



# The Westie Wire

*A Publication from the Mayor's Advisory Commission*



## Mayoral Address

I hope this address finds you all well. I would like to thank you for reading this newsletter which has been planned, composed, and distributed by students down the road at the University of New Haven. The Westie Wire is part of a larger effort by a group of students at UNH who form the Mayor's Advisory Commission. The MAC is all about connecting two communities; the Westies of West Haven and the student body on the UNH campus of over 6,000. We are all Westies as far as I'm concerned, and efforts like West Fest and The Westie Wire work to reinforce that relationship. There is a whole world of opportunities not being utilized, from the niche shops on Main Street to the free concerts on campus that we at City Hall and the students in the MAC aim to raise awareness of for both communities. I applaud the efforts of the MAC and look forward to continue working closely with them in building our town-school relationship even further.

Regards,

*Mayor Edward O'Brien*

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## UNH Immigration Speaker Series

*By Brandon Bush*

In response to the current political conversations happening in the world today, a committee of faculty from the Tow Institute for Youth Justice, Sociology, History, and Political Science at the University of New Haven came together to organize a speaker series that focused on topics of immigration and refugees. We recently had the opportunity to interview Dr. Paulette Pepin, the Chair of the Division of Humanities & Social Sciences, and a history professor at the University of New Haven

When asked about the reasons for this new speaker series, Dr. Pepin said “There needs to be conversations had about the current state of affairs when it comes to U.S. foreign policy.” She added, “There has been too much negative news coverage regarding the Syrian refugee crisis and immigrants in general.” At the same time, the series allowed students and faculty to share their opinions and observations about immigrations and refugees and to critique and understand the origins of misconceptions about these issues. When asked about the events thus far, Dr. Pepin was ecstatic to report that the student turnout to the events has been “fantastic!”

Dr. Pepin further explained just how intimate these events were designed to be and cited the presentation by Megan Jordi, Supervising Attorney for Catholic Migration Services in Brooklyn, New York as an example. In her presentation to students, Ms. Jordi covered why it is difficult to discuss the topic of immigration, the “us” vs “them” myth, legal immigration and the effects of foreign policies such as the Merida Initiative and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). She also discussed the reasons why people migrate and used Mexico as a case study.

We at the Westie Wire are excited to see what else will come from collaborations like these that aim at creating an environment where students and faculty can engage in a dialogue around today’s issues.



Megan Jordi, Supervising Attorney for Catholic Migration Services in Brooklyn, NY

## 88.7 WNHU, The Best College Radio Station Revolutionized by Radio Veteran

*By Brandon Bush*

WNHU is the University of New Haven’s official FM radio station, run by professional staff, students, and community volunteers.

Bruce Barber was recently hired as the new General Manager. Mr. Barber brings over 35 years of experience in both commercial and public radio to the position. He began in Geneva, New York at Hobart and William Smith Colleges and became a part time announcer in 1978. He is known for his part in the Smith and Barber morning show on WPLR.

In an interview with UNH Today he said, “College radio really existed in the past as a way for students to experiment and learn.” He continued, “I want to take that and expand on it. If just one student gets to have the same opportunities that I had, it’s a win for me. I think it is going to be a lot more than one before we are all said and done.”



Bruce Barber at WNHU Radio Station

## Whitie Bensen's Legacy Lives On

By Benjamin Atwater

Whitie Bensen and his store are synonymous with the town of West Haven. Open since 1965, the business on Saw Mill Road began with first-generation American Frank "Whitie" Bensen selling hockey equipment out of the trunk of his car. With immigrant parents from Denmark, Bensen had a dream of spreading his love of hockey to all. From the trunk, operations moved into the Bensen family basement.

In the 1960s, Whitie married a Westie and moved to West Haven, where Whitie Bensen Athletic Equipment has been running ever since. Stressing a new and used model that uses trade-ins, Whitie believed that anyone who wanted to play hockey or lacrosse should be able to regardless of economic status. The trade-in model allows for this accommodation.

Whitie Bensen Athletic Equipment is the most distinguished hockey-lacrosse store in Fairfield and New Haven counties. He draws athletes from even farther away, including many who stop in West Haven to get supplies on the way up to vacations on Martha's Vineyard.

The store serves customers of all ages and skills, from five-year-old initiates learning the games to retired individuals in what has been coined the Beer League. Local universities including Yale, Quinnipiac, and the University of New Haven also look to Whitie Bensen's to meet their athletic equipment needs.

After experimenting with satellite locations in neighboring towns, the business came back to West Haven, where it has grown from a single store to over half a shopping plaza. With this growth, Whitie Bensen's has supported programs to assist young and aspiring athletes. Current programs include a scholarship fund and a training program, Rising Star, which teaches young hockey players basic skills to carry on the sport for the rest of their lives.

Very much a family man, Whitie passed the business on to his son Kyle, who continues to run the shop. After studying education in college, Kyle returned to the family business and revamped the company, which is about to celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. To mark this occasion, Kyle will be running many giveaways throughout the summer as well as the annual cookout on Whitie's birthday: August 22.



*Whitie and Kyle Bensen in the current store on Saw Mill Road*



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## UNH Model United Nations

By Brandon Bush

Model United Nations (MUN) is an educational simulation/academic competition in which students learn about diplomacy and international relations through simulating the inner workings of the United Nations. Student delegates refine research, public speaking, debating, and writing skills, while practicing perspective-taking, persuasion, strategic thinking, and problem-solving. All of these skills are engrained in students to prepare them to compete in National MUN conference competitions, including those in New York and Washington, D.C.

