



OUR TOWN

BRIDGEWATER

Connecticut

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE TOWN OF BRIDGEWATER, CT

FEBRUARY, 2022

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Penny Auction

Message from Our First Selectman

It's still a topsy-turvy world with Omicron blowing in the wind at this writing. The old clichés apply for all of us: like, expect the unexpected, roll with the punches, never a dull moment, etc. We find ourselves in a time when a Positive is Negative and a Negative is Positive. This state of affairs has been locked in for almost two years. Some are thinking this will never end, but other experts postulate that Covid will have run its course after this winter. Let's hope so!


We also just passed an unfortunate anniversary, the first for the January 6th attack on the U.S. Capitol. Divisive politics and the internet echo chambers are probably responsible for the destructive behavior by self-anointed "patriots." This was an event that showed extreme disrespect for laws, lawmakers and law enforcement. Yes, personal freedoms are rights in a democracy, but not at the expense or safety of our fellow citizens. Let's talk, not fight, about our differences.

Meanwhile, back in Bridgewater the multiyear Grange saga is nearing a tipping point. We have satisfied the final condition from the CT Attorney General's office to allow time for someone to step forward with enough money and a realistic plan to buy and restore the structure. No one has, which should free the town to proceed with demolition, salvage of good wood and cleanup of the site. The town has a \$100,000 grant approved by the state to do this prep work for the next steps.

Potential plans for the site include: a memorial for Bridgewater veterans who served in wars since WWII and moving a soon to be restored "Captain's House" (now near the Burnham Library) to its 4th location in town. It will be a place where people can sit and reflect on the beauty and history of our fair town. There is a memorial commission, renovation carpenters and private citizens contributing their vision and services to make this idea a reality.

Lastly, something to celebrate..... Recently, US News and World Report highlighted Region 12 primary schools as the best in Connecticut (Booth was #1, Washington was #14). Due to its smaller school size, Bridgewater's Burnham School was not able to be individually listed. However, it should be noted that Burnham students achieved at 90% for both math and English. These scores were the top in Region 12 performance this past year. Bravo!

Stay safe!


Curtis S. Read, First Selectman

LAND TRANSFERS

Land Transfers: October 2021

- Joseph and Susan Briemann to B Burmann Building LLC, land, Northrop Street, \$125,000
- Cleuzeir Lopes to Do Ryeol and Jeang Sook Kim, land and buildings, 417 Old Turnpike Road, \$615,000
- Allan Wolfe to Ashley Lund and Gerardo Hacer, land and buildings, 329 Old Turnpike Road East, \$995,000

Land Transfers: November 2021

- Timothy and Cecilia Crowhurst to Shannon and Aaron Simpson, land and buildings, 161 Wewaka Brook Road, \$1,850,000
- Thomas and Lida Fitzgerald to Peter May, land and buildings, 17 Berry Road, \$2,500,000

Land Transfers: December 2021

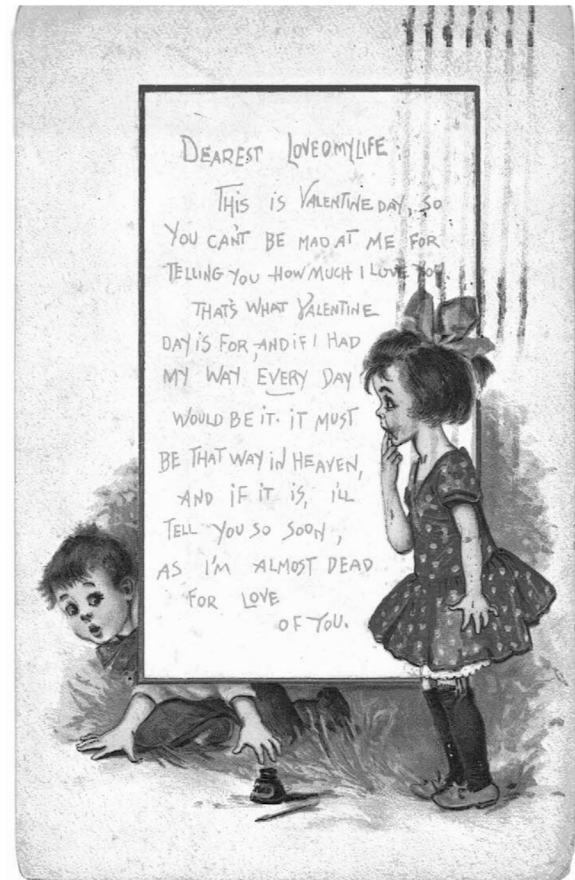
- Todd Delessio to Eric and Elizabeth Mansell, land and buildings, 39 Millvoe Drive, \$449,500
- Patricia Schramm to Ivan and Susan Pagan, land, Canfield Drive, \$100,000.00.
- Patricia Schramm to Ivan and Susan Pagan, land and buildings, 83 Canfield Drive, \$385,000
- Harold and Joyce Rannestad to Linda and Frederick Farewell, land and buildings, 152 Main Street South, \$550,000
- PD Associates LLC to Kevin and AnnMarie Hritz, land, Lillinonah Lake Road South, \$100,000
- Catherine Mulberry to Gary and Margaret Toledo, land and buildings, 48 Keeler Road, \$652,501
- Estate of Sonja Kantzas to Karen Schmidt, land and buildings, 5 Keeler Road, \$330,000

ATTEST:
Cheryl L. Pinkos, Town Clerk

Bridgewater Center Cemetery Association

We would like the winter cleanup at the Bridgewater Center Cemetery to start on March 21, 2022. If there is still ice or snow on the ground, the cleanup will start when the grounds are clear. Several winter arrangements have been placed at grave sites in late fall and during the Christmas season. Anyone wishing to keep any containers or any other items from the arrangements are asked to remove them by Monday, March 21, 2022, depending on the ground conditions.

Thank you,
Alan Michener - President



ASSESSOR'S OFFICE REFERENCE PROPERTY TAX BENEFITS

The following programs are available to the residents of Bridgewater, CT.:

Taxpayers who are 65 or older or totally disabled on or before December 31, 2021 and are full-time residents may be eligible for tax relief. To qualify for the State benefit your income must be no more than \$38,100 if unmarried and \$46,400 if married, including Social Security. For the Local benefit, your income must be \$16,000 or under, not including Social Security. The application period starts February 1, 2022 and must be received in the Assessor's office by May 15, 2022.

