The Greens: Our Last Best Chance.

Michael Westerfield

Based on elected office-holders and votes cast in elections at every level, the Green Party is the third-largest political party in the United States. Unlike the two other leading political groups, the Green Party is based on a clear set of principles that guide its policies. The Greens are the party of Nonviolence, Grassroots Democracy, Environmental Responsibility, and Social and Economic Justice. The party leans neither “left” nor “right.” The vast majority of its positions, many of which were first articulated by Greens, are now the accepted positions of “mainstream” America.

Detractors often describe Greens as being “socialists,” and we do indeed believe that the government is obliged to provide its citizens with essential services, including quality health care and education, a fully-funded social security system, and guaranteed affordable access to the basic necessities of life. On the other hand, Greens are strong opponents of centralized control, believing in local control of production—particularly of agricultural products and energy—and that as far as humanly possible, all social/political decisions should be made by those directly affected by them.

Above all, Greens believe in grassroots democracy and are working at every level to reform our present two party “winner take all” electoral system, which often leads to control by very slight majorities—as in the Bush

Reflections on Election 2006

Jean de Smet

I was honored to be asked to join Cliff Thornton on the Green Party gubernatorial ticket. Ken Krayske ran a great campaign (living on adrenaline), and I stand in awe of the wonderful people who dedicated their time to the election. Thank you.

After every campaign, I wonder, “what was that all about?” I’m keenly reminded of all the negatives of American politics. The system is rigged by media access, the plurality system of voting, money, sound bites, the military-industrial complex, and honestly, is this any way to choose our governor? I have to remind myself of our campaign goals. Here’s the big one, right off Cliff’s website:

Running for Attorney General With Katie the Goat

Nancy Burton

I was the Connecticut Green Party’s candidate for state Attorney General in 2006.

The experience was exceptional. The campaign enabled me to broadcast the perils of the operating nuclear power plants at both ends of the state—Indian Point in New York and Millstone near New London—and advocate for radical change in our energy use and energy policy toward a clean, renewable, sustainable economy.

I was able to spread the message across the state that we are captives of a corporate enterprise—the nuclear industry—which lacks government oversight. I vowed to initiate court action to close both nuclear power stations on

continued on pg. 2
continued on pg. 3
“Reflections on Election 2006” Continued

Go Green.

In a very real sense, the Green Party, is the party of traditional American values. Greens support small local businesses, family farms, healthy communities, true democratic decision-making, religious freedom, equal access to justice, protection of the individual from unreasonable intrusions by government or big business, and the obligation of government to provide its citizens with those services which they cannot provide for themselves.

The Green Party just might be the last best chance to pull this country out of the mire of greed, corruption, violence, and hypocrisy into which its been led by those currently in power. The Democrats and Republicans certainly aren’t going to save us.

The Green Party is based on the number of votes each has provided its citizens with those services which Greens advocate electoral systems based on “proportional representation,” as used in many parliamentary democracies, where there can be any number of political parties, and their representation in “Congress” is based on the number of votes each has received.

The Green Party just might be the last best chance to pull this country out of the mire of greed, corruption, violence, and hypocrisy into which its been led by those currently in power. The Democrats and Republicans certainly aren’t going to save us.

Go Green.

“Reflections on Election 2006” Continued

“Reflections on Election 2006” Continued

Did you ever think“affordable” means housing for the poor, it actually means housing for working people based on a formula related to local income levels.

The land on which Curley’s sits was never part of the redevelopment map and was never subject to eminent domain—yet several years and an estimated half million dollars of taxpayer dollars were wasted on this failed land grab, for which the City offered the owners a mere $230,000.00.

Incidentally, Mayor Malloy, who campaigned last year for governor, had the gall to cite his support for affordable housing, something he strongly opposed for fear that it would discourage developers. Predictably, he also opposed any major reform of Connecticut’s eminent domain laws.

Other property owners in the same block as Curley’s, caved into City Hall pressure and took the low-ball settlements they were offered, although one business owner later sued when he learned his property was illegally taken.

