



SPRAGUE ~

OUR TOWN

VOLUME XVII
ISSUE XII
DECEMBER 2007

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

An open letter to the citizens of Sprague from Cathy Osten, Sprague First Selectman

I would like to extend a sincere thank you to the voters of Sprague for choosing to support me, Buddy Meadows, and the entire Democratic slate at the polls. Your vote and your trust mean a great deal to all of us and you should know that we will honor and protect that trust by working to the full extent of our abilities and always making choices in the best interests of our community. Your expectations of us are exceeded only by our expectations of ourselves.

Many people throughout town were extraordinarily generous with their time, effort, energy and financial support in support of our campaign and I would like to thank those individuals. I really am overwhelmed by the support we received from all of you and it is with deep emotion that I offer my gratitude.

Campaigns are a team effort and can be a uniting force within a community which can draw that community together. That happened here in Sprague thanks to the efforts of a great many people and in the end, your vote. Municipal government itself is also a team effort and I look forward to your input, ideas and contributions as we all move forward together.

Thank you once again,

Cathy

From the Former First Selectman

I want to congratulate all those who won in the November election. I also want to thank all whose names appeared on the ballot. The right to choose is an eternal principle. To make a choice there must be options.

As I saw the numbers it occurred to me the Democrats have taken back the town. They have not been in control since I won in 2001, the first Republican in 54 years. And I won for the next two elections for a total of six years. Now that you are back in control see if you can match what I have done.

While cleaning out the second floor getting ready to do the mold remediation I found

a picture of my father Raymond Allen, Marco St. Germaine, Babe Blanchette, and Tommy Heneault. They were putting up the Christmas decorations. That was before we had the ACLU and others who were looking out for our rights. While being First Selectman I could not have a Christmas tree in or around the Town Hall, let alone a Nativity Scene. It is too bad we have gotten to the point that traditions of the past cannot be continued.

I want to wish each and every one of you a Merry Christmas and a very happy New Year.

Dennison Allen
Versailles

SPRAGUE ~

DEMOCRATIC TOWN COMMITTEE

Dear Sprague,

Let me first thank all those who came out to vote on Nov. 6, regardless of affiliation, or how you might have cast your ballot. Voter turnout was a bit over 57 percent of registered voters, a meaningful improvement from a little over 54 percent in the last municipal election. Turnout in Sprague was also considerably higher than any of our neighboring communities and among the highest in the state, something to be proud about.

A special thanks to those who supported our ticket with their vote. Every vote does indeed count and without each of you coming out on that rainy Election Day to cast your ballot, we would not have been so successful. The DTC is also extremely grateful to all of those who offered their time and donated money in support of our cause.

Our new Board of Selectman has already been hard at work in the short time since taking office and I'm sure that you will begin to see the fruits of their efforts, if you haven't already. I'm looking forward to an exciting period of productivity and progress.

If you have any interest in becoming involved with the DTC please don't hesitate to contact me or any member. We have a few available slots and are actively seeking new members.

Best wishes to you and your family in the upcoming holiday season,

Kord Jablonski, Chairman Sprague DTC

CONSERVATION COMMISSION UPDATE By Don Boushee

Hello fellow Sprague citizens.

As usual we have all been very busy helping to conserve and preserve our town. I have to again thank all the volunteers in our town that help make it a better place. Please help us keep that spirit going. Please thank them when you see them, not just from the SCC, but all the people who donate their time. On behalf of the SCC, welcome to the new Board of Selectman. We are looking forward to working together.

A crew of us got together and worked at the River Park. We planted some bushes, picked up some litter. And help survey the park so we can have a clearer picture to make decisions of future projects. We also discussed future work on the recreational trails grant project. Anyone who would like to help and to be a part of that project, or any other, please contact me or come to the next SCC meeting on Dec. 10 at 7 p.m., Town Hall.

We also had a work party up to the Mukluk on Saturday after Thanksgiving to repair fence, hang signs to delineate boundary lines. We have many small signs like the ones that you might see in a state forest that need to be hung. We will need help

in the future.

Speaking of that, I would like to post a short list of conservation jobs: build a couple of picnic tables, clear and mark trails, install bulletin board, hang signs, grooming and planting at the River Park. This is a partial list of rewarding jobs that anyone can help with. If you think that you might be able to help, contact me at donald-boushee@sbcglobal.net.

It really does feel good to know that a small job really does make your town and you feel better, not to mention, it saves us all tax money.

Also, we are looking for two new active members to help with all of our good work. At our last meeting we also discussed the idea of the "Smart Power" initiative, like the one that Lebanon just passed in their town recently. We discussed the possibility for our town to commit to get 20 percent of its power from renewable source energy. We hope to continue this discussion with our town leaders. We felt that it is important to set the example to commit to reduce our dependence of oil imports, and our town can help make a difference. GO GREEN POWER!

