

## BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year! With the elections behind us, the Board can turn to beginning the annual budget process of assessing department needs and objectives for the Town. January should contain the annual Tri-Board meeting (Selectmen, Finance, and Education) in which we review the state of the Town, discuss funding priorities and identify short and long-term goals. About that time, bids for architectural services for the Emergency Services Center should be received and evaluated.

Before the end of 2013, the Selectmen planned to choose candidate projects, which would be eligible for Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grants. Also, by the time you read this, the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) will have been submitted to the State Office of Policy and Management and the Board should be evaluating how to integrate its goals into our strategic planning.

There are still several vacancies on town committees – anyone wishing information on how they might become more involved in helping to meet the challenges of running a small town are encouraged to contact the First Selectmen's office. The Board hopes all had a safe and enjoyable holiday season.

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## NORTH STONINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

There are a number of items that I would like to bring to your attention. We have a couple of new additions to the Board of Education. Julia Buzzee and Christine Wagner were sworn in as the newest members along with Bob Carlson, Dave McCord and Alex Karpinski. At their first meeting, the BOE elected Dave McCord as Chair, Bob Carlson as Vice-Chair and Walt Mathwich as Secretary.

Chris Sandford, Wheeler principal, has resigned to take a position as Headmaster of Woodstock Academy. We thank Chris for his dedicated service to North Stonington and wish him well. For the duration of the school year, the district conducted a search for an interim principal and, at the November BOE meeting, they appointed Mr. Donald Macrino to serve as principal until the end of June. We are fortunate to have Mr. Macrino with us. He has impeccable credentials as a long-serving principal of Waterford High School, from where he retired last year. He has extensive experience in some relevant topics facing Wheeler, such as NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges) and facilities planning and building. We will search for a new principal in the new year.

You should know that the district has decided to forgo the traditional CMT/CAPT (except for science) testing this year. Instead, our students will take the Smarter Balanced-Field Test. The SM-FIT is administered using the computer. This will allow our students and teachers the opportunity to gain experience in the new test, which was slated to begin next year anyway. Further information will be forthcoming.

## TAX COLLECTOR'S CORNER

Don't forget that second half Tax payments are due in January!!

SANDY STEINHART

## NORTH STONINGTON EDUCATION FOUNDATION

The goal of the North Stonington Education Foundation is to fund creative, innovative and inspiring ideas that improve the educational experience of our children and community. These ideas come not only from our educators, but also from members of our community. If you have an idea that meets this goal, apply for a grant!

Thanks to our supporters, the North Stonington Education Foundation has been able to fund a variety of programs totaling more than \$100,000 during our first nine years! Please join us for our Trivia Event on February 21, 2014 at the Pawcatuck VFW.

For more information, go to [www.nsedfoundation.org](http://www.nsedfoundation.org).

## TOWN TREASURER'S REPORT

With the start of my 6th term as Town Treasurer, I will be working closely with the Board of Selectmen to finance several large capital projects for the Town as approved in this year's budget, along with the new Center for Emergency Services.

The Board of Finance has also requested additional reporting each month and I am working with the Town's Bookkeeper to create those items to allow for the Board members to have better oversight of Town and Board of Education spending.

During the first quarter of the year, I will also be reviewing investments of funds in order to secure the best return possible on our monies and, although we will be making our last bond payment for the previous school renovations in the Spring, I am looking at several options to keep our redemption of debt fees to a minimum for the upcoming fiscal year.

ROBIN D. ROOHR, TOWN TREASURER

## BOARD OF FINANCE

With town elections now behind us, the Board of Finance will convene with two new members, Charles Steinhart and Tim Main. Ongoing Board of Finance responsibilities for 2014 will be the fiscal oversight of initiated capital projects as adopted in the current budget, such as the wall refurbishment of the Town Hall parking lot. The Board has also been apprised on an ongoing basis of the progress on the EMS/Fire Complex project. We welcome all members of the public to attend our meetings to offer their input, especially as the 2014-2015 budget planning begins. Please refer to the Board of Finance on the Town website for meeting dates and pertinent information.

