

THE NORTH STONINGTON QUARTERLY

WINTER 2023

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Happy New Year!

The Board of Selectmen have just completed the first year of our two-year term. We hope that the residents of North Stonington have been pleased with our performance as your public servants. We are always available for constructive criticism and willing to listen to suggestions on ways that we can improve.

2022 has been a year of getting things done and overall, has been pretty smooth. "Knock on wood". We started with a Community Conversation on January 8th to discuss the fate of the old middle school and how best to spend our ARPA Funds. The John Dean Gallup House at Hewitt Farm finally has a tenant and NEW windows. Hewitt Farm also was home to a new Farmers Market which was a huge success. Speed humps were installed in the Village and have received mixed reviews and the demolition of the old middle school is almost completed. The contractor will be hydroseeding in the Spring.



The Board of Selectmen meetings have been open for public comment throughout and the BOS, BOE and BOF have agreed to re-establish Tri-Board meetings that are held quarterly. With our Budget Season approaching, communication between the Boards and feedback from our residents is of the utmost importance.

So, what will year 2 bring? Spring meetings to discuss everything from Speed Humps to the repurposing of the land where the old middle school once stood. Addressing the rising cost of operating our Transfer Station and a renewed focus on Affordable Housing. We are also planning an Agricultural Forum to be held in March along with the Towns of Preston, Griswold, Sterling and Voluntown in an effort to help our local farmers. And, as always, trying to make the already wonderful Town of North Stonington the best it can be.

BOB CARLSON, NICOLE PORTER, BRETT MASTROIANNI

selectmen@northstoningtonct.gov

NORTH STONINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Thank you for attending the Open House at the Stephen Main Homestead, the headquarters of the Historical Society, in the center of the village. Please feel welcome to visit the house and the genealogical library on Tuesday afternoons or by appointment. Phone 860-535-9448 or 599-3608 or go to nostonhistoricalsociety.homestead.com.

The historical society works with the schools to introduce students to the rich history of the town and provides talks on varying subjects at the homestead or at Wheeler Library. Come March, all of us will be thinking of spring. Work will continue in the dye house garden and on native plantings supporting the Pollinator Pathway Project. Volunteers will often be there on Wednesdays. Please stop by.

DICK SEAGER

PRESIDENT

dickseager@comcast.net

NORTH STONINGTON LIONS CLUB

The North Stonington Lions have had a busy fall. Despite a very cold and windy day, we were able to hold our annual Dahlia Days and participate in the Town Wide Yard Sale. Once again, the beautiful dahlias did not disappoint. Many folks came by and enjoyed the day, filling their vases with colorful bouquets, stopping at the grill for lunch and homemade desserts and browsing the barn filled with yard sale treasures.

In October we welcomed First Selectman Bob Carlson to our dinner meeting for an informative talk on What's Happening in North Stonington, followed by some questions and comments from our members. We appreciated Bob taking time from his busy schedule and joining us. Also in October, we were invited to have a food booth at the North Stonington PTO's Fall Fest. It was a great opportunity for families to gather for some fun fall activities. There were a lot of hungry mouths to feed but we were up to the challenge.

In November we held a Spaghetti Supper at the Grange Hall. Thank you to everyone who purchased tickets and made donations. With your help, we were able to raise \$1,000.00 to a disaster relief fund set up for Florida hurricane victims. Also in November, after an absence due to Covid, we were able to return to the North Stonington Elementary School to conduct Kids Eyesight Screening to students in grades kindergarten - fifth grade. With our digital, touch less device, we were able to detect 26 possible eye problems and sent home letters to those parents to follow up with an optometrist. At the end of November our members assisted the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center and delivered Thanksgiving baskets to some of their very grateful clients.

We are looking forward to hosting our second Soup Supper sometime after the first of the year. Watch for signs and posts on Facebook for all the details. We would like to wish all North Stonington residents a very joyous and happy New Year and may your 2023 be a year of many blessings and good health. If you are interested in joining our club or attending a meeting, please contact me at 860-535-4380.

TERRY BYASSEE PRESIDENT

PAWCATUCK NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

North Stonington Lions have been a constant source of assistance to the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center. At Thanksgiving, they helped the PNC to distribute turkeys to 633 people from its food center, located at 27 Chase Street, Pawcatuck. Volunteers also delivered turkey meals to the homebound. The food center is open Monday through Friday, 9:00 to 3:30 and open to all North Stonington residents.

Residents are also welcome at the PNC Community Breakfast on the 2nd and 4th Friday of the month and Veterans Coffee House on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month.

New classes for seniors start in January – tai chi, writing, painting, stretch & strengthen, chair yoga, line dancing and music and movement. Lunches are available five days each week. Unexpected Treasures thrift store open to the public, Monday through Friday, 9:00 to 3:30. Interested in volunteering? Call us at (860) 599 – 3285, ext. 101 or email susan@thepnc.org

SUSAN SEDENSKY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Joint Volunteers from left to right:

Dan McCrary,
Wanda Breidinger,
Wayne Byassee,
John Bradshaw,
Jan McCrary.



BOY SCOUTS TROOP 71

Troop 71 has had a wonderful last few months!



The troop participated in the annual Scouting for Food drive where they collected close to 1,200 items! The items were donated to the North Stonington Food Pantry. We appreciate the kindness and generosity of our wonderful community!

Troop 71 had a very successful annual Troop Feast, held at the Zichichi farm. The scouts prepared a total of four turkeys, two chickens, sausage and a variety of sides and desserts, all outdoors! It was a wonderful event enjoyed by over 50 people! The troop assisted with lighting the way down Main St. with luminaries for the town tree lighting in early December.

