

Recreation Commission Report by Paige Burgess, Chair
December was a great month here in Eastford. Our Treats with Santa Event had a good turn out and it was great to see parents and the support for our town (*photo right*). Along with the Treats with Santa, our Light Fest was beautiful. Our winners were announced online first place White Lights wonderland, second Happy Holidays and Just Christmas Lights in third place. Thank you to everyone who has continue to support the Eastford Recreation Commission events and our town. We are working on upcoming events. Please look for events on our site and/or the display case in front of school/to side of town. Any question or concerns can be emailed to the recofeastfordct@gmail.com Please continue to stay safe by following COVID guidelines.



BELOW: EES Students, PTO & staff donated to its Annual Giving Tree to support the Eastford Food Pantry & folks in need through the year (EES Reports p4) . Shown below are some of the festive outfits by Grade 5 students, back row (l-r): Leah Talaga, Holly Dubina, Sofia Gillett, Mitchell Normann, Aiden Mitchell; front row (l-r): Nora Miller, Piper Moore, Aaron Minor.



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Every year, beautiful natural wreaths adorn the doors of the Eastford Public Library in the historic Ivy Glenn Memorial. They are made & donated by members of the Garden Club of Northeast Connecticut. Shown (right) is Eastford's Anne Latham, Garden Club Member, making a wreath for our Library. Thank You, Anne!



The Eastford Independent Fire Company provided a Holiday Parade along Eastford roads, with Mr. & Mrs. Santa, decorations, sound effects and cheers from onlookers (below left). Below right: Deputy Chief James Roy led off with Mr. & Mrs. Santa. **THANK YOU FIRST RESPONDERS** (report back cover; ET-271 Truck photo by Liz Scranton).



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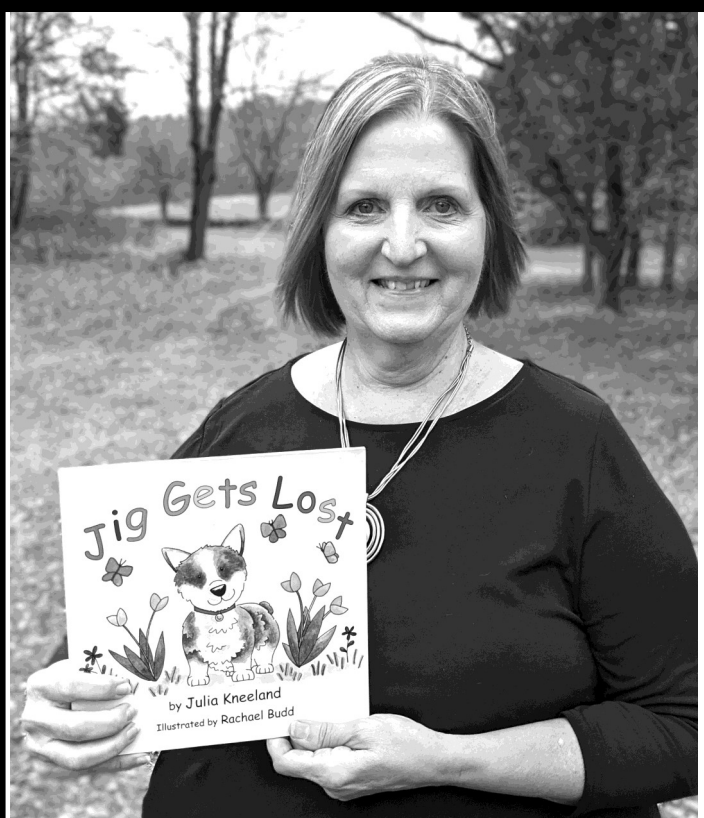
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Congratulations to author Julia Kneeland of Pomfret and illustrator Rachael Budd of Woodstock, for their "Jig Gets Lost" book which has been awarded the 2021 Royal Dragonfly Book Awards winners honorable mention in the pet and animal category. The Royal Dragonfly Book Awards is an international competition. "Jig Gets Lost" is an adventure story about a dog named Jig who lives in a big city and decides he wants to go exploring. It is a book for young readers. "Jig Gets Lost" is available from Amazon or visit Julie's website: juliakneeland.net.

