

THE NORTH STONINGTON QUARTERLY

Summer 2014

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

In some parts of the country (such as Chicago), there are two seasons - winter and construction! While North Stonington has more than two seasons, we have our share of construction this summer. Look for significant progress on (if not completion of) the Town Hall parking lot. Bid packages should be issued and received for the Hewitt dam work (hopefully we will have heard positive news from the State Bond Commission regarding financial support). Also, final engineering should be close to completion on the Boombridge Road bridge. A Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) application has been submitted to cover an extension of the SCWA water line through the Village up to the firehouse, as well as to the Grange.

Late summer will see the retirement of our Tax Collector Sandra Steinhart; we wish her well and thank her for her service to the Town. There continue to be vacancies on several boards and commissions - if an article from a committee in this newsletter sparks your interest, consider becoming involved in the management of your town. Contact the First Selectman's office for more information.

With the return of warmer weather (and more time spent outdoors and on the town roadways), the Board asks everyone to observe speed limits and drive safely.

SELECTMEN 860-535-2877 Ext.10 SELECTMEN@NORTHSTONINGTONCT.GOV

GREETINGS FROM THE TAX COLLECTOR'S CORNER

Another tax year is upon us. Tax bills will be mailed out by June 30, 2014. If you don't get a bill during the first week in July, please call us for a copy. The phone number is 860-535-2877 x20. For your convenience, payments may be made at the Chelsea Groton Bank (North Stonington Branch), as well as the Tax Office in Town Hall. Office hours for the Tax Collector will be 9:00 to 4:00, Monday through Friday. The best way to avoid the crowds is to pay by mailing. If you would like a receipt, please enclose a self addressed stamped envelope.

Have a great summer!

SANDY STEINHART, TAX COLLECTOR

WHEELER LIBRARY

Summer Reading begins right after school gets out! We've got a lot going on, including Jen Welborn's great Summertime Science drop-in evenings. Check our website, wheelerlibrary.org, for the latest details. If you are not on our mailing list, please email amykennedy@wheelerlibrary.org to join.

Don't miss the Benefit Concert on July 24th at 7pm at Jonathan Edwards Winery. *Sunday Gravy* will play rock and reggae; bring your dancing shoes. Kids under 12 are free with an adult. Tickets are \$15. A portion of the proceeds benefits Wheeler Library.

AMY KENNEDY 860-535-0383



NORTH STONINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

It is hard to believe that the 2013-2014 school year is coming to an end. It has certainly been a very busy one. Teachers and administrators alike have been involved in groundbreaking Connecticut educator initiatives that have been the most progressive that I have witnessed in my four decades of public education. Last year, our teachers and administrators went through intensive professional development, which included training last summer learning the intricacies of the SEED evaluator model. During the course of the past year, one-third of our teachers were evaluated using the new instrument, however, all staff will receive a yearend evaluation as a summation of his/her practice.

Over the past couple of years, administrators and teachers have been aligning the curriculum to the Connecticut Common Core State Standards. This spring, students were tested using the Smarter Balanced Field Test (SB-FT). The SB-FT was conducted as a pilot test this year. The principals tell me that they were very proud of our students as each student worked very hard and put in their very best effort. The results of the SB-FT will not be known until the late fall.

While standardized tests have their value, our students are assessed in a variety of ways and their success is on display this spring. Our Music department is displaying the growth of our student talent at the annual spring concerts. Our Art Department is holding its art exhibits as well. There are a number of honors programs and promotions that will be occurring at year's end to celebrate the success of our students at all levels. We are also very proud of our sports teams from all three seasons. Of course, the 2013-2014 school year will culminate in the early evening of June 19th on the Wheeler Library lawn where the class of 2014 will receive their diplomas. Please bring a blanket or a chair and help us celebrate with our students and faculty.

PETER NERO, SUPERINTENDENT



ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

Reminders for Veterans

Veterans with a service-connected disability, who are new to town, must inform the assessor's office of the percentage of their disability to get an increase benefit.

If you are a veteran, new to town, and have not filed your DD214 form with the Town Clerk's office before October 1st, you will not receive your tax exemption. You only need to file once for this benefit, but you must file in every town you move to.