In January, the Troop will be participating in a snow sports campout to enjoy tubing, snowboarding and skiing. They will also be participating in the Hartford Wolfpack Scout Night, as well as an exciting Klondike Campout at JNW Scout Camp, and an Orienteering hike to sharpen those navigation skills!

If you know someone interested in scouting, please contact Scoutmaster Ramsey Allen at mmpadi3d@gmail.com.

JENN RICHTER COMMITTEE MEMBER

NORTH STONINGTON GIRL SCOUT TROOPS

Girl Scout troops in town were very busy this fall. Brownie Troop 63813 participated in a beach cleanup with ORCA; they went swimming with the Pumpkins at the YMCA and held a community book swap. They also participated with friends to learn about Tide Pools with the New England Science & Sailing (NESS) and even found a dead stingray during the event. They also had a fall hike that concluded with a campfire and smores.

Brownie Troop 63283 is a new troop getting started in town. The new girls participated in the Awards ceremony and had their Investiture Ceremony into Girl Scouts.

Cadette Troop 63817 has been busy making Chemo Kits for the Cancer Center at Yale. They put together birthday bags to donate to the PNC, participated in the Annual Holiday Light parade, the Annual Tree Lighting, in conjunction with Ambassador Troop 63061, to make hot cocoa and provided cookies for the event.

Ambassador Troop 63061 participated in the Grammie Jammie program which donated new PJ's to PNC for Christmas. They participated in the Lighthouse Service Unit Awards ceremony and are currently working on webinar participation in preparation for starting the Gold Award.

All troops will be busy with cookie sales which start in January. In February there will be celebrations for Thinking Day, on February 22nd, to celebrate International Scouting and on March 12th will be celebrations for the birthday of Girl Scouts in the USA. For any information on Girl Scouting in North Stonington, please contact me.

MANDY BRINK trekeragb@sbcglobal.net



POLLINATOR PATHWAY PROJECT

The project has a good start with additions to plantings in public areas and two new installations along Main Street, all marked with the PPP logo sign. There is a bed along the parking area at the front of the Congregational Church. We should expand this in the spring. Behind the library, the new Children's Garden was planted by children, parents, and members of the garden club. The library has acquired new children's books and will have activities in the spring with children.



A big thank you to everyone who participated in the crowdfunding last year. We are attempting to provide a contiguous path of pesticide free and pollinator friendly plantings along Main Street for pollinating bees and others. Everyone is encouraged to manage their properties in ways to encourage and sustain the various pollinators. By late winter, many of you are starting seeds and planning new gardens. Please consider using plants native to our area.

For more information or to sign a pledge and purchase a lawn sign, contact Pat Turner No.Sto.Pollinators@gmail.com

PAT TURNER

NORTH STONINGTON GARDEN CLUB



Once again NSGC members met to decorate and donate evergreen wreaths to adorn public buildings, churches, and other locations in North Stonington. Each wreath (or pair of wreaths) represents the unique creative effort of a club member, be sure to look for them as you move around town this holiday season.

In October, we held our annual meeting and election of officers by Zoom, rather than in person. In 2023, Barbara Duncan of Ledyard will serve as President, Kirsten Solomon of Mystic as Vice-President, Karen Askins of Ledyard as Treasurer, Mary Bellandese of Waterford as Assistant Treasurer, Fran Barsky of North Stonington as Recording Secretary, and Liz Hoch of North Stonington as Corresponding Secretary. We are truly a regional club and welcome members from all surrounding towns!

Also in October, NSGC's efforts were recognized by the Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut. NSGC contributions to the town's Pollinator Pathway Project earned a Conservation Award, the Horticulture Committee's native plant project was awarded the Joyce P. Harris Award for Horticulture, and past-President Mary

Ann Buckley was recognized with an individual Tribute Award for Conservation for her many contributions, most notably her newsletter initiative which kept members informed and connected during the pandemic. In addition, the New England Garden Clubs awarded NSGC the New England Wildflower Society Award for "Promoting the use of native species in community and members' gardens".

New members are always welcome. If you would like to learn more, please visit our website www.nsgardenclub.org, or feel free to contact us with questions: info@nsgardenclub.org

JANICE PARKER

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

The North Stonington Economic Development Commission (EDC) hopes this newsletter finds everyone safe and healthy as we move into 2023. Looking back at 2022, the EDC has been busy with new members and leadership on the Commission working to update our list of current businesses, assisting those businesses affected by the pandemic, while examining our website and social media presence to ensure communication of what we have available to the business community. Two financial assistance programs: “North Stonington Works” and the “North Stonington Covid-19 Small Business Assistance Program”, will end in 2023. Both programs are intended to help North Stonington businesses in a competitive market, whether their challenges are due to hiring or pandemic-related issues.



We now turn our focus toward assessing and revising the 2012 North Stonington Economic Development Action Plan. We will be working with the committee updating the Plan of Conservation and Development. The revised Action Plan will provide a snapshot of the demographics of North Stonington in 2023 as they relate to economic development, if/how we have changed since 2012, an assessment of what we have and have not accomplished since 2012 and where we want to go moving forward. This is an opportunity to examine not only the benefits, but also the roadblocks to developing a successful business in North Stonington.

It is an exciting time to examine how far we have come, and where we want to go. Our Commission is here to assist the local business community. Stay safe, North Stonington.

CHRISTOPHER P. ANDERSON 860-608-4549 canderson@northstoningtonct.gov

NORTH STONINGTON EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Trivia night will take place on February 10, 2023, at the Pawcatuck VFW from 6 to 9 p.m. Our Annual Dinner Dance will be held at Lake of Isles from 6 to 11 p.m. on March 25, 2023. This event is our major fundraiser. and was a fantastic success last year.

