

THE NORTH STONINGTON QUARTERLY

WINTER 2017

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

The Yule is an appropriate time for reflection on the past year as well as a critical point for strategizing about the coming months. Each year, there are new or increasing challenges to maintaining the quality of life in our Town and 2017 will be no different. State budget woes may translate to reduced grants to municipalities. The recent court decision on the manner of educational funding and support may also impact us. And a generally improving economic environment may cause developers to consider applying for housing projects at odds with our Plan of Conservation and Development. In the face of these pending uncertainties, our community will continue to work on completing several important objectives and critical infrastructure projects.

Bids are expected to be solicited in January for the construction phase of the Center for Emergency Services with work planned to begin in the spring. Final State approvals have been received to permit the continuation of the public water line from the Town Garage to the Grange and from Main Street in the Village up Rocky Hollow Road to the Center for Emergency Services. The School Modernization project continues to progress on schedule. Recommendations from the new Town Government Structure Committee will be available in the February/March timeframe. And of course, there is development of the annual Town budget to be conducted.

2017 may very well be a pivotal year for the Town through the advancement of infrastructure projects, evolution of town governance and commitment of strategic budgetary decisions. Which is all the more reason to become involved in helping to address the future uncertainties and move our community closer to the goals captured in the vision of the Plan of Conservation and Development. Please consider participating on a town board or commission. To find out more information, contact the Town Clerk or First Selectman's office at Town Hall.

The Board wishes safe and enjoyable holidays to all and a Happy New Year!

SELECTMEN

860-535-2877 EXT 10

SELECTMEN@NORTHSTONINGTONCT.GOV

WHEELER LIBRARY

Thanks to all who donated to Wheeler Library's Annual Appeal – we rely on your gifts to keep the doors open, so please give if you have not had a chance.

Looking for the best books of 2016 or the Academy Award nominees? We've got them, along with great books on CD for the car, grab and go book/activity bags for snow days, and lots of programs to educate and entertain you.

We'll start off in January with a Hula Hoop program on the 19th; and then Cabin Fever returns for a night of bluegrass on January 28th. February brings Take Your Child to the Library Day on the 4th and Mark Starr returns for a program on the 27th. We're working on an Irish Fest for March 4th, complete with step dancing and pub and traditional songs from the Garda Irish Band. The Friends Book Sale begins March 7th.

We've got story hours on Tuesday mornings, yoga for children on Wednesday mornings, and preschool exploration on Wednesday afternoons. We are always adding more events so check our website at www.wheelerlibrary.org or Facebook page often.

AMY KENNEDY

860-535-0383



NORTH STONINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The New Year begins the budgetary season. Since September, Central Administration has been busy working to develop the fiscal year 2017-2018 budget. Our Business Manager, Mrs. Kim Allen, has been formulating anticipated expenditures and evaluating historical data and contracts in regards to personnel and our vendors. Of course, when building a budget, it is always difficult to predict the exact costs of doing business when you are predicting out, sometimes a year or more, into the future. The Superintendent's budget will be presented to the Board of Education in January. Once presented, a series of budget hearings will be scheduled as the BOE will deliberate over it, as they have the final authority in approving the budget. Once approved, it becomes the Board of Education budget, which will be presented to the Board of Finance.

The winter, while always challenging in terms of weather, is also very busy with activities at our schools from early morning through the evening. The Elementary and Middle/High Schools are busy rehearsing with their respective Drama Clubs and will have their productions in early spring. The Gymnasium will have its usual activity, with boys' and girls' Middle/High School basketball. As always, feel free to drop in and enjoy a game.

While mandated state testing will not begin until early spring, the process of preparation is ongoing.

Wishing everyone a happy and healthy New Year!

PETER NERO, SUPERINTENDENT



Photograph by Dorothy Burdick

NORTH STONINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Winter brings months of exciting learning and many events to share at North Stonington Elementary School.

On December 13th, the 5th Grade Chorus & 2nd Year Band Holiday Concert was held. The students performed a concert for the school in the morning and an evening concert for the families. It was a day of song and cheer to start the holiday season.

We ended 2016 with our PBIS celebration of Movies and Popcorn on Dec. 22nd to recognize all students who demonstrated positive behavior throughout the year. We are proud to say that our students daily demonstrate our expectations of being respectful, responsible, honest, and safe.

During this winter season, we encourage the development of reading with our students every day. Holidays and the cold months ahead are special times to share the love of reading. It will make such a difference when you cuddle up to read a book no matter what age. It is also a great way to get your child "settled for a long winter's nap," too!

On behalf of the faculty and staff, I would like to thank the community for supporting our school. We wish each North Stonington family the very best in 2017!