If you are a veteran, still on active duty, and claim another state as your home of record, you need to file a soldier and sailor form EVERY YEAR to have your car exempted from tax.

Connecticut veterans, serving outside the State, should complete a veteran's form showing active duty to receive an exemption on one motor vehicle, if it is registered in Connecticut.

Attention property renters: if you meet an age and income requirement, you have until October 1st to file with the assessor's office to receive a benefit, if you qualify. Maximum income is \$41,000 for a married couple and \$34,100 for a single person. Please provide a copy of your proof of income and copies of rental expenses. The assessor's office can help with the completion of the forms.

Reminder for Horse Owners & Businesses

The personal property tax forms will be mailed in late September. If you are a business owner or an owner of a horse and you do not receive the form before October 1st, please contact the assessor's office. The exemption on horses is \$1,000 per animal, but in order to receive the exemption, you must file a personal property declaration

Reminder about Farm and Forest Land

The application period to qualify new farm and/or forest land for a lower tax assessment under CT Act 490 is between September 1st and October 30th. If you want to place land into either of these classifications, see the assessor's office for an application. The minimum time for the land to remain in 490 classifications is 10 years for forestry and ownership of the land for 10 years for farming. For the land to be classified as a farm, you must attempt to make a profit in a farming occupation or have a land lease with a farmer.

DARRYL L. DEL GROSSO, ASSESSOR

NORTH STONINGTON GARDEN CLUB

Celebrating 75 Years.

The Club thanks everyone who attended our annual plant sale. Your purchases contributed to a very successful 2014 sale!

This month we are planning to announce the recipient of our \$1000 scholarship. We are also in the process of designing, donating, and installing a new demonstration garden at the fairgrounds, celebrating 50 years of the fair, as well the 75th anniversary of the North Stonington Garden Club.

For more information about the North Stonington Garden Club and our 75th anniversary activities, visit our website at www.nsgardenclub.org.



HEWITT FARM

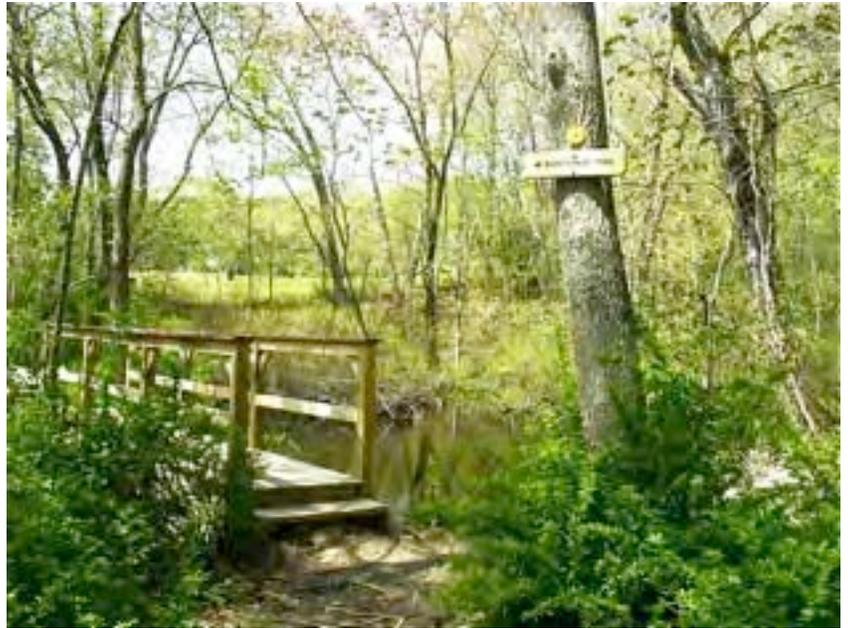
Why not explore all the Hewitt Farm trails this summer? You can download the Hewitt Farm Trail Map from the town website (www.northstoningtonct.gov) or just pick one up at any trailhead.

Many folks choose to start at the popular Bicentennial Trail, which was cleared in 2007 as part the town's Bicentennial celebration. The trail is well marked and placards describe various periods in North Stonington's history. It also passes by the Old Plains Cemetery with its interesting, early gravestones.

The other trails (Mystic Road Trail, River Trail, Fishermen's Trail, Loop Trail and Wyassup Trail) are also clearly marked. Handsome wooden trail signs have recently been added in a number of spots, thanks to a North Stonington Garden Club donation.