Model United Nations is a cooperative, hands-on learning experience that allows students to confront a range of international issues with the perspective of their assigned country. Through a variety of experiences (including research, preparation, committee sessions, hallway discussions, and public speaking). Students develop an appreciation of different points of view, experience the challenges of negotiation, see the rewards of cooperation, expand their world view, and discover the human side of international relations and diplomacy.

At the most recent NMUN conference in New York this March, delegates from the University of New Haven represented the delegation of Paraguay, a small, land-locked Latin American country located between Brazil, Argentina, and Bolivia. For the first time, the UNH team won the Outstanding Delegation award in addition to individual awards for Outstanding Delegate and Outstanding Position Paper.

Another first for the program was the large influx of new delegates that had no prior MUN experience. Dr. Chris Haynes, coordinator and assistant professor of Political Science, shared his thoughts of this semester's students with *UNH Today*. "What I see as the best part of Model UN is the remarkable degree of personal and professional growth that it facilitates," Haynes said. "I saw students that lacked confidence gain it, shy students who would cringe at giving a public speech confidently deliver one... This confidence, these skills, and this new reality is what will propel them long after they leave UNH."



UNH MUN Delegate Brandon Bush at the UN's Great Hall during Plenary Session



UNH MUN 2016



UNH MUN 2016 E-Board

## WestFest Round Two

By Benjamin Atwater

If you were in town last year around the end of the summer, chances are you heard of WestFest. Held on the West Haven Green on August 29th, the event served as a celebration of all things West Haven, including local businesses as well as various organizations from the University of New Haven. With over fifty businesses and clubs in attendance, the event was a knock-out hit, bringing hundreds out to feast on the fruit of the hard work and planning of the Mayor's Advisory Commission, the sponsoring organization. However, the event was far from a one-and-done deal. Already, the Mayor's Advisory Commission is planning WestFest 2016.

The West Haven Green has been booked with City Hall, school clubs and local businesses are clamoring to become a part of what will surely turn into a West Haven tradition, along with the Apple Fest and Savin Rock Festival.

Last year, many food trucks were present to serve some of Westies' favorite cuisine. A plethora of clubs were also present. Fraternities from UNH ran field games, honor societies ran trivia, and West Haven High School's Peer Advocates oversaw a children's obstacle course. The MAC ran a dunk tank, where Mayor O'Brien, John Lewis, and other city officials were plunged into water to raise money for MAC's efforts.

This year, WestFest is going to be bigger and better. Mark your calendars for September 10th and come celebrate the best West Haven has to offer!



## Hidden Secrets of West Haven

By Westie Wire Staff

Savin Rock has been West Haven's most iconic landmark since the town's settlement in 1648. Now a site on the jogging path, the nearby beach also used to be home to the Savin Rock Amusement Park, which operated from the 1870s to 1966. Forgotten in time, the park had many attractions, from roller coasters to fun houses to a movie theater. Seen below is what remains of the boardwalk that hosted these attractions, which delighted over one million visitors annually. More remnants of the park can be found in the Savin Rock Museum.



Photo by Brandon Bush

## Cappetta's Italian Imports

Cappetta's Italian Imports has been a fixture in the Allingtown section of the city, serving authentic Italian food and as well as providing the community with quality Italian specialties. Cappetta's is a family-owned business started by Aniello and Palma Cappetta. Their sons Donato and Luigi Cappetta now handle the operations. Cappetta's offers a full-service Italian deli as well as gourmet grocery items imported from Italy. Pizza and dinners are also available as well as catering for all occasions.



## Local Events

### WHHS & Bailey Middle School Jazz Band Concert

Date: 4/28 @ 7PM

Location: WHHS

### West Haven Youth Lacrosse Day

Date: 4/30 @ 10AM to 4:30PM

Location: WHHS Ken Strong Stadium

### WHHS PTSA Barnes and Noble Fundraiser

Date: 4/30 @ 11:00AM to 4:00PM

Location: Barnes and Noble Milford

Benefits PTSA, free musical entertainment

### Westies Care Annual Celebration of Education & Community

Date: 5/2 @ 6:00PM

Location: West Haven Italian American Civic Association, benefits scholarship fund for West Haven High Students

### UNH Cabaret

Date: 5/2 @ 8:00PM

Location: UNH Bucknall Theater  
free admission

### UNH Chargers VS PACE Baseball Game

Date: 5/3 @ 1:00PM

Location: Frank Viera Field

Free admission

### West Haven K-12 Fine Arts Festival

Date: 5/4 @ 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM

Location: Savin Rock Conference Center

### Seth Haley Spring Carnival

Date: 5/21 @ 11:00AM to 4:00PM

Location: Haley Elementary School

*If you want your event featured in a future edition of The Westie Wire, please contact our staff!*

**Meet the Westie Wire Staff!**  
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## What is KOMBIDO?

KOMBIDO translates literally to the “way of combination”. The combination is not simply a combination of Judo, Karate, Kung Fu, and Tai Chi but instead is a combination of martial arts fundamentals such as stance, blocks, strikes, and foot maneuvers along with strategic timing, distancing, entering, trapping, and take downs.



These skills provide students with an effective and efficient system of self-defense with the goal to help the individual find balance through practice and wisdom. KOMBIDO provides the student with physical balance through stance and foot maneuver practice with and without partners. Mental balance is also achieved as the student learns how to make proper self-defense decisions within a short timeframe. Finally, spiritual balance is achieved as the distinction between right from wrong becomes clear, freeing one from the chains of doubt, fear, disbelief, and low self-esteem.

In the end, KOMBIDO is a combination of all of these things - creating a family of martial artists that share their challenges, their victories, and their faith.

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