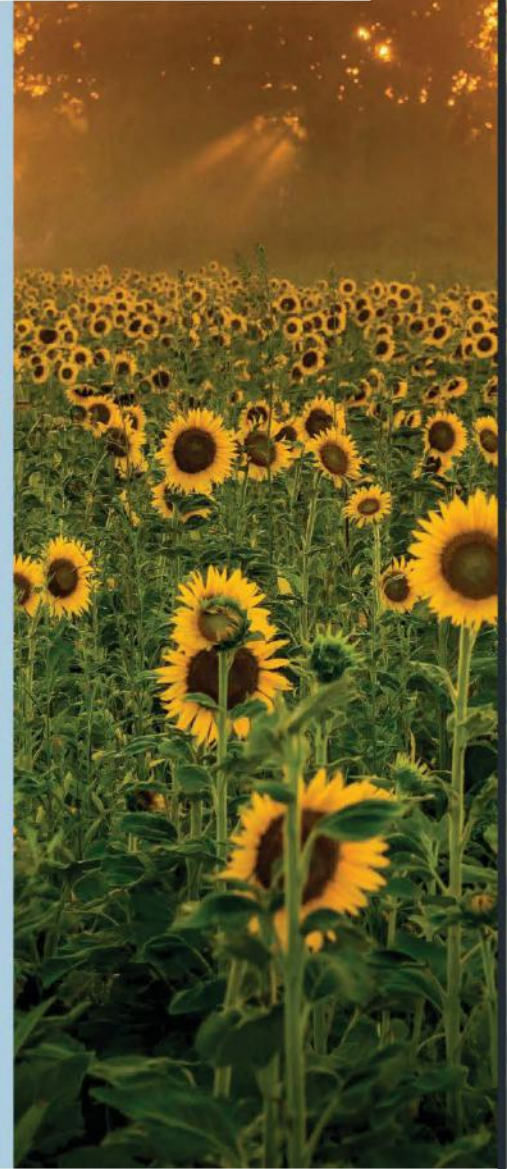
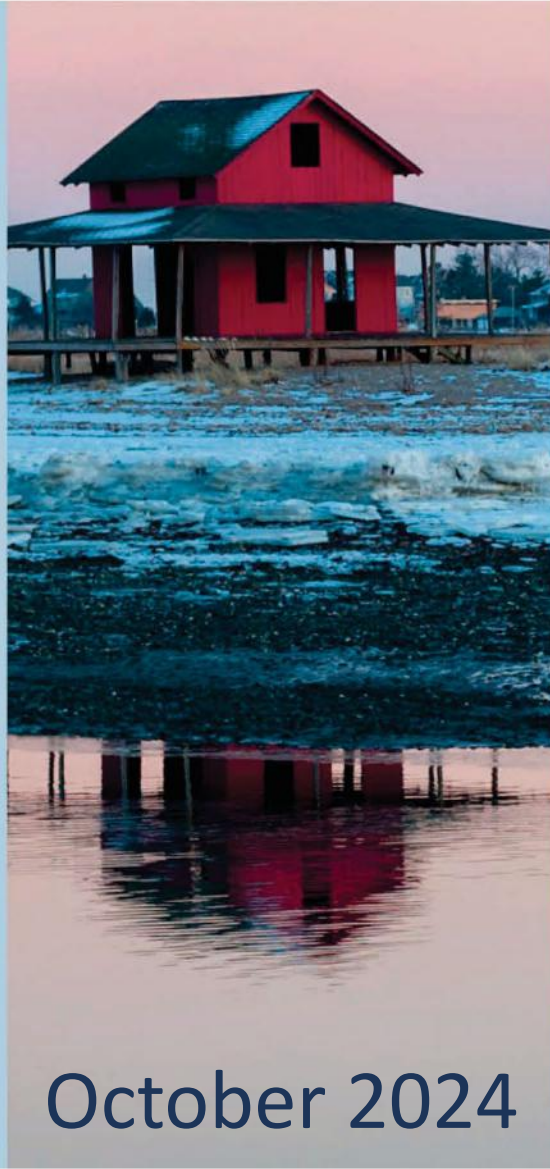
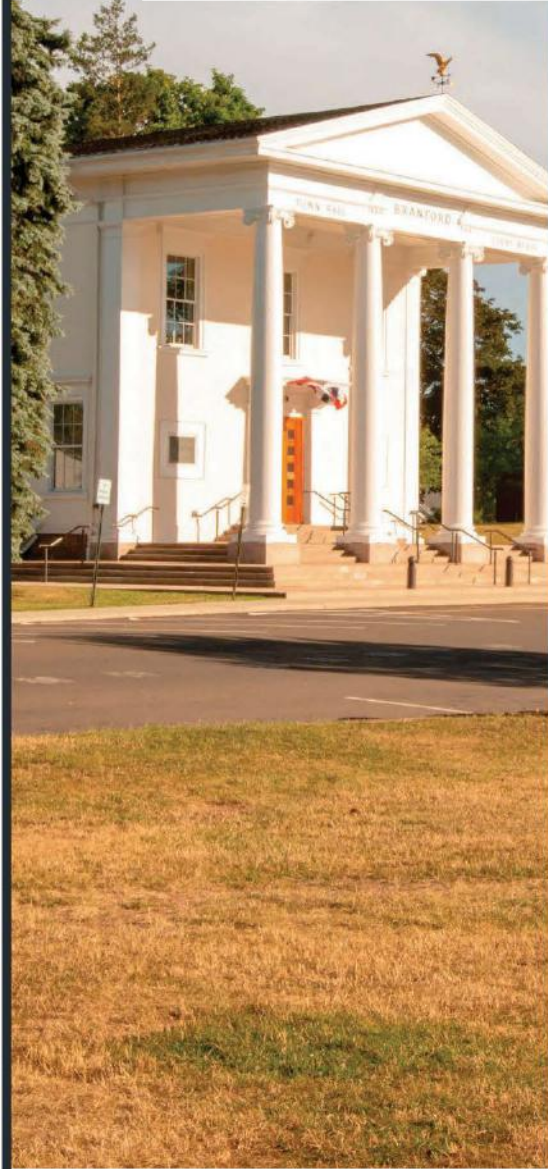


