

GREENWICH TIME



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put measures in place to prevent spread of coronavirus. **A12**



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on Metro-North fear fallout after N.Y. rider tests positive. **A12**



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Lamont seeks funding exception for Daliao initiative

By Keith M. Phaneuf
CTMIRROR.ORG

Gov. Ned Lamont has repeatedly insisted legislators shun gimmicks and make the tough choices demanded by Connecticut's budget cap.

But for the second time in two years, Lamont wants an exception — Connecticut's \$20 million contribution to its education partnership with hedge fund giant Ray Daliao's philanthropic arm.

And while the administration says the accounting maneuver it would use to avoid the cap is justified by the importance of the partnership, legislators from both parties say the Democratic governor is applying a double standard.

"This is a circumvention of their purported, 'New Day' in state budgeting," said Sen. John Fonfara, D-Hartford, co-chair of the tax-writing, Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee. "They're essentially doing an end run around so this [\$20 million] doesn't show up on the books, so it doesn't count against the cap. But they still say our priorities are subject to all of these rules."

Lamont has been outspoken about his commitment to strict accounting practices since he took office.

"I want to be clear — no more
See Funding on A4



Brian A. Pounds / Hearst Connecticut Media
Barbara Daliao meets community members and educators at the Carver Community Center in Norwalk on Tuesday.

200+ MONITORED FOR CORONAVIRUS IN CONN.

Residents told to self-quarantine for 14 days

By Kaitlyn Krasselt

At least 200 people in Connecticut have been monitored for the COVID-19 coronavirus by state and local health officials since the beginning of February, Gov. Ned Lamont was told in a briefing Thursday.

Health officials asked or told the patients to remain home and away from people as much as possible for 14 days, effectively a self-quarantine.

So far, the state has tested 12 people, all showing they do not have the coronavirus strain that has led to global travel restrictions and quarantines. More were not tested because the state is using strict criteria to determine who is being tested.

The briefing, reported exclusively by Hearst Connecticut Media, was by Renee Coleman-Mitchell, commissioner of the state Department of Public Health, and Dr. Matthew Cartter, the state epidemiologist, in Lamont's office.

"There could very well be people that have it, that haven't been tested because of CDC guidelines," Cartter told Lamont in the briefing, referring to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Other doctors told Hearst Connecticut Media Thursday there is a "100
See Virus on A4



Jessica Hill / Associated Press



Gov. Ned Lamont, center, speaks to the media at the Connecticut State Public Health Laboratory in Rocky Hill Monday. At top, microbiologist Xiugen Zhang runs a Polymerase Chain Reaction at the lab.

COVID-19 spread

200+ People monitored in Conn.

0 Confirmed cases in Conn.

22 Confirmed cases in NY

13 States with cases

12 Deaths in U.S.

Taking a plunge for Elodie, awareness

Young girl's rare skin disease inspires Sunday fundraiser for research, treatment

By Tatiana Flowers

GREENWICH — Elodie Kubik is a happy-go-lucky, smiley and spunky toddler during the day. But the 3-year-old's mood often changes in the evening during a scary but mandatory routine.

Every night, Elodie's parents prepare a special bath, which contains oxygenated bubbles, to exfoliate the young girl's skin. While bath time is usually a soothing or fun routine for kids, it's the first step in a process that sparks fear in Elodie.

Before the bath, the parents remove a series of "retention bandages" that holds together Elodie's skin. Occasionally, the bandages get stuck to Elodie's body, worsening the previous wounds on her already fragile skin.

"It's honestly something that we've figured out how to do over time," said Emily Kubik, Elodie's
See Elodie on A4



Tyler Sizemore / Hearst Connecticut Media

Elodie Kubik, 3, hugs her mother, Emilie Kubik, at their Riverside home on Tuesday. Elodie was born with a rare genetic condition called epidermolysis bullosa.

Historical society to honor four homes

Plaques to recognize residences of 'trailblazing women'

By Robert Marchant

GREENWICH — The Greenwich Historical Society is highlighting "trailblazing women" and the home of Mary Tyler Moore in its annual celebration of unique and notable homes in the community.