## PLANNING AND ZONING OFFICIAL / LAND USE OFFICE

The Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) is finished! Thank you to all who participated in the process. I am excited to work with you in the future when we begin to implement the Plan. The next step is to revise the Zoning Regulations so that they are less cumbersome and more consistent with the goals of the new plan. Keep an eye on the town website for meeting announcements, though most discussions about Zoning Regulations will occur at the regular Planning and Zoning meetings. In addition to revising the regulations, I hope to begin the Master Planning process for the planning opportunity areas identified in the Plan. Let's keep the momentum of the POCD going by staying involved in the planning process!

JULIET LEEMING, SENIOR PLANNING AND ZONING OFFICIAL

# NORTH STONINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

As in all school districts in CT, teaching and learning at North Stonington Elementary School is going through great change. Instruction is now based on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) to ensure all students are college or career ready upon graduation from high school. Each grade level has specific learning expectations based on the CCSS, which represent what students should know and be able to do at the end of each grade level.

Both the English Language Arts and Math standards require that our students solve complex problems, think critically, read and write proficiently, and develop and defend their ideas. Our students are reading more advanced fiction and non-fiction text and asking and answering higher level questions that require evidence from the text to respond. This year students will be expected to plan and write narrative, expository, and even persuasive pieces. In math, the children are expected to build deeper understanding of fewer concepts each year. They are expected to be fluent with arithmetic, apply their knowledge to real world situations and demonstrate a deep understanding of mathematical concepts. For more information on the CCSS and to download a grade level parent guide visit: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2618&q=322592>.

Students in grades 3-5 will be taking the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium test this year. There will be tests for each grade in Language Arts and Math. Parents and students are invited to take the sample assessments at <http://sbac.portal.airast.org/practice-test/>. On the page click on Explore Smarter Balanced Practice Test and then click on the green box.

Thank you to all for the continued support of our students and school.

VERONICA WILKISON, PRINCIPAL

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## HEWITT FARM WINTER UPDATE

Winter is a great time to enjoy the outdoors at Hewitt Farm. In addition to hiking, biking and exercising your dog, try your snowshoes on our scenic trails. For the horse community, a setback of 15 to 20 feet has been established around all hayfields. Here you can enjoy hitching a horse to a sleigh or riding through the snow. Cross-country skiers are also welcome. Trail maps are available at any of the trailheads or on the town website ([www.northstoningtonct.gov](http://www.northstoningtonct.gov)).

For young children, the amphitheater slope near the 1750 Farm House and the Green provides a wonderful sledding area. Parking is available inside the Hewitt Road entrance off Route 2 or in the marked parking area ¼ mile down Hewitt Road from Ryder Road.

The Community Garden Association had a successful first season at the farm and will be expanding the plots available for rent in 2014. Plot sign-up will begin Feb. 3-7 for returning gardeners, Feb. 10-14 for North Stonington residents and open enrollment thereafter. The plot rental fee is \$25 for a 12'x47' space. For more information contact Mary Ann Ricker (860-535-2426).

Last, but not least, the Hewitt Farm Committee recently received a generous donation from the North Stonington Garden Club to be used for the purchase of permanent trail signs for the farm. We are in the process of selecting and ordering attractive, durable wooden signs and hope to install them throughout the property by spring.

For any questions, call Nita Kincaid (860-535-1416) or Dick Cooper (860-535-0528)



## WHEELER LIBRARY

It's warm and cozy at the Wheeler Library. This is where you will find the latest movies, books, and magazines for browsing and borrowing.

Music on Main continues. Join your friends at one of our great concerts. January brings jazz with Sarah Smith and the Jazz Factor on Saturday, the 11th. February features North Stonington's own Ashley Jones with Grupo Poderoso (salsa) on the 8th. We will wrap up in March with The Cartells on the 22nd.

Light refreshments, beer and Jonathan Edwards wine are available at each event. Tickets for each concert are \$20 (\$10 for students), and are available online at [wheelerlibrary.org](http://wheelerlibrary.org) or at the library.

Check out our website for other programs and events.

AMY KENNEDY 860 535-0383 OR  
[AMYKENNEDY@WHEELERLIBRARY.ORG](mailto:AMYKENNEDY@WHEELERLIBRARY.ORG)

## NORTH STONINGTON CEMETERY COMMITTEE

The North Stonington Cemetery Committee is composed of seven residents appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The committee has statutory authority and responsibilities for the more than 124 cemeteries in the town of North Stonington. Maintenance and repair of the cemeteries is a prime responsibility. Given the remoteness of many of the old burying grounds located in town, this is an often-daunting task. The committee places flags on the graves of veterans each spring prior to Memorial Day. The cemetery committee answers questions relating to the various burial grounds. With the help of the town GIS Coordinator, Mark Tate, the committee is creating a digital locator map with coordinates and basic historical information that will be accessible on line in the future.

