



**SHOREVIEW**

'Dammit Doll' relieves stress for this writer  
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NEWS AND VIEWS OF THE VALLEY AND SHORE  
**SHORELINE**

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SECTION **B**

**Doo-wop Musical**

Life Could be a Dream opens at the Ivoryton Playhouse, March 13. Tickets on sale now.



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**Shore Life**

Facebook and Twitter icons with text: "Like us on facebook.com/ShoreLineTimes and follow us at twitter.com/ShoreLineTimes"

**A part-time vegetarian**

**I** RECENTLY ADDED A NUMBER of vegan and vegetarian classes to my roster for my upcoming classes and am happy to see them selling so well. It would be hard to avoid the information all around us that



**AMANDA CUSHMAN**  
Amanda Cooks

points to the fact that including more vegetables in your diet can be the best thing you can do for your health.

With the countless studies that have been done and films about meat production and how animals are treated before being slaughtered, it is no wonder that vegetarianism is becoming mainstream in this country. Finally people are becoming more aware of the benefits in consuming less animal protein even if they are still eating meat and chicken regularly.

When I was in college in Boston, I followed a macrobiotic diet for two years and had a lot of interest in this lifestyle. Although eating out was impossible and the amount of effort it took to find the ingredients needed was a feat, I felt light and healthy. Those were the days of health food stores being few and far between and Whole Foods was not even a thought at that time.

Now, we have an entire aisle in the supermarket with natural and organic products not to mention natural foods markets, farmers markets and large chain stores carrying healthy foods.

As a beginning step for those of you who are interested in knowing more about eating vegetarian style I would recommend a few books to get you on your way. "Diet for a Small Planet" is a 1971 bestselling book by Frances Moore Lappe, the first major book to critique grain-fed meat production as wasteful and a contributor to global food scarcity. Eating a planet-centered diet, she argued, means choosing what is best for the earth and our bodies.

"The Dictionary of Wholesome Foods" by Gianna De Persiis Vona, Anstice Carroll, Embree De Persiis Vona is an informative addition to your food reference shelf. It provides practical guidance on how to make sense of the burgeoning selection of healthful foods, herbs and supplements, and provides a concise understanding of the sources, characteristics, benefits and uses of these foods. This book is a personable, readable guide that includes historical information and fascinating anecdotes about the many foods it describes, plus an array of delicious recipes that feature them.

Another terrific book "Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone" by Deborah Madison has a wealth of information on cooking, buying produce, food combining and understanding the basic techniques of vegetarian cooking. What Julia Child is to French cooking, Deborah Madison is to vegetarian cooking. "Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone" teaches readers how to build flavor

