



OUR TOWN

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

INFORMATION * NEWS

VOLUME XIX
ISSUE V
MAY 2009

From the Desk of the First Selectman

Please **VOTE** at the May 5 Referendum!

It's my great pleasure to report that the Town's budget for 09/10 is recommended to have NO mill rate increase. The Boards of Finance, Education and Selectmen worked extremely hard and held several meetings, with individual town departments and as reviewing bodies, to insure that citizens would not see a mill rate increase this year.

I urge every person who is an elector of the Town of Sprague, and any citizen of the age of 18 years or more, who is liable to the Town for taxes on an assessment of not less than \$1,000 on the last completed grand list to vote on the Sprague budget on May 5. Voting hours are 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the Baltic Fire House on Bushnell Hollow Road (Route 138).

Sprague usually has a high voter turnout in comparison with other area towns, and this is looked on quite favorably by area legislators who see this as one of the indicators of a concerned, active community. So please join me in voting on May 5.

~ Cathy Osten, First Selectman

SAYLES SCHOOL HONOR ROLL

Sayles School announces the Honor Roll for the second marking period, November 24, 2008 to February 27, 2009.

Grade 8 High Honor: Jillian Boisclair, Jillian Provost, Bryce Hill

Honor Roll: Joseph Walczyk, Emalee Shrewsbury, Ariana Stewart, Felicia Cloke, Adam Izbicki, Cristina Knowles, Jared Riley

Grade 7 High Honor: John Baldino, Daniel Briggs, Jacob Provost, Anne Woronecki

Honor Roll Grade 7: Rachel Fish, Ben Giroux, Timothy Paz, Kayla Davis, Tim Jorsz, Hannah Potter, Sara Tiffany, Mason Thibodeau, Kevin Zeller.

CHAIR CAR VAN AVAILABLE

The Senior Center's Chair Car Van is now available for door-to-door transportation to shopping and medical appointments, Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Please call at least 48 hours in advance to schedule a ride. Pharmacy and banking stops may be made, too. (860) 822-3000, ext. 203.

JOB SEEKERS: CAREER EXPRESS AT LIBRARY

Tuesday, May 26

10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Career Express at Sprague Public Library

Supported by the Connecticut Department of Labor, Career Express staff will be available to assist job seekers conduct online job searches, learn more about other job search resources and Web sites, or have their resume critiqued by a certified professional resume writer. Staff will also be available to answer questions on job searches and interviewing.

Information on the Department of Labor/CT Works career centers and other services will be available.

This service is free and open to anyone.

Look for the Winnebago in the Grist Mill lot.

(Additional parking behind Town Hall.)

MEMORIAL DAY PARADE MONDAY, MAY 25 12:30 PM

Our parade will start at the former Baltic Mill lot and will go approximately 1.1 miles through the village of Baltic on Main Street, River Street, and part of High Street, ending at the War Memorial Park.



SUPPORT OUR VETERANS

OUR TOWN

CONSERVATION COMMISSION UPDATE

Welcome to Spring. I'm sure we are all looking forward to warm sunny weather. I'm looking forward to the River Park coming alive along with the rest of our town. Remember to come out and enjoy the River Fest on May 31 sponsored by the Rec Committee. I'm sure it will be a blast to come floating down through our beautiful river valley on the Shetucket. If you haven't yet enjoyed this experience, please do yourself a favor and float on down to the River Park and enjoy a picnic, farmer's market and some fun.

Also there will be a hike up to the Preserve at 10 a.m. leaving from the River Park. We will hike up to the vista and enjoy the sites.

There will be people canoeing down from Willimantic as part of the "Source to Sea" event sponsored by the Last Green Valley. You can pick up brochures at the town hall. Events run from April 1 to July 31. They start from the headwaters of the Quinnebaug and Shetucket rivers and wind slowly down to the Thames River and Long Island Sound.

There will be a volunteer project of planting trees around the Baltic Reservoir. If anyone would like to help please let Cathy Osten or me know. Please continue to enjoy and appreciate our lovely town and our River Valley. It truly is a small part of this Last Green Valley that some people speak of.

Any questions or concerns, or if you want to get involved, contact me at donaldboushee@sbcglobal.net.