The Foundation has recently given out one large grant (\$8,548) and two microgrants. The large grant (Applicant: Kerry Schacht) was for library hands-on materials to facilitate learning in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM). A microgrant (Applicant: Shannon Curioso) was awarded to subsidize a field trip for forty students to see the *Nutcracker* in Providence (two students from Wheeler were in the show). The other microgrant was for Stop the Bleed Kits (Applicant: Sheri Tardiff) to be placed in key locations in the elementary school (many faculty members have been trained in their use). These grants were possible because of the generosity of the North Stonington Community.

Please look for a letter from the Foundation in the New Year asking for donations to help us continue supporting education in the community and schools.

We wish everyone a Happy New Year!

BERNARD “BING” BARTICK 860-389-0264 nsedfoundation.org

ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

As we begin the new year, Cecile and I hope that everyone had a Happy Holiday and wish you all a prosperous New Year.

Homeowners Program: The homeowners' program has just released the income limits for 2023. The maximum income for a married couple to qualify for the program is \$49,100. The maximum income for a single person is \$40,000. The program begins on February 1st and goes thru May 15th. If either couple turned 65 or over before January 1st, 2023, and your income is less than the maximum, you may apply for the program. The minimum tax benefit is \$150 off your July tax bill, or up to \$1,250, depending on your total taxes and your income. For more information, contact the Assessor's Office at 860-535-2877 x 124.

Veterans or the surviving spouse of a veteran may also qualify for an additional benefit. The application period is from February 1st thru October 1st. The income limit is the same as the Homeowner's Program. Lastly, **if you are a disabled veteran**, and turned 65, please let the Assessor's Office know, as your benefit may increase.

The third solar project in the Town of North Stonington has started construction and is located at 450 Providence New London Turnpike. When completed, this project will produce 8.35 megawatts of electrical energy. The other solar projects in the town are located off Boombridge Road and Ella Wheeler Road. Boombridge, which is on 27 acres, produces 5 megawatts of electrical energy, and the project located on 353 acres off Ella Wheeler Road, generates 15 megawatts.

As a reminder, **active-duty veteran's must apply every year for their veteran's exemption on their motor vehicle registered in Connecticut.** Connecticut veterans are entitled to one car that is exempt from motor vehicle taxes. Contact the Assessor's Office.

DARRYL L. DEL GROSSO

CCMA 11, ASSESSOR 860-535-2877 ext. 23 or 24

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Hello, everyone, and Season's Greetings!

Well, I think you'll agree that we fared well, through our hurricane/tropical storm season (which officially ended on 30 November). Now, we must turn our attention to the winter months.

For the second year, I have received warnings from "ISO New England" (operator of the region's electric transmission grid), that severe and prolonged cold weather could cause an electricity shortage that might require/mandate calls for conservation. As a last result, utilities could be required to implement controlled, rolling power outages, possibly affecting both electric and natural gas services. This unlikely situation (but real possibility) would be very different from repairing damage and restoring power following a storm.

I urge everyone to have necessary supplies on hand. In the event something like this happens; there would be very little warning beforehand. I can't stress early preparedness enough!

Happy Holidays, Everyone!

GARY BARON

DIRECTOR

LAND USE DEVELOPMENT

After 19 years as a member of the North Stonington PZC it is time me to move on. Therefore, I respectfully resigned as a member of the North Stonington PZC effective December 16, 2022.

First, thank you Madeline Jeffrey and Dick Cooper for getting me involved in planning issues by creating maps for the North Stonington Land Alliance and the Town using the newly created ArcView GIS program back in the 1990's. Coop got me involved with creating the first Plan of Conservation and Development in 2000.

I would also like to thank all our Town planners and PZC members past and present that I have served with for their dedication and hard work that created regulations that have helped our Town prosper while maintaining its rural character and treating our citizens fairly.

I want to thank the citizens of North Stonington for your support for me and the PZC over the last 23 years. It has been an honor and pleasure serving on the PZC and am very grateful for your trust and support.

Lastly, thank you Cheryl Konsavitch for your common sense, assistance, patience, and historic knowledge of planning and zoning issues that helped me do my job on the commission better.

Respectfully,

LOUIS STEINBRECHER

HEWITT FARM

Winter is a peaceful, quiet time at Hewitt Farm. The trees are bare opening up a panoramic view of the property. Across the field from the house is the pavilion inviting visitors to stop, sit and enjoy the scenery after walking the trails. When you visit, there is much to observe on 104 acres!

The John Dean Gallup house now has a comfortable residence. The wonderful new window installations are complete, with the exception of some touch-up painting that is being done. In addition to window replacement, the basement bulkhead entrance has been completely rebuilt. This completes the planned work for this year.

Hewitt Farm is open daily from dawn to dusk. It's free, easy to get to, right near the village and Holly Green. Park just inside the Hewitt Road entrance off Route 2 or at the parking area down Hewitt Road from Ryder Road. Download the Hewitt Farm Trail Map from the town website (www.northstoningtonct.gov) or pick one up at any of the trailheads.



The pavilion can be reserved by visiting the Recreation Department website and scheduling the event.

ED HARASIMOWIZ

CHAIRMAN

860-245-5305

NORTH STONINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Our incredible schools are filled with empowered learners, both children and adults, who are happy and successful. Mention worthy, North Stonington students continue to succeed academically on their standardized assessments, including our grade 8 science scores being the highest in Connecticut! With a growth mindset, we are looking to improve what is already great! With that in mind, the district goals for the next three years include the following:

- Embed practices and procedures throughout the schools and curriculum experiences that ensure all students, staff, and families feel safe, valued, and have a sense of belonging.
- Design, document and implement innovative instructional opportunities that empower each learner.
- Develop and follow efficient and transparent processes to ensure smooth flow of operations and enable increased focus on learning.

Everyone in the schools, our families, and the community can help us to meet these goals. Aligned with our goals, a couple of our upcoming initiatives are reinvigorating a woodshop program as well as creating an alternative education center.

