

THE NORTH STONINGTON QUARTERLY

SPRING 2018

It's Budget Time!

The 2017-2018 fiscal year ends on June 30th. During the past few months Town Boards, Commissions, Committees and Departments have been providing input about expected revenues and expenses to be included in the upcoming 2018-2019 North Stonington Budget. Reviews of the information by the Boards of Finance, Selectmen and Education are well underway.

All involved are looking forward to bringing the results to the town in the following manner:

- ✓ A **Public Hearing** led by the Board of Finance will present the budget contents. This is an important step, because it allows taxpayers to gain understanding of what is in the budget and to ask questions of those who have prepared it. Following the public input, any necessary changes can be made before the Annual Town Meeting .
- ✓ Next the **Annual Town Meeting** will be held. All residents are encouraged to attend. The final budget will be presented and will subsequently be voted upon at a referendum. The 2018 Annual Town Meeting participants are also looking forward to sharing an overview of accomplishments in 2017 and goals for 2018, highlighting the progress that's been made in executing the Plan of Conservation and Development. A few other items of town business (for example town ordinance updates) will be reviewed and voted upon at the meeting.
- ✓ Not less than 7 days and not more than 14 days after the town meeting, the **Referendum** to vote on the budget will be held at the North Stonington Town Hall between 6 am and 8 pm.

The dates for these three events are not yet available, but the goal is to complete all the above events prior to the end of June. As soon as the dates are set, the town will publicize them with vigor! If you are not already signed up to receive "**News & Announcements**" from the Town website, go to www.northstoningtonct.gov and you will find the Citizen Action Center on the home page with a button to "Sign up for News".

BOARD OF FINANCE

The Board of Finance has been actively reviewing budget submissions from departments and commissions for the fiscal year 2018-2019 with some delay due to a number of meetings that were cancelled due to consecutive "northeasterners" during the month of March. With shortfalls from the State of Connecticut impacting revenue estimates, though not severe, the Board looks to provide a fiscal blueprint for the upcoming year to support services and capital projects. Through the month of April the Board will move toward submitting a budget to be presented to the Town.

As we witness the completion of the new Emergency Management Center and the beginning of the School Modernization Project, it serves to demonstrate that prudent fiscal management can move the Town forward in meeting goals defined in our 10 year Plan of Conservation and Development.

Board of Finance meetings are scheduled Wednesday evenings at 7:00pm at the New Town Hall. The public is encouraged to attend. Please review the calendar on the Town website to confirm dates.

DAN SPRING, CHAIRMAN

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

It has been incredibly busy since the winter edition of the Quarterly. Your new Board of Selectmen has had some interesting challenges and developments.

We passed our budgets and the new mil rate was set in December. We also had a surprise re-vote on the school building project that showed decisive favor for the modernization efforts. These two items certainly took a lot of time and effort from the selectmen, but we are happy to see that things are moving forward on all fronts and construction has begun after a very special groundbreaking ceremony February 9th in which all students attended.



The past few months have seen our new Town Clerk Antoinette Pancaro begin, as well as promotion of Donny Hill from Assistant Foreman to Foreman of the Highway Department. We are currently in the process of interviewing candidates for the new position of Administrator/Finance officer.

Progress continues on the Emergency Services building with anticipated occupancy in June of 2018.

We have a great deal of economic activity going on with many of the large parcels in town selling and exciting plans on the horizon. Once details are known we will make them available. In anticipation of this, the town is looking at plans for sewers in the Route 2 area, which is in line with our Plan of Conservation and Development. Having wastewater options is extremely important to preserve our aquifers in that area.

We appointed great new volunteers to a variety of committees: DJ Noyes and Dick Blodgett to The Historic Village Improvement Committee; Brianne Casadei, Hewitt Farm; Carl Johnston, Center For Emergency Services; Ryan Mason, Water Pollution Control Authority; Margaret Leonard and Ellen Flanner-Schroeder to Affordable Housing.

Over the past couple of months, the newly created Communications Committee has been meeting and has been working on some very exciting ideas (see their article). That group is made up of Nick Bolt, Alice Fitzgerald, Alton 'Mac' Gray, Mark Leonard, Amy Kennedy, Ellen Spring, Claire Silva and Chair Lisa Mazzella.

You will soon see the finished North Stonington Welcome signs reflecting new poles, fresh paint, and the addition of the "schools of distinction" rider underneath the "we appreciate our volunteers". We are excited to be able to welcome people to town with these fresh new signs as you enter the community.

Weather has been a big factor over the past couple of months with 3 Nor'easter type storms hitting only 11 days apart. We would like to thank the Emergency Services personnel for their continued response to these issues. Their dedication to the community is unparalleled and we are truly blessed to have such a great group serving the town. We are also so thankful for the highway department's efforts in getting most roads passable in such a short period of time. Both of these teams have worked incredibly hard over the past couple of storms and we are very fortunate to have them. I would like to thank Eversource for having crews on site immediately during the storms and responding as rapidly as possible given the circumstances.

Finally, the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance have been working together to put a fiscally responsible budget forth for the town's consideration at our annual town meeting in May. We have held a number of joint meetings to help streamline the budgeting process and create strong collaboration between the boards.

Please keep an eye on the town website for further news and announcement updates and consider following us on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram!

MIKE URGO, FIRST SELECTMAN 860-535-2877 EXT10 SELECTMEN@NORTHSTONINGTONCT.GOV

PLANNING AND ZONING OFFICIAL/ LAND USE OFFICE



Since January, the PZC has approved a 9,224sf Dollar General off Exit 93 and a 2,100sf Medical Marijuana Dispensary in the Holly Green complex as part of Dr. Pecher's Wellness Center (pending State application approval).

The Commission will be considering a text amendment to allow micro-assisted living facilities, which is consistent with housing goals outlined in the 2012 Housing Plan and 2013 Plan of Conservation and Development and we remain focused on implementing the remaining POCD goals. We hope to host a new round of neighborhood meetings and community conversations this spring or summer, and look forward to seeing many of you there!

The Commission is proposing a reduction in the length of the term for alternate member positions, from six years to two, in an effort to attract new members who might like to try out the position before committing to a full six-year term.