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Short and Sweet by Deb Richards—First Selectman

December started with a flurry of activities! The BOS met for their first meeting and had a busy night! We welcomed Deb Lee co-chair of Eastford Conservation & Historic Preservation Commission who gave a comprehensive overview of the Conservation committee. It's history, projects and goals. It is nice to know we have such knowledgeable people with oversight of Eastford's preservation.

Eastford along with other towns in NE CT has received new solar digital speed awareness signs, currently posted on Westford and County Roads. Speeding is a known factor in many of our nation's fatal and serious-injury crashes. In Connecticut, an analysis of crash records from 2016 – 2019 showed that fifty percent (50%) of fatal and serious-injury crashes, where "exceeded speed limit" or "too fast for conditions" was a contributing factor, occurred on a rural, town-owned road. The program aims to address speed-related crashes on local rural roads by providing speed display signs to eligible municipalities to help reduce the number of speed related fatalities on rural roads. The signs will be moved periodically throughout town. They will not result in any personal vehicle tracking or tickets given. Their purchase was fully funded by the State.

Building maintenance was a hot topic last month- with the boiler project at EES still ongoing as they work to straighten out some kinks thought to be associated with the lines in the heating system. We are now discussing plans for a new school roof! The heating system at the TOB also experienced some issues and the TOB was without heat for 4 days. That issue has been resolved and was all covered under warranty. Thank you to our dedicated volunteer energy expert Paul Torcellini and the staff who had to work with coats on for a few days!

Business 'as usual' happens quickly with many items flowing through the TOB daily. Paramedic intercept contract has been renewed; tax collector will be holding a tax sale January 19, for more information go to the town website, WWW.townofeastford.com and type- tax sale -in the search bar; applications were received for the bookkeeper position, EMD position is still open, farm abatements were approved, maintenance of public records, building permits issued, records researched, gun permits accepted – even a marriage license applied for!! This just names a few of the everyday activities at your town office building.

We are looking for gardeners willing to help create gardens around the town office building and the library. This would involve cleaning up old plants and planting some easy to maintain shrubs and or flowers to brighten up the buildings! PW will help if any overgrown plants or shrubs need to be pulled out. If interested, please let us know at Selectmen@townofeastford.com Thank you EIFC, Inc., for your continued dedication to the town and for the great Santa drive-by! What a great way to spread holiday cheer!

I have seen many bright stars this past month! The quality and dedication of our Eastford volunteers shine every day in all the work they do for our town. All our boards and commissions are run by qualified, dedicated volunteers. They are the true engine that keeps our town running. To all the staff, members of our boards, commissions, and schools. Thank YOU! We would not be Eastford without your guidance, support, caring and shared knowledge!

"Write it on your heart that every day is the best day in the year." —Ralph Waldo Emerson
Wishing you all a happy, healthy new year!
Deb

COVID INFO SOURCES: The Northeast District Department of Health coronavirus webpage has been updated to include what we currently know about at-home test kits, masks, and new recommendations from the CDC regarding isolation and quarantine. As you well know, information changes by the minute and we will make updates as necessary. Our website informs visitors on information regarding the distribution of kits and masks being managed by State DPH, DEMHS, and local municipalities. Schools will receive separate supplies of at-home test kits in January. More information to follow.

<https://www.nddh.org/services/emergency-preparedness/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/>.

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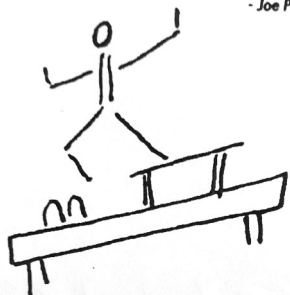
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News and Notes from the Superintendent's Office by Donna P. Leake, PhD

For me, the beginning of a new year is a time to celebrate all accomplishments and to look forward to making all that is good even better! As we move into 2022, COVID-19, winter weather, the economy, and family and personal issues will continue to challenge us. The stress and uncertainty caused by COVID-19 has affected everyone's social, emotional, and physical well-being to varying degrees. I firmly believe, however, that the Eastford learning community will continue to support each other through these challenging times through a renewed commitment to retaining, as its highest priorities: maintaining a positive attitude and exercising safety protocols and ongoing respect for each other.

