

# THE NORTH STONINGTON QUARTERLY

## WINTER 2018

### BOARD OF SELECTMEN

As we enter the New Year, we recognize that 2017 was a very exciting time for North Stonington! Our town is in the midst of the two largest infrastructure improvements the town has seen: construction of a new Center for Emergency Services, which will house our Ambulance and Fire teams, and a new Middle/High School and completely renovated Elementary School. North Stonington has been in need of these improvements for many years and low interest rates, combined with nearly zero town debt, made this a great time to make these improvements.



**Bob Carlson, Mark Donahue, Nick Mullane  
Mike Urgo, Shawn Murphy, Nita Kincaid**

A great many things were accomplished in 2017. We were able to paint Old Town Hall and complete some renovations inside the New Town Hall building. We built a storage shed for some of our large equipment at the Highway Garage and the highway garage loader was refurbished and overhauled. Major drainage repair work was done, replacing rotten metal pipes with concrete pipes on all of Northwest Corner Rd and two on Wyassup Rd. Road repairs have been completed on Boombridge Rd, Grindstone Hill Rd, Fowler Rd, Stillman Rd, Stillman Rd Ext. and Kingswood/Meadow Wood developments; Anna Farm East had new drainage and widening of the road.

During 2017 North Stonington also hired a new building official. We have relocated his office so he now works side-by-side with our planner to insure a smooth process for incoming applications. We have joined Ledge Light Health District and no longer have an in-house sanitarian. We are excited about the ability to respond quickly now to applications and inspections with our new partners.

We also updated our website for a more user-friendly feel. You may see we are becoming more active using our "News and Announcements" where we email information, agendas, and minutes along with other communication. Please visit our website at [www.northstoningtonct.gov](http://www.northstoningtonct.gov) to sign up for these. You also can follow us on our new social media sites.

Looking toward the future, there are great things ahead. 2018 will see our Emergency Services complex open, and our schools begin their extensive renovations. We have a solar initiative, which is going in next to I95 exit 92, where you will see large solar arrays going in to help power the area with clean energy. We will be looking at ways to help create more efficiencies and government transparency with the help of new software, which we hope to implement in early 2018. We are working to come up with solutions to encourage more development in line with our plan of conservation and development along the route 2/95 corridor and by Foxwoods. 2017 saw 54,802 square feet of re-purposed commercial/industrial space, 29,324 square feet of new commercial/industrial construction, and 62,382 square feet of new residential construction. We are so pleased to have recently attracted great organizations, including Quinlan Enterprises, Faria Beede Instruments, Jovial Foods, Farmtrue and Quality Propane, among others that have chosen to call North Stonington home!

Most importantly, we are thrilled with the people who continue to volunteer and work hard in all capacities in the community. When driving into town, you see our sign "We Appreciate our Volunteers". This is very true and, furthermore, in our small community our volunteers are essential to running our town. Thank you to all.

MIKE URGO, FIRST SELECTMAN 860-535-2877 EXT10 [SELECTMEN@NORTHSTONINGTONCT.GOV](mailto:SELECTMEN@NORTHSTONINGTONCT.GOV)

## BOARD OF FINANCE

The North Stonington Town budget is represented by the General Government and Board of Education. Both were recently passed, with the latter put to a second referendum with a zero percent increase for the current fiscal year. With the budgets passed, the Board of Finance set the mil rate at 28 for 2017-2018 at a Special Meeting on December 18, 2017.

It is worthy to note that we are at the end of the calendar year but halfway through the 2017-2018 fiscal year. January starts the budget preparation for the next fiscal year. During the process, it is anticipated the Town will receive both accurate and timely information from the State of Connecticut, precluding delays experienced this past year and facilitating planning not burdened by uncertainty.

In the meantime, it is important to report that the Town's annual audit report for 2016-2017 was exemplary. There were a multiple of positive comments attributed to our responsible execution of the budgets and widening stability of the Town's fiscal profile.

In November, we welcomed new members to the Board of Finance to include Mike Anderson, Paul Simonds, Candis Banks (alternate) and Dan Spring. Officers of the Board are Dan Spring, Chairman, Paul Simonds, Vice Chairman, and Carolyn Howell, Secretary. We thank those leaving the Board for their service and we appreciate those continuing to serve their terms.

We welcome the public to the Board of Finance meetings; dates are posted on the Town's Website, Wednesday evenings at 7:00pm at the New Town Hall.

DAN SPRING, CHAIRMAN

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## PLANNING AND ZONING OFFICIAL/ LAND USE OFFICE

After many lively public hearings this fall, the Commission voted to rezone the western end of Route 2 to Resort Commercial. The town hopes to attract luxury accommodations and amenities that promote the enjoyment of the area's natural features and serve as a transition between Foxwoods and the existing residential properties. The new regulations can be found on the Town website.

This year marks the half-way point in our 10-year Plan of Conservation and Development. Keep an eye out for invitations to participate in a new round of neighborhood meetings to discuss our progress with implementation and to discuss any new issues that need attention in the various neighborhoods. The Chairmen of our primary Boards and Commissions will continue to meet each quarter to ensure greater communication and coordination of efforts with respect to furthering town goals.



