



OUR TOWN

SERVING THE VILLAGES OF BALTIC, HANOVER AND VERSAILLES
IN THE BEAUTIFUL SHETUCKET RIVER VALLEY

VOLUME XVIII
ISSUE VII
JULY 2008

INFORMATION * NEWS * OPINIONS

WATER. WATER EVERYWHERE!

Just a few facts about our most recent water emergency. In the news it was stated that the Town of Sprague had 10 days of water left and the Department of Public Health ordered the Water and Sewer Authority to begin using wells 4 and 5 to help the situation; this is a temporary hook up to the system. You might ask, rightly so, why didn't the WSA use these wells before? The answer is that the WSA has been requesting Department of Public Health to use these wells since sometime in March. Our engineering firm prepared a detailed report on the hook up and use of wells 4 and 5. We were in the process of making the necessary connections when Well 1 began to fail. It took the failure of well 1 to get a water emergency declared

and DPH directing us to use 4 and 5 immediately. Right now with the work to permanently hook up 4 and 5 in progress, the immediate water requirements of the town will be met. Another issue is that the Department of Environmental Protection has not granted the WSA a diversion permit to use wells 4 and 5. The WSA still needs to obtain a diversion permit from the DEP. The diversion permit ensures that water resources aren't depleted in nearby areas forcing other user's wells to go dry. It is a complicated process and can be very costly. The WSA knew that water supplies were getting low last year and contracted a

company to drill a well (2A) next to well 2 in the Baltic well field. The well was drilled last year and can provide up to 49 gallons per minute. However the DPH will not let us use this well until we can prove that the well is not affected by the Shetucket River. This requires a full year of testing before being allowed to use this well. In the interim we could install a filtration plant on the well but this is a costly option and we are trying to keep the cost of water low as we can. Both the DEP and the DPH are currently working with the Sprague Water & Sewer Authority to resolve these issues.

The Sprague Water & Sewer Authority

EMERGENCY NOTICE: WATER ADVISORY

Issued by Todd Hastings, Superintendent
Sprague Water and Sewer Authority

To all water customers of the Town of Sprague:

The Water Supply Emergency Ordinance #2007-1 located in the Town Hall is still in effect and the following still applies:

1. Prohibiting sprinkling, watering of lawns, gardens, flowers, plants or any other vegetation.
2. Prohibiting washing of motor vehicles, boats or trailers.
3. Prohibiting filling or cleaning of swimming or wading pools.
4. Prohibiting cleaning of outdoor surfaces of all buildings or structures, sidewalks, driveways and other outdoor surfaces.

Anyone caught disregarding these restrictions could be fined not more than \$250 per violation.

If these restrictions are not complied with, the next step would be to truck water from outside vendors at our customer's expense.

Help us help you!

HEAR YE! HEAR YE!

TOWN MEETING

MONDAY
JUNE 30

7 P.M.

SAYLES ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL

Bring your cooperative
community spirit and be a
part of what makes
Sprague
a Great Place to Live

OUR TOWN

CONSERVATION COMMISSION UPDATE

Hello once again fellow Sprague citizens. I hope that you are enjoying your summer and some family fun. I just want to continue to keep you posted on the goings-on of the Sprague Conservation Commission. Our team of conservation volunteers has been busy at the River Park. We have been spreading loam and grass seed. **Thank you very much to those who have pitched in to help.** Please remember that anyone can call me if they can donate a little bit of time in order to make a difference in their town. We hope by now you are seeing the fruits of our efforts. There is also work being done around the corner, you will soon see a new stairway going up to the top of the headrace from the River

Park. The park is an ongoing project mostly accomplished though a combination of volunteer help and grant money. Come down and enjoy the park, have a picnic, fish, or just experience the peace and quiet of the river. Now, on to the Mukluk issue. I hope that Sprague citizens and their families have been enjoying the beauty, tranquility and peace that characterize this important section of our river valley. To everyone who has enjoyed hiking, biking, fishing, or recreating on this wonderful property **NOW IS THE TIME TO PRESERVE IT... NOW AND FOREVER...FOR US, OUR CHILDREN, AND THEIR CHILDREN!** For all those who have asked what can I do to help, the answer is simple; come out and vote **YES** on **Tuesday July 22** at the referendum to designate 236 acres of the 278 acre Mukluk Property as a permanent, passive recreation area. In return, the town will receive \$500,000 from the State of Connecticut to place into the General Fund.