If you are a veteran or surviving spouse of a veteran and would like to apply for benefits, you must file your proof of honorable discharge (DD-214) with the Town Clerk's office by September 30, 2022.

If you are a Veteran or surviving spouse of a Veteran and your income is between \$38,100 if single and \$46,400 if married (not including your Veteran's disability payments) you may qualify for an Additional Veteran's Exemption.

If you are a Veteran's Administration designated Disabled Veteran, you may qualify for other programs. Please speak to the Assessor about the various Veterans programs. We appreciate your service and want to make sure you are receiving the full benefit to which you are entitled.

If you know of a resident of Bridgewater who is an Active-Duty Serviceman with a Motor vehicle registered in Bridgewater, please contact our office, as they may qualify for a total tax exemption of his or her vehicle.

If you have any questions, please contact the Assessor's office at (860) 355-9379 or dpinter@bridgewater-ct.gov.

Our hours of business are Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 8am until 12:30pm, Tuesday 8am until 3:30pm, please call to make an appointment. Applications are available in the Assessor's office or at our town wide website: www.bridgewater-ct.gov.

Sincerely,
Denise C. Pinter Assessor

The Bridgewater Scholarship Commission

PLEASE NOTE: At the current time, appointments must be made in order to enter Town Hall. Any activity requiring you to make interview appointments or pick up applications must take that into consideration.

APPLICATIONS- Will be available (1) online in January; (2) hard copy at the Town Hall office, Burnham Library or at Region 12 office. Applications may be returned via US Mail or submitted via our online portal.

Your application and transcript must be postmarked or sent electronically by May 15, 2022. If you cannot get your transcript by that date due to school delays you can email a copy to lenary1@gmail.com. NOTE: Applications must be received with or without your transcript by May 15.

Your application must be accompanied by the SAR (Student Aid Report) Page 1, showing EFC (Expected Family Contribution). Similar to last year. Again, the DEADLINE IS MAY 15. No applications will be accepted after that date.

We will attempt to hold in-person interviews this year and will make that determination by May 15. Please sign up at Town Hall before that date. Again, currently you will need to set up a time to enter Town Hall. That may or may not be the case in upcoming months.

The committee appreciates the additional efforts students must make throughout these difficult times. Please help us serve you by adhering to our requirements.

Respectfully submitted,
Larry Neary, Chairman

REGISTRARS OF VOTERS

Our office in Town Hall is open the first and third Tuesday of every month
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Theresa Angell, Republican Registrar
Denise Valeri, Democratic Registrar

Office of the Tax Collector

LAST DAY TO PAY WITHOUT PENALTY FEBRUARY 1, 2022

Notice is hereby given to the taxpayers of the Town of Bridgewater that the second installment of property taxes on the Grand List of October 1, 2020 is due and payable January 1, 2022. Payments must be received or postmarked by February 1, 2022 to avoid an interest penalty.

Also due on January 1 is the Supplemental Motor Vehicle tax (vehicles newly registered after October 1, 2020 and before September 30, 2021). Supplemental tax bills were mailed in December.

Failure to receive a tax bill does not invalidate the tax or interest.

NEWS: Catherine Vikstrom (Tax Collector) and Susan Wilcox (Treasurer) are among the fourth class of municipal leaders across the state to be recognized as Certified Connecticut Municipal Officials (CCMO). Both officials were recognized at the 2021 CCMO Conference held at Mohegan Sun on Tuesday, November 30th. Vikstrom and Wilcox completed 36 credits of continuing education to achieve this designation. CCMO training is intended to teach municipal leaders how to work collaboratively, solve problems, build partnerships, and work across political and organizational boundaries.

PAYMENTS may be mailed to: Tax Collector, P.O. Box 171, Bridgewater, CT 06752. E-checks and credit card payments are also accepted but are subject to a processing fee, with a minimum fee of \$2. Online tax payments may be made at www.mytaxbill.net/bridgewater.

DOING YOUR STATE/FEDERAL TAXES? Payment history reports can be generated via the town's website. Please visit the Tax Collector's page at www.bridgewater-ct.gov and follow directions carefully.

DMV NEWS: Get out of line by going online! Visit the DMV website at www.ct.gov/dmv. Check the status of your license and registration; check property tax, insurance, emissions and other compliance issues; pay infractions online; cancel or renew registrations, and more.

If the address on your motor vehicle bill is wrong, it is your responsibility to change it with the Department of Motor Vehicles. Our office cannot change the DMV record. A lot of effort is wasted on redirecting bills that are sent to the wrong town year after year.

TAX ALERTS: Would you like to receive an email alert that an installment is due? Sign up through the link provided on the town website.

In person Collection Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30-12:30 pm and Tuesdays until 3:30 pm.
Face masks are REQUIRED in Town Hall.

Catherine B Vikstrom, CCMC CCMO Tax Collector





VETERANS' NEWS

Public Act 18-47 (PTSD/TBI/MST): Simplifies the process for all applicants and incorporates the existing Qualified Condition Verification process option pursuant to Public Act 18-47 for applicants with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) or who was a victim of military sexual trauma (MST). These updates are reflected at the DVA website at: <https://portal.ct.gov/DVA> then click on 'Restoration of State Veteran Benefits.' Law includes a significant change in Connecticut Law related to State Veterans Benefits. Pursuant to Public Act 21-79, the CT State Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) established the Eligibility Qualifying Review Board (EQRB), for the purpose of restoring eligibility for State Veterans Benefits to Veterans who have an Other-Than-Honorable (OTH) characterization of discharge primarily caused by post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury (TBI) or military sexual trauma (MST) or was based on sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Changes are outlined at <https://portal.ct.gov/DVA/Pages/Eligibility-Qualifying-Review-Board>.

Virtual Town Hall: Connecticut Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) statewide meeting on Thursday, January 21st at 4:00PM featuring a presentation on the services provided by Residential Programs and Services including housing for individual Veterans and Families. Call in (audio only), 0+1 860-840-2075. Conference ID: 568 640 719.

FY 2022 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA): Passed on Dec. 15 by a 88-11 vote in the Senate. The bill authorizes \$768.2 billion - 5% increase from last year, keeping pace with Inflation - and is \$25.1 billion more than requested by the president. You can read this massive bill, HR 4350, at Congress. Gov. Be advised, it is enormous, will take lots of time to download and may cause your computer to become unresponsive. It provides for a 2.7% pay raise, enhanced leave provisions, special pay equity provisions for Guard and Reserves, and other social initiatives to enhance service life and recruitment.

