

OUR TOWN

BRIDGEWATER

Connecticut

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE TOWN OF BRIDGEWATER, CT

NOVEMBER, 2021

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Santa Express

Message from Our First Selectman

Congratulations to Bridgewater residents for your vigilance over the past 20 months to remain mostly clear on the CT Covid-19 map! At the same time, surrounding towns were often mired in the orange or red zones. Overall, Connecticut has led the nation in vaccination rates with low positivity results and associated deaths. Even though cases keep coming in waves elsewhere, we have weathered the pandemic better than average..... so far.

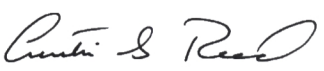
Good News! - The Scenic Road designation by the CT DOT was recently rejected by the Town. Also, the Selectmen approved a compromise agreement with the CT AG's Office about the future of the Grange. It will go "on the market" with very stringent financial and performance conditions set by the Town and will be advertised in CT Preservation News in print and online for November-December. If a prospective buyer does not come forward and then is approved by the Town, the Grange can be demolished. This agreement favors the Town after 5 years of frustrating delays.

Bridgewater has a municipal election coming up on Tuesday, November 2nd. You may not know it since there are no roadside signs, debates, hoopla and other trappings of vying parties. There is a good reason for this uncontested status. Both the Democratic and Republican Town Committees agreed to cross endorse the slate of candidates. This is partly because there is a small pool of volunteers to fill the slots, but I also like to think that most residents are generally happy with how Bridgewater functions and that party affiliations don't matter so much locally.

As a matter of fact, there are more voters registered as Unaffiliated than as either "major" party. Keeping track of voter status is the job of our Registrars. The recent retirements of Judy Sullivan (D) and Susan Patrick (R) created openings for Denise Valeri (D) and Theresa Angell (R) to be appointed by their respective town committees. This can be a demanding job with ever changing state rules, software systems and pressures leading up to elections. We owe sincere thanks to both Judy (16 yrs) and Susan (5 yrs) for their integrity and professionalism in their critical roles. Susan is staying on as an assistant.

As a reminder, it's important to vote in this cycle for two reasons despite no critical contest in the wings. One is to keep your name "fresh" on the voter rolls. People who don't vote or do so only intermittently can be "purged" from the master state list. Maybe the new computer system or voter registration records could have a glitch. Don't take a risk, go to the polls or check your status on the town website. The second good reason is to show the same endorsed officials running on either slate that they are valued and have the support of our voters. It's certainly unusual to be in Bridgewater's electoral position this year. It's a great place to be!

No muss, no fuss..... and Happy Holidays !


Curtis S. Read, First Selectman

LAND TRANSFERS

Land Transfers: July 2021

- Linda J. Garrity to Sunny Meadow Farm LLC, land, 5 Ledgewood Lane, \$175,000
- Neil and Roberta Schwartz to Jack S. and Judith E. Kravitz, land and buildings, 259 Second Hill Road, \$1,000,000
- Joseph M. Hoban to Michael Lefferts and Yasmin Nozari, land and buildings, 20 Hat Shop Hill Road, \$660,000

Land Transfers: August 2021

- Cesar and Elia Godoy to Jorge and Monica Franco-Tejeda, land and buildings, 28 Rock Cut Road, \$350,000
- James and Melanie W. Gustin to Janette James, land and buildings, 73 Hat Shop Hill Road, \$659,000
- Maureen A. Hayes to David J. Cohen, Tr., land and buildings, 18 Northrup Street, \$875,000
- Holland Joint Venture LLC to SMF Universal, LLC, land and buildings, 137 New Milford Road East, \$1,100,000

Land Transfers: September 2021

- David C. and Pamela L. Lucchesi to Richard J. and Annie Kaplon, land and buildings, 397 Second Hill Falls Lane, \$2,200,000
- Ruth Drucker to Westley S. Harrell, land and buildings, 6 Henry Sanford Road, \$325,000
- Davidson and Elizabeth Goldin to Maureen Hayes, land and buildings, 209 Northrup Street, \$2,500,000

ATTEST:
Cheryl L. Pinkos, Town Clerk



Tree Lighting 7 PM December 3rd Town Green



Join us on the Town Green as we light the tree for the holiday season! Santa will be there with cookies and cheer. More details to follow.



happy holidays

ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

Personal Property

All individuals owning and operating a business in the Town of Bridgewater, including businesses that are being operated from home, are required by law to declare furniture, fixtures, tools, equipment, etc. for taxation purposes. Personal Property forms have been mailed out and must be returned in our office by Monday, November 1st. If forms are not returned or returned late there will be a 25% penalty on the value of a business owner's personal property.

Farm Machinery, Horses or Ponies

The application for an exemption on Personal Property of up to \$100,000 on all farm machinery, (except motor vehicles as defined in Section 14-1) and the \$1,000 exemption on horses or ponies which are actually and exclusively used in farming, within the provisions of Section 12-91 of the General Statutes must be filed annually by November 1st.

Applications to claim personal property and farm machinery, horses or ponies are available on the Town's website www.bridgewatertownhall.org or in the Assessor's office.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (860) 355-9379; we are here Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 8am until 12:30pm and Tuesday 8am until 3:30pm.

Sincerely,
Denise C. Pinter Assessor



The Bridgewater Scholarship Commission

With 2022 quickly approaching, we look with great anticipation to once again being able to interview our scholarship applicants in person. The Commission is fully vaccinated and we ask all who have a personal interview to do the same.

