



The Eastford Communicator

February 2016 Calendar

- 1 Fiddle & Song, EES, 3:30-5pm
Fiddle & Song, EES, 5- 9pm
School Readiness Council, EES, 6pm
BOS, TOB, 7pm
- 2 Conservation & Historic Comm, TOB, 7pm
- 3 Adult Pickup Basketball, EES, 6:30pm
Nahaco Commission, Woodstock T.H., 7pm
- 5 Yoga, TOB, 8:15-9:15am
- 6 Take Your Child to the Library Event, 10am
- 8 Fiddle & Song, EES, 3:30-5pm
Fiddle & Song, EES, 5-9pm
Yoga, TOB, 5:30- 6:30pm
Clean Energy, TOB, 7pm
- 9 Planning Commission, TOB, 7pm
- 10 **Communicator Deadline**
Recreation Commission, TOB, 2pm
Registrars of Voters, TOB, 5-7pm
Adult Pickup Basketball, EES, 6:30pm
- 11 Gentle Yoga, TOB, 1-2pm
BOE, EES, 7pm
- 12 Yoga, TOB, 8:15-9:15am
- 15 Yoga, TOB, 5:30-6:30pm
- 16 Republican Town Committee, Library, 7pm
- 17 Adult Pickup Basketball, EES, 6:30pm
- 18 Gentle Yoga, TOB, 1-2pm
- 19 Yoga, TOB, 8:15-9:15am
- 22 Fiddle & Song, EES, 3:30-5pm
Fiddle & Song, EES, 5-9pm
Yoga, TOB, 5:30-6:30pm
American Legion, TOB, 7:30pm
- 23 Pollywog Youth Basketball (see Rec.Comm.)
Transfer Station Committee, TOB, 1pm
Democratic Town Committee, Library, 7:30pm
- 24 Registrars of Voters, TOB, 5-7pm
Adult Pickup Basketball, EES, 6:30pm
- 25 Union Society Building Comm, TOB, 8am
Gentle Yoga, TOB, 1-2pm
Inland Wetlands Commission, TOB, 7pm
Library Board, Library, 7pm
- 26 Yoga, TOB, 8:15-9:15am
- 29 Fiddle & Song, EES, 3:30-5:00pm
Fiddle & Song, EES, 5-9pm
Yoga, TOB, 5:30-6:30pm

Of Special Note

**Feb. 6, 10 am - Take Your Child to the Library Day:
Make a Chocolate Valentine Tree!**
**Feb 23 - April 12 Pollywog Youth Basketball program
Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays - Yoga with Sue Orcott
Wednesday Nights-Adult Pick-Up Basketball
Fiddle and Song Free Violin Instruction
Reminder for School Vacation:
The Library has discount/free passes to the
Connecticut Science Center, museums and other destina-
tions.**

BRODEURBITS

[Brodeurbits is a regular compilation of writings and ramblings from the First Selectman and others and elsewhere, some profound, others mundane; all hopefully of interest and import, aimed at communicating and informing.]

[This month: Times and Timing, Steep Cuts and STEAP Grants, Why and Y]

The preparation of the Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Town Government and Board of Education budgets is well underway. As part of that process, the Board of Selectmen has set Monday, May 9, 2016 as the date for the Town Budget Hearing, and Monday, May 23, 2016, as the date for the Budget Town Meeting. Both will take place at 7 p.m. at the Eastford Elementary School. The annual Local Capital Improvement Pro-

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gram [LoCIP] meeting will be held on Saturday, February 6, 2016, at 9 a.m. in the Lower Town Office Building.

And, while you've got your calendars out, Heritage Day this year will be on Saturday, July 16. Come one, come all!