Veterans Day: Thanks for all the support on Veterans Day. Special thanks to the Senior Center, Pat Babbage and her team, for their efforts on our behalf!

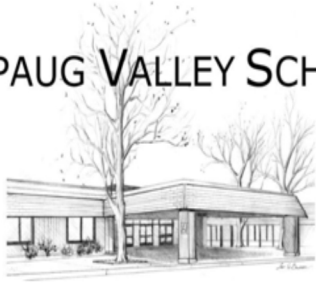


If you know a Veteran who is in crisis, call the Veterans Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255 and press 1.

Joe Buchheit, LTC-USA (Ret), VA Liaison,
860-355-2433
or email: townofbridgewaterva@gmail.com

Region 12 Schools

SHEPAUG VALLEY SCHOOL



Our students returned in August with the enthusiasm and spirit that we know and love. The current school year can be summed up with “never a dull moment.” We had high hopes of some return to normalcy, but see that normalcy is a relative term. Our students recognize the need for masking and honoring social distancing so we can safely celebrate and host events. We are so appreciative of our community and the care that is provided to each other.

There are some exciting events that I want our community to watch for in the upcoming months. The Shepaug Planetarium has been given new life. This planetarium will open up programs and immersion experiences for our students at all grade levels and our community members. We are looking forward to hosting the public for stargazing. In our push to explore the universe, we have partnered with Slooh to allow our students in fourth and fifth grade as well as the Shepaug Astronomy Club to have access to fifteen telescopes from around the world. Students will have the ability to engage in scavenger hunts for stars and planets as well as the ability to keep a portfolio of their space exploration.

The Shepaug campus continues to evolve with our agriscience program. We welcomed a Belted Gelding cow named Peppermint Patty. Peppermint Patty is a social, young calf who enjoys her time with our goats and horses. Additionally, we are working with the producers of the film, Sacred Cow, to host a public showing of the movie as well as hold a debate for our students regarding the meat industry and regenerative farming. We welcome people to visit Shepaug’s campus when school is not in session as you will see our animals enjoying their home.

Our Burnham School students continue to shine this year both in performance and in its appearance. A special thank you to Julie Stuart for coordinating our new school sign. The sign really makes our school stand out as people travel through the center of town. While things look good outside, our students are doing great inside of the building. US News and World Reports highlighted the Region 12 Schools as the best in Connecticut. Due to their small school size, Burnham School was not able to be ranked. However, it should be noted that Burnham School fell in the 90% or better in testing for math and english on testing measures. These scores topped our district’s performance this year. Burnham School’s children continue

to thrive in the multiage design. There is true unity that occurs in our hallways and in our community. We appreciate all of the care that is offered to each other during this pandemic and beyond. Region 12 Schools want to thank the town of Bridgewater and its community members for allowing our students to grow and thrive in our schools. Our small town always shows its big heart!

Megan Bennett,
Superintendent
Region 12 Schools





Burnham School PTO NEWS

The Burnham PTO had an enthusiastic start to the school year! Our continued praise goes out to the Burnham staff for their guidance as well as their eagerness to keep the kids education and well-being their top priority.

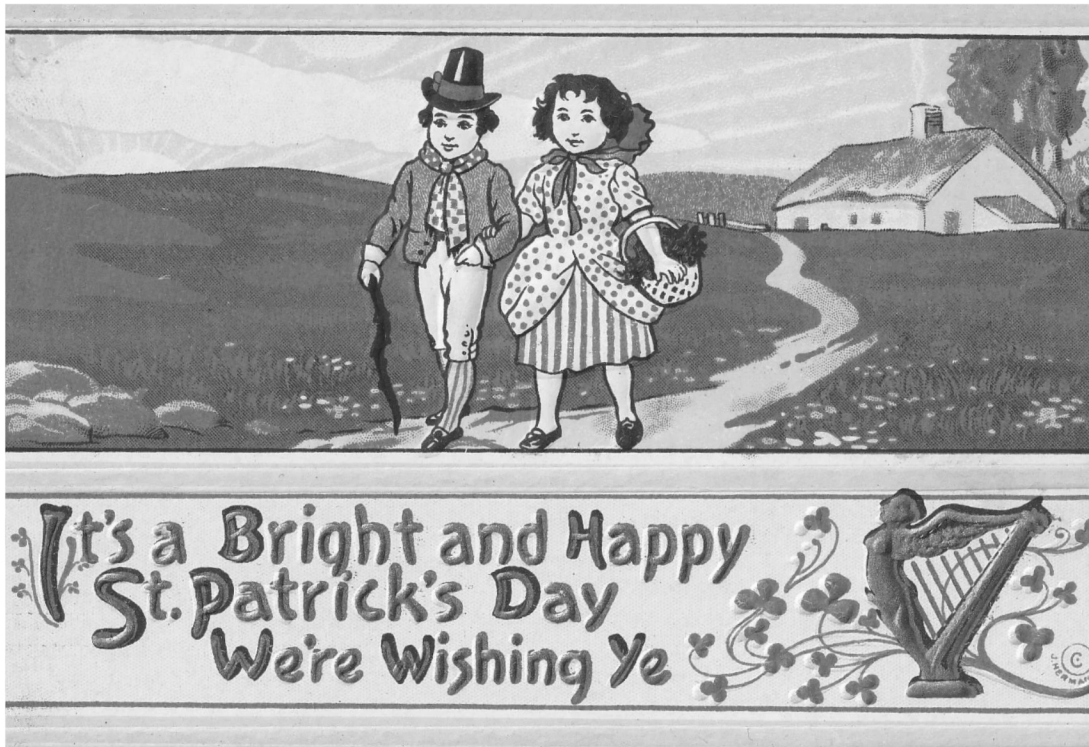
We had a very busy Fall! Our parent community came out in droves for our annual Fall Festival back in early November. The weather couldn't have been more perfect for our outdoor festivities, which included a local taco truck, parent-run games, and just some good old-fashioned fresh air!

Our Wreaths and Wine event took place at Sunny Meadow Farms in early December. The event included bring your own beverage and charcuterie board, festive wreath making and luxurious raffle items that were very generously donated for the event. We are so thankful to all who were able to attend and/or donate to this fun and festive night!