In commemorations of the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment that granted women the right to vote across the United States, four homes designed, owned or dedicated to women will be highlighted through the Greenwich Historical Society's annual Landmarks Recognition Program.

Mary Tyler Moore, an actress who captivated the nation, lived in a backcountry home clad in fieldstone with her husband, Dr. S. Robert Levine, until her death
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Weather: Cloudy with a late afternoon shower.
High: 44. Low: 31. **Page A14**

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

ELODIE

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mother.

"There's so few families that are dealing with this, there's not a set of instructions," the Riverside mother said. "And everyone's disease is a little bit different, and I think different things work differently for different kids."

When Elodie was born at Greenwich Hospital on July 15, 2016, doctors noticed abrasions on her legs and blood coming from her mouth. When the physicians washed her off, "a bunch" of ankle skin broke off.

Immediately, she was transferred to Yale New Haven Children's Hospital, which has a more advanced Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, said Elodie's mother.

A skin biopsy determined Elodie has epidermolysis bullosa or EB, a rare and genetic skin condition that can be life-threatening. Doctors narrowed down the subtype and determined Elodie has the recessive dystrophic type, meaning she lacks a protein, collagen 7, that binds the layers of skin together.

The normal daily activities of a 3-year-old — even running and eating — can cause internal and external wounds, so Elodie wears bandages that cover her from

neck to toe. Wounds often form around the joints of those with the condition and may never heal, according to the EB Research Partnership, which funds research to find a medication and a cure.

"It took a lot of time for me to maybe come to terms with it and fully understand how limiting the disease can be — to fully understand that her life expectancy is 30," said Elodie's mother, Emily.

"And there's a lot of reasons to be very, very hopeful around that but ... I can't just assume that it's going to resolve itself. It's a progressive disease."

On Sunday morning, the Kubiks will host the third annual Plunge for Elodie, an event that raises awareness and funds for the life-changing disease.

The inaugural fundraiser, held in Wellesley, Mass., raised \$150,000. The next year, it expanded to also include a plunge in Ohio, which raised \$180,000. This year, plunges will take place in Massachusetts, Staten Island, San Francisco, London and Greenwich, with a goal of raising \$300,000, said Emily.

The family invites the public to donate and join the plunge this Sunday at 8 a.m., at Lucas Point Beach, in Old Greenwich. Participants must sign an online waiver and RSVP at plungeforelodie.org.



Tyler Sizemore / Hearst Connecticut Media

Elodie Kubik, 3, plays with her mother, Emilie Kubik, at their home.

Those joining can also attend a small breakfast at 9 a.m. at Riverside Yacht Club, 102 Club Road.

"Fundraisers like Plunge for Elodie are absolutely critical in generating the support to fund innovative research that leads to treatments and cures for the disease," said Michael Hund, CEO of the EB Research Partnership in New York City, the organization that will receive 100 percent of the proceeds from the events.

With "a rare disease like epidermolysis bullosa, there's really not funding sources," Hund said.

"EB affects somewhere between 25,000 to 30,000 people in the United States," he said. "So what fundraisers like this allows us to do, is raise funds that can be put toward brilliant scientific and academic and medical minds working on projects to advance treatments and cures for the disease."

In 2018, the EB Partnership funded 19 projects in six countries. When the organization formed in 2010, there were only two clinical trials for people with EB, said Hund.

"Today, there's more than 25 clinical trials being conducted in EB," he added.

To further spread awareness about the disease, and the fundraiser, a local group featured Elodie's story for a local audience online.

"We featured them because we love highlighting amazing stories that are local," said Megan S. Sullivan, co-founder of Greenwich Moms, a group supporting mothers locally.

"Every Monday we highlight a local 'Mom' who is doing something for our community. It's a favorite spot for our readers to visit," Sullivan said in an email.

Plunge for Elodie helps spread awareness about the disease but it has also connected the family with others affected, which offers the Kubiks a sense of emotional support, said Emily.

"There's a million ways that it affects her daily life. But she's very happy," the mother said about her daughter. "There are a lot of things that are normal about our life."

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VIRUS

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percent chance" that coronavirus cases are not being diagnosed in Connecticut because of the limited testing.