In the context of municipal budgeting, Eastford, like all of Connecticut's towns and cities, has been impacted by reductions in municipal aid from the State in the current fiscal year. The reductions came as a result of two State budget items: lapses associated with the so-called MORE Commission [Commission on Municipal Opportunities and Regional Efficiencies] and the deficit mitigation package approved in December. The adopted Fiscal Year 2016 budget includes some \$20 million in lapses in municipal aid, lapses which were supposed to be offset by savings identified by the MORE Commission. To date, no such savings have been identified. The cuts impacting Eastford were those made in Payment In Lieu Of Taxes [PILOT] for State-owned property, Education Cost Sharing [ECS], and Public School Transportation funding. In all, Eastford lost a total of \$9,951 in State aid to municipalities--\$7,406 in PILOT funds, \$1,283 in ECS, and \$902 in School Transport.

The Board of Selectmen, meeting in regular session on January 4, 2016, reappointed Thomas Latham as Town Finance Director for a one-year term ending December 31, 2016. It also appointed Carol Davidge to serve as Town of Eastford representative on the Charter Cable Advisory Board.

At the same meeting, following a Public Hearing, the Board approved the application of Christopher D. Bowen [doing business as Eastford Fire & Rescue Sales, Inc.] for a Used Car Dealer's License at 144 Eastford Road.

You may have noticed that the timing of the traffic signal at the intersection of Routes 198 and 44 is different. During milling and repaving of Route 44 by the State Department of Transportation

[DOT] this past Summer the sensors which control the so-called "loop detectors" were apparently damaged. This resulted in the control reverting to a specific length of time for the lights in each direction rather than an 'on-demand' change of the light dependent on traffic flow. So you may find yourself waiting at the light a bit longer than before. DOT is on the repair case.

The Board of Selectmen has accepted the bid of Silva Engineering, LLC of Willimantic to perform engineering design of an open-sided structural steel and metal roof building at the Transfer Station. Silva was the lowest of three bidders and has experience designing such structures, having designed the one at the Union facility. Coverage of Transfer Station containers has been mandated by the State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection [DEEP] and design and construction was approved by Town Meeting in accepting the Fiscal Year 2015-2016 budget.

The Town has submitted two Small Town Economic Assistance Program [STEAP] grant applications to the State Office of Policy and Management [OPM] in the Fiscal Year 2016 funding round. One is a \$290,000 application for the Eastford Community Center which would be added to a prior \$100,000 STEAP grant to create, via the rehabilitation and expansion of the Town-owned 1806 Union Society of Phoenixville Building, a community center. This is a resubmission of an unawarded application last year. Also submitted was an application for

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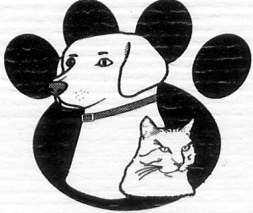
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\$455,000 for renovation and expansion of the Eastford Fire Station which was built in 1945. Also, the Town of Woodstock, in its STEAP submissions, has included one to fund projects at Nahaco Park. We shall keep our municipal fingers crossed.

The Town has advertised for bids for construction of the new Mill Bridge Road bridge over Bungee Brook. The bids will be opened on Thursday, February 4 at 2 p.m. in the Town Office Building. Construction is slated to begin on April 1 with completion projected by the end of this calendar year.

Wouldn't It Be Nice If:

Folks didn't use Eastford roadsides as trash bins. Recently, Public Works personnel filled twelve large trash bags after a sweep of just one section of Westford Road; a similar pickup detail on a section of Old Colony Road netted four bags of trash.

Please continue to assist in our efforts to reduce volume in the Co-Mingled container at the Transfer Station. Compressing, squashing, plastic milk containers and the like is one significant way you can help in this effort. Reduced volume in containers means fewer times the container must be pulled and taken to Willimantic Waste. Each pull costs the Town \$175 and we are currently pulling the Co-Mingled bin every two weeks. If we compress milk jugs, etc., we can get more in the container and have to pull it fewer times, reducing costs and expense to Eastford taxpayers.

A box of sand has been placed at the entrance to the Public Works area for your use. But, please, be aware that this sand is for your use in moderation; it is not for sanding entire driveways. People are taking the sand in large quantities and Public Works has to constantly refill the sand bin. If you have a requirement for larger quantities of sand, have a conversation with Public Works Supervisor Ben Schmidt and he will try to accommodate you.