The ultimate beneficiary of this land grab will not be the citizens of Stamford but Corcoran-Jennison, a Boston-based developer, who purchased the land based on the URC’s promise that they would be able to build on the entire plot. Although President Marty Jones hinted at litigation against the city and the URC when they couldn’t deliver the diner’s property, the parties are all apparently in new alignment concerning Curley’s parking lot, which the city blocked off with a chain-link fence to “protect” the property. The fence blocked patron parking and trash removal. In a classic Catch-22 move, the city Health Department then issued a violation, though this was successfully fought on the state level.

The damage to the Diner’s business, however is ongoing.

Not surprisingly, Dannel Malloy is opposed to the state legislature’s making any significant change in our eminent domain laws. His former campaign manager remains co-Chair of the State Judiciary Committee.

Governor Rell has asked for a moratorium on the use of eminent domain for private development until the Legislature could act, but made no mention of it in her campaign. Can legislators dependent on contributions from businesses and developers really make protecting the people their priority? Should our towns propose their own moratorium until the State law is reviewed and reformed?

These are not hypothetical questions, especially when your home or business could be next.

Curley’s Diner & Eminent Domain

Patricia Kane

Curley’s Diner is a local landmark on West Park Place also known as “restaurant row” in downtown Stamford. It is also a cause célèbre for its unwanted role in the nationwide drama involving the abuse of “eminent domain.”

“Eminent domain” is the right of the government, under the Constitution, to take “private property for public use with just compensation.” It erupted onto the national scene in June 2005 when the US Supreme Court, in a 5-4 decision, ruled in Kelo et al. v. The City of New London et al. that the “public purpose” for which government could take property included development.

People understandably were outraged at the decision to take private homes to redevelop an area near Pfizer and “increase the tax base,” but when the case went to the US Supreme Court, the majority of the justices decided that since many state legislatures have defined “public use” to include development, the Court would allow the states to define the limits of the use of eminent domain, rather than the Supreme Court.

While I do not agree with the outcome, there was at least a rational basis for this decision—and 34 states have already revised their eminent domain laws to eliminate development as a proper purpose. But not Connecticut.

The dissenting justices not only objected to the undue deference given to the states’ treatment of a federal law but indicated that they understood how easily the economically powerful (e.g. corporations) in partnership with local government, could override local wishes for profit-making reasons—an outcome not contemplated by the authors of the Constitution.

Stamford had its own eminent domain controversy in 2002 when the Connecticut Supreme Court ruled against Mayor Malloy, his counsel Andrew McDonald (now a state senator and head of the state Judiciary Committee) and the Urban Redevelopment Commission (URC) in their attempt to seize Curley’s Diner—a valuable property surrounded by land the City sold to Corcoran Jennison to build more luxury rental housing.

Few people in Stamford realize that the purpose of the original plan was to develop the downtown by creating a more attractive business environment, coupled with “affordable” housing—not luxury rentals with only 20% allocated to “affordable” units that will actually be built. While some people mistakenly thought “affordable” means housing for the poor, it actually means housing for working people based on a formula related to local income levels.

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“Running w/Katie the Goat” Cont

my first day in office on grounds they are a
public menace.

The highlight of the campaign was the tour of
the “Goat Caravan.” As director of the
Connecticut Coalition Against Millstone, I
enlisted Katie the Goat and her five-month-
old offspring—Cindy-Lu and Joe-Joe—to
to travel to cities and towns from New London
barn on a trailer to my Jeep and set out.

Katie is a very important radiation monitor
who lives near Millstone. Her milk has been
sampled as part of Millstone’s environmental
monitoring program. According to Millstone’s
own lab reports, Katie’s milk has tested super-
high for concentrations of strontium-90—a
deadly radioisotope that causes bone cancer,
leukemia, and cancers of the lung, breast, and
prostate. Because strontium-90 mimics calci-
um in its chemical properties, it is most haz-
ardous to developing babies and infants,
whose calcium needs are greatest. New
London County has the highest rates of cancer
and early childhood mortality in the state.

Strontium-90 is not naturally occurring. It is
produced during nuclear fission from nuclear
bombs and nuclear power plants. According
to records maintained by Connecticut’s
Department of Environmental Protection,
strontium-90 levels in milk decrease with dis-
tance from Millstone.