VERONICA WILKISON, PRINCIPAL

PLANNING AND ZONING OFFICIAL/ LAND USE OFFICE

The Planning and Zoning Commission has been busy this season with a few new business approvals in town. A nano-brewery operation was approved for the soon-to-be reopened Village General Store, Hardware and Café at 2 Wyassup Road, in the Village District. The brewery will offer beer tastings and 'growlers-to-go' to complement the cafe. Quality Propane is nearing construction on the retail propane store at 552 Providence-New London Turnpike (the old McDonald's site). They will offer retail propane equipment and propane delivery service. Farm to Gold, the makers of ghee, are under construction at 81 Norwich-Westerly Road (near the rotary). They will manufacture ghee made from grass-fed cows for retail distribution.

On the Planning side, the Commission has proposed zoning regulation changes for excavation applications and an Incentive Housing Zone Overlay District to allow for more affordable housing in town. They are also considering adding an Economic Development District to the western portion of Rt. 2, between the casino and Yerrington's Salvage. The Commission is studying a revision to Farm Breweries, to allow more flexibility, and to bring them more in line with what is currently allowed with Farm Wineries.

As always, P&Z meetings are on the 1st and 2nd Thursdays of the month. Agendas are available on the Town's website northstoningtonct.gov.

TOM ZANARINI SENIOR PLANNING AND ZONING OFFICIAL



Photograph by Dorothy Burdick

EMERGENCY SERVICES BUILDING COMMITTEE

As reported previously, initial bids in 2016 for the construction phase of the Center for Emergency Services project fell beyond the town-approved budget of \$6.3 Million. Thus, the committee was mandated to focus on a redesign with the Architectural Firm Silver-Petrucelli, in order to yield a facility that meets the operational needs of the town's Emergency Services but does not exceed the town-approved budget.

During the past quarter, the proposed building construction drawings and specifications were re-engineered by Silver-Petrucelli, with input and oversight by the committee and First Selectman Murphy. A reduction of the building footprint from approximately 20k sq ft to approximately 13k sq ft. was accomplished. That effort of several months is now complete and construction drawings are available for the Bid phase. The drawings and specifications are in the Fire House meeting room for public information.

The project has received approvals from USDA and town agencies and we are waiting for the approvals from State of CT DECD department to proceed into the Bid phase by late January 2017, in preparation for building construction.

In anticipation of the initiation of construction, the project has secured CREC of Hartford, which is a company that specializes in Project Management and 'Clerk of the Works' Construction services.

The Emergency Services Building Committee encourages members of the North Stonington community to attend its meetings, which are posted on the Town's website and are generally held at the North Stonington Fire House Meeting Room at 6PM every Monday, unless otherwise posted. Depending upon the outcome of the receipt and opening of the bids, a description of milestone actions and dates of completion will be posted on the Town's website.

PAUL KOWACK PE COMMITTEE MEMBER

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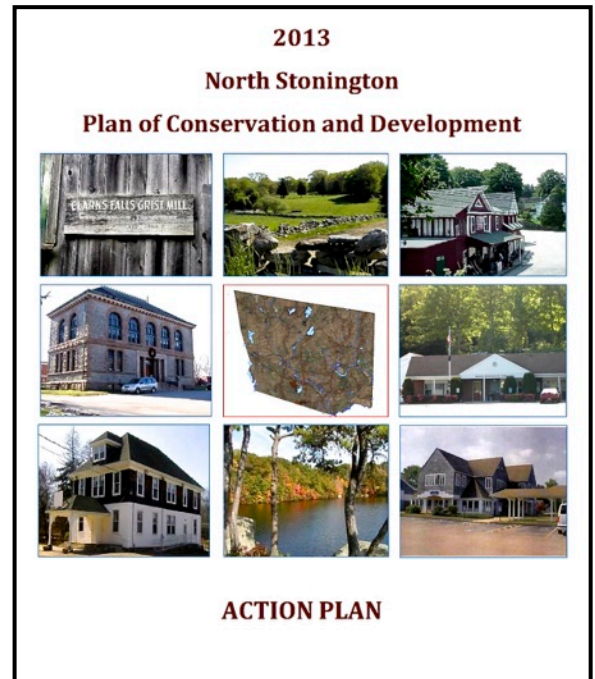
TOWN GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE COMMITTEE

With more and more mandates coming from the state, ongoing planning for improved town operations, and a myriad of daily government issues needing attention, it is increasingly difficult for our few elected officials to move us forward into the future.