Easy ways you can help to support Burnham School PTO today:

- Support the Read-A-Thon: The students will be reading for sponsorships and donations for 30 days in March 2022. Donations for our readers will be accepted throughout the remainder of the school year. Please send checks to the school made out to the Burnham School PTO, Read-A-Thon in the memo or donate online: <https://burnhamschoolpto.weebly.com/fundraising>
- Sign-Up for Amazon Smile: www.smile.amazon.com/ch/26-0011749
- BOX TOPS are still being collected and returned to the school!

Kindly submitted by,
Burnham School PTO





The Bridgewater Land Trust

The Bridgewater Land Trust has a lot of exciting news to share! We are pleased that we have further protected one of our most beautiful farm preserves - the Jane Pratt Preserve on Town Line Road (read the entire article on the opposite page). This important partnership with the state of CT Department of Agriculture not only protects the land from development forever, but also provides us with funds to make improvements and enhancements to our properties and facilities.



Speaking of improvements, the iconic barn at our Town Line Farm Preserve received much needed renovations in the area near the two large blue silos. The work performed included: replacing the foundation and foundation walls, shoring up and stabilizing the structure, installing new drainage pipes and replacing the old siding with new. In addition, over 30 new windows and 6 sliding doors were installed throughout the barn. BWLT Board Member Joe Wilcox (pictured left) managed the project and volunteered his time assisting with the work. This reduced the cost of the job substantially. Many thanks to Joe and the hired contractors Decio Tenreiro and A&L Masonry.

We have a fun lineup of events this spring including a Townwide Cleanup. Please consider helping us keep Bridgewater clean and green. An added bonus this year- there will be prizes "littered" around town! Additionally, we are looking forward to our Give Local Campaign on April 26-27. For those not familiar, this on-line giving event is for all local non-profits who choose to participate. It is the perfect time to join or renew your Land Trust membership, as funds raised are boosted by the Connecticut Community Foundation. Plus, due to the generosity of Board Member Ted Alt and his wife Katherine Burke, we have a matching challenge! Ted and Katherine will match donations up to \$10,000! This is an incredible opportunity to help advance our mission. More information will follow.

Finally, a huge thank you to Dawn Burdick who has decided to step down as the Administrator for the Bridgewater Land Trust after 15 years of service. Dawn did outstanding work and she will be missed.

Thank you,
Julie Stuart, Executive Director
The Bridgewater Land Trust

Help keep our town CLEAN and GREEN!

BRIDGEWATER TOWN CLEANUP

Green Bridgewater Day is scheduled for Saturday, April 23rd (rain date is April 24th). Stop by the town green between 10 AM-2 PM to pick up supplies to clean-up litter along the roads of Bridgewater. The Housatonic Resources Recovery Authority (HRRRA) in partnership with the Bridgewater Land Trust will provide, bags, gloves and safety vest for volunteers.

NEW twist - In an effort to make clean up more fun this year we are "littering" the town with prizes. While cleaning up your street you might be a lucky winner. More details will be shared when you pick up your supplies on the Green.

Saturday, April 23rd, 2022
10 AM to 2 PM



Questions?
Contact Jen Heaton-Jones at Jennifer@HRRRA.org or Julie Stuart at JulieStuartCT@gmail.com
More information about the event is available at www.HRRRA.org



Jane Pratt Farmland Is Preserved Forever

State of Connecticut Protects Bridgewater Farm

The Bridgewater Land Trust has partnered with the Connecticut State Department of Agriculture to protect the Jane Pratt Farm Preserve from future development. The 104 acre preserve located on Town Line Road in Bridgewater is now part of the state's Farmland Preservation Program, ensuring that the land is protected forever for agricultural uses. The Bridgewater Land Trust received \$4,500 per acre which represents the value of the development rights of the property.

Bridgewater Land Trust President Ed Franklin is thrilled that the process is complete, and the land has important additional protection. "With this permanent agricultural restriction, this land will be protected as a working farm for the benefit of the Bridgewater community forever. We are thrilled to be the first land trust to enroll in the program. There are cases where land trusts have been given land that may not be fully protected, and we hope that this may pave the way for others to do the same."

The voluntary Farmland Preservation Program, managed by the Department of Agriculture, has been protecting farmland throughout the state since 1978. They have now protected over 46,000 acres with a long-term goal of 130,000 acres.

Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy (NCLC) played a key role in assisting the Bridgewater Land Trust in this process. NCLC helps farmers and farm owners throughout Litchfield County successfully enroll in the state's program. Paul Elconin, NCLC's director of land conservation, said agricultural lands in Connecticut are at great risk of loss: "Local farmland in Northwest Connecticut is one of the more endangered landscapes we have. Since 2018, NCLC has enrolled five working farms in the state program, supporting local economies and helping to ensure the availability of Connecticut grown products for the future."

The funds Bridgewater Land Trust received will help advance its conservation mission and provide funding for needed maintenance, repairs and upgrades to its farm properties at both the Jane Pratt Preserve and Town Line Farm Preserve. These funds will also enable the Trust to help protect additional natural and working lands in Bridgewater.





Burnham Library ... Where Community Connects

February, March, April 2022

Keep up-to-date with all the Burnham Buzz at www.burnhamlibrary.org, via Facebook OR have news dropped into your inbox by emailing cfisher@burnhamlibrary.org.

Library services and restrictions are subject to change and are based on the State of Connecticut's reopening plan and the latest guidance from the CT State Library. Please visit our website for details. Masks are required for all patrons and staff regardless of vaccination status.

Library Hours:

Visit us Tuesday - Friday from 10-5 and Saturday 9-1.

Short on time? Schedule a Curbside Pick-up. Available Tuesday - Saturday and includes after-hour pick-up! Simply email, call, or place a request through the catalog and we will notify you when your pick-up is ready!

Adult Programming



Staff Picks

Every month a new selection of recommended reads from the BL Team. Visit the Staff Picks display at the Library or check-out the complete list (and more) in the Burnham Buzz monthly newsletter.

The Burnham Library has teamed up with the Minor Memorial Library in Roxbury and Gunn Memorial Library in Washington, to provide all three communities with a wide range of virtual and in-person events this fall and winter. Registration is required with the hosting library for all programs.