We will be following a similar set of requirements as last year which will allow us to focus on those students most in need. Early in 2022 applications will again be available at Region 12, the Burnham Library and at Town Hall as well as on-line.

We will consider all students who have an undergraduate college status as well as all trade school students,

As this year comes to a close, please consider a Tax-deductible donation to the Scholarship Trust. You may contact Susan Wilcox at Town Hall for more information.

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 AM

Theresa Angell, Republican Registrar
Denise Valeri, Democratic Registrar



Office of the Tax Collector

Taxes Due: The second installment of Real Estate and Personal Property taxes is due January 1, 2022. Bills were mailed in June; NO BILLS WILL BE SENT FOR THIS INSTALLMENT. For Real Estate bills, please notify our office if the payer has changed since July. If a different bank will be paying the installment or if you will be paying the installment instead of a bank, please call or send us a note with the new information. If you purchased property after June and did not receive the bill at the closing, please contact the office and we will send a copy.

Supplemental Motor Vehicle Tax Bills: These bills are for new or replacement vehicles registered after October 1, 2020 and before September 30, 2021. The bills will be mailed in December and become due January 1, 2022.

Online Services: You may now look up and pay your bills online, and can complete your own tax payment history reports for any time period. Searches may be made by name, property location, or bill number.

Payment: Payments must be received or USPS postmarked no later than FEBRUARY 1, 2022 to avoid an interest penalty. Failure to receive a tax bill does not invalidate the tax or interest.

PLEASE NOTE: If you use an online banking service, there is no actual postmark on the envelope and your payment may arrive after the due date. The effective date will be the date your payment is received in this office! Office postage meters are also not US Postmarks and will not be accepted as proof of on-time payment.

Pay Online: The Tax Department can receive payments made by e-check, credit, or debit cards. This service can be accessed at www.mytaxbill.net/bridgewater

NOTICE OF TAX SALE: Real Estate more than 2 installments OR \$5000 delinquent may be auctioned in a Tax Sale this winter. Tax Sale may be avoided by bringing your account up to date immediately.

TAX ALERTS: Would you like to receive an email alert regarding local tax news and a reminder of payments becoming due? Sign up through the link provided on the town website.

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.

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday 8-12:30 PM and Tuesday 8-3:30 PM.

Catherine B. Vikstrom, Tax Collector
Ann Virbickas, Assistant to Tax Collector
860-355-9220

HAPPY KWANZAA!
Merry Christmas **Happy Hanukkah**
Happy Holidays

Region 12 Schools

SHEPAUG VALLEY SCHOOL



Region 12 Schools opened up the 2021-2022 school year with renewed hope and optimism. Our students, staff, and community members continue to evolve through the pandemic, and as time passes we learn more. This school year provides more opportunities for time-honored events and social interactions. We are able to re-introduce our traditions as well as new celebrations and experiences for our students. We welcome back in-person after-school activities,

book fairs, and ice cream socials at the elementary schools, and Homecoming, full athletic schedules, and drama productions, and events at Shepaug Valley School. The schools and PTOs are mindful of safety protocols in designing these events in order to create joy for our children and communities.

Our 59 Burnham School students are ready to return to the community garden and to play musical instruments. We are happy to introduce Mrs. Monique Oppel and the instrumental program to the Burnham community this year. Students will begin with percussion before moving toward wind instruments. Additionally, we are introducing Mrs. Betsy Minton who will teach students computer programming at the elementary schools. Our students have the opportunity to explore robotics and programming while building their problem-solving and analytic skills. We look forward to the return of our foreign language program at the elementary level next school year. More information will follow as we shift from stabilizing education from the pandemic to enriching the classroom opportunities for our students.

Shepaug Valley School welcomed its new principal, Mr. Donald Schels, to our community. I encourage you to reach out to meet the new leader of our middle/high school. Mr. Schels has been weaving himself into the fabric of our community.

As part of the reopening of Shepaug, our students have been enjoying the returned freedom of being in the mall, regular hallway travel, locker and locker room use, as well as pep rallies and free periods. Academically, Shepaug boasts 17 college-level classes and continues to look for opportunities for our students to grow including certification courses. This year our administrative team in partnership with students, staff, and community is reviewing the school schedule for alternative configurations that will provide our students more opportunities. We look forward to presenting a schedule that works for academic growth while supporting our students' needs.

The Agriscience Academy of Shepaug Valley School welcomed students from the towns of Bethel, Brookfield, Danbury, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown, and Sherman. The question that we are asked most in our program is what separates agriscience from traditional vo-ag programs. Our answer is the action research that our students are doing each day. Our students are taking a scientific approach to agriculture so they can transform farming practices and seek new opportunities to be good stewards of our planet. We are not only training students for the jobs of today we are building their capacities so they create the jobs of tomorrow.

We are looking forward to planning community events including tours of Shepaug this year. It is our hope that we can cut the ribbon together on our science labs and agriscience program that are actively used by staff and students.

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. The success of last year's school year is due to your care and consideration of health and safety practices. Our small town always shows its big heart!

Megan Bennett, Superintendent
Region 12 Schools



Burnham School PTO NEWS

The Burnham School PTO has had an energetic start to the year! The Burnham staff and parents have been navigating through this second pandemic year with a sense of hope. We have been able to safely reintroduce some of our favorite enrichment programs and events this year!