SHORELINE CONNECTIONS

A Magazine About Events, Businesses and
People Along the Shoreline

Branford, Guilford, North Branford



October 2024

 SHORELINE
CHAMBER

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Meet Our Members

Meet Our Members

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2024 CANDIDATE FORUM



Thank you to the standing room only crowd that joined the Shoreline Chamber CT for our 2024 Candidate Forum on Tuesday, October 15th.

We thank Rep. Vincent Candelora, 86th House District, Rep. Moira Rader 98th House District, Rep. John-Michael Parker 101st House District, Lisa Deane Candidate 101st House District, Sen. Christine Cohen 12th Senate District, Candidate Paul Crisci 12th Senate District, Rep. Robin Comey 102nd House District, and Candidate Ray Ingraham 102nd House District for their participation.

We were happy that the League of Women Voters of the East Shore partnered with us to conduct this forum. Thank you to Dan Armin, co-moderator, as well as Carol Reimers and Elise Lowe from the LWV.

And many thanks to BCTV who filmed the forum

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BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT JOSE CUAPIO

Jose Cuapio is the co-owner of Floor Craze, a flooring shop in Guilford, and is also a Gold Member.



Where you're originally from?

I grew up in Los Angeles, California, and then I moved here when I was 12. My parents wanted a quieter pace of life.

Where do you live?

I live in East Haven.

Can you tell me a little bit about yourself and what you do at Floor Craze?

I'm responsible for helping customers find a solution to their flooring needs, as well as finding solutions when things don't go as planned. I'm also in charge of all the different initiatives as far as new things that we want to bring on board, whether it's product or services to make renovations easier for every homeowner.

Can you tell me a little bit about the services that you provide?

Beyond simply choosing a floor, the experience for our customers is about convenience and staying connected. Today, customers expect to handle much of the process from their phones, and we make that possible with more options for email and text communications. Flooring and home renovations are personal, yet most people are on the go, so we've adapted to that. No more trips just to sign a quote—now customers can approve documents and make payments from their phones or computers. On complex projects, we use texts to keep everyone updated, even when a quick phone call isn't possible. This approach keeps customers informed and allows them to make confident decisions for their homes.

How long has Floor Craze been around?

We opened in 2006. We used to work with the original owner, Lee, and we took over back in 2015, so we're going almost 10 years now.

What would you say sets you apart from the big box stores?

