

THE EASTFORD *Communicator*



AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2024

"Eastford: One of Connecticut's best small towns." - Carol Davidge

VOL. 33, No. 1

'Communicator' begins new era of Eastford news

LOOKING BACK ON THE LAST 32 YEARS, AND AHEAD TO THE FUTURE

BY LIZ MUNSON SCRANTON
AND ADAM MINOR

Elizabeth Scranton (née Munson) was 8 years old when her family moved to Eastford. She had spent previous years visiting Crystal Pond in the summertime and visiting family, but officially became a resident in November of 1991. Her father, Jon Munson, was always passionate about the news, history, and politics.

"He was not happy with the fact that not one news organization covered Eastford happenings well," Scranton said about her father. "With so many organizations in town, no one knew when they met or where meetings were being held."

One day, Scranton said her father was at the Town Office Building speaking with newly elected First Selectman John Schmitt, when another Eastford resident, Sue Orcutt, came in to speak with him regarding this very issue.

"[Orcutt] had similar feelings regarding the news and things happening in Eastford," Scranton said, "and when speaking with John Schmitt, he introduced her to my father. The two spoke and came up with a plan to meet and discuss how they might conquer this informational discord."

The early 1990s was a time of technological simplicity. The internet was still a few years



Jon Munson, one of the founders of the Communicator, which launched in April 1992.

away, as were cell phones. Cable television was a luxury. News was brought to the people via newspaper, magazines, radio, local word of mouth, phone call, or the local broadcast via "bunny ears" antennae. Computers were not in every household, and to create a newspaper, or lay one out, you needed a very specific set of specialty skills.

Nevertheless, a small group of Eastford residents pursued the project. There were a few meetings over the winter months about the name of the paper, content, roles, mailings, timelines, how it would be paid for, and all the other logistical considerations one must take into account when starting a local news source. The one consistent theme for what would become



Above, Eastford seniors are seen preparing the January 2000 edition of the Eastford Communicator in December 1999.

The Communicator was to not be political, to inform the residents of Eastford of what was happening in town, and what was coming up in the next month.

"My father spent several evenings in the basement of Barbara Klare's house on Crystal Pond creating the first issue," Scranton recalled. "At the time, she was the only one in the group with a computer capable of taking on the task."

The first issue of *The Eastford Communicator* was published in April 1992. Scranton said that once the first issue was published, there was a lot of positive feedback from the community — and people could not wait for the second issue. It came in June 1992.

"As I was reading those first

issues, I was amazed at all the content it provided to the town," Scranton said. "The Hiking Club told of which trails were open or closed due to hazards and when the next Gardening Club meeting would be. There was an article welcoming newcomers and information on the next potluck dinner. There was information from the principal about what the school children were focusing on that month. There was also a piece focusing on a local individual in town, John Savage, written by Sue Orcutt, who was a state representative, former first selectman of the town and agriculturalist."

While interviewing Savage, Orcutt met his wife, Katherine, or

Turn to COMMUNICATOR, pg. 18

IN
THIS
ISSUE



EES
GRADUATION
COVERAGE
PG. 4



'FABULOUSLY
FUN
FUNDRAISER'
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CALENDAR
PG. 9

**THE
EASTFORD
Communicator**
LOCAL NEWS SINCE 1992

VOL. 33, NO. 1 | AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2024

MANAGING EDITOR: Adam Minor

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The Eastford Communicator is published bi-monthly, and as a non-profit 501(c)(3) venture, it is registered with the State of Connecticut and IRS, and is supported by advertising revenues and donations. All contributions are tax deductible.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Editorials, articles, calendar or event information, press releases, photos or

questions may be sent to

eastfordnews@gmail.com.

Please send text in Microsoft Word format (not PDF), and high-resolution photos in JPG format. Send mail to Editor, Eastford Communicator, P.O. Box 253, Eastford, CT 06242, by the 10th of the month preceding the next issue. All submissions to the *Communicator* are subject to editing. The *Communicator* reserves the right not to accept submissions.

To contact the *Communicator* by phone, call (860) 337-2481, and leave a message, and someone will get back to you as soon as we can.

ADVERTISING

E-mail ads.eastfordnews@gmail.com for advertising information and questions, or to be sent a copy of our rate sheet.

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CIRCULATION

The Eastford Communicator is available online at www.eastfordct.gov, and in print, free of charge, to every home in Eastford. Out-of-town subscriptions are available by request, for an annual fee of \$25 (although additional donations are appreciated).

Transfer station fee hiked to \$100

RICHARDS: INCREASE DESIGNED TO BRING FINANCIAL 'BALANCE'

BY ADAM MINOR
MANAGING EDITOR

EASTFORD — If you picked up your Transfer Station stickers this past month, you may have noticed a bigger dent in your wallet as a result.

That's because during its June 10 meeting, the Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to increase the town's Transfer Station permit fee from \$60 to \$100 as of July 3 — a move officials say is necessary to try to maintain the services it provides, which covers disposal of everything from tires, mattresses, brush, appliances, bulky waste, propane tanks, electronics, and oil, as well as recycling.

First Selectman Deborah Richards said the move is a way to continue offsetting the ever-increasing costs of operating the Transfer Station. While the move was met with plenty of complaints, Richards said that when compared to other towns, Eastford's fee is "reasonable."

"We're just trying to balance it all," Richards said during a conversation with the *Communicator* on July 10. "We were looking at different towns, and looking at how we could balance everything with what we pay out. We're just trying to balance out the funds."

Richards added that over the years, the Transfer Station used to get paid for different materials collected at the Transfer Station. Those revenues which consisted of textiles, electronics, and appliances, have consistently dwindled. Because of this, the town could no longer hold steady at \$60 per year.

Even with the increase, Eastford's Transfer Station fee is "very reasonably priced," Richards said. "If you look at the towns around us, none of them are as [low] as us."

Indeed, a cursory look at surrounding towns reveals a stunning difference in transfer station fees. Neighboring Woodstock, for example, according to a chart provided by the Board of

Selectmen, charges \$220 a year for a single-family household, which includes only one permit (Eastford issues two). Pomfret closed its Transfer Station years ago, but offers residents permits in Woodstock and Brooklyn, the Woodstock permits only being available to 50 residents at \$270 per permit, and with only three planned bulky waste disposal events throughout the year. In Union, trash is disposed of with a pay-per-bag system. Similarly, in Chaplin, waste is disposed of by paying per cubic yard (\$10-\$35). In Ashford and Union, the transfer stations are operated using tax dollars.

Comparatively, trash pickup services by Casella Waste Systems (which purchased Willimantic Waste Paper Co. in July 2021) in Willimantic can cost more than \$100 quarterly, according to several Eastford residents we talked to for this story. This does not include bulky waste, and other services employed by a transfer station.

"Municipal waste is a huge issue," Richards said. "Our Transfer Station Committee is always looking at ways to make our Transfer Station more efficient."

While the \$100 sticker price tag might sting initially, Richards said she was unsure if it would hold there for a specific amount of time.

"Right now, we are holding," she said.

NEW RECYCLING GUIDELINES

In other Transfer Station news, two new recycling guidelines are now in effect as of July 3. The co-mingle compactor, which accepts glass, food cans, and #1-#7 plastic, will now include magazines, books, mail, and paper. Additionally, the newspaper/cardboard compactor will be for cardboard only. These changes, according to Richards, were made by Casella Waste Management.

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING FOR GIFTS OF THEIR TIME, TALENT, AND/OR TREASURE

Janet Bellamy (in memory of Carol Davidge); Ken and Peg Bernier; Art Brodeur; David and Fran Buchholz; Susan Burns; Lisa Canter; Randal Chinnock; Colleen DePercio (Editor, *The Ashford Citizen*); Mary Ellen Ellsworth; Susanna Gaines; Nancy Gingras; Jeffrey Gordon; Gulemo Printers; The Hansen and Oftedal Families; Rachel Hutchins; Tom Latham; Debra Lee; Lindon Tree Service, Inc.; Rick and Claire Mackowiak; Adam Minor; Louis and Carol Molnar; Jenna Moore; Our Advertisers; Michele Palulis; Timothy and Louise Rickard (in memory of Carol Davidge); Liz Scranton; Julia Torcellini; Linda Torgeson; Town of Eastford; Barbara Urban; Roger and Johanna Wolfe.

We have made every effort for this list to be complete and accurate; please excuse any omissions or errors and contact us to let us know.

Eastford

TOWN-WIDE TAG SALE

August 17th & 18th 2024

REGISTER YOUR ADDRESS
ONLINE TO BE AVAILABLE
FOR THE MAP!