Visit www.burnhamlibrary/events for featured collaborative programs and the most update-to-date information on Burnham Library events and services. Questions? email cfisher@burnhamlibrary.org

Mugs and Minds - A Shepaug Libraries Program

A quarterly discussion series which features experts on various topics leading thoughtful conversations in a casual environment.

- January 29 - Host: Burnham Library
- April 23 - Host: Gunn Memorial Library
- July 23 - Host: Burnham Library
- October 22 - Host: Minor Memorial

Virtual Book Discussions - All are welcome to join in on the lively monthly discussion. Third Thursday at 5:00 via Zoom. Advance registration is required to receive the Zoom event link. Please email cwflynn60@gmail.com to register or for further information.

- February 24 - An Artist of the Floating World by Kazuo Ishiguro
- March 24 - Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents by Isabel Wilkerson
- April 28 - The Book of Two Ways by Jodi Picoult

Copies of each selection will be available at the library or request curbside pick-up.

Art @ the Burnham Library

Visit and view during library hours.

- January 4 - February 26: Anita Gregorski of Middlebury with "Observing Surroundings" a collection of acrylic, oil and watercolor paintings.
- March 1 - April 16: Kit Sagendorf and Jean O'Reilly of Roxbury with works in oil, acrylic, and watercolor.
- April 19 - May 28: Denise Schlesinger of Sherman with "Big, Little, Details," works in acrylics.

Two Town Tabletop Club - 2nd Saturday from 1:00 - 5:00 pm

Teen and adult gamers join us every 2nd Saturday of the month. We have tons of games or bring one you want to share. Registration is NOT required. Questions? Email cfisher@burnhamlibrary.org

Burnham Library, cont.

Featured Adult Programs @ Burnham Library

At this time the following programs are scheduled to be in-person at the library - masks are required regardless of vaccination status. Registration is required, as space is limited. Email cfisher@burnhamlibrary to register.

Welcome to the Digital Branch: Learn to Use Hoopla and Libby o Sat, February 26 from 1:00 - 2:00
Do you want to know how to stream FREE audiobooks, ebooks, movies, and more from the library? This hour-long, hands-on session will dive into the apps the library uses to provide you with content from the comfort of your home.

Wicked Stepmother in Early American Popular Culture: Thursday, March 31 from 6:00 - 7:00
Join Dr. Leslie Lindenauer, professor at WestCONN, as she explores the trope of the wicked stepmother and asks the question of why women were depicted in this way.

Women's Work in WWII: Thursday, April 21 from 6:00 - 7:00 Join presenter John Cilio as he discusses the workplace momentum that women built during WWII. In pictures and stories, he highlights the struggles and accomplishments that women made during the war, and discusses how the 1960's gender-focused legislative changes were energized by how these women changed expectations and demolished workplace falsehoods.

22 in 22 Reading Lover's Challenge: New year, new challenge! Beginning February 1, 2022 and ending January 31, 2023. This is a year-long opportunity for adult book lovers to explore new authors and genres while having fun with your reading list. We have chosen the prompts and we challenge you to read 22 books within those categories (or read more! who is stopping you?) Upon completion you will receive a BL gift to brag about your accomplishments, AND one lucky reader will receive a BL hoodie! More details available at the library or email jkallay@burnhamlibrary.org. Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

Youth Programs in the Susie Beris MD Youth Learning Center

In-person programming is back! Masks are required for all patrons and staff regardless of vaccination status. Advanced registration is required with cfisher@burnhamlibrary.org. Burnham School students will be escorted to the library by a member of the BL team for after school programs.

Take Your Child to the Library Month Join us for the 11th annual nationwide celebration of children and libraries! Again, we decided to extend the fun for an entire month! Giveaways, raffles, free stuff and more, beginning February 1. No sign-up needed. Just drop in and see what each week will offer!

Graphic Novel Book Club - Grades 3-5 on Thursday, 2/24, 3/24, 4/28, 5/26 @ 3:30

Burnham Bunch Board Games - Grade 2-5 on Thursday, 2/10, 3/10, 4/21, 5/12 @ 3:30

A Time of Self-Care for Girls - Grades 3-5 on Thursdays 2/3, 3/3, 4/7 from 3:20 - 4:30
Lanie Flanagan, certified children's and adult yoga instructor will guide the group in the self-care activities of yoga, crafting, drawing, and journaling.

Burnham Bunch Storytime - Thursday morning sessions from 10:30 - 11:00.
Bubbles, books, and songs designed for the under 5 crowd. We will meet indoors and via Zoom for the winter months. Mask are required for ages 2 and older regardless of vaccination status. Registration is required for both in-person and Zoom with jkallay@burnhamlibrary.org

Grab and Go Crafts - New take and make crafts for children released every Tuesday. Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

EMERGENCY SERVICES



Bridgewater EMS Update

On behalf of the Bridgewater Emergency Medical Services Team, I wish you a happy and healthy New Year. We are looking forward with hope that 2022 will be a year of Peace and Harmony for all of us.

The Fire Department elected John Stietzel to serve as our new chief in 2022. We are grateful that John has agreed to accept the position and we are looking forward to a great year under his leadership. Congratulations, Chief Stietzel!

Josh Murphy has completed his term as Chief of our Fire Department. Covid 19 and some unusual weather generated many challenges while Josh was chief. We appreciate all the work he did to help keep the Fire Department operating effectively in spite of the unusual circumstances. Thank you, Josh!

Bridgewater is blessed with people who generously volunteer to serve their neighbors. In 2021 we had three new EMTs join our ranks. Each of them has a busy life and meaningful responsibilities. Their willingness to come to the aid of people in our town when medical emergencies occur is a great example of the spirit that helps make Bridgewater a great place to live for all of us. The attraction of being a member of our team of dedicated volunteers is being noticed. This month a newly qualified young man asked to join us as our newest Bridgewater EMT. He is Ryan Thibodeau. In addition to being an EMT and an Eagle Scout, Ryan is a student at UCONN. He will be assisting us on ambulance calls while he is home on semester break now and all during his summer break. Welcome Ryan!

The Bridgewater Fire Department is hosting a class for those interested in becoming a new EMT. Classes begin in January. Our instructor is an excellent teacher who has made it possible for many students to successfully complete the training and testing required to become an EMT. If you think you would like to join the class please contact me at the email listed at the end of this article.