I think it's the service and attention to the customer's needs. Big box stores are very convenient for everything, no matter whether it's flooring or home decorations, but I think the time that we take to really understand the customer is what sets us apart. The most common question I get is "what's the best floor?" And I have to help customers really think about it by asking things like "what's the best floor for you?" which means I have to really understand their needs because the same product can perform very differently depending on the household. A very common question I get is, "I really like this light color, but how will it last?", so I ask questions like "what's the shoe policy at the house? Is it shoes on, shoes off?" "Do people take snacks upstairs?" "Who gardens? Are they taking their shoes or boots off when they come inside?", etc. My job is to really understand how the family lives so I can make the best recommendation because you shouldn't just love your floor once it's done, you should love it down the road. Thankfully, we get a lot of customers who will come back for different projects and say, "you know, I still love my floor!" years later.

Is here anything exciting that Floor Craze has coming up?

We're transitioning to new software just to make the user experience a lot easier. I think something else that sets us apart is the actual installation, which we do very well because we send our team members to trainings all the time because it's an ever evolving industry. We're always looking at new products, new ways of installation and new materials. We're always looking to improve our practices because there's always room for improvement to learn!

There is also some software that we're going to be hopefully onboarding and done by next year which will make everything more streamlined and allow us to provide faster service for customers. We're glad that we're able to provide a lot of convenience to customers when they need things and we're able to make things work, but that's honestly because of the relationships we've built with our vendors.

What was your earliest involvement with the chamber?

I think when we opened up or the following year. There was someone from the chamber that came to introduce themselves, and I think shortly after, I was offered an opportunity to participate in Raise the Roof's "Dancing with the Stars" gala because someone had dropped out and they needed a fill in, so I did that! That was the start of me getting more involved with the chamber and the community. We are also a Gold Member and routinely Gold Sponsors of the chamber's Annual Excellence Awards, Women of Excellence Awards and Holiday BASH.

Do you feel like it's helped your business being able to network through the chamber?

Absolutely! I think there's a misconception that a chamber and networking is only for what you need. One of my greatest joys is connecting members with one another. We all face challenges in our business operations, and finding solutions can be tough.

When I hear someone express their frustrations, I often think of another member who might offer valuable insights. I've been in those frustrating situations myself, whether it's dealing with merchant services or organizing the warehouse, and it's incredibly helpful to reach out to fellow members for guidance.

What's your current position with the board?

Currently I am a board member at large.

What's a fun fact or something that people should know about you?

I may annoy some of my company reps, but I believe in making choices with confidence—something I value in our customers as well. I love hearing about their visions and ensuring they know there are many more possibilities beyond what they've seen. People often stick to familiar patterns; I see customers shop for hours, only to choose something that their spouse points out is just like what they already have. That's okay, as we are creatures of habit. My goal is to encourage them to think outside the box. By asking questions and guiding them, I help customers expand their vision. We often underestimate our ability to recognize what we truly like.

What's your favorite spot on the shoreline?

That's tough. I think any restaurant that's by the water is great to be able to smell the sea, enjoy food, and just feel the sun.



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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE –

Staying Ahead of the Curve

By: Sean Lentner – Lenter Technology



Businesses today need to be innovative and automated in order to stay competitive in their markets. Lentner Technology is no different; in order to continue to provide cutting edge modern services we need to be the purveyors of everything digitally new. This also means we need to know what is going to scale with businesses and further know what businesses should not be wasting money on.

When my company was asked to speak last week at Microsoft's office in New York City I was interested to hear what the audience had experiences in all things AI. I was surprised to see that most businesses were very interested in the topic but slightly intimidated by the technology aspect. The AI we are referring to in this article is really what the majority of businesses will use and should be the least intimidating. Think about the output you desire and not how the sausage is made. Technology should always scale to your business needs, meaning if there is no ROI you should not be using it. With that, AI is one of the first products, (since the internet and email), that all businesses will be able to utilize from a cost perspective. The topic of our discussion at Microsoft, who everyone knows is aggressively promoting Microsoft CoPilot, was how to utilize AI to deliver prompt data analysis from information available but difficult to examine. Imagine a restaurant with an expensive Point of Sale system that spits out dozens of reports that someone then has to decide how to analyze and present a solution...this would take hours if they have the time to do it. Imagine the restaurant having the ability to see that their schedules don't match their payroll, or that their highest selling menu item is the least profitable because of the itemized costs of products and prep time...