[HTTPS://FORMS.GLE/W83UJ5BGMQBWmjYR6](https://forms.gle/W83UJ5BGMQBWmjYR6)

Please be aware your home-owners insurance covers all liability.

Map provided by the Eastford recreation commission.

Eastford's Back-to-School

FUN!

DAY OF PLAY

FRIENDS!

GAMES!

SPORTS!

SNACKS!

SUNSHINE!



August 25th 1-3pm

Use link below to register
<https://forms.gle/2EX4WBsy7U9tWKjH8>

Kids ages 4-13 can join for a day of play at Eastford Elementary School back field to run, play, make new friends, and have fun! Register online. No indoor facilities, dress appropriately for weather. www.eastfordct.gov

We will be collecting non-perishable food pantry items at this event.



TOWN OFFICE BUILDING DIRECTORY

SELECTMEN'S OFFICE

Mon.-Wed., 9 a.m.-12 p.m., 1-5 p.m.; Thursday: 9 a.m.-12 p.m.;
2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month:
9 a.m.-12 p.m., 1-6:30 p.m.
First Selectman Deborah Richards
Phone: 860-974-0133
Fax: 860-974-0624

BUILDING OFFICIAL

Tuesday: 5:30-7:30 p.m.
Building Official Joseph Pajak
joseph.pajak@eastfordct.gov
Phone: (860) 974-2068 ext. 8

LAND USE

Tuesday: 10 a.m.-12 p.m.
Land Use Secretary Susan Welshman
susan.welshman@eastfordct.gov
Phone: (860) 974-2068, ext. 9

REGISTRAR OF VOTERS

2nd and 4th Wednesday each Month:
4-6 p.m.

Tuesday & Wednesday:
10 a.m.-12 p.m., 1-4 p.m.
2nd and 4th Tuesday each month:
10 a.m.-12 p.m., 1-6:30 p.m.

Town Clerk Johanna Wolfe
johanna.wolfe@eastfordct.gov
Phone: (860) 974-1885

Lisa Kellermann

Accountant, Assistant Town Clerk
lisa.kellermann@eastfordct.gov
(860) 974-0133, ext. 4

TAX COLLECTOR

Tuesday & Wednesday:
10 a.m.-12 p.m., 1-4 p.m.
2nd and 4th Tuesday each month:
10 a.m.-12 p.m., 1-6:30 p.m.

Registrar of Voters Kathleen Healey

kathleen.healey@eastfordct.gov
Phone: (860) 974-0133, ext. 2

ANIMAL CONTROL

Animal Control Officer Denis Day
Phone: (860) 377-6635

PUBLIC WORKS

Benjamin Schmidt
Public Works Supervisor
benjamin.schmidt@eastfordct.gov
Phone: (860) 974-2259

ASSESSOR

Tuesday: 5-7:30 p.m.
Friday: 1-4:30 p.m.

James Roy

Phone: (860) 974-2259

BURN OFFICIAL

Assessor Mary Hawley
mary.hawley@eastfordct.gov
Phone: (860) 974-1291, ext. 7

Nathaniel Fabian
Burn Official
(508) 365-7543



FOR UPDATES, EXTRA PHOTOS, AND
MORE INFO...

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK!

Class of 2024 bids farewell to EES

EASTFORD — Eastford Elementary School said goodbye to 11 students from its Class of 2024 on Thursday, June 13, during its annual Graduation Exercises.

Of the 11 students, 10 plan to attend Woodstock Academy in the fall, while one plans to attend H.H. Ellis Technical School.

Class President Porter Barlow addressed the class, encouraging his fellow students to follow their dreams. Principal Carole McCombe addressed the students on behalf of Superintendent Donna Leake, who announced she purchased several books for the school's library in honor of the class. Board of Education member Robert Ellsworth handed out diplomas and awards to students, while BOE Chairman Stephen Bowen briefly addressed the students, wishing them well. After the ceremony, families and friends enjoyed refreshments supplied by the school's Parent Teacher Organization (PTO).

Check out the Communicator's Facebook page for more photos from this year's graduation!



The Class of 2024: Top row, from left, Emmalee Elizabeth Gibeault, Miles William Neely, Brett Anthony Bibeault, Roswell Maverick Souvigney, William Ellsworth. Front row, from left, Logan Alexander Williams, Rosemarie Taricani, Kyleigh Murphy, Marley Jane Hutchings, Porter Lewis Barlow, Wes Whipple. Photo by Adam Minor

THE GRADUATES



Porter Barlow



Brett Bibeault



William Ellsworth



Emmalee Gibeault



Marley Hutchings



Kyleigh Murphy



Miles Neely



Roswell Souvigney



Rosemarie Taricani



Wes Whipple



Logan Williams

Class of 2024 Award Winners

Porter Lewis Barlow: The Joseph St. King Award, The ETA Local Hero Scholarship; **Brett Anthony Bibeault:** Eastford Teachers Memorial Award; **William Ellsworth:** The Presidential Academic Fitness Commendation, The William S. Warren Academic Award; **Marley Jane Hutchings:** The Citizenship Award, The Otto F. King Award, The Presidential Academic Fitness Commendation; **Kyleigh Murphy:** The Allen James Day Memorial Award, The Humanities Award; **Miles William Neely:** Aboriculture Award, The Allen James Day Memorial Award; **Roswell Maverick Souvigney:** The William Shand Memorial Award; **Rosemarie Taricani:** The Olivette Kozey Art Award; **Wes Whipple:** The Marilyn Krom Award; The American Legion Award

CCE fundraiser is 'fabulously fun'

COMMUNITY BANDS TOGETHER TO RAISE \$31K FOR CHURCH REBUILD

Photos by Adam Minor

EASTFORD — In April 2023, the Congregational Church of Eastford suffered a terrible loss, as its church building burned to the ground. More than a year later, the community has continued to rally to support rebuilding efforts, and on Saturday, July 6, an event was held that strived to make a sizeable donation to the cause.

The “Fabulously Fun Family Fundraiser,” held at Eastford Elementary School, mixed children’s games, an auction, a concert by the Stephen Bell Trio, and many other fundraising activities into a family event that brought several area churches and townspeople together for a worthy cause.

Herm Barlow, one of the organizers, said, “I have been pleasantly surprised by how widespread the support for this effort has been, crossing many cultural and faith values. This demonstrates that in northeast Connecticut, community is still highly valued.”

The event also took the time to honor area fire departments, including Eastford Independent Fire Company, with a special gift of thanks.

As of press time, the FFFF event had raised \$31,202.79, which was presented to CCE at the church’s annual Frog Jump event on Saturday, July 13 (see pg. 8). This money will be donated to the CCE Fire Fund, which will help rebuild the church on a new site on John Perry Road.

In an interview with WINY Radio in April, CCE Pastor Mike Moran said that despite the loss of the building, God has been blessing the congregation.

“The Lord is really blessing us,” Moran said. “We are strong, we have seen a lot of growth in the church. ... We also have been able to sustain all of our work in the local community. ... Right from the beginning, the kindness and generosity of the community has been a blessing, just profound, and they continue to be supportive ... Eastford has been so, so good to us.” - Additional quotes for this story were obtained from WINY Radio



Above, freshly facepainted Brayden Kjos has a blast on the bounce house during the event.

Below, Georgia Barlow competes in the donut eating challenge; the Stephen Bell Trio performs; and Eliana Kneeland shows off prizes she won playing games at the event.



**SEND US YOUR
PHOTOS!**

eastfordnews@gmail.com

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

The 2024 Legislative Session ran from the first week of February to the first week of June to adjust the State Budget and to take up other smaller issues ahead of the long session in 2025.

For the second year in a row, I served as the House Chairman of the Public Safety & Security Committee, which has cognizance and oversight of the CT Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP). In the committee, we focused on positioning the state to coordinate better with towns to combat the growing shortage of volunteer firefighters and EMS responders. Eastford, like many small towns in northeastern Connecticut, are getting the job done with limited resources and people. DESPP will now be reconfigured to include a Division of Fire Services and a Volunteer Commission on Fire Prevention & Control to work with local Fire Chiefs and town leaders to build a Statewide Fire Plan that is sustainable for the future.