In collaborative meetings with the PTO and the North Stonington Education Foundation, I am regularly reminded of and awed by the community's commitment to educating our young people. These groups truly want the best for our schools and work tirelessly to provide important funding. With ongoing focus, support, and pride by all, our students will have multiple opportunities to receive personalized education, preparing them well for a fulfilling life.

TROY C. HOPKINS

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

hopkinst@northstonington.k12.ct.us

2023 PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT



It's time to update the 2013 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)! We are planning a series of informal discussions on Economic Development, Housing, and Open Space/Agriculture beginning February 6th to be held virtually on Monday evenings and in person on Saturday mornings, followed by a series of neighborhood meetings beginning in early March on Monday evenings. Please check the Town Website for detailed scheduling and locations for all POCD related meetings and events.

In April, a survey will be mailed to each household and will also be available at the Town Hall, the Library and on-line. When all the responses are summarized, we will have a Town Visioning Session (like the one held in 2013) to review the findings and revisit our current Vision and Guiding Principles.

In 2013, the considerable input we received from the public made all the difference in the world! Please take the opportunity to participate and make your concerns known. This will help us identify community needs and make better decisions that more accurately reflect your values and perspectives.

This is your plan for the next 10 years, and we hope you will engage in the process so that we can create a realistic plan that residents and elected officials will be excited to implement.

Thank you,

THE POCD STEERING COMMITTEE

TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

Happy New Year 2023! As we begin this new year, it is a good time to review what the Town Clerk's Office does throughout the year. The Town Clerk issues hunting, fishing, and trapping licenses, which can also be purchased online at www.ct.gov/deep/hunting.

The office issues certified copies of birth, marriage, and death certificates, as well as marriage licenses. If you plan on being married in North Stonington, a marriage license must be obtained from the Town Clerk's Office.

Dog license renewals occur during June. All dogs over the age of 6 months and new dogs to town must obtain a dog license from the Town Clerk's Office.

The Town Clerk's Office handles absentee ballots for all elections, primaries, and referendums. The date of the next regular election for Town offices is November 7, 2023. Please contact the office for any questions regarding absentee ballots and elections throughout the year

The recording and indexing of land records are an important part of the Town Clerk's job. If you need to access the land records, you may come to the office or go to the Town website (www.northstoningtonct.gov -- on the homepage page look for "Quick Access" and then click on "Town Land Records").

The Town Clerk's Office is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM until 4:00 PM, except on legal holidays. Please call (860) 535-2877 Ext. 121 or e-mail townclerk@northstoningtonct.gov.

ANTOINETTE PANCARO, MMC, MCTC, CCMO TOWN CLERK

NORTH STONINGTON AGRICULTURAL FAIR



Fair season may be over, but the North Stonington Fair volunteers are busy making upgrades to the grounds, reviewing contracts for 2023, planning entertainment, shows etc. Congratulations to our baking contest winners who went on to the State contest in November, a job well done and thank you for representing our fair.

Our monthly meetings will resume in January 2nd Tuesday of each month, 7pm at the Grange Hall. Have ideas? Have some times to lend? Just want to see what goes on? Feel free to join us, the meeting is open to all.

Wishing each and every one Happy Holidays and a Healthy Happy New Year! Save the date: July 13th-16th, 2023!!

JODY WHIPPLE pineneedlehomestead@sbcglobal.net 860-599-8498



NORTH STONINGTON VOLUNTEER FIRE CO., INC.



As of the writing of this letter, NSVFC has responded to 340 emergency calls in 2022. While calls for service continue to trend upward, a trend that show no evidence of changing, the number of volunteers has remained level.

The training requirements for volunteers are no different than those of a career department. Being a volunteer has become a 2nd job for most. Our volunteers continue to answer the calls while remaining proficient in all areas of fire, rescue and medical responses while working full time jobs. We continue to be as accomplished as any other department, providing the best level of service to our town as possible.

We currently have 2 per diem firefighters on duty weekdays, 6am-4pm, to supplement our staffing due to a majority of our members working their full-time jobs outside the town. These per diem firefighters ensure an immediate response while augmenting our remaining volunteers.

Now that cold weather is upon us, it is critical to ensure you have working smoke and CO alarms. These alarms could save your life.

Everyone at NSVFC would like to wish you a Happy New Year.

CHARLES A. STEINHART V FIRE CHIEF

GIVING CLOSET



Do you know that the district has a Giving Closet. The Wheeler High School Give Back Club created an amazing closet of free clothing in 2019. It has free clothing for babies, toddlers, kids, teenagers and adults with sizes ranging from 0-3 months to 3XL. Until recently due to Covid, the closet was only available on a limited basis. It is located at the North Stonington Education Center, 297 Norwich-Westerly Rd. All items are either brand new or gently used and we always welcome donations. Everything is clean and ready to wear. We have coats, snow boots, sweatshirts, dresses, sweaters, pants, pajamas and lots more, ready and waiting for anyone who would like to shop.

If you would like to set up a time to pick out some items for your family, please reach out to Rebecca Schilke at schilker@northstonington.k12.ct.us, or Sarah Vaillancourt at jnsvaillancourt@comcast.net. Confidentiality is of utmost importance to us, and we will accommodate private shopping times if preferred. We are working hard to come up with set weekly hours that we can open. In the meantime, you can check for the weekly hours on the North Stonington Town Group Facebook page.

We would like to thank the many hands that have donated, volunteered their time and have shopped at the Giving Closet. It truly is a great little closet with lots of treasures to give you some financial relief during these hard times. Please stop by and shop!