After Care Enrichment Program (ACE): ACE is up and running! We'd like to recognize our new ACE director, Mr. Nadig for taking on this position. Students and parents look forward to this program as it provides before and after school care.

Walk-to-School! This parent led program will meet every Friday in October at 8:30am at the Pratt Pavilion in Bridgewater.

Upcoming PTO Events (Community Welcome!)

Fall Festival (11/6): Will take place behind the school on the playground. Fall games, packaged snacks and a food truck. Scarecrow Contest will be judged during the event. Student Council will also sell craft items!

Wreaths & Wine Night (Date TBD): Lets get together (safely) and get crafty! Enjoy an evening with friends at one of the most beautiful farms in Bridgewater, Sunny Meadow Farm. More details will be released at a later date.

Easy Ways You Can Help to Support Burnham School PTO Today:

- Cash donations are a generous way to support the school and we are a 501c3 organization.
- Sign-Up for Amazon Smile: www.smile.amazon.com/ch/26-0011749. A portion of your purchase will go directly to our organization!
- Sign-Up for School Rewards at your local grocery store: Register your store cards at ShopRite
- And YES, we are collecting BOX TOPS at our school!

Look for important dates and events on our website: www.burnhamschoolpto.weebly.com

Kindly submitted by The Burnham School PTO Officers

President: Diana Kelly

Vice President: Tabitha Potok

Co-Treasurers: Joy Ruppert & Rhei C. Gordon

Secretary: Krystle Toczylowski





VETERANS' NEWS

Exciting News: Bridgewater Selectmen have requested a commission be established in order to further preserve and commemorate the U.S. Armed Forces individuals living or previously lived in Bridgewater in order to increase the public's awareness of our Veterans who contributed to the security of our country in peace and war. Stay tuned for updates!

VA's Debt Management Center: The Center resumed sending debt notification letters on October 1, 2021. If you owe money to VA for an overpayment related to VBA benefits, here is what you need to know.

VA automatically deferred collection on VBA benefit debts created on or after April 6, 2020, through September 30, 2021, to provide relief from the COVID-19 pandemic. Benefit debts created prior to April 6, 2020, had collection deferred upon request. VA also paused all collection activity on debts under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of the Treasury until September 30, 2021.

Most VBA benefit debts are collected by the VA Debt Management Center (DMC). This includes debts for benefits, like compensation, pension and education. If VBA created a debt for you while collection was deferred, you likely received informational letters from DMC letting you know your debt existed, but you didn't need to act until after September 30 unless you chose to do so.

For more information on resumption of debt collection, check out the latest information on:

<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/95184/debt->

[management-center-what-you-need-to-know-about-vba-debts-and-debt-relief/](https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/95184/debt-management-center-what-you-need-to-know-about-vba-debts-and-debt-relief/)

Defense Finance Accounting Service (DFAS) The September 2021 issue of the quarterly Retiree Newsletter is now available online. The newsletter has helpful information on the progress in rolling out additional status notifications, preparing for tax season, the importance of keeping your Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) beneficiary designations updated, and information to share with your loved ones.

They also have important news for Reserve and Guard Gray Area Retirees: a new kind of myPay account that helps you keep your contact information current so that you can stay on top of your future retired pay. Plus, they have some great information for you from their partners, including information on extended temporary Uniformed Services ID (USID) card expiration policy guidance for all USID cards with expiration dates between January 1, 2020 and July 31, 2021.

The downloadable PDF of the newsletter is: <https://www.dfas.mil/retireenews>

National Defense Authorization Act: Has passed the House with a 2.7% pay raise, new Basic Needs Allowance for up to 200,000 troops, health care enhancements, parental leave enhancements, incentive pay parity for Guard and Reserve, changes to Arlington National Cemetery eligibility (which Sen. Blumenthal is opposing), and changes to Selective Service Act including drafting women. It's not too late to phone or email your Congressmen and let them know how you feel. You can do this through any of the military web sites, eg, MOAA, DAV, VFW, et.

Not too late: Service Academy Nominations, Applications Due October 21, 2021, Contact: 860-505-2186, Rep. Jahana Hayes, [Hayes.house.gov](https://www.house.gov/jahana) | Twitter: @repjahanahayes | Facebook: @RepJahanaHayes

Veterans Day: Hope to see you all at the Senior Center for Veterans Day. Lunch provided after. Meet time is 10:45AM on 11 November.

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



The Bridgewater Land Trust Fall/Winter 2021

Thank you to those who participated in our 2nd Annual Volksmarsch Walk on Sunday, September 26th. It was a gorgeous day to see some of the most beautiful views in Bridgewater (see pictures below).

We welcome the public to enjoy our public trail located on the Town Line Preserve and the Ketchum Children's Trail (Maps are now on our Website). As always, we ask that you help take care of our trails and open space by adhering to our Carry In, Carry Out policy.

Please consider becoming a member of the Bridgewater Land Trust. Membership dollars are crucial to the operation of the trust and preservation of our beautiful open space in Bridgewater. The Bridgewater Land Trust is an approved 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit organization. Visit us at our website bridgewaterlandtrust.org or our Facebook page.

Thank you,
The Bridgewater Land Trust



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.

Historical Society News

What About Minks?

Folks have been seeing bears around town, but what about minks? There have been mink sightings in Southbury. They were said to have been “aggressive”. How did they get there? Maybe they traveled from Bridgewater. Here’s how.