Katie the Goat and her kids propelled my
campaign to the front page of the Hartford
Courant. She and they also stimulated public
awareness wherever we went. We decorated
Katie’s traveling barn with giant maps—
“How safe are you?”—so people could see
exactly how far they live from these twin
nuclear installations.

As a result of my campaign for Attorney
General, the campaign to close Millstone and
Indian Point surged ahead. The countdown for
shutdown—to avoid a dreaded meltdown—is
on.

Give the power to
the people

Frank Panzarella
(Originally published in the
P.A.R. Newsletter)

Since December, Fight the Hike has been urg-
ing our state legislature to set a new standard,
return to a publicly owned, regulated utility
model and set a course founded on clean,
renewable energy, affordable public service,
and preserving the environment for future
generations.

Right now an ambivalent Energy &
Technology Committee in Connecticut has
failed to bring forth any comprehensive plan
to correct the failure of deregulation and
instead has dumped the hot potato into the
laps of the General Assembly.

Our representatives must do the right thing.
First and foremost they must protect the most
vulnerable amongst us and stop the electric
rate increases. Attorney General Blumenthal’s
suggestion of a Windfall Profit tax would be
one viable way to help poor, elderly and
working families.

The unregulated, wholesale energy market
must be brought under control. Our state must
re-regulate, at minimum by creating a
Connecticut Energy Authority as Blumenthal
has suggested, though taking it a step further
by creating a state-wide publicly owned utili-
ty would be the best long-term plan.

We need a comprehensive energy bill that
puts the people in control. A Connecticut pub-
lic utility could subsidize new power gener-
ation with emphasis on increasing renewables
to 40% by 2012.

This new generation could include solar,
hydro, wind, clean high efficiency gas tur-
bines and perhaps even fuel cells.

Reducing our carbon footprint is crucial to
the future of our planet. The corporate world
has proven it is irrationally driven by greed.
We must act on the state level to give our peo-
ple the leverage and the freedom to create
new things.

We only have two months to take crucial
steps for our energy future in the current
legislative session. Call your legislator now
and demand the bold steps we have outlined
here. Fight the Hike is committed to fighting
for the short and long-term changes necessary
to turn our state around. Though these
changes will cause some disruptions, eco-
nomic hardships, and have yet unforeseen
consequences, business as usual will be sig-
nificantly worse for the long-term health of
our state and economy.

Green Party of Connecticut 2006 Election Results

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<th>Race</th>
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<th>Votes</th>
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</table>

CTGreen Times

Staff: Mike DeRosa Eric DeVos
Ken Dowst David Bedell
Albert Marceau

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RICO on the Loose
Steve Fournier

What could be more satisfying than impeaching George Bush and his accomplices? How about a RICO action?

The Basics

Cleverly named, apart from the ethnic slur, RICO—short for the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations act—is found within Title 18 of the United States Code (federal criminal law). The act makes it “unlawful for any person through a pattern of racketeering activity . . . to acquire or maintain . . . any interest in or control of any enterprise” with any connection to interstate or foreign commerce (Section 1962).

The act also makes it unlawful for anyone associated with an enterprise that has some effect on interstate or foreign commerce to “participate, directly or indirectly, in the conduct of such enterprise’s affairs through a pattern of racketeering activity.”

Passed in the Nixon years (1970), this law was supposed to be a foolproof means of combating organized crime. The Attorney General and his U.S. attorneys are the enforcement officers. There’s also a provision (Section 1964) that allows victims of the racketeering activity to sue the racketeers and collect triple their damages.

Section 1961 of the law consists of definitions. To summarize, “racketeering activity” means either obstruction of justice or commission of any one of 80 crimes. “Pattern of racketeering activity” requires as few as two acts of racketeering activity, the second occurring within 10 years of the first. “Enterprise” includes “any individual, partnership, corporation, association, or other legal entity, and any . . . group of individuals associated in fact,” even if not a legal entity. A government agency is an “enterprise.”

Section 1503 defines “obstruction of justice.”

As “whoever corruptly . . . or by any threatening letter or communication, endeavors to influence, intimidate, or impede any . . . officer in or of any court of the United States in the discharge of his duty.” Prescribed punishment is imprisonment for up to 10 years.

Now Let’s Imagine . . .