In this session, we opted not to adjust the budget, so the two-year budget that was adopted in 2023 remains unchanged for 2024. The 2023 budget extended fiscal guardrails put in place in 2017 and provided tax relief for the

The benefits will be capped at \$150,000 for single filers and \$300,000 for joint filers. • One million tax filers will benefit from the rate cuts — nearly 60 percent of all filers; 82 percent of the benefit will go to filers making less than \$150,000. • Increases the Earned Income Tax Credit from 30.5 percent to 40 percent; 211,000 filers will benefit from the EITC increase. • Eliminates retirement income tax cliff by adding a phase-out for allowable pension and annuity and IRA distribution deductions against the Personal Income Tax. • Total personal income tax relief between the above three items is approximately \$460.3 million.

It has been the honor of my life to serve Eastford and six other communities in the State House. If I can be of any help to you or your family, please feel free to reach out at pat.boyd@cga.ct.gov or visit my website at www.housedems.ct.gov/boyd.



PAT BOYD
STATE
REPRESENTATIVE
50TH DISTRICT

first time in decades.

Highlights include:

- Reduces the state income tax by lowering the 5 percent rate to 4.5 percent and the 3 percent rate to 2 percent for the income year 2024.

I am working to help make Connecticut more affordable; historic income tax cuts for low- and middle-income people and families; earned Income Tax Credit increase for low-income workers; and expansion of existing tax exemptions on pension and retirement funds for seniors.



JEFFREY GORDON
STATE
SENATOR
35TH DISTRICT

help towns like Eastford pay for increasing special education costs was not taken up by the majority party. I am working with others to find a way to pay these costs without making towns raise property taxes to do so.

On July 1, electricity

rates increased. Although the supply part of your bill dropped around \$40/month for average electricity use (around \$440 cumulative savings total), state mandated public benefits charges hiked your bill by around \$48/month (around \$528 tax you must pay). So, your bill will rise around \$8/month. Actions by the Legislature in 2017 before I joined the Senate subsidized the Millstone nuclear power plant. The Governor

issued a pandemic executive order to stop electricity shut offs for unpaid bills. You pay for these. I supported using federal ARPA money to pay these costs. I supported having public benefits mandates put in the state budget, which would save you around \$210/year. But these proposals were not taken up by the majority party. I have supported meaningful laws last year and this year to enhance the state's regulatory authority of utilities' performance and review of rate hikes, and to secure long-term electricity purchasing agreements to lessen costs to rate payers.

I hold office hours in person and virtually. Reach out to me any time. I look forward to hearing from you. Visit <https://ctsenaterepublicans.com/home-gordon/>, call my office at (800) 842-1421, e-mail me at jeffrey.gordon@cga.ct.gov, or visit my Facebook page at www.facebook.com/senatorjeffgordon.

ATTENTION

ATTENTION OUT-OF-TOWN RESIDENTS

There is an annual \$25 subscription fee for non-Eastford residents to receive the *Communicator*, which covers production and mailing costs. For uninterrupted service, if you would like to continue receiving the *Communicator* for the next year, please mail a check for a minimum of \$25 to Eastford *Communicator*, P.O. Box 253, Eastford, CT 06242. We must receive payment no later than Sept. 15.

DONATIONS MAKE THE COMMUNICATOR POSSIBLE!

Please consider a donation to the *Communicator*!

Send checks to:

Eastford Communicator, P.O. Box 253, Eastford, CT 06242

NOTES FROM THE FIRST SELECTMAN
DEB RICHARDS

Progress continues on the Ashford Road Bridge over Bigelow Brook. Estimated date of construction is 2027. CHA Consulting and CT DOT have been very communicative and open with the residents and the town regarding plans. This will be a total replacement, so we expect 8 months of road closure and detour. This bridge was built originally in 1937 and is rated as poor. The bridge replacement is grant funded 20 percent by federal or state funds and 80 percent by state funds.

The new town website (<https://eastfordct.gov>) is going live in the middle of July. We hope this site makes it easier to locate information about Eastford. There are still items that will be added, and department information will be expanded soon.

Upgrades have been done at Crystal Pond Park and the Ivy Glenn using STEAP grant funds. We hope to have all scheduled work completed in the next few months.

Town committees/commissions are always looking for new members. Many people have ideas or thoughts about things happening in town. By joining a committee you would have a voice in shaping these thoughts and ideas. For more information contact selectmen@eastfordct.gov.

EASTFORD FOOD PANTRY UPDATE
AUDREY CARABEAU

The Eastford Food Pantry is located at the Eastford Baptist Church, 133 Union Rd., in Eastford. The pantry is available to any resident of Eastford who is in need of food assistance. Delivery is available to those who are homebound. Referrals can be made by calling Audrey Carabeau at 860-933-7685, or e-mail acarabeau@yahoo.com. All referrals are kept confidential.

Hours: The Food Pantry is open the first Monday of each month from 8-11 a.m. Each shopper is assigned a 15-minute time slot.

The Eastford Food Pantry relies on donations from the community. All donations to the pantry can be dropped off at the Town Office Building during regular business hours. Check donations can be mailed to Eastford Food Pantry, 16 Westford Rd., Eastford, CT 06242.

Most needed items include tuna, peanut butter, macaroni and cheese, pasta, pasta sauce, canned vegetables, canned fruit, crackers, healthy snacks, and toiletries. Thank you for your support!

RECREATION UPDATE

Eastford Recreation was so happy to see all those who joined us for Heart of Eastford 5K Run & Experience Eastford. We had an incredible turn out of volunteers, vendors, and citizens, which allowed us to raise more than \$3,000 for William Hull and Eastford Food Pantry. Eastford Recreation thanks everyone for their efforts and participation.

We are excited to announce upcoming events. Day of Play will return Aug. 25, from 1-3 p.m., and the Eastford Town Wide Tag Sale will be held Aug. 17-18. Both event flyers can be found on the town's website and Facebook page, with locations/registration links attached. Stay informed of events via Eastford Recreation page on the town website. If you have ideas and would like to help generate more events and activities, join the Eastford Recreation Committee, and help us make Eastford active again!

**TOWN OF EASTFORD
WARNING OF REPUBLICAN PRIMARY
AUGUST 13, 2024**

Notice is hereby given that a Primary of the political party listed below will be held in your town on August 13, 2024 for nomination to each office indicated below. Notice is also hereby given that the following are the names of the party-endorsed candidates, if any, for nomination to each office indicated,

together with the street address of said candidate. The party endorsed candidates, if any, are indicated by an asterisk. Additionally, the following are the names of all other candidates who have filed their certificates of eligibility and consent to primary or have satisfied the primary petitioning requirements in conformity with the General Statutes as candidates for nomination to each office indicated, together with the street addresses of said candidates.

Office	Party	Name	Address
United States Senator	Republican	*Gerry Smith	163 Laskey Rd., Beacon Falls CT 06403
	Republican	Matthew M. Corey	181 Center St., Manchester CT 06040

Dated at Hartford, Connecticut, this 21st day of June, 2024. Stephanie Thomas, SECRETARY OF THE STATE

The foregoing is a copy of the notice which I have received from the Office of the Secretary of the State, in accordance with Section 9-433 of the General Statutes. As provided such primary will begin with early voting on August 5, 2024 through August 11, 2024, and the primary of the referenced party for nomination to the state or district offices therein specified will be held on August 13, 2024. The hours of voting during early voting and at said primary and the location of the polls will be as follows:

Early Voting –

Location: Eastford Town Office Building, Lower Level, 16 Westford Road, Eastford CT 06242

Hours of Voting:

Aug. 5, 2024 - 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Aug. 6, 2024 - 8 a.m. to 8:00 pm
August 07, 2024 - 10 a.m. to 6:00 pm
August 08, 2024 - 8 a.m. to 8:00 pm
August 09, 2024 - 10 a.m. to 6:00 pm
August 10, 2024 - 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
August 11, 2024 - 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Hours of Voting on Aug. 13, 2024: 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Eastford Town Office Building, Lower Level, 16 Westford Road, Eastford CT 06242

*Dated at Eastford, Connecticut, this 25th day of June, 2024
Johanna H. Wolfe, Town Clerk
Town of Eastford*

CCE Frog Jump is a bouncing good time



EASTFORD — The Congregational Church of Eastford held its annual Frog Jump, Band Concert & Cookout on Saturday, July 13, at Crystal Pond Park, a tradition that has been upheld despite the church's current lack of a permanent home base. The East Woodstock Cornet Band performed several songs, while hamburgers, hot dogs, and ice cream were served throughout the evening, free of charge. The lake was open for swimming, a bounce house available for bouncing, and the night was capped with the annual cake walk, which awarded several desserts to those in attendance. At the event, the Fabulously Fun Family Fundraiser, which was held the previous Saturday, July 6, awarded a check to CCE with the proceeds from the event, totaling \$31,202.79.