The proposed budget for FY 2018-2019 represents a 1.6% increase from this year due to the increase in salaries per the union contract. If the salaries are left out, the budget is actually the same as FY 2017-2018. The Attorney line item, used primarily for Zoning Enforcement, remains the costliest item in the PZC budget.

JULIET HODGE PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT & ZONING OFFICIAL jhodge@northstunningtonct.gov

NORTH STONINGTON AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE

The 2018 Needs Assessment Report of the Southeastern Connecticut Housing Authority was presented at their March 15th conference. It provides insight and guidance for the future of affordable housing in North Stonington. Population and household projections for 2015-2030 show significant increases in young adults 25-44 and seniors 65+. North Stonington is currently undersupplied with appropriate housing to support these projected shifts in housing demand. Our seniors want to downsize within our community to affordable smaller houses or rental units, and our young people want starter homes or rentals that they can afford. North Stonington currently has only 1.34% deed restricted affordable housing units. State law says we must have 10% housing units so designated. Those who qualify for these homes include a two person household earning \$50,000 or less. Households of "moderate income" earning \$50-\$75,000, also qualify. For these households, housing is considered affordable if monthly housing costs are less than \$1,250 and \$1,875 per month respectively.

North Stonington received recognition at the conference for meeting one of their key recommendations: having a local housing committee to lead community-wide conversations about housing goals and to advance changes. The other key recommendation was to re-evaluate zoning regulations to reflect the demand for smaller and lower cost housing units. Our community needs to show support for changes in our zoning laws that will allow North Stonington to grow appropriately while maintaining our rural charm.

MARY ANN RICKER, CHAIRMAN

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SCHOOL MODERNIZATION BUILDING COMMITTEE

Construction is officially underway! If you have driven by the Gymnasium lately, you will see initial site work in progress, which includes tree removal and safety fencing all around the areas designated for phase one of our school construction project. This phase of the project requires the Gymnasium to be closed until March of 2019 when the new High School/Middle School is scheduled to open to students and staff. As a result, the Central Administration has been relocated into temporary offices located in the existing HS/MS across the street, and alternative arrangements have been made to accommodate physical education classes and other programs impacted by phase one. Although construction is occurring and safety fencing has been secured around the areas closed to students and staff, the tunnel remains open for access to the athletic fields and the Elementary School as needed.

Sports is a big part of the Wheeler experience for our students, so closing the Gymnasium for a year was a decision the committee did not take lightly. Significant consideration was given to the impact on our sports program and student athletes. Our Athletic Director, Ellen Turner, has done a phenomenal job reaching out to her colleagues in neighboring districts to arrange practice and game schedules for the 2018 fall and winter sports season. As the season approaches and plans are finalized, information will be shared with our athletes and their families. The Athletic Department, administrators, the Board of Education and the School Modernization Building Committee are working collaboratively to ensure the impact is minimized and we communicate plans effectively.

Phase one of the project also required the traffic pattern for student drop-off and pick-up at the Elementary School to be altered. This change went into effect on Monday, March 12th and will remain in effect through March of 2019. The safety of our students and the school community is of highest priority, so we ask everyone to stay aware and informed throughout the building process for any posted signs, school communications, notifications, pavement markings, and fenced off areas.

Although patience and understanding is appreciated throughout the school modernization project, we understand communication is essential. Weekly meetings between the Construction Manager, the Architect and the Town are scheduled to begin Tuesday, March 27th to review the progress of the project, the schedule and any issues that need to be addressed. The School Modernization Building Committee will continue to meet regularly and as needed to keep the project on track and the community informed. As part of our plan to ensure information is current and available to everyone, a new website dedicated to the project will go live next month. BuildingWheeler.com,



managed by D2 Media Solutions, will provide schedule updates, pictures and videos of the construction process, budget information, and allow for ongoing questions and feedback to the committee. Please feel free to join us at any of our scheduled meetings as we work together to “build Wheeler” and provide our students and teachers a state of the art educational facility we can all be proud of!

PAMELA POTEPMRI, CHAIRMAN

EMERGENCY SERVICES BUILDING COMMITTEE

During the reporting period of January 2018 to March 2018, building components have been assembled and erected to drawing specifications along with the compliance requirements of Town and State agencies.

Enterprise Builders, Inc of Newington, CT along with qualified subcontractors have maintained progress to Planning, Construction Compliance and Budgetary (cost to complete) Status Reports. CREC of Hartford, a company that specializes in Project Management and 'Clerk of the Works' Construction services has maintained a supervisory role in these efforts.



Field Reports and verified budgetary status that have been maintained with imbedded photographic evidence of progress are archived at the Town of North Stonington town hall.

Key activities in addition to final assembly for this reporting period that are in progress:

Installation of Building Gutter System

Installation of HVAC Ductwork

Installation of Branch Wiring

Installation of Plumbing Piping

Installation of Building Framing & Sheetrock

Installation of Fire Protection Piping

Installation of Electrical Switchgear

The time impact of recent weather events is being analyzed and will be described in the next Quarterly Report.

PAUL KOWACK PE, COMMITTEE MEMBER

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CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Winter has allowed us to concentrate on less physically active pursuits, but none the less important. After establishing our goals & objectives for 2018, we immediately began work.

The dumping of "fracking waste", filled with unknown chemicals from states west of us into New England towns, led us to develop a draft of an ordinance to prohibit fracking, polluted or contaminated waste from being brought into North Stonington. Our Board of Selectman will likely bring this ordinance to our Annual Town Meeting in May.

We have spoken before the state legislature in support of SB 181, a bill allowing signature towns to levy up to a 1% "conveyance fee" on property over \$150K to build up our Land Acquisition Fund for future purchase of land deemed valuable to the town as a whole. As the state continues to cut funding to the towns, this would be a means of providing conservation money without adding to our budget.

We have completed the measuring of all significant trees submitted to us and have forwarded our statistics to Conn. College Arboretum for verification and listing on their state website.