The Building Official has officially moved to the Land Use office. The new hours are Mon., Wed. and Fri. 1pm – 6pm. Inspections will be scheduled for the beginning of the shift and the Building Official will be available to the public between 3:30 and 5:30 (approximately). Applications must now be submitted in person to the Land Use Office during normal Town Hall hours.

We would like to welcome Lisa Wood and Connie Berardi to the Planning and Zoning Commission and look forward to working together in the coming years.

JULIET HODGE

PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT & ZONING OFFICIAL

[jhodge@northstoningtonct.gov](mailto:jhodge@northstoningtonct.gov)



## CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The 2013 POCD identified scores of ideas, projects, and proposals for enhancing and beautifying our town. One such idea was the renovation of the Rte. 49/184 intersection. Not wanting an idea to just sit undone, your Conservation Commissioners contacted CT-DOT asking for their approval to “redo” three of the four corners of state owned property. Following many rejections, they approved only the Northwest corner.

After nine months of negotiations, the work began in September and was completed 5 weeks later. None of this could have happened without a community effort. We wish to acknowledge Sergio Cherenzia for providing a survey and scaled plot plan without charge; Chelsea-Groton Foundation and North Stonington Citizen Land Alliance for substantial donations; Mike Christie, owner of Christie Landscaping, for providing the loam and seed at cost, and donations from several individuals: Paul Kowak, John WIELLETTE, Bob Fleury, Robin Roohr, Nita Kincaid, Bing Bartick, Mary Ann Ricker, Van Brown, Marilyn Mackay, Nick Mullane, Betty Perkowski, Sue Sutherland, Ledyard Lewis, and Dawn Bock. Public Works supported us by providing wood chips and Don Hill planted the reflectors.



The behind the scenes design, planning, plant research, shoveling, raking and planting was provided by your volunteer commissioners on Conservation, past and present: Bob Fleury, Steve Colgan, Mike Charnetski, Arnie Vlieks, Doug Farrand, Bob Degoursey, Jason Mancini and Bill Ricker. This was a true community effort with not one additional penny asked from town funds.

Other CC initiatives include the development of an educational interactive map and brochures of all the private and public hiking trails in town, 100 Douglas Fir trees given to all children visiting our booth at NoStoFest, recommendations to our BOS to support a “No Fracking” or dumping ordinance, and publishing the 5<sup>th</sup> annual 2018 North Stonington Community Calendar – also produced at no cost to the town, but available for you to purchase at the Wheeler Library.

BILL RICKER, CHAIRMAN

[WILLIAMRICKER@COMCAST.NET](mailto:WILLIAMRICKER@COMCAST.NET)

860-535-2426

## TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

Happy New Year! Just a little reminder to all of the local hunters: 2018 Hunting Licenses and permits are available in the Town Clerk's Office and also on line at [www.ct.gov/deep](http://www.ct.gov/deep). The Town Committees will be holding their Caucus in the month of January 2018 so, if you are interested in joining a political party, contact Republican Committee Chairman Brett Mastroianni ([brett@pawncnct.com](mailto:brett@pawncnct.com)) or Democrat Town Committee Chairman Mark Donahue ([donahuems@comcast.net](mailto:donahuems@comcast.net)).

This is my last newsletter. I have retired as the Town Clerk, a position that I have held for the last 17 years. Thank you all for the great memories; I'm sure we will meet again in our great little Town! My family and I would like to wish you all a safe and healthy New Year!

NORMA J. HOLLIDAY, RETIRED TOWN CLERK

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## EMERGENCY SERVICES BUILDING COMMITTEE

Within the reporting period of September 1 – December 1, 2017, site preparation and structural concrete pours have been completed to the Specifications, Drawings and Approvals from Town and State agencies.

**Enterprise Builders**, Inc from Newington, CT, along with qualified subcontractors, have developed the necessary Planning, Construction Compliance and Budgetary (cost to complete) Status Reporting which is now under the supervision of **CREC of Hartford**, a company that specializes in Project Management and 'Clerk of the Works' Construction services.

The Project Manager is Mr. Michael Faenza in the employ of CREC. Mike has the responsibility of 'Clerk of the Works' and develops the Field Reports and verified budget status that is available with imbedded photographic evidence at the Town of North Stonington Web Site.



### Subcontractors working on site as of 12/8/17:

- Suchocki & Son Inc. - Sitework
- Xenelis Construction - Pre-Engineered Building
- East Coast Wall System - Masonry
- MCM Acoustics LLC - Framing & Drywall

### Key Activities of the week ending 12/8/2017 included:

- Erection of Steel for Pre-Engineered Building - In Progress
- Installation of Roof Liner - In Progress
- Installation of sheathing for Masonry Veneer Walls, including Weather Barrier - Complete
- Installation of Trim for Masonry Veneer Walls -Complete
- Site Grading - In Progress

The public is invited to review the website for detailed information on the project but should be aware that for the duration of this project, unauthorized entry onto the site is prohibited by contractual agreement. Please see individual photos and locations within the report for specific detail of activities performed.