REBECCA SCHILKE & SARAH VAILLANCOURT COORDINATORS

BOARD OF FINANCE

Hello North Stonington! I hope you are all enjoying a safe and enjoyable holiday season with friends and family. The major boards and starting their preparations for budget season to put your tax dollars to the best possible use. This year we will be asking departments to provide an in-depth "post-mortem" of their expenditures from last year when providing draft budgets to the Board of Finance. We'll also be eager to hear about any new initiatives for which they might be requesting additional funding. This information will facilitate productive and positive discussions. Much will depend on our grand list values and we on the BOF are looking forward to our Assessors presentation for what changes to the town's income that might occur. Happy Holidays to you all!

PAUL SIMONDS

CHAIRMAN BOARD OF FINANCE

NORTH STONINGTON COMMUNITY GRANGE #138

When North Stonington Community Grange #138 meets (on 2nd & 4th Fridays, with some exceptions) we discuss and act upon not only our Grange needs, but also the needs of our community.

This fall we have been busy, and we have managed to give out Dictionaries to 3rd graders again, help families with Thanksgiving meals, and adopt Christmas families. Santa came again this year, after our program, reminding us that no matter how much or how little we have, we can always help someone, as the example set by "The Little Drummer Boy". Winter is always a bit slower, but we do have programs scheduled. Jan 13th is "Hollywood Squares", hosted by the Agriculture Committee; Feb 10th is "Candyland", hosted by Nancy Weissmuller; March returns to two meetings a month. March 10th is a great day for you to come see what we are all about, with our "Ritual Program". March 24th will be (we hope!) our award-winning Lecturer's contest entry!

You are welcome to join us at any time. Sensitive to the Covid and flu season, please contact Lecturer Sue Pianka at 860-599-4528 or Secretary Nancy Weissmuller at 860-535-2703 for the latest on meeting status. We look forward to meeting you.

SUE PIANKA

PROGRAM DIRECTOR

860-599-4528

KEEPING NORTH STONINGTON AFFORDABLE



As families gather in their homes this season, we recognize the policies that have benefited homeownership. We have a universal housing program. It's an entitlement. It's the homeowner tax break that allows the deduction of mortgage interest from our income, reducing taxable income. Keeping North Stonington Affordable believes we need to support town policies, such as making town land available for affordable housing development, so that we can extend the benefit of homeownership to those who cannot otherwise afford to live here. We need the diversity in population; we need the children in our new schools; we need the seniors who wish to stay in town, and we need the young adults who grew up here and wish to stay or return to town.

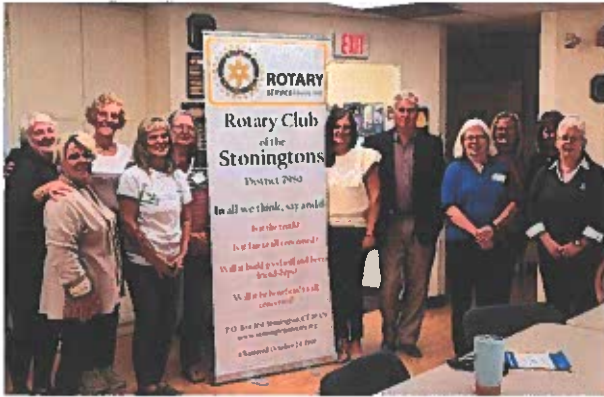
We thank those of you who have contributed to our mission with money and time. Local volunteers, led by KNSA board member Jeff Nelson, have been evaluating the condition of and cleaning out of 119 Clark Falls Road, the 1840 one room schoolhouse, which the town gave to KNSA. KNSA did the legal work to change the deed restriction so that this historic building could be given to us, a non-profit dedicated to providing affordable housing.

We now look forward to the opportunity to partner with the town and state to save and rehabilitate it into housing which is affordable.

MARY ANN RICKER

PRESIDENT

ROTARY OF THE STONINGTONS



We'd Love to Have You Join Us!! Rotarians provide community service to both local and international communities. Please join us, we are always looking for new members! One of the best reasons for becoming a Rotarian is the chance to do something for somebody else and to sense the self-fulfillment that comes in the process; it is richly rewarding. Rotary also supports our local youth by developing character and bringing out the best of the human spirit. It teaches students ethics, humanity, cultural and environmental awareness, people skills and the desire and ability to serve. Rotary also creates a more positive environment in our towns for promoting world understanding and peace.

The Rotary of the Stoningtons meets Friday mornings at 7am at the North Stonington Senior Center. We recently hosted Selectpersons Danielle Chesebrough of Stonington and Bob Carlson of North Stonington. They spoke about their current local initiatives and how Rotary can help support the financial needs of their respective towns.

November was Rotary's International Foundation Month. Members John and Marti Bradshaw presented a slide show of their summer Rotary Service trip to Kenya and Uganda to view and volunteer at projects funded by Rotary grants. Rotary was everywhere! Hospitals, clinics, schools, and the library/community center were all important projects made possible with Rotary Foundation money. Marti received a special recognition at our District Rotary Assembly in Hartford recognizing her significant impact in the lives of the people in our local community and in the international community.

Rotary was also very excited to help sponsor the recent Wheeler Library Farm to Table Dinner and is looking forward to supporting the library's upcoming renovation project. Continuing our commitment to our local students, we also sponsored 2-Wheeler seniors to attend the district Rotary Youth Leadership Awards Event.

We invite you to join us for an evening of fun, food (appetizers provided) and fellowship at CC O'Brien's on January 13th at 6pm (weather date January 20). Anyone who is interested can also join us at the New London Community Meal Center every second Monday and fifth Tuesday of the month. If you are involved in a community project, a local nonprofit, or a local business, we would love to hear from you! Come speak at our weekly meetings in North Stonington. Contact our president Donna Scherer at: dscherer.rotary@gmail.com. Interested in joining our amazing club? Contact our Membership chair Carol Umphlett at: carolu.rotary@gmail.com



AVALONIA LAND CONSERVANCY



- Sound Finances
- Ethical Conduct
- Responsible Governance
- Lasting Stewardship

Get out on some of the trails in the several preserves in town while leaves are off, and the views are long, maybe even white. On the website avalonia.org you can find trail maps and descriptions. Avalonia does more than protect open space. The land trust engages in education, wildlife & watershed protection, public recreation and more.