A committee of seven townspeople has been appointed by the Board of Selectmen to conduct studies, research the structure of similar towns, and provide recommendations for alternate forms of town management. The committee members are Nita Kincaid, Anne Nelson, Paul Simonds, Dan Smith Dan Spring, William Ricker and Diana Urban.

With a goal of early March, the committee is working to produce a report to the selectmen that will offer the best approaches to meet our town's needs and will provide continuity and stability as administrations change.

Initial recommendations may include a full-time non-partisan administrator, educated, trained and experienced in small town governance, to work with all town boards and commissions to execute the town's Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). This plan was completed in 2013 after extensive year-long input from citizens, business and property owners, elected officials and volunteers. We are now three years into the 2013 adopted plan with much to do in this decade. Everyone can read the full document on-line on the town's website.



The committee is now doing more in-depth analysis of the town's needs and additional ideas are being reviewed. Meetings are open to the public and are on alternate Wednesdays at the Wheeler Library with agendas and minutes posted on the town's website.

PAUL SIMONDS CHAIRMAN

NORTH STONINGTON SENIOR CENTER

The Senior Center, located behind Holly Green, is open Monday – Friday 9:30-2:00 pm. It is closed, because of weather conditions, when school is closed.

The Center has many offerings: classes in painting, quilting and yoga; scheduled trips; Breakfast Club on the first Tuesdays; Mystery lunches on the third Thursdays; and Senior Center lunches on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Wednesdays of each month. Call to make lunch reservations by Friday of the previous week. Also, a registered nurse is available on the first Wednesday of each month from 11:30 to noon. Call 860-535-8188 for more information on activities, or if an appointment with Teresa Pensis is needed for fuel assistance or other concerns.

The North Stonington Golden Agers meet at the Center on the first Wednesday of each month at 12:30pm. Membership is \$10.00 a year. We offer several social events and a yearly scholarship. Applications will be available February 1st at the HS guidance office and Wheeler Library. North Stonington residents and descendants of current Golden Ager members are eligible. Applicants must be interested in an aspect of the medical field and have financial need. For more information call Corinne Bacchiocchi, 860-599-1396.

NORTH STONINGTON VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY, INC.

During the months of September, October and November 2016, your volunteers at the North Stonington Volunteer Fire Company (NSVFC) responded to a total of 88 emergency 911 calls for help. Of these calls, 4 were brush fires, 18 were false alarms, 3 involved hazardous materials, 1 was a medical assist, 3 were mutual aid assistance to surrounding towns, 11 were motor vehicle accidents (two fatalities), 7 were power lines down, 2 were service calls, 4 were vehicle fires, 2 were patient/victim lift assists, 1 was a vehicle lockout involving children, 1 was a water rescue (one fatality), and 31 were medical aid/first responses from our EMT certified firefighter volunteers.

Responding to these emergency calls required 615 man-hours of volunteers' personal time donated to North Stonington; an average of 12 volunteers responded to these calls. There were 28 emergency calls during the daytime, 29 during the after-hours timeframe.

Your volunteers at NSVFC also contributed an additional 348 man hours involving training and drills, in order to improve their proficiencies in life-saving skills. These drills included pumping operations (water supply), mandated compliance training (infectious diseases/HAZMAT), struts and air bags (motor vehicle accident stabilization techniques), simulated structure fires, rope rescue operations, hydraulic rescue operations and car fires.



What's new? Your volunteers acquired a sophisticated "drone," that can be employed during water rescue operations, wilderness search and rescue operations, vehicular hazardous material scenarios and brush/forest fire operations. This is a very sophisticated "state-of-the-art" device that puts our eyes above the terrain to aid in rescue and fire operations. Training with this sophisticated tool has already begun, and it is ready to deploy during an emergency, which might require its assets. We've also recently received a grant, in the amount of \$2600, from the Chelsea Groton Foundation to purchase two new defibrillation units. These new units will replace our current, older/outdated models. Thank you, Chelsea Groton!!

Merry Christmas to all North Stonington residents!! Please stay safe during this Holiday Season!!

CHARLES STEINHART V, CHIEF

GARY BARON, PRESIDENT

NORTH STONINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

We hope you are looking forward to the next Sunday concert at the Stephen Main Homestead in the center of the Village. On February 12th, Aymeric Dupré la Tour will perform on the beautiful and historic A. H. Gale square piano. He will also accompany soprano Juarate Svedaite. There will be two performances, 4:00 and 6:30 pm. Tickets are limited in this intimate setting. Phone 860-599-3608 or email parlorconcertseries@gmail.com for reservations.

Remember that the Morgan A. Stewart Library, with its trove of genealogical material, is open (as usual) on Tuesday afternoons or by appointment. You can find the North Stonington Historical Society on Facebook.