Photos by Adam Minor



At top, Karen Johnson, left, and Martha Sibley-Jett hold a frog-themed cake won in the cake walk; above left, Parker Kjos enjoys a swim in Crystal Pond; above center, Grace Moore shows off her cake walk win; at right, Owen Budd holds one of the frogs employed in the frog jump; below at left, Chad Benoit presents CCE Pastor Mike Moran with a check for \$31,202.79 from the Fabulously Fun Family Fundraiser, and below, at right, Deb Torcellini and Heather Logee share a smile at the frog registration table.



CALENDAR

AUGUST

Wednesday, Aug. 7

On Wednesday, Aug. 7, the Eastford Public Library will host two events — Papier-mâché Vase STEAM (3 p.m.); and 500-Piece Puzzle Challenge (6 p.m.). Call the library at (860) 974-2515 for more information.

Thursday, Aug. 8

On Thursday, Aug. 8, the Eastford Public Library will host "Storytime in the Treehouse: Vacation Under the Volcano," at 3 p.m. Call the library at (860) 974-2515 for more information.

Saturday, Aug. 10

On Saturday, Aug. 10, the Eastford Public Library will host two events — "Xen and her Cuddle Critters" (10:30 a.m.); and a Movie in the Park: "Jersey Boys" at 8:30 p.m. Call the library at (860) 974-2515 for more information.

Wednesday, Aug. 14

On Wednesday, Aug. 14, the Eastford Public Library will host two events — Paint Vases STEAM at 3 p.m., and Maker's Night, Dream Pillow (Adults), at 6 p.m. Call the library at (860) 974-2515 for more information.

Wednesday, Aug. 14-

Friday, Aug. 16

Eastford Baptist Church will

host its annual Teen Vacation Bible School Wednesday, Aug.

14 to Friday, Aug. 16, starting at 6:30 p.m. nightly. Invite your friends! We will have games, snacks, Bible study, and many more surprises!

Thursday, Aug. 15

On Thursday, Aug. 15, at 3 p.m., the Eastford Public Library will host "Storytime in the Treehouse: Hour of the Olympics." Call the library at (860) 974-2515 for more information.

Saturday, Aug. 17

On Saturday, Aug. 17, at 10 a.m., the Eastford Public Library will host "Kid Olympics," with ice cream cones after! Call the library at (860) 974-2515 for more information. If you like mysteries, the library will also host "Grim Readers" on Aug. 17, at 6 p.m. This group meets every other month.

Saturday, Aug. 17-

Sunday, Aug. 18

Eastford Town-Wide Tag Sale will be held Saturday, Aug. 17 and Sunday, Aug. 18. Register your address online to be available for the map at <https://forms.gle/w83uj5bgmqbwmjyr6>. Please be aware your homeowners insurance covers all liability. Map provided by the Eastford Recreation Commission.

Sunday, Aug. 25

Eastford's Back-to-School Day of Play! Fun! Friends! Games! Sports! Snacks! Sunshine! Sunday, Aug. 25, from 1-3 p.m. Kids ages 4-13 can join for a day of play at Eastford Elementary School back field to run, play, make new friends, and have fun! Register online at <https://forms.gle/2ex4wbsy7u9twkjh8>.

No indoor facilities, dress appropriately for weather. Sponsored by the Eastford Recreation Commission. We will be collecting non-perishable food pantry items at this event.

We look forward to seeing you there! This event is free for motorcycle riders and passengers, including entrance to Gillette Castle. Cost for church members and guests to attend the BBQ only at 5 p.m. is \$10. Please register at www.eastfordbaptist.com. Call Kevin Rumrill at (860) 377-5753 for questions.

Wednesday, Aug. 28

The first day of school for students at Eastford Elementary School is Wednesday, Aug. 28!

SEPTEMBER

Saturday, Sept. 14

The Eastford Public Library Brownies, Books and Chat (BBC) book group meets every other month. The members pick a genre out of a bowl, find a book and lead the group discussion. Our next meeting is Sept. 14, at 1 p.m.

ONGOING

Eastford Independent Fire Company meets monthly on the first Tuesday of the month (unless it falls on a holiday), 7 p.m. at the fire house at 6 Westford Rd., Eastford CT 06242.

The Eastford Democratic Town Committee meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. Call (860) 341-2006 for more information.

ADVERTISE WITH US!



Contact us at

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an advertising rate sheet, or get more
information on advertising with the
Communicator!**

TIPS FOR TODAY
LIZ ELLSWORTH

Fireflies/lightning bugs bring childhood magic into our summer evenings. They are in need of our support, and here are some actions you can take.

1) Learn about fireflies. Did you know that fireflies are not actually flies? They are winged, soft-bodied beetles.

2) At night, turn off your outdoor lights. Artificial lighting can interrupt the glow-light-blinking-patterned communication between potential firefly mates.

3) Avoid spraying weed-killing chemicals in your yard as these toxins damage the lifecycle of fireflies.

4) Join in on the “Low Mow May” campaign and carry it through the mowing season. Fireflies love long-grass yards and meadows.

5) Participate in a community-science project and report the fireflies in your community to the Xerces Society (<https://xerxes.org/endangered-species/fireflies/community-science>).

6) Increase the number of native plants, of varying sizes, in your yard. Fireflies love flowers and hide in long-leaved plants in the day. Firefly expert Terry Lynch recommends planting pine trees because they offer shade, and the “low light area provided by a canopy actually increases[es] the amount of time fireflies have to find a mate. Also, the litter produced by pine trees, if left to accumulate, provides a good habitat for earthworms and other small animals which firefly larvae feed upon.” (www.firefly.org/how-you-can-help.html).

Which action do you think you’ll try? Meanwhile, enjoy finding some fireflies in town this week!

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EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT UPDATE
DEB RICHARDS

Be prepared, stay informed!

- CTPrepares Mobile App: Have all the latest and important information in the palm of your hand in the event of an emergency or loss of power. The CTPrepares Mobile App can be downloaded on both Apple and Android smartphones. It provides information and alerts in emergency situations and incorporates text messaging, email, and social networking, as well as allows residents to communicate with family members during an emergency. Receive real-time notifications including emergency news, state office closings, and public safety messages.

- Sign Up for CT ALERT - Emergency Notification System. The State of Connecticut has implemented a state-of-the-art emergency notification system to alert residents about emergencies in your area. <https://portal.ct.gov/ctalert/common-elements>, navigate to CT Alert homepage.

- Weather – <https://www.weather.gov/nwr/>

DID YOU KNOW?
EASTFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Did you know that in 1872, Sumner Hill Road was called Yetter Hill Road? It was named for Andrew B. Yetter, who owned the farm at the top of Yetter Hill. A truckman from New York City, he was president of the Atlas Storage Company, the Globe Storage & Carpet Cleaning Company, and he also ran one of the several companies that did the city street sprinkling. He had a stable of horses to pull the many horse-drawn delivery wagons needed for his businesses. When the horses became lame or footsore from the cobble stone pavement, they were shipped to the Abington rail station and then brought to the Yetter Hill. After a restorative stay on the farm, they were shipped back to the city and returned to service. The farm also grew hay that was shipped to the city to feed them.

Please think of us when cleaning your closets, drawers, attics, and basements. Remember — one man’s trash may be the Historical Society’s treasure. Your support by membership and/or donation would be greatly appreciated. Membership forms are available in the Post Office lobby or on our website. E-mail us at ehsarchives@gmail.com. Our mailing address is P.O. Box 350, Eastford, CT 06242.

WHAT'S GOING ON AT EASTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY?
ELIZABETH PLATT

What's happening in the library in August? We're finishing our summer program, "A Magic Treehouse Summer." Can you or your children participate even though you're not signed up for the program? Yes, you can! But please call us to sign up for individual programs. We have you do this so that we have plenty of materials for all the children and so we don't go over the room capacity set by the building inspector.

We will also be collecting backpacks, lunch boxes and school supplies to give to Eastford Elementary School.

This year we are celebrating the beloved "Magic Treehouse" books by Mary Pope Osborne.

Check out the calendar section of this edition of the *Communicator* to see events we have coming up in August and September!

Library hours are Monday: 11 a.m.-6:30 p.m.; Tuesday: 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Thursday: 11 a.m.-6:30 p.m.; Saturday: 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Call the library at (860) 974-2515.

EASTFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

Vol. 48, No. 1

Summer 2024

Camp Eastford

By Philip Finch for the Eastford Historical Society



Last summer, the Eastford Historical Society published the first half an article on Camp Eastford in its Quarterly insert to the June issue of the Communicator. Sadly, that June issue was the final Communicator published by long-time editor, Carol Davidge. The Historical Society salutes the efforts of the community members who have revived the publication and is pleased to offer the remaining half of the article on Camp Eastford.