As the POCD is now half way through its 10-year life span, we are assessing what properties may be added to our "wish list" to hopefully add to our wildlife/greenway corridors. Coincidentally, we are creating an updated trail map including Avalonia and North Stonington Citizen Land Alliance trails to soon be available for public use. An interactive trail map is being planned for children's and family use to acquaint folks to the locations of our hiking trails in a fun educational manner.

Now let's see if our Conservation Commission's plantings at the Pocket Park made it through the winter.

BILL RICKER, CHAIRMAN

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860-535-2426

BOARD OF EDUCATION

It has been a busy year so far for the Board of Education. We have had to update our calendars to keep pace with the constant storms and are hoping to set a graduation date soon. The school modernization project is underway and we are so thankful for the talented team we have working with our students. Their ability to continually step up, stay focused, and be flexible is amazing. As the modernization project continues, flexibility will continue to be the buzz word of the day. You will soon be able to follow the progress of the project on the Town and BOE websites.



The winter athletic season has come to a close with 2 championship wins: One for the Middle School girls basketball team and the other for our Middle School Cheerleaders. Congratulations to both teams for demonstrating great skill and sportsmanship. Additional congratulations to Rylin Fowler; who was the goalie for the winning team of the State Championship Division III title in boys hockey.

Budget season has begun and we have been hard at work to come up with the most cost effective budget for the town's taxpayers, while continuing to fund our award winning education system at a level that supports success for our students. Our meeting dates and times are posted online and we welcome the community's input anytime. Thank you for supporting our schools; we are a better place for it. Think Spring!

CHRISTINE WAGNER, CHAIRMAN

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HEWITT FARM

Spring is finally here - why not enjoy the outdoors by fishing, exploring trails, exercising your dog, your family and yourself! If you bring your dog, please remember that dogs must be under control at all times, so keep handy a leash or other device to manage your pet.

Hewitt Farm will be the gathering place for the upcoming North Stonington **"Party with the Parties"** scheduled for June 9th from noon to 4pm (rain date June 10th). The Unaffiliated Voter and Republican and Democratic Town Committees are sponsoring this free event and it will offer music, hayrides, games, food and much more!

2018 marks the 6th year for the planting of the Community Garden area, which is located near the Route 2 entrance at the farm. Additional plots were added last year, providing extra space for new gardeners. At this time there are still a few remaining plots available for \$25 and information flyers can be found at Wheeler Library.

The Hewitt Farm Committee is considering two projects to enhance the use of the farm. One is a covered pavilion and the other is a Frisbee Golf course. Both projects are in their early stages of planning.

The 104-acre Hewitt Farm is open daily from dawn to dusk. It's free, easy to get to, right near the village and Holly Green. When you visit, park just inside the Hewitt Road entrance off Route 2 or at the parking area ¼ mile down Hewitt Road from Ryder Road.



ED HARASIMOWITZ

CHAIRMAN

860-245-5305

NORTH STONINGTON COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

We are a new town committee, appointed by the Board of Selectmen at the beginning of January 2018. Our overall mission is to establish effective ways to disseminate accurate, unbiased information regarding town matters to the residents and businesses of North Stonington. Our goal is to assist the Selectmen, as well as other boards and commissions, in informing as many residents as possible using various forms of communication including, but not limited to, email, social media and town-wide mailings.

The Communication Committee is made up of eight members: Nick Bolt , Alice Fitzgerald, Alton ‘Mac’ Gray, Mark Leonard, Amy Kennedy, Ellen Spring, Claire Silva and Chair Lisa Mazzella.–One of first things we did was create a survey asking folks how they would prefer to receive their information. Perhaps you visited us outside Town Hall after you voted at our last referendum. We handed out 445 surveys that day and nearly 200 have been returned to us. Survey forms are currently available at the Wheeler Library and the Town Clerk’s office. Please stop by and fill out yours. Moving forward, the information you provide will be very helpful to our committee in order to reach our goals.

Committee member, Nicholas Bolt, has been working on digital modes of communication using an identifiable label of @MyNoSto. This handle will be used for an official Town Facebook page, Twitter, Instagram, and more. These will go live soon so stay tuned!

Another initiative we are working on is a more old-fashioned approach; we are planning to install 5 outdoor bulletin boards, constructed of cedar, at key places throughout town. The bulletin boards will be shatterproof, clear plastic with windows and locks and will be weather and graffiti resistant. They will be continually updated with town government-related information, such as town meeting dates and referendums. These will be especially helpful for sharing information during town-wide emergencies.

Our committee generally meets at 6:30 on first and third Wednesdays of the month at Wheeler Library. If you have suggestions, questions or concerns, please email us at Communications@northstoningtonct.gov or join us at one of our meetings.

LISA MAZZELLA, CHAIRMAN

NORTH STONINGTON AGRICULTURAL FAIR

Happy Spring! It’s been an eventful winter this year with several storms and cold weather, but that hasn’t kept the Fair Committee members from working diligently to prepare for July! Those of you that follow us on Facebook already know that we are adding a Costumed Goat Race to this year’s fair. We are looking forward to the fun, laughter and imaginations of those that will be competing. A new Farm Tractor pull has also been added on Sunday, following the ATV pull that was new last year! Dirty Deeds will be returning to the main stage on Saturday evening.



The new website is up and running and we are continually updating and adding events to our Facebook page. Thank you to the several new members that have joined our committee and meetings over the winter. Monthly meetings will move back to the Grange Hall on the fairgrounds, 7pm the 2nd Tuesday of each month. The meetings are open to the public and we welcome all to attend. Find us on our website at www.northstoningtonfair.com or on Facebook: North Stonington Agricultural Fair, Inc.

Mark your calendars: July 12th – 15th, 2018! We hope to see you there!!

JODY WHIPPLE

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

The EDC welcomes the **Dollar General** and **We Got Your Back** (Therapeutic Massage) to North Stonington! We are excited about recent real estate transactions on some of the larger vacant parcels in the EDD Zone and look forward to meeting with prospective developers to hear their plans.

The EDC is proposing an increase in the FY 2018-2019 Budget to fund several initiatives including the establishment of a town-run farmer’s market, a business beautification matching grant program, and a marketing campaign that will focus on promoting our local businesses, our unique assets, and vacant parcels ripe for development in the new Resort Commercial Zone and the Economic Development District.

