

ELECTION

2020

# New London County saw more votes cast on both sides

**FROM A1**

Biden won 11 towns: East Lyme, Groton, Lyme, New London, Norwich, Old Lyme, Stonington and Waterford, as well as the three towns he flipped. Trump was favored by voters in 10 rural towns: Bozrah, Franklin, Griswold, Lebanon, Lisbon, North Stonington, Preston, Salem, Sprague and Voluntown.

This year, Voluntown had the highest share of the Trump vote, at 60.24%, while New London had the highest Biden vote, at 75.76%.

In all 21 cities and towns, the share of the overall vote the Democratic ticket received increased from 2016 to 2020, whereas the share of the vote for the Republican ticket decreased in 20 municipalities. The lone exception was New London, where the Trump ticket got 22.15% of the vote in 2016 and 22.42% in 2020.

New London was an outlier in terms of growth in votes for the Democratic ticket: The number of people voting for Biden compared to Clinton increased only 9.63%. Turnout in New London was 55% this year, the lowest in the county and down from 56.3% in 2016.

While Montville went for Biden and Salem for Trump, these were the only two towns where neither candidate received more than 50% of the vote this year. In 2016, neither candidate reached 50% of the vote in Colchester, Ledyard or Waterford.

The number of people voting for a third-party candidate dropped in every municipality from 2016 to 2020, with votes for the Libertarian Party ticket dropping between 41.7% and 71.4% in different towns, and support for the Green Party ticket decreasing between 48.5% and 85.7%.

All of the vote tallies are marked “unofficial results.” Gabe Rosenberg, spokesperson for the Secretary of the State’s Office, explained that final election results aren’t due until 96 hours after the election.

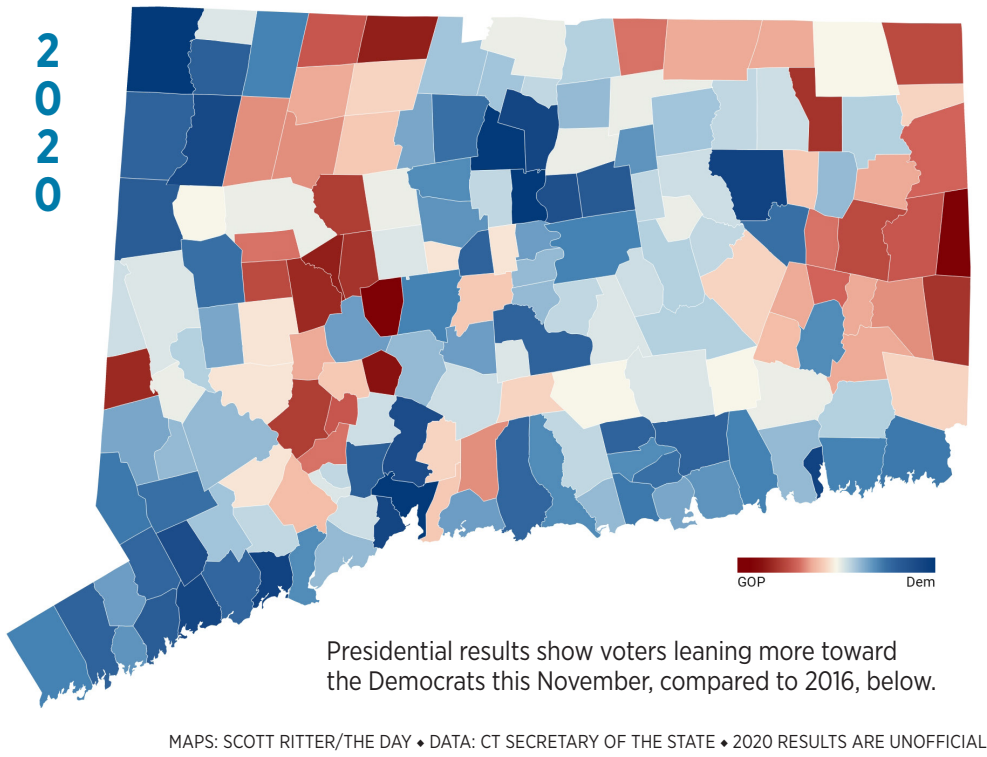
He said after that, local election officials have an opportunity to make sure there are no mistakes, the Secretary of the State’s Office calculates if there are any recounts, and there is a chance for legal challenges, before results are certified on Nov. 25 and become official.