Camp Eastford was a summer camp for boys that was in operation on Crystal Pond from 1911 through the mid-1950s. We'll begin by taking a look at a typical day at Camp Eastford. Life at the camp provided campers with fun and healthy activities include swimming, boating, canoeing, hiking, baseball, basketball, games, movies, dramatics, woodcraft, signaling, biology, literary work, kodak trips, aquatic meets, field days and a gypsy hike ... a 70-mile round trip hike into Massachusetts for older boys which lasted several nights. In later years the Camp added tennis, riflery, archery and more.

A typical day at Camp Eastford in 1924 would have included:

- 6:25 am – First call
- 6:30 am – Reveille, Flag raising, Dip in the lake
- 7:00 am – Breakfast
- 8:00 am – Clinic. Each boy makes personal report of physical condition, etc., to the director. Housekeeping. Tents and beds in order.
- 9:00 am – Inspection. Announcements. Complaints.
- 9:15 am – Squad Duties
- 11:00 am – Swim
- 12:00 noon – Lunch
- 1:00 pm – Rest - Boys on own beds for one-half hour.
- 1:30 pm – Afternoon Assembly
- 1:40 pm – Treasure hunt, hikes, baseball.
- 4:00 pm – Swim
- 5:00 pm – Leisure-Boys read, play games, write, etc.
- 5:50 pm – Colors
- 6:00 pm – Supper
- 7:30 pm – Council Fire. Songs, stories, fun.
- 8:45 pm – Call to quarters. Prayer. Hymn.
- 9:00 pm – Taps

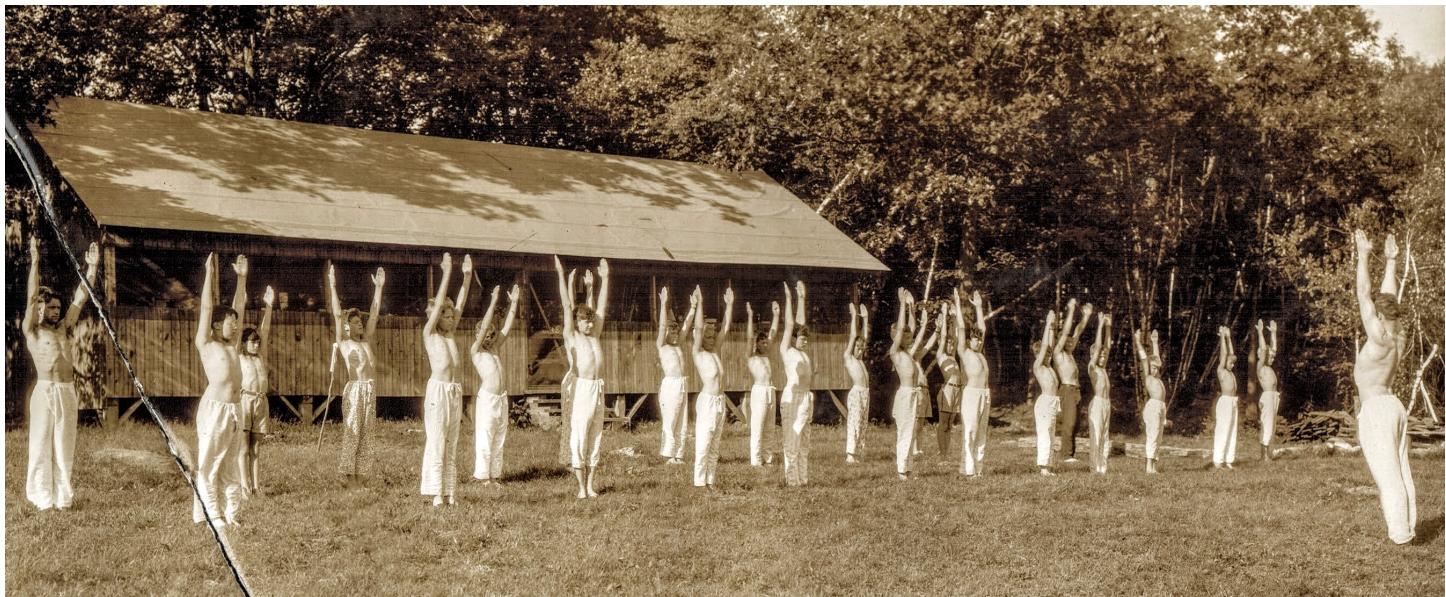


Of course, food was an essential part of the Camp Eastford experience with strict attention paid to the quality of food served, the preparation and service of food and to well-balanced menus. The camp farm supplied fresh vegetables and berries and the neighboring farms provided country eggs, butter, and milk from a registered Jersey herd. Fresh fruit, the best meats and fish, together with home cooked bread and pastry, were an integral part of the Camp's healthy meals.

Boys were allowed all they wanted to eat at the dinner table, but between-meal eating was strictly prohibited. Parents and friends were asked not to send or bring food of any kind to camp as candy and sweets were part of the regular menu. An experienced chef prepared all meals, menus were planned by the chef, under the direct supervision of the Director. An eleven o'clock lunch of crackers and milk

was served to all junior campers immediately after morning swim. Afternoon tea was offered daily at the Director's cottage. Boys, parents and friends would meet there with the Director for refreshment and comradeship.





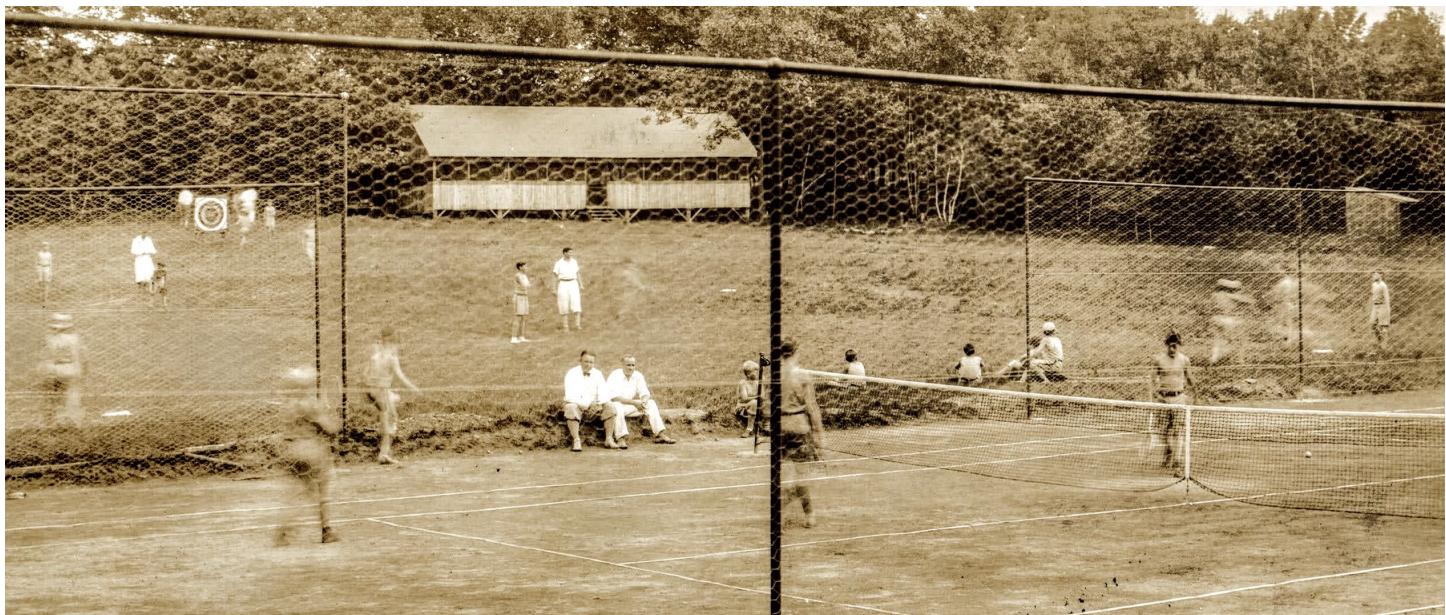
Camp Eastford saw an important management change when James O. Wood purchased the Camp in 1924 and ran it during the summers while he was away from his full-time role serving as headmaster of the prestigious Latin School of Chicago, a position he held for over two decades. The Latin School drew students from across the country and many of Wood's students from Chicago would join him at Camp Eastford for one or more summers.