Artificial intelligence is going to allow businesses to analyze data faster, deliver better customer service and in many instances help identify areas that are wasteful timewise and cost wise. Sure, there are concerns around AI, such as having your bosses voice impersonated to scam you into giving them information, but that can be protected by simply putting pass codes in place and following a strict "trust but verify" policy. The benefit of AI is a far cry from negative. Have you ever heard the saying "the best company is the one with no employees?".

CONTINUED

Don't look to replace your employees with task driven AI tools but eliminate the tasks your employees are doing so that they can use their time to deliver more powerful roles in your business.

About 6 months ago a law firm came to us when they heard we were at the forefront of designing language modules for businesses to help them increase profitability. We asked them what their bottlenecks were, and they were quick to say that each of their lawyers had varying degrees of experience writing agreements and the amount of billable time was widely varied and unpredictable. They were not monetizing this part of their business, and in some ways were not even profiting from this service. Lentner fed 30 years of agreements, in this case and used various language modules to teach us what had been standardized and executed on an average basis. From there, we were able to templatize the best possible standard version of a prenuptial agreement with data that supported the probability of it being a mutually agreed upon engagement.

Today, this law firm can use a paralegal to write a prenuptial agreement in a fraction of the time the attorneys were; they are able to bill a consistent hourly rate and provide their attorneys with the benefit of spending valuable time on services that a lower costing employee can perform. Generative AI is going to transform the SMB market and empower their operations with data analysis that used to only be accessible to enterprise businesses.

“The trust factor—that the product works and is scalable—is important. With Artificial Intelligence, we can always be innovative and create something very efficient, and that’s where you get ROI for the customer; by creating a unique solution for their unique business needs.” – Sean Lentner

The logo for Lentner Technology, featuring the word "lentner" in a blue, lowercase, sans-serif font above the word "technology" in a purple, lowercase, sans-serif font. The logo is set against a white rectangular background.

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SENIOR LIVING

Thank you **Holiday by Atria Senior Living** for hosting members of the Shoreline Chamber's Net90 on October 23rd. Members met casually over drinks and hors d'oeuvres, presented their organizations and offerings. Thank you for the nice evening!

COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

Chamber events are highlighted in Green

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|----------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| NOVEMBER 1, FRIDAY | Alpine Haus Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting! | 4:00PM-4:30PM | Apline Haus in Branford | details |
| NOVEMBER 2, SATURDAY | Gift of Life | 8:30AM - 1:00PM | Branford CrossFit | details |
| NOVEMBER 2, SATURDAY | Health and Wellness Open House | 9:00AM - 12:00PM | Soundview YMCA | details |
| NOVEMBER 4, MONDAY | Strategies for Managing Life Transitions Support Group | 12:30PM - 2:00PM | Women and Family Life Center | details |
| NOVEMBER 6, WEDNESDAY | SCORE Webinar: Accessing Non-Profit Grants, Sponsorships, and Resources | 10:00AM - 11:30AM | Online | details |
| NOVEMBER 7, THURSDAY | SCORE Webinar: ChatGPT, AI, and How They Can Help Your Small Business | 12:00PM - 1:30PM | Online | details |
| NOVEMBER 11, MONDAY | Strategies for Managing Life Transitions Support Group | 12:30PM - 2:00PM | Women and Family Life Center | details |
| NOVEMBER 11, MONDAY | 23rd Annual Lasagna Dinner | 5:00PM - 6:30PM | Guilford Community Center | details |
| NOVEMBER 12, TUESDAY | Gold & Silver Members Thank you Cocktail Hour | 5:00PM - 6:00PM | Woodwinds in Branford | details |
| NOVEMBER 12, TUESDAY | Business After Hours | 6:00PM - 7:30PM | Woodwinds in Branford | details |
| NOVEMBER 15, FRIDAY | 2024 Gala of Stars: Dancing for the Cause | 6:30PM - 11:00PM | Woodwinds in Branford | details |
| NOVEMBER 15-17, FRI-SATURDAY | Ordinary Days | Click link for times | First Church in Guilford | details |
| NOVEMBER 16, SATURDAY | 18th Annual Gala for Epilepsy | 5:00PM - 9:00PM | Aquaturf | details |
| NOVEMBER 18, MONDAY | Strategies for Managing Life Transitions Support Group | 12:30PM - 2:00PM | Women and Family Life Center | details |
| NOVEMBER 20, SATURDAY | Holiday Cocktail Class at Madison Beach Hotel | 6:30PM - 8:00PM | Madison Beach Hotel | details |
| NOVEMBER 21, THURSDAY | Estate Planning 101: Protect Your Family and Your Finances | 6:00PM - 7:00PM | Women and Family Life Center | details |
| NOVEMBER 25, MONDAY | Strategies for Managing Life Transitions Support Group | 12:30PM - 2:00PM | Women and Family Life Center | details |
| DECEMBER 10, TUESDAY | Holiday BAsH at Bill Miller's Castle | 5:30PM - 9:30PM | Bill Miller's Castle, Branford | details |
| DECEMBER 4-15 | Legacy Theatre Presents "A Christmas Carol" | Click link for times | Legacy Theatre, Branford | details |