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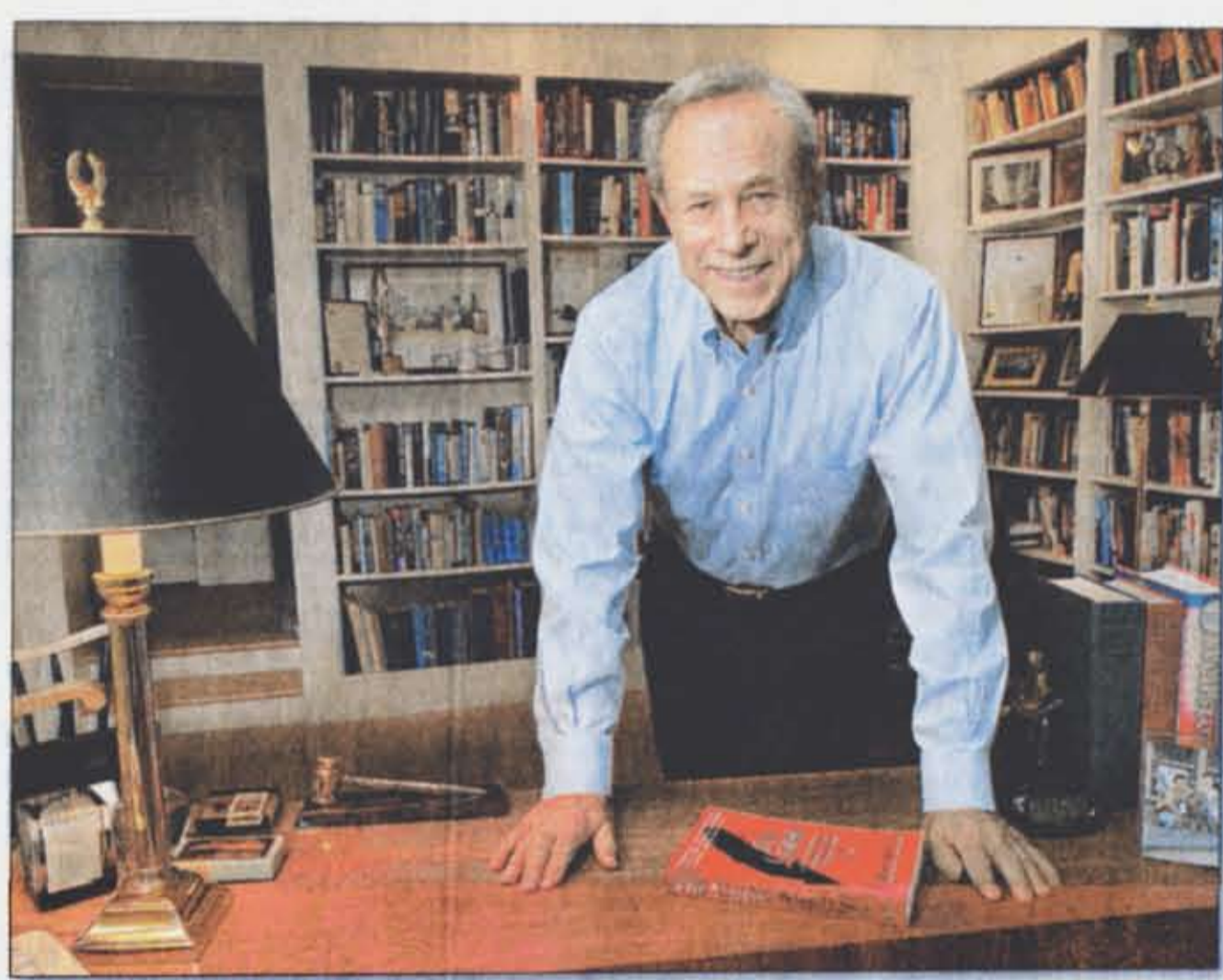


Photo by Catherine Avalone

Former Congressman Robert Steele in his office at his Essex home is the author of "The Curse: Big Time Gambling's Seduction of a Small New England Town." Steele's novel describes the wrenching when the federal government allowed two Indian casinos to open in eastern Connecticut. He will appear in Old Saybrook and in Branford in March for a book-signing.

**Gambling CURSE**

Essex novelist looks at impact of casinos on Connecticut

By **Julie Anne Rancourt**  
Special to the Times

**ESSEX** - At a time when neighboring states are rushing to legalize gambling in an attempt to cash in on their share of gaming revenues in the region, Robert Steele has written a novel warning of the disastrous effects casinos have had on Connecticut.

"The Curse — Big-Time Gambling's Seduction of a Small New England Town" is the fictional story of a family with deep roots to the earliest settlers in the area who see their traditional New England way of life slip away before their eyes because of the construction of two Indian casinos.

Steele was compelled to write this novel — which is part history book and includes an extensive bibliography — after seeing first-hand the effects Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun casinos had on his beloved state.

The author lived in Ledyard for 21 years, leaving the area in 1998 after the two casinos were completed. The son of Connecticut radio legend Bob Steele also represented Eastern Connecticut, including Middletown, for two terms in the U.S. Congress.