This spring the committee is hoping to begin informational meetings with the public. Please keep a look out for the date, time, and place in the coming months. The committee is also looking for people to help maintain the town's cemeteries by creating a "friends" group. Some residents already participate in this. After receiving some basic do's and don'ts, the work will include occasional mowing, clearing and trimming.

Currently, the committee and the town highway department maintain about thirty-five cemeteries and residents help with about ten others. But, many more are in need of attention. If you live near a cemetery and have ever wondered what you can do to help, this would be a good opportunity to get involved.

Thurlow Coats, Chairman

Committee Members: Arthur Crofts, Priscilla Crofts, Paul Ames, Bill Peterson,  
Mike Dibble, Jeff Barnes

# CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Efforts continue with our trail work to open up town owned "Open Space" for public use. Currently, Stillman Hill Preserve, a property off Wyassup Road, is in the works. This gorgeous 28 acre property slopes down to about 14 miles of Pachaug Forest. When completed this winter, it will be available for hiking, mountain biking and equestrian use. Bring a picnic lunch in the spring and sit along the banks of Yawbux Stream. Beaver, turkey and deer enjoy the property as well.

Further out in our plans is a hiking and equestrian trail from the top of Chester Maine Road down to Wyassup Road. Extensive trail work is necessary before it can be opened to the public. Volunteers are needed to do light trail clearing. Consider this opportunity to volunteer, get out in the woods, and contribute to our growing trail system.

A few 2014 Community Calendars, for \$10 each, are still available. Contact Bill Ricker at 535-2426. Familiar scenes each month, all from North Stonington, will enhance your wall for appointments, holidays, and local events.

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## NORTH STONINGTON VOLUNTEER FIRE CO., INC.

The North Stonington Volunteer Fire Company responded to 224 alarms in the fiscal year 2012/2013. During the incidents, the members volunteered 3,663.67 man-hours. The members also attended 331 other events such as training, meeting and fire prevention.

Everyone knows the adage "Every Second Counts" when referring to an emergency and it's true. The difference between life and death may only be a few seconds for a victim. This fact has not been ignored by governmental agencies and community organizations; millions of dollars have been poured into technologically advanced E-911 systems over the past 15-20 years. However, with all of this technology, we have ignored one small problem. People should mark their home or business addresses with a reflective 6"x18" double-sided address marker. The cost is \$15 per sign and the money raised will go towards much needed equipment. Order forms can be found at the Firehouse, Wheeler Library, and the Town Hall. Please pick up an order form today!

CHARLES A. STEINHART V, FIRE CHIEF

## NORTH STONINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

From our mission statement: the society works to promote awareness and understanding of the sociological, economic, political, cultural, and natural history of our town. The society strives to nurture and preserve an evolving collection of land records, genealogical materials and other historical artifacts within the headquarters, the 18th century Stephen Main Homestead, in the center of the village. The society supports the study of local history in the schools. It encourages identification and stewardship of historical sites and structures, including houses, cemeteries, old roads, and stonewalls.

Interested in genealogy? The A. Morgan Stewart Memorial Library is housed in the Homestead and is a treasure trove of material. It is open Tuesdays from 2-4, or by appointment. The Society hosts speakers programs, open to everyone, about eight times a year. For questions, contact 860-535-9448 or go to <http://nostonhistoricalsociety.homestead.com>

## LAKES AND STREAMS

Wetland plants that grow along the shoreline of lakes and along the banks of rivers and streams help protect the shoreline soils from the erosive forces of waves and currents. The wetland plants act as a buffer zone by dissipating the water's energy and providing stability by binding the soils with their extensive root systems.

Remember that the types of septic systems and your lawn-use habits are key factors in the health of these ecosystems. Excessive lawn fertilizations can cause unhealthy amounts of fertilizer to run off into adjacent water bodies, stimulating excessive algae and other unfavorable aquatic vegetation. Failing septic systems on waterfront properties can also contribute to this type and other types of water pollution.