~ Don Boushee, SCC Chairman

POSTAL RATES TO INCREASE

Effective May 11, the price of a first-class stamp for a one-ounce letter will be 44 cents.

Forever Stamps are currently available for 42 cents each.

A complete list of current pricing and the listing of rates is available online at usps.com. Local postmasters may also be able to answer most questions.

LADIES AUXILIARY NEWS

The regular meeting of the Baltic Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary was held on Wednesday, April 8. The ladies hope everyone had a safe and healthy winter. It's nice to see the grass beginning to turn green and the trees budding.

Several items were discussed for fund raising. The main event of the year will again be the Holly Jolly Bazaar on Saturday, November 28. Mark your calendars. Tables will be available for rental.

The next meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, June 10**, at 7 p.m. at the Fire House. Anyone interested in joining the Auxiliary is welcome, as they are always looking for new members and new ideas.

~Jeannette Deschamps, 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, articles, commission notes and other items of town-wide interest will take priority over personal opinions. Annual budget considerations may affect page appropriations as well. Submissions may be e-mailed to OurTownNews@gmail.com, or mailed to Town Hall, P.O. Box 677, Baltic, CT 06330. Info: (860) 617-2986.

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 ; **Editorial Assistant:** Colette Hoffman
Production Staff: Jeannette Bastien, Al Hoffman, Rita Grenier, Al Grenier, Barbara Robitaille, John Ellis, Joe Osowski, Richard Waterman, Dennison Allen, Anita Reguin, and whoever else wanders through the room the day we collate.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! We usually meet the last Saturday of every month, beginning at 8:30 a.m. COME ON BY!

BRANCHING OUT ... Notes From the Tree Warden

Another Spring is here in all its glory – the buds, the blossoms – the allergies!! And time again for all the yard sales. Just a reminder to everyone to please not attach yard/garage sale signs to any trees or poles per state statutes. I recommend stakes or wire frames - and please remember to collect your advertisements when your sale is over. Thank you to all the folks who are already helping to keep Sprague looking so clean. I want to pass on to everyone parts of a report about “new and the usual” threats the State Deputy Entomologist, Dr. Victoria Lynn Smith, recently published in the Spring 2009 issue of *The Connecticut Arborist*.

The Usual Suspects: The usual suspects are the pests and diseases that are already present in Connecticut and monitored by the CT Agricultural Experiment Station. These include Gypsy Moth, Forest Tent Caterpillar, Orange-Striped Oak Worm, Hemlock Woolly Adelgid and Anthracnose.

Briefly, the Gypsy Moth, Forest Tent Caterpillar and Orange-Striped Oak Worm all damage trees by munching on the leaves. This defoliation does not normally kill a tree, but may if the tree is under stress from drought, disease or previous defoliation. The heaviest damage in the state last year from these three pests was in eastern Connecticut. Over 21,000 acres of leaves were eaten by these larvae in 2008 – mostly in New London and Windham counties. Fortunately, these pests can be controlled by homeowners with readily available sprays.

The Hemlock Woolly Adelgid is a tiny white insect that suck the fluid out of the hemlock needles. An infected tree will appear to have a white “mist” on the underside of the branches. The needles will brown and the tree may die. Many hemlocks have recovered from the heaviest infestation a few years ago and the pests don’t appear as prevalent this year. Unfortunately, chemical control for Adelgid is very expensive with moderate results.

Anthracnose is a fungal disease that occurs on hardwood trees and is caused by several different fungi. It favors cool wet conditions in the spring when leaves are forming. Deformation, discoloration and defoliation will occur and, if repeated, can weaken the tree and cause it to die. We had noticeable anthracnose in maples, dogwoods and sycamores last year.

The New Threats: The Asian Longhorned Beetle poses a serious threat to our forests and landscapes. The larvae of this beetle, originally from China, bores huge (3/8 inch diameter) holes into the trunks, limbs and exposed roots of trees (maples are favored), significantly weakening the structural integrity of the tree and ultimately causing the tree to die. This beetle was discovered in Worcester, Massachusetts, in August 2008, in a park next to an industrial area. It is believed it arrived in pallets and quickly infested the park. Initially, one square mile was quarantined. As of March 2009, 64 square miles are quarantined and over 20,000 trees are infected. The only approved eradication procedure is removal and chipping of the entire tree and grinding the stump. Currently, three bulldozers are needed to manage the pile of chips.