At the December Board Education meeting, the BOE: (1) Approved the appointment of Stephen Bowen for his second term as BOE Chair, Terry Cote for her second term as BOE Vice Chair and Adam Minor for his first term as BOE Secretary. Congratulations and thanks to all BOE members for their commitment to providing quality education programs for all Eastford students; (2) Approved revisions to several policies, including non-discrimination, sexual discrimination, and parent communication; (3) Approved a transfer of funds to support the increased need for substitute coverage; (4) Approved the continuation of the contract with E.O. Smith High School; (5) Approved the submission of the ESSER II and ARP Special Education Recovery Activities Grants; (6) Reviewed the proposed 2022-23 School Calendar. This draft is posted on the homepage of the EES website. It is anticipated that the BOE will approve the calendar at its regular meeting on January 13, 2022.

As a reminder, on behalf of the staff and students, I will be presenting the Superintendent's proposed 2022-23 education budget to the BOE at its regular meeting on January 13, 2022. The BOE Finance Committee will review this proposal on January 27, 2022 and February 3, 2022, both at 5:30pm. Although not open to public comment, the public is invited and encouraged to attend these BOE Finance Committee meetings. The BOE anticipates approving the 2022-23 education budget for submission to the Town at its regular meeting on February 10, 2022.

In other news, the application process for the Ethel Cushing Gardner Scholarship is now open. This is a scholarship open to high school seniors and college level students who live in Eastford and have a serious interest in music. Additional information is available on the homepage of the EES website. All the best for a safe and healthy 2022. As always, never hesitate to contact me at dleake@eastfordct.org.

From the Principal by Carole McCombe

Happy New Year from the staff at Eastford Elementary School! I hope that everyone enjoyed the holiday break and was able to relax and rejuvenate! We are eager to jump into a new year, refreshed and enthusiastic about new learning and the experiences that await both students and staff. Recently, our students participated in our annual Giving Tree collection organized by our Parent Teacher Organization. Students donate money and receive a snowflake to place on our Giving Tree. Students learn about supporting one another and the importance of taking an active part in their community. The money collected will support the Eastford Food Pantry and it will be used to support local families in need throughout the year. I would like to thank all the local organizations that assisted us in supporting our families with toys, food and other necessities throughout the holiday season. Your generosity is greatly appreciated by all! I also want to extend a heartfelt thanks to our music teacher, Mr. Tomanelli, for spreading cheer just before our holiday break. He organized a virtual performance to bring holiday and popular songs to all our students. The performance showcased our eighth graders playing on ukuleles – something they have been working on for the past few weeks during their music classes. Their practice paid off and everyone enjoyed the holiday festivities!

All high school students are reminded that if Eastford Elementary School is closed due to inclement weather, transportation is not provided to the high schools that Eastford residents attend. At times, we may initially declare a delayed opening to give us enough time to properly consider road conditions in Eastford and surrounding towns, but then the delay may change to a closing once we have this additional information. Please check our website (www.eastfordct.org) on days that you are wondering about the status of Eastford Elementary School and out of town transportation. WINY, WFSB and NBC CT all broadcast our status as well.


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FOOD PANTRY by Steve & Karen Broderick As coordinators of the town's food pantry, we give thanks for the many folks who have helped keep our shelves well stocked this winter, making our jobs so much easier. Our heartfelt thanks go out to Elizabeth Platt and Martha Burgess for coordinating a food drive at the Eastford Library, to the Congregational Church of Eastford for their donation of gift cards and holiday wreaths, and to Jeff Sulloway & Jeff Conrad for the food drive at their annual harvest holiday gathering. An extra special thank you goes to our town's very generous Secret Santa who helped four families have a good Christmas this year. Financial donations are critical and allow us to purchase essential items that are missing from our pantry. Thank you to David Bucholz, Gary Kendrick, the Ashford Lake Property Owners' Association, Nancy & Anthony Galeota, Allan & Joyce Hernberg, John & Maureen Tacy, Mike Schultz, Claire & Richard Mackowiak, Gerald Sazama, and David & Christine Hustus. We also want to thank the several anonymous donors who have brought food and/or financial donations to the town office building. It is very much appreciated. Part of the definition of a real community is that we willingly help one another out in times of need. At a time of year that can be particularly difficult to make ends meet, Eastford has once again proven that we are a close-knit community of caring, generous people. Many, many thanks to you all. For those who would like to donate, grocery store gift cards are always welcome, or checks can be made out to the Town of Eastford with Food Pantry on the memo line and mailed to the Selectmen's Office, 16 Westford Road, Eastford 06242. Eastford residents in need who would like to avail themselves of the food pantry can place a confidential call anytime to Steve or Karen at (860) 974-1618.