While you're at the farm, don't forget to visit the Community Garden area near the Route 2 entrance. All the plots have been rented and the gardeners have been busy planting. They enjoy talking about their crops and methods.

We're open daily from dawn to dusk and all are welcome. Parking is available in two areas at the farm: just inside the Hewitt Road entrance off Route 2 or a quarter mile down Hewitt Road from Ryder Road, where there is a marked parking area. For questions about the town's 104-acre farm property, call Dick Cooper at 860-535-0528 or Nita Kincaid at 860-535-1416.



PAWCATUCK NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

The Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center serves the communities of North Stonington, Stonington, Old Mystic, Mystic, Pawcatuck and Westerly. The Center offers transportation at no cost to seniors (age 60 and older), who are no longer able to drive. We take seniors to necessary medical appointments, for blood work, the pharmacy, pre-scheduled grocery shopping and banking. We do not go to New London or Norwich.

For more details about our senior transportation program and an application, please call us at 860-599-3285 x 15. If you'd like to make a donation to the PNC transportation program - To keep our wheels turning! - please send a check to PNC at 27 Chase St., Pawcatuck, CT 06379.

Families, who have children on the "Free & Reduced Lunch Program" through the North Stonington School System, are eligible to pick up a half or full gallon of milk (purchased through a Local Dairy), cereal, sliced bread, peanut butter & jelly, tuna, soup & crackers & many other food items. These items supplement the 21 meals per child that are provided each week throughout the summer. To enroll, please call Maura or Abby at the PNC at 860-599-3285 x 23 or Vicki at x14.

VICKI ANDERSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PLANNING AND ZONING OFFICIAL/LAND USE OFFICE

So how can I persuade you that Planning and Zoning meetings can be fun ... or that being more involved in planning can be rewarding? Should we have more neighborhood meetings? An informal town workshop about implementing the town plan? A neighborhood planning pot luck dinner to exchange ideas and vent frustrations? Tell me how you want to participate. Many of the goals outlined in the plan of Conservation and Development are geared toward strengthening the community; getting residents involved and fixing problems together. North Stonington's quality of life is one of its major assets, and my goal as town planner is to maintain and enhance this quality of life and the town's sense of place. This task is much easier with a much better outcome, if the residents are involved. I want to hear from you! My office is always open. There is no need for an appointment.

The Zoning regulations are coming along. Soon there will be public hearings and I strongly encourage you to participate. There are some big changes this time!! I am also interested in including a student member on some of the Commissions and Committees that I work with. Students would offer a different perspective and early involvement may lead to future participation as full members on Boards and Commission. What do you think?

I want to give special thanks to the Plan of Conservation and Development Steering Committee for their thoughtful gift in recognition of Cheryl Konsavitch's and my work on the Plan. What a wonderful gathering we had to celebrate the adoption of the POCD! Thank you!



JULIET LEEMING SENIOR PLANNING AND ZONING OFFICIAL
860-535-2877 X27 JLEEMING@NORTHSTONINGTONCT.GOV

NORTH STONINGTON GRANGE



On April 25th the Grange presented Sal and Linda Costanza with the 2014 Community Citizen of the Year Award. This was the first time the Grange had honored two people together to recognize their joint efforts in contributing to the community.

Volunteerism in the community was the highlight of the evening. Grange members performed a short skit in which they depicted Sal and Linda preparing to distribute items that would benefit others. Much of their work has focused on children in our town.

A letter from the Elementary School principal, Veronica Wilkison, addressed the numerous contributions they have made within the school system. First Selectman Mullane delivered the plaque of appreciation and thanked the Costanzas for their years of service. An award well deserved!

For more information about the Grange, contact the Grange Master, Robert Miner at 860-535-8506 or the Secretary, Nancy Weissmuller at 860-535-2703.