Back in 1959, Kay Edwards and her husband bought a 52 acre farm from Norman Mailer. She and her friend, Robin Owens, had a plan to raise minks there. Neither had any experience in that field, but both were determined, hard workers - and they had family members who could help. They approached Reginald Nettleton in Southbury to buy 13 dark mink. Nettleton was an experienced raiser who had won awards for his mink. He must have been impressed with these ladies, because he became their mentor. Under this tutelage, Connecticut Mink Farmers’ Association awarded them trophies for their pelts.

The enterprise was successful. They named their business “Roads End Fur Farm”. Their “herd” was productive. One winter, they sold 720 pelts. During the learning process, some minks escaped. They are not known for their good dispositions. Robin Owens once said, “ Well, I really like people. However, with mink, you know they are all mean, but, with people, you have to figure them out.”



Times change, and, in fashion, they change trends rapidly. By 1967, furs were not as popular as they had been. Competition from fur raisers in Japan hit the American market hard. Prices for pelts dropped sharply. Kay and Robin decided to “pelt out” their mink. Kay had developed health problems. Her children were grown and out of the house. Robin’s part time job with the Y.M.C.A. developed into a full time position - in New Jersey. It was time to close up shop. So, what happened to those mink who escaped Roads End Fur Farm? Maybe they are still in the woods off Rocky Hill. Or, maybe, they went to Southbury?

- Eileen Buchheit 860-355-2433



From The Desk of the Town Historian

Finding out about your family history through the study of your last name can be tricky. Some names come from a profession, like “Baker”. Others come from a place of origin, like “Napoli”, from Naples. Others are harder to track down. My maiden name was “Strang”. I finally found the “real” last name before it was “Americanized”. It was “Strenkowski”, from the village of Strenkowo in Poland. In the case of “Buchheit” there may be genes at work. This name translates to “book binder” or “maker of books”. The link here is that, for more than four generations, the Buchheit family business was in printing - and, yes, book making. It has skipped some generations, but who knows what future Buchheits will decide to do for a living?

- Eileen Buchheit





BURNHAM LIBRARY NEWS

November, December 2021 - January 2022

Library services and restriction 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.

NEW Expanded Hours as of September!

Expanded hours means more time for YOU! Visit us Tuesday - Friday from 10-5 and Saturday 9-1.

Thanksgiving Closings:

Early Closing at Noon - Wednesday, November 24

Closed - Thanksgiving Day and Friday, November 26

The Great Giveaway!

It can't get any easier than this! Stop into the library every month and grab the newest item in Burnham Library's The Great Giveaway! Supplies are limited!



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

The Burnham Library has teamed up with the Minor Memorial Library in Roxbury, the Gunn Memorial Library in Washington, and the New Milford Library to provide all four 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

Featured Burnham Adult Programs for November

Women in Jazz - Lecture & Performance on Tuesday, November 9 at 6:00 - 7:30 via Zoom

Tech-Help with Michael Jay: What the Heck is iCloud? - Wednesday, November 20 at 1:00 in-person

Reading Lover's Challenge 2021 - This year's challenge ends on January 31, 2022. You still have time to explore new authors and genres while having fun with your reading list. Upon completion you will receive a BL drink koozie to brag about your accomplishments AND one lucky reader will receive a BL hoodie! Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

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.

December 2 - *This is the Fire* by Don Lemon

January 27 - *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer

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

Burnham Library, cont.

Art @ the Burnham Library
Visit and view during library hours.
November 1 - December 31 - Kathy L'Hommedieu
showing "Simplicity of Nature," Connecticut
landscape paintings in oil
January 1 - February 28 - Anita Gregorski with
paintings in watercolor, oil, and acrylic.

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 in
the Burnham Buzz monthly
newsletter.



Holidays at the Library

Visit the website for a complete listing of Holiday
events ...

Gingerbread House Workshop

Saturday, December 4 - Three in-person sessions:
9:30 - 10:30, 10:45 - 11:45, 12:00 - 1:00
Join Nancy Stuart for our most-beloved annual
event! Register for one of three sessions. Space is
limited, one adult per child, please. Registration is
required. We cannot accommodate any day-off
requests or walk-ins. For more information or to
register email cfisher@burnhamlibrary.org.

A Note from the Friends of the Burnham Library



We have decided to postpone our annual
fundraising event, O Silent Night, for one more
year. Like so many we are disappointed. Although
we cannot meet in person, we have planned a
small-scale silent auction to raise vital funds to
support Burnham Library's free programs and
resources: storytime, summer reading, adult &
family events, after school activities, digital
streaming library, and much more! We wish all our
friends and neighbors a safe and happy holiday
season.

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.

Super-Secret Art & Book Club - Grades K-1 on Thursday, November 4 and December 2 @ 3:30

Graphic Novel Book Club - Grades 3-5 on Thursday, November 18 and December 16 @ 3:30

Burnham Bunch Board Games - Grade 2-5 on Thursday, November 11 and December 19 @ 3:30

Burnham Bunch Storytime - Thursday morning sessions from
10:30 - 11:00.