The Emerald Ash Borer has been found near State College, Pennsylvania. This pest will kill an ash tree in one to two years by its aggressive feeding on the tree. Monitoring is on-going by the state to ensure migration or transportation of this pest to Connecticut is quickly detected. Information sheets for these new threats are available at Town Hall.

Replanting the Baltic Reservoir with pine trees will get underway in May. Why? Public water supplies are required to have “leaf screens” – pine trees to inhibit hardwood leaves from blowing into the water supply. An annual planting will take place to replace the red pines that got infected and had to be cut down several years ago. This is why all the hardwood trees are being removed from inside the water line and 50 feet around the outside of the road (where the pines will get planted).

~ Dave Gustafson, Tree Warden

MRS. HYNES' KINDERGARTEN & MS. NORRIS' CLASS WOULD LIKE YOUR HELP

Every year billions of drink pouches end up in dumpsters and landfills across America. TerraCycle, Capri Sun and Honest Kids are working together to put an end to this awful loss of resources. As an eco-friendly innovator, TerraCycle is going to convert the used drink pouches into unique fashion bags, tote bags, and pencil cases.

TerraCycle is proud to team up with the largest producer of drink pouches in the country, Capri Sun, and a young organic entry into the market, Honest Kids, to help address this problem from all angles. Together with your help we CAN make a difference. The Capri Sun & Honest Kids Drink Pouch Brigade™ program allows almost any organization or individual to save drink pouches from taking up space in our landfills. Capri Sun and Honest Tea will donate \$.02 for each Capri Sun, Kool Aid and Honest Kids drink pouches, which will go to Sayles School!

Collection containers will be placed at the library, Town Hall, and at Sayles School. Help us upcycle these pouches to earn money and help reduce waste. Squeeze all juice from pouch, remove straw, and press flat. This project will continue through the summer. Get your family, friends, and neighbors involved. Share Kindergarten’s excitement and commitment to helping the Earth and earning money for our school.

Information contact: Michele Hynes, (822)–8264, ext. 191.



BALTIC UNITED METHODIST

Baltic UM is holding a Spaghetti Supper on May 2. All are invited to come to this fund raising and social event. Sittings are at 5 and 6 p.m. Tickets available at (860) 822-6091; (860) 319-0654 or (860) 319-0988.

On the first Sunday of each month, Communion Sunday, services will be held at Lee Memorial Church, Norwich, at 9:30 a.m. All other Sunday services will be in the Baltic church at 10:30 a.m., with lay speakers from Lee Memorial and other churches.

OUR TOWN

SPRAGUE GARDEN CLUB



PLANT SALE
Saturday
May 16, 9 a.m.
Town Hall Garage
RAIN or SHINE
We will also have home
-baked goodies.
Come for the plants
and stay
to have coffee with us.

Other events sponsored by the Garden Club: **May 7** Business meeting to discuss Plant Sale, 7 p.m., Senior Center; **June 11** Potluck Picnic at the River Park, weather permitting. **June, July, August** visit various local gardens. We will be cleaning, planting and weeding at the Grist Mill as needed.

If you would like to join us, attend one of our activities and introduce yourself or call (860) 822-6520. We are looking forward to meeting you.

~Jan Settje, Secretary

HEALTH SCREENINGS

Sponsored by VNA East, 34 Ledgebrook Drive, Mansfield Center, a blood pressure screening will be held at Sprague Senior Center on Wednesday, **May 13** from noon to 1 p.m. An adult health screening will be held on Tuesday, **May 26**, from noon to 2:30 p.m. Appointments are required for this screening

There is no charge for the blood pressure screening, however there are nominal charges for other services.

Additional screenings are held locally. For a complete schedule, call (860) 456-7288.

SENIOR CENTER NEWS

What's happening at the Sprague Senior Center? LOTS! Crafts **every Monday**, 1 to 4 p.m.; BINGO on the **first Thursday** of every month (**May 7**), 12:30 p.m.; Po-Ke-No **every Tuesday and the second and third Thursday** of the month, 12:30 to 4 p.m.

SMILE Chorus has several concerts planned during May and June. For more information contact SMILE at (860) 822-3000, ext. 203 or ext. 210.