Go to: [www.northstoningtonct.gov/center-emergency-services-building-committee](http://www.northstoningtonct.gov/center-emergency-services-building-committee).

PAUL KOWACK PE, COMMITTEE MEMBER

[pkowack30@comcast.net](mailto:pkowack30@comcast.net)

860-235-6771



## PAWCATUCK NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

### North Stonington Residents – Helping Neighbors in Need

The motto of the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center (PNC) is “neighbors helping neighbors”. North Stonington residents live that motto by supporting the PNC through volunteering, holding food drives and making monetary donations. The PNC is unique because it houses both a senior center and a social service agency. Both serve people in North Stonington, Stonington and Westerly.

North Stonington residents are welcome to participate in “traditional” senior center classes like painting, creative writing, Zumba, yoga, board games, cards, lunches, trips, Wii Bowling, parties, speakers, and musical entertainment. Non-seniors enjoy the Veteran’s Coffee Hour, Community Breakfasts and Youth Orchestra.

Other North Stonington residents like Monica Eppinger, pictured here, choose to volunteer at the PNC. Volunteers deliver food to the homebound through Meals on Wheels and distribute food, daily living supplies, pet food, baby supplies and clothing to our neighbors in need. Words cannot express how a kind word and understanding demeanor brings comfort to those who are in need of the most basic daily living items. If you would like to join a class, teach a class, organize an event or volunteer, please contact the PNC at [www.pawcatuckneighborhoodcenter.org](http://www.pawcatuckneighborhoodcenter.org) or find us on FACEBOOK.



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

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## AVALONIA LAND CONSERVANCY

### This is the start of our 50th Anniversary Year!

Watch for announcements of special activities. Explore trails. Consider joining the Avalonia Town Committee. Avalonia Land Conservancy owns 8 properties with trails 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.

Our most recent acquisition is the **Benedict Benson Preserve** on Swantown Hill Road, north of Stonington Institute. Enjoy the loop trail on the west side of the road. Note the historic **Parke Pond** on Babcock Road, just out of the village. You can hike from the **Erismen Woodlands** on Reutemann Road (¼ mile west of Hangman Hill Road) through **Babcock Ridge** and then onto the **Donald R Henne Preserve**, by walking 100 ft. west along Babcock Road; then, continuing through the Henne all the way to Surrey Lane, you will reach Rt. 184. Another excellent hiking location is the **Reed Woodlands-Mitchell Preserve**. Its entrance is on Northwest Corner Rd. Look for a green and white “visitor parking” sign on the south side of the road, at a sharp bend between the two Anna Farm Rd. entrances. There are several well marked trails through this wooded property. Enter **Tefftweald** by a private drive off Grindstone Hill Road, about 0.8 miles west of Route 49. There you will find several trails through forest and ledge. Long-time residents will remember it as the Girl Scout camp. The **Yannatos Preserve**, in the center of Clarks Falls, has a short loop trail and a display on the history of the former mill there.

You will find trail maps and more on the website at [www.avalonialandconservancy.org](http://www.avalonialandconservancy.org) or at the library; and if you haven’t already, we welcome you to become a member. Like us on Facebook. If you have questions or want to volunteer, phone Pat Turner, 860-535-1514

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

We give many thanks to Buon Appetito for providing the space and delicious food for the All Boards and Commission Member Symposium, hosted by the EDC in November. The event was well attended and provided a much needed opportunity to thank outgoing volunteers and welcome the new Board and Commission members. The Economic Development Commission welcomes four new members: Salvator Cherenzia IV, Paul Simonds, Toulia Balestracci and Lisa Wood. The EDC still has three vacancies. Interested residents are encouraged to attend our next meeting or contact Brett Mastroianni or Juliet Hodge.

The EDC plans to host a community conversation in the upcoming months about interest and logistics for establishing a year-round farmer's market in town and hopes to also help facilitate another municipal economic development training workshop, hosted by a collaboration of partners – including the Connecticut Economic Resource Center, Inc. (CERC), and the Connecticut Economic Development Association (CEDAS). The workshop is geared to those within a municipality who impact economic development, and is designed to get everyone working collaboratively.

Please continue to follow us on Facebook! Let's see how many likes we can get this winter! We encourage you to share your ideas about ways to grow our tax base in a way that still preserves our unique character.

BRETT MASTROIANNI, CHAIRMAN      [bmastroianni@northstoningtonct.gov](mailto:bmastroianni@northstoningtonct.gov)

JULIET HODGE, PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT & ZONING OFFICIAL      [jhodge@northstoningtonct.gov](mailto:jhodge@northstoningtonct.gov)

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## NORTH STONINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

We have one more Sunday concert planned at the Stephen Main Homestead in the center of the village on February 11<sup>th</sup>, at 4:00pm and again at 6:00pm. Our Parlor Concert Series features the two unique period pianos owned by the Society (George Astor & Co, London, c. 1800, and A. H. Gale, New York, 1857) and presents musical works of historical interest and significance brought to life, with anecdotes and commentaries. The recent restoration of these instruments reflects the Society's commitment to share lively historical projects with the population of North Stonington and surrounding towns.