Bubbles, books, and songs designed for the under 5 crowd. We
will meet outdoors (weather permitting). Please bring a blanket
or towel -- masking is optional. Bad weather and cold months, we
will meet indoors AND via Zoom- masks required. Registration is
required for both in-person and Zoom with
jkallay@burnhamlibrary.org



EMERGENCY SERVICES



Bridgewater EMS Update

Fall has arrived and Winter is soon to be with us. This is the time to check the batteries in all your safety devices and to replace them if necessary. Although many smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms are now hardwired, there are still a lot of them that rely on replaceable batteries. These life-saving devices will only do their job if the batteries are sufficiently charged. Safety devices that are hardwired or have 10 year batteries should also be tested to be sure they are in good working order. Please do not neglect this simple but important chore.

Darkness and fallen leaves increase the risk of accidents this time of year. Walkers, joggers, bicyclers, etc. would be wise to make sure they wear reflective clothing and use safety lights when they are travelling on our roads. This is especially important after sundown. Also, please remember that bicycle riders are to ride on the right side of the road with traffic. Walkers and joggers are to travel on the left side of the road into traffic. Please be aware of the importance of making sure you are visible to drivers when you are on the roads.

Drivers, please make it a point to keep focused on the road when you are operating your vehicles. Distracted driving is a serious problem. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that approximately 3,000 people die in traffic accidents each year due to distracted driving. Twenty-five percent of the distracted drivers involved in fatal accidents were young adults aged 20-29. If you think about it, a case can probably be made that says almost every accident not related to deliberate "bad behavior" is caused to some extent by distracted driving. Our Bridgewater Fire Department and Ambulance crews have responded to a number of vehicular accidents in town lately. The majority of these accidents have occurred on Rte 67 near the intersection with Rte 133. Thankfully the injuries suffered have not been fatal. With a bit more care, I think most of the accidents could be avoided. Please make a point of staying alert whenever you are driving. train yourself to be especially alert and drive defensively whenever you are near the intersection of 67 and 133. Expect the unexpected and "watch out for the other guy." We want all our Bridgewater drivers to enjoy our roads in safety.

Covid 19 is obviously still with us. Thankfully, vaccination has made a big difference in reducing both the infection rates and the death rates. But we

all know that immunity from vaccinations is not permanent. If you are qualified for a booster shot, please get it. The Holiday Season is upon us. We can avoid creating the surges that have been part of our lives during the past two years if we observe the Public Safety guidelines. While enjoying the holidays remember to protect your personal space and provide a safe space to your friends and family when socializing.

Thank you to those of you who have made donations and continue to offer support for the Bridgewater Volunteer Fire Department. Your support is especially meaningful to us due to our inability to host the Fair again this year.

We have a very good team of volunteers who provide Emergency Medical Services to our neighbors in Bridgewater. We are always in need of additional volunteers. Plans are underway to offer an EMT Class at the Firehouse in January, 2022. If you have an interest please contact our Training Officer, Peter Johnson at parapete39@gmail.com. Alternatively, you can contact me using the email address below.

The members of the Bridgewater Emergency Services team want you to know that we appreciate the trust you give us when you and your loved ones are most in need. We will always do our best to provide the best care possible.

Jim McNulty, NREMT
Ambulance Coordinator
The Bridgewater Fire Department, Inc.
Email: JamesMcNultyNREMT@gmail.com



BFD Women's Auxiliary

The Bridgewater Fire Dept Women's Auxiliary would like to express our sincere gratitude to John NeJaime for his continued support and help in organizing our Annual Wine & Beer Tasting. This year's Tasting was the most successful thus far and we look forward to an even better event next September.

Thank you to our firemen for helping with the setup, take down and running the event all weekend. The Auxiliary would also like to thank our residents and all the attendees for their continued support of our events.

November 15th is our last meeting for 2021. Please remember to contact any member to join our auxiliary.

Wishing you a Healthy & Happy Holiday Season!!

Ann Frattalone President



Community Caring in Bridgewater, Inc. (CCB)

Neighbors Helping Neighbors
Staying Healthy and Happy at Home

Our Services

Our principal services are to (a) coordinate chores/household services referrals that are requested by seniors and provide, to the extent possible, volunteers to perform basic household services; (b) act as a repository for community information and services for seniors, and (c) provide financial assistance when need is apparent.

Shredding Day

Thanks to all who came out and took advantage of the Shredding Truck when it was here on September 11th. We enjoyed spending time and chatting with all who came and are so glad that we can provide this benefit to the Town. Thanks also to Stericycle LLC dba Shred-it for its professionalism and assistance.

Colder Weather Needs/Wants

As the colder weather moves in, providing financial assistance and winter proofing assistance and recommendations are some of our key services.

New Officers and Directors

We are pleased to announce that Nathaniel Cardonsky and Glenn Hochstetter have joined our Board of Directors. Cheryl Johnson has been elected President. You can reach Cheryl at 203-299-6775.

Senior Financial Assistance

If you are in need of financial assistance to get you over seasonal issues, surprise expenses or extraordinary circumstances, reach out to us. All requests for help are handled in confidence.

By Phone: 860-350-2194.

By Email: info@ccbridgewater.org

By email: cheryl@westernviewfarms.com





BRIDGEWATER HILLTOP CENTER NEWS

Hilltop Center ~ A Place for Active Living and Learning

The Hilltop Senior 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 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.