[Click here for full list of events.](#)

Guilford Youth Mentoring Celebrating 25 Years!



Bill Russell, the NBA MVP, once said that “there is no such thing as other people’s children” and working in positive youth development, we see over and over again that our communities both embrace this philosophy and benefit from it. There are relatively concrete, simple actions that adults can take to help ensure that young people have the tools they need to grow into healthy, resilient adults.

In 1990, the SEARCH Institute identified 40 internal and external assets (examples are possessing the skills to make difficult decisions and cope with adversity as well as having positive adults in their lives who aren’t their parents and having a community that values youth) and if kids have a fair number of them, their chances are good that they will be able to smoothly navigate the path to adulthood and will possess the skills they need to be assets themselves to the communities where they live. Conversely, kids with a low number of assets are at risk of anxiety, depression, bullying, substance use, unhealthy relationships etc. A strength of our shoreline communities is that many of our kids stay or return to live, work and raise their families here, so there is a direct benefit to investing in them and recognizing them as the resource that they are. Their enthusiasm and their outside-the-box thinking can energize any project where they are involved and from years of working with them, it is clear that they want to make a difference and they care a lot about the world. So how can we best support our youth as they grow, develop personal responsibility and encourage their potential?

Some of the most recent SEARCH research laid out the Developmental Relationships Framework (which although aimed at youth is good for adults to keep in mind for our own relationships as well). Developmental Relationships are connections through which young people discover who they are, cultivate abilities to shape their own lives, and learn how to engage with and contribute to the world around them.

How to achieve this? Five key elements of Developmental Relationships are:

- to express care
- challenge growth
- provide support
- share power
- expand possibilities

CONTINUED

No one adult can ensure that our youth have all the resources, opportunities and encouragement they need to thrive, but when we work together, we can make a measurable difference. There are all sorts of ways to do this, and it starts with saying hello with a smile. Mentors, whether formal or informal, have a real impact. Coaches, employers, neighbors, Scout leaders all have an opportunity to make a lasting difference. You can also have a real impact on your children's friends, your grandchildren, nieces and nephews etc.

Encouraging kids to map out their relationships to develop their awareness of their web of support, their social capital, can help them to build and strengthen their capacity for taking healthy risks and for learning, growing and ultimately thriving.

It's important to recognize that it isn't hard to make a real difference and you don't need special training. Listening with both ears, being a cheerleader, offering choices and asking a few open ended questions can help a kid to feel seen, to try on a new identity, and according to one of our GHS grads, to "shoot for dreams that I used to think were outside my reach." And everyday, we can see the difference that adults make when they spend time with our kids. One of the elementary principals observed that "for many years we've watched the faces of the children light up when their mentors arrive." Students cherish the time with their mentor as it often is the one time each week when one person cares only about them. For a child who struggles at school or home, this can be the highlight of their week." Think about when you spend time with a friend or a family member and there isn't any big to do list running through your head - when you can just be together - that is magical, and that is what building assets is all about.

Kids with mentors are:

- 55% more likely to enroll in college
- 78% more likely to volunteer regularly
- 90% more interested in becoming mentors themselves
- 130% more likely to hold leadership positions

Guilford Youth Mentoring is excited to be celebrating our 25th Anniversary with our volunteers who spend about an hour a week with kids, no big agenda, just showing them that they matter. If you would like to join us or if you know a child who would benefit from having a mentor, please contact Lisa Ott, Program Coordinator, ottl@guilfordschools.org or visit guilfordmentoring.org where you can also find more information about Developmental Assets and Developmental.

