

TECHNOLOGY

## City pushes digital effort Partners with event app, burbio

By Robert Koch

NORWALK — Locals and visitors looking for things to do in Norwalk can now find them in one fell swoop.

On Monday afternoon, Mayor Harry Rilling announced the city has partnered with burbio.com to launch a “city-wide event discovery platform” aimed at informing the public about school, government and nonprofit happenings.

Burbio reads calendar and event feeds from Google, iCal, Facebook, WordPress and other platforms and updates the information automatically as it changes.

The free website and iPhone app streams all Norwalk schools, sports, library and other community events in one place. After signing up, users can create a personalized event feed and sync local events to their Google and iPhone calendars. The Android app has not launched yet.

Burbio co-founders Dennis and Julie Roche, who live in Pelham, N.Y., explained the features during a press conference at Norwalk City Hall.

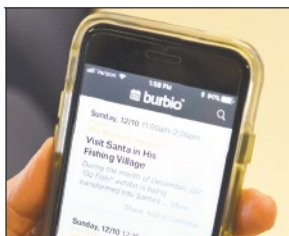
“It’s kind of a one-stop shop for events on calendars,” Julie Roche said. “Burbio came about because Dennis and I had so much trouble finding out just in our local community everything that was going on and always felt like we were missing out and spending too much time organizing, so we created burbio to do just that.”

Roche said people can find everything they need to know about local events, interact with various calendars and easily organize their lives. For groups and organizations holding events, burbio offers a central location to get the

*See Burbio on A8*



Dennis and Julie Roche, co-founders of burbio, introduce their app at Norwalk City Hall on Monday. They have partnered with the city to promote local events.



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Julie Roche, burbio co-founder



The city of Norwalk Director of Economic Development Liz Stocker asks a question during the introduction of the new burbio calendar app.

Alex von Kleydorff / Hearst Connecticut Media

A8 | The Norwalk Hour | Tuesday, November 28, 2017

## BURBIO

From page A1

word out about their offerings.

The platform also provides the city an opportunity to showcase everything that is happening, she said.

Roche said burbio screens events to ensure that no objectionable content is posted.

A one-stop shop for local calendar listings was long overdue, according to Dennis Roche. He noted the rise of websites devoted exclusively to airplane tickets, hotel reservations and restaurant offerings. Centralized information about events has not kept pace.

“Not a lot has changed,” Dennis Roche said. “You’re opening emails. You’re cutting and pasting.”

Rilling described Nor-

walk as an active community but said many residents need help organizing their calendars to make sure they don’t miss out on things.

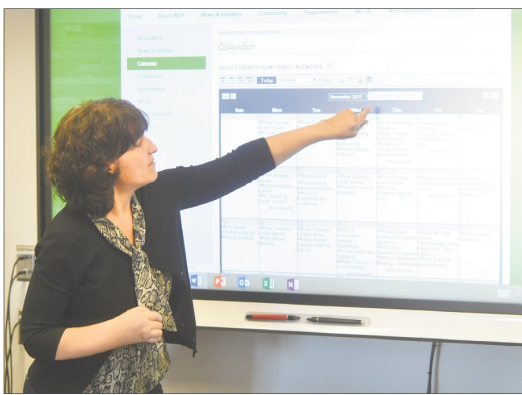
“The free service should make it easier for residents, especially parents who have children in different schools and who participate in different activities to organize their calendars,” Rilling said. “Since not-for-profits may add their events with the free service, I expect that many residents will be pleased with the options.”

Rilling was joined by Norwalk Director of Information Technology Karen Del Vecchio, Director of Economic Development Elizabeth Stocker, Norwalk Public Schools spokeswoman Brenda Wilcox Williams and Norwalk Public Library Executive Director Chris Bradley.

Stocker said the initiative brings the concept of Smart Cities to event automation.

“It’s a great example of a city taking what could be a problem for busy residents — events are everywhere

and hard to track — and turning it into both a great service and a source of competitive strength.”



Julie Roche, CEO and co-founder of burbio, points to an event on the school system calendar to illustrate the app at Norwalk City Hall on Monday.