VETERANS DAY - NOVEMBER 11

Please join us for our Veterans' Day Ceremony. Bridgewater resident, Joe Buchheit, retired US Army Lieutenant Colonel, will again lead us in a moving tribute to all our veterans. First Selectman Curtis Read will give an address and there will be a wreath ceremony as well as our own Hilltop Singers performing for us. We would ask that you be in your seats no later than 10:45 am. Refreshments will be served after the ceremony.

THANKSGIVING LUNCHEON- NOVEMBER 18

A traditional Thanksgiving meal with entertainment by Blithe & Fred. Reservation needed.

CHRISTMAS BASKETS

At this time of year we like to spread some extra cheer by continuing to give our Christmas Baskets to those who are unable to be out and about during the holiday season. We like to bring a little sunshine to brighten their day! If you would like to contribute with a donation of goods or help to deliver these baskets, call the senior center.

CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON - DECEMBER 16

Join us for a cheerful celebration and singing some of our favorite Christmas songs led by Jim Moker and the Walking Fish band. Reservation needed.

NEW YORK BOTANTICAL GARDEN: TRAIN SHOW- NOVEMBER 30

In addition to the Train Show, we will visit "Little Italy" and Arthur Avenue and have lunch at Ann & Tony's Restaurant. Price of \$132 pp includes motor coach transportation, admission to Botanical Garden Train Show, lunch and all gratuities. Call the center to reserve your seat.

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. The van will transport people who are well on a first come, first serve basis.

ONGOING PROGRAMS

- Body Conditioning Exercise: Monday 10:30 and Wednesday 11:30
- Better Balance Class: Monday 1:00
- 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
- Hilltop Book Group: Last Monday of each month at 2:00
- Blood Pressure Clinic: 3rd Tuesday of each month at 1:00
- Poker: 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
- Burnham Library Program: 3rd Wednesday of each month at 1:00
- Massage: Twice a month, Wednesday at 1:00 - appointment needed.

Patricia Babbage, Director

OUR CHURCHES



St. Marks Episcopal Church

November, December,
January 2022

At this time we are expecting to continue having a service at the church every Sunday at 9:30 am. The service currently may be a Eucharist at which communion will be modified probably to only Bread. It may also be a Morning Prayer service with no Eucharist. We are, at the same time, offering the service on ZOOM. All are welcome at any service or activity.

Since both our clergy availability and Covid restrictions are very changeable, for current info please do check our website at <https://stmarksbridgewater.weebly.com>



St. Marks Holiday Bazaar November 13, 2020 9 AM - 1 PM

We will be keeping the protocols of masks and distance keeping or any current protocols. We will have tag sale items, jam, baked goods, and bagged luncheons with chips, sandwiches, dessert and a beverage.

The Bridgewater Congregational Church

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

The Bridgewater Congregational Church

Welcome Abby

After 218 years
the journey
continues



The Bridgewater Congregational Church new
Minister Abby Gackenhimer

The Bridgewater Congregational Church joyfully announces the hiring of full time pastor, Abby Gackenhimer. The Congregation voted to approve Abby after a two-year search by the transition committee.

"I am passionate about the vitality and vibrancy of a small local church. I believe that a faith community of a few can be just as powerful as a faith community of 200", explained Reverend Gackenhimer.

Reverend Abby currently resides at Silver Lake Conference and Retreat Center with her husband, Rev. Ryan who is the Executive Director of SLCC, and son, Keadyn, who is in first grade plus their 2 dogs, 3 guinea pigs and tortoise.

Abby will take the helm on November 15, replacing the Reverend Daniel England who has served as the interim pastor for the past two years.

"The church has grown and prospered the last two years under the loving guidance of Daniel," explains Alan Smith, Head Deacon. "We shall forever be grateful."

Abby has served as the Interim/Transitional Minister for the Congregational Church of Plainville and the First Congregational Church of Kent, as well as pulpit supply in Salisbury, Cornwall and Goshen.

Ten Thousand Waves

About 40 years ago Dick Gabriel wrote a laugh out loud article for our paper. Dick described the struggles he had as a newcomer when strangers would wave at him as they passed by on the road. He was new to town. This waving thing was a phenomenon that he hadn't encountered before, and he didn't know what to do. He felt funny waving to people he didn't know. He tried alternative responses like flashing his lights, but then learned he had been making people think there was a speed trap ahead. Eventually, he gave in to our tradition, and simply waved back.

I don't know how the waving began here in Bridgewater. The town crew may have played a part. I remember Frank Colburn. I still see him with his cigar clenched in that toothy grin, waving from his town truck. Even unto today, the town crewmen wave their greeting to me as they pass by.

So, the wave is alive here, and unlike Dick I'm not going to fight it. For the last few decades during my daily jogs I have given and received tens of thousands of waves to drivers as they pass by. I am compelled to do so. I need to acknowledge them as fellow humans. From a jogger's perspective, though, waves are a little tricky. I can't see faces because the interiors of vehicles are dark compared to the outside light. And I am terrible at remembering who owns which car. So, I raise my open hand to say, "Hi. Have a nice day." The wiggle wave is too risky for me. Since I can't see the drivers, I don't want to give the impression that I know them. It feels dishonest. Am I "over thinking" this a little?