In February, our musical director and superb pianist, Aymeric Dupré la Tour will play and will accompany soprano, Ava Wing. They will present a very accessible program of evocative piano pieces and art songs with thoughts of Valentine's Day. Tickets are limited in this intimate setting and are \$20 each. Phone 860-599-3608 or email [parlorconcertseries@gmail.com](mailto:parlorconcertseries@gmail.com) for reservations.

And 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.



**PARLOR CONCERT SERIES**

**Blessed, Sweet Oblivion**  
AN EVENING WITH LOVE ART SONGS

FEBRUARY 11, 2018 • 4:00 P.M. & 6:30 P.M.

AVA WING  
SOPRANO

AYMERIC DUPRÉ LA TOUR  
PIANO



NORTH STONINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
STEPHEN MAIN HOUSE  
1 WYASSUP ROAD  
LIMITED SEATING! RESERVATIONS REQUIRED  
CALL: (860)245-5322  
\$20 PER PERSON



## **NORTH STONINGTON AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION**

During the months of September, October, and November, North Stonington Ambulance responded to 164 calls, of which 118 were transports.

Over the past few months we have strived to recruit new volunteers and retain our long-term members. We are currently accepting applications for a new member to fill our treasury position on the Board of Directors. Board members meet once a quarter to discuss the future of the company and supervise funds.

The Ambulance Association has updated their website and included a calendar of all future meetings for the Board of Directors, membership and the bylaws committee. We are starting to partner with the local Fire Department for training and preparations for the big move to the new Emergency Services building.

If you would like to become a member of the North Stonington Ambulance Association, you need to be a resident of the town or immediate surrounding area, pass a background check and complete an application - it's that easy. To inquire about how to become a member, serve on the board or what you can do, you can email the volunteer committee at [EMS@nsambulance.org](mailto:EMS@nsambulance.org) or visit [www.nsambulance.org](http://www.nsambulance.org) to apply.

ASHLEY MAGNANT, SECRETARY

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## **NORTH STONINGTON LIONS CLUB**

The North Stonington Lions Club will kick off 2018 with our annual Town Solicitation. The contributions received from this event go right back out to our community locally and globally. This year we have been able support the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center and the Humanitarian Relief efforts to help those impacted from the catastrophic damage caused by Hurricanes. This was possible because of you and we would like to express our sincere gratitude. 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 Club. Thank you!

DENISE MURPHY, CLUB PRESIDENT

860-625-7363

[northstoningtonlions@gmail.com](mailto:northstoningtonlions@gmail.com)

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## **NORTH STONINGTON EDUCATION FOUNDATION**

The NSEF continues to support the students of the North Stonington School System by funding grants for projects that would never be considered for inclusion in a town budget. To date, there has been more than \$150,000 so granted.

Having outgrown the Stonington Country Club, this year's NSEF annual Dinner Dance was held at the Lake of Isles facilities on November third and was the largest ever, at 130 people. A central feature of the night was the recognition of Terry Bishop as the fourteenth "Distinguished Graduate" of Wheeler High School. Mr. Bishop, a 1984 graduate of Wheeler and a decorated analyst at the Central Intelligence Agency, had also been honored by the Agency through an annual award to the best new analyst - individuals that Mr. Bishop excelled at mentoring.

The next big event sponsored by the NSEF is the ever popular "Trivia Contest" on February second at the Pawcatuck VFW hall, and those interested of fielding a team of 6 to 8 people are well advised to be quick to register when the event is formally announced. What will make this year's contest especially interesting is that the new Master of Ceremonies will be none other than Superintendent of Schools Peter Nero - previously the head of the three-time contest winning team "The Italian Stallions".

JAMES H. PATTON, JR.

860-535-2617

[JHPATTON@CONCENTRIC.NET](mailto:JHPATTON@CONCENTRIC.NET)





## HEWITT FARM

Occasionally, I am asked by travelers who drive through North Stonington on Route 2, “What is Hewitt Farm?” They see the characteristic brown-with-yellow-print park entrance sign along the road and wonder what treasure of nature could be hidden down the stonewall-lined entranceway and over the dam. As they pass by, they sometimes see cars parked with hikers loading or unloading backpacks, or dog walkers bending to leash-up their canine companions in preparation for a walk. More than likely, they will see a car or pickup truck continuing beyond the dam to park where a picnic can be spread, or a canoe or kayak launched.



At this time of year, the more common sight might be a group of cross country skiers or sledders readying for their run. Or maybe a fisherman preparing his tackle for some serious ice fishing. You may even see one of the Scouts who recently completed his Eagle Scout project at the farm stopping by to admire his and his Troop's hard work.

The next time you pass the Hewitt Farm entrance take a minute to make the turn and enjoy a short drive through Hewitt Farm. Its road extends all the way to Wyassup Road where a right turn will return you directly to the village. As you look around, imagine all the opportunities for a fun afternoon you could have with with your family regardless of the season.

Maps are available at all entrances or on the town website at [www.northstoningtonct.gov](http://www.northstoningtonct.gov). Any questions, please contact Dick Cooper (860-535-0528) or Nita Kincaid (860-235-1565).

