

Briefs

Green Drinks at Westport Playhouse

WESTPORT — The Westport Country Playhouse will hold a Fairfield County GreenDrinks networking event from 6 to 8 p.m. on Saturday, May 2. The event will include organic food, beverages and local sustainable businesses offering eco-friendly goods and services.

The event is being held in conjunction with the Westport/Weston Chamber of Commerce and include a performance of Around the World in 80 Days.

Tickets are \$15 in advance; \$20 at the door. Advanced tickets may be purchased by visiting: <http://playhouse.eventbrite.com>.

For more information, or to discuss exhibiting or sponsorship opportunities for this or other events, contact Heather Burns-DeMelo at (203) 470-8020 or info@ctgreenscene.com.

Career Coach to visit library

NORWALK — ConnecticutWorks Career Coach will be at the Norwalk Public Library from 10 a.m. to noon and 1 to 3 p.m. on Monday, April 27, to continue its free job search assistance to the public. Staff from ConnecticutWorks will provide general assistance with job searching including resume writing, and online job applications. This job search assistance includes help with resumes, cover letters, and online job applications. All services are free.

The ConnecticutWorks van will be on Mott Avenue outside the library. For more information, call (203) 899-2780 ext. 109.

Norwalk Chamber to hold events

NORWALK — The Greater Norwalk Chamber of Commerce will hold Business After Hours event from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 28, at The Ginger Man at 99 Washington St. Cost is \$20 for members and \$35 for non-members.

For more information or to reserve a spot, call (203) 866-2521 or email info@norwalkchamberofcommerce.com

Ash Creek Saloon holding food drive

NORWALK — Ash Creek Saloon at 2 Wilton Ave., will hold a food drive for St. Vincent de Paul food pantry, starting Monday, April 27, and running through Monday, May 4. The restaurant will be collecting non-perishable food items. On both Monday, April 27, and Monday, May 4, children will receive a free kids meal by donating a non-perishable item.

Also, on Monday, May 4, Ash Creek Saloon will hold a celebrity bartending night with all gratuities being donated to the St. Vincent de Paul food pantry.

Norwalk company denies claims made in class action suit

NORWALK
By CHRIS BOSAK
Hour Staff Writer

The law firm of Meiselman, Denlea, Packman, Carton & Eberz has filed a class action lawsuit against a subsidiary of Norwalk-based Vertrue Incorporated. Vertrue, a membership marketing company, disputes the action and calls the suit "factually baseless and legally meritless."

Saying it is acting "on behalf

of consumers nationwide," the law firm filed the claim against Coverdell & Company, a subsidiary of Vertrue, and Universal Health Card, for "perpetrating one of the largest consumer health benefits scams in the United States through the placement of deceptive advertisements in newspapers across the country."

The class action, filed in the U. S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio Eastern Division, states that the

medical providers that UHC and Coverdell claim accept the Universal Health Card ("Card") do not accept it. The firm claims Coverdell and UHC's advertisements "serve as a pretext for gaining access to consumers' credit and debit card information in order to charge fees for nonexistent services."

The suit seeks compensatory damages and refunds of all fees charged to consumers for the Card. It also seeks reimbursement of expenses, interest and

fees incurred; attorneys' fees; and the costs of the suit.

George Thomas, senior vice president of Vertrue, said his company does not use newspapers for advertising and does not market on behalf of Universal Health Card. He is also confident the "frivolous suit will be withdrawn or dismissed."

Thomas said the same law firm has attempted to file suit against Vertrue in the past and withdrew the case.

Insurance company celebrates 50 years

STAMFORD
By CHRIS BOSAK
Hour Staff Writer

Paul Troy has seen a lot of businesses come and go.

"Even some companies you thought would be around forever because they were well-run and conservative are no longer in business," he said.

Troy must know something those companies do not. He founded Troy Insurance 50 years ago in Stamford and the company is still going in strong in the city. Not surprisingly, Troy said one of the keys to the company's longevity is a special focus on customer service.

"We get a relationship with customers," he said. "It's friendly and service minded."

He added that Stamford was the perfect place for him to start the company.

"Stamford is unique and it's been that way for a long time," Troy said. "The town is just a friendly place. That made it easy to do business here."

A former insurance teacher at New York University and UConn Stamford, Troy decided to start a business in 1959. He recalls working seven days a week and being: "Chairman of the board from the beginning, which makes you feel good, but you also have to empty the baskets."

Troy Insurance offers property, casualty, liability, life and health



Hour photo/MATTHEW VINCI
Paul Troy, who founded Troy Insurance in Stamford 50 years ago, stands at his desk.

insurance, in addition to other types of coverage.