"The Latin School of Chicago was indeed, fortunate to be guided by a splendid headmaster, James O. Wood. This New Englander with an impressive background in teaching and leadership was an exemplar of the finest qualities in education that influenced so many of us during his tenure. His just discipline and keen understanding of the students' strengths and weaknesses were mixed with a kindly twinkle in his eye when we were certain that some ultimate retribution was imminent. During the years of World War II, it is fair to say that he was a surrogate parent and counselor to some of us whose fathers were serving overseas. Mr. Wood's benevolence and understanding guided all of us through the college interview, and reflected the loyalty and

kindness of this exceptional mentor." — submitted by Richard A. Davis '43 and Harland W. Oates '43 for The Latin School Bulletin

Wood purchased a residence in Eastford to live in during the summers. The home on Crystal Pond Road, built in 1790, still stands today. Wood continued to run Camp Eastford into the mid-1950s. The general summer camp experience and standards changed significantly at the close of World War II. Many summer camps closed as advancements in highways and automobiles made it easier for families to travel on summer vacations and the profile of the typical summer camper changed.

The land that Camp Eastford occupied ran from roughly the area that is now marked as 136 – 154 Crystal Pond Road. Most of the old camp buildings are gone, however a few cabins and small utility buildings remain scattered across the former campgrounds. The area is residential now, but today's children still enjoy boating, swimming, fishing and more on the same land and water that came alive as Camp Eastford each summer a century ago.





"NATURE, when she ran her fingers across this continent in deep and wide furrows, scooped a hole and filled it with water and with her skilled fingers shaped the hills and valleys near the lake, by us called Crystal. She then covered the hills with forests and thought of the boy tired with the life in the city and the play and joy and learning that would be his here. It is not often that one sees a setting as wonderful as ours. Lake Crystal with its everchanging moods contains multitudes of pictures that increase by reflection the beauty of the surrounding hillsides. Splendid as is this location and natural beauty it would be a waste land if it were not for the living spirit within. Twelve summers of comradeship in these woods at this lake in every way have tended to create a feeling of loyalty that only an Eastfordian can realize."

Written by a Camper, 1923



CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF EASTFORD UPDATE

PASTOR MIKE MORAN

It has been 16 months since fire destroyed the Congregational Church of Eastford's beautiful and historic building, which had served the church and our community for 195 years. The church is moving forward with plans to rebuild on a new site on John Perry Road. We look forward to being in the new building late next year.

While the loss was great, the journey since has been filled with great blessings. On the morning of the fire, there were the heroic efforts of our firefighters and the generosity of the town and school to allow us to worship in the school gym that very day. Since then, our community has been pouring blessings on us. We have been able to worship in the school gym, conduct adult and children's programs in town spaces as well as Eastford Baptist Church, and other area churches.

Many of you have given

financial gifts. We are so very grateful. Thank you all for your love, care and kindness! The Fabulously Fun Family Fundraiser on July 6 raised over \$30,000 to help with the rebuilding. This event was not organized by the Congregational Church, but by kind people from area churches and our own Eastford community. Again, thank you all!

As far as our ongoing church life, Sundays in the gym are working well for us. We have grown in numbers, and we have worked to sustain our various activities outside the church. It is easier to get "beyond the four walls" when you don't have any! Our temporary office space next to the Post Office works well, and we enjoy your drop-ins. We host our "Family Music" classes for preschoolers and many meetings there. We are delighted to have been able to continue to serve in the school, to support recreation

activities and to seniors. We are committed to continue traditional events like our summer frog jump and band concert (thank you Crystal Pond Park). Our programs that help people deal with the issues of life, like "Grief Share" and "Celebrate Recovery" are ongoing.

We at the Congregational Church of Eastford believe that God has called us to serve Him by blessing you. The Bible tells us that we are the Lord's "ambassadors." We believe we are here to tell you that God loves you, and we are here to be the very best examples that we can be of God's love for all of you. This is what guides our plans to rebuild. The church building is a tool for us to bless you. Our vision is to use what He has given us to build a facility that will serve our community for a couple centuries as did the old one. We are thinking about space that serves all

generations — from littles to the hill. We are committed to great facilities for children and youth where they can learn, play and be safe — to include ample outdoor space. And of course, we will have space for the worship of our great God. God has a wonderful plan for all humanity — if you want to hear more about that come check us out on a Sunday morning or just ask one of us.

One final note: Our plan for the old site is to preserve it as a memorial place, a place of rest and contemplation and a place where we will also hold Easter sunrise services as in years past. And we hope a lot of future generations will build memories of sledding on

EASTFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL UPDATE

DONNA LEAKE, SUPERINTENDENT

August is typically the time when families and students reluctantly allow thoughts of school to begin to make their way into their minds. However, before the school year ended in June, preparations were already being made for the 2024-25 school year.

At its meeting on June 13, our dedicated Board of Education approved the final purchases from the 2023-24 school operating budget. With the positive vote of the Town at the June 11 Town meeting the BOE secured a 2024-25 school budget in the amount of \$4,610,243 that will allow for the continuation of quality educational programming for all our students.

While we continue to search for a second full-time custodian, Lory Kneeland, our daytime custodian, has been quite busy, with the support of part-time summer helpers, cleaning, painting and making repairs throughout the school. The district and school administrative teams are focused

on implementing procedures and protocols that will make the return to school for EES staff on Aug. 26 (and students on Aug. 28) a welcoming and wonderful experience. All families with students attending Eastford Elementary School will be receiving a letter from Principal Carole McCombe filled with many important details about the beginning of the school year.

If you are new to Eastford, please be sure to contact the Eastford Elementary School office to register your children, including those of high school age, as soon as possible. Details concerning the registration process, and other important school and district information, including the 2024-25 school calendar, as well as current district and school policies can be found on our district/school website, www.eastfordct.org. Please note, however, that information for all Eastford high school students is best accessed on

their respective school websites.

EASTCONN will once again be providing school bus transportation services for our students. As we move closer to the start of school, information will be provided by the school and on the website that will provide families with information on how you can access bus routes and additional transportation information.

We are happy to announce, that based on our past success, we will once again be offering, through grant funding, free after-school programming to all students in kindergarten through grade 8. For K-8 students, the grant covers the cost of all after-school childcare and participation in any after-school enrichment activities. However, we do charge fees for the use of the childcare program in the morning for all attendees. Unfortunately, the grant does not cover preschool-aged children, so fees for both the morning and afternoon sessions will be assessed

on a sliding scale based on family income for children who are not yet in kindergarten.

There are several locations offering free meals through the USDA Summer Meals Program to children 18 and younger. To find a location, please visit <http://www.fns.usda.gov/summerfoodrocks>, or call 1-866-348-6479. Visit <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/summer-food-service-program> for more.

I am excited to welcome all our new and returning Eastford families, staff and students to a new and exciting year of learning in the 2024-25 school year. In the meantime, I wish you continued enjoyment of the summer days. You are also invited to contact me at dleake@eastfordct.org if you have questions or concerns and/or would like to schedule an appointment. Of course, please feel welcome to stop by to say hello before our regularly scheduled school BOE meetings.

Library hosts author for book signing



EASTFORD — On Saturday, June 22, the Eastford Public Library hosted bestselling suspense author Vanessa Lillie for a book signing and interview. Lillie was promoting her latest novel, "Blood Sisters." Lillie lives in Rhode Island, and is an enrolled citizen of the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma. Jody Blanchette, who runs the library's mystery book club "Grim Readers," interviewed Lillie about "Blood Sisters." Attendees then enjoyed refreshments. *Photo courtesy Jennifer John*

EASTFORD INDEPENDENT FIRE COMPANY UPDATE JEANNINE SPINK, VETERAN MEMBER

Thank you to the residents of Eastford who have helped sustain us through support and donations. Thank you to the *Communicator* for giving us the opportunity to tell the town what we do.

But we need your help. We are still a long way from the estimated \$75,000 goal needed to complete renovations and structural repairs to the firehouse.

The EIFC is steeped in history. We have been in existence since December 1917, the building becoming a reality in 1938, incorporation in 1942, and holding our first inhouse meeting on May 1, 1951, at today's location. Your support is crucial to maintain our station and its future.

At our Annual Meeting on June 4, we celebrated our 82nd year of incorporation. Our current officers are: Chief: Doug Beaudoin; Deputy Chief: James Roy; Fire Captain: Nate Fabian; Fire Lieutenants: Gordon Spink, Dave Jakubowski; EMS Lieutenant: Steve Kitson; President: James Roy; Vice President: Jeannine Spink.