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## NORTH STONINGTON COMMUNITY GRANGE #138

The Grange organization 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; then we have a program, sometimes internally created, sometimes with guest speakers of varying interests.

On October 13<sup>th</sup>, we met the two candidates for First Selectman, as each explained their visions for the future of North Stonington. On October 27<sup>th</sup>, we had our annual Halloween party and enjoyed all the young ghouls and princesses who came. Susan Sedensky, director of the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center, visited us on November 10<sup>th</sup> and spoke to us of the many programs and offerings benefitting the towns of Stonington, North Stonington and Westerly. We had our Christmas program December 8<sup>th</sup>, with a visit from Santa Claus for all present.

We slow down for late fall and early winter due to holidays and potential weather. On January 13<sup>th</sup> (with a snow date of January 26<sup>th</sup>), the Agriculture and Conservation Committee will present the program; February 9<sup>th</sup> (with a snow date of February 23<sup>rd</sup>) we have our Winter Game Night, and also our Talent and “A Number” contests. March picks back up with 2 meetings: March 9<sup>th</sup> being our Officer Exchange and Ritual night – an excellent night to come learn all about the Grange; and on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, our Lecturer puts on her State Lecturer contest program; always a good show!

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

SUE PIANKA, PROGRAM DIRECTOR

860-599-4528

## NORTH STONINGTON AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE

In 2014, the Town of North Stonington applied for and received a \$400,000 grant from the Department of Housing under the Small Cities CDBG program. Those funds were used to rehabilitate the homes of 16 income qualified residents with 0% loans, payable when the title to the home changes hands. When loans are repaid, the money recirculates to rehabilitate more homes within the community with the same requirements. Maintaining existing homes that are affordable helps residents with limited income stay in their homes, or for our qualifying elderly residents to age in place.



This program has again been funded by the federal Department of Housing. Historically, communities that have received funds once are likely to receive them again if they can show the need and apply. Our Board of Selectmen must decide if the Town will again apply and residents must show their need for the rehabilitation of their homes by submitting a letter of intent so stating. If these two actions are taken, our Town may again receive funds under this program. Contact Juliet Hodge (jhodge@northstoningtonct.gov) at the Land Use Office for the Letter of Intent Forms and for more information on the program. Please also contact your Board of Selectmen and urge them to apply for these funds again.

MARY ANN RICKER, CHAIRMAN

marykricker@comcast.net

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## NORTH STONINGTON AGRICULTURAL FAIR

The monthly meetings for the North Stonington Fair will resume in January at the Fire House on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm. The committee is busy planning for this year's fair to be held July 12-15<sup>th</sup>. There are some new events being planned, along with the traditional, and we encourage new members to attend the meetings and share your ideas and suggestions. It's not too early to think about what you may enter in the Arts and Crafts or Baked Goods departments; young children can be planning decorations for the Doll Carriage and Wagon Parade; young ladies can mark the date for competing in the Princess, Jr. Princess and Queen contests ( just to list a few of the activities/events).

**The Fair Committee is actively seeking an individual/individuals who may be interested in putting together the 2018 Fairbook.** If you are interested, please contact any one of the fair officers or directors and they can give you more information. A list of members can be found on our website at [www.northstoningtonfair.com](http://www.northstoningtonfair.com).

On March 13<sup>th</sup> we will hold our annual Pot-Luck supper. Everyone is welcome to bring their favorite dish and take part in the meeting. We would like to wish each and every one a very Happy & Healthy New Year. Be sure to visit and "like" us on Facebook @ North Stonington Agricultural Fair, Inc.

JODY WHIPPLE

PINENEEDLHOMESTEAD@SBCGLOBAL.NET

860-599-8498

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## NORTH STONINGTON SENIOR CENTER

The Senior Center, located behind Holly Green, is open Monday-Friday from 9:30am-2:30pm. It is closed when local schools are closed due to weather conditions. Lunches are available the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays of each month; reservations must be made by the Friday prior to lunch. The Golden Agers meet on the first Wednesdays at 12:30pm, with a registered nurse available at 11:30 to take blood pressures.

Teresa Pensis, Director and Agent for the Elderly, provides help with fuel, food and rides. For assistance, call 860-535-8188. She will also schedule appointments for free-of-charge Income Tax preparation, done by qualified AARP volunteers.

During the winter months, plans are made for excursions that will take place the rest of the year. Your suggestions are most welcome! Remember, the Center has a handicapped accessible bus.

## NORTH STONINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

In the blink of an eye, we are at the mid-way point of the school year. One minute you are watching soccer practice and the next, the gymnasium is filled with spectators watching basketball.

Now that the state has a budget, you will begin to see considerable work regarding the building projects. Having been a part of building projects as a student and as an administrator, the mantra that will be projected will be patience. The building project will definitely take us all out of our comfort zone. The last building project was completed 22 years ago, so there is a lot of work necessary to modernize our schools and, most importantly, completely remediate all of the environmental issues, especially at the elementary school.