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The Harrison House Museum

By Mairi Bryan

The Branford Historic District encompasses much of what was the original community of Branford. Originally part of the New Haven Colony, the Town of Branford was settled in 1644, and thrived as a farming and fishing settlement, located on the Branford River, which provided at the time the only deep harbor between New Haven and New London.

Of the many historic houses in Branford, the Harrison House Museum is a classic example of an original Connecticut saltbox. Built in 1724 by a descendant of Branford's founders, it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and since 2016 has been operated as a museum by the Branford Historical Society.



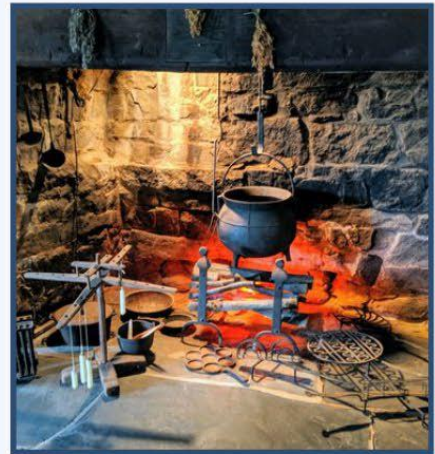
The house was built in 1724 by Nathaniel Harrison II, although its original construction date is estimated to be around 1680 based on the land acquisition records, and the construction of a dwelling by Daniel Swain in that year. The land was acquired by Thomas and Nathaniel Harrison and subdivided for them both to build houses on the property. The 1724 house built by Nathaniel Harrison is typical of Connecticut houses of the period, with a large

central stone chimney and a two over two room configuration with a stairway leading to the upstairs bedrooms. The design of the stairway is similar to that of the Hyland House in Guilford, which was built by Edward Parmalee, and is typical of a 1724 staircase, indicating that this may also have been built by Parmalee.

The Harrison family and their descendants occupied the house until 1800 when it was sold to the Joseph Linsley family, who lived there until 1938. Frederick Kelly, a prominent architectural historian, then bought the house and restored it to its original condition.

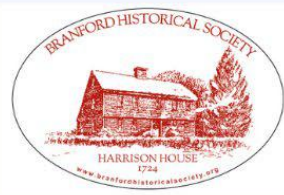
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The original summer beams and hand-hewn oak corner posts, together with the huge fireplace and unique features such as a corner cupboard, and 1700's furnishings of rope beds, a beehive oven, warming pans and foot stoves give the house its historical authenticity.



Frederick Kelly bequeathed the house to the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (Now Historic New England), who

leased the property to the Branford Historical Society in 1974 and sold it to them in 2016. The Branford Historical Society now maintains the Harrison House, and its 1890's barn, as a museum. The exhibit room contains many Branford historical artifacts and archival documents. The Branford Garden Club has planted and maintains a colonial herb and flower garden on the property.



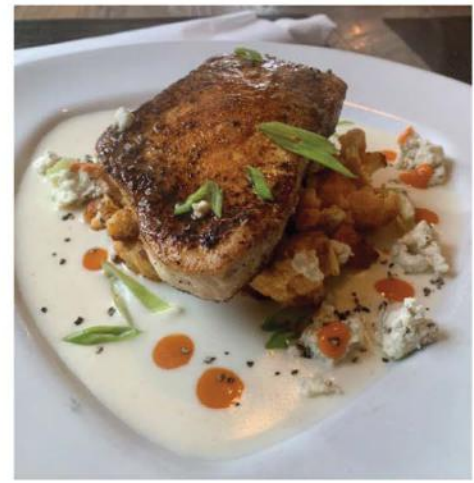
The Harrison House Museum and gardens are open from June through September, or by appointment, and welcome new members to share in keeping this part of Branford's history alive.



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MAXIMIZE YOUR YEAR-END STRATEGY: 10 Essential Planning Tips for Small Business Owners



By: Fair Street Advisors

As the calendar year draws to a close, small business owners face the critical task of year-end planning. While the season may often be synonymous with holidays and celebrations, it's also a pivotal time to prepare your business for the new year. Whether it's optimizing your financials or strategizing for future growth, this process can set the tone for the coming year, elevating your enterprise's success.