Your membership is always welcome. For information or to volunteer to monitor a property or help keep trails clear, you may contact Pat Turner, jmt.pst@gmail.com

If you are interested in joining a work party, contact Toby at tglaza@avaloniaalc.org

CEMETARY COMMISSION

The Fall season has been quiet for the Commission this year. Of course, David Fede is busy as ever seeing to the upkeep of our veteran burial grounds. He has overseen the removal of some dangerous trees, as well as maintaining the schedules for mowing.



On October 16, 2022, the Abigail Hinman Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) in Stonington, joined us at the Brown Cemetery, Hale # 313-71, to complete their act of service. We cleaned stones, removed fallen limbs, and discussed the wealth of history present in these cemeteries. We are very thankful for their assistance and look forward to additional cooperative ventures!

Unfortunately, this year we were unable to coordinate with the Boy Scouts to do the same in Union. Perhaps next year!

I can never express too often our gratitude to all who volunteer to care for these sacred sites!

DIANE PRESTON

Home 860-599-1832 / Cell 860-961-2580

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FROM OUR REGISTRARS

Happy New Year! This past November's election was a success that would not have been possible without our amazing poll workers. We thank them and our resident trooper, Jason McCarthy, who was appreciated on Election Day and was nice to see making connections with the residents.

We also want to thank all the voters. We had a huge turnout and were grateful to those that were patient with our issues in the ballot machine jamming as well as issues with names not being on the voter list. The election went smoothly and that was, in part, to all of YOU!

We have office hours in the town hall on Tuesdays/Thursdays from 10:00-12:00 if there is something we can assist you with. We can also be reached at 860-535-2877 ext. 113 or registrar@northstoningtonct.gov.

HELPFUL WEBSITES FOR VOTERS:

- You can register to vote; change your name, address and/or party affiliation at <https://voterregistration.ct.gov/OLVR/welcome.do>
- Voters can look up if and where they are registered at <http://myvote.ct.gov/lookup>

See you at the next election!

CONNIE BERARDI & EMILY LEWIS

REGISTRARS

NORTH STONINGTON PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

Oh, wow! Where did fall go???

Before we know it, we'll be on Winter Break! You know what they say: Time flies when you're having fun! And boy are we having fun!

We had an amazing turnout for Fall Fest! So many groups joined us to make it a great night and we couldn't be more appreciative of their participation.

We also had a blast with our Halloween float entry! Thank you to Greg and Hailie Davis for helping us with our vision!

Thanks to the tremendous success of our biggest fundraiser of the year, soon we'll get to see our Elementary School Principal, Rob Cillino, KISS A PIG! Add THIS to the list of fun, for sure!



We got some work done too! We helped fund the 5th grade trip to the CT Science Center, the "Reptile Guy" for the 6th grade, the 7th grade Ropes Course trip, and the Shakespeare class's tickets to the Globe Theatre. All great causes!

If this sounds like fun to you, and you have a student in our schools, come join us! Meetings are the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 7pm.

Have a wonderful winter! Happy holidays to you and yours!

DAWN GORALEWICZ president@northstoningtonpto.com

NORTH STONINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Here at North Stonington Elementary School, we have moved into our second trimester of the year. We are all 1/3 of a year smarter! This time of year is so much fun for the elementary school. The holidays and start of winter bring an excitement that cannot be matched the rest of the year.

This December our school held a Talent Show. This was a fundraiser for our awesome Drama Club. We had thirteen students perform and highlight their talents that ranged from singing to magic and stand-up comedy! It was awesome! Our Sixth Grade Chorus performed a fabulous concert on December 12th.

Our students and staff also took part in a district-wide pajama day to raise funds for Connecticut Children's Hospital. It was fun for everyone to get to dress comfortably for the day. The district raised over \$3000 to help CCH as well as people here in our own community.

We hope everyone had a peaceful holiday season and got a chance to enjoy some extra time with family and friends!

ROBERT CILLINO PRINCIPAL

NORTH STONINGTON CITIZENS LAND ALLIANCE

Have you ever had the feeling that what you really want and what you crave, is to take a walk, no hikes, no trails, no guides, with or without the dog on a lead, and maybe in a park?

We know the perfect place: a park-like setting that is a Land Alliance Preserve. It is very near Pendleton Hill/Clarks Fall Junction. Turn into the gravel lane at the blue and white sign, "Samuel Cote Preserve, NS Land Alliance". You will enter 17 acres of agriculture, pines, and Spalding Pond.

A North Stonington farmer works both the hay and corn fields, the dirt lane from the parking area to one of two pine woods openings is easy underfoot and leads to soft pine-needled paths and a river road lane along Spalding Pond.

Spalding Pond is a tributary of nearby Green Fall River. There is one solitary bench along the pond, and you may consider bringing a snack or thermos to enjoy and take in the easy, quiet, sense of solitude and delightful walking. Let us know.

NS Citizens Land Alliance, Box 327, North Stonington CT 06359 landallianceinc@gmail.com

MADELINE JEFFERY 860-599-5517

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Several copies of the tenth annual 2023 Community Calendar are still available. This year's theme is "Our One Room School Houses: Then & Now". What did our schoolhouses look like 75 years ago and, of the 10 remaining, what are they like today?