NORTH STONINGTON LIONS CLUB

Celebrating 50 Years ~ March 1967-2017

The Club began this year with two great fundraisers, Dahlia Day and NOSTO FEST. Since then, we have been helping the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center with Thanksgiving and Christmas Food Basket preparation and deliveries.

Currently, plans are underway for two more fundraising events in the upcoming months. A "Taste of Art" will be held on March 11, 2017 at the Wheeler Library from 1:00-5:00 pm. This is a paint and sip/appetizer event with music. Seating is limited. The second event is a family "Drone Flying" informational and instructional event, to be held at the Grange in May or June.

Finally, our Food Trailer is in need of replacement. It truly has served the club and others well. Please keep us in mind if you, or somebody you know, has a trailer that they would like to donate. Also, we are looking for 2 new (or gently used) BBQ Grills, 2 pop up tents (10x10), 3 folding tables, and 3 ice coolers.



If you are interested in becoming a Lion, please come and see what we are all about. Please contact us at northstoningtonlions@yahoo.com or denisemurphy@comcast.net.

DENISE MURPHY, CLUB PRESIDENT

860-625-7363

TAX COLLECTOR

The second half installment of tax bills is due in January. The last day to pay without interest is February 1, 2017. Payments may be made in the Tax Office, Monday through Friday from 9:00 to 4:00. Payments are no longer accepted at the Chelsea Groton Bank branch in town. The best way to avoid the crowds is to pay by mail. If you would like a receipt, please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope. You may also find out how much you owe and make payments online by going to www.northstoningtonct.gov/payonline. Service fees for on-line payments are as follows: E-check \$2.00; Visa Debit \$3.95; all other debit or credit transactions 2.5% of payment amount.

After January 1st, tax payment information for your 2016 Income Tax Return can be found at the same website. Just click on "IRS Payment Records for year 2016" before hitting the search button and all payments made in 2016 will be displayed.

Supplemental motor vehicle tax bills for vehicles registered between October 2, 2015 and August 2016 are in the mail. If you purchased a vehicle and transferred license plates from the old car to the new, credit for the payment on the old car is shown on this tax bill. **You MUST pay the second half payment on the old vehicle to earn the credit. Please do not disregard the second half payment on the old vehicle.**

AMY SNELL

TAX COLLECTOR

NORTH STONINGTON GARDEN CLUB

The North Stonington Garden Club celebrated a very successful 2016 at its October Annual Dinner, held this year at the recently renovated Mystic Hilton. As a part of the evening, we awarded grants to Avalonia Land Conservancy, Friends of Chikumbuso, Groton Open Space Association, North Stonington's Hewitt Farm Committee, and the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center.

The club ended the year with our traditional Christmas wreath-making workshop during which we decorated 30 wreaths and delivered them to enhance town buildings and sites for the holidays.

As we enter the New Year, we have just completed our 2017 yearbook, which lists all programs, workshops, garden visits, and other activities that are planned. Our theme this year is "Growing Forward". We engage knowledgeable, interesting speakers for our monthly meetings (February to October) so that we can learn more about subjects like "Growing Roses in the Northeast", "Foundation Gardens that say Welcome Home" and "Butterflies and Their Gardens". Those are only a few of this year's topics - we provide many ways to expand your gardening know-how!



If you'd like to attend one of our meetings or learn more about joining the North Stonington Garden Club, please contact us. We'll invite you as a guest, so that you can decide if you'd enjoy the club.

NITA KINCAID, MEMBERSHIP CO-CHAIR

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RESIDENT STATE TROOPERS

The Connecticut Resident State Troopers, along with Troopers from Troop-E in Montville, patrol the Town of North Stonington. The statistics for the three month period of September, October and November 2016, for the Town of North Stonington, are as follows: Troopers responded to 28 motor vehicle accidents, made 1 DUI arrest and 3 narcotic arrests. They investigated 21 criminal cases which include Burglaries, Larcenies, Assaults, Domestic, Criminal Mischief and Breach of Peace. Troopers also issued 201 tickets on Town and State roads during this period.

The Connecticut State Police would like to remind residents to report any suspicious activity in Town by calling 860-535-1451/860-848-6500 or 911. The Resident State Trooper's office is located at 40 Main St. on the second floor of the Old Town Hall.

NORTH STONINGTON AGRICULTURAL FAIR

The Officers, Directors and Members of the North Stonington Agricultural Fair wish each of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy & Healthy New Year!

