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Some good Italian cooking



TAMMI KNAPIK

Southington's Italian-American Festival is renowned for its food. Above, UNICO members Fran Delfino, Dan Longo and Marc Ingriselli grill up some sausage and peppers.

Weather can not stop Italian-American Festival

By ED HARRIS
Editor

It was a bit damp, but the annual Italian-American Festival went on last weekend, despite rain showers and hot and humid conditions.

This marks the sixth year for the festival and the crowds keep on growing every year. The weather did keep numbers down this year though.

The festival is sponsored by the UNICO Club, Sons of Italy and the Chamber of Commerce, with Stop & Shop as the major host.

The Sons of Italy celebrates 100 years this year

and the celebration was a big part of the festival. The club, founded in 1910, is headquartered on Center Street where the Italian-American Festival is located.

"We are proud to put this festival out," said Tom DeSanto, president of the Sons of Italy.

The festival kicked off Friday afternoon amidst rain showers. Despite the weather, the show went on, with various singers and comedians entertaining the small crowd that braved the elements.

The entertainment is known for creating large crowds of onlookers, and

this year featured many returning performers like the Southington All Stars and Aaron Caruso.

During the opening ceremonies, both the United States and the Italian anthems were sung.

"It's a nice gathering," said Delores LaPorte, as she sat underneath a tent with some friends Friday evening. The trio voiced hope that the weather would hold off and not impact the evening's entertainment.

Brian Cocchiola and his family braved the weather to get some food.

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Meridian officials still optimistic

First phase of demolition to begin shortly

By ED HARRIS
Editor

Some small work is expected to take place on the Greenway Commons project, though the overall plan is in a holding pattern due to economic issues.

Meridian Development Partners, of New York purchased the old Ideal Forging property several years ago. Their proposal, also known as the Meridian Project, was passed by the Planning & Zoning Commission in 2007.

It calls for a large condo complex, retail development and open space areas along the nearby Quinnipiac River.

The plan has had its share of ups and downs through the last several

years, including the creation of a special tax district and bonding issues that have hampered town efforts for a grant.

Town officials have given the plan enthusiastic support throughout the process, and the Meridian developers have maintained their commitment to the plan despite the setbacks.

Southington's Economic Development Coordinator Lou Perillo said Meridian was still "actively engaged" in the project and had plans to remove one of the inside buildings on the property in the coming months.

"We remain optimistic that we will move forward in the near future," said Howard Schlesinger, of Meridian, in an email interview. "Accordingly, we will be starting the first phase of the demolition shortly. To date, our project and the grant applica-

tion has received overwhelming support from the administration, the town of Southington, its elected officials and from the community as a whole."

Legislative History

In 2008, Meridian made a presentation to the Town Council about a special tax district encompassing the 14-acre parcel where the development was set to take place.

This district, which needed to be approved at the state level, would give the developers the ability to issue bonds to help finance the remediation costs at the old Ideal Forging site. The property is highly contaminated and the cost of cleaning it will amount to millions of dollars.

The initiative was approved by the state legis-

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Keeping the seniors cool

By ROB GLIDDEN
STAFF WRITER

The staff at the Mulberry Gardens assisted living facility has been using the unique Quiet Care system for years, but has found it especially useful in the current hot weather.

Quiet Care is a sensor-based system that monitors temperature in individual rooms.

It also uses motion sensors to keep track of a resident's daily activity pattern and detect changes that may signal potential health issues or emergency situations.

"This system is not a replacement for the care we offer here," said Perry Phillips, executive director

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TAMMI KNAPIK

Bryan Meccariello and Angelina Santa Maria get a hot dog from Bryan's son Garrett during the opening of Southington's Democratic Headquarters on Center Street last week.

Step Inside

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