This chart only provides data for the Land Use Permits received. The Building Department reported a total estimated construction value for *all* permits received to date in Q1 of \$3,718,817 (which includes a portion of the school project).

LAND USE PERMITS	# Permits	Sq. Ft. Construction Residential	Sq. Ft. Construction Commercial/Ind.	Estimated Construction Value
JAN	2		9,477	\$456,000
FEB	11	4,960	5,256	\$228,000
MARCH	4	875		\$60,000
2018 Q1 TOTAL	17	5,635 sf	14,732 sf	\$744,000

BRETT MASTROIANNI, CHAIRMAN bmastroianni@northstoningtonct.gov

JULIET HODGE, PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT & ZONING OFFICIAL jhodge@northstoningtonct.gov

NORTH STONINGTON COMMUNITY GRANGE #138

The Grange meets on the second and fourth Fridays at 8:00 pm with certain exceptions. Each meeting we discuss the needs of our community, the needs of our grounds and upkeep and what we can do to help, and then we have a program; sometimes internally created, sometimes with guest speakers of varying interests.

Our winter schedule is slower, with a lot of fun to ease the “winter blues”. In January our Agriculture and Conservation Committee presented a program on natural food facts. February’s meeting was “Grange Olympics”, culminating with a rousing game of “ice hockey” with pool noodles as the hockey sticks...you should have been there! With two meetings in March, the first meeting was about the Grange itself, and our second meeting was the State Lecturer’s contest entry

Our upcoming schedule has April 13th as a surprise, and April 27th we’ll honor our long-term members and present our Community Citizen Award. May 11th will be announced later, and our Memorial program is on May 25th. June 8th is our election of officers for the New Year, with June 22nd being our Annual Pot-luck Picnic and games. All meetings are at 8:00pm except the picnic, which begins at 6:30.

Come have some fun with us! **ALL are welcome to come.**

SUE PIANKA, PROGRAM DIRECTOR 860-599-4528

TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

Hello, everyone. I am very happy to be in North Stonington, serving as your new Town Clerk. As I am writing this article, a winter storm is on the way, but the spring season is just around the corner! The spring season brings warm sunshine, beautiful flowers, and the beginning of fishing season. The Town Clerk's Office is here to sell any sporting licenses that you need, as well as providing Angler's, Hunting and Trapping, and Boater's Guides for up-to-date information. Sporting licenses can also be purchased online at www.ct.gov/deep.

The spring season also brings an increase in marriage licenses. If you plan on being married in North Stonington, a marriage license must be obtained from the Town Clerk's Office.

As a reminder, dog licensing for the new dog licensing year will begin on June 1st. A Rabies Clinic is being held in June, at which time the office will also be providing dog licenses for dogs belonging to North Stonington residents. I am also a Notary Public, so if you need notarial services, please come and see me.

The Town Clerk's Office is open on Monday through Friday from 8:00am until 4:00pm, except on legal holidays. I can be reached at (860) 535-2877 Ext. 21 and at townclerk@northstoningtonct.gov.

ANTOINETTE PANCARO, CMC, CCTC

TOWN CLERK

AVALONIA LAND CONSERVANCY

Celebrating 50 years of preserving natural habitats in Southeastern Connecticut, by acquiring and protecting lands and by communicating the value of these irreplaceable resources.

On Saturday June 2nd, we are offering a family-oriented nature hike through Babcock Ridge and Donald R. Henne Memorial Preserves as part of Connecticut Trails Day.



Award -winning photo by Bruce Fellman

This approximately two-plus mile hike starts with a trek through the rugged valleys and slopes of Babcock Ridge, where we'll look for vernal pools, pileated woodpeckers, glacier-carved hillsides, wildflowers, and even tree-climbing black rat snakes. We'll follow with a gentler walk through the Henne Preserve and its beaver-created wetlands, home to nesting great blue herons, acrobatic tree swallows, all sorts of ducks and geese, many colorful warblers and other songbirds, and maybe even osprey.

Meet leader and veteran naturalist Bruce Fellman at 10:00am, at 113 Babcock Road. The parking area is on the north side of the road at the well-marked trailhead for Babcock Ridge. The trailhead for the Henne walk is nearby. Rain date is June 3rd, 10:30am. For more information, visit CTFPA's website at www.ctwoodlands.org; pre-registration is recommended. Contact Bruce at 860-599-4867.

www.ctwoodlands.org; pre-registration is recommended. Contact Bruce at 860-599-4867.

There are five other trailed parcels in North Stonington, and you can download trail maps from Avalonia's website at www.avalonialandconservancy.org. You'll also find information on membership and the interactive Hike & Seek scavenger hunt activity; look for other events during our 50th anniversary year.



NORTH STONINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

North Stonington Elementary School continues to provide enrichment opportunities for our students. On March 1st, the seventh annual Family Science Night was held with the theme, *Science in the USA*. Hundreds of students and their families had fun with science that evening! The entire school community is so grateful to Jen Raggon for organizing and planning the annual event.

Thank you to the many parents/guardians who attended the Parent-Teacher Conferences. Conferences are such a valuable time to share student progress and plan as a team with both parents and the teacher to support a child's academic and social growth. If you were unable to meet with your child's teacher and would like to set up a conference, please call the school at 860-535-2805.

On March 23rd and 24th, the North Stonington Elementary School Drama Club danced and sang their way through an amazing production of *The Little Mermaid, Jr*. We are so proud of our talented students and we thank our producer and director, Mrs. Gonzalez, as well as Mrs. Thompson, Mr. Noonan, and the many, many parents for their support!



**Photo by
Jessica Deary**

On April 4th, kindergarten registration will take place from 1:30 – 3:00 and again at 5:00 – 7:00 P.M. Please call the school (860-535-2805) for more information if you have a child who will turn 5 years old on or before January 1, 2019.

With the start of the building project, there have been many changes that have taken place especially with parking at the elementary school as well as parent drop-off and parent pick-up. We will be making some changes in scheduling events due to availability of parking. We thank all NSES community members for your patience during this time.

