

# THE MIDDLETOWN PRESS

AN EDITION OF THE NEW HAVEN REGISTER

WWW.MIDDLETOWNPRESS.COM | Wednesday, April 6, 2022 | SINCE 1878 | \$1.00

## Fostering cheaper, greener energy

### Geo SubSea bringing wind energy to state — and country

By Adam Hushin

MIDDLETOWN — Compared with other countries around the globe, the United States has not yet fully tapped into the potential of offshore wind energy, but one city-based company is trying to change that.

Geo SubSea moved to its location on Middletown's Main Street in 2018. Since

then, the firm has been making strides in bringing wind energy to the state, and the country as a whole.

Owner and President Jeff Gardner said that the city has been great so far. "I really like the atmosphere," he said.

He has made sure the company collaborates with, and contributes to, the community as well. This includes helping with local nonprofits such as the Rockfall

Foundation and Connecticut River Conservancy, participating in environmental clean-up events, and visiting local schools for informational programs and seminars.

"It's very important because it's a way to give back," Gardner said.

Geo Subsea is also in the process of creating an internship program with Wesley-

See Energy on A6



Geo SubSea / Contributed photo

Jeff Gardner, owner and president of Geo SubSea in Middletown.

### MIDDLETOWN

## ELM CITY BOUND



Sherab Gyaltzen / Contributed photo

From left, husband and wife Sherab Gyaltzen and Tsering Yangzom have run Tibetan Kitchen at 574 Main St. in Middletown since 2011. They plan to move the restaurant to a smaller location on Chapel Street in New Haven and open in September.

### Tibetan Kitchen owners downsizing in move to New Haven

By Cassandra Day

The husband-and-wife owners of a downtown Middletown Tibetan restaurant will be moving the business to New Haven this fall after operating the venture for over 10 years.

After shuttering for a time during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Tibetan Kitchen, at 574 Main St., has been offering a to-go menu through various food delivery services, such as DoorDash and GrubHub, Sherab Gyaltzen said.

It has been very well-received, and an easy way for the small family-run business to serve customers, according to Gyaltzen, who operates the culinary venture with his wife, chef Tsering Yangzom.

That success, combined with difficulties retaining staff, led to the decision, he said. "Those they have brought



Sherab Gyaltzen / Contributed photo

Tibetan Kitchen in Middletown offers a taste of the Himalayas.

aboard and trained for a couple of months often leave for other opportunities," Gyaltzen said.

It's even more difficult to find workers familiar with Tibetan food. "For

them to learn and be perfect, it takes about two, three months," the co-owner said.

Yangzom and Gyaltzen expect to move to the new location, at 1127 Chapel St., in early September, near Yale University and Tandoor New Haven, which serves Indian fare. Tibetan Kitchen, a smaller, more intimate space, will mostly be a grab-and-go operation with a slimmed-down menu and daily specials.

At first, they tried to find another, smaller and manageable location in Middletown equipped with a kitchen, but were unsuccessful.

With the new endeavor, the idea is to be able to manage the restaurant between the two of them if they have to, Gyaltzen said.

Fans will be pleased to learn that the couple found a friend of a friend, who operated an eatery in New York, to "fill the gap," and be a consistent presence.

See Kitchen on A6

## 'Test-to-treat' COVID care comes to state

By Jordan Nathaniel Fenster

Connecticut residents can now get tested and treated for COVID-19 at the same time and place.

So-called "test-to-treat" sites have started receiving medications for COVID infections, representative from CVS confirmed.

"We've started to receive our test-to-treat allocation of COVID oral antivirals from the federal government," said Matt Blanchette, CVS Pharmacy's senior manager for retail commun-

ications. Run by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Test to Treat Program provides antiviral medications to hundreds of pharmacies and federally qualified community health

See COVID on A6

See COVID on A6



Brontë Wittpenn / The Chronicle

Pfizer's Paxlovid tablets.

See COVID on A6



Hearst Connecticut Media file photo

The Chester-Hadlyme Ferry is owned and operated by the Connecticut Department of Transportation.

## State's historic ferries return to Conn. River

By Abigail Brone

CHESTER — Before the Chester-Hadlyme Ferry began carrying passengers and cars across the Connecticut River again this spring, Patricia Morrell transferred departments and joined the crew as a mate.

Previously, Morrell conducted road maintenance for the state but switched to her new role six weeks ago. And so far, she said she prefers the pace and work aboard the state-operated ferry.