Rosenberg said Friday morning it doesn’t look like there will be any recounts.

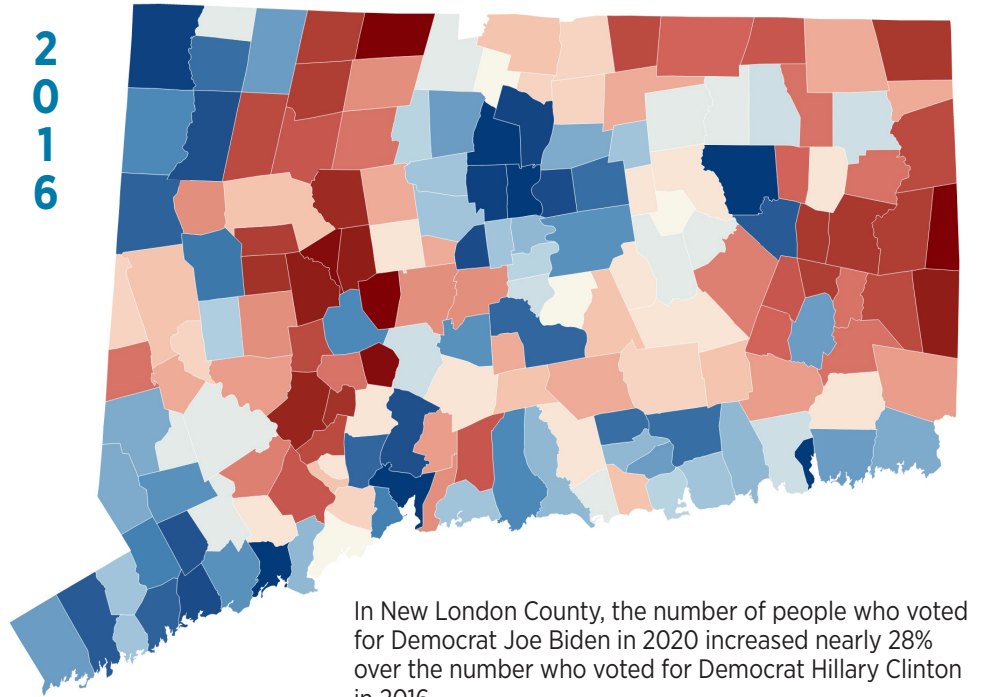
## Colchester, Ledyard and Montville flip red to blue

Ledyard saw the largest

## CONNECTICUT’S SHIFTING ELECTORATE



MAPS: SCOTT RITTER/THE DAY • DATA: CT SECRETARY OF THE STATE • 2020 RESULTS ARE UNOFFICIAL



percentage of increase in votes for the Democratic ticket, with 34% more votes — representing 1,135 more people — going to Biden than Clinton. The number of people voting for Trump increased 4.6%.

The largest percentage of increase in votes for Trump was 13.3% in Lisbon, which also saw a 26.6% increase in votes for the Democratic ticket.

Ledyard resident Bella Langlois attributes the increased Democratic support to the Black Lives Matter movement. She co-organized several Black Lives Matter protests in Ledyard this summer, where people could register to vote.

Langlois, who is studying

political science and history at the University of Connecticut, said that on Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat, friends and people she grew up with “were suddenly becoming interested in politics and involved, and asking questions about democracy and civics, everything that I spend all of my time studying. It was nice.”

She added, “I think it is the youth vote, and it’s hard to deny that.”