The Hale YMCA Youth and Family Center, at 9 Technology Park Drive in Putnam, is scheduled to open this month. It will provide a multiplicity of facilities and myriad programs for residents of Northeastern Connecticut, including us in Eastford. It will also provide seasonal employment opportunities for youth. Among the facilities soon to open are an eight-lane competition swimming pool, a warm water pool with wheelchair accessibility, a whirlpool spa, a gymnasium, Wellness, Childwatch [babysitting], and Teen Centers, a multi-purpose community room, a group exercise studio, locker rooms and sauna and steam rooms. For more information, or to get a look at the facility in one of their scheduled hard-hat tours, call 860-315-9622.

Eastford Energy, Clean and Green

Solar Tax Credit Is Retained by Feds

By Kenny Andersen, Chair

Eastford Clean Energy Task Force

The recently-enacted Consolidated Appropriations Act extends the expiration date for Photo Voltaic (PV) solar and solar thermal (hot water) home installations through 2019. After that there will be a gradual step down of the tax credit.

You may claim a tax credit of 30 per cent on expenditures for the costs of solar construction on your home dwelling at the time of completion. Solar application on new homes will qualify for the tax credit from the date of occupancy.

As electrical bills have increased sharply during 2015, the price of solar panels has dropped to very affordable levels, a factor that's boosted residential solar conversions in Connecticut's northeast. Eight solar construction permits were issued in Eastford since July 2014.

The tax credit covers labor costs for on-site preparation, assembly and system installation and piping and wiring to connect the system to your home. If the tax credit exceeds your tax liability, the excess amount can be carried forward to the succeeding taxable year.

At the state level, the Connecticut Green Bank provides additional incentives to offset the cost of your investment. A lease option requiring little or no money down can provide immediate savings on your electric bill.

By combining federal and state tax incentives, net metering credits for the power you generate and low-interest financing you will realize long-term savings over the life of your PV system. For more information, Go to the Energize CT website.

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Eastford Readiness Council

AKA Eastford's Preschool Program

Jennifer Barlow

12 Westford Rd

Eastford, CT 06242

(860)974-1130

Attention Parents/Guardians of children born in 2012 and 2013. The Readiness Council will be making decisions concerning the 2016-2017 preschool program at the meeting on February 1. We would like the input of the families that may want to be a part of this program. If you have not already received a survey in the mail we invite you to complete a short survey that will help the Readiness Council in their decision. The survey can be downloaded from the school website eastfordct.org under the "instruction" tab, and then under Mrs. Kopplin, and then over to the listing on the left side of the page click on Readiness Council. If you do not have access to a computer please contact the school (860-974-1130) and we will mail one to you. Please complete and return the survey as soon as possible but no later than February 1. If you have any questions please feel free to contact the school.

Update

The Preschool children participated in a program before school called Books and Bagels where they were able to enjoy a light breakfast and read with a family or staff member. The Readiness Program and PTO funded a laser show as a whole school assembly the day before the Winter Break. There will be a Winter Wonderland activity day for all children from birth to 5 years of age on January 22nd. Please contact Mrs. Kopplin if you plan on attending. There will also be Story time at the public library on January 26 and February 25th open to the same ages. Mrs. Kopplin would also like to invite all those non-students to come and get to know her and the school by having a time of stories and songs on March 16th. For more information on the program please look on-line at the Program's handbook or by contacting the Head Teacher, Christine Kopplin at ckopplin@eastfordct.org or the Readiness Council Liaison, Jen Barlow, at

jbarlow@eastfordct.org

Mark your calendar!