In my discussion with the Building Committee and the Construction Manager, the plans are beginning to become firm. The projects will need to be phased, while parts of each project at the elementary and middle/high school will commence at the same time. The middle/high school project is slated to be completed first, followed by the elementary school.

We will do our best to keep everyone informed as the project is about to begin and continues to move towards completion. You will be receiving a number of communications from me as we have an actual “shovel in the ground” date. As we have been doing with our environmental updates, we will be posting updates regarding the building projects on our website.

Wishing everyone a safe and healthy winter season.

PETER NERO, SUPERINTENDENT

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## WHEELER LIBRARY

Start the New Year off with art and music at Wheeler Library. Sue Starr will teach four Thursday night sessions in January on creating monotypes, using a gel printing plate. Come to one or all of the classes (\$20/session; \$70 for all). On Saturday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, we welcome back our favorite bluegrass band, Cabin Fever.

Mark your calendar now for the Second Annual Irish Fest on March 3<sup>rd</sup> and our Blooms and Barns Garden Tour on June 2<sup>nd</sup>. This library fundraiser will feature unique North Stonington properties.

For kids, we've got an Introduction to Yoga program for children in kindergarten through fourth grade with Kim Signor after school, on Thursdays in January; a Stuffed Animal Sleepover on February 2<sup>nd</sup>; visits from Phantom the Therapy Dog for those who want to practice reading in a relaxed setting; and special events for Take your Child to the Library Week (Feb 3<sup>rd</sup>- Feb 10<sup>th</sup>).

Don't miss our fabulous Friends of Wheeler Library Book Sale in early March. The Tuesday, March 6<sup>th</sup> Preview (6-10 pm) has a \$5.00 early buying fee. On Saturday, March 10<sup>th</sup> enjoy a Bag of Books for \$5.00. Always great books at reasonable prices!

More information on all that the library offers is available online at [wheelerlibrary.org](http://wheelerlibrary.org).

AMY KENNEDY

860-535-0383





## **NORTH STONINGTON VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY, INC.**

On November 11, 2017 the North Stonington Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. received a written commendation from the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Chairman and the Mashantucket Pequot Fire & Emergency Services Chief for mutual aid rescue assistance. The assistance provided involved a complex high angle rope and technical rescue of seven Pequot Museum guests, who became entrapped within an elevator. The operation lasted several hours and resulted in the safe rescue of all elevator occupants.

During the months of September, October and November 2017, the volunteers at the NSVFC responded to a total of 99 emergency 911 calls for help. Of these calls, the majority involved downed power lines during our last storm, R1 supplemental EMT medical assistance and motor vehicle accidents. Responding to these calls required 1,046 man-hours of volunteers' personal time, with an average of 10 volunteers responding to the incidents. The volunteers also contributed an additional total of 143 man-hours involving training and drills, in order to maintain and improve their proficiencies in life-saving skills.

The NSVFC is also very proactive in educating the Town's children in Fire Prevention and Fire Safety. Fire Captain Stephen Sadowski ("Fireman Steve") personally leads this effort and travels to the North Stonington schools to ensure our children receive valuable fire prevention training and instruction. Visits to the firehouse are also a part of our program. On average, over 550 children attend these training sessions every year. Captain Sadowski also teaches our Town Hall and Highway Department employees fire extinguisher training on an annual basis.

CHARLES STEINHART V, CHIEF

GARY BARON, PRESIDENT



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## **WHEELER HIGH SCHOOL/MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Our Wheeler teachers and students are busy wrapping up Quarter 2 and preparing for midterm exams, and many of our seniors are diligently working on their college applications! Our middle school SRBI (Scientific Researched-Based Interventions) program continues to provide extra instruction for our students in Math and English and our Student Study Center provides that same support to struggling high school learners. Our latest accreditation report was submitted and all of our 2-year recommendations were approved. We will continue to work on our 5-year school improvement recommendations and work hard to make Wheeler the best place it can be for our students.

This month, Wheeler and the BRAVE Club had the privilege of hosting Master Sargeant Ben Seekell, as a guest speaker for our grade 9-12 students. Ben's life is an amazing story of resilience and determination. Our middle and high school chorus and band delivered outstanding holiday performances, and our winter sports and spring drama production of *Annie* are well underway! If you have the chance to come to any of our sporting events, Wheeler is officially a *CIAC Class Act School* because of our outstanding sportsmanship. Many of our fall athletes were named to ALL ECC teams and our girls' soccer team won the ECC Sportsmanship Award! Happy holidays to everyone. Thank you for supporting our school!

KRISTEN ST. GERMAIN, PRINCIPAL

## NORTH STONINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

On December 14<sup>th</sup>, the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Chorus & 2<sup>nd</sup> Year 5<sup>th</sup> Grade 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 2017 with our PBIS celebration of Movies and Popcorn on Dec. 21<sup>st</sup>, 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 the support you give to our students and school. We wish each North Stonington family the very best in 2018!