1. Review Financial Statements

The first step in effective year-end planning involves a thorough review of your financial statements. Scrutinize your income statement, balance sheet, and cash flow statement to assess your business's financial health. This will help identify trends, spot opportunities for cost savings, and recognize potential areas for growth. Understanding your financial position empowers you to make informed decisions for capital investments or scaling operations.

2. Optimize Tax Planning

Year-end provides a strategic opportunity to implement tax planning strategies. Meeting with your Wealth Advisor or CPA can help ensure that you are maximizing deductions and credits. Consider strategies such as deferring income or accelerating expenses to potentially lower your tax liability. Additionally, evaluate your retirement plans for you and your employees, as contributions made by year-end can offer substantial tax benefits.

3. Evaluate Inventory and Supply Chain

Conducting an inventory check is an essential part of year-end planning. Determine which products are moving well and which are not. This information can guide future purchasing decisions and help in clearing out slow-moving stock before the new year begins. Also, review your supply chain strategies to ensure optimal efficiency and cost-effectiveness, potentially renegotiating terms with suppliers if necessary.

CONTINUED

4. Assess Insurance Coverage

Review your business insurance policies to ensure that you have adequate coverage. Year-end is the perfect time to evaluate any changes in your business that might necessitate adjustments to your policies, such as increased inventory or new equipment. Make sure you are not underinsured, which could expose your business to unnecessary risk.

5. Revisit Business Goals

Reflect on the goals you set at the beginning of the year. Assess what you accomplished, where you fell short, and why. Use these insights to recalibrate your objectives for the upcoming year. Ensure that your goals are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) to facilitate clearer planning and tracking.

6. Plan Employee Engagement and Development

Your team is one of your most valuable assets. Use the year-end to plan for employee development, whether through training, mentoring, or other professional growth opportunities. Engaged employees are more productive and committed, which can significantly boost your business's performance.

7. Prepare for Changes in Regulations and Tax Laws

Stay informed about any impending changes in local, state, or federal regulations that could impact your business. This includes understanding updates to tax laws, minimum wage rates, or industry-specific regulations. Early preparation ensures compliance and avoids any last-minute surprises that could mean penalties or added costs.

8. Strengthen Strategic Partnerships

Networking and forging partnerships can be crucial for growth. Use this time of year to strengthen relationships with existing strategic partners or explore new alliances. This can provide access to new markets, enhance your service offerings, or introduce innovations to your business model.

CONTINUED

9. Implement Technology Upgrades

As technology continues to evolve, maintaining a competitive edge often requires staying current with digital innovations. Assess your business operations to identify areas that could benefit from automation or new technology solutions. Upgrading software, enhancing online security, or improving your digital presence could improve efficiency and customer satisfaction.

10. Plan for Succession and Estate Needs

It's never too early to start succession planning. If you're considering an eventual exit from your business, defining a clear plan now can ensure a smoother transition. Additionally, reviewing your estate plan, even revisiting buy-sell agreements, if necessary, can protect your interests and provide peace of mind.

The year-end is not just a time for reflection but also an opportunity for strategic planning that will position your small business for future success. By attending to these critical steps, you can enter the new year with clarity, confidence, and a blueprint for continued growth and achievement. Proactive planning today can translate to sustainable success tomorrow.