January 22: Winter Wonderland Activities (10:30-11:30 @ Eastford Elementary School)

January 26: Story time (9:30 @ Eastford Public Library)

February 1 : Needs Assessment Survey Due and Readiness Council Meeting 6:00 (Eastford Elementary School Teacher's Lounge)

February 25: Story time (2:30 @ Eastford Public Library)

March 7: Readiness Council Meeting 6:00 (Eastford Elementary School Teacher's Lounge)

Library News

By: Susan Shead

The Eastford Public Library will celebrate Take Your Child to the Library Day on Sat. Feb.6, at 10 am. Children under the guidance of new Library Board Member Rachel Budd, will make Valentine Trees of Chocolate and other candy. This is also a good time to get your child a library card if they can write their name properly.

Recent new fiction at the library include The House of the Rising Sun by James Lee Burke, The Secret Chord by Geraldine Brooks, Playing with Fire by Tess Gerritsen and Ashley Bell by Dean Koontz. Recent Children's books include Big Rig by Jamie Swenson, Imagine a World by Rob Gonsalves, When it Snows by Richard Collingridge, and The Boy on the Porch by Sharon Creech.

In continuing the story of the Eastford Public Library, by 1904 the library had a building of its own in Eastford center at the present location of the Eastford firehouse. In 1910 in an effort to better serve the community the library completed a card catalog. A branch library was started in 1912 in North Ashford. A book wagon was implemented in 1913. The book wagon took books to families who lived at a distance and would be unable to take advantage of Eastford's Public Library.

Please note: The library will be closed on Monday Feb.15, 2016 in observance of Presidents Day.

The library hours are Monday 3-8pm, Tuesday 10am to 8pm, Thursday 3-8pm and Saturday 9am to 1pm.

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Board of Education

Linda O. Loretz, Superintendent

The Board of Education began planning its budget for the 2016-17 fiscal year at the first scheduled Budget meeting on January 14, 2016. Salaries, health insurance costs, tuition and special education costs are the primary drivers in the proposed increases. The Board of Education will have finalized its proposed budget by the end of January and the Board of Selectman will review budgets from the Board of Education and other town agencies during the month of February.

The Eastford Board of Education began to revise its bylaws at the January meeting. A set of revised bylaws will be on the agenda for approval at the February 11 meeting.

The Board discussed the Eastford college scholarships. Their efforts for the remainder of this fiscal year will be on advertising the availability of scholarships, selecting recipients and then planning a reception for the 2016 recipients. If you are interested in applying for one of the Eastford scholarships, please check the Eastford School website for the link to the Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut’s online application. It will be available during the first week of February.

Ethel Cushing Gardner Music Scholarship

Ethel Cushing Gardner, a former Eastford resident, left money to the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving to be distributed annually to one or more students who reside in the town of Eastford, who in the opinion of an appointed committee shall have **musical talent and a serious purpose with respect to the study of music**. If you are a young person who is serious about the study of music and would like to apply for music scholarship to augment your studies, please call the school for a scholarship application. Please note that the deadline for submitting scholarship applications is March 3, 2016.

News You Can Use

Deb Richards – Emergency Management Director

During this milder than normal winter weather, many of our generators have remained idle for a long period of time. Our Fire Chief would like to remind us to perform basic generator maintenance.

General Generator Maintenance

Clean Generator	Clean with Towels & a Degreaser Every Year; Check for Leaks
Change Oil	25 Hours or 1 Year (Should Also be Changed after the First 5 Hours)
Change Oil Filter	At Every Oil Change
Change Air Filter	25 Hours or 1 Year (Should be Cleaned Regularly)
Change Spark Plugs	100 Hours or 1 Year
Check Fuel Filter	100 Hours or 1 Year
Check Battery	100 Hours or 1 Year
Add Fuel Stabilizer	When the Generator will be Stored for More than 1 Month
Run Generator with a Load	Every 1 Month

Check the gas tank

If gas has been left in the generator for a long period of time, it can gum up and block the fuel filter, fuel lines, and carburetor. Some generators can simply be drained and primed with new fuel, while other manufacturers call for a more complete generator service

Changing the Oil

The oil in your generator engine needs to be changed just like the oil in your car. You’ll need to empty your old oil, replace it with new oil, and replace your old oil filter. And like any engine, you’ll want to give it time to cool off if it runs for a while. If your generator is going for more than 48 hours, allow it to cool down and check the oil, changing it if necessary.