VERONICA WILKISON, PRINCIPAL

NORTH STONINGTON SENIOR CENTER

The Senior Center, located behind Holly Green, is open Monday through Friday, 9:30am-2:00pm. It offers many programs and activities. Lunches are available the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Wednesdays. Reservations must be made by the Friday prior to lunch. The Golden Agers meet on the first Wednesday of the month at 12:30, with an RN available from 11:30 to 12:30 to take blood pressures. Chair Yoga, led by Pam Lewis, is held on Thursdays from 10-11am. These classes include meditation methods and are relaxing. Registration is not required. Come and join us!

Teresa Pensis, Center Director and Agent for the Elderly, is available to help with fuel, food and rides. Call 860-535-8188 for an appointment.

NORTH STONINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

We have developed a slogan at North Stonington Public Schools: **Please Excuse Our Appearance While We Are Under Construction.** The School Modernization Project is in full swing and we are all grateful for the progress that is being made. You should know that the gymnasium is closed and will not reopen again until it is fully renovated and the new middle/high school is ready to be occupied. That will take place at the beginning of March, 2019. Central Administration has been relocated temporarily to a Wheeler Middle School classroom. Our new location includes, in addition to the Superintendent, the Administrative Assistant, the Bookkeeper and the Business Manager. When you need to visit our office, you will have to arrive at the Wheeler main entrance and be processed at the main office. All of our phone numbers and extensions remain the same.

In addition to a very busy spring with the building project, the administration has submitted its requested budget to the Board of Education. The BOE is presently deliberating and doing their due diligence. It will then go through the appropriate channels.

It seems that we are in a winter that hasn't been very kind and doesn't want to end. By law, the graduation date cannot be set by the BOE until April. Barring anymore days missed for inclement weather, we anticipate it to be on Thursday, June 21st. We hope you will join us on that date on the Wheeler Library lawn.

PETER NERO, SUPERINTENDENT

WHEELER LIBRARY

Spring means the Seed Lending Library is full of great vegetable and flower seed packets for you to “borrow”. Take a look upstairs next time you visit.

Upcoming programs to educate and entertain include a documentary on dairy farming, **Forgotten Farms**, on April 7th; a visit from Riverside Reptiles on April 18th; monthly talks with area historians; Gentle Yoga & Meditation for adults beginning in late April (fee); container gardening on May 19th; and a visit from bestselling author Jennifer Egan ([Manhattan Beach](#)) on June 19th. Egan's 2011 novel, [A Visit from the Goon Squad](#) won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction.

We are working hard, along with our generous homeowners, on the June 2nd Blooms & Barns Garden Tour to benefit the library. About a dozen of North Stonington's loveliest properties will be featured and a locally sourced luncheon at one of the sites will be available for advance purchase. A country market will be held on the library lawn, featuring our heirloom tomato plants and much more. The library's full event calendar and details about the Blooms & Barns Garden Tour can be found at wheelerlibrary.org.

Mark your calendar for Monday, June 25th, the date when summer reading and library fun begins!

AMY KENNEDY

860-535-0383



PAWCATUCK NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

Hunger Pains Not Easily Forgotten . . .

Did you know that the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center provides weekend food to children who receive free or reduced lunches? North Stonington families are invited to pick up food at the PNC on each Friday throughout the year. Each child is given 40 pounds of food (protein, fresh fruit, cereal, milk, and snacks). The PNC shops for meat or fish each week and plans the menu around that product. As you can imagine, shoppers often look into our shopping carts with curiosity when they see one person checking out with a shopping cart filled with an item like hotdogs!

On one particular day when I was shopping, I stood at the checkout line chatting with another shopper. I explained that the Weekender Backpack Program is for children who receive free/reduced lunches at school, but might need food for the weekend as well. He said, "I am so happy that kids today have a program like that. When I was growing up, my brother and I would go to school without breakfast, then we would go without lunch, and we would be so hungry at supper time."

As we spoke further, I learned that his family had struggled with food insecurity, even though his father had been employed at the time. What struck me most during our conversation was the vividness of his memories as he spoke. Memories of hunger pain do not fade easily.

Unfortunately, his story remains the reality for many kids today. So many people who come to the PNC for help are working, underemployed or have recently faced an unexpected illness or loss that has created a need for assistance. The Weekender Backpack Program is just one of many PNC programs that allow those who have enough to help those who need a little help from their friends. If you would like to be a part of the Weekender Backpack Program, would like to donate or volunteer please contact the PNC at 860-599-3285 or susan@thepnc.org.

SUSAN SEDENSKY, J.D., EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR 860-599-3285



NORTH STONINGTON AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION

With spring right around the corner, we at North Stonington Ambulance plan on being incredibly busy and we want YOU involved. May 19th- 25th is National EMS week; during this time we will be hosting multiple events for everyone in the community. We are pulling out all the stops to show the community what we are made of. We will be holding a mock version of a motor vehicle collision to show how dangerous drunk driving can be and what the consequences could be. We will have stuffed animal boo-boo clinics, ambulance tours, and a stop the bleed class. Stop the Bleed campaign was launched by the White House to teach non-emergency personnel how to help someone with a major bleed before emergency personnel arrives. If that's not enough excitement for you, we will be having a mass casualty incident training. During this training, we need you to come out and play the part of a victim. We will have make-up artists on site to help you get into character. If you can volunteer your time, or would like more information about the events, visit NSambulance.org or email Ashley.Magnant@nsambulance.org.

National EMS Week Schedule of Events

Saturday May 19th, Mass Casualty Incident Drill **Monday May 21st**, Education Day
Tuesday May 22nd, Safety Day **Wednesday May 23rd**, EMS for Children Day
Thursday May 24th, Save- A- Life Day **Friday May 25th**, EMS Recognition Day

ASHLEY MAGNANT SECRETARY

NORTH STONINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society has had very successful concerts under the direction of, and performed by, Aymeric Dupré la Tour on our two antique pianos. The Parlor Concert Series continues June 10th at 4:30pm, with Aymeric and a guest artist on the federal era Astor piano in the Wheeler Library. For tickets, contact Laurie at 860-245-5322.