NORTH STONINGTON AGRICULTURAL FAIR



2014 marks the 50th year of the North Stonington Agricultural Fair. The Fair runs from Thursday, July 10th to Sunday, July 13th. The Committee has been working diligently on making this year special. In celebration of 50 years we bring back a Nashville Artist, Austin Webb with hit single “Slip on By”. We will also offer local acts Steven Daggett, Frankie Lamprey and Room to Move. In addition to our traditional activities we will be holding a women’s hay bale toss & mini pony pulling. There will be plenty of activities for children both young and old; from pie eating contests, nail driving, pedal tractor pull, amusement rides, petting zoo, Princess & Queen Contests, Tractor and Wagon parade and plenty of mouthwatering food. If you’re looking for a traditional home-cooked dinner, stop by Saturday evening for the Ham & Bean Supper.

One big change at the fairgrounds is our new entrance gate. To ensure everyone’s safety, there is a new, faster, free parking entrance to the grounds. Access to the rear parking area will be by permit only for our exhibitors. Admission is \$8.00 per day and advanced sales tickets can be purchased at Xtra Mart, Wheeler Library and the Town Hall.

Visit our website at www.northstoningtonfair.com for a full schedule of events, applications for contests, exhibitor forms and to order your 50th celebration t-shirts and sweatshirts. Like us on Facebook and keep up to date on work parties and news about the fair. Fair Committee meetings are held the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the Grange Hall on Wyassup Road. All are welcome to join us.

NORTH STONINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The 2013 – 2014 school year has been a time of great success for all of our students and the entire NSES community. Thanks to the dedicated efforts of the faculty and staff and the support of all parents and families, our students have demonstrated amazing growth.

Through the efforts of the North Stonington Board of Education and the support of the citizens of North Stonington, the elementary school was able to purchase a new math program for grades K – 5 and add a Math Specialist to our faculty. The CT Core Standards determine what students need to know by the end of the year. Fall assessment in math determined 75% of students in one grade three class were below grade level. With implementation of the enVision program and powerful instruction by the classroom and math intervention teachers, 90% of the students were proficient or higher on the mid-year assessment. Thanks to new intervention initiatives in reading our assessment data demonstrates amazing student growth. For example, in the fall 55% of first graders were reading at grade level. With the implementation of the new programs and the student-specific instruction by all teachers, 87% students were reading on or above grade level on the spring assessments.

The year will come to an end with many student celebrations including Student Author’s Day, the Band and Chorus Concerts, the Annual NSES Art Show, PBIS June Jubilee, Field Day and much more. Our fifth graders will be recognized at the Fifth Grade Promotion Ceremony and we are confident they will continue to be determined students and exceptional young people.

Thank you to the entire North Stonington community for the support of our schools.

VERONICA WILKISON, PRINCIPAL

WHEELER HIGH SCHOOL/MIDDLE SCHOOL

As always, our Wheeler students have experienced many exciting events this spring. Our middle school students did an amazing job on the new state Smarter Balanced test. A few of our history students presented in mid-May at the Encountering Survivors of the Holocaust program at Waterford High School and represented our school community honorably. Our girls' softball team had an excellent season, making it to the playoff match of the Eastern Connecticut Conference divisional leaders!

As we prepare for the end of another great year at Wheeler, we are busy putting together end-of-the-year celebrations and activities for our students. The school counseling office has been organizing transitional opportunities for incoming students, as well as scheduling all of our current students in courses for the 2014-2015 school year. This year's Wheeler High School graduation will be held on Thursday, June 19th at 6pm on the lawn of the Wheeler Library, weather permitting. Eighth grade promotion will be on Wednesday, June 18th at 6pm in the gymnasium.

In addition, the high school staff continues to prepare for the New England Association of Schools and Colleges accreditation visit this fall. We are sad to say goodbye to our interim principal, Mr. Don Macrino, I will move to my new position as principal on July 1, and am already preparing for an exciting 2014-2015 school year.

KRISTEN ST. GERMAIN



The North Stonington Quarterly is printed by the talented students at
the Wheeler High School Print Shop.

We wish them a happy, healthy summer vacation!

TOWN CLERK

Dog licenses expire on June 30th. New licenses must be procured on or before June 30th, or there will be a penalty imposed pursuant to section 22-338 of the Connecticut General Statutes. The proof of rabies vaccination must be provided when registering your dog. The fee schedule is as follows: Neutered or Spayed \$8.00, Male or Female \$19.00, Kennel (10 Dogs) \$51.00. There is a late penalty of \$1.00 per month.

