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Stamp sting snags Danbury man



Contributed photo

A mint condition stamp similar to this stamp from 1930 led police to \$140,000 in alleged stamp thefts from a dealer in Bethel.

By John Pirro
STAFF WRITER

BETHEL — An investigation into the theft of a 1930 postage stamp commemorating the flight of the Graf Zeppelin has led police to two men who allegedly stole some \$140,000 in collector stamps from a Bethel dealer.

A 22-year-old Danbury man has been charged in the case, and police have obtained an arrest warrant for an accomplice, Det. George Bryce Jr.

said.

Both suspects worked in the shipping department of Nutmeg Stamp Sales, a nationally known dealer of high-end philatelic material located in Bethel's industrial park.

"People would purchase stamps, and as they prepared them for shipment, some would end up missing," Bryce said. "Some of the shipments were big, so they figured, 'Who would know?'"

Police identified the suspect who was taken into custody

last Friday as Andrew Mastrianni, of Advocate Place, Danbury.

He was charged with first-degree larceny and conspiracy and was released on \$50,000 bond pending a June 20 appearance in Danbury Superior Court.

The arrest of the second suspect, whose name wasn't released, is pending.

Bryce said the investigation began in January, after Nutmeg president David Coogole and chief operating officer

Lawrence Gibson reported some stamps shipped to customers hadn't made it to their destinations.

Attempts to contact Coogole and Gibson on Wednesday were unsuccessful.

Among the missing items was a \$2.60 face value 1930 U.S. airmail stamp specifically issued to carry letters on the Graf Zeppelin, a famous German dirigible that made round trips between Europe,

► STAMP, PAGE A6

Paul Newman fights cancer

NEW HAVEN (AP) — Paul Newman, the legendary actor and philanthropist, is battling cancer, his longtime neighbor and business partner said Wednesday.



Paul Newman

Newman, 83, has recently appeared gaunt in photos, and dropped plans to direct a play in his Connecticut hometown. Writer A.E. Hotchner, who partnered with Newman to start Newman's Own salad dressing company in the 1980s, said the actor told him about the disease about 18 months ago. He did not specify what kind of cancer, but said Newman is in active treatment.

"I know that it's a form of cancer," Hotchner told The Associated Press.

► NEWMAN, PAGE A5



Chris Ware/Staff photographer

From left, Bethel Police Officer Bob Durkin, police dog Asco and Town Clerk Lisa Bergh. Bergh placed a new yearly dog license on Asco on June 4 in Bethel.

Cappiello reaches \$1M milestone

By Dirk Perrefort
STAFF WRITER

DANBURY — State Sen. David Cappiello announced this week that he's raised more than \$1 million for his congressional bid.



David Cappiello

Cappiello, R-Danbury, is challenging U.S. Rep. Chris Murphy, a first-term Democrat, for the 5th District seat.

"To run a successful campaign, you need to raise a significant amount of money to get your message out to the voters," Cappiello said Wednesday. "Our message is resonating, and the support we've been able to build

► CAPIELLO, PAGE A5

It's time to get Fido licensed

By Marietta Homayonpour
STAFF WRITER

Asco is Bethel's top dog. He's 85 pounds of beautiful, energetic, black and red German shepherd who serves as the town's police dog.

That's why 5-year-old Asco got dog license tag No. 1 earlier this month.

"Asco is No. 1 because he commands respect as the town dog," said Lisa Bergh, town clerk.

June is the time to renew dog licenses throughout Connecticut,

and new and renewed licenses are obtained at town clerks' offices.

Under state law, residents must renew the dog licenses in the municipality where they live by June 30. After that deadline, \$1 is added each month as a penalty.

That's why June is a busy month for town clerks.

"We say no one takes a day off in June," Debbie Aurelia, Newtown's town clerk, said about the "nonstop" traffic in her office this month.

Last year about half of Newtown's 1,900 registered dogs got their li-

censes in June.

Town clerks aren't complaining about the work. In fact, some of them send notices to remind people to renew — even though that's not required by law.

Some hold contests to encourage residents to register their dogs in June.

Aurelia encourages people to bring their dogs along when they renew the licenses, and she gives them Scooby dog snacks. Each pet registered by June 30 gets his or

Licensing facts

- All dogs over 6 months old must be licensed.
- All dog licenses must be renewed each June. Deadline is June 30.
- The fee is \$19 for an unsterilized dog, \$8 for a spayed or neutered dog.
- A \$1 fee will be added to the fee for each month the licensing is late.
- To be licensed, all dogs must have a current rabies vaccination.
- Get licenses at your Town Clerk's office.

► DOG, PAGE A4

Ted Cutsumpas, Danbury's community services coordinator, plants a tomato in a new community garden at the intersection of Sugar Hollow and Miry Brook roads. Those looking on include Michael LaPorta, Paracare's Amy Mitchell, Nicolo J. LaPorta and Michael McLachlan. Eugene Driscoll



Nonprofit teams with city to build garden

By Eugene Driscoll
STAFF WRITER

DANBURY — A number of young people with developmental disabilities teamed with city officials and area businesses to build a community garden near Danbury Municipal Airport.

The community garden is on city-owned land at the intersection of Sugar Hollow and Miry Brook roads.

There are 20 plots in all, with about half being used by clients of Paracare Interna-

ON THE WEB

VIDEO
Watch the community garden's opening ceremony
NewsTimes.com

Paracare's president.

The garden was made possible with donations from businesses such as Wal-Mart and Danbury Topsoil — and

the hard work of guys like the LaPorta brothers, Joe, 25, and Michael, 21.

The LaPortas go to events organized by Paracare and played a key part in transforming the lot into a garden.

"Before this was here, it was all untilled land," Joe LaPorta said.

Other Paracare clients on hand included Jessica Soran, 19, and Tyler Kimmel, 18.

About 15 people were at
► GARDEN, PAGE A5

News updates all day

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WEATHER C10

HIGH 82 LOW 51
Mostly sunny, beautiful

STOCKS A9

Dow Jones 12,083.77
S&P 500 1,335.49
Nasdaq 2,394.01

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