Service pins were awarded to: Colton Garrison – 5 years; Nate Fabian – 15 years (2023); James Roy – 20 years; Gordon Spink – 40 years.

Between 2021 through 2023, we welcomed new members: David Garrison, Jason Albrecht, Jonathan Lynch, and Kyle Ravenelle. Returning to duty were

Veteran Members Lincoln Budd, Dennis Desaulnier, Marvin Neely, Gordon Spink, and Will Spink.

Our participation in town events has never wavered. We sponsored our 64th year of the Citizenship Award to an 8th grade graduating student at the Eastford School. This year's recipient was Marley Jane Hutchings. Seventy fire department flags were installed at the Grove Cemetery, two at the Ashford Cemetery, and five at the Southbridge Cemetery to honor deceased firefighters and auxiliary, Fire Prevention at EES, Halloween Trunk or Treat, Xmas in July, Memorial Day Parade, Experience Eastford, Silas Bunnell 5K Race at the Boy Scout Camp in Ashford, CPR/First aid classes at EES for grades 6, 7, and 8.

Call volume has increased appreciably. They are: 162 in 2021; 154 in 2022; 237 in 2023; which is 60 more than previously reported. In June 2024 alone, we responded to 32 emergencies. Technology has been incorporated into our accountability system to track inventory, trucks, equipment via PSTRAX.

Monetary donations are welcomed to help us achieve our renovation goal. We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit. Donations can be sent to EIFC, P.O. Box 333, Eastford, CT. 06242. We look forward to keeping the town updated on the progress we make.

GROVE CEMETERY ASSOCIATION INC. A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees of the Eastford Grove Cemetery Association welcomes the return of the *Communicator*, a valuable information source for the public.

Around 1960, the Grove Cemetery Association began selling plots to Eastford residents in the newly developed, south section. At the time, there were only six-space, full burial plots available in that section. If you or your family purchased one of these, you may have much more space than you would ever use.

With family members moving out of town, and the trend of cremation rather than full burial, we believe there will, unfortunately, be many vacant spots in the cemetery that can never be used. To clarify, a single plot space measures 4' X 9' and allows one full vault burial plus two cremation burials, or three cremation burials. In other words, the originally purchased, six-space plot can accommodate six full burials, plus 12 cremation burials, or 18 cremation burials.

Since Grove Cemetery has no expansion room beyond its present borders, the Board of Trustees is urging plot owners to donate or sell (at the original price of purchase) unused plot space back to the Association. Single spaces are currently sold for more money (\$1,200) than they were 60 years ago, so the tax-deductible impact for a donation of plot space could be sizeable. Since unused plot space cannot be sold by the owner or inherited owners, or given away except to the Association, please consider a donation of unused space back to the Eastford Grove Cemetery Association. Thank you.

• Bylaw-Article Eleven — Ownership Rights: "... Plots/spaces may not be resold by the purchaser for any reason whatsoever. The Association may buy back ownership rights to a plot/ space from a purchaser or his/her family in the event the plot/ space is no longer needed. The Association will pay only the amount of money originally paid by the purchaser less all concomitant costs that may be incurred because of the buy-back. No interest monies of any kind shall be paid to the purchaser for any reason."

Our next issue will be published on:

Oct. 1

Please send all submissions to [*eastfordnews@gmail.com*](mailto:eastfordnews@gmail.com) *by:*

Sept. 15



CONSERVATION AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION UPDATE

The Eastford Conservation and Historic Preservation Commission (ECHPC) is a town-appointed commission providing information on the natural, agricultural, and historical resources of our town. We meet on the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Office Building, lower level. Meetings are open to the public.

Recent projects include: Encouraging Pollinator Pathways, monitoring for evidence of invasive plants like water chestnut, partnering

for more information, visit the Town of Eastford's website or the Commission's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/EastfordConservation/>.

EASTFORD BAPTIST CHURCH UPDATE PASTOR TIMOTHY HOWARD JR.

Greetings Eastford folks! My name is Tim Howard and I am the pastor of Eastford Baptist Church. It is an honor and privilege to be the shepherd of EBC and it is an even greater privilege to be a part of the Eastford community.

One of the unique aspects about the Town of Eastford is how integrated the two churches in town are with the entirety of the community, with this column being an example of this. Eastford embraces the virtues and necessity of faith, which is something I am sure many would agree, is lacking but needed in our society as a whole. Thus, because of this rare gift, our church strives to be as big of a blessing as we can be to our little town, maintaining our Lord's mandate to both love God and love you, our neighbors (Matthew 22:36-40).

Just to give you a little more background about our church, Eastford Baptist Church was founded in 1793, known originally as The Fourth Baptist Church of North Ashford. The Town of Eastford broke away from the Town of Ashford, in 1847 and thus the name of the church changed along with the establishment of the town. We are historically Baptist in our theology — however, we are independent of any organized denomination (i.e. the Southern Baptist Convention, American Baptist Convention, etc.). This simply means we are not governed by any outside entity, rather we are completely autonomous, being funded and governed ultimately by the people who make up our congregation.

We are also a Bible-believing, Bible-teaching church. This means if you visit us for worship, you will hear a sermon that is highly educational, delving into the history, grammar, and context of the Bible, as we make our way, verse by verse, through the text. At the same time, I try to make sure that we understand both the relevance and application to our lives today. I also give opportunities to ask questions of the sermon every Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. We are a family-friendly church, offering Sunday School every week at 9:15 a.m. for all ages, children and teen club programs on Wednesdays in the fall, Vacation Bible School in the summer, as well as a variety of other fun activities geared to help your kids grow in their faith. We also strive to be a community-oriented church, striving to help and serve our neighbors however we can. Some examples of this include opening our doors to the Eastford Food Pantry, organizing roadside clean-up days, hosting Red Cross blood drives, as well as serving and helping with a variety of town-wide activities. If you live in Eastford, chances are you have been blessed by one of, if not many of our faithful members.

Again, it is a blessing to be a part of our Eastford community! Please feel free to contact me any time if you have any questions about our church! I also invite you to check out one of our worship services on Sunday at 10:30 a.m.!

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Did we get something wrong?
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and we will run a correction
in the next issue!

EASTFORD VETERINARY CLINIC



WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN EASTFORD – AND BEYOND?

Consider joining the Eastford Democratic Town Committee or participating in our programs. Donate time, items or services to our Sep 22nd fundraiser.

For more info, please visit our [Facebook page](#), email EDTC.CT@gmail.com, or call (860) 341-2006.

Take action. Make the world a better place.

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Republican Party In The Park

Crystal Pond Park Upper Field
Saturday September 21, 2024 Noon to 3pm

Chicken Dinner Available

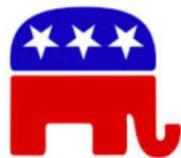
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Jeff Gordon

And

Mike France

Are Scheduled to Attend

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Hosted By The Eastford RTC

Paid for by the Eastford Republican Town Committee-Gary Kendrick, Treasurer

EASTFORD DEMOCRATS and UNAFFILIATED VOTERS

SAVE THE DATE: SEP 22, 2024, 2-5pm

rain or shine

THE 2024 DEMOCRATIC MEET-THE-CANDIDATES FUNDRAISER

Please join us to mingle with our 2024 candidates for our state government. Invited candidates include Governor Ned Lamont, Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz, U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal, U.S. Senator Chris Murphy, U.S. Representative Joe Courtney, Secretary of the State Stephanie Thomas, State Senate candidate Merry Garrett, State Representative Pat Boyd, Agriculture Commissioner Bryan Hurlburt, and others. Silent auction, light refreshments.

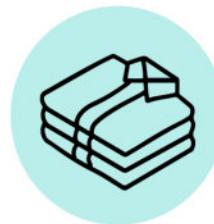
Please register by visiting <https://mobilize.us/s/cUEfif>, by emailing edtc.ct@gmail.com, or by calling 860 341-2006. Location will be provided upon registration. Donations of items or services for the auction gladly accepted! If you are unable to attend, please donate to support our candidates! Use QR code>>>

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Church of Eastford**
4 County Road
PO Box 177
Eastford, CT 06242-0177
(860) 974-0294
cceastford@gmail.com

Sunday Worship Service:
9:30 AM June through Labor Day
10:30 AM the rest of the year
Eastford Elementary School Gym
12 Westford Road, Eastford
Childcare (Birth - Age 4) and
Children's Program (Age 5 - 9)
available during the service!