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## Stefanowski: Devlin an 'outsider' pick as GOP running mate

By John Moritz

FAIRFIELD — Republican Bob Stefanowski said Tuesday he found a fellow "outsider" to join his second campaign for governor who will otherwise serve as a foil for his staid corporate background: A moth-

er, lawmaker and resolute critic of Democratic leadership in Hartford.

State Rep. Laura Devlin, R-Fairfield, represents a cross-section of experiences that Stefanowski told reporters he lacked after announcing his decision

See Devlin on A4



Arnold Gold / Hearst Connecticut Media file photo

Killingworth First Selectwoman Nancy Gorski speaks at Deer Lake Scout Reservation on Jan. 27.

## Scouts reject Pathfinders' bid to purchase Deer Lake

By Susan Braden

KILLINGWORTH — The Connecticut Yankee Council has rejected the latest offer from a local group to buy the Deer Lake camp, officials said, to the disappointment of town and local Scout officials, as well as U.S. Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn..

The Council had agreed in February to sell the site to a private developer with a \$4.6 million offer, but had extended its deadline to March 31 to

allow for a better offer — with the high bidder in recent days welcoming such an offer.

That deadline was pushed back to May 1 last week after the state attorney general got involved.

Attorney General William Tong currently is reviewing legal questions raised regarding the sale of the camp. The amount of the recent bid from the Pathfinders was not disclosed.

Ted Langevin, president of Path-

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Weather: Cooler with occasional rain. High: 53. Low: 46.  
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## NEWS/FROM THE FRONT PAGE

# Hunting, logging may harm state forest, supporters say

By Ann Gamble

OLD SAYBROOK — The prospect of logging and hunting in the 1,000-acre Preserve drew a small crowd to a Conservation Management Committee meeting.

“We’re afraid the Preserve is not preserved,” Chris Cryder, long-time Preserve activist said during a phone conversation prior to the meeting.

The main agenda item was a Forest Management Plan which would guide logging and hunting activity for the next 10 years.

The plan divides the Preserve into 24 stands, identifies their unique characteristics and makes recommendations for selective logging in each area in order to improve the health of the forest. Access points for heavy equipment are also proposed.

The plan notes that some grading, gravel, drainage, bridges and culverts would be required to support logging access in some areas. Hunting is also recommended in part to control the deer population and reduce grazing pressure on young trees and shrubs.

The Preserve is home to several species of concern including

the box turtle, ribbon snake and spotted turtle and is accentuated by more than 38 interconnected vernal pools that support an abundance of life. The area also encompasses the headwaters to the Mud River, Trout Brook and the Oyster River. It is a mostly uninterrupted forest, a necessary feature for a variety of wildlife, and serves as an important stopover for migratory birds.

Purchased for conservation in 2015 through a \$10 million fundraising effort spearheaded by the Trust for Public Land, 926 acres in Old Saybrook and four acres in Westbrook are designated Connecticut state forest although jointly owned by the state and the town of Old Saybrook with a conservation easement held by the Nature Conservancy. The Essex Land Trust owns 70 acres not included in the plan.

GEI Consultants of Glastonbury, and Ferrucci and Walicki of Middlefield created the plan for the DEEP, TPL, town of Old Saybrook and the Nature Conservancy. The DEEP routinely creates Forest Management plans for their properties.

The CMC makes decisions regarding the Preserve, with

advice from the ad hoc committee. The CMC has two members, Old Saybrook First Selectman Carl P. Fortuna, Jr. and Will Hochholzer, state lands management program supervisor, DEEP. The ad hoc committee includes citizens, representatives from local organizations and town officials.

Cryder is a member of the ad hoc committee, formerly of Save the Sound, and was on the frontlines of the nearly 20-year battle to protect the Preserve. He and fellow committee member, Susan Esty, who is also the Parks and Recreation Committee Chairman, expressed frustration at the lack of consideration given to the committee’s ideas during the plan’s development.

“We have an enormous amount of experience with this tract of land, and are not feeling heard or given weight,” Esty said. She expressed hope for future cooperative planning following the meeting and a hike with DEEP forester Alex Amendola the previous day.

Other members of the public, including abutting landowner and donor Frank Landry expressed a sense of betrayal. The

grassroots effort to preserve the property raised large and small donations from citizens. They fought to preserve an undisturbed coastal forest for conservation and recreation, not to “create a working forest.”

During a subsequent phone conversation Fortuna said that the next step in the process is to hold a public hearing where GEI will deliver their report and people can comment. A date has not been set.