You can meet the author when he will speak on the shoreline at two engagements — at the Acton Library, Old Saybrook at 2 p.m., Sunday,

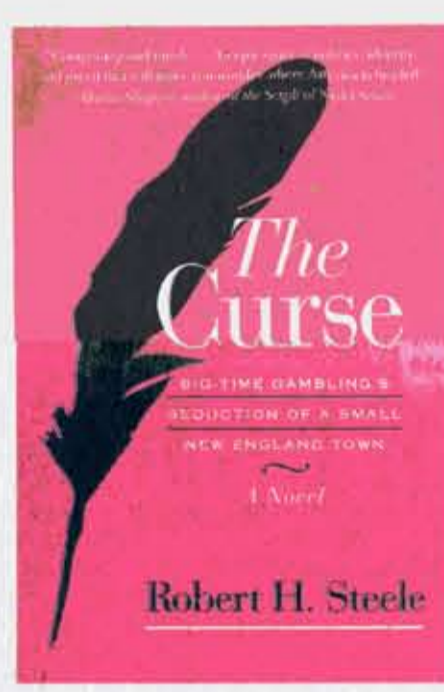
March 10 and the James Blackstone Memorial Library, Branford at 7 p.m., Tuesday, March 26.

"I watched the political maneuvering. I watched the building of the casinos and the impact on the region," Steele said.

Steele got the idea for the book about what he calls a fascinating story when he lived in Ledyard and watched the political battles unfold.

"I was fascinated by the history of the Pequots and the Mohegans and how they were mortal enemies," Steele said. "They virtually disappeared and then reemerged to build two of the world's biggest casinos."

After Foxwoods, opened by the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation in 1992, and Mohegan Sun, opened by the Mohegan Tribe of Connecticut in 1996, the state



started to benefit from deals made with the Indians for a portion of the slot machine revenue. Since peaking five years ago, however, slot revenue has steadily declined, because of the recession and increased competition mostly from gambling sites at the Aqueduct and Yonkers, N.Y., race tracks, while social costs such as gambling addiction, divorce, and embezzlements have increased.

Between 1992 and 2007, embezzlements alone rose 400 percent in Connecticut, or 10 times the national average, according to the author's research.

"We made this huge bet on casino gambling in Southeastern Connecticut," Steele said, and he's afraid we're coming up snake eyes.

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**Gambling curse: Local author**

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"Meanwhile, the state and the casinos are spending tens of millions of dollars to encourage you to gamble in ads where everyone is winning and having a good time," Steele said.

And the author fears that it is only going to get worse. Recently, U.S. Sen. Harry Reid, D-Nev., proposed the Internet Gambling Prohibition and Poker Consumer Protection Act which would legalize poker on the internet, including on mainstream websites like Facebook.

"If internet gambling happens, you won't need to leave your living room, your dorm room, to place a bet," Steele said. "Then they'll have everything they want."

Steele noted that the state of Nevada just signed a law last week to allow online gambling.

Steele worked on the book on and off for 10 years, finishing it last summer.

The process was possibly more difficult because of the style Steele chose, blending fact and fiction.

"I wanted to tell the whole story, but in a way that hadn't been done before. I wanted to write a novel what would appeal to a different audience than just a book of non-fiction," Steele said, adding, "But weaving imagination and fact is infinitely more difficult."

"It's been very rewarding seeing it in print, especially when I think of all the time I put into it," Steele said.

Steele, who lives in Essex with his wife, is now traveling to 37 libraries and historical societies throughout New England to discuss the book.

Steele will also be at the Meriden Public Library on Saturday, March 2, at 2 p.m. and at the Russell Library in Middletown on Saturday, March 9, at 2 p.m.

"This book is about where we are," Steele said. "We have to talk about where we're going."

"The Curse — Big-Time Gambling's Seduction of a Small New England Town" is available in soft-cover from Amazon and R.J. Julia Booksellers in Madison and as an eBook on Amazon and Barnes & Noble.