Checking / Changing the Spark Plug

The next thing to check is your spark plugs. They get worn out after a year of use, so make sure to replace them to keep your generator running right.

Changing the Air Filter

And just like you change the air filter in your lawn mower engine or car, you need to change the air filter in your generator engine. They can get pretty dirty, which can impede how well the engine functions.

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Eastford Independent Fire Company #1, Inc.
From: Jeannine Spink, President

HAPPY NEW YEAR! In 2015, we responded to 157 emergency calls. Year 2016 is expected to be as busy as 2015. Mandatory fire equipment testing, physical exams and EMS recertification's will consume a large portion of time, in addition to regularly scheduled meetings, drills and "911" calls.

GREEN HOUSE NUMBER and/or SIGNS ARE AVAILABLE FREE ANY WEDNESDAY NIGHT FROM 7:00 TO 8:30 AT THE FIREHOUSE. We request that the area surrounding your sign is cleaned for the winter so we can find you quickly. If you have a common driveway, post a second number sign on your entryway. If you are putting up a new sign, put it high enough on a post so it doesn't get buried with snow.

On Wednesday, Dec. 16th, EMS Lieutenant Debi Nowakowski Johnson, along with CSP and EES faculty, staff and students participated in a mandated "Intruder" drill. Debi wrote the excerpt below:

"EIFC was invited to participate in a "Lockdown Drill" at the EES. Having had three children attend EES, and now a grandchild, I was very interested to see how they would handle an active shooter situation or crisis that would put them into "lockdown". When the Troop D officer and I arrived, it was a typical day at school. You could hear the chatter in the classrooms, the gym loud with laughter while bowling pins were scattered everywhere, with the usual traffic in the hallways. Principal Tamsin had the "lockdown" announcement made. We immediately witnessed teacher's hands coming out of classroom doors to check if they were locked, and then closed immediately. We all know how difficult it is to keep little ones quiet. With that said, within ten seconds, I could have heard a pin drop. Personally, I felt a lump in my throat just thinking about why they would have to do this in real life, and the "goosebumps appeared. Words can't describe how quiet and empty the school felt. The halls were bare, and the officer and I looked at each other in amazement. We walked to all the classrooms and wigged the handles. LOCKED! We looked everywhere we could through the interior door windows and not a student or teacher could be seen. I can't describe the overwhelming feeling of how safe our children are in this little town school. It was like they just disappeared. Impressed, amazed and grateful doesn't even begin to describe how it felt to know if there was an incident like Sandy Hook at the EES, how prepared and trained the staff are and how cared for and protected are our children. Not only do the students need to be praised for a job well done, the entire staff from administration, faculty, custodians, aids and volunteers are to be commended for their dedication. Thank you for everything you do".

DO YOU LIVE ALONE? ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR SAFETY? DO YOU HAVE HEALTH ISSUES? HAVE YOU CONSIDERED MEDIC ALERT?

Discussing emergency response for you or your loved ones isn't easy. But it is important. As we age and health concerns appear, it's crucial to have reliable support in case of emergency. Since 1956, state-of-the-art systems have improved and boost the user's independence and loved ones' peace of mind, that you are never alone. A medical alert system provides you access to emergency help wherever you are, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If you wear an emergency alert bracelet or pendant at all times, and you find yourself alone in a crisis situation, all you have to do is push the button to get connected to help directly through the system's base. No need to struggle to get to the phone or to dial numbers. The simple push of the lightweight, waterproof help button signals a trained, monitoring professional. They will speak over the base unit and call emergency services (EIFC) as needed. This saves precious time and provides confidence that care is always there and on the way. Some systems are perfect for use around the home, and some provide a safety net to users as they go about their daily lives, both inside and outside the home. In the event the wearer cannot communicate with the base, secondary people, along with the first responders will automatically be alerted and respond.