Plans are ongoing for the 2017 Fair that will be held July 13th – 16th. Our monthly meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the Firehouse at 7pm. We welcome and encourage new members to attend our meetings and get involved with the organizing, preparing, scheduling, and operation of our Town's largest annual event (please note that you do not have to be a member of the Fire Department or the Grange to join and attend meetings). Our goal is to provide a fun, safe, and educational family oriented experience for all ages. Please join us on Tuesday, January 10th at 7pm at the North Stonington Firehouse and share your ideas and/or find out how you can contribute. Mark your calendars!

JODY WHIPPLE

PINENEEDLEHOMESTEAD@SBCGLOBAL.NET

860-599-8498

ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

Hope everyone enjoyed the holidays.

Assessment Appeals: Any taxpayer who wishes to appeal their assessment must get an application from the assessor's office after February 1, 2017, complete the form and return it before February 20th. The Board of Assessment Appeals will meet in March to hear your appeal on the 2016 Grand List.

Elderly Homeowners Program: If you qualify for the Elderly Homeowners Program, you need to complete and bring in your IRS Form 1040, plus the Social Security 1099 form, which will be mailed to you in early January. You or your spouse must be 65 years old on January 1st or have a Social Security disability and have the TPQY statement.

If you do not need to file IRS Form 1040, we need to see any pension statements plus interest and dividend statements that you received, as well as your Social Security 1099 form. As of this writing, we have not been informed of the income limits for the Homeowners Program 2017. It will be around \$42,900 for a married couple and \$35,200 for a single homeowner. The application period is between February 1st and May 15th 2017, so you have plenty of time to file.

Veteran's new to North Stonington who have a service connected disability, need to bring in the % disability statement so we can give you the correct exemption amount.

Supplemental motor vehicle tax bills have been sent out. If you purchased a motor vehicle between October 2, 2015 and August 31, 2016, and did not receive a supplemental tax bill for the motor vehicle, please call the assessor's office.

The renters program begins April 1st, 2017. More on that program will be in the next newsletter.

DARRYL L. DEL GROSSO

860-535-2877, ext. 23 or 24

NORTH STONINGTON AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE

The Affordable Housing Committee recognizes an opportunity for the Town to expand the housing choices for the citizens by developing a parcel on Town owned land on Wintechog Hill, which could contain 47 units of one, two and three bedrooms. A feasibility study conducted on that site supports this number, of which anywhere from 20 - 100% could be deemed affordable under Incentive Housing Zone regulations. Our Community Survey, conducted in 2008, indicates that 59% of respondents think that North Stonington needs more housing choices; 50% think the Town needs housing for younger people and 46% think that the Town needs housing that is lower priced. Since that survey, housing affordability has become more of an issue. Moving forward on this opportunity for housing would correspond to the 2013 Plan of Conservation and Development: "Expand housing choice to accommodate the needs of residents of all ages and incomes". This document is a blue print for the future for our town. The Committee urges the Town to move forward on this issue.



Photograph by Dorothy Burdick

A bright note to start our New Year: the \$400,000 Community Block Grant to rehabilitate housing has been expended, making sustainable the affordable housing that does exist in our town. When these no-interest loans are repaid, upon the sale of the homes, that money will stay in our Town to be recycled, and loaned again, to income-qualified homeowners for home rehabilitation.

MARY ANN RICKER, CHAIRMAN

marykricker@comcast.net

SCHOOL MODERNIZATION COMMITTEE

Greetings, friends. The time is quickly passing and much is being accomplished with the School Modernization initiative. Our committee has met 30 times since being appointed and has accomplished a great deal of work in that time. The project is running on schedule, based on our projections. As you may remember, last year we had conceptual designs prepared by Quisenberry/Arcari, which were the basis of the project we are constructing. Since approval of the project, the real work has begun. We have been doing soil testing, property surveys, meeting with town and state officials, and beginning preparation of our schematic (much more detailed) design plans. We also hosted a nationally renowned expert in facility design to spend a day with a small group of teachers, students, and community members, to engage in detailed discussion about how the facility we build will be used in day-to-day instruction. As expected, the process we are going through is unfolding with some very positive updates to the project.



On the Middle/High School plan, we have opted to change the direction of the building from the proposed “V” shape, to a building that runs parallel to the road. This design helps us in a variety of ways. The soil behind the Gymnasium tested slightly wet, so this helps us build the structure on firm ground. We also should manage to design a facility in a less expensive manner than the previous design because there will be less “angles”. This concept also avoids interference with underground utilities and fields unlike the conceptual design did. Finally through our meetings with many architects during the hiring process, we discovered that a “campus design” was much more suitable to our footprint and also showcases the facility that we are all investing so much time and effort in building for our students.