NORMA HOLLIDAY, TOWN CLERK



NORTH STONINGTON SENIOR CENTER

The Senior Center is located at the rear of Holly Green.
We are open Monday through Friday, 9:30 am – 2:30pm.

We offer many weekly activities:

Monday

10am -11:30 am: Wii Bowling

11:30 am -12:30 pm: Chair Exercises

1pm - 2pm: Tai chi

Tuesday

10am -3pm: Quilting

1st Wednesday each month

11:30 am: The Visiting Nurse will take your blood pressure. Crackers and cheese will be served at noon.

12:30 pm: The Golden Agers meeting begins. The cost to join the Golden Agers Club is \$10 per year.

2nd, 3rd & 4th Wednesday each month

12 Noon: Lunch is served.

The cost for the lunch is \$4.

Please call by the prior Friday for a reservation.

Thursday

10 am - 11 am: Gentle Chair Yoga

1pm - 3pm: Quilting

Friday

9:30am -11:30am: Art class

1:30 pm: Food is distributed from the United Way/ Labor Food Center, thanks to "POPPIN" (Plenty of Produce for People in Need). Please bring your own bags for pick-up.

Special monthly trips are arranged and posted on the Town's web site.

As the Agent for the Elderly, I'm also a trained CHOICES counselor. As a counselor, I assist individuals in Medicare and Medicaid enrollment. Open enrollment for Medicare is from September to December. Individuals retiring before or after open enrollment may call for supplemental insurance help.

TERESA A. PENSIS, SENIOR DIRECTOR 860-535-8188

NORTH STONINGTON AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE

The Community Development Block Grant for the Housing Rehabilitation Program was successfully submitted in April. Approximately 45 people filled out letters of intent to participate in this program and the Town should receive notice in June as to whether or not North Stonington was selected to receive the \$400,000 requested. The strong interest (and eligibility) for this program really speaks to a growing need in our community for assistance with housing related costs. Many responses came from seniors needing significant repairs in order to safely remain in their homes and to reduce the utility costs by making their homes more energy efficient. When we receive notice of the award, the consultant will contact the interested homeowners and set up an informational meeting. Keep your fingers crossed and stay tuned!

Please consider attending one of our meetings to see what the Affordable Housing Committee is all about. We meet the fourth Thursday of the month at the High School Media Center at 6pm. We are looking for one or two new members to help us move forward with our goals outlined in the recent Housing Plan. Please contact Mary Ann Ricker (marykriker@comcast.net) or Juliet Leeming (jleeming@comcast.net) if you are interested in joining the Committee.

NORTH STONINGTON PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

The North Stonington PTO would like to thank all our volunteers and community members for supporting our many fundraisers throughout the school year. The PTO has sold candles, cookies and handbags. We ran two Scholastic Book Fairs, and organized a fantastic Holiday Sale for our students to shop for their families. Our volunteers have worked hard to bring our community together by organizing events such as our Annual Basket Raffle, the Fall and Spring Festivals, and various Playground Fundraisers.

We would like to share with you what your support actually means for our schools. The funds we acquire throughout the year, determine the programs we are able to support the next school year. We are pleased to have passed our PTO budget to include \$24,220 of line items, which directly benefit our schools. These funds support Cultural Programs, Earth Day, Family Science Night, scholarships to graduating seniors, just to name a few. When you order something from one of our fundraisers, or stop by at one of our community events, it truly means a lot. You are helping to enhance student programs and to enrich the education of all North Stonington students.

LISA MAZZELLA, PTO PRESIDENT

NORTH STONINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society takes a break from monthly programs for the summer, but watch for special events at the Dye House located at the Stephen Main Homestead in the Village.

If you are investigating genealogy, don't forget that the A. Morgan Stewart Memorial Library, housed in the homestead, is a treasure trove of material. The Society strives to nurture and preserve an evolving collection of genealogical materials, land records and other historical artifacts within the headquarters. We are open Tuesdays from 2-4 pm or by appointment. For questions or information about membership, phone 860-535-9448 or 599-3608 or visit our website at <http://nostonhistoricalsociety.homestead.com>

EMERGENCY SERVICES BUILDING COMMITTEE

The design portion of the plan is a very exciting and critical part of the new Emergency Services Building project. The final footprint of the building has been determined and we hope to be able to have some renderings of the building available by mid July. The continued struggle for this project has been the site on which we will construct the building. In order to save on excavation costs, an estimated 50,000 cubic yards of material needs to be moved to another area of the property.