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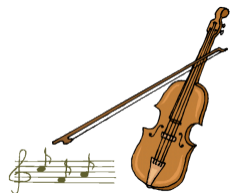
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Tom French
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Is there an infant in your life? You may be the parent, but this article is also for brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, grandparents, and friends of a family with an infant. One of the best things you each can do is sing to that child. Lullabies have been around for thousands of years. Anthropologists theorize that the first human singing was likely a lullaby: some sort of repetitive sound that had a calming effect. Silence is generally perceived as threatening; a fear of not knowing what might be there. Sound fills the void with familiarity and reassurance.

Researchers have taken up the study of music for infants. Songs were found to keep babies calm twice as long as baby talk speech. The explanation for the calming effect of music is called entrainment, where the child's body begins to follow the simple rhythms and melodic repetitions, instilling them in their breathing, heartrate, and emotional rhythm. Babies actually are carried away by music just as older kids and adults.

In the Western countries, most mothers speak to their children, and may be missing out the superior emotional benefits in music. In particular, nursery rhymes provide simplicity and repetition. Other studies reveal that singing to a child also helps the parent, by reducing frustration and emotional struggle in caring for the infant. They also show that playing music to an infant works well, but making your own music is just so much more personally beautiful. Don't miss the opportunity.

And the benefit goes on in the child's development, gaining musical skills even before they learn to walk and

talk, maybe mastering the rhythm band and learning to sing well with others at an early age. The benefits of music for an infant will travel with them for the rest of their lives.

Recreation Commission News

By Valerie Katkaveck, Chair

Winter activities include:

"Pollywogs" Youth Basketball program (to get kids ready for Frog Rock) will be starting in February! Download a registration form at the town website, eastford.org. The fee is only \$20 for 8 weeks. From Feb. 23 to April 12 - Tuesday nights at 6:30 at EES gym. This program is suggested for kids in grades K - 3. Please contact me at valkat@charter.net if you are interested in signing up your child or want to help with the coaching.

Yoga with Sue Orcott, Monday nights at 5:30 and Friday mornings at 8:15. **Gentle Yoga** is Thursday afternoons at 1 pm. All sessions are in the Town office building lower level. **Adult (over 18 please) Pick-Up Basketball**, Wednesday nights at 6:30 in the EES Gym.

Fiddle and Song Violin instruction and more meets on Mondays at EES from 3:30 to 5 pm and then from 6 to 9 pm.

We have ordered 4 new bricks this year for the memorial bench located at the school soccer field.

Thank You for your generous donations to the 5k and Fun Run fund raising events. This Spring we will start a SURVIVOR section, dedicated to those still fighting serious illnesses.

Note that the Rec Commission will have a part in March for folks interested in joining our dynamic commission.

Our next meeting is Wednesday February 10, at 2 pm in the Town Office Building. Consider participating - its your town - you can make things you like happen here!

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From the principal:

This month, a guidance counselor from Woodstock Academy will meet with eighth graders to discuss registration for ninth grade courses. The Eastford Board of Education recognizes Woodstock Academy as Eastford's designated high school. The Board's policy allows students who are accepted to Ellis Tech, Windham Tech, ACT (Arts at the Capitol Theater Magnet High School) or Killingly Vo-Ag to attend those high schools at no cost to families.

Parents may request that the Board of Education pay tuition at another public high school, but in order to be considered, this request must be in writing to the Board of Education.

During the month of February, the Sports Booster will sponsor its annual magazine fund-raiser. If you are planning to purchase or renew magazine subscriptions, please consider supporting our students.

We are accepting registrations for preschool and kindergarten for the 2016-17 school year. Registration forms may be found on the school's website (<http://www.eastfordct.org/documents.cfm>). Please contact the school office if you need further information.

Preschool Registration

If your child was born in 2012 or 2013, and you are interested in having him/her participate in Eastford's preschool during the 2016-2017 school year, please file a registration form. We cannot guarantee that there will be a spot for new registrants, but the Readiness Council, which oversees this program, would like to plan for the upcoming school year. Registration forms are available in the school office and on our website (<http://www.eastfordct.org/files/filesystem/registration%20form%202012.pdf>). Please submit one as soon as possible!