Have a great holiday celebrations. See you around town.

PLANNING AND ZONING About OUR TOWN...

The Planning & Zoning Commission holds its regularly scheduled meetings on the first Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. in the courtroom on the second floor of the Town Hall. The agenda is posted on the bulletin board in the town clerk's office on the Monday immediately preceding the meeting. The public is welcome and encouraged to attend. Members of the Commission are: Sandor Bittman, Kord Jablonski, Joe Osowski, Paul Piezzo, Arthur Spielman, Jr., Gerald Stefon, and Richard Waterman. Alternate member is Kathleen Boushee.

The Commission employs a part-time planner and consultant, Tom Seidel of the Southeastern Connecticut Council of governments, and a zoning enforcement officer, Joe Smith.

An audiotape, as well as written minutes of the Commission meetings, is available at Town Hall. Additional information: www.ctsprague.org.

How do, Folks, Thought I'd throw my two cents in here since there is a bit of space in this month's edition. As you know, the Sprague ~ Our Town is continually integrating ideas and stories from the community. There has been a rather intense debate about what information exactly should be included in each publication. Should the newsletter be limited to town commission reports? Should it include more advertising? Should more "news" such as the article to the right? What about those Opinions???

This being YOUR newsletter, what are your thoughts? (Let's hear from some new voices; I've heard repeatedly from the vocal minority.)

What would you like to see in the newsletter? Do you have a press release or newsworthy item to include? E-mail: OurTownNews@gmail.com or drop off a hard copy at Town Hall by the 15th of the month.
~ Amy Lynn Reifsnyder, Editor

SALEMMA RECEIVES PURPLE HEART

BALTIC — Congressman Joe Courtney presented local Vietnam veteran, David Salemma of Baltic, with a long overdue Purple Heart decoration during a ceremony on Saturday, Nov. 10, at the Norwich VFW.

Salemma earned the Purple Heart after sustaining injuries from a 'booby trap' that was triggered approximately three feet away from him by another soldier in his unit. Salemma was drafted in May 1968 and deployed to Vietnam five months later.

He is a lifelong resident of Baltic, where he lives with his wife, Catherine, and their children.

Taken from a press release submitted by Cathy Osten

Lincoln's Greatest at Library

Patrick Rowley returns to Sprague Public Library on Thursday, Dec. 6 at 7 p.m. for a presentation about Abraham Lincoln's greatest speeches. The discussion will focus on Lincoln's writings, and how increasingly important the power of the written and spoken word was to his presidency, and how his writings continue to influence American culture.

There is no fee; all are welcome.

Books are available at the library, 76 Main St., Baltic. Information: (860) 822-3012.



OUR TOWN STAFF

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

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

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

Editor: Amy Lynn Reifsnyder

Editorial Assistant: Colette Hoffman

Production Staff: Jeannette Bastien; Al Hoffman, Cecile Gagnon, Rita Grenier, Al Grenier, Barbara Robitaille, John Ellis, Joe Osowski, Richard Waterman, Ruth, Dennison Allen, and whoever else wanders through the room the day we collate.

Feel free to volunteer! Good storytellers welcome. Information: (860) 456-1082.

SPRAGUE ~**SAYLES SCHOOL PRESCHOOL PROGRAM****SURVEY RESULTS**

To the Residents of Sprague:

The School Readiness Preschool Program at Sayles School is happy to forward to the residents of Sprague the results of the survey that were completed regarding the preschool program for the 2006-07 school year. Thirty-five surveys were distributed to families and 18 surveys were returned.

The questions from the surveys and the responses of parents/guardians follow. We are extremely pleased with the responses received in this survey that indicate parents/guardians are very satisfied with the program. In a review of some of the areas where it appears attention is needed, discussions have included the following:

Question 4 – “I talk with a teacher about my child at least once a week.” There were 7 “no” responses to this question and 1 “don’t know”. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) recommends that parents transport their children to the program. Sprague transports the preschool students. This is beneficial to most families, although some parents prefer to bring their children to the program daily. Because of the transportation accommodation, not all parents come to the school and talk with the teachers daily. Discussions continue regarding this question.

Question 12 – “I know how the program makes sure that information about my child and his or her program is kept confidential.” There were 12 yes responses to this question, 2 “no” and 2 “don’t know”. All student records are kept in the school office in a locked filing cabinet. Teacher information regarding the students in the class is kept in a locked cabinet in the classroom. Special education records are kept in the office of the Assistant Superintendent of Schools in a locked cabinet.

Question 23 – “When program evaluations are completed, I receive information about the findings.” The results of the survey were sent home with the preschool students. This letter to residents of the town is also in response to that question.