Over the decades I have seen lots of different waves given in return to mine. Of course, there are those who don't know what the hell I'm doing waving at them. But mostly, people wave in their own way. There is the single finger raised from the steering wheel. I read this as "Man, I see ya." It feels good to be seen. Then there is the rare two finger and thumb point. That says to me, "Man. How ya doin'?" How nice for someone to ask how I am feeling today. Many drivers give back my simple raised hand: "Hi. Have a nice day!" Same to you, kind person. Less frequent, but even more fun to receive is the open hand wiggle wave: "Hi! Good to see you today!" Some nice folks honk their horn, or even roll down their window to give me verbal encouragement. What a boost of positivity these people have laid upon me.

I also appreciate so much the tens of thousands of drivers who have moved over to give me plenty of room as I jog along. How nice of them to do this.

I love all the waves I've been fortunate to receive, but my favorite greeting was not a wave at all. In fact, it was a confrontation. Every morning as I jogged past his land, this individual would hurry out to the edge of his property simply to intimidate me. Fortunately, it was a mock confrontation, for said intimidator was the magnificent bullmastiff, Bono. He and I would square off, I bent over with my hands on my knees, and he right at the edge of his lawn, staring straight into me. Then, I would pivot and sprint ahead, and Bono would race me. We were pretty closely matched for a few yards, neither of us being among the fleetest of our species. We had such fun. I miss him.

After all these years I am finally saying thank you to all the wavers, and a special extra helping of gratitude to the open-handed wigglers, to the town crew, and to Bono. Every wave has been a boost to my spirits. I owe you many, many thanks.

Jim Gustin
Long Time Bridgewater Resident





Literacy Volunteers on the Green

As we enjoy the fall semester, LVG's tutors and adult learners are safely returning to on location and in-person tutoring sessions in a variety of ways that suit each learning team. LVG's 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. We thank our many dedicated Bridgewater tutors who continue to give so freely of their time!

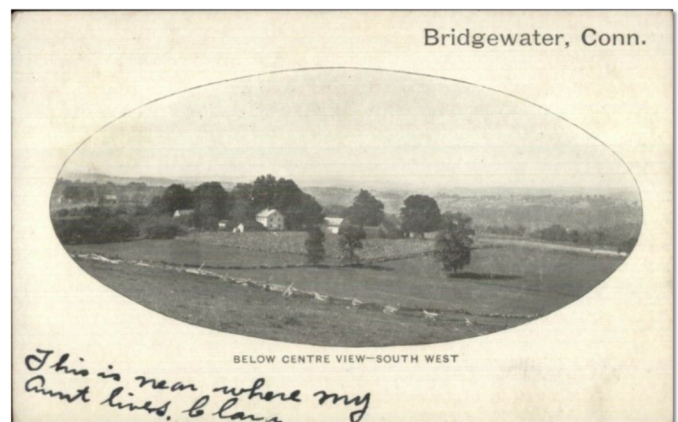
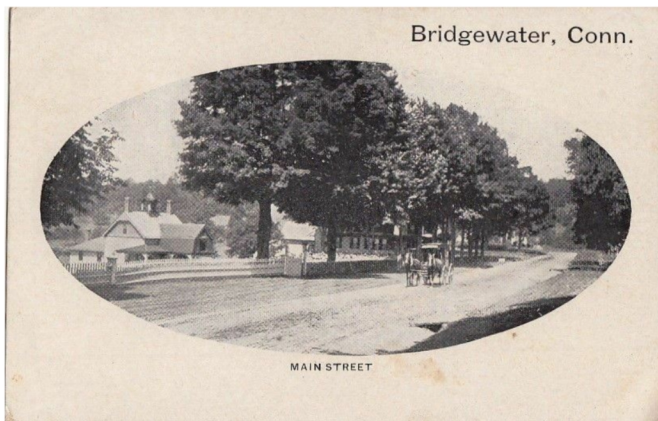
Our adult students continually look for ways to balance family and job responsibilities, while attempting to improve their English language skills and hone basic reading and math skills. LVG's tutoring community remains closely connected through monthly Zoom meetings, professional development opportunities, and social gatherings.

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 October 19th - 21st. 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

Bridgewater Back In The Day



The Piggott Diary

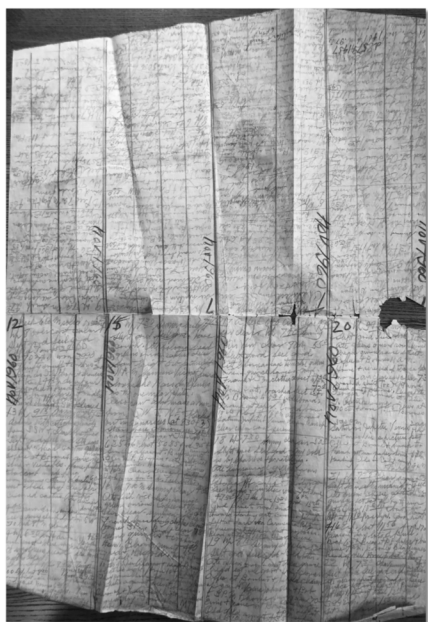
I'm not sure this statement needs to be said to the general public, but archiving, and as an extension conservation and preservation of documents is not always glamorous. A single piece of paper can lead to hours of research and work to make sure that the lifespan of the document is as long as it possibly can be. It's part of what inspires me to write down these little anecdotes. The process can often seem more impressive than the actual artifact. Despite this, frustration often breeds excitement if you are someone who "nerds out" on the obscure. It gets that much more entertaining when you have the ability to weave some sort of narrative out of obscurity. It is a rich payoff. Sometimes, though, frustration is simply frustration.