In addition to the registration form, the Readiness Council would be very grateful if parents of children born in 2012 or 2013 would fill out a Needs Assessment Form.

The data collected from parents, even those who choose not to send their children to preschool, are important to the Readiness Council. The Needs Assessment Form was mailed to families and can be found on the website. If you or somebody else has not received a Needs Assessment form in the mail, please call the school office (860-974-1130).

Kindergarten Registration

There is a registration form available in the school office and online for kindergarten (<http://www.eastfordct.org/files/filesystem/registration%20form%202012.pdf>). Children, who were born in 2011 or earlier, are eligible for kindergarten during the 2016-2017 school year. We will accept registration forms at any time. Students who are attending Eastford Elementary School's preschool do NOT have to re-register.



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6th Grade and Middle School History Teacher

Charlie Kernan

Happy New Year! I hope this note finds the reader well and ready for the exciting opportunities 2016 may bring you. As the middle school history teacher and 6th grade teacher, I have several activities to report on so far from the current school year.

In 8th grade history, we have been learning about topics regarding the American Revolution and our Road to the Civil War. We were able to experience first hand the Jonathan Trumbull House and the Nathan Hale House earlier this year. Many students were able to stand in the same stall that Nelson, George Washington's horse, would have stayed when Mr. Washington would visit Connecticut during the American Revolution. In class, we have had videoconferences directly from the American History Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. and these have led to lectures on Manifest Destiny and Native Americans. Discussion in class has revolved around the establishment of the American economy, slavery, and politics.

In 7th grade, we have recently been exploring the Islamic world. The highlight of this unit was a discussion with a graduate student in Egypt. Our lecturer discussed differences between Shiites and Sunnis. Students questioned her about current events and I believe the class was given an incredible opportunity to hear first hand a view of a culture we have so many questions about. The unit itself also showed geographically just how large the Islamic world is and where Muslims live.

7th graders also have been exposed to the Fall of the Roman Empire. We will begin our study of the Silk Road in January.

Our 6th graders have been able to study the Mayans, Aztecs, and Incas. We had a wonderful presentation from an adjunct professor at Harvard University on Ancient Native American tribes of South America.

Eastford Elementary also boasts a very strong girls basketball team with a young and exciting boys team. As you may know, these same girls played for the QVJC Soccer Championship back in November. The girls lost 1 - 0 to Canterbury. Lets hope our basketball teams have a chance to play for another championship!

Once again, all the best and I'll see you around town!



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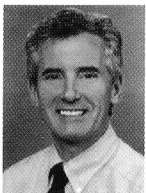
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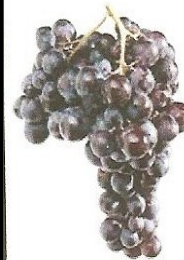
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Eastford Seniors

By Linda SM dos Santos

Area seniors ended 2015 listening to the glorious refrains from the Woodstock Academy Hill Top Singers. 106 neighbors took part in the December 15 Community Day event, which included a marvelous FREE turkey dinner prepared by Keri Buell & the volunteers from the Congregational Church of Eastford.

For the second year, thanks to the invention & efforts of the FIVE BELOW store in Dayville, & volunteers from the Congregational Church of Eastford & Eastford Senior Citizens (ESC), 39 grandchildren in need were provided clothing and gift items. In November, Eastford seniors (who are responsible for the care of their grandchildren) submitted the children's names. Gifts given after the Community Day event. We hope this "Grandparent Holiday Helper" program might become an annual event.

The Eastford Senior Citizens will begin their 2016 program with a **SENIOR BROWN BAG LUNCHEON** on **THURS., MARCH 17 AT 11 AM** at Eastford Town Office Building's lower level. SAVE the DATE.