Fortuna said that the report is just a current condition report with recommendations and will not be voted on. It is a report that can be changed or amended by CMC, “and I believe it will change,” Fortuna said.

Most of the attendees who spoke agree that active management may be beneficial in some areas, but that the majority of the Preserve should be untouched.

Dr. Michael Klemens has studied the Preserve since 2002, when he worked as a consultant to previous owners, Lehman Brothers/Riversound Development, LLC which had sought approval for various development plans for homes, ballfields and a golf course on the property. His job was to maximize conservation in a development context. Klemens presented a lengthy report via Zoom during the meeting and provided a written report.

“The plan as presently conceived is likely to cause unrea-

sonable harm to the public trust and the natural resources of the state,” Klemens said. “My professional opinion is that the proposed forestry plan could have a greater impact on the natural resources of The Preserve than the scaled-down development plan of Riversound Development LLC that was denied.”

“I’m not opposed to hunting, I’m not opposed to recreational use, and I am not opposed to forestry. But everything needs to be done in the right place and needs to be based on science,” Klemens said.

Hochholzer said that no work will be started without approval from the CMC and experts in the field. He invited members of the ad hoc committee and Klemens to future planning meetings.

After the meeting Cryder reported feeling “very hopeful — we achieved what we set out to achieve. We were concerned both plans might be approved, but they weren’t approved as written. It was a good day.”

“Forest management is not mandated, but generally agreed that it’s best practices, managing not just for one species, but for 50 and more, and to do that for the health of the entire ecological system,” Fortuna said, adding, “I’m glad people came out for the meeting...I think Old Saybrook’s voices were heard and I think there’s a very good path forward for the state and the town to do what’s right for the Preserve.”

## COVID

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centers in 35 states, including Connecticut.

The program began in March, and Mark Masselli, president and CEO of Community Health Center Inc., said his health centers “got Paxlovid shipped to us right off the bat.”

Masselli said people at high risk from severe reactions to COVID-19 infection, including immunocompromised patients and older residents, should “know there is a treatment out there and it is effective.”

“We’ve got adequate doses available and we’ve got a ready supply should it increase,” he said. “Unfortunately, the virus isn’t done with us. People need to be safe.”

The state said Tuesday 2,623 additional COVID cases had been identified over the previous seven days, out of 56,969 reported tests for a seven-day average positivity rate of 4.6 percent. The state reported a net increase of five patients in the hospital with COVID-19 over the previous week, for a total of 105 statewide.

When acknowledging a new COVID wave may have begun in Connecticut, state Department of Public Health Commissioner Manisha Juthani said during an interview last week that residents gathering with family and friends for the

holidays should “be aware of test-to-treat sites where oral antivirals can be dispensed if you test positive for COVID.”

“Our mission remains to protect the health and well-being of every American,” U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra said in a release. “Tackling barriers to testing and treatments remains a priority for us, including making sure people can access these tools for free, wherever they are, and even if they don’t have health insurance. This important test-to-treat initiative will help more at-risk people get the care they need if they get sick.”

Under the program, patients can be tested for COVID-19 at a participating site and, if they test positive, be immediately prescribed either Merck’s COVID-specific antiviral molnupiravir or Pfizer’s Paxlovid.

Earlier this year, Dr. Peter Hotez said during a news conference with Hartford HealthCare that antivirals offer promise in the treatment of COVID, but only if the diagnosis is made early.

“Clearly, antivirals have an important role as treatment options,” he said. “There’s a lot of hopes for Paxlovid and the new antiviral drug from Merck, which is a protease inhibitor, and it looks like a very promising drug.”

Hotez explained that a COVID infection has two phases: “The virus replication phase, the early component that happens in the days following infection, and then there’s large post-inflammatory response to the virus, which is what’s often landing people in intensive care units.”

Antivirals can be effective treatments, but only during the first phase of the illness, Hotez said.

“That means as soon as you start having symptoms and get a diagnostic test, you have to be pretty quick off the mark getting antiviral treatment. Otherwise, it’s not going to be effective,” he said.

Connecticut has dozens of test-to-treat sites, including the Fair Haven Community Health Center in New Haven, Physician One Urgent Care in Hamden, Norwalk and Newtown, CVS on East Putnam Avenue in the Riverside section of Greenwich, Pershing Drive in Ansonia and Washington Avenue in North Haven, among others.

Masselli said, “there are a lot of locations that are using this,” including Community Health Centers “all across the state from Stamford to Groton and Clinton to Enfield, and points in between.”

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has set up a test-to-treat site locator online.