VERONICA WILKISON, PRINCIPAL

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## ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

Homeowners who are at least 65 years old on January 1, 2018, and persons with a 100% Social Security awarded disability, can apply for the Elderly Homeowners Program starting February 1<sup>st</sup> through May 15<sup>th</sup>. Maximum income for a married couple is \$43,000, including both of your Social Security 1099 incomes. Single homeowner's maximum income is \$35,300, and also includes the income on your Social Security 1099 form. Homeowners who are required to file a federal tax return must wait until you have completed your IRS 1040 income tax return and then bring a copy, plus your Social Security 1099 form(s), to the Assessor's Office. If you are not required to file with the IRS, please bring all forms showing all income for 2017, including your Social Security form(s) 1099.

The income limits are the same for an additional Veteran's Benefit. When you apply for the Homeowners Program, please indicate that you are a veteran. Veterans that meet the income limits are eligible for an additional benefit.

Renters Program begins on April 1<sup>st</sup>. More on that program will be in the next newsletter.

**The Board of Assessment Appeals** will hold hearings for those who wish to appeal their real estate, personal property, or motor vehicle assessments. Please call the Assessor's Office between February 1<sup>st</sup> and February 20<sup>th</sup> if you would like to make an appointment to discuss your property assessment. In order to appeal, you must be present or appoint an agent to appear before the board. A letter to the Board of Assessment Appeals is **NOT** acceptable, and your appeal will not be heard; you or your representative must be present.

Please remember, the Department of Motor Vehicles does **NOT** inform the Assessor's Office when you return a license plate. In order to get credit for a motor vehicle that was sold, you must provide a copy of the bill of sale. If you transfer plates from an old car to a new car, credit is automatic. You must pay the taxes on the old car to earn the credit.

DARRYL L. DEL GROSSO, CCMA II

ASSESSOR

860-535-2877 ext. 23 or 24

## NORTH STONINGTON GIRL SCOUT TROOPS

Happy New Year, everyone!! First and foremost, we want to give a very heartfelt “THANK YOU” to everyone who sponsored our Thanksgiving Food Drive and Adopt a Family this holiday season. Your generosity has been overwhelming and appreciated. Every donation and act of kindness continues to change the lives of so many.

With the 2017 holiday season wrapped up, Girl Scouts have a new season upon us . . .COOKIE SEASON! Cookies are an important time of year for Girl Scouts as those sales fund everything for the year--from crafts to troop trips, and summer camps to community projects. When girls participate in the Girl Scout Cookie Program, they get more than fun, experience and adventure. They also develop essential life skills, such as goal setting, decision making, money management, people skills, and business ethics! When you buy a box of delicious Girl Scout Cookies, you help power new, unique and amazing experiences for every awesome G.I.R.L. (Go-getter, Innovator, Risk-taker, Leader)<sup>™</sup> in your community who sells these purpose-filled treats - and that too is SWEET! There are 8 different mouth-watering flavors to choose from including Toffee-tastic, which are gluten free, and everyone’s favorite, Thin Mints, which are vegan!! Nutritional and product information is available online at [www.gsofct.org](http://www.gsofct.org). Cookies are available for initial purchase from January 6<sup>th</sup> to February 4<sup>th</sup>. You may also choose to donate boxes to the Military or another organization chosen by a Troop.



If you would like to purchase or donate cookies, please contact me at [jenefer81@hotmail.com](mailto:jenefer81@hotmail.com) to be set up with a Girl or Troop in your immediate area! Thank you all for supporting your local Girl Scouts!!

JEN PETERSON

TOWN ORGANIZER & JULIETTE MEMBERSHIP MANAGER

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## BOARD OF EDUCATION

The BOE has had a busy year so far. We have had some board member changes; we had to say goodbye to Julia Buzzee and Robert Carlson. Bob was a fantastic Board Chair and mentor. I have some big shoes to fill. We welcomed new members, Pam Potemri and Jen Welborn. As I write this, we are awaiting our 2017-18 budget referendum and are hoping for strong voter turnout, as the next budget season is waiting in the wings.

This is an exciting time for the North Stonington School system. We are looking forward to breaking ground on the school project very soon; so much work has already been done behind the scenes. Thank you to the School Modernization Building committee for your endless hours and hard work.

North Stonington students continue to impress us. North Stonington has been recognized as a school of distinction, ranking us in the top 10 schools in Connecticut. Enrollment is up at the elementary school, while so many districts are experiencing declines. Being a high-performing school is no doubt making an impact. Wheeler athletes are into their winter season. I invite you to come catch a game; it is a great way to support our kids and show your community spirit. We enjoy hearing from our citizens at the BOE meetings. Our schedule is posted online ([www.northstonington.k12.ct.us](http://www.northstonington.k12.ct.us)). Come see us in January to get all of the latest updates.

Have a safe and Happy 2018!

CHRISTINE WAGNER, CHAIRMAN

[wagnerc@northstonington.k12.ct.us](mailto:wagnerc@northstonington.k12.ct.us)



## SCHOOL MODERNIZATION BUILDING COMMITTEE

Happy New Year from the School Modernization Building Committee! We continue working diligently to ensure that our project remains on schedule and within budget. Although adjustments were made to accommodate the delay in passing the State budget, we received our “official approval letter” and anticipate ground-breaking to occur this spring. Bids for construction are in the process of being finalized and resubmitted in cases where bids did not meet our budget requirements. Needless to say, the process is tedious, but we are committed to delivering high quality school buildings while meeting our fiscal responsibility to the taxpayers of North Stonington. We appreciate your feedback and support over the past year.