The Society will host two interesting talks at Wheeler Library; On April 25th, James Wermuth will speak to us about the fascinating figure Dr. John Clark who, with Roger Williams, cofounded Rhode Island. On May 23rd, Robert Geake will be speaking on American militia and its effects on our early history.

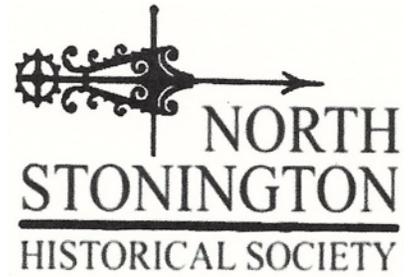
Searching for something? The A. Morgan Stewart Memorial Library, housed in the homestead, is a treasure trove of genealogical and other materials. It is open Tuesdays, from 2-4pm, or by appointment.

Our annual meeting and pot luck supper is on June 4th, at 6:30pm at the Stephen Main Homestead, in the center of the Village. Of course all are welcome. For more information on the Society, membership, or the library, visit nostonhistoricalsociety.homestead.com.

FRANK EPPINGER

PRESIDENT

epping@aol.com



NORTH STONINGTON EDUCATION FOUNDATION

The North Stonington Education Foundation continues to raise money to redistribute in grants, primarily but not exclusively, to teachers that help North Stonington students. More than \$160,000 has been so raised and granted in the eleven-year history of the NSEF, to include a jogging trail behind the elementary school, a climbing wall at the gymnasium and bringing a famous Australian artist to the schools to advise and teach art students.

The NSEF held its largest annual Trivia Contest ever at the Stonington VFW hall on February 2nd with 17 tables of contestants present. It was a fun-filled evening, featuring a very close contest between the 5-time winner and defending champions - the "Italian Stallions" and (even sitting next to them!) the "PyeongChang Gang". The contest was not settled until the 10th and last round of 10 questions, when the Italian Stallions were defeated by one question!



The next major NSEF event is the annual Memorial Day "Runners and Walkers in Support of Education" road race on Saturday, May 26th at the North Stonington Grange. Check-in is at 8:30am, with the fitness walk kicking off at 9:45 and the runners at 10:00. Participants can register on-line at eventbrite.com or receive more information from the race coordinator, Marc Tardiff, at tardiffm@northstonington.k12.ct.us.

JAMES H. PATTON, JR.

860-535-2617

JHPATTON@CONCENTRIC.NET

NORTH STONINGTON GARDEN CLUB

Mark your calendar! The North Stonington Garden Club's Annual Plant Sale will be held on Saturday, May 12, 2018, from 9 am to 1 pm at the North Stonington Elementary School. This event takes place rain or shine. The sale features exceptional perennials, lovingly potted from members' gardens, as well as annuals, herbs, vegetables and hanging baskets from reputable local dealers. All are sold at very reasonable prices. Additionally, there will be a selection of creative Mother's Day gifts, a rummage sale, and a variety of garden-related items.

Master Gardeners will be on hand to answer your gardening questions and provide free soil testing, so be sure to bring a sample from your garden. Bring your own wagon and fill it up with garden delights. If you need to refuel, members of the North Stonington Congregational Church will be there, selling sandwiches, snacks, and their famous baked goods.

Not only is this one of our biggest community events, attracting customers from southeastern Connecticut and adjacent Rhode Island, it is also a major fundraiser for the club, providing funds to support civic plantings, donations to community organizations, and an annual scholarship.

The North Stonington Garden Club was founded in 1939 and is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. We welcome new members from North Stonington and adjacent towns.

Visit our web site at www.nsgardenclub.org and like us on FACEBOOK/[northstoningtongardenclubplantsale](https://www.facebook.com/northstoningtongardenclubplantsale).

JANICE PARKER, PRESIDENT

NORTH STONINGTON GARDEN CLUB

Plant Sale

Saturday, May 12 9:00 – 1:00
North Stonington Elementary School (Rt. 2)
*Fantastic Bargains on Perennials, Annuals, Veggies, Tomatoes,
Herbs, Mother's Day Gifts, and a Great Rummage Table*

✿•✿

URI Master Gardeners will be available to answer your gardening questions and URI Soil Testers will be on site to test your soil's texture and pH. See our website:
www.nsgardenclub.org for details.

✿•✿

Please Note: Cash or Checks Only!



**BRING YOUR OWN WAGON
TO SNAG ALL THE BEST BARGAINS!**

NORTH STONINGTON LIONS CLUB

The North Stonington Lions Club annual Town Solicitation is now underway. Letters have been sent out and should be arriving in your mailbox very soon. Your contributions help us to help others. Every contribution is most appreciated and we sincerely thank each and every one of you for your continued support. If you would like to send a donation, you can mail it to North Stonington Lions Club, P.O. Box 100, North Stonington, CT 06359. Checks can be made payable to: North Stonington Lions Charities. We are a 501(c)3 organization.

On Saturday, April 7th at 10:30am we will be sponsoring a community event, along with AARP and hosted by Wheeler Library. The topic is "What I Need to Know About My Electric Choices". You must register for this event at <https://aarp.cvent.com/d/Otgh6w/> or dial toll free at 1-877-926-8300. Please bring your Electric Bill!

Our Annual Memorial Day Parade through the village will be on Monday, May 28th and we're hoping for a dry, sunny day!

Interested in becoming a Lion? See what great things Lions Clubs are doing at: www.lionsclubs.org or contact us by phone, email or on Facebook at [facebook.com/NorthStoningtonLionsClub](https://www.facebook.com/NorthStoningtonLionsClub).

DENISE MURPHY CLUB PRESIDENT

860-625-7363

northstoningtonlions@gmail.com

WHEELER HIGH SCHOOL/MIDDLE SCHOOL

We are building it! On behalf of the staff and students of Wheeler, we would like to extend our sincere thanks for supporting such an important movement. We have some phenomenal students at Wheeler and they certainly deserve this upgrade to their facility! First, Rylin Fowler and the Eastern CT Eagles won the State Championship



DIHI in hockey! Our MS Cheerleaders also won first place in their cheerleading competition as well as picked up the Sportsmanship Award! Our MS girls' basketball team won their divisional championship! Hannah Gomes and Caitlyn Tillinghast were selected for the CAS (CT Association of Schools) Arts Award while Emma Morgan and Ryan Condon were selected as this year's CAS Scholar Athletes! Caleb Bogue, a Wheeler senior, has also been selected as our first student to enter a program at the Westerly

Education Center on a full scholarship! Caleb will specialize in sheet metal training where he will finish and potentially be able to interview for a position at Electric Boat.