Don't assume that others will get it done, we need every vote. Once it's gone, it's gone forever. You can help, even with just a call to your neighbor reminding them to vote. Or, if you would like to ask how you can help more directly, please call me at (860) 822-9808 or e-mail me at donaldboushee@sbcglobal.net. Together we can make an incredible difference in **OUR WORLD.**

Also, don't forget that our next hikes are scheduled for July 13 and 27; they will leave from the Gristmill parking lot at 10 a.m. The hike on the 13 would be a great opportunity before the vote...to come up and experience the Mukluk Property, so that you can truly appreciate the importance of this issue. The hike will be led by myself and by our First Selectman Cathy Osten.

Have a great summer,
~Don Boushee, Chairman

**MUKLUK HIKES
JULY 13 AND 27
LEAVE GRIST MILL 10 A.M.
Dress ACCORDINGLY**

PARK AND REC REPORTS SUMMER FUN

THANK YOU! We had a perfect day the our annual Shetucket River Fest!!!! We had a good turn out, and plenty of help. Thanks to all that came out. We would like to thank the following for their donations: Norwich Tire, 72 Degrees, Sharky's Pizza, and Travis Jakan.

We would also like to thank the following children that were a BIG help to us: Cristian, Jasmeen, Selena Calderon, Gregory Dziekan, Kelsie Erickson, Shannon Foley, Josh Paul, Alex & Hanah Richardson.

SUMMER PROGRAM Our Summer Program will run from July 7 to 25. We will have having science/arts, sports, and Karate/flag football. Instructors from the Hidden Dragon will be conducting the karate portion of our program. The cost for the three weeks is \$36; scholarships available. Call Noreen at (860) 822-1829 or Barbara at (860) 822-3000 ext 201.

Parents are to provide snack/lunch and a drink Mondays through Thursdays; on Fridays we will provide pizza and a drink. Register as soon as possible as we will an accurate count for the Karate instructors.

ROPES COURSE Park and Rec. received a grant for a ropes course, and we have invited the children interested in helping out with the skate park. We would like to thank Penny Newbury for helping us obtain the grant.

Anyone girl's interested in playing on a summer softball league please e-mail me at noreenfoley@sbcglobal.net.

OUTDOOR FUN Don't forget about the grills down at the Shetucket River Park. They are their for your use. Also, the Boy Scouts have been busy making trails down at the Mukluk, pack a lunch and go see the beautiful work they've done there.

If you would like to organize a family day filled with a hike and then a cook-out at the Shetucket River Park contact either Don Boushee or me, and I will help organize something.

VOLUNTEERS WELCOME Park and Rec is looking for volunteers. If you have any ideas that you would like to submit for our Fall Festival contact me.

~Noreen Foley

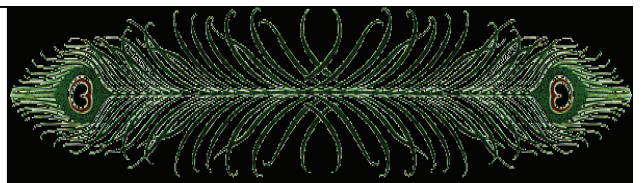
OUR TOWN STAFF

Sprague ~ Our Town is a free monthly publication of the Town of Sprague, serving the communities of Baltic, Hanover and Versailles. Primarily funded by the Town, support is also provided by paid advertisements.

Opinions expressed in Sprague ~ Our Town are not necessarily those of town officials or the community at large, but solely reflect those of the writer.

Submissions may be edited for clarity and format as necessary. Libelous or obscene materials are not permitted.

Editor: Amy Lynn Reifsnnyder
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Production Staff: Jeannette Bastien; Al Hoffman, Rita Grenier, Al Grenier, Barbara Robitaille, John Ellis, Joe Osowski, Richard Waterman, Ruth Clark, Dennison Allen, and whoever else wanders through the room the day we collate, **USUALLY THE LAST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH, 8:30 A.M. TO ?** Feel free to volunteer! Good storytellers welcome. Information: (860) 456-1082; OurTownNews@gmail.com.