Lake and stream maintenance is best done in the driest season when water levels are at their lowest. Another option is to wait until the lake is drawn down for other reasons. Please contact your Wetlands Commission for a workshop to discuss any maintenance you plan to do in or near a wetland area.

### INLAND WETLANDS COMMISSION

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## HOW DO I JOIN ICONS?

It's very easy! ICONS (Informed Citizens of North Stonington) is open to any resident or taxpayer in our town. We meet one Monday per month to discuss important town issues, work to disseminate information and pass it along to the general public. We want every resident in town to feel welcome to join us to help move our mission of spreading accurate information to taxpayers and citizens of North Stonington.

Our next meeting will be held January 27th at the Wheeler High School Media Center at 7:30. Even if you cannot make the meetings, you can help ICONS spread accurate information by following us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ns.icons](http://www.facebook.com/ns.icons) or our website at [www.informedcitizensofns.com](http://www.informedcitizensofns.com). Questions? Feel free to email us at [icons@informedcitizensofns.com](mailto:icons@informedcitizensofns.com).

# NORTH STONINGTON AGRICULTURAL FAIR

The North Stonington Agricultural Fair will be celebrating its 50th anniversary this year! We are planning to make the fair in 2014 an event to remember. July 10th through the 13th are the dates for 2014 and plans are already underway to make this a special year.

The fair is sponsored by the North Stonington Community Grange and the North Stonington Volunteer Fire Department as a fundraiser and as a signature event that helps make our community a special place to live. You do not have to be a member of either organization to be a part of the fair. With the exception of December, meetings are held year-round at the Grange, at 7:00 pm, on the second Tuesday of each month.

The Fair Committee is made up of any interested person who wants to help. Please come and join us! This year the fair officers are Michael Riley, President; Jody Whipple, Vice President; John Holliday, Treasurer; Peggy Sue Long, Secretary; and Charlie Burger, Financial Secretary. There are also 12 members of a Board of Trustees, which meets monthly on the first Tuesday of the month. Six are appointed from the Grange and six are from the fire company. The board Chairman this year is Douglas Carricari; Fritz Rauch is Vice Chairman and Kathleen Bond is the board Secretary.

The fair began as a local event in 1965 and has grown into a major agricultural fair sanctioned by the Association of Connecticut Fairs. It is the first major fair held in Connecticut each year. We hope to see all our residents and friends at the 2014 fair, so please talk it up and plan your vacations around it!



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## EMERGENCY SERVICES BUILDING COMMITTEE

The North Stonington Fire/EMS building committee has hired a secretary to assist with all aspects of the clerical portion of the building project. The goal is to have this process turned entirely paperless, which should streamline the way the committee currently works.

The committee has also posted the RFQ (request for qualification) to begin the process for interviewing and hiring an architect/engineering firm, which will help design the final renderings of the building. Peter Springsteel, who is the committee's architect representative, has said early returns have been promising and there have been over 15 companies showing interest in the project. The goal is to have a firm chosen by the first of the year and a building concept to be finalized by mid spring. The tentative start date for the construction of this building will be late summer.

This is a very exciting time in our town and we would like to invite any resident who would like to attend our meetings to please do so. They are held every Monday at the Old Firehouse at 7pm. Once again, we would like to thank the community for its support on this project.

## NORTH STONINGTON GARDEN CLUB

The North Stonington Garden Club was founded in 1939. Through education, service, and partnership with the Town and other volunteer groups, NSGC members help preserve the beauty of North Stonington and promote gardening and conservation.

Our popular annual plant sale in May provides the funds for many local activities. The club maintains the town's Village Green and the gardens around Town Hall. Completion of the village bridge repairs recently allowed us to replant those gardens for all to enjoy throughout the year. Our plant sale profits also provide:

- the Christmas wreaths & greens that decorate all town buildings, churches and the library for the holidays.
- an annual \$1000 scholarship
- donations to local groups like Wheeler Library, Avalonia and the Hewitt Farm.

We are very excited to be celebrating our 75th Anniversary in 2014. The club is planning special activities throughout the year and the list of these will be provided in the spring edition of the North Stonington Quarterly.