Ledyard resident Nina Cotugno-Diaz, 35, said this was the first election in which she voted, and it was because of her daughters.

“In years past, I never really felt like my voice was going

to make a difference; I’m just one person. How am I going to make a difference?” she said. “But when my girls came home from school one day and started talking to me about the president and their feelings about him — mind you, they’re 10 and 13 — it was kind of a reality check.”

Cotugno-Diaz, who voted for Biden, said her daughters asked things about Trump, like “How come he can throw a fit, Mom? He’s too old for that.”

Ledyard Republican Town Committee Chairman John Rodolico declined to comment for this article. The heads of the Republican town committees in Montville and Colchester, as well as Connecticut GOP Chairman J.R. Romano, did not respond to requests for comment.

Colchester, one of three local towns to switch to Biden, saw the second-highest percentage of increase in support for the Democratic ticket in New London County from 2016 to 2020, and by far the largest increase in voter turnout. According to the Secretary of the State’s Election Center, turnout increased from 77.35% to 89.35%.

Colchester Democratic Town Committee Vice Chair Meaghan Kehoegreen said she got involved with the DTC four years ago “purely because Trump winning terrified me, made me sad for the state of our country.”

### Voter engagement

She said this year, the DTC “had about 50 new volunteers who have never done anything with politics before get involved because they don’t want Colchester to be known as a Trump town.” She said people worked hard with voter engagement, whether it was door-knocking, phone banking or texting.

Kehoegreen, 36, said vol-

unteers reached out to people who are registered but hadn’t voted in 2016 or 2018. She also pointed to “young 20-somethings who had never been involved in politics before” going on social media to call out racism and to tell their friends to vote.

Bernie Dennler, a Democratic member of the Colchester Board of Finance, said Kehoegreen has “done a phenomenal job in this town” and drove success by bringing other people into the fold.

Dennler, 25, was away at college in 2016 but has since gotten involved with the DTC, which he said now has “unprecedented engagement” and is “a very different organization than it was a few years ago.”

He said so many more people have stepped up to run for local office, building networks that “paid off big in terms of driving turnout this year.”

Dennler pointed to Democratic candidates getting control of the Board of Selectmen and Board of Education in last year’s municipal election, and Montville Democratic Town Committee Chairman Tim May pointed to Democrats taking control of the Montville Town Council.

May, 56, said a DTC member working the polls Tuesday told him it was remarkable how many first-time voters under age 30 she saw. May said he did hear of older first-time voters, but most were Republican.

The vote tallies from the Secretary of the State’s Office don’t indicate who or what drove the larger increase in support for the Democratic ticket. It’s unclear how much can be attributed to young voters, older voters who didn’t vote in 2016, people who flipped from Trump to Biden, or people who flipped from a third party to Biden.

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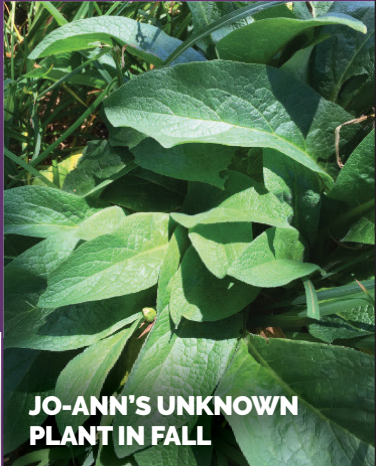
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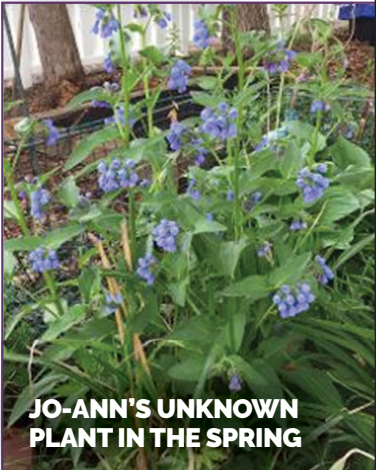
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