Mukluk Referendum
“Help Save the Shetucket River Valley”
Vote Yes on July 22

On July 22 the voters and taxpayers of the Town of Sprague will be asked to make an historic decision, whether or not to place 236 acres of the 278 acre Mukluk Property into permanent “open space.” We would do this by conveying to the State of Connecticut a conservation “easement” or “restriction.” In return the State of Connecticut will give to the town the sum of \$500,000, which would be placed into the town’s general fund and could be used for whatever purposes the Town sees fit.

Now I’d like to give you some facts. First the bad news, a portion of the Mukluk Property (17 acres) is polluted with lead pellets from a skeet shooting range and will cost about \$4,000,000 to clean up.

Now, the good news. Despite rumors to the contrary Gina McCarthy, Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection, is not requiring the Town of Sprague to use its tax dollars for the clean up. Rather, she expects us to accomplish the task by applying for state and federal funding. Last year we were awarded a \$240,000 Environmental Protection Agency grant and have already started the clean-up process.

Second, even though the Mukluk Property is not connected to a public road, there are some in town who are recommending that the majority of the Mukluk Property be used for development, instead of open space. Included in their suggested uses is a 120-acre commercial gravel mining operation. They insist that the town could make a fortune; they also insist that commercial gravel mining is compatible with “open space.” I’m not sure that the dozens of families who live along Pautipaug Hill Road (the closest public access) and who would be subject to the endless parade of gravel trucks passing by their houses daily would agree.

While some in town have been busy building bridges over streams, laying out trail systems, applying for grants and proceeding with the lead contamination clean-up at the Mukluk Property (all at no expense to our citizens), others have been busy either scaring taxpayers or promising them a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Both scenarios are equally fraudulent. To set aside this beautiful natural resource for hiking, fishing, hunting, camping, kayaking, horseback riding and community events will cost the average taxpayer 30 cents a week for 20 years. However, it would cost millions to buy equipment, build and repair roads, prepare site plans, pay attorney fees and restore the landscape after destroying it if we decide to mine gravel.

Preserving this spectacular natural asset is part of a much larger goal, namely that of saving the entire Sprague portion of the Shetucket River Valley. Some citizens have already stepped forward...offering to place over 400 acres of their own land into conservation if the Mukluk Property remains open space. Volunteers have also stepped forward, offering to help with this project in any way possible. This is a tremendous opportunity to save 4.5 miles of the most pristine river valley left in Connecticut.

It’s time we take a stand; it’s time we present ourselves, our children and our grandchildren with a gift...an entire river valley. We must decide whether to leave a legacy for future generations by which they will know who we were, what we stood for, and what we believed in....or dig gravel. The choice is ours. Please vote YES on July 22.

~Don Boushee
Chairman, Sprague Conservation Commission

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OUR TOWN

BRANCHING OUT...Notes from the Tree Warden

Five more trees got planted in June. These maples were put along a section on Bushnell Hollow Road to eventually fill in a canopy over the road and provide great shade and help cool the drive and the residences. During these hot summer days the temperature change is dramatically noticeable between open, un-shaded roads and those that have a nice full tree canopy over them. Tree canopies are part of what I envision as part of the character of rural communities like Sprague.

I removed a lot of signs last month. For those who are not yet informed, CT Statute 23-65 prohibits the attaching of any sign or advertisement to any public tree, telephone pole or light pole. I recommend using single stakes or the wire frames instead.

Once again I sincerely thank residents and neighbors who donated flowers and bulbs for the island at the intersection of Hanover-Versailles Road and Main Street. A special thanks to Dick Waterman for once again donating and planting dahlias in the island.

Now that we are in the new fiscal year, we have the funds to start pruning and removing trees along the roads as necessary. If there is a tree that you are concerned about, call the First Selectman at (860) 822-3000 or the Tree Warden at (860) 822-9656.

~Dave Gustafson

AT THE LIBRARY

Summer Reading Program: I SPY begins **July 8** with Vanilla Swirl, Variety Show and Flea Circus, 1 p.m.; **July 10** Connecticut Invents, 11 a.m.; **July 15** Comedy Magician Chick Kelman, 1 p.m.; **July 17** Science Sense-ations, 1 p.m. **July 22** Jugglers Delight and Unicycling with Craig Wise, 1 p.m.

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11 a.m. Story Time and Something Special. **Wednesdays** 6 p.m., Teen Night at the Library.

visit ctsprague.org/library.htm, call (860) 822-3012 or visit the library.



You're Invited!