In our ongoing effort to preserve Bridgewater history, and the rich history of Burnham Library, we are frequently presented with artifacts whose provenance is recorded orally (some might call this hearsay...?) It's always exciting when you come across an item that is well documented, or requires little research to discover its own story. The written word is usually an example of this. Diaries, letters, journals, they have so much surface-level content that they are a joy to uncover. This doesn't mean that there is no room for analysis, but it is certainly different than receiving an object that doesn't have the ability to tell its own story. That is, of course if you can read the object. What happens when you find a diary that can't be read?

For the uninitiated, Burnham Library was the very lucky recipient of a sum of money that would ultimately lead to us building our addition (opened in 1980). The benefactor (Mr. Piggott), as Burt Bernstein would find out, was an eccentric hermit who lived in California and idolized the life of Thoreau. Mid-century, the works of New England authors, including the Sage-of-Walden, would be analyzed by Bridgewater's own Van Wyck Brooks, and because of this, the benefactor connected Brooks to Bridgewater. He then found out about the Library's efforts to expand its handsome stone building, and as they say "the rest is history."

The library was blessed to receive this money after a brief legal battle. We also received many effects of Piggott's, which as you can imagine range from bizarre to strange. Many of these items now sit within a wooden display box in the 1926 building and include some pieces of turquoise, silver, and gold teeth, which I was relieved (I think?) to find out were not his.

As the story seems to go, while I was looking through a file cabinet, I came across a folder of paperwork dealing with the lawsuit that was the result of the bequest. Within this folder was a manilla envelope. Being who I am I HAD to know what is inside. I flipped the folder in my hands, looking for some writing. After an eternity of searching, I found, scrawled in very light pencil: "Piggott Diary." I took a breath, flipped open the envelope and gently slid out what I anticipated to be an insight into this fairly mysterious gentleman who arbitrarily chose Burnham as a symbol of his affection for Brooks.



Instead, what I found were scraps of recycled ledger paper with the frenetic scrawl of someone who has had too many pitchers of espresso. The paper is crumbling - folded one too many times and then compressed and refolded. What is even more frustrating, is that the writing is hard to decipher. The object tells more of a story of who Piggott was than his actual words. While I undertake the first steps of conservation on this item, my interest is piqued. If we could read the script, what would it say? Will this frustration lead to excitement? Or will this frustration simply lead to more frustration?

Once the diary is appropriately stabilized, it will be available for viewing at the library. Email cfisher@burnhamlibrary.org for more information.

Submitted by Chris Fisher

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



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

Wednesdays at 12 Noon
Saturdays at 10 AM
Recreation Center
tennis courts
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.



Bridgewater Volunteer Fire Department Santa Express

SANTA WILL VISIT YOUR HOME ON A FIRE TRUCK!

Don't miss the chance for Santa to come to your house,
deliver a gift to your child, and pose for photos on the
fire truck with your family!

Sunday, December 12th

Deliveries made
throughout the day

All Proceeds Benefit BVFD

STOPS WILL BE AWARDED ON A 1ST COME 1ST SERVE BASIS:
Santa Can Only Make a Limited Number of Stops, SO REGISTER EARLY!

Please Make Checks Payable to: BVFD
For more information or
questions email: jscott.bvfd@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
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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 January 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

NOVEMBER

- 2 Lake Authority 7:30 PM, Brookfield Town Hall
- 2 Inland Wetlands Comm. 7:30 PM, Town Hall
- 9 Board of Selectman 7:00 PM, Town Hall
- 11 Veterans' Day ***Town Hall Closed***
- 17 Board of Finance 5:30 PM, Town Hall
- 18 Planning & Zoning 7:00 PM, Town Hall
- 18 Recreation Commission 7:00 PM, Town Hall
- 25-26 Thanksgiving ***Town Hall Closed***

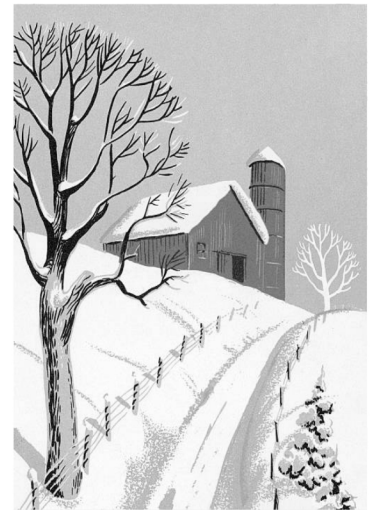
DECEMBER

- 3 Tree Lighting 7:00 PM, Town Green
- 7 Lake Authority 7:30 PM, Brookfield Town Hall
- 7 Inland Wetlands Comm. 7:30 PM, Town Hall
- 14 Board of Selectman 7:00 PM, Town Hall
- 16 Planning & Zoning 7:00 PM, Town Hall
- 16 Recreation Commission 7:00 PM, Town Hall
- 24 Christmas (observed) ***Town Hall Closed***
- 31 New Year's Day (observed) ***Town Hall Closed***

JANUARY

- 4 Lake Authority 7:30 PM, Brookfield Town Hall
- 4 Inland Wetlands Comm. 7:30 PM, Town Hall
- 11 Board of Selectmen 7:00 PM, Town Hall
- 20 Planning & Zoning 7:00 PM, Town Hall
- 23 Recreation Commission 7:00 PM, Town Hall

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



'TIS THE SEASON