On the Elementary school, we have discovered through environmental testing that it will make more sense for us to actually take down many of the interior (non load bearing) walls and dispose of them as bulky waste rather than sanding them down to remove the paint as would have been required by the state. This approach will now allow us to save money and also open up our design plan in a way that will truly allow us to create a 21st century learning space for our students.

The committee continues to evaluate ways to build the most state-of-the-art facility possible while realizing savings through design, construction methods, and negotiating contracts. Though there have been changes with both designs, the square footage remains the same and the overall project costs have not changed. We are continuing to work to the budget passed at referendum and the committee is committed to saving the town money wherever and whenever possible.

Our next steps include meeting with the State in February to review our final schematic designs, meeting with local officials to review our plans, and beginning to prepare bid packages, so when State funding is granted, we are ready to put a shovel in the ground.

For more detailed information on the plans and committee updates, please visit www.northstonington.gov and click on the School Modernization Building Committee link. We are posting regular updates to keep the public informed of our progress. Additionally the committee meets most Monday evenings at 7:00pm and you can email us anytime at nsschoolmodernization@gmail.com.

MIKE URGO, CHAIRMAN

NORTH STONINGTON GIRL SCOUT TROOPS



Community service, and service to others, is always a huge part of Girl Scouting. Our town's own Girl Scout Troops are busy with many community service projects all over southeastern Connecticut. Our 2nd and 3rd grade Brownie Troop will be doing a book drive to benefit Read to Grow of southeastern Connecticut. Our 5th grade Junior Troop made over 500 dog biscuits to raise money for The Humane Society of southeastern Connecticut, donated and worked to organize over 700 books for Whales & Tales Book Bank in New London, and are currently working towards earning their Bronze Award (based on many community projects that the girls chose and feel are important). Our 6th grade Cadette troop refurbished the Butterfly Garden at Hewitt

Farm and will continue the ongoing maintenance this spring. They will sell milkweed seeds in an effort to help restore the monarch butterfly population. All troops got together in September to build fairy houses and created a beautiful Fairy Garden Display for the NOSTO FEST.

Several troops adopted local families for the holidays to help bring them extra Christmas cheer and others sent Holiday cards to Military Troops overseas.

To all the Town Girl Scout Troops, thank you, for all you do. What one 5th grade girl, Haley Kumpf, said regarding these events sums it up, "I am proud of what we've done!" We're proud of all of you, too.

JEN PETERSON, GIRL SCOUT TOWN ORGANIZER

jenefer81@hotmail.com

NORTH STONINGTON COMMUNITY GRANGE #138

North Stonington Community Grange #138 meets on the second and fourth Fridays at 8:00 pm with certain exceptions. January and February have only one meeting scheduled, each with a potential "snow day". Each meeting we discuss the events we will be participating in, the needs of our community, and the needs of our grounds and upkeep; then we have a program. Often we have guest speakers in varying interests, as well as committee programs.

This fall we heard from Genevieve Nutall on ospreys in Connecticut, went over election questions and answers, and had our Halloween and Christmas parties. Winter is our slower season, meeting once a month November thru February.

ALL are welcome to come. Our upcoming schedule has our Agriculture and Conservation Committee program on January 13th (snow date Jan 27th); Game night and "Talent" and "A Number" contests on Feb. 10th (snow date Feb 24th); a Ritual Program on March 10th; and our State Program contest on March 24th. If you'd like to learn about the Grange in general and our Grange in particular, March 10th would be an excellent time to come, but you are welcome ANY time!

SUE PIANKA, PROGRAM DIRECTOR

860-599-4528

WHEELER HIGH SCHOOL/MIDDLE SCHOOL

We are already half way through the 2nd Quarter here at Wheeler. Students are busy preparing for their upcoming midterm exams and many of our seniors are diligently working on their college applications! Our faculty continues to work hard to assess the 21st Century Skills that we know our students need to be successful when they leave Wheeler. At the end of January, we will be administering our very first assessment report of these skills to give to all of our families. As we continue to pilot this process, the faculty will be meeting regularly to revise and update how this initiative is progressing. This initiative was a large part of our 2014 NEASC report and, as we continue to work on our five-year report, we will monitor and update this process accordingly.

We are very excited to announce a high school career fair that will take place on the afternoon of March 30th. Nearly 50 guest speakers from local businesses and organizations will be on hand to educate our high school students on a variety of career possibilities.

Lastly, thanks to our PTO and SERAC (Southeastern Regional Action Council), we will be sponsoring a program on mental health and substance abuse for all of our Wheeler students.