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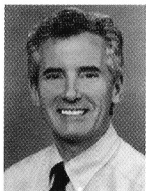
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Eastford Seniors by Linda SM dos Santos
A Great Big Thank You to all the volunteers, businesses & nonprofits that helped local seniors in 2021. We hope that 2022 brings good health, joy, & friendship to everyone. For those who need help, there is the CT Energy Assistance Program which helps homeowners & renters who meet income & asset guidelines with their winter heating bills. For details call 211 or Eversource directly at 860-286-2828. The Quinebaug Valley Senior Citizens Center (QV), the last remaining Regional Senior Center in CT, serves seniors in Eastford, Pomfret, Thompson, Woodstock, Killingly, Putnam, Brooklyn, Canterbury, Sterling, & Plainfield. Call 860-774-1243, for yearound activities such as Fitness Over Fifty Exercise; knitting, card playing, & quilting groups; CHIOCE counseling, Medicare/Medicaid insurance info; & locating Veteran or Community help. Spot a stroke Fast: Face drooping, Arm Weakness, Speech Difficulty, or Sudden Weakness of the leg, confusion, trouble seeing in one eye, dizziness, or Sudden severe headache with no known cause; IT'S TIME TO CALL 911 or [StrokeAssociation.org/warning signs](http://StrokeAssociation.org/warning-signs), for more details. Let's stay healthy, warm, & active in 2022!

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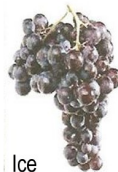


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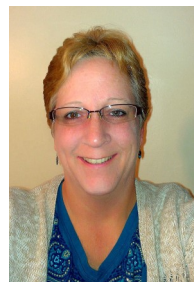
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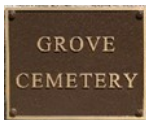
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Trustees' Meeting:

Tuesday, March 15, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. at the T.O.B.

Board of Corporators Annual Meeting:

Tuesday, April 5, 2022 (tentative)

Board of Trustees: Alex Kowalchuk, Scott Huri, Lauren Anderson, Herman Barlow, David Barlow, Carolyn Hazard, Linda Torgeson, Rick Torgeson

Kindly consider assisting the Eastford Grove Cemetery Association in its pursuit of efficient perpetual care of the Grove Cemetery. We are a non-profit group that does not receive funding from the Town of Eastford. A tax deductible donation from you will help us meet present and future beautification and maintenance requirements. Contribution in any amount will allow us to continue to meet the goal of providing a well-maintained, respectable final resting place for your loved ones.

Additionally, you could leave a gift to the Eastford Grove Cemetery Association in your will or living trust, known as a bequest. This allows you to offer future support without giving up assets today. Or, you may also wish to consider making "The Grove Cemetery Association" the recipient of a memorial donation ("in lieu of flowers").

We appreciate your consideration of our appeal and welcome any questions or concerns regarding the cemetery operation. Questions?

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Dear Readers:

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Thank you for your support. Carol Davidge, Editor

Scout Troop 92 Report (photo back cover)

Activities:

In early December Scouts had instruction in fire starting for cook fires. Two patrols competed building a fire and boiling water. This was followed by a hot cocoa celebration. At the next Scout meeting, knot tying was covered. Scouts learned the best way to tie the Clove Hitch, Two Half Hitches, Taut line Hitch and the Square Knot. Afterwards there was a Clove Hitch competition. Jacob Murphy from Eastford won by tying six Clove Hitches in thirty seconds, a new record.