As we adjust to the building project renovations, please understand that the gym and lot across the street are both officially closed. We appreciate everyone's flexibility over the course of the next year as this project continues to progress.

KRISTEN ST. GERMAIN, PRINCIPAL



THE ROTARY CLUB OF THE STONINGTONS

The Rotary Club of the Stoningtons comprises Stonington, North Stonington, and Pawcatuck. Rotary is a global network of 1.2 million neighbors, friends, leaders, and problem-solvers who see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change – across the globe, in our communities and in ourselves.

The 26th annual Rotary Club of the Stoningtons golf tournament will take place in May, to be held at the Fishers Island Club. This is the club's only fund raising function, to support the many local agencies needing grant assistance and to establish and continue to support international projects. See our web site, www.therotaryclubofthestoningtons.com, for more information. If you would like to help us in our mission by donating door prize gifts for the golf tournament, or sponsoring a golf course hole with signage on the course and in our booklet, please contact us via the web site.

The club is also a sponsor of the Fourth Annual Chikumbuso 10k/5K Challenge, which takes place on Saturday April 21st. All finishers receive African beaded necklaces. The first 100 entries will receive African cloth wrap. This is a charity race and all proceeds are to benefit the non-profit Chikumbuso Women and Orphans Project in Zambia. Tax-deductible donations are greatly appreciated.

For a full list of agencies and projects that this club supports, go to the web site. We look forward to questions about our club, about Rotary in general, and the many projects we support.

ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

ELDERLY HOMEOWNER'S PROGRAM



Elderly homeowners who were 65 years old or older on January 1, 2018 and who had income under \$43,000 for a married couple or \$35,300 for a single person can apply for the **Elderly Homeowner's Program**. Disabled homeowners also can apply if they are on the disability program. The same income limits apply. The benefit depends on your income and it ranges from \$150 to \$1,250 off your town property taxes. This is a State of Connecticut program.

The paperwork required to file includes your federal income tax return that you filed with the Internal Revenue Service, plus your social security 1099 form. If you do not need to file with the IRS, then copies of your 1099's for interest, dividends and all other income including social security is required. This is based on 2017 earnings. Applications are accepted until May 15, 2018.

Veterans can receive an increase in benefits if they qualify for the **Elderly Homeowner's Program**. The deadline for filing is October 1, 2018.

RENTER'S PROGRAM

Renters with a social security disability, or who are 65 years old can apply for the **Renter's Program** between April 1, 2018 and October 1, 2018. Paperwork includes the same income as the elderly program, plus rent receipts, electric bills and heating bills for the year 2017.

MOTOR VEHICLE TAXES

Proration on your motor vehicle taxes is available if you sold a motor vehicle and returned the license plate. To apply for a credit, you must show a plate receipt that indicates the vehicle was sold. The credit equals an 8.33% reduction for every month from when you sold the vehicle to September 2018. As an example, if you sold your vehicle in March 2018, you are entitled to a 50% reduction in your tax bill.

DARRYL L. DEL GROSSO, CCMA II ASSESSOR 860-535-2877 ext. 23 or 24

NORTH STONINGTON CITIZENS LAND ALLIANCE

Congratulations to Avalonia Land Conservancy for this being its 50th Anniversary! We remember well its adventurous beginnings as The Mashantucket Land Trust for both North Stonington and Stonington and watching it expand by choice into a regional mega-group throughout Southeastern Connecticut. Continued good fortune!

Consider walking one or both of Land Alliance's preserves that have paths: Fowler-Grindstone Preserve, on Fowler Road, and Samuel Cote Preserve, on Clarks Falls Road; two very different places and each special. **Samuel Cote Preserve is listed within the 2018 CT Trails Day Program, with a guided walk Sunday June 3rd at 1:00pm.** Dogs on leashes are permitted; a lovely experience, mark it down and try to come!

Land Alliance continues its lake and pond tri-season monitoring with URI's Watershed Watch. As of this date, Joe Spano will be testing Wyassup Lake and Bill Hixson, Blue Lake. Yearly results are listed on our website; www.landalliance.org.

We have put the coffee pot on, come on over. Give a call; let's have a warm-hearted talk about issues, ideas, and concerns. 860-599-5517 or email landallianceinc@gmail.com.

MADLINE JEFFREY

NORTH STONINGTON VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY, INC.

With the passing of the three recent winter storms, members of the Fire Company have responded to over 45 emergency incidents related to the weather as of this writing. With a forth storm on the horizon, those numbers will likely increase. Please remember that as volunteers, emergency responders leave the safety and warmth of their homes and families to assist other residents in their time of need, often traveling and working in less than safe conditions.

While we can't stress enough the importance of having working battery operated smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) detectors, it becomes even more critical during those times when alternate sources of heat and electricity are being used. A poorly placed generator can cause carbon monoxide to enter your dwelling. Since CO is a colorless and odorless gas, a working CO detector is your only defense from a potential tragedy. We have also seen incidents where generators were placed too close to a structure, causing a fire to occur. A fire starting on the outside of a structure can gain significant headway before enough smoke is generated inside to activate a smoke detector. If a detector activates, immediately exit the structure and call 9-1-1 from a safe location. Lastly, do not use candles for lighting – they can be an accident waiting to happen. Battery operated lighting is safer.

We currently have four members attending the Firefighter 1 state certification course. We were fortunate to be the host for this class, with almost twenty others attending from various surrounding departments.

As a bedroom community, we continue to see the need for volunteers who are available to respond to emergencies during day-time hours to augment our current numbers. Training will be provided for you to become proficient in the various tasks required. If interested, please call the fire station at 860-535-0937 and leave a message.



CHARLES STEINHART V, CHIEF

KYLE BERGEL, PRESIDENT

ANIMAL CONTROL

Hi Everyone! I hope everyone survived the colder months. It was a pretty quiet winter with Animal Control.