Need help with laundry, housework, or grocery shopping? OR, a ride to doctor appointments, errands, or shopping? The Congregate Housing Services Program (CHSP) subsidizes services (based on need) includes: homemaking \$4.12/hour, Transportation \$5/hour, Assistance with care, etc. For more information, & to determine eligibility, call John O'Hara or Senior Resources - Agency on Aging 860-887-3561, 1-800-690-6998. Subsidized Services depend upon available dollars. CHSP is available at these senior housing sites: Salem Village in Brooklyn, Westfield Village in Danielson, Little River Acres in Putnam, and Gan-Aden 1&2 in Willimantic.

Affordable housing needs? There are two programs available:

1) The CT Rental Assistance Program (RAP) is the major state-supported program for assisting very-low-income families to afford decent, safe, & sanitary housing in the


private market. Participants find their own housing, including apartments, townhouses, & single-family homes. Funds are not always available, & clients are placed on a waiting list.

2) The CT "Elderly Rental Assistance Program" provides rental assistance to low-income elderly persons residing in state-assisted rental housing for the elderly. Such housing must comply with applicable state & local health, housing, building & safety codes. DOH contracts with not-for-profit organizations, as well as, housing authorities who provide rental subsidies in accordance with an approved contract. Income qualified Eastford seniors, who are having difficulty, in pursuing either program, call Bob Williams, Eastford Agent on Aging, 860-974-1034, 9-5 week days only.

AARP SMART DRIVER 1-DAY COURSES on FRI-DAYS 9 AM - 1 PM, FEB. 5, MARCH 4, OR APRIL 1

in the Meeting Room at Quinebaug Valley Regional Senior Ctr, 69 So. Main St., Brooklyn, CT. Cost: \$15 AARP Members, \$20 Non-Members, call for reservation, 860-7741243. In addition, TVCCA lunch available, promptly at 11:30 AM, Tuesday through Friday, must call **26** hours before to register 860-779-7074; federal senior financial assistance possible. Help with Medicare/Medicaid/Insurance & CHOICES Counseling on Mondays 9:30-1 PM Monday through Thursdays, call Tammy Harris, Marcia Manns, & Lisa Baxter for an appointment, 860-774-1243.

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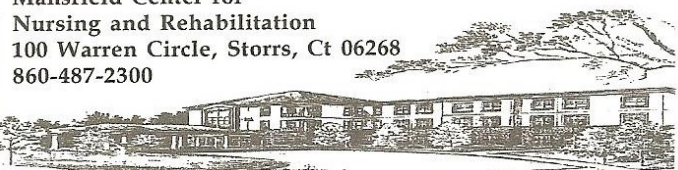


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Tips for Today

by Liz Ellsworth

Happy February!

Be a Valentine for your local Environment: Stack broken branches or your dead Christmas tree as shelter for some of the wild animals; feed birds, including suet; be sure outdoor pets have access to water (not frozen), or shovel out walking trails for the bigger critters in your yard. There are many small things you can do.

ATTENTION

All articles & news for The Communicator must be submitted to Deb Yazo:

E-mail: eastford.communicator@gmail.com

Deadline: 2nd Wednesday of each Month

Eastford Communicator Volunteers

Executive Editor	Carol Davidge
Composition/Layout	Deb Yazo
News Collection	Deb Yazo
Volunteers	Ruth Yulo
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All items for The Eastford Communicator must include submitter's name, address & telephone, for verification. All items submitted are subject to editing. The Communicator reserves the right to reject any submissions. Opinions expressed are those of the submitters and not necessarily those of The Communicator. The Communicator will not print items it regards as offensive or slanderous.

Dear Readers:

We hope you will contribute to The Eastford Communicator.

Advertising revenues do not cover printing and postage costs. The Communicator is Eastford's main source of news about local events, town government, committees, organizations. We need donors to support this effort if we are to continue. If you can, please send a donation. **Thank you!**

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The Volunteer Staff of The Communicator


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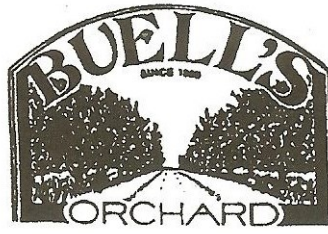
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