Late Thursday, Lamont's office released a letter he sent asking the CDC to send more test kits and questioning the CDC guidelines on testing. The public health department has one kit that can test 500 to 600 people for the illness.

"I am concerned that the most recent guidelines issued by CDC cast too broad

a net at this point in time and will not ensure that the right people are being tested," Lamont said in his letter.

The CDC guidelines call for testing whenever a doctor deems the symptoms might be a sign of COVID-19. "While on the surface, this approach seems reasonable, the resources available to meet this new demand are simply not adequate to ensure people most at risk get tested," Lamont wrote.

Earlier, Lamont wanted to know why it's taking so long to get more test kits. More could come as soon as

next week, Coleman-Mitchell and Cartter told him.

The state is testing people who show symptoms of the coronavirus, including difficulty breathing, and who have recently visited China or another country where the outbreak is more acute, Lamont was told — a much tighter standard.

The 200 people who are or were being monitored were identified by doctors as showing possible signs of the disease and then reported to local health departments. The status of those patients remains unclear but they were told to self-quarantine, Cartter said.

Cartter and Coleman-Mitchell did not say how many state residents are still being monitored, and how many have been under observation or self-quarantine since the tests became available last week.

Some health professionals are questioning why the state is testing so few people while more are being monitored — and Lamont wondered the same thing.

The picture may change soon, as at least two large medical testing companies, including Quest Diagnostics, announced Thursday they have their own COVID-19 tests and will start

offering them to patients based on doctors' orders next week.

Coleman-Mitchell and Cartter also told Lamont that some hospitals will set up trailers and tents outside of their buildings to test or treat possible coronavirus patients so as not to risk exposing vulnerable emergency room patients to the virus. Hospitals have been in touch with the state about how exactly they will do that, as hospital facilities are strictly regulated.

Officials told Lamont the state is advising, or will advise, that anyone with flu-like symptoms or respi-

ratory infections should stay home and "self-monitor" rather than go to a hospital — unless they have difficulty breathing or prior respiratory conditions — in which case, they should seek medical attention.

As the COVID-19 coronavirus spreads, health officials in Connecticut and elsewhere are having a harder time identifying people to monitor, Cartter and Coleman-Mitchell said.

Staff Writer Ben Lambert contributed to this story.

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FUNDING

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funny math or budgetary gamesmanship," Lamont said as he delivered his first State of the State Address 14 months ago. "I come from the world of small business where the numbers have to add up at the end of the month or the lights go out."

Chris McClure, spokesman for governor's budget office, conveyed a similar message just five weeks ago when describing the new budget Lamont would unveil on Feb. 5.

"The budget Governor Lamont will present to the General Assembly next Wednesday is fully compliant with all of the existing caps and does not engage in the game-playing and gimmickry that have haunted our state for decades," McClure said.

But the \$23 billion budget Lamont offered last month would have exceeded the spending cap — had the administration not proposed using an accounting technique known as an "intercept" or "revenue transfer" to effectively keep

a \$20 million payment to the Partnership for Connecticut outside of the budget.

When asked whether this contradicted the governor's anti-gimmick message, McClure said the approach shows Connecticut's commitment to this important initiative.

"We are able to demonstrate to the Partnership and other outside investors that we have set aside funds to be used when the timing is appropriate and the Partnership is ready to make investments in our state's public schools," he said.

Connecticut has a cap designed to keep state spending from growing faster than household income — but it only applies to spending within the budget. And while a few line items, such as debt payments, are cap-exempt, the education partnership is not.

To work around the cap, Lamont wants legislators to designate \$20 million in revenues — such as tax and fee receipts — for the partnership, "intercepting" those dollars before they are formally assigned to the

budget. Because this accounting technicality could be used — at least in theory — to move most spending outside the cap, it generally is used sparingly.

Lamont also sought, and received, a spending cap work-around for the partnership contribution last June when legislators adopted his first budget. The governor initially said he would fund Connecticut's participation in the program out of reserves, which would subject it to the spending cap.

Now, after watching the governor seek cap relief two years in a row, Lamont's fellow Democrats in the legislature's majority are pushing back.

