much of their talent is sourced from local vocational and technical schools, including Oliver Wolcott Tech in Torrington. In their tool room, where they produce custom crafted tools and gears, they currently employ twelve graduates, including three apprentices from Oliver Wolcott.

Like many other businesses, Seitz was not immune to the effects of Covid-19. Although fortunate to be an essential business, Seitz did see a slight decrease in sales volume. However, management made a conscious effort to increase communication with both employees and customers as to maintain a healthy work environment and expert service. Seitz was even able to continue recruiting local hires and other non-essential workers, actively finding ways to help a struggling community.

As part of their mission to build a positive culture in both the community and work environment, Seitz introduced a program wherein they would buy lunches from Torrington restaurants to serve to their employees on a rotational basis, as well as donate food to Charlotte Hungerford Children's Hospital and F.I.S.H of Torrington. Each year, their employees participate in food and toy drives, notably filling four cars worth of items over Christmas. Not only does Seitz support the Torrington community through its unyielding service, but their products have first-handedly impacted consumers' daily lives. Seitz produces parts that are essential to smoothie machines like those found in restaurant chains including McDonald's and Dunkin Donuts. In fact, Seitz provided the Winsted McDonald's with their first smoothie machine. Seitz is also involved in several community development programs including the NWCT Chamber of Commerce, Coalition, the NWCT Community College and Manufacturers Alliance Service Corporation where they instruct a few courses.



The Parks and Recreation Department is very excited to help organize summer programs and events for the 2021 season. Here are some great opportunities to engage the brain and get moving. Check out one of the STEM, arts, or sports programs geared toward healthy growth and development!

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Action and Adventure Camp

MAD Science Camp



TORRINGTON PARKS & RECREATION



Junior Scientist Fun Lab

Preschoolers discover science! This program is great introduction to science as preschoolers explore the human body & our senses, the science of colors and the way things move. Children will explore fossils & take an exciting mission with Mad Science to explore the planets, moon and stars. Junior Scientists continue the science at home with take-home projects related to each subject.

Ages: 4-6 (Pre-K and Kindergarten)
Dates: 7/26 - 7/30
Time: 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Location: Cox Memorial Park
Fees: \$25.00 per child
Min./Max.: 12/21 students
Instructor: Mad Science of Western New England

Crazy Science!

Shake up a flask of fun in the lab as a young chemist! This week of fun is packed solid with experiments of cool chemical & physical reactions, laboratory equipment, acids and bases, re-suspension of matter, atom & molecules and much more! Children take home a complete set of labware by the end of the week to continue the chemistry fun at home.


Ages: Entering grades 1-5
Dates: 7/26 - 7/30
Time: 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM
Location: Cox Memorial Park
Fees: \$25.00 per student
Min./Max.: 12/21 students
Instructor: Mad Science of Western New England

Torrington Parks & Recreation | 153 South Main Street | Torrington, CT | 860-489-2274
[Find us on f](#) www.torringtonct.org [Info Line: 860-489-2274](tel:8604892274)


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Skyhawk Sports Programs

Northwest Vocal Showcase

 **TORRINGTON PARKS & RECREATION**

2021 Northwest Vocal Showcase



ADDITIONS: Saturday, June 5, 2021 at 3:00 PM, Coe Memorial Park
"Auditions must be using a cappella and should be no longer than 3 minutes"
Ages 15 and up


1ST SEMIFINAL: Saturday, June 26, 2021 at 7:00 PM, Coe Memorial Park


2ND SEMIFINAL: Saturday, July 17, 2021 at 7:00 PM, Coe Memorial Park
"Eliminations may take place the night of both semifinals."

FINALS: Saturday, August 14, 2021 at 7:00 PM, Location TBD
Band - Opening Night Band
Ticket information will be available at a later date.

Participants must complete & return an application by Friday, May 28, 2021 by 4:00 PM. Applications are available at the Parks and Recreation Department and online at www.torringtonct.nyrec.com.

For more information, contact the Torrington Parks and Recreation Department.