KRISTEN ST. GERMAIN, PRINCIPAL

NORTH STONINGTON EDUCATION FOUNDATION

The Foundation's Trivia Contest, which is a major fundraiser, will be at the VFW in Stonington on Friday, February 24th. The snow date will be Saturday, March 4th. There will be a Social Hour from 6-6:45 pm; the competition begins at 7:00.

Teams consist of 6-8 people, age 21 or over. The cost is \$20.00 per team member. There are ten rounds of ten questions in a variety of categories for the Trivia Competition. Each team works together and submits their answers on their Trivia Question form. No one has to answer aloud! During each round the judges score the answer sheets and a leading team is proclaimed. This continues until the end of the final round when the Trivia Champs are proclaimed. Snacks will be provided. Please bring more substantial food if desired.

Register your team now! Pre-registration and payment is required by February 21st. For information call 860-941-8502 or email nsedfoundation@gmail.com.

Save the Date: Road Race to be held on Saturday, May 27, 2017

BERNARD "BING" BARTICK

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AVALONIA

Avalonia, along with others, is conserving open space for our forest, streams, meadows, and ledge in North Stonington. Winter is a great time to get out for a walk in nature. You can see far into the woods and a coating of snow can enhance the experience.

Avalonia Land Conservancy owns 6 properties with trails in North Stonington and more in other towns. You can find trail maps on the website www.avalonialandconservancy.org or at the Library. On our Facebook page you will find activities and more. This land trust has properties in eight towns in southeast Connecticut. If you haven't already, consider becoming a member.



Italian Stallions
Winners of Last 3 Trivia Contests
& Moderator Larry St. Clair

BOARD OF EDUCATION

It was 13 years ago that my family and I moved to North Stonington. If NoSto is like a quilt and the town's people are the fabric, I felt like a piece of thread. Living in a rural area, it is not always easy getting to know your new neighbors and making new friends. It was then I decided that we would start attending the High School basketball games. Meeting and talking to new people made me more familiar with my surroundings and helped me realize what a wonderful town we had moved into. These basketball games seemed like a town event. There were people there that did not have relatives playing. They just wanted to support the hometown school.

Our schools are known for their great test results that we post when compared to similar schools. Did you know that we also have one of the highest percentages of students participating in extra-curricular activities in the state? When you are small, it is "all hands on deck" to be able to support the programs offered. We have Clubs, Drama, Band, Chorus and Sports teams. We just had our Holiday Concerts, which were heavily attended and were raved about. In the spring, the Elementary School Drama Club will perform the musical "Beauty & the Beast Jr.". The High School Drama Club will be performing the musical, "Cinderella". The Boy's and Girl's Basketball teams and the Cheerleading squad will be competing all winter. The students in these clubs and on teams work very hard. When you attend one of these events, you can feel the passion.

So, go to some games; watch a concert; go to a play; feel the passion; make a new friend; become part of the fabric!

BOB CARLSON, CHAIRMAN

carlsonb@northstonington.k12.ct.us

HEWITT FARM

Enjoy the outdoors at Hewitt Farm this winter. Snow is predicted for the Northeast so consider snowshoeing or cross-country skiing on some of the trails. A leisurely walk through the woods will allow you to see how beautiful the property is, all dressed in white! Horses and dogs are welcome, too. Trail maps are available at any of the trailheads or on the town website (www.northstoningtonct.gov). Parking areas are located inside the Hewitt Road entrance off Route 2 or at the end of Hewitt Road when you enter from Ryder Road.

The Hewitt Farm Committee will be overseeing a project in 2017 to repair structural beams in the basement of the 1750 Farm House. This building is an important part of North Stonington's history and we want to ensure appropriate preservation. The committee is also considering recommendations for the two empty structures at the farm, the Cabin and Greene Gables.

Looking forward to spring, the Hewitt Farm Community Garden Association has added six additional garden plots for rent. Last year they filled all plots early and they now hope to extend the opportunity to garden to more members of the community. Plot sign-ups are in February: the first week of February for previous renters and the second week for interested town residents. Contact Mary Ann Ricker for more information at maryricker@comcast.net.



1750 Hewitt Farm House

We are very excited about the continued support that Hewitt Farm receives from other town organizations. Many thanks go to the North Stonington Garden Club, which has funded most of the signs at the Hewitt Farm. We now look forward to three 2017 projects being planned for the farm by Troop 71 Eagle Scout candidates.

Any questions, please contact Nita Kincaid or Dick Cooper

NITA KINCAID, CO-CHAIR

860-535-1416

DICK COOPER, CO-CHAIR

860-535-0528

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

This fall we have been addressing several action items from the Plan of Conservation and Recreation Lands portion of our 10-year Plan of Conservation & Development document. Our support of the Federal efforts to designate the Wood-Pawcatuck Rivers and their tributaries as wild river status assures our maintenance of the 100-foot buffer zone among our major waterways and maintains the health and integrity of our lakes and ponds. This continues to be of paramount importance to the health of our town.