Fonfara, who has been at odds with Lamont over state borrowing for much of the past year, is especially critical of the cap work-around. Fonfara has charged that the governor's proposed "debt diet" will hinder economic development and affordable housing efforts in many communities, particularly poor cities and towns. Lamont counters that Connecticut already has one of the highest bonded debt

burdens, per capita, in the nation.

As co-chairwoman of the Appropriations Committee, part of Sen. Cathy Osten's job is to tell many colleagues their funding requests will be scaled back or denied altogether.

"Legislators always like to have their priorities in the budget and will be concerned if none of their issues are addressed," Osten, D-Sprague, said. But when legislators hear the governor may get an exception from the spending cap, and that they likely cannot, "the process is more difficult," she said.

When contacted for comment, the partnership said the spending cap issue is a matter to be resolved by the governor and legislature.

Minority Republicans in the House and Senate overwhelmingly oppose spending cap exceptions.

Deputy House Minority Leader Vincent J. Candelora, R-North Branford, said rather than assuring philanthropic groups that the spending cap won't get in the way of the education partnership, the governor should be building confidence with another group.

"What we should be focusing on is not the investors, but rather the taxpayers," Candelora said, adding that the spending cap workaround only exacerbates an existing transparency problem involving the partnership.

The legislature granted a request from the Dalios and Lamont last June and exempted the partnership both from state ethics and disclosure rules — a move that has divided lawmakers.

Candelora was the first to expose that arrangement, which was included in an omnibus budget bill.

"These corporate boardholders are going to go up to the balcony and sprinkle down dollars on, I guess, the peasants of Connecticut, and we're supposed to be happy about that?" Candelora said during a June 3 House debate on the budget.

Sen. Mae Flexer, D-Windham, is spearheading a bill this year to cancel those exemptions.

The partnership announced Monday that Barbara Dalio would host at least 16 community meetings across Connecticut

this spring to discuss the program's goals.

But she and other advocates of the privacy arrangement say Connecticut's schools cannot be fixed without tackling many sensitive issues, and these talks are more likely to be productive behind closed doors.

"I really don't understand that," Flexer said, noting legislative committees routinely hold open hearings and meetings on sensitive matters including mental illness, drug addiction, child and domestic abuse and poverty.

"I represent some of the poorest towns in the state of Connecticut and any improvement that's been made in those systems has come from the public discussing it — parents and students and teachers working together with the state to find creative solutions," Flexer said. "Darkness doesn't improve anything."

Flexer is co-chairwoman of the legislature's Government Administration and Elections Committee, which will hold a public hearing Friday on the partnership transparency bill.

HONOR

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in 2017. She was best known for her roles in the TV sitcoms "The Mary Tyler Moore Show" and "The Dick Van Dyke Show." She died at the age of 80 and was buried at Oak Lawn Cemetery in Fairfield.

Other structures that will be given historic plaques are the Innis Arden Cottage in Old Greenwich, the YWCA and a Tudor residence in the Rock Ridge neighborhood, the Woolley Huntzinger House.

The Greenwich Historical Society has been granting landmark plaques to historically significant homes and structures for 33 years, and more than 300

structures have been received plaques over the years.

"We're thrilled to recognize enterprising women and the structures that often helped them succeed," said Robin Kencel, chairwoman of the Landmarks Recognition Program. "It's a fascinating and timely topic considering the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, and the historical society's dynamic new exhibition underway that showcases the role Greenwich women played on the national stage in achieving its passage."

An exhibit on the suffrage movement is currently on view at the Greenwich Historical Society's galleries in Cos Cob.

The ceremony for the plaques will be held at the

Greenwich Country Club on April 26.

The keynote speaker will be Nina E. Harkrader, an architectural historian and author of "All the Single Ladies: Women Only Buildings in New York." She will discuss the homes and hotels that were designed to offer "good moral surroundings" for women who lived and worked in New York City and other cities.

She will focus on the Barbizon Hotel in Manhattan, where such luminaries as Lauren Bacall, Grace Kelly and Sylvia Plath resided temporarily, immortalizing it as a stylish and sought-after place to live.

Tickets for the event at the Greenwich Country Club begin at \$75. The program will run from 3:45 to 6 p.m.



Contributed photo / Dion Photography

The Mary Tyler Moore home