Torrington Parks & Recreation | 153 South Main Street | Torrington, CT | 860-489-2274
Find us on  www.torringtonct.org Info Line: 860-489-2270




TORRINGTON PARKS & RECREATION



Rocket Science

Build & launch Wicked Cool's favorite solid fuel rocket, the customizable EZX, perfect for the young aerospace engineer. Keep a Commander's Log as you investigate the solar system, design a satellite, and build a space base for the astronaut. Blast off with a solid fuel, high-flying, rocket launch at the end of the week (weather permitting). Continue your outer space journey and make galactic slime, map distant constellations, undergo astronaut training, saving a parachuting "eggstronaut" and grow alien cells in a test tube.

Agess:	Entering Grades K-5 in Fall 2021
Dates:	8/2 - 8/6
Times:	9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Location:	Coe Memorial Park Civic Center
Fee:	\$372.00 per student
Min/Max:	8/18 students
Instructor:	Wicked Cool for Kids




Torrington Parks & Recreation | 153 South Main Street | Torrington, CT | 860-489-2274

Find us on  www.torringtonct.org Info Line: 860-489-2274

Wicked Cool Rocket Science

LifeSafe Babysitting Classes



TORRINGTON PARKS & RECREATION



LifeSafe
SERVICES

BABYSITTING SAFETY & CPR CERTIFICATION

This course is for youths age 11 to 17 years of age. It's a combination of the Babysitter Safety 101 & 102 classes. This is an entry level course intended to teach age appropriate skills necessary to care for children of all ages using team babysitting, mother's helper, and individual babysitting concepts. The course focuses on safety with emphasis on prevention. Other topics include hand washing, diapering, bottle feeding, personal safety and interview skills. Basic first aid and obstructed airway management for a conscious choking adult/child and infant will be covered. First Aid including adult and child CPR (requires passing written and skills testing to receive 2 year certification), booklet, handouts and Babysitter Safety Certificate of completion included.

For: Ages 11-17
Min: 7 Max: 10
Date: Saturday, June 12, 2021 (*New Date*)
Time: 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Location: Armory
Fee: \$92.00 per person

***Class will be offered following social distancing guidelines. Masks and gloves will be worn by all in attendance as well as six feet spacing in between. Rescue breaths will be taught but not practiced on CPR models.**

Torrington Parks & Recreation | 153 South Main Street | Torrington, CT | 860-489-2274
Find us on   www.torringtonct.org **Info Line: 860-489-2274**

BUSINESS RESOURCES

COVID-19 RESOURCES



Betsy Paynter



Northwest Transit District Is Hiring!!

DRIVERS WANTED!!

Full and part-time positions available

Service Area

Northwest Connecticut Transit District is a local transit service that offers both door to door and fixed route transportation. Towns served include Barkhamsted, Canaan, Colebrook, Cornwall, Falls Village, Goshen, Harwinton, Kent, Litchfield, Morris, New Hartford, Norfolk, Salisbury, Sharon, Torrington, Warren, and Winchester & Winsted.

Job Description

Transit bus drivers needed! Must have a public service license or be willing to obtain one. CDL license is helpful, but not a must. Non CDL drivers must have a V or F endorsement. CDL drivers must have a P and either an F or V endorsement. Potential hired drivers will be subject to a drug test, background check and will need an up to date medical card. Drivers are responsible for sanitizing their busses to maintain a sterile and virus free work area.

Part-time hours: 25 - 30 hours per week

Salary: From \$16.00 per hour

COVID-19 considerations: To keep our passengers and drivers safe, we've installed clear plastic barriers, masks, gloves, sanitizer and disinfectant sprays.

PLEASE APPLY IN PERSON @ NWTD, 957 East Main Street, Torrington, CT, Monday through Thursday, 6 am - 1pm, or Friday 6am-noon. Ask for Dee or Lenon Williams. Inquiries may be made to (860) 489-2535.

**Northwest Connecticut Chamber of
Commerce**

**CT Small Business Development
Center**

**U.S. Small Business
Administration**

SBA Restaurant Revitalization Fund

***COVID-19 Testing
and Vaccine Sites***

Torrington Area Health District



**Centers for Disease Control and
Prevention**



**State of Connecticut
Webpage**



Hartford Healthcare



May 2021 Covid-19 Guidelines