"Our greatest obligation to you, should you suffer a loss, is to mobilize all efforts to quickly give you the advice and assistance needed on a personal basis," Troy said. "Your problem becomes our problem."

Troy said he has been surrounded by a good staff, which is another reason the business has survived for five decades. For example, Allison Gagliardi, the

company's vice president, has been with Troy Insurance for 25 years.

Another manager, Kara Condlin, has been with the company for 11 years.

Now 79, Troy still goes to work every day at the office on Hoyt Street and plans to keep doing so for the foreseeable future.

"I hate doing housework, so I'll keep going," he said.

For more information visit <http://www.troyinsurance.com>.

Who's behind the mystery college gifts?

NEW YORK
By JUSTIN POPE
Associated Press

It's the question on everyone's lips in philanthropy: Who is the mysterious donor giving away millions of dollars to at least a dozen colleges across the country?

A circle of successful businesswomen? A publicity-shy (or playful) billionaire? Oprah?

What's so unusual is that not even the colleges themselves know the answer. But the parlor game is afoot, with only one real clue: So far, all the colleges are led by women.

Coincidence? Unlikely. With about 23 percent of U.S. college presidents women, the odds of a dozen randomly selected institutions all having female leaders are 1 in 50 million.

Melissa Berman, president and CEO of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors in New York, thinks the donor might be "a woman who maybe grew up in an era in which the opportunity to go to college was not taken for granted by women, and who feels that women in leadership positions are important motivators for women to be able to achieve their potential."

Brian O'Rourke, director of development at Clemson University in South Carolina, imagines "a group of high-powered women that want to make sure women presidents in higher education are successful."

"My gut tells me it's a group of people sitting around saying, 'Let's just make a huge difference,'" he said. (Clemson has not gotten a contribution from the mystery donor.)

The gifts, ranging from \$1 million to perhaps \$10 million, and totaling up to \$68.5 million so far, have arrived over the past seven weeks in similarly secretive fashion at colleges around the country, including Purdue in Indiana, Montclair State in New Jersey, and the University of Southern Mississippi. All were contacted by a law firm or other intermediary and given a highly unusual condition: College officials had to promise — in writing, in some cases — not to try to find out the donor's identity.

The donations arrived the form of in cashier's checks, or checks from law firms or other intermediaries. In most cases, the donor specified that the money be used for financial aid.

Michigan State

see WHO, D3

The end of TV — cutting the cable

Frisch's third law states, "Technology changes, always."

More than 30 years ago, cable and satellite began to replace broadcast TV. Internet video will replace cable and satellite TV, soon and in much less time. What is a cable company president to do? If I ran the cable company, I would make a lot more money than I do. I would also be thinking, "How do I shift from the historical value-added content model to the utility-pipe model of the future, without having my revenue and profits sharply decline?"

Cable has two advantages that are not eroded by changes in content distribution. They have very fat pipes and typically only one or two competitors for their customers. Cable companies make

money from subscriber fees for TV, Internet and telephone. They may be paid carriage fees by some cable channels, and they sell advertising space. The latter two revenue streams are under attack as content rapidly moves to the Internet.

Have you ever watched a show like CSI or The Office on the Internet? You can if you have broadband. Cable gets no income



RICHARD FRISCH
The Help Desk

from this type of content. Advertising dollars go directly to the content producers and there is no way for the cable company to insert their own advertising. Pay-video on the Internet will happen, just as HBO came to cable in the 1970s. Viewers will shift their video dollars from premium cable channels to premium video websites. Traditional TV viewers will decline as Internet video-on-demand (VOD) increases. Cable networks, like TNT, Fox News, and A&E, are likely to wither and die as viewers move elsewhere. The current economic climate accelerates this trend.

This leaves subscriber fees as the primary revenue, perhaps

see CUTTING, D2

Building and Land Technology takes over Stamford properties

NORWALK
Hour Staff Report

Building and Land Technology, a Norwalk-based development company, has been retained by Goldman Sachs and Lubert Adler to manage five of their commercial property assets in

Stamford, including 600 Summer Street and the four buildings known as Stamford Landing.

The announcement was made this week by Goldman Sachs officials.

All properties were previously managed by Antares.

A Goldman Sachs official said the move was based on Building and Land Technology's "proven abilities and outstanding reputation."

Building and Land Technology is also working on the 80-acre, mixed-use Harbor Point project in Stamford. The

company is working with Lubert Adler on that project.

In Norwalk, Building and Land Technology built and owns The Towers at Merritt River, a three-building complex home to companies such as Diageo, Xerox, IMS Health, GE, and Hewlett.