## ENERGY

From page A1

an University, and is actively looking to hire local people to help achieve one of its goals — growing the offshore wind energy industry.

Geo SubSea supervises and manages everything that goes into such development, including environmental surveying, data collection and construction preparation. It was first company in the state to get involved in this industry, the president said.

“We’re helping move these renewable energy projects forward,” Gardner explained.

Wind turbines built on the coast and offshore can harvest more wind than turbines set up on land, Gardner said. The industry, which began in the late 1990s, has finally started to see some growth, but the United States is still far behind, he said.

“We’re about 30 years behind Europe,” he explained.

While there are thousands of offshore wind farms along the coasts in Europe, there are only a handful on the East coast. There are a few south of Block Island, and two located off the coast of Virginia Beach.

Through the work Geo SubSea has done, in collaboration with other like-minded companies in and around the state, the nation’s first commercial scale offshore wind farm will soon open on Martha’s

Vineyard.

Staff are also heavily involved in another project known as Park City Wind, which entails building Connecticut’s first offshore wind farm south of Bridgeport. It would deliver renewable energy to the Connecticut power grid.

This could make energy both cheaper and greener for Connecticut residents.

Gardner explained why this work is important, saying it is necessary to both develop enough energy for the world’s population and fight climate change.

“Eventually, fossil fuels may not be available, so we need to transition energy sources toward renewable options,” Gardner said. “People need to think globally and act locally to improve and conserve the earth’s natural resources.”

It’s a mission he and his staff are very passionate about.

“I personally collected rocks, crystals and minerals as a kid and I loved the water, so I combined the two and went to college to become a marine geologist,” Gardner said.

“The GSS staff have similar background stories and we all love science, and know how important renewable energy is to society,” he added. “We enjoy our jobs, and it gives us a larger purpose to our work to try and leave the planet in better condition when we depart.”

More information about Geo SubSea and the work it does is available at geosubseaconsulting.com.



Sherab Gyaltsen / Contributed photo

From left, wife and husband Tsering Yangzom and Sherab Gyaltsen own Tibetan Kitchen at 574 Main St. in Middletown. They plan to move the restaurant to a smaller location in New Haven this fall. The Middletown community will still be able to enjoy Tibetan cuisine when a similar restaurant opens at the location in early July.

## KITCHEN

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“We thought a lot about it,” Gyaltsen said.

Also, the lease will be up soon. “It was the right time,” he added.

The couple does robust business in the city.

“Everything was perfect for us,” said Gyaltsen, who, with his wife, bought a house in Woodbridge to be close to the New Haven location. “We have been back and forth from there. That’s why I can’t operate a business in Middletown properly. We wanted to downsize a little bit,” he said.

The couple prioritizes their downtime and shuts the restaurant down every August for 45 days of vacation. “We wanted to work at the same time, we wanted to have a quality of life, so we thought the small restaurant, takeout, delivery, is best for us.”

A good number of their customers are Yale and Wesleyan university students, and the couple hopes they will frequent the new location.

Lt. Gov. Susan Bysiewicz,

**“We wanted to work at the same time, we wanted to have a quality of life, so we thought the small restaurant, takeout, delivery, is best for us.”**

Sherab Gyaltsen

a lifelong Middletown resident, is a big fan.

“My family and I have enjoyed many delicious meals at Tibetan Kitchen, and we will miss having them here in Middletown,” she said. “We decided to first visit after hearing it was one of Jacques Pépin’s favorite restaurants in Connecticut.”

Tibetan Kitchen was reviewed by the New York Times in Oct. 2014 in a story, “A Taste of the Himalayas, Near Sea Level,” by Sarah Gold.

“The tiny, crimson-hued dining room of Tibetan Kitchen, with 24 seats grouped at lacquered tables, is humble, but the ambiance is both cheery and authentic,” Gold said in the article.

“Surrounded by trendier, flashier-looking places that cater to the Wesleyan University community, Tibetan Kitchen, with its understated

yellow sign and entryway hung with faded prayer flags, makes a modest first impression,” she wrote.

The new owners are in the process of developing a menu, said Gyaltsen, who declined to name who they are until they an official announcement is made.

“I am delighted to learn that a new Tibetan family will be filling the space, Bysiewicz said. “Now both Middletown and New Haven will have the chance to try some amazing Tibetan cuisine, like my favorite, vegetable momos and avocado potato salad!”

She and her husband wish the couple every success in their future, she added.

Presently, dine-in is offered by appointment only. For information, visit Tibetan Kitchen on Facebook or the website at tibetankitchen.us.