For more information about the North Stonington Garden Club, including how to join us, visit our website (<http://nsgardenclub.org>) or contact membership chair, Nita Kincaid (860-535-1416).

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## NORTH STONINGTON PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

The North Stonington PTO has been very active this school year organizing fundraisers so that we may continue to help support the enhancement of student programs and family activities. The Fall Festival, our first fundraiser of the school year, was a wonderful family event. We had vendors, games and hayrides. For evening entertainment, a Haunted School was organized by 8th grader Matthew Mendolia and friends. A big thank you to all of the students who participated and made the Haunted School a success!

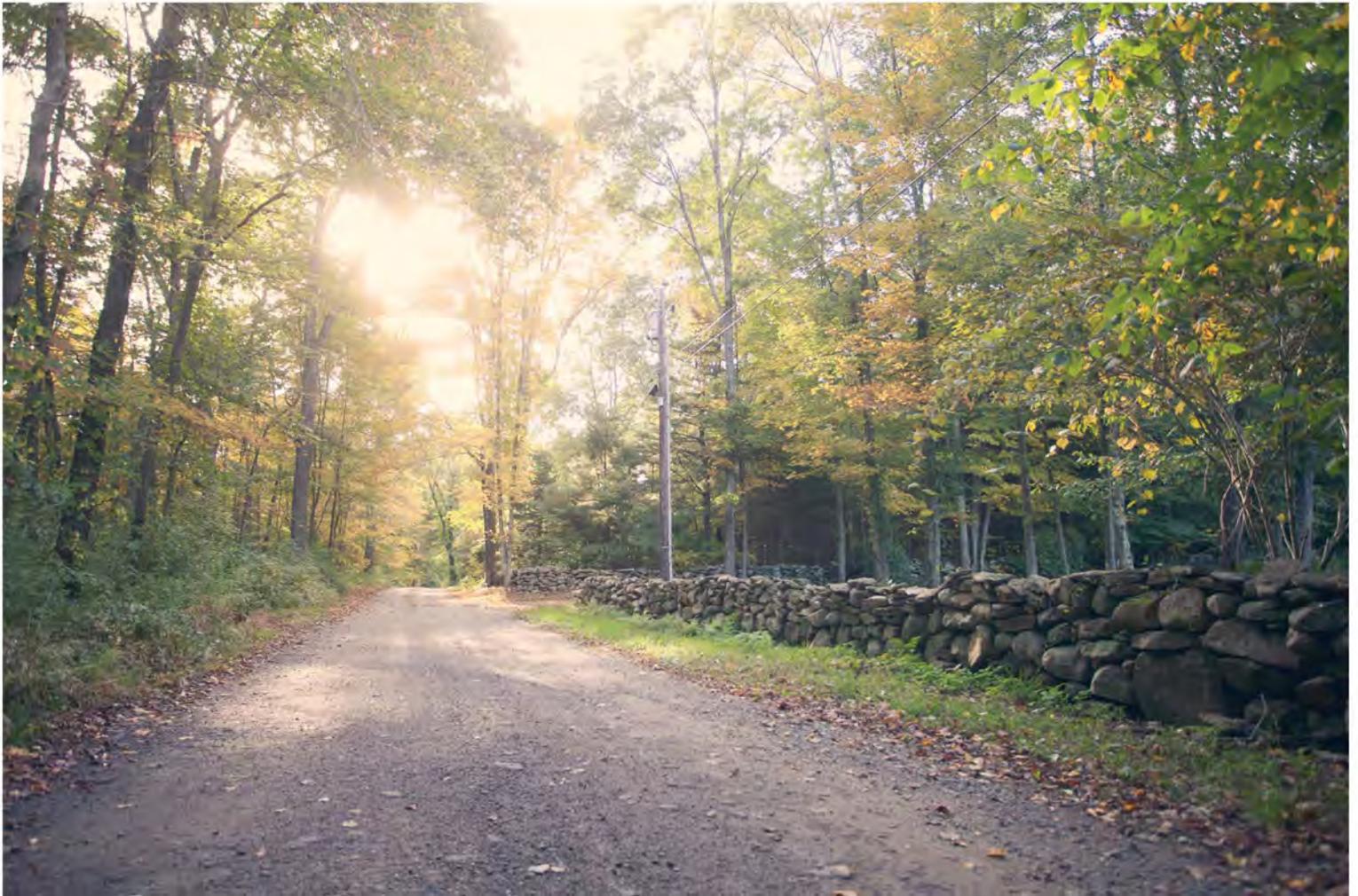
Last month we held our first annual Holiday Extravaganza! It was a great opportunity to do some holiday shopping while supporting the PTO and the Wheeler classes and clubs at the same time. We have begun aggressively fundraising to replace the Pre-K/Kindergarten Playground with a new, all-abilities playground. We are also seeking to enhance and upgrade the existing playground for grades 1-5. Our fundraising goal is \$150,000. In addition to fundraising, we have requested funds from other community organizations and have also applied for many grants to help make this a reality. We held a Playground Kick-off Event, where we invited all families to enjoy mini golf, and have their pictures taken with the Wheeler Lion! We will have many events throughout the school year, including an Evening Gala planned for spring.