After completing the Kayak-Canoe Trail on the Pawcatuck River we are creating a brochure for our numerous bicyclists in town, giving mileage for several routes, the elevation and level of difficulty. We also will identify the Euro Trails which are available to motorized cyclists hoping they can use trails the state has designated for them and stay off the public roads.

One of the several trails the Conservation Commission has built and maintained on town owned open space properties is the Assekonk Borderlands Trail, between Pine Wood Road and the school's playing fields.

We are working on grants to resurface this mile long trail for handicapped wheelchair use and parents with strollers.

After 10-years of dedicated service, the Conservation Commission had a resignation. We are searching for a dedicated individual to help with our mission to develop, conserve, supervise, and regulate natural resources, including water resources, within our town.

We meet 10 times a year in a congenial group and would like more diversity among us.

BILL RICKER 860-535-2426 williamricker@comcast.net

BETTER TOGETHER CT INC. FARM & SANCTUARY

At Better Together CT Inc., we aim to address the root cause of suicide and the opioid epidemic with Combat Veterans, First Responders and the Community at Large. We are already providing free wellness services to Veterans. Our new Programs for 2023 will include:

- Reiki, Health, and Wellness Coaching - Christine Gentry, BS, MA, RN, HN-BC
- Free Yoga for Veterans - Michelle Shaw
- Free Art Therapy - By Veteran for Veterans - Felicia Stevens, BAAT, NLP
- Farm to Table Nutritional Ed Program (PTSD Diet)- Stefana Pecher, MD & Guest Chefs
- Purpose Changes You(th) – a Focus on Change through Community Service
- Cloning, Growing, and Harvesting - with UCONN students & Professor Matt DeBacco.

We ended the growing season strong, with a bountiful harvest! In 2023 we will continue participating in North Stonington Farm & Artisan Market and Dennison Farm Market. We will also continue assisting those who are food-insecure through direct and indirect donations.

Thank you to our volunteers and supporters! Without your generosity with your time and financial support, it would not be possible to help as many people as we have. We are truly “Better Together”!

Save the Date!! April 22nd - Earth Day - 2nd Stone Soup Dinner - Veterans always eat free of charge.

Wishing everyone abundance, health, and happiness, now and in the coming year!

DR. STEFANA PECHER, DIRECTOR

CAROLYN HOWELL, SECRETARY

TAX COLLECTOR

Hello North Stonington! My name is Zayne R. Ring, and I am the newly hired Tax Collector for the Town of North Stonington. I have ten years of experience as a Certified Connecticut Municipal Collector (CCMC), and 25 years as a municipal employee. I may be new to North Stonington, but not to the position. In the last position I held, I was kept very busy as I was the tax collector for the only regional tax office in the State of Connecticut. I am excited to be back working with the smaller community where it is a little more personal and hands on. The hours also give me a little more time to be a grandmother to my first grandchild born in August 2022. Please stop by and introduce yourselves.

Just a reminder, the second half of motor vehicle, real estate and personal property are due January 1, 2023, and will become delinquent on February 1, 2023. In addition, if you purchased a new vehicle after October 1, 2021, you will be receiving a supplemental motor vehicle bill which is also due and payable by February 1, 2023. For your further information, the tax collector's office hours for collecting will be Monday thru Thursday from 8:30 to 3:30 and Friday from 9:30 to 11:30. I hope these hours are conducive to serve you. If not, you can continue to use the drop box outside the Town Hall, which is checked twice daily. If your payment is not in the drop box at 4 pm when checked, it will be considered received next day. You can also pay online by going to the town website. For mailing and post mark, please send to 40 Main Street, North Stonington, CT 06359.

Please feel free to call my office at 860-535-2877 ext. 120 for any questions you may have. I will do my best to answer your questions or send you to the department that can help you.

ZAYNE R. RING, CCMC

TAX COLLECTOR

WHEELER HIGH SCHOOL/MIDDLE SCHOOL



Happy Holidays! Our performing arts talent continues to impress with first, our Drama Club's amazing production of *Barefoot in the Park* and with our Wheeler Music Department hosting two spectacular holiday concerts! A special shout out to Mrs. Black and her choir for their performance at the NoSto Tree Lighting Ceremony! We have some incredible talent at Wheeler!

Academically our students are working hard in their classes, internships and work-study opportunities. We are already preparing our Program of Studies for the next school year and students will begin to build their schedules for the 2023-2024 year shortly. We are excited to bring a woodshop class back to Wheeler next year!

Our admin team attended the annual NEASC conference this past week to prepare for our upcoming accreditation visit! For the first time, we are seeking district accreditation and are excited about this

change. Our teachers are busy preparing our students for their upcoming academic midterm assessments in January.

We are so grateful for the community connections that help us better provide for our Wheeler students and families. This month alone because of the generosity of the staff, students and our community, NoSto schools raised over \$2200 for the CT Children's Hospital as well as another \$2000 for a family in need! We appreciate your partnership. We can't do it without you all. Happy New Year.

KRISTEN ST. GERMAIN

PRINCIPAL

BOARD OF EDUCATION

It is hard to believe we are almost halfway through the school year. It has been a flurry of activity and we have had a great year so far. Mr. Hopkins has proven to be up for the challenge of running our district and is doing a fantastic job. We have all new staff in the Central Office, and they are coming up with more efficient ways to run the district.

The school has been working on a goal plan for 2022-2025 that includes 3 primary goals. The Board has realigned our subcommittees around these goals to ensure our decisions, policies and budget align with these goals. The first is 'Safe, Valued, and Sense of Belonging', the second is 'Innovative Instruction' and the third is 'Transparent and Efficient.' The work is ongoing, and we are looking forward to sharing more information as we develop these goals in the hopes that everyone will be able to follow what is happening at the schools and the BOE in a simple and transparent format. We are looking to update our website, adding more information to our Facebook page, and are streamlining our budget process. We met with the Board of Finance and Selectmen in December and had great discussions on how we can collaborate better through the budget process and throughout the year. We are looking at ways to bring woodshop back as a curriculum option and are assessing our grounds and fields to see what is needed to make them more functional for our students and athletes.