We will be having our Annual Rabies Clinic in the beginning of June; the date will be announced soon, so please watch for fliers to go up and we will post to our Facebook page with the details. Also a reminder that June is Dog License month - all dogs over the age of 6 months will need to be licensed with the town. We would like everyone to know that the Hewitt Farm is a great place to visit and dogs are welcome when they are with a responsible owner. We ask that dogs are kept under control at all times. Please bring a leash or other device to ensure you are able to manage your pet in all situations. Help us make the farm safe and enjoyable for all visitors.

With the warmer weather, there will be more wildlife out and about so please don't feed or handle wild animals. If we can help in any way, please call us at 860 287-2197

KARCHER DESHEFY

ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER



SPRING EVENTS

April

7	SATURDAY	10:30 am	Wheeler Library	What I Need to Know About My Electric Choices - Register in Advance	Page 11
7	SATURDAY	7 pm	Wheeler Library	<i>Forgotten Farms: A Documentary on Challenges Dairy Farmers Face</i>	Page 11
10	TUESDAY	6 pm	NS Firehouse	NS Fair's Annual Pot Luck Dinner & Meeting - All Are Welcome	Page 7
18	WEDNESDAY	11 am	Wheeler Library	Riverside Reptiles (And Amphibians!) Special Vacation Event	Page 11
21	SATURDAY	9:30 am	NS Grange	4 th Annual Chikumbuso 10k/5k Challenge - Register online at www.chikumbuso.com	Page 15
25	WEDNESDAY	8:45 am	Wheeler Library	Adult Gentle Yoga and Meditation 6 Week Session for All Levels (Fee)	Page 11
25	WEDNESDAY	7 pm	Wheeler Library	Historian John Wermuth: Life & Times of John Clark, M.D., Co-Founder of RI	Page 13
27	FRIDAY	7 pm	Wheeler Library	Sam Ducharme on Thru-Hiking the Appalachian Trail	Page 11

May

10	THURSDAY	6-7:30 pm	NS Elementary School	NS Elementary School Art Show	Page 10
12	SATURDAY	9 am-1 pm	NS Elementary School	NS Garden Club Annual Plant Sale	Page 14
19	SATURDAY	10:30 am	Wheeler Library	Container Garden with a Twist	Page 11
19	SATURDAY	10 am-12 pm	Town Garage	NS Ambulance: Mass-Casualty Incident Drill - Come Play the Part of aVictim Cook-Out to Follow	Page 12
23	WEDNESDAY	7 pm	Wheeler Library	Historian Robert Geake: American Militias	Page 13
26	SATURDAY	8:30 am	NS Fairgrounds	NSEF Annual Road Race	Page 13
28	MONDAY	10 am	NS Village	Annual Memorial Day Parade	Page 14

SPRING EVENTS



June

2	SATURDAY	10 am	Babcock Road	CT Trails Day: Avalonia Walk at the Babcock Ridge Preserve (Rain date June 3, 10:30 am)	Page 9
2	SATURDAY	9 am- 4 pm	Wheeler Library	Blooms & Barns Garden Tour and Country Market	Page 11
3	SUNDAY	1 pm	Clarks Falls Road	CT Trails Day: NS Citizens Land Alliance Walk at the Samuel Cote Preserve	Page 16
4	MONDAY	6:30 pm	NS Historical Society Stephen Main Homestead	Annual Meeting and Potluck Dinner	Page 13
9	SATURDAY	12-4 pm	Hewitt Farm	Party With The Parties: A Voter Turnout Event Rain Date 6/10	Page 19
10	SUNDAY	4:30 pm	Wheeler Library	NS Historical Society; A Piano Concert by Aymeric Dupré La Tour	Page 13
19	TUESDAY	6 pm	Wheeler Library	Visit from Best-Selling Author Jennifer Egan, Pulitzer Prize Winner	Page 11
22	FRIDAY	6:30 pm	NS Grange	Annual Pot Luck Picnic & Games	Page 8

PARTY WITH THE PARTIES

A Voter-Turnout Event: Save the date of June 9th from 12-4pm for some FREE family fun!

The Democratic and Republican Town Committees and Unaffiliated voters have joined hands to plan a fun family picnic and townwide party at Hewitt Farm.

We are planning live music, hay rides, kayak and canoe paddling, a silent auction for adults, games and races for kids, and lunch consisting of hotdogs, chips and soda for all. We ask that you bring a baked good to share and we would love it if you would bring some of your favorite family recipes to be included in a NoSto Cookbook! There will be a recipe box for you to place them in at the baked goods table. Although there is no charge, we hope you will voluntarily donate to a "Pavilion Fund" to raise money for us to build a shelter at the Farm for community use. Our Fire Department and State Troopers will also be present to allow us to see their equipment and have our children meet those who protect us.

Many candidates running for office in the fall will be present for us to meet and greet. Elections and referendums have generally shown a low percentage in voting; we are asking attendees to sign a pledge to vote in all coming elections and referendums and ask you to call 5 neighbors to do the same. Rain date is Sunday, June 10th, same time.

What better way to spend a Saturday afternoon, right here in town with friends and neighbors!

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

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

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



**A Garden Tour
to benefit Wheeler Library
Saturday, June 2nd, 2018
9am to 4pm**

- ☞ Enjoy a day exploring North Stonington on this tour of several beautiful and unique gardens as well as properties with stunning barns and landscapes;
- ☞ Locally-sourced luncheon at one of the properties.
- ☞ Country Market on the library lawn featuring local goods, our famous heirloom tomato plants, perennials, soil testing and more;

Sponsorship and ticket information is available at the Library or online at wheelerlibrary.org. Tour tickets are \$25/\$30 day of event. Luncheon is available for \$15 (advance sales only). Event proceeds benefit Wheeler Library.

This Spring North Stonington Quarterly is chock-full of great updates about all that is going on in our Town. The calendar of events is amazing, too!

Many thanks to our Town's boards, commissions, non-profit organizations and the Wheeler High School Print Shop for making this publication possible.

Nita Kincaid & Lisa Mazzella, NSQ Editors