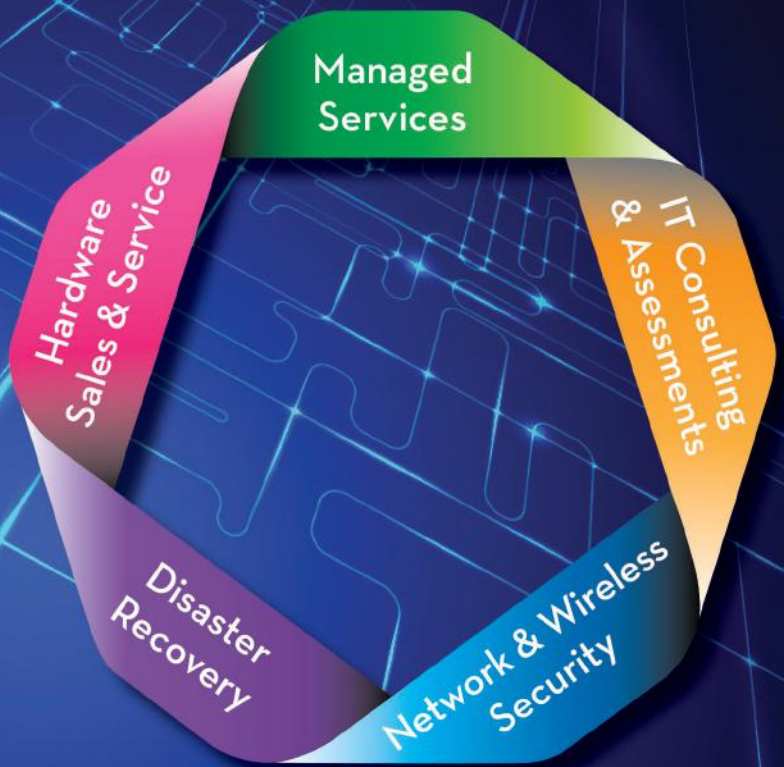
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EXHIBITORS AND SEMINARS



SPEAKER SEMINAR SCHEDULE

- | | |
|----------|---|
| 9:00 AM | How to Handle an Emergency Situation Randy McNamara from Shoreline CPR Services |
| 9:30 AM | What is Pediatric OT, Speech and Feeding Therapies? Danielle Matos, MSOT, OTR/L from More to Say, LLC |
| 10:00 AM | Heart Health Habits for Women Dr. Lisa Rosenberger, ND, LAc from East West Integrative Health Clinic |
| 10:45 AM | Cognitive Decline and Dementia: How to recognize it in a loved one and possible therapeutic approaches. Matthew Robinson ND from Advance Therapeutics |
| 11:15 AM | Fall Prevention Austin Bronson, DPT, OCS from Ivy Rehab Network |



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Tina Strell
Vice President
Shoreline Chamber
tina@shorelinechamberct.com

We are pleased to announce that Tina Strell has joined the Shoreline Chamber of Commerce as Vice President. Tina brings an array of expertise to the Chamber with over 20 years of development, marketing, communications, and design experience.

Prior to joining the Chamber, Tina worked on the development team at the James Blackstone Memorial Library where she planned, organized, and executed major fundraising campaigns and events which consistently exceeded expectations. She also served as lead coordinator for the James Blackstone Memorial Library Board and meetings with key partner and community organizations. Prior joining the Blackstone Library, Tina was the Assistant Development Director at Mercy High School (Middletown, CT) where she managed all aspects of development and advancement including the creation and execution of comprehensive annual fundraising and event plans.

Tina is a graduate of The University of New Haven and lives in Branford with her husband John and their two children. Outside of work, she enjoys spending time with her family on the water and shorelines of Branford and New England



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THE ESSEX BRASSERIE



The newly opened Essex Brasserie is an award-winning restaurant in Branford led by Chef Colt Taylor, featuring a modern approach to French cuisine with local ingredients and bold flavors. The menu includes popular French-inspired dishes like steak frites, moules frites, and a variety of seafood options, offering a relaxed dining experience that highlights Taylor's creative culinary style. The restaurant, which opened in September 2024, serves as a companion to The Essex in Old Saybrook, which is known for its innovative tasting menus and has earned recognition and several awards for its excellence.

Gold Member since 2024

"We have dined at the Essex in Saybrook many times. The dining experience in Branford was just as wonderful if not better. Highly recommend this restaurant to become your first choice in Branford." – Andy



www.theessexbrasserie.com

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Nonprofit Member since 2001

"GFFE creates possibilities! We seek to encourage and deepen a community-wide enthusiasm for excellence in education while involving residents in supporting Guilford youth."



www.gffe.org

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Spectrum Art Gallery, located in Essex, CT, opened in April 2014 as an extension of the non-profit Arts Center Killingworth, founded in 2003. Serving the CT shoreline and river valley, Spectrum showcases both emerging and established regional and national artists. The gallery features a range of artwork including painting, sculpture, and photography, along with an Artisan Store offering fine crafts in mediums such as ceramics, glass, and jewelry. Spectrum has become a key venue for artists, offering themed exhibits, an online shop, and participation in events like the Annual Autumn Arts Festival in Madison. **Nonprofit Member since 2013**

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