Imagine a situation in which a creditor or supervisor or benefactor or relative of a federal law enforcement officer requests that the officer arrest a particular person without legal cause. That would be a violation of Section 1503; that is, obstruction of justice. The applicant could get ten years for it. So could the law enforcement officer if he satisfied the request.

Now suppose that the law enforcement officer is a U.S. attorney and the person making the request is a U.S. senator with political influence among the prosecuting attorney’s bosses in Washington. That’s likewise a violation of Section 1503, and if the U.S. attorney resists the request and is punished by his bosses for that, that’s a conspiracy to obstruct justice involving the senator and the bosses, and the penalties are multiplied. Now suppose those same bosses make similar moves on other U.S. attorneys within ten years of the first wrongful act. Maybe they remove a U.S. attorney who had dared to prosecute a political ally. That’s a “pattern of racketeering activity,” and the defendants are looking at 20 years, minimum.

Except for one thing. Most of the guilty parties are part of the Justice Department, which is responsible for enforcing this law. What happens when the United States Justice Department has engaged in a pattern of racketeering activity?

What might happen is a RICO lawsuit. Remember that part about anyone injured by the racketeers being allowed to sue for triple damages (Section 1964)? Damaged parties also are eligible to be repaid their costs in bringing the suit, including reasonable attorney’s fees.

Who might have sustained damage resulting from such a “pattern of racketeering activity”? Any of the fired U.S. attorneys, certainly. Maybe some of the retained attorneys, if they were impeded professionally as a result of the racketeering enterprise—such as a prosecutor who didn’t advance but would have if she had cooperated in the obstruction of justice.

Maybe some criminal defendants, if a prosecutor had acted against them in consequence of the racketeering activity. Maybe any lawyer at all, inasmuch as a stain on the integrity of the system of justice impedes each of us in his exercise of professional judgment on behalf of clients.

Even a law student might claim damages, to the extent that his expectations of professional standing are damaged by the defendants’ corruption of the institutions of justice.

A Modest Proposal

Here’s a possible strategy. Bring a RICO claim against Bush, Gonzalez, Sampson, Miers, and a few others who were in on the racket.

As a Green Party project, recruit a team of motivated law students to put together a complaint and prosecute it under the supervision of an attorney, with all the advocates serving also as plaintiffs.

If the federal court throws the plaintiffs out for lack of standing, insufficient proof of damages, or some other pretext, prosecute the case anyway in a mock proceeding. It would be fun. It would be educational for all of us. It could produce justice. It might make history.

Law students and others interested in such a project can contact Steve Fournier: stepfour@stepfour.com

Visit www.ctgreens.org

NECT Greens
Jean de Smet

The Northeast CT Greens have been actively pursuing peace on earth in this post-electoral season!

Our weekly Cable TV show, “Village Green,” gives the local Greens a podium to share our values with people we may never meet. We’ve hosted guests on the topics of medical care and alternative medicines, local issues, politics, immigration, saving energy, and helping others from Africa to the local Soup Kitchen. A core group films every other week, allowing lots of creativity and flexibility. We welcome anyone to join in—whether you want to rant about something or share a funny story or recite a poem—it’s our space.

Much of our local activity is through participation with the NE Coalition for Peace and Justice. We vigil, organize, educate. As we all know, a Democratic majority in Congress does not mean the US will withdraw its invading forces from Iraq any time in the near future. Public opinion will help to force them to act.

We’d love to help people form a chapter in the Northeast region. Save fuel by meeting in your town! We have lists of people who are allies, but live too far from Willimantic to come to our meetings. Contact Jean if you’d like to organize a more local chapter: 456-2188, nectgreens@hotmail.com. We’re definitely going to try to start a Uconn chapter soon.

The Northeast CT Greens meet on the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 7:00 at the Wrench in the Works Collective, 861 Main Street, Willimantic.
Refugee Now 3½ Years Under DHS Detention
Albert J. Marceau
Cameroonian refugee Richard Sitcha has now suffered three-and-a-half years of detention by the U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security (DHS). He has neither committed a crime nor been convicted of one in the U.S.