These knots are secure, yet still easy to untie. Coming up next: The Bowline and Sheet bend. For information, E-mail: nordyl177@gmail.com

Nord Yakovleff Ast Sct Mstr, Cory Blanchette Scout Master
Chris Murphy Ast Sct Mstr, Kurt van Heinigen Cubmaster
Doug Nemeth Committee Chairman

KINDNESS REPORTS:

Rebecca Gurland, Steven and Hannah Kitson, children filling Jody Blanchette's Holiday Books for Kids (p3), Mike Norman, Deb Richards, Jeannine Spink, Debbie Yazo, and others who met needs of Eastford's residents.

Eastford - A Connecticut Best Small Town

Connecticut Magazine's cover story in March 1993 showed Eastford with Bowens Garage, the Ivy Glenn, cows, trees and people walking around our lovely village. Rankings were based on quality of life, affordability, good schools, low crime rate, leisure and other measures. Those qualities remain today.

Information: www.eastfordct.org/townofeastford

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See also article in Willimantic Chronicle, Jan 23, 2021

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EASTFORD INDEPENDENT FIRE CO. NO 1 by Jeannine Spink

Although COVID-19 and its' variants are still around, we all need to be vigilant by getting vaccinations, boosters, wearing masks and distancing where appropriate. Members of the rescue squad are not always aware of our potential exposure to COVID when responding to an emergency. If you call "911" with a suspicion or a definite diagnosis, please inform the dispatcher. They will relay that information to the first responders and ambulance. All responders to medical emergencies and motor vehicle accidents are dressed in full and appropriate turnout gear. We are here to keep you safe, but we look to you to be forthcoming with your information to keep us safe as well.

On December 15th, active and veteran members, along with their families, enjoyed an evening of relaxation, good food, and camaraderie to celebrate the holidays. We participated in the "Count the Candy" jars and "Yankee Swap" for fun. One of the highlights of the evening was the number of non-perishables we collected within our ranks that was donated to the Eastford Food Pantry to help support residents less fortunate than we are. It is a rare occasion that the Company, as a whole, sits down to an evening such as this. We welcomed our Veteran members who worked hard to get us to the level we are today.

"YOU KNOW WHO" brought laughter and cheers to all, young and old on a ride-through town on Sunday, December 19th. It's a known fact that Santa has plenty to prepare for and has a habit of getting "side-tracked", so Mrs. Claus came along to keep him on task. Santa and Mrs. Claus were escorted around on decorated EIFC apparatus. Our Christmas wishes were passed on to the town through his efforts and we hope all enjoyed. Who knows, maybe next year the Claus' visit will grow by having a couple of elves join the fun.

The first article for 2022 will have a breakdown of the number of calls the EIFC had and what they were for in 2021.

Winter is almost here with snow, ice and cold temperatures. Please clearly mark your driveways with the green, reflective, house number signs so we can respond to your needs quickly and efficiently. If you need new ones, or replace the numbers, they can be obtained any Wednesday night at 7:00 at the firehouse.

One of the biggest concerns for this heating season is "CARBON MONOXIDE – THE SILENT KILLER". The colorless, odorless and tasteless gas is a byproduct of burning organic fuels in the forms of household appliances and equipment fueled with gas, oils, coal, kerosene and wood. Prime examples are faulty furnaces, water heaters, space heaters, car exhausts, charcoal grills, lanterns, clothes dryers, ovens, fireplaces/woodstoves, and snow blowers. Early symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning often mimic the flu – headache, nausea, unclear thinking, temperature, shortness of breath and weakness. Severe symptoms can lead to convulsions, unconsciousness and possible death. A good indicator of exposure is if members of a family, even pets all present with symptoms at the same time. Call "911" immediately, leave your home and do not open doors or windows, if you suspect Carbon Monoxide poisoning. The EIFC will respond and test to establish the source of the carbon monoxide exposure and make their recommendations.

Thank you to all who have generously donated to the EIFC during 2021. Your donations are helping us maintain our training and equipment requirements.
HAVE A HAPPY, HEALTHY AND PROSPEROUS 2022

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NOTE: Some articles will appear next month due to space limits.



Scouts in Troop 92 compete in Knot tying. Shown are Jacob Murphy (left), with Owen, Cody, John. (story p7)