NOTE: Meals through TVCCA are available Monday through Thursday. Contact Denise at (860) 822-2000, ext. 210.

Van transportation is available. Call (860) 822-2000, ext. 203 for more information.

Van Shopping Schedule

Lisbon Super Wal-Mart and Kohl's—Bi-weekly, Monday, 1 to 3 p.m.

Norwich Big Y and Wal-Mart by request.

Norwich Stop 'n Shop and surrounding stores, Thursday, 1 to 3 p.m.

Norwich Stop Rite, Tuesday, 1 to 2:30 p.m.

Willimantic Super Wal-Mart and Food Coop by request.

Medical appointments require a 48-hour notice. Please contact the Senior Center for availability before making your next appointment.

DEMOCRATIC TOWN COMMITTEE

Hello Sprague,
Spring is upon us, and so is budget season. As you may have already heard, and be able to see from the inclusion here in the Our Town, the upcoming tax year's mill rate will be flat from the prior year. While death and taxes are certain, increasing taxes are an almost near certainty, so a flat mill rate is a welcome change from life as we know it. Quite an accomplishment, indeed! The Sprague DTC encourages all of you to support this budget with your vote of "YES" at the upcoming referendum. The referendum will be on May 5 and the polls will be open from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the Baltic Firehouse.

While the fall election might seem like a long time from now, the DTC is beginning the process of considering our slate. We welcome interest from anybody interested in running on the Democratic ticket for any of the Town's boards or commissions. Feel free to contact me at any time to discuss the opportunities. As always, we also welcome any general involvement or input on the DTC itself.

With kind regards,
Kord Jablonski, Sprague DTC Chairman
(860) 822-1912; kordjablonski@yahoo.com



POST 85 NEWS

American Legion Post 85 and the Knights of Columbus are currently exploring the possibility of bridging their resources to construct a new building on the KC land on High Street. Both organizations would use the facility.

Post 85 is also considering the possibility of erecting a structure on the land leased by the Town on River Street. No decisions will be made until the Town Attorney has reviewed the matter.

The names of local veterans are being sought in preparation of Memorial Day activities. Those who have served, or know of someone who has should contact the Town Clerk at (860) 822-3000.

Veterans are invited to participate in the Memorial Day parade on Monday, May 25, beginning at 12:30 p.m. at the site of the former Baltic Mill.

New members to the Post are welcome. The next meeting will be **May 5** at the Senior Center, beginning at 7 p.m.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS SEEKS NEW MEMBERS

Knights of Columbus Council 2336 is currently looking for new members to join their organization. Members must be at least 18 years of age, and a practicing Catholic. New candidates would be fully indoctrinated after they had participated in three degree events, with an option to join the fourth degree. More information is available from Grand Knight Edgar Daigneault at erdrd@att.net or from Recording Secretary Tom Coletti at tcoletti@yahoo.com.

The next meeting of the Knights of Columbus will be held on **May 6** at the Fire House, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

VERSAILLES UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Versailles United Methodist Church is located at 4 Church Street, Versailles. For information call Pastor Wanda J. Greaves at (860) 822-9439.

SCOTLAND LIBRARY INVITES YOU TO...

Personal Excellence Classes on Thursdays in May, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. A 4-week class that will focus on defining job history, skills and accomplishments to create a skills resume. Class dates are **May 7, 14, 21 and 28**. The class is free; registration is suggested, as space is limited.

Sir George and the Dragon Puppet Show will be held on **Saturday, May 30**. Call the library for more information and to sign up. This program is supported by a grant for the Community Foundation of the Tri-County Area's Cultural Heritage Program, supported by the Connecticut Humanities Council.

For more information and to register for events, contact Scotland Public Library, 21 Brook Road, at (860) 423-1492.

5th Annual River Fest

Sunday, May 31

9 a.m. to 3 p.m.



*There is no cost to go down the river
Be sure to wear your PFD!*

Come out and enjoy a ride down the Shetucket River
Hike the Preserve—Meet at River Park 10:30 a.m.
DJ Music All Day! * Food for Sale!



Sponsored by Sprague Park and Rec—Information: Craig at 860) 822-1339

Anyone who brings an individually wrapped bag of candy will receive a free meal.
The candy will be donated to the Fire Department's Safe Halloween Project.