Richard Sitcha fled to the U.S. from the Cameroon—in fear of his life—in April 2001. He had helped to expose the state-sanctioned murder of nine youths in Bepanda, Cameroon. One of the “Bepanda Nine” had stolen a gas canister, but in January 2001, nine people were arrested by the Douala Operational Command, a paramilitary police force. None of the youths was seen or heard from again.

In January 2003, the U.S. District Court in Hartford granted Sitcha refugee status. However, two months later, DHS filed a motion to reopen his case.

Another court hearing was held in September 2003. Here DHS argued that Sitcha’s claims for refugee status were fraudulent. The hearing included a transatlantic telephone call to an official of the U.S. embassy in the Cameroon. The official said that the embassy had telephoned three local character witnesses selected by Sitcha. All three had denied knowing him.

The judge revoked Sitcha’s refugee status, and DHS immediately arrested him. He has been in jail ever since.

At the September 2003 hearing, Sitcha was not allowed to challenge the statements made by the embassy official. Furthermore, the embassy had erred, for one character witness was not the person Sitcha had named—a Madame Kouatou, mother of two of the Bepanda Nine—but rather her attorney.

In May 2005, Sitcha’s attorney filed a writ of habeas corpus. A hearing on the writ will be held sometime in the future in federal appeals court in New York City.

Public Surveillance vs. Public Safety
David Bedell Candidate for Stamford Constable
You remember Flight 93. It crashed in Pennsylvania because a few brave passengers, armed only with cell phones, did what none of our government security and intelligence agencies could do. The passengers foiled the plot to destroy the U.S. Capitol.

But do you remember Kitty Genovese? She was the woman, now buried in New Canaan, whose 1964 rape-murder in a Queens apartment complex led to a New York Times investigative report, “Thirty-Eight Who Saw Murder Didn’t Call the Police.” The story inspired public outrage and the creation of Neighborhood Watch programs and emergency 911 service in cities across the country.

Decades later, the most effective crime prevention programs remain ones like these, which connect the police with the communities they serve: Neighborhood Watch, 911, Block Watch, Weed and Seed, community policing, cops on bikes, local police substations.

Smart technology can enhance these efforts. In his 2007 State of the City address, New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg announced plans for a “revolutionary innovation in crime fighting”: New York will be the first city in the world to equip 911 call centers to receive digital photos and videos submitted by citizens using cell phones and computers.

What about Stamford? Instead of creating innovative and powerful partnerships between police and residents, our Board of Representatives recently authorized closed-circuit TV cameras throughout the city that will feed surveillance videos into a room at Government Center, where anonymous police officers will sit and watch like Big Brother.

Will the camera operators be secretly tracking you and gathering evidence to use in court? Maybe, but from the numerous documented cases of abuse in other cities, it is more likely that a bored officer will be panning the cameras to follow attractive women, or zooming in on couples engaged in intimate behavior. The effectiveness for crime prevention is dubious.

Legitimate questions include whether the attorney knew Sitcha, and whether of not he was lying to protect his client.

In the Cameroon, average citizens assume that their telephones are tapped by the police. The U.S. State Department recognized such invasions of privacy by the authorities in its report, Cameroon: Country Reports on Human Rights Practices 2001.

The report states that “police and gendarmes harassed citizens, conducted searches without warrants, and opened or seized mail. The government continued to keep some opposition activists and dissidents under surveillance. Police sometimes punished family members and neighbors of criminal suspects.”

Since Sitcha was an activist against a state-sanctioned murder, it is reasonable to conclude that he and anyone connected with the Bepanda Nine would be kept under surveillance. Given the authorities’ wide-scale snooping, it is also likely that character witnesses would hesitate to talk about an activist with a stranger claiming to represent a foreign embassy.

In May 2005, Sitcha’s attorney filed a writ of habeas corpus. A hearing on the writ will be held sometime in the future in federal appeals court in New York City.

Retired Marine intelligence officer and CIA agent Robert David Steele says we will be safer if we opt for less secrecy and more of what he terms Open Source Intelligence: “The threats we face don’t lend themselves to pre-planned, centrally controlled government direction. Only a nation in which each citizen is both a collector and consumer of intelligence, able to share information adequately and in real time, will survive the tribulations to come.”