It is still the intention of the committee to go out with a Request For Proposals by the end of the summer, with the hope of choosing a firm for the construction of the building by the late fall.

As always, if any resident would like to attend a meeting of the committee, the meeting dates are posted in the Town Hall with the town clerk.

MARK PERKINS JR., CHAIRMAN

INFORMED CITIZENS OF NORTH STONINGTON

The mission and purpose of ICONS is to spread accurate information to the citizens of North Stonington. This organization began with a small group of people who saw a need to open up the lines of communications between town boards and commissions and the residents of our town. It is important to form our opinions regarding town issues based on the facts. We also encourage people, at every opportunity, to exercise their right to vote. Every vote counts. Let your voice be heard!

ICONS meet one Monday per month from 7:30-8:30 pm. Members from different boards and commissions in town attend our meetings regularly. They provide us with valuable information and afford us the opportunity to ask questions regarding issues important to our town and us. The meetings also serve as a forum to engage residents in good conversations that are beneficial to our community a whole. We hope to see you there!

For more information, email us at icons@informedcitizensofns.com. Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ns.icons.

Summer
has arrived!



**Town of North Stonington
Third Quarter 2014 Meeting Schedule**

Board/ Committee/Commission	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	Time PM	Location
Affordable Housing Committee	24 th	28 th	25 th	6:00	High School Media Center
Board of Education	9 th & 23 rd	13 th & 27 th	10 th & 24 th	7:00	Gymnasium Band Room
Board of Finance	2 nd & 16 th	6 th & 20 th	3 rd & 17 th	7:30	New Town Hall
Board of Selectmen	1 st , 8 th , 15 th , 22 nd , 29 th	5 th , 12 th , 19 th , 26 th	2 nd , 9 th , 16 th , 23 rd , 30 th	7:00	New Town Hall
Conservation Commission	24 th	28 th	25 th	6:00	Town Hall
Economic Development Committee	17 th	21 st	18 th	6:00	New Town Hall
Emergency Services Bldg. Comm.	7 th , 14 th , 21 st , 28 th	4 th , 11 th , 18 th , 25 th	8 th , 15 th , 22 nd , 29 th	7:00	NS Fire House
Hewitt Farm Committee	14 th & 28 th	11 th & 25 th	8 th & 22 nd	3:00	New Town Hall
Inland Wetlands	9 th	13 th	10 th	7:00	New Town Hall
Permanent School Bldg. Committee	28 th	25 th	22 nd	7:00	Holly Green Probate Ct. Room
Planning & Zoning Committee	3 rd & 10 th	7 th & 14 th	4 th & 11 th	7:00	New Town Hall
Recreation Committee	3 rd	7 th	4 th	6:15	Holly Green Probate Ct. Room
Zoning Board of Appeals	15 th	19 th	16 th	7:00	NS Senior Center
Meeting dates are subject to change. Check the town website (www.northstoningtonct.gov) for most current information.					
Additional Information					
ICONS (Informed Citizens of NS)	14 th	18 th	15 th	7:30	July & August: Senior Center; September: WHS Media Center

**Residents are encouraged to attend these meetings, which are open to the public.
Learn more about our town and consider volunteering to help one of these groups.**

SUMMER EVENTS

July 10th-13th: **North Stonington Agricultural Fair.**

Celebrate the Fair's 50th year!

Thursday 5:00 pm

Friday 5:00 pm

Saturday 8:30 am

Sunday 9:00 am

July 21st at 7 pm: **Free Community Bicycle Clinic** for ages 5-14. The clinic is offered by Bike & Build at the Congregational Church. It will feature a half mile ride and emphasize bicycle safety. For more info call 860-535-0379 or email NoStoUCC@comcast.net.

July 24th at 7 pm: **Benefit Concert** for Wheeler Library at Jonathan Edwards Winery. *Sunday Gravy* will play rock and reggae; bring your dancing shoes. Kids under 12 are free with an adult. Tickets are \$15.



Town Of North Stonington
40 Main Street
North Stonington, CT 06359

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