Vital to the protection of our conservation lands is an ongoing monitoring program our commissioners undertake with every private easement and town owned, open space parcel. As our POCD notes, conservation requires a strong management commitment. If we lack that vision, it will become costly to the preservation of the quality of life and the environment we desire.



JOHN BRADSHAW SUGARING
2017 North Stonington Community Calendar

In providing appropriate areas for active and passive recreation opportunities, the POCD directs us to continue to develop a network of trails on our town-owned properties. Five trails on our land have now been completed. In appreciation of our abundant forests and woodlands, we have continued to work toward identifying the largest tree of numerous species in town and will shortly publish an ever-changing list of notable trees submitted and identified around town; more specimens are welcomed.

We have an alternate position open on our commission. If any of our activities interest you, please contact us for that position.

BILL RICKER, CHAIRMAN

WILLIAMRICKER@COMCAST.NET

Found this scribbled in the corner of someone's notes
from a meeting over 20 years ago.

“Let's Save The World!”

Courage. Goodness. Determination. Belief. Commitment. Hope

Please Join Us

North Stonington Citizens Land Alliance, Inc.

PO Box 327 North Stonington, CT 06359

860-599-5517 landallianceinc@gmail.com



WINTER EVENTS

January

9	MONDAY	12 noon	Wheeler Library	Book Discussion: <i>I'll Take You There</i> by Wally Lamb	Page 1
19	THURSDAY	6:30 pm	Wheeler Library	'Dancin' with Hoops, Free & Open to All	Page 1
28	SATURDAY	7 pm	Wheeler Library	"Cabin Fever" (Bluegrass Band) Refreshments	Page 1
30	MONDAY	7 pm	Wheeler Library	<i>Libertarians on the Prairie</i> with author Chris Woodside	Page 1
31	TUESDAY	6:30 pm	Wheeler Library	Book Discussion: <i>Dead Wake</i> by Eric Larson	Page 1

February

4	SATURDAY	10 am-noon	Wheeler Library	Take Your Child To The Library Day A Special Program	Page 1
12	SUNDAY	4 & 6:30 pm	NS Historical Society S. Main Homestead	Aymeric Dupré La Tour Piano Concert	Page 5
15	WEDNESDAY	7 pm	Wheeler Library	Ten Tips for Eco-Friendly Gardening with Jo Negri	Page 1
24	FRIDAY	6 pm	Stonington VFW	N.S. Education Foundation Trivia Contest (Snow Date: Saturday 3/4)	Page 11
27	MONDAY	7 pm	Wheeler Library	Scallop Fishing on <i>Mister G</i> presented by Mark Starr	Page 1

WINTER EVENTS



March

1	WEDNESDAY	7 pm	Wheeler Library	URI Master Gardener Program on Attracting Pollinators	Page 1
4	SATURDAY	TBD	Wheeler Library	Irish Fest	Page 1
7 - 11	THURS-SAT	Library hours	Wheeler Library	Friends of Wheeler Book Sale	Page 1
11	SATURDAY	1-5pm	Wheeler Library	A "Taste of Art", Lions Club Fundraiser	Page 1
13 - 31	DAYS OPEN	Library hours	Wheeler Library	Climate Change Open House	Page 1
19	SUNDAY	4 & 6:30 pm	NS Historical Society Stephen Main Homestead	Elena Zamolodchikova Piano Concert	Page 5
22	WEDNESDAY	7 pm	Wheeler Library	Connecticut's Trees with DEEP Forester, Christopher Martin	Page 1
26	SUNDAY	2 pm	NS Historical Society Stephen Main Homestead	Talk on Flintlock Guns	Page 5
29	WEDNESDAY	7 PM	Wheeler Library	Yale Program on Climate Change Communication by Jenn Marlon	Page 1
31	FRIDAY	5:30 pm	NS Elementary School	NSPTO Basket Raffle	



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

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Welcome 2017

We wish all our readers and contributors a happy, healthy and rewarding New Year.

North Stonington can be proud of all the talent and commitment that exists in our community.

This publication is a team effort that depends upon the support of our Town's boards and commissions, as well as the hard-working nonprofit organizations.

All continue to fill each issue with interesting, thoughtful articles.

A very special thanks goes to teacher Noel Devine and the students at the Wheeler High print shop; their help makes it possible to produce the NSQ.

We look forward to a very positive, productive 2017 for our special town!

Nita Kincaid & Lisa Mazzella, NSQ Editors