As I write this article we are once again faced with a surge in Covid 19 infections. The number of cases in Bridgewater has increased at a higher rate than we have seen in over a year. Our neighboring towns are also experiencing a significant surge. Danbury Hospital and New Milford Hospital have instituted a "No Visitors" policy as of January, 2022. The intent of the restriction on visitors is to attempt to limit the

spread of Covid infections. Someday this will surely come to a conclusion. For now, please stay informed on the guidance being provided by Public Health Officials and comply with the recommendations.

As always, your Bridgewater EMS team is grateful for the privilege of providing assistance to you and your loved ones when you need us. Please stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely, Jim McNulty,
NREMT EMS Coordinator
The Bridgewater Fire Department, Inc.
JamesMcNultyNREMT@gmail.com



BFD Women's Auxiliary

The auxiliary will begin their year with the installation of officers at our March meeting on Monday the 21st. They are as follows:

Ann Frattalone - President
Courtney Wilson - Vice President
Michelle Stietzel - Secretary
Carol Wilbur - Treasurer
Michele King - Hospitality
Laura Abbott - Membership

Stay tuned for the following events for 2022:
August - We will be looking forward to supporting the fire department in hopes of a Fair this year at the Beer Garden.
September 17th - Our Annual Beer & Wine Tasting

The auxiliary always welcomes new members, please contact any member to join us. We meet the 3rd Monday of every month at 7:30 pm at the firehouse. Stop in and see what's going on.

Everyone please stay healthy and safe during this difficult time.

Ann Frattalone President

Daylight Savings: March 13th



Bridgewater Volunteer Fire Department

As we start our new year here in 2022, we have a lot to be thankful for in Bridgewater. In 2021, we have kept our all-volunteer membership going while dealing with many changes. Our morale has remained strong, and our members are committed to our community.

Thanks to all your support, we held some great fundraising events that gave our community a little "Taste of the Fair." As we have canceled the last two fairs out precaution and uncertainty, we are full steam ahead here planning for 2022. We are planning to put on the best fair ever! For all the new residents, welcome to town. The funds from our fair are how we mainly survive financially and have a good time! So don't miss the Bridgewater Country Fair 2022!

The department recently received some appropriated money from the town through the American Rescue Plan Funds. This is federal money...not our taxes! The American Rescue Funds appropriated money to each town and the town is to use it in certain manners. Thanks to the recent town meeting and all your support, BVFD received a portion of that money. We have purchased eight new MSA air packs, 20 spare bottles, and associated equipment. We will also be placing an order shortly for some much-needed ambulance supplies.

As of January 1st, our line officers are Chief John Stietzel, Assistant Chief Dave Ledbetter, 2nd Assistant Chief Julie Ledbetter, Captain Jeff Herron, 1st Lieutenant Glen Wilson, 2nd Lieutenant Dave Hendy, and Ambulance Coordinator Jim McNulty. We would like to thank our past chief and officers for their guidance and support. We can't say enough about our ambulance crew. If you see them around at coffee, give them a big high five. If you are interested in joining and being part of the team, please let us know. You might not realize that there's a fireman or EMT around the corner.

The fall has come and gone, and I am sure everyone has changed or replaced their smoke detector batteries or had their alarm system serviced. Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors save lives.

When shoveling or plowing this winter, please keep our big red trucks in mind in case we need to visit your house. Our trucks are wider and longer than a SUV or car! We recommend that your house number is clearly labeled at the end of your driveway so that our ambulance and fire responders can find your house when you need it the most.

Wishing you all a safe and happy New Year.

Chief John Stietzel
Bridgewater Fire
chief@bvfd.org



**SAVE
THE
DATE**

**BRIDGEWATER
COUNTRY FAIR**

August 19-21, 2022

Historical Society News

When I write an article, I try to find a topic that interests me - and, hopefully, you. A while back, I found a book by Peter C. Vermilyea called "Wicked Litchfield County." I was fascinated by the title, since I've never thought of Litchfield County as a particularly "wicked" place. The more I read, the more I found that "wicked" was used extensively as a description of witchcraft. Pity the poor woman who had a wart on her nose or crossed eyes, as she was a likely candidate.

But, witches alone were not the only "wicked". The term also applied to drunks, blasphemers, adulterers, thieves, murderers and, last, but not least, counterfeiters. The punishments for those offenses ranged from the pillory to whipping, branding and physical mutilation. Counterfeiting was a popular crime then, as each state had the right to print, or coin, their own currency, making it possible for the "wicked" to easily pass notes from state to state.

One of the most notorious counterfeiters was William Stuart, of no relation to our long time First Selectman. This William Stuart was born in Wilton in 1788. Stuart lived a life of crime until his death in 1854. He traveled over most of the eastern seaboard passing false notes and, eventually, joining a gang of six that worked out of Canada. While visiting a cousin in Bridgewater, Stuart decided that it was time to settle down. He married but his honesty was short lived. Before the ink was dry on the marriage license, Stuart was hiding his ill gotten gains in caves in town and then he was off again to pass more notes. He branched out into making coins, using pewter, and by changing the value of the coins to a



William Stuart, as he appeared on the cover of his autobiography.

larger amount. He was eventually captured and spent five years in New-Gate Prison. While an inmate, he continued making coins. Eventually, he was found out. When asked why he made more trouble for himself, he replied, "I was sent here for counterfeiting, and I shall lose my skill unless I do a little at the business." He wrote his autobiography the year he died, either leaving a blue print for followers or a warning to those considering a criminal career. No sooner had I started writing this article than a copy of "Connecticut Explored" arrived. Who should appear on page 48? No other than William Stuart - still famous after all these years.

- Eileen Buchheit 860-355-2433



From The Desk of the Town Historian

Just about every civilization has a special way to bring in the New Year. Customs vary from visiting graves of dead ancestors to giving the house a thorough cleaning. The phrase "Out with the old, in with the new" comes to mind. Covid encouraged some of us to clear out closets when we were trapped in our homes. That got old fast, but it's still an idea with merit. This year's number one resolution is to bring order to my house. I'm approaching it like the way you'd eat an elephant - one bite at a time. Each month, I hope to clear out one closet or drawer. The results will either go to the curb or off to Goodwill. I wonder what "in with the new" will bring this year. But, first, "out with the old". Happy New Year!