Work on the next budget has already started and we are looking for additional ways to get that information out to the public. In addition to our regular meetings, the BOE will be joining the BOF to go over our current budget and we will start presenting next year's budget in March. Please feel free to reach out anytime and we would love your input at one of our meetings. Wishing you a great 2023, the best is yet to come!

CHRISTINE WAGNER

BOARD OF EDUCATION CHAIR

WHEELER LIBRARY

Happy 2023 from the staff of Wheeler Library. As you can see from the Events Calendar, we have a lot going on for the community to enjoy. Our Annual Appeal is a large part of the library's operating budget and enables us to provide a bounty of programs, books, and services.

Please support your library with a donation to the Appeal.

The new year kicks off with Writing Workshops and a special event with Diary of a Wimpy Kid author Jeff Kinney. Art and music come into the mix as well, along with fundraising events that also bring the community together. Wheeler Library is working on plans to replace our aging mechanical systems and update the interior of the library to include meeting rooms, air conditioning, and more functional multi-purpose spaces. In addition, we hope to create more park-like grounds for all to use. More details will be available as we develop our "Building Community" project.

Keep up to date on everything happening at the library and make a donation to this community resource, at wheelerlibrary.org

As usual, we have scheduled several interesting and informative events. They are listed on the following page.

AMY KENNEDY DIRECTOR

THE NORTH STONINGTON RECREATION COMMISSION

The North Stonington Recreation Commission would like to remind everyone of the following winter programs being offered:

Dance: Three (3) ongoing dance programs after-school on Tuesdays & Thursdays

Spirit Moves Yoga & Pilates (for adults only):

- Tuesday morning Pilates starting January 10th
- Wednesday evening Yoga starting January 11th
- Thursday morning Pilates starting January 12th

Youth Basketball Skills Clinics (Saturday mornings for 8 weeks): starting January 7th

NoSto Family Skate Nights: Sunday January 15th & Sunday February 12th (6:00 – 8:00pm)

Periodically check the recreation website www.northstoningtonrec.com for updated information or “last-minute” programs and activities. Please feel free to contact North Stonington Recreation with ideas for programs or activities that you might be interested in coordinating or instructing (email: nsrecplay@northstoningtonct.gov)

THOMAS FABIAN DIRECTOR



WINTER EVENTS



January

| | | | | |
|--|------------|---------------------|-----------------|---|
| 7 th , 21 st , 28 th | Saturdays | 10:30 to 11:30am | Wheeler Library | Teen Writing Series. Please Register. |
| Jan 11 th Mar 1 st | Wednesdays | 6:00 to 7:00pm | Wheeler Library | 50 Day Writing Challenge, \$40 pp |
| 12 th | Thursday | 5:30 to 7:00pm | Wheeler Library | Reception for Bryn Souza's photography exhibit in the Arts Corridor |
| 14 th | Saturday | 11:00 to 1:00pm | Wheeler Library | Jeff Kinney Author Visit, \$10pp. (May sell out early) |
| 15 th | Sunday | 3:00pm | Wheeler Library | Classical concert. Prevailing Winds Woodwind Trio. |
| 17 th | Tuesday | 6:30 to 7:30pm | Wheeler Library | Ceramic Valentines |
| 31 st | Tuesday | 4:00pm | Wheeler Library | Book Discussion, Indigo Girl (Boyd) |

February

| | | | | |
|------------------|----------|-------------------|-----------------|--|
| 10th | Friday | 6:00 to 9:00pm | Pawcatuck VFW | North Stonington Education Foundation Trivia Night |
| 25 th | Saturday | | Wheeler Library | LOL "Love Our Library" A Chocolate Event |
| 28 th | Tuesday | 4:00pm | Wheeler Library | Book Discussion, Devotions (Oliver) |

March

| | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|--|
| 17-18 th | Friday & Saturday | | Wheeler Library | Mini-Golf in the Library |
| 25th | Saturday | 6:00 to 11:00pm | Lake of Isles | North Stonington Education Foundation Dinner Dance |
| 28 th | Tuesday | 4:00pm | Wheeler Library | Book Discussion, Crying in H Mart (Zauner) |

LISA MAZZELLA & NITA KINCAID NSQ EDITORS

**Town of North Stonington
40 Main Street
North Stonington, CT 06359**

**PRSR STD
ECRWSS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
EDDM-Retail**

**Local
Postal Customer
North Stonington, CT 06359**

Have you ever told someone that you live in North Stonington only to have them say, "Oh, I love Mystic?"
Then, when you correct them, they give you a blank stare and say, "Oh."

So, who are we?

We are NORTH Stonington (a poem)

I live in North Stonington; you can say it with pride.
There is no other place in Connecticut that I would rather reside.
We do not have the ocean, tourists, or boats,
We do have horses, cows, chickens, and goats.
Our beautiful stone walls seem to frame our open space.
If you like to hike, fish or kayak, this is the place.
We are known for our wonderful schools and our many volunteers,
our beautiful winery and our brewery for beers.
We have clear air, great water and dark skies at night
where stars shine brightly, not blurred by the presence of artificial light.
We gather to chat at our parades, our festivals, our fair,
We meet our neighbors and tell stories to people who care.
Our Town is large, our government small,
our ears and doors are always open at our friendly Town Hall.
We have a beautiful, historic Village at the center of Town,
where a wonderful Library and Village Green can be found.
So that is who we are, almost everywhere a farm,
come for a visit and witness our beauty and charm.
We are North Stonington, let the words roll from your mouth,
we are not our neighbor just to our south.

Anonymous