The events and fundraisers we organize can only be successful with the help of many volunteers. The PTO also appreciates the many students who donate their time at family events. We would like to give an extra special thank you to 8th graders Anna Hundt and Kelsey Marcaurale. These students have given their time at nearly every event we have had in the last two years. Thank you! Please visit our website at [www.northstoningtonpto.com](http://www.northstoningtonpto.com).

## WHEELER HIGH SCHOOL/MIDDLE SCHOOL

Wheeler High School and 8th grade students are beginning to prepare for their midterm exams, which tentatively begin on January 16th and end on January 22nd. The faculty has also been hard at work on a collaborative initiative to help to continue to prepare our students for the Common Core transition as well as the changeover into our new state assessment, the Smarter Balanced Field Test. This test will replace the CMT/CAPT test and will be given entirely on the computer. The faculty has been collaborating on ways to bring technology application into the daily classroom. The goal is to familiarize our students with this new test environment, which will be very different than the paper/pencil format they are used to taking.

Wheeler's faculty and students continue to give back to the North Stonington community. On December 11th, "Wheeler Give Back Day", faculty and students came together and worked hard to prepare gift baskets for local animal shelters and for many holiday drives. They also volunteered at North Stonington Elementary School, reading to students and helping them create holiday crafts. Students made cards for our troops, collected donations and worked throughout the high school to help clean computer labs and paint inspirational quotes along the hallways and throughout the school. The WHS also held a blood drive on 10/31! All of these experiences allow our students to prepare for their culminating Senior Project in the spring, which will showcase their continued volunteer service and commitment to our community.



# F E E D B A C K ?

We would love to hear what you think about this issue of the North Stonington Quarterly! Please e-mail us and let us know what you liked, what could be better, and what topics you would like to see covered in the next issue.

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

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# JANUARY 2014

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10 BENEFIT DINNER Emily Zinz Elks Lodge, Westerly 5:30 pm	11 LIBRARY Music On Main Sarah Smith & the Jazz Factor 7-9 pm
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20 MLK Day	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31 NS REC FIELD Winter Campfire Rocky Hollow Rd. 6 - 8 pm	

# FEBRUARY 2014

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3 HEWITT FARM Community Garden Sign-up begins 860-535-2426	4	5	6	7	8 LIBRARY Music On Main Ashley Jones & Grupo Ponderoso 7-9 pm
9	10	11	12	13	14 Valentine's Day	15
16	17 Presidents' Day	18 School Winter Break	19	20	21 NS EDUC. FOUNDATION Trivia Event Pawcatuck VFW 6pm	22
23	24	25	26	27	28 LIBRARY Mardi Gras Family Night Doors open 6 Airborne Jugglers 7 pm	

# MARCH 2014

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4 LIBRARY Friends' Book Sale Preview Night 6-8 pm	5 LIBRARY Friends' Book Sale Continues daily thru Saturday during Library hours	6	7	8 CLASS OF 2015 Pancake Breakfast Congregational Church 8-11 am
9	10	11	12	13	14 PTO Magic Show Elementary School 6:30 pm	15
16	17 WHS GYMATORIUM "Wheeler's Got Talent" Show 6 pm	18	19	20	21	22 LIBRARY Music On Main The Cartells 7 - 9 pm
23	24	25	26	27	28 PTO 24TH Annual Basket Raffle Elementary School 6 pm	29
30	31					