- Eileen Buchheit





BRIDGEWATER HILLTOP CENTER NEWS

Hilltop Center ~ Experts At Living Well

Do you feel you are "too young" to go to a senior center? It's time to update your vision! According to the National Council on Aging research shows that compared to their peers senior center participants have higher levels of health, social interaction and life satisfaction. It can be tough to make new friends at any age, but know that a majority of people at the center felt just like you before they got involved. Take a look at our calendar and find something that interests you. Commit to trying it at least twice. Growing older doesn't mean you stop growing. Come in and see that senior centers aren't just for old people. The Center offers ongoing programs as well as special monthly programs and educational presentations.

The Hilltop Center offers services to enhance the quality of life for our community. For the latest updates and news you will want to be on our email list. Give us a call at 860-355-3090 or email bwscseniorcenter@gmail.com and request that we add your name. You can also go to our website to view the current newsletter and calendar: bridgewater-ct.gov/hilltop-senior-center.

CHRISTMAS BASKETS

Our Christmas baskets were delivered and once again we are thankful to those who baked, shopped, and delivered this holiday cheer. Thank you also to Maywood Gardens for the beautiful poinsettias. Recipients were so grateful and happy to receive these gifts.

FUNDRAISING

We would like to thank everyone who generously donated to the Hilltop Senior Center. All money raised is used to cover the cost of our programs, lunches and activities provided for our seniors. We are so grateful for your thoughtfulness.

BRIDGEWATER SENIOR VAN

The van is available weekdays for MD appointments, grocery shopping, senior center programs and special activities. The van has a limited destination distance of no more than 20 miles. Contact Ann Frattalone at 860-350-3042 at least 2 weeks in advance for an appointment. Transporting people that are well on a first come first serve basis.

ONGOING PROGRAMS

- Body Conditioning Exercise: Monday 10:30 and Wednesday 11:30
- Social Services: Tuesday 9:00-12:00
- Computer Group: Tuesday 10:00
- Silver Needles: Tuesday 1:00
- Tai Chi: Wednesday 10:00
- Mahjong: Wednesday 1:00
- Rummikub: Friday 10:00
- Chair Yoga: Friday 10:30
- Canasta: Friday 1:00
- Breakfast Group: 1st Thursday of each month - reservation needed.
- Sunday Concert Club: One Sunday a month - check with center for dates
- Hilltop Book Group: Last Monday of each month at 2:00
- Blood Pressure Clinic: 3rd Tuesday of each month at 1:00
- Burnham Library Program: 3rd Wednesday of each month at 1:00
- Massage: Twice a month, Wednesday at 1:00 - appointment needed.

May everyone find peace and feel safe in 2022.

Patricia Babbage, Director



Community Caring in Bridgewater, Inc. (CCB)

Neighbors Helping Neighbors
Staying Healthy and Happy at Home

Safety Reminders

Keep a telephone landline and spare "old fashion" phone on hand because if internet and power go out, that is often the only means of communication. Check your batteries regularly to make sure you have an adequate supply. If you have a generator, make sure it runs periodically and make sure the battery is charged. Always keep at least a month of staples on hand.

Financial Back-up

Colder weather often stretches finances. We can help with food cards, utility bill support and other similar concerns. We handle requests quickly and quietly.

Neighbors

Living in Bridgewater allows all of us to take advantage of being able to be helped by and to help our neighbors. Please do not hesitate to reach out if health and safety issues are of any concern to you.

Contact Us

If you need assistance please do not hesitate to contact us (all requests are confidential). We can be reached:

By Phone: 860-350-2194.

By Mail: CCB, P.O. Box 338, Bridgewater, CT 06752

By Email: info@ccbridgewater.org

BRIDGEWATER FOOD PANTRY

The Bridgewater Food Pantry located in the Friendship Hall at the Congregational Church, routinely requests specific items when we are running low. However, there are certain staples of which we are always in need.

The following items are always welcomed.

Coffee
Juice (apple, tomato, V-8)
Paper towels
Canned meat (chicken)
Detergent (laundry and dish)
Sugar
Bleach
Cleaning Products (general)
Snacks
Food wraps (aluminum foil, plastic wraps)
Canned fruit



The Pantry is opened to all Bridgewater residents and is open Tuesdays through Thursdays from 10:30 to 2:00 or by appointment by calling 860 354-8283.

Participation is strictly confidential.

Donations of all non-perishables are accepted at the Burnham Library, Town Hall or Friendship Hall.

OUR CHURCHES



St. Marks Episcopal Church

February, March,
April 2022

Sundays 9:30 AM Holy Eucharist on the 1st & 3rd Sunday. Morning Prayer on the 2nd & 4th. (see note below) Vestry meets on third Sunday of every month.

March 2nd - ASH WEDNESDAY
(see note below)

March ? TBA
St. Patrick's Day
Corned Beef Dinner
(see note below)

April 10th - PALM SUNDAY
9:30 Eucharist
(see note below)

April 14th -MAUNDY THURSDAY
6 PM - Supper and Eucharist
(See note below)

April 15th - GOOD FRIDAY
(See note below)

April 17th - EASTER SUNDAY
9:30 EUCHARIST
(see note below)

April 30th - 6th Annual Penny Auction
Doors open at 11 AM
Lunch from 11:30
Numbers called at 1 PM



(Note: Because of the pandemic, we have no idea when - or even if- any of these events will take place. We are certain that the services will happen on ZOOM if not in the church, but the dinner and Penny Auction may be canceled. To check the status, please go to the Town Website.

The Bridgewater Congregational Church

Greetings Bridgewater! With an invitation to join me in worship on Sunday mornings, I want to first introduce myself to you all. I am the Reverend Abby Gackenheimer and as of November 15, 2021, I am the new minister at the Bridgewater Congregational Church, and I am loving working and living in this community! My family and I moved to Connecticut in 2016 when my husband was called as the Executive Director of Silver Lake Camp and Retreat Center. I have since been a minister in Plainville, CT and Kent, CT and now look forward to settling in Bridgewater. It is such a privilege and blessing to be a part of this community. I look forward to meeting many of you through the various community meetings and events. Please feel free to reach out and introduce yourself, or stop and say hi as you see my child and I walk back and forth to the library and café! Thank you for the warm welcome I have received thus far.