The last two questions on the survey do not apply to our program, but were answered positively by some families.

We hope that if anyone has questions or comments regarding these survey results that they will contact the school at 822-8264 ext.193.

The Sayles School Readiness Team

Directions: For each statement, circle “Yes” or “No” or “DK” for “don’t know.” If the statement does not apply to your child’s program, circle “NA” for “not applicable.”

1. I have a good relationship with my child’s teacher and other staff. **18 YES 0 NO 0 DK**
2. The teacher takes good care of my child, helps my child learn to get along with others, and is a good teacher. **18 YES 0 NO 0 DK**
3. The teacher often shares information about things happening in the program and wants to know about things my child is doing at home. **18 YES 0 NO 0 DK**
4. I talk with a teacher about my child at least once a week (or every day if my child is a baby.) **9 YES 7 NO 1 DK**
5. I have received information at enrollment and/or throughout the year about the program and my child’s classroom, including information about:
 - a. Program mission and philosophy **18 YES 0 NO 0 DK**
 - b. Rules and expectations **18 YES 0 NO 0 DK**
 - c. Procedures for drop-off and pickup and handling emergencies **18 YES 0 NO 0 DK**
 - d. When my child may be exposed to contagious diseases and what I should do to protect my child **18 YES 0 NO 0 DK**
6. I receive this information in a language that I understand. **18 YES 0 NO 0 DK 0 NA**
7. The teacher asks about things that are important to our family and uses this information to help my child grow and learn. **13 YES 3 NO 0 DK 2 NA**
8. *For families who speak a language other than English at home:* The teacher and I discuss the language used to teach my child. **1 YES 0 NO 0 DK 17 NA**
9. I am invited to take part in classroom activities and events. **18 YES 0 NO 0 DK**
10. When I disagree with how a teacher works with my child, I feel comfortable letting the teacher know and working together to find a solution that works for both of us. **16 YES NO 1 DK 1 NA**

11. I am comfortable with what my child is learning and how my child's progress is measured. I have the opportunity to discuss what is learned and how it is measured. **18 YES 0 NO DK**
12. I know how the program makes sure that information about my child and his or her progress is kept confidential
12 YES 2 NO 4 DK
13. I receive written reports about my child at least twice a year.
18 YES 0 NO 0 DK
14. I am told about my child's progress in a language I understand and in ways that are respectful to me and my family.
18 YES 0 NO 0 DK
15. The teacher and program work with me to meet my child's individual or special needs and help me get other resources within the community when needed. **13 YES 0 NO 0 DK 5 NA**
16. The program helps me get to know other families in the program and encourages us to support each other.
14 YES 2 NO 2 DK
17. I am always welcome at the program and am invited to participate by helping to plan events, being involved in decisions about the program, and taking on leadership roles.
16 YES 1 NO 1 DK
18. I am provided a translator when needed.
1 YES 0 NO 0 DK 17 NA
19. The program staff helps me learn about community events and resources that can help my child and family.
16 YES 0 NO 2 DK
20. The program gives me information to help my child make a smooth transition to kindergarten or first grade.
14 YES 0 NO 0 DK 4 NA
21. I believe the program administrator is an effective leader.
17 YES 0 NO 1 DK
22. I have been or will be included in program improvement efforts including a yearly program evaluation. **16 YES 0 NO 2 DK**
23. When program evaluations are completed, I receive information about the findings. **10 YES 0 NO 8 DK**
24. I generally feel respected by the program staff and that my contributions are valued. **17 YES 0 NO 1 DK**
25. *For families with babies only:* The program supports breastfeeding by providing space, storing milk, instructing staff on handling procedures, etc. **2 YES 0 NO 0 DK 16 NA**
26. *For families with babies or children with special nutritional needs:* Staff work with me to meet my child's nutritional needs and document for me what my child eats each day.
3 YES 0 NO 0 DK 15 NA

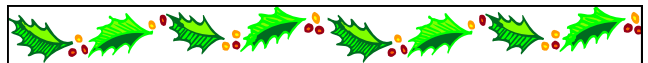
VOICES FOR FAMILIES TO BEGIN

NORWICH — Greater Norwich Community Leadership Team presents Voices for Families: A Parent Empowerment Initiative beginning in January 2008.

Applications are now being accepted for the 15-week class, which begins with a Saturday Retreat and is followed by Monday evening classes held locally. The curriculum includes: How to Define a Problem; Personal Skills; Diversity; Bridges and Barricades; Language and Writing Skills; The Media and Packaging Agendas; State Government; City Government; Board of Education and the School System; Budgets, Accountability and Outcome Expectations.

Meals and childcare provided. A limited number of scholarships are available.

Information: Sherry Filiatreault, (860) 823-3782. Children First Norwich is affiliated with Norwich Youth and Family Services, 80 Broadway, Norwich.



