

## The Chronicle, Editorial

### We offer these threads, needles

Published: January 23, 2017

**Needles** to the recent spate of criminal incidents that should remind us we all have to be vigilant - no matter the size of our town or closeness of our neighborhood. On Jan. 11, a Savings Institute Bank & Trust branch in Lebanon was robbed, forcing local schools to go on lockdown as investigators sought the perpetrator. While not the crime of the century, it was a stark reminder that criminally induced mayhem knows no borders. A few hours later, the next morning, a Willimantic man was assaulted Jan. 12 by three home invaders. One was arrested. In recent years, home invasions have taken on scarier tones in light of the horrific incident in Cheshire back in 2007. Law enforcers have emphatically said the public is not in danger and those involved knew each other. Still, most folks don't like the sight of police tape and cruisers camped out in their neighborhoods. The reminder is simple. Keep your doors locked and your eyes open. It can happen here. **Threads** to the Windham Family Child Care Association, which recently celebrated 25 years of helping home child care and day care providers. Back in 1991, home child care was a culturally new phenomenon as more and more mothers worked outside the home. At the time, those who took care of children formed what amounted to a support group. Eventually, the "group" became an "association," a more formal collaborative that united for enhanced grant opportunities, workshops and, still, support aiding members with the difficult job of child care. Times have changed and more and more child care providers are needed. As a result, organizations like the WFCCA are necessary and welcomed. **Threads** to University of Connecticut and Eastern Connecticut State University students who spent their day off Jan. 16 making "literacy kits" for Windham schoolchildren and working on blankets for the homeless. The event was called UConn's Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service and it was a daylong affair at UConn's Student Union. On a day where college kids could have enjoyed one last day off before classes resumed Jan. 17, 110 students from two universities chose to honor King by giving their time. King would have approved. **Threads** to community members who have resurrected the Windham/Willimantic chapter of the NAACP, a civic organization espousing the virtues of civil rights and community service. The fact the new officers were officially sworn in Jan. 14, two days before the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, made this resurrection all the more poignant. Windham and Willimantic are diverse communities, with all sorts of ethnicities represented. Thanks to the NAACP, all in the community have a voice in civic affairs - and a loud and clear one at that. **Needles** to the University of Connecticut students behind a wild party Dec. 23 that had Mansfield municipal leaders talking during January town council and subcommittee meetings. In short, what once was a common scourge when school was in session has now spilled over to an academic break period. That's because more and more students are living in residential neighborhoods these days, either in homes bought for them by parents or rented to them. As a result, the off-campus lifestyle once relegated to apartment complexes is now being seen in single-family home neighborhoods year round. On this night, Echo Drive saw hundreds of students engaging in typical collegiate revelry, with atrocities like property damage, loud noise and, even, public urination reported. As the town continues to come up with ways to manage the situation, it must now confront the realization this problem may, now, be a year-round issue. Not exactly the best news for residents who look forward to winter and summer breaks.

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