During the month of January, the Bridgewater Congregational Church will be holding worship services via Zoom at 10:00am. We hope to be back to in-person worship by February. We cordially invite you and your family to join your neighbors and friends to this lively and meaningful service of worship. You can receive a personal invitation each week if you'll leave your name, email, and phone number at the church office or by emailing the office at office.bwucc@gmail.com or call 860-354-8283 and leave a message; or on Sundays at 10am, you can go to our webpage www.bwucc.org and click on "join now" where we live-stream our service. You can also view all worship services on our YouTube Channel. In this unpredictable time, let us come together in hope and love. And if you are so called to join us on Sundays, we'd love to have you!

Reverend Abby Gackenheimer

Church Office
Tuesday-Thursday, 9-2 and by appointment
Telephone: 860-354-8283 Email: office.bwucc@gmail.com
The Bridgewater Friendship Hall www.bridgewaterfriendshiphall.com



Literacy Volunteers on the Green

Happy New Year to our tutors, donors, and friends from Bridgewater!

2022 and the winter semester begins our 17th year as an adult literacy organization with over 80 trained volunteer tutors supporting 199 students. Our mission remains steadfast - to offer free English language literacy to adult learners in northern Fairfield and Litchfield counties, as they strive to become independent readers, writers, listeners, and speakers of English, enabling their full participation in the communities we share.

Literacy programs include: English Language Learning, Family Literacy, Basic Skills remediation, and offering English tutoring for families settled by Refugee Resettlement Groups in New Milford and Washington.

As we start the new year, our learning teams of volunteer tutors and adult learners yet again face concerns regarding meeting in-person due to the increase of COVID cases in the area. LVG follows CT/CDC guidelines and tutoring sessions are offered through distance learning via Zoom, Facetime, and other video platforms, or onsite, safely distanced, and fully masked. Potential tutors can feel safe meeting with adult students - all tutors and students are expected to be fully vaccinated before joining in person tutoring sessions - unvaccinated students will be offered remote learning options.

A new tutor training is planned for the first week in February. Feel free to contact LVG's office, conveniently located at St John's Church on the Green in New Milford for details of the training and tutor commitment expectations. Please consider impacting the lives of adult learners and their families by revitalizing the working lives of adults seeking English language proficiency. For further information, please contact Lynn@lvg-ct.org to learn of ways to support English language literacy in northwestern Connecticut.

Lynn Davies Executive Director
Literacy Volunteers on the Green

Support your favorite Bridgewater non-profit organizations!

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

GIVE LOCAL

Greater Waterbury and Litchfield Hills

April 26-27, 2022

Connecticut Community Foundation

www.GiveLocalCCF.org

The poster features a stylized illustration of a town skyline with a barn, houses, and balloons. The text is arranged in a celebratory, festive style with stars and confetti.

Bridgewater Recreation News

Recreation News

Have questions about Bridgewater Recreation?
Contact Allison Gsell Bridgewater Recreation
Coordinator www.bridgewater-ct.gov
Email - bridgewaterpavilion@gmail.com
Cell - 203-417-0744 Office - 860-355-9133

Trunk Or Treat Thank You!



A special thank you to Larry and Sandy Neary for judging the Annual Trunk or Treat event and thanks to all those who participated!

Mindful Moves Yoga

Held at the Friendship Hall at Bridgewater Congregational Church.

For more information on classes, email Tanya at: yoga.mindfulmoves@gmail.com



Pickle Ball

Tuesday and Friday at 6:30 PM at Burnham School. Canceled when school is closed. All are welcome!



Pavilion Rentals



Thank you all for a full season of Pavilion rentals in 2021. If you are interested in renting the Pratt Pavilion in 2022 please contact Bridgewaterpavilion@gmail.com.



The Bridgewater Recreation Commission

Eric Soetbeer - *Chairman*
Roberta Allen - *Secretary*
Josh Murphy
Lynn Kubisek
Jim Moker
Christian Stuart
Mike Dubos
Allison Gsell - *Recreation Coordinator*

The Bridgewater Recreation Commission is working hard to bring fun filled activities to all the residents of Bridgewater. Our newsletter is now incorporated into "Our Town" and programs will be announced through town email blasts, the town website and the town calendar. If you have any ideas, feedback or suggestions, please let us know. Thank you for your continued support of our programs.



Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 273
New Milford, CT 06776
Carrier Route Presorted

BRIDGEWATER RESIDENT

Bridgewater, CT 06752

Town Newsletter Statement of Purpose

This is the official town newsletter to communicate current issues, services and activities in Bridgewater to the residents of the town. The newsletter is published quarterly. *Deadline for the next issue is April 5th, 2022.*

About *Our Town*

Our Town is published with the assistance of town officials, employees and volunteers from boards, commissions, groups and organizations. The Town of Bridgewater reserves the right to edit submissions. Articles, input or ideas can be sent to Julie Stuart at juliestuartct@gmail.com

Bridgewater Board of Selectmen

Curtis Read, *First Selectman*
Alan Brown
Laz Pinter
Administrative Assistant
Anne Marie Wagner

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

- 1 Lake Authority 7:30 PM, Brookfield Town Hall
- 1 Inland Wetlands Comm. 7:30 PM, Town Hall
- 1 Last Day for on-time tax payments
- 8 Board of Selectman 7:00 PM, Town Hall
- 17 Planning & Zoning 7:00 PM, Town Hall
- 21 PRESIDENT'S DAY ***Town Hall Closed***
- 24 Recreation Commission 7:00 PM, Town Hall

MARCH

- 1 Lake Authority 7:30 PM, Brookfield Town Hall
- 1 Inland Wetlands Comm. 7:30 PM, Town Hall
- 8 Board of Selectman 7:00 PM, Town Hall
- 16 Board of Finance 5:30 PM, Town Hall
- 17 Planning & Zoning 7:00 PM, Town Hall
- 24 Recreation Commission 7:00 PM, Town Hall

APRIL

- 5 Lake Authority 7:30 PM, Brookfield Town Hall
- 5 Inland Wetlands Comm. 7:30 PM, Town Hall
- 12 Board of Selectmen 7:00 PM, Town Hall
- 15 GOOD FRIDAY ***Town Hall Closed***
- 21 Planning & Zoning 7:00 PM, Town Hall
- 28 Recreation Commission 7:00 PM, Town Hall
- 28 Board of Trustees 7:00 PM, Town Hall

For additional information and updates, please visit our website at www.bridgewater-ct.gov