Check our website **Calendar** and **Events** tabs
for information on our upcoming events!

Reverend Michael Moran
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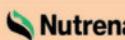
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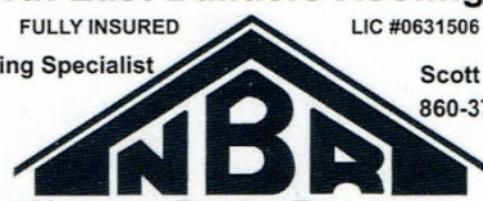
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‘The future of the *Communicator* is bright’

COMMUNICATOR

Continued from pg. 1

“Kate” as she was more affectionately known. Orcutt expressed the need for people to join the little paper, and thus came on staff as the treasurer. Little did she know she would eventually become co-editor, and then chief editor.

“Once the paper hit its stride, Kate and my father would spend two or three evenings laying out the articles on his computer and scanner,” Scranton remembered. “They had a contest to see if someone could produce a drawing/logo for the little paper and it appeared in issue 11. People would send in articles via snail mail and my father would scan them in or retype them depending on how much space was needed. Sometimes, there would be arguments between [Kate Savage and Jon Munson] regarding articles received because the paper did not want to be a space for individual opinions. However, if there was a topic in town that affected most families and someone submitted a thorough opinion, it might have made it to print.”

Scranton added that there were many other individuals who helped make *The Communicator* a success. The publication had such positions as a telephone coordinator, events manager, billing manager, treasurer, and mailing liaison. There were groups of people, such as the senior citizens, who would spend an evening putting labels on so that the paper could make it into each household. There were also those who went out to businesses and asked them to place an advertisement, since many businesses did not know there was a paper in Eastford.

“All of these individuals and groups supported *The Communicator* and it gave everyone a sense of community and togetherness,” Scranton said. “It is my belief that without these individuals, *The Communicator* would not have been as successful as it was in those early

years.”

Jon Munson died suddenly in May 2001, and the torch was fully passed to Kate Savage. She continued on for a few more years until Debbie Yazo took over, and eventually, the role was taken on by Carol Davidge in 2009. With her long career in journalism, Davidge knew firsthand the impact that the news — or lack thereof — could have on a community.

Eventually, as technology became more user-friendly, fewer and fewer individuals volunteered at *The Communicator*. Every once in a while, there would be a note from the editor requesting assistance, but fewer people became involved. Eventually, Davidge became the only person responsible for putting out the publication every month, and with her at the helm, the publication endured for 14 more years under her care.

Sadly, in August 2023, Davidge passed away suddenly, seemingly ending the legacy of town-wide communication that she, and those that came before her, cared for so deeply.

A LEGACY CONTINUED

It was not long after Davidge’s death that questions about the future of *The Communicator* began to arise. Was it finished? Would it even be possible to pick up the pieces and continue? Because Davidge was involved so completely in every aspect of the publication, there was no one immediately in line to take over if the unthinkable happened. Unfortunately, when it did, the future seemed uncertain.

A group of about a dozen Eastford citizens decided in the fall of 2023 to at least look into the possibility of bringing back *The Communicator*. After several months of going through Carol’s computer and paper files to determine where things stood when she passed, identifying roles that people could take to resurrect the paper, brainstorming, inquiring, researching, and



Carol Davidge was the editor of the *Communicator* from 2009 until her death in August 2023.



Adam Minor is the new managing editor of the *Eastford Communicator*.

workshopping, a plan began to formulate, and a group of five people emerged that would eventually become the new Board of Directors, led by Eastford residents Arthur Brodeur, Randal Chinnock, Nancy Gingras, Michele Palulis, and Julia Torcellini. This group solidified *The Communicator* as an official 501(c)(3) nonprofit, reconnected with advertisers, added a Facebook page, re-established communication channels, created a new logo, updated mailing lists, obtained a nonprofit postal permit, and finally, began to look into the process of hiring an editor.

Nancy Gingras, who was a part of the process from the beginning, said the large task that faced that initial group began to seem more and more like a reality.

“I learned that there was a meeting being held in September 2023 to discuss the possibility of reviving *The Communicator*, and I was interested in attending, as I felt its demise left a large void in communicating town happenings and news to our community, and I was curious to learn about what a ‘new *Communicator*’ might entail,” Gingras said. “Little did I know that night when about 10 of us sat around the table at the Town Office Building, asking questions and expressing opinions, that I would become heavily involved in helping to make it a reality 11 months later. It’s been a lot of work, but the

overwhelmingly positive response we’ve received from everyone I’ve contacted about the endeavor has made it all worthwhile. I’m incredibly grateful to everyone who has helped — all the volunteers, our advertisers, donors, and the many behind the scenes people who have contributed in some way.”

The search for a new editor ended in June 2024, when the new Board of Directors decided to name longtime Eastford resident Adam Minor as the new managing editor of *The Communicator*. Minor has an extensive history in local media. He was the managing editor of local publishing company Stonebridge Press for nearly a decade, a company that produced *The Woodstock Villager* weekly newspaper, a publication that often covered Eastford events. He has 12 years of journalism experience, and even after his journalism career ended in 2017, Minor said his love of writing and local news has never wavered. It was that, as well as a desire to continue on Davidge’s legacy, that ultimately persuaded him to take on the role of managing editor for the new *Communicator*.

“I worked a lot with Carol on content for the *Communicator*, even when I was with the *Villager*,” Minor said. “I loved working with her. She was so kind and considerate. She loved

Communicator looks to carry on local news legacy

COMMUNICATOR

Continued from pg. 18

this town. She dedicated herself to it. Her caring was contagious, and I admired her commitment to continuing on the *Communicator*."

Once Minor was on board, momentum began to quicken, as it was decided that the new *Communicator* would re-launch on Aug. 1, 2024.

"It's been a lot of preparation, but it has also been like riding a bike," Minor said, referring to his past career in journalism. "It's been a lot of fun. Many people have stepped up to either support us, advertise with us, or write for us. It has been a true team effort. I'm excited to see how the town responds to this new *Communicator*."

Indeed, Davidge's fingerprints remain on these pages, which is understandable because of her influence in the lives of those that have carried this project on. For *Communicator* board member Julia Torcellini, Davidge's influence is hard to calculate.

"Carol was a quiet influencer in our community who touched people's lives in a big way, one

by one," she said. "I know she has positively shaped my homeschooled children and expanded their world with what she did for them and taught them. She was so humble. I don't think she ever understood who she was to us. What I have gleaned from Carol has enabled me to be part of this project of bringing back the *Communicator*."

Communicator board member Randal Chinnock had similar sentiments.

"When I travel around the country — or even abroad — I always like to read the local newspapers," Chinnock said. "I'm always interested in the happenings, breaking news, and topics of interest to the communities I visit. So, when I moved to Eastford in 2010, I was delighted to discover *The Eastford Communicator*. After reading just a few issues, I felt like I was beginning to know some history of the town, become aware of current events, and understand issues of concern."

"Along the way, I met Carol, who embraced me with her warmth and enthusiasm about the community," he continued.

"It was truly a sad day when she left us, though I knew immediately that the paper must carry on. I think that she'd be thrilled to see [our] vision of the future, where grants may be won, a small staff employed, and our mission expanded to include original reporting on local — or even regional — newsworthy events."

First Selectman Deborah Richards added her well wishes for the project, adding she believed it would be a continuation of the "vision" Davidge — and those that came before her — had for the *Communicator*.

"Carol Davidge had a wonderful vision for the *Communicator* and for the Eastford community," Richards said. "A small group of residents had an idea to share local news and increase awareness of events happening in our community. It's a way to bring us all together, to share and highlight the greatness of Eastford and all the people who make up our amazing town. I look forward to reading the *Communicator* once again and having another avenue for our community to share information and to become

involved in our great town. Congratulations to the *Communicator* committee who have recreated a community icon, while honoring the authors' vision."

Looking to the future of the *Communicator*, Minor added it would continue to evolve as the needs of the community evolve.

"I think the future of the *Communicator* is bright," Minor said. "I think Carol would be ecstatic that we are picking up where she left off, and I hope we make her proud with what comes next. At the end of the day, we are all doing this for the same reasons she did. We love this town. We love this community. We want to inform, and along the way, maybe we'll even have a little fun too. Jon Munson, Sue Orcutt, Debbie Yazo, Kate Savage, Carol Davidge — the legacy of everyone that has ever contributed to this project — we hope their legacies are honored with what is to come."

"It's my hope that once again, we as a community can come together and support our little slice of media and continue to 'communicate' around town," said Liz Scranton.

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