So instead of surveillance cameras, let’s have more cops on the beat interacting with residents. Let’s have more support for our school crossing guards. They know more about problems in the neighborhood than anyone, and they are a lot smarter and friendlier than cameras. Let’s have pedestrian-friendly urban design: if people simply did more walking, they would see the city from a different perspective and street crime would plummet.

Let’s have more outreach and opportunities for young people, not a bunker mentality in City Hall that treats citizens as objects for suspicion and spying.

Let’s put the “public” back in public safety.
The Arsenic in Your Garden
Tailpipe Blues
RALPH NAiDER

Years ago, when leaded gasoline was what gas stations sold to motorists, I would be driving through the fertile valleys in California and see the crops growing right up to shoulders of the narrow blacktop roads that coursed the expansive fields. “Doesn’t this lead coming out of many vehicular tailpipes get into the soil and contaminate the food that is harvested there?” I wondered.

Nobody I asked was very informative about this dangerous heavy metal, or other pollutants, coming from vehicles, nearby factories and power plants. The connection between airborne pollutants and soil pollution needs to be made more often.

Lately the Eskimo’s, with the help of ecologist Dr Barry Commoner, of Queens College in New York City, are finding out about the dangers of dioxins floating thousands of miles north to their habitats.

Lead in gasoline has been phased out by the EPA beginning in 1975. But the lead that was deposited in these farmlands is not degradable. It is still there. Surprisingly, the EPA has no binding minimum lead level for soil growing vegetables, fruits, corn, soy beans, wheat, barley and the like.

Knowledge about lead and other heavy metals in urban gardens may be on the way, thanks to the suburban community gardens that have sprung up in cities around the country. Unfortunately, the density of heavy metal contaminants has raised suspicions that this otherwise marvelous civic initiative may have a downside, albeit a remediable one.

Working with soil scientists and analytical chemists at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station and the Connecticut Community Gardening Association, Mr. Keilty is advancing a proposal to test some of the 44 Connecticut cities and towns with active community gardening programs. These sites contain 2,280 individual garden plots and provide many moderate to low income residents with a source of nutritious and affordable food.

This is not a fishing expedition. Preliminary findings, in 2006, have already shown elevated levels of lead, arsenic and other heavy metals in soil samples taken from 12 out of 17 initial collection sites, compared with background levels. Three of these sites exceeded the state lead guidelines, while one of them reached the definition of a hazardous waste site.

The budget for the soil testing proposal is $285,600 and its sponsors are requesting funding from the state legislature.

Lead poisoning is especially damaging to children’s developing brains and nervous systems. Leaded paint peeling off tenement walls has damaged millions of mostly poor children over the past eighty years. Some of the children who are described as having learning disabilities were really suffering from lead poisoning. Fortunately lead was also banned from paint in 1978, but peeling apartment walls still provide an enticement to little children to chew and swallow paint chips.

Federal, state and local efforts to rid these buildings of lead have lagged in both funding and enforcement. One would think that rid-ding this silent form of violence (lead, arsenic, cadmium, chromium, nickel and zinc) would come under “national defense,” but the President is too pre-occupied with sending hundreds of billions of tax dollars to destroy Iraq and deepen that costly quagmire. Problem-solvers, like Michael Keilty and Thomas Bott of the Connecticut Community Gardening Association, are focusing on soil health and safety of produce in America. Their findings and their recommendations for soil cleanup will benefit the community garden movement throughout our country.

First, however, the lawmakers in Hartford have to place this public health and consumer safeguarding endeavor in their proper scale of priorities. They can easily pay for it, and other necessities, just by cutting back on the tens of millions of dollars for various corporate subsidies-direct and indirect-that they have been doling out over the years.

Community gardens have many, many benefits beyond providing needed food and dollar savings. The joint project proposal, by Mr. Keilty and his colleagues, lists a “sense of community that culminates in interaction among various community groups, a source of pride in the neighborhood and the reclamation of unused, neglected parcels of land...the level of physical activity associated with gardening...the educational source for young people who learn where their food comes from and how it grows.”


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Green Party of Connecticut Chapters

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<td>Northeast CT</td>
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<td>Tolland County</td>
<td>860-456-2188</td>
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