Sayles Eighth Grade Presents

WINTER BASKET BASH

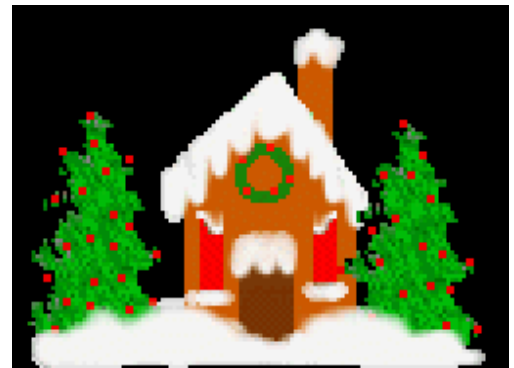
Friday, Dec. 7

5:30 to 7 p.m.

Sayles School Gym
25 Scotland Road
Baltic

BASKETS * DOOR PRIZES

SILENT AUCTION



BRANCHING OUT Notes from the Tree Warden, Dave Gustafson

I was able to get six large trees from the nursery "clearance" at the end of October for a really good deal. The three maples were planted 1) to replace one at the River Park that never "made it" from the original planting a year ago and 2) to replace the two at the ball fields that were snapped off at ground level this summer. Two lindens were planted at the ball fields between Route 97 and the fence so that, eventually, they will provide additional shade to the bleacher area in the late afternoon summer sun. Eventually those four oaks should break the view of the transfer station from Route 138. A special "thank you" to the Town Road Crew for all their assistance picking up trees and the heavy equip-

ment work getting the trees planted. I also got three Red Vein Enkianthus bushes from the nursery that I planted at the River Park. These plants have bell-shaped white flowers with red trim and should grow to be a distinct feature upon entering the park. These three plants, two witch hazels and two dogwoods planted by the Cub Scouts are a good start toward a "bank of color" originally envisioned by the Conservation Commission for the park. I will be ordering small trees for a Spring planting during the first week of December. Any property owner who would like to discuss having trees planted along a town

road at their property should contact me for consideration and evaluation of the site. Street trees provide health benefits, heat reduction in the summer and a more pleasant view throughout town. These trees will be planted within the town's right-of-way and will be tended by me until they are sufficiently mature and are healthy. I remind everyone to notify me or the First Selectman's office of any tree that may be a safety hazard. Telephone: (860) 822-9656.

MUKLUK HIKES

Our December hikes are the 2nd and 15th.

Meet at the Grist Mill
9 a.m.

Come and enjoy the
fresh air and
the beautiful scenery.



SPRAGUE ~

DECEMBER HEALTH SCREENINGS

The VNA East, 34 Ledgebrook Drive, Mansfield Center, will hold the following health clinics:

Blood Pressure Screening:

Wednesday, Dec. 5: Andover Old Fire Dept., 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.; Willington Senior Center, 1 to 2 p.m.; Thursday, Dec. 6, Florence Lord Marlborough, 11 a.m. to noon; Tuesday, Dec. 11, Hebron Senior Center, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.; Marlborough Senior Center, 1 to 2 p.m.; **Wednesday, Dec. 12, Chaplin Senior Center, 9 to 10 a.m.; Sprague Town Hall, noon to 1 p.m.;** Tuesday, Dec. 18, Franklin Senior Center, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.; Lebanon Fire Safety Complex, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.; Wednesday, Dec. 19, Scotland Town Hall, 12:30 to 1 p.m.; Ashford Senior Center, 1:30 to 3 p.m.; Thursday, Dec. 20, Columbia Beckish Senior Center, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.; Marlborough Town Hall, 2 to 3 p.m.

Adult Health Screenings, including blood pressure, cholesterol, HDL cholesterol, blood glucose, earwax and foot care, will be held: Thursday, Dec. 6, Hebron Senior Center, 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Columbia Beckish Center, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m.; Thursday, Dec. 13, Ashford Senior Center, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m.; Hebron Senior Center, 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Blood pressure screening is free; other services have a nominal charge.

To schedule an appointment call (860) 456-7288.

Please note: Deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month. The writer's name, address and a contact phone number must be included with each submission.

Opinion letters will be published with the writer's name and town. Please limit word count to less than 400.

Paid ads may be purchased at a rate of : 3 x 4 inches, \$21; 6 x 8 inches \$40; Half Page, \$70; Full Page, \$100. One month free for 11 months pre-paid.

Submissions may be e-mailed to OurTownNews@gmail.com, or mailed to Town Hall, P.O. Box 677, Baltic, CT 06330.

I can be reached by telephone at (860) 456-1082.

Thanks again for sharing your news and events with

Our Town.



Amy Lynn Reifsnyder

CALENDAR PAGE

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	