Please join us at our regularly scheduled meetings(the second Monday at 7pm, New Town Hall), as well as any of the workshops (scheduled as needed) to address building and budget issues that arise throughout the process. Again, thank you and we wish you a happy and healthy new year!

PAMELA POTEMRI, CHAIRMAN

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## NORTH STONINGTON GARDEN CLUB

As 2017 gives way to 2018, for many of us garden activities are winding down. Not so for the members of the North Stonington Garden Club, whose programs continue year-round. The November 2017 meeting was devoted to the decoration of the 28 wreaths that you are now seeing in town, adorning public buildings and memorials. If you look closely, you will notice that each one is unique, reflecting the individual skill and creative vision of the volunteer who designed and decorated it. We hope everyone in town enjoys this, our contribution to the festive spirit of the season.



When you install your 2018 calendar, don't forget to mark the date of our **Annual Plant Sale, Saturday, May 12**, 9am to 1pm at the elementary school. Believe it or not, club members have already started to dig and pot perennial plants, so that after they over-winter they will be in peak condition and ready for their new home in your garden. In addition, we will be offering our usual wide selection of annual plants, herbs, vegetables, and special and unique features for your own garden, or for Mothers' Day gifts. See you there!

If you are interested in becoming a member, contact Membership Co-chair, Nita Kincaid (860-235-1565) or visit our website, [www.nsgardenclub.org](http://www.nsgardenclub.org).

JANICE PARKER     PRESIDENT

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## RESIDENT STATE TROOPERS

The Connecticut State Police, along with the two North Stonington Resident State Troopers, patrol the town of North Stonington. During the months of September, October and November, 2017 troopers for the town of North Stonington responded to 36 motor vehicle accidents and made 3 DUI arrests. Troopers investigated 37 criminal cases which included burglaries, larcenies, assaults, domestics, criminal mischief and breach of peace. Troopers also issued 427 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 or 860-848-6500 or 911. The Resident State Troopers' office is located at 40 Main St. on the second floor of the Old Town Hall. Thank you for your support.

DAVID ABELY, RESIDENT STATE TROOPER

# WINTER EVENTS



## January

4, 11 18, 25	THURSDAYS	6 pm	Wheeler Library	Art Class with Sue Starr \$20 per session or \$70 for all 4	Page 10
4, 11 18, 25	THURSDAYS	After School	Wheeler Library	Kids' Intro to Yoga for K-4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Free	Page 10
4	THURSDAY	6:30-7:30 pm	Wheeler Library	Read with Phantom, the Therapy Dog	Page 10
16	TUESDAY	6:30 pm	Wheeler Library	Book Discussion: <i>Bring Up the Bodies</i>	Page 10
20	SATURDAY	7-9 pm	Wheeler Library	Cabin Fever Blue Grass Band	Page 10

## February

1	THURSDAY	6:30-7:30 pm	Wheeler Library	Read with Phantom, the Therapy Dog	Page 10
2	FRIDAY	6 pm	Pawcatuck VFW	NSEF Trivia Event	Page 7
2	FRIDAY	5:30 pm	Wheeler Library	Stuffed Animal Sleepover	Page 10
11	SUNDAY	4 pm & 6pm	NS Historical Society Stephen Main Homestead	Piano Concert: Aymeric Dupre' la Tour, accompanied by Ava Wing, Soprano. Tickets \$20	Page 6
13	TUESDAY	6:30 pm	Wheeler Library	Book Discussion, Title TBD	Page 10
15	THURSDAY	5-7 pm	Wheeler Cafeteria	Wheeler Music Boosters: Taco Dinner & Live Music. \$10 adults, \$5 students Snow Date: Friday 2/16	

## March

1	THURSDAY	6:30-7:30 pm	Wheeler Library	Read with Phantom, the Therapy Dog	Page 10
2	FRIDAY	7 pm	Wheeler Library	Movie Screening: <i>Homegrown Habitat</i> Co-sponsored by the N.S. Garden Club	Page 10
3	SATURDAY	6:-9 pm	Wheeler Library	Irish Fest: Traditional step dancing, pub music and refreshments. Tickets \$20 in advance; \$25 at door; Kids under 12 free.	Page 10
6-10	TUES-SAT	Library hours	Wheeler Library	Friends of Wheeler Book Sale	Page 10
13	FRIDAY	6:30 pm	Wheeler Library	Book Discussion, Title TBD	Page 10

**Town of North Stonington  
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The North Stonington Quarterly continues to be a community effort shared by our Town's boards, commissions, non-profit organizations and the Wheeler High School Print Shop.

Thank you to all our contributors who fill each issue with thoughtful, valuable information.

A very special thank you goes to the students and their teacher, Noel Devine, at the Wheeler High School Print Shop; their support makes it possible to produce the NSQ.

*Lisa Mazzella & Nita Kincaid, NSQ Editors*