Pastor Wanda J. Greaves invites the community to join in Sunday worship at Versailles United Methodist Church, 4 Church Street, Sundays at 10:30 a.m. Sunday School is held during worship. The church is wheelchair accessible. Coffee and fellowship follow the service. Information: (860) 822-9439.

THANK YOU!

The Sprague Garden Club would like to thank everyone who supported our annual plant sale in May.

Due to your generous support we will be able to continue giving out monetary awards to our local graduating students, and also maintain the gardens at the grist mill and around Lord's Gazebo. We also would like to thank the town crew for readying the garage for the sale and also to all the members that volunteered in making this year's sale a great success.

Our year ended with members meeting at the River Park for a summer picnic. Although the night was a bit cold we all enjoyed the park and would like to thank all the people involved in creating this nice area for people to use for such activities. It is a nice addition to our town.

The club will not have meetings in July or August, but members will be busy caring for and maintaining the planters and gardens. We will also be touring local gardens and learn to make leaf moldings.

Anyone interested in joining us can call Jan at (860) 822-6520 or Carole at (860) 822-8918. Our club is a great way to learn about gardening and to get involved in the community.

Have a safe summer with family and friends.

~Jan Settje, Secretary



FROM THE EDITOR: Deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month. The writer's name, address and a contact phone number must be included with each submission. Because the focus of Our Town is community events, there may be times when there is simply not enough space to run opinions.

Submissions may be e-mailed to

OurTownNews@gmail.com, or mailed to Town Hall, P.O. Box 677, Baltic, CT 06330.

~Amy Lynn Reifsnnyder, (860) 456-1082

FROM THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Dear Citizens of Sprague:

The professional community that comprises the Sprague Public Schools recognizes and embraces student performance on the CT Mastery Tests (CMT Grades 3-8) and the CT Academic Performance Test (CAPT Grade 10).

Student performance on these standardized tests has been the top priority of the Board of Education’s strategic plan for the past five years and will continue to be well into the future. Our 3-8 graders and 10 graders have met the NCLB standards in reading, writing and math for the past five years.

We think it is safe to say that as parents we want much more for our children than for them to do well on a single test that is taken once a year. We expect our schools to teach our children to be well-rounded human beings, physically fit and successful as global citizens.

To accomplish these goals and to share the results with our community, we asked our administrators to develop a more comprehensive type of school district report card. It is our hope that the attached report card* gives you a better understanding of what we do for our children and what they accomplish at Sayles School. We believe you will find the overall performance of our students in so many different ways, very encouraging and very valuable.

Please tell us what you think by e-mailing us at supt@saylesschool.org.

Thank you for your continued support. Have a terrific summer!

~Cheryl Blanchard, chairman; Julie Fish, vice chairman; Janet Piezzo, secretary; David Giroux, public relations; Michael Smith; Carmella Turner; Terri Woronecki

**(Editor’s Note: Because of space limitations, the entire report card is not included in this month’s edition of Our Town. Copies of the complete 5-page report are available at Town Hall and from the Board of Education.)*

Sayles School Report Card

I. Background Knowledge (Grades Pre-k to 8)

Core Knowledge Sequence: Taught: 257 Units
Target Met?: Not available; baseline year

IIa. Connecticut Mastery Test (Grades 3 to 8)

Percent at Proficient (Level 3):
Mathematics 20.9; Reading 12.9; Writing 22.0
Percent at Goal (Level 4)
Math 35.7; Reading 44.0; Writing 36.0
Percent at Advanced (Level 5)
Math 21.7; Reading, 21.5; Writing 18.0

IIb. Connecticut Academic Proficiency Test (Grade 10)

Percent at or above Proficient
Math 100; Reading 100; Writing 84.0; Science 92.3
Note: Sprague School District has met the Adequate Yearly Progress standard under the federal No Child Left Behind legislation each year since 2002-2003, the first year of implementation.

III. Percent Parent Attendance at Conferences

Fall K-6: 85; K-8 74.5; Spring K-6 89.5; K-8 78.3

IV. Attendance

Average daily attendance (as of May 27, 2008) 95.23%

V. Enrichment (Grades K-8)

Percent of students participating in enrichment: 52 (164 total)

VI. Intervention (Grades K-8)

Percent of students participating in intervention: 55.6 (Total 176)

VII. Extracurricular Activities (Grades K-8)

Percent of students participating in extracurricular activities: 61.3 (Total 194